Careers in Food and Nutrition

GACTE Conference 2016
July 11th, 2016

Sarah T. Henes, PhD, RD, LD
Georgia State University
Department of Nutrition
Atlanta, GA
Objectives

- Describe the various career options in Foods and Nutrition
- Illustrate the various paths to a career in Foods and Nutrition
- Briefly discuss the kinds of curricula and courses that are required for careers in Foods and Nutrition
Career Options With a Nutrition Science Degree

• **Clinical Nutrition** (Registered Dietitian Nutritionist-RDN)
  • Hospitals, long-term care, outpatient settings
  • Specialties: Renal, Diabetes, Pediatrics, Weight Management, Sports Nutrition

• **Food and Nutrition Management**
  • Hospitals, businesses, schools, work with chefs, spas
  • Consult regarding healthy choices on menu, creating healthy menus
  • RDN licensure often beneficial
Career Options With a Nutrition Science Degree

• Public Health/Community Nutrition
  • Women Infant Children (WIC), Public Health Departments, Co-operative Extension, Supplemental Programs (i.e. Meals on Wheels, Project Open Hand)

• Education and Research (often requires advanced degree: MS, PhD)
  • College, university, professional practice (i.e. dietetic internships), K-12 teaching, worksite wellness, manage/assist with clinical trials, nutrition interventions, clinical protocols, create curriculum for state board of education, Dairy Council, etc.
  • RDN preferred but not required
Career Options With a Nutrition Science Degree

- **Business and Industry** - sales, marketing, food nutrition labeling, research and development, public relations
  - **Food** (i.e. Coca Cola, Kraft Foods)
  - **Nutritional**s (i.e. Mead Johnson); **Nutraceuticals** (i.e. Genisoy Products)
  - **Pharmaceuticals** (i.e. GlaxoSmithKline)
  - **Food Service** (i.e. Ecolab, Aramark, Sysco)
  - **Medical Equipment** (i.e. Johnson and Johnson)
  - **Trade Associations** (i.e. Peanut Institute)

- RDN often beneficial, combined degree (i.e. MBA) may be beneficial
Career Options With a Nutrition Science Degree

• Use Nutrition Degree for another health related profession:
  • Physician (MD, DO), Physical Therapist (PT), Dentist (DDS), Chiropractic (DC), Physician Assistant (PA), Veterinarian (DVM)

• Private Practice/Consultation (RDN)
  • Consult for hospitals, private physician offices, client counseling in a variety of areas (i.e. weight management, diabetes, eating disorders, etc.)
  • Write cookbooks, food photography, consult at health spas, health clubs
Career Options With a Nutrition Science Degree

- **Public Policy/Government**
  - USDA, FDA, National Institutes of Health (NIH)
  - Resource for legislators
  - Supplement labels
  - Healthcare Reform

- **Media** (radio, TV, newspapers, magazines)
  - Major source of nutrition information for the public
  - Very beneficial to have the RDN licensure for credibility, evidence-based

- **International Food Organizations**
  - Peace Corp, World Relief, United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization,
What Do Dietitians (RDN’s) and Nutritionists Do?

• “Dietitians and nutritionists are experts in the use of food and nutrition to promote health and manage disease. They advise people on what to eat in order to lead a healthy lifestyle or achieve a specific health-related goal.”- Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2016²

• **All RDN’s are nutritionists but not all nutritionists are RDN’s

• RDN’s are Licensed and Board Certified by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR)
  • State licensure is also usually required

Sarah T. Henes, PhD, RD, LD
July 11, 2016
Job Outlook for Dietitians and Nutritionists²

• Projected to grow 16% from 2014-2024 (faster than average)

• Median Annual Wage: $57,910 (May 2015)
  • Can vary depending on area of nutrition
  • Advance degrees often lead to increased salary (i.e. education and research: average $65,000; Consult/private practice: average $69,000)

• Current education requirement for the RDN:
  • Bachelor’s Degree in Nutrition (Didactic Program in Dietetics- accredited by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND))
  • Dietetic Internship: 1200 hours in clinical, food service management, and community nutrition
  • Passing score for CDR exam
  • State Licensure
  • Continuing Professional Education: requirements every 5 years
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)³

• The professional organization for dietitians and nutritionists:

  • “The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals founded in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1917, by a visionary group of women dedicated to helping the government conserve food and improve the public’s health and nutrition during World War I. Today, the Academy has over 100,000 credentialed practitioners — registered dietitian nutritionists, dietetic technicians, registered, and other dietetics professionals holding undergraduate and advanced degrees in nutrition and dietetics, and students — and is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

  • Members of the Academy play a key role in shaping the public's food choices, thereby improving its nutritional status, and in treating persons with illnesses or injuries. Members offer preventive and medical nutrition therapy services in a variety of settings....”

http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/about-us

Sarah T. Henes, PhD, RD, LD
July 11, 2016
Examples of Career Paths for a Degree in Foods and Nutrition

• Career Path 1- RDN: Undergraduate Degree in Nutrition in a DPD (Didactic Program in Dietetics)
  • 2 years of typical college courses and science pre-requisites (i.e. chemistry, anatomy and physiology, biochemistry, basic nutrition course)
  • Acceptance into a DPD program (usually a minimum of a 3.0 overall GPA and in the sciences)
  • Nutrition Curriculum examples for Junior and Senior undergraduates
    • Food Science (class and lab), metabolism, macro and micro nutrients, nutrition and disease (medical nutrition therapy), nutrition counseling (patient centered approach to nutrition care), nutrition interventions (community nutrition projects),
Example Career Path 1

• During the Senior year (undergraduate): apply for Dietetic Internships
  • “Matching” Process
  • Current “Match Rates” = less than 50%

• Once matched: Graduate from DPD (“verification statement”)
  • Dietetic Internship (DI): 9-12 months depending on internship
  • DI must be accredited by Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)
  • 1200+ hours of Supervised Practice (rotations in clinical, community, food service nutrition)
  • Registration Eligible
  • Pass RDN exam
  • Entry level RDN
  • **As of 2024- Entry level RDN will require a Master’s Degree**
Variations on Career Path 1 (RDN)⁴

• Complete Undergraduate Degree (DPD)
  • OR may complete a 2 year Associates Degree (accredited by ASCEND and complete 450 supervised practice hours)
  • Become Dietetic Technician, Registered (NDTR)
  • Pass the CDR DTR exam
  • Work under the supervision of RDN’s
  • May utilize the DTR to apply for internships and become RDN eligible.

http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=6442485468

http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/career/become-an-rdn-or-dtr/high-school-students
Variations on Career Path 1 (RDN)

- Undergraduate Degree in Nutrition (DPD)  OR
- DTR  OR
- Undergraduate Degree in another Field

Coordinated Program (CP) in Dietetics 5
(accredited by ASCEND)
- Curriculum for Master Degree in Nutrition/Nutritional Sciences
- Must also complete 1200 hours of Supervised Practice
CP Program in Dietetics
(variation in career path 1)

• Programs may have 2 “tracks”
  • 1 track for those with an undergraduate degree in nutrition (DPD)
    • May be a 14 month program
  • 1 track for those with an undergraduate degree in another field
    • May be up to 24 months to include extra nutrition courses

• Upon graduation from a CP program:
  • MS Degree
  • Registration Eligible
  • Must then pass the CDR exam
Example Career Path 2

Undergraduate Degree in Nutritional Sciences

Graduate Degree in Nutrition (or related field i.e. Exercise Science, Biochemistry, Biology)

- Dietetic Internship-RDN
- Education, Research

- Doctoral Degree (in related field)
- Post-doctoral training
- Academia/Industry Research

Sarah T. Henes, PhD, RD, LD
July 11, 2016
Example Career Path 3

Undergraduate Degree in Nutritional Sciences

Post-Baccalaureate Training for Health Care Profession
(Physician, Dentistry, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Health Informatics and Technology, Chiropractic)
Example Career Path 4

Undergraduate Degree in Nutritional Sciences

Graduate/ Post-Baccalaureate Degree (in any field, complimentary to nutrition)

Management, Clinical, Community/Public Health Nutrition

RDN

Culinary School

Public or Private Sector

Nutrition is A Science

Courses required to succeed in the Profession of Foods and Nutrition

- MATH
- Chemistry
- Food Science
- Metabolism (i.e. Biochemistry)
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Management (People Skills)
- Understanding of how foods and nutrition affects chronic disease states (i.e. diabetes, kidney problems, gastrointestinal disorders, obesity, etc.)
Other Skills for Succeeding in Nutrition

• Patient-Centered, People Skills
• Critical Thinking (i.e. for data collection, research)
• Business skills
• Marketing Skills
Fields that are Complimentary to Foods and Nutrition

- Culinary and Restaurant
- Business and Marketing Administration
- Exercise and Sport Science
- Physiology
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Health Informatics/Technology
- Public Policy
- Health Care Administration
Reference List


Questions?

Sarah T Henes, PhD, RD, LD
Department of Nutrition
Georgia State University
shenes@gsu.edu
Office Phone: 404-413-1241