

## ***Becoming a Registered Dietitian***

### **What is the process of becoming a Registered Dietitian?**

A registered dietitian (RD) is a food and nutrition expert who has met academic and professional requirements to earn the credential “RD.”

To obtain this credential, individuals must complete the following 3 steps:

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>1</b>	Earn a B.S. degree, and meet the requirements to receive a Verification Statement	If you already have a Bachelor’s degree from an accredited university then you only need to successfully meet the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) components to receive a verification statement.
<b>2</b>	Apply for, be accepted and successfully complete a Dietetic Internship (DI)	*Highly Competitive (1200 clocked hours) 50% of students get matched The national average GPA for those applying to an Internship is a 3.7.
<b>3</b>	Pass the National Registration examination	The exam can be taken only once Steps 1 and 2 have been completed. Most Registered Dietitian eligible candidates spend 3-6 months preparing to take the exam. Most employers require you to pass the National Registration exam within 6 months to 1 year of employment.

Read more about becoming a dietitian at [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and then click on the “Student” tab.

**The Food and Nutrition major at UA can satisfy step 1: BS degree and DPD requirements.**

### **What is a DPD Program?**

The DPD route prepares degree holders to enter dietetic internships where they can apply the theories they learn as undergraduates in health care settings under the supervision of health professionals. Subsequently, they are eligible to take the national examination and become Registered Dietitians. Additionally, students may

major in Food and Nutrition and complete the requirements to obtain a second Bachelor's degree.

### **What is a Verification Statement?**

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) Verification Statement verifies completion of educational requirements and is required for application to accredited Dietetic Internship (DI) programs. All students who graduate from The University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Science degree in Food and Nutrition and also meet the DPD requirements receive a Verification Statement.

#### **DPD Program Requirement (to be eligible to receive a Verification Statement):**

1. To receive a **Verification Statement** for a Dietetic Internship, a student in the Didactic Track must:
  - (a) Have completed a minimum of 60 semester hours including NHM 101, 195, 201, 253; CH 104 and 105; BSC 215 and 216
  - (b) Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
  - (c) Make **B-** or higher in all "NHM designated" courses including BER 345 or equivalent
  - (d) Earn **C** or higher in CH 104,105; BSC 215, 216, 242; PY 101
  - (e) Submit official transcripts of ALL work taken at another institution to the DPD director
  - (f) Submit a "DPD Application Form" to the DPD director
  - (g) Complete all DPD required courses or equivalent
  - (h) Complete a bachelor's degree

### **What is the difference between a food and nutrition major with or without a Verification Statement?**

When you apply for admissions to the University of Alabama, you are designated as a "Food and Nutrition" major. If you successfully complete all the degree program requirements as stated in the [program catalog](#), you will be awarded a B.S. degree in Food and Nutrition only upon graduation.

### **When and how do I apply for admission into the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)?**

#### **When to apply?**

You can apply for admission into the DPD only after completing the following requirements:

- (a) Have completed a minimum of 60 semester hours including NHM 101, 195, 201, 253; CH 104 and 105; BSC 215 and 216
- (b) Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- (c) Make **B-** or higher in all “NHM designated” courses
- (d) Earn **C** or higher in CH 104,105; BSC 215, 216
- (e) Submit official transcripts of ALL work taken at another institution to the DPD director
- (f) Submit a “DPD Application Form” to the DPD director

### **How to apply?**

Use the “DPD Application Form” to determine if you’re ready for a Verification Statement. Click [here](#) for a copy of the form.

To apply, you must submit the following to Mrs. Shannon McMahon.

1. DPD Application Form (click [here](#) to download a copy of the form).
2. Official copies of all transcripts for courses taken at another institution. Please send 1 copy to Mrs. McMahon and 1 copy to The University of Alabama.

#### **(1 copy to):**

University of Alabama Registrar  
Box 870134  
Hospitality Mgmt.  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

#### **(1 copy to):**

Mrs. Shannon McMahon  
Dept. Human Nutrition &  
  
P.O. Box 870311  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Once your application is approved and you are admitted into the DPD program, you must continue to meet all the DPD requirements to earn a verification statement.

**\*These are the minimum requirements for a Verification Statement. To be competitive for Dietetic Internships a GPA of 3.7 or above and A’s in all sciences classes and 300-400 level nutrition courses is recommended.**

### **Are dietetic internships very competitive?**

At this time, Dietetic Internships are very competitive and only approximately 50% of students who apply are matched with an internship. GPA is very important when applying to internships (a competitive GPA is 3.7 overall or above), as well as work experience, volunteerism, and leadership.

View the current accredited dietetic internships on the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website at [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and click on the “Student” tab.