

Master's Program in Human Nutrition Advising Guide

Graduate students in Human Nutrition will have selected one of three tracks on their application. The required course work will differ by track (see page 2). Students should start their program by completing the required courses. It is recommended that HES 509 (Research Methods) and CHS 525 (Biostatistics) be taken early in the program. Please note, HES 509 is a prerequisite to select NHM courses.

Program Requirements

To complete the MS-HES with an emphasis in Human Nutrition, students will need to complete the required courses designated in their track (page 2), a minimum of 18 hours in NHM designated courses (may include non-thesis and thesis research hours), a minimum of 30 credit hours at the graduate level (500 or greater), and a culminating project or exam entitled the Capstone Experience (see pages 6 and 7). Additionally, students need to earn a grade of B or better in all required coursework and any NHM designated course, and at least a 3.0 overall GPA to graduate.

Graduate students may develop their own plan of study unless they are coordinating their master's degree in Human Nutrition with a DPD verification statement. Students should consult both an academic advisor and the graduate advisor for a specific plan of study that includes both graduate and undergraduate courses.

When selecting graduate electives, please seek advice from Dr. Tiffany Hylton, Advisor/Director for the Master's Program in Human Nutrition (tmhylton@ches.ua.edu). Some courses require a pre-requisite undergraduate course while others do not.

Required Courses

The table below outlines the requirements for each track in the MS in Human Environmental Sciences with an emphasis in Human Nutrition.

Clinical Track	Community Track	Generalist Track
Research Core	Research Core	Research Core
HES 509: Research Methods	HES 509: Research Methods	HES 509: Research Methods
CHS 525: Biostatistics	CHS 525: Biostatistics	CHS 525: Biostatistics
	CHS 520: Basic Epidemiology	
Nutrition Core	Nutrition Core	Nutrition Core
NHM 561: Advanced Vitamin and Mineral Metabolism	NHM 550: Community Nutrition I	NHM 561: Advanced Vitamin and Mineral Metabolism
NHM 562: Metabolism of Energy Nutrients	NHM 551: Community Nutrition II	NHM 562: Metabolism of Energy Nutrients
NHM 557: Childhood Obesity <i>OR</i> NHM 558: Nutrition in the Prevention and Treatment of Chronic Disease	NHM 557: Childhood Obesity <i>OR</i> NHM 558: Nutrition in the Prevention and Treatment of Chronic Disease	NHM 555: Maternal and Infant Nutrition <i>OR</i> NHM 567: Nutrition Support for the Critically Ill
NHM 567: Nutrition Support for the Critically Ill	NHM 555: Maternal and Infant Nutrition	
NHM 568: Nutrition for the Older Adult	NHM 556: Child and Adolescent Nutrition	
Electives	Electives	Electives
3 electives (1 must be designated as NHM)	2 electives (1 must be designated as NHM)	5 electives (3 must be designated as NHM)
Additional Requirements	Additional Requirements	Additional Requirements
Capstone Experience	Capstone Experience	Capstone Experience

Required Course Offerings

See the table below for the pre-requisite courses (if needed) and timing of all required courses. Students must earn a B or better in a required course. If a student earns a C or lower in a required course, he/she will be allowed to repeat the course. Students must receive a B or better when repeating a required course. The first attempt will not be counted toward the degree but will be counted in the overall GPA.

Course	Pre-Req	Fall	Spring	Summer
HES 509: Research Design		x	x	X
CHS 525: Biostatistics		x		
CHS 520: Epidemiology			x	
NHM 550: Advanced Community Nutrition I		x		
NHM 551: Advanced Community Nutrition II	NHM 550		x	
NHM 555: Maternal and Infant Nutrition		x		
NHM 556: Child and Adolescent Nutrition	NHM 555		x	
NHM 557: Childhood Obesity				x
NHM 558: Nutrition in the Prevention and Treatment of Chronic Disease	HES 509	x	x	
NHM 561: Advanced Vitamin and Mineral Metabolism		x		x
NHM 562: Metabolism of Energy Nutrients			x	x
NHM 567: Nutrition Support for the Critically Ill			x	x
NHM 568: Clinical Nutrition for the Older Adult		x		x

Nutrition Electives

Regardless of the selected track, all students must take at least 18 hours in their content area or NHM designated courses. However, the number of required nutrition electives will vary depending on which track the student selects.

- Generalist track = at least 9 credit hours of electives in nutrition.
- Community track = at least 3 credit hours of electives in nutrition.
- Clinical track = at least 3 credit hours of electives in nutrition.

Students must earn a B or higher in each class taken within the nutrition department. Students should attempt to complete required courses prior to attempting electives. Elective courses may only be taken once. If a student receives a grade of C or lower, he/she will not be allowed to retake an elective course for a higher grade. Students may opt to take a required course from another track as an elective.

Aside from NHM courses offered in other tracks, the following are possible NHM electives:

Course	Pre-Requisites*	Fall	Spring	Summer
NHM 530: Advanced Nutrition Counseling	HES 509	x		
NHM 625: Nutritional Epidemiology		x		

Electives Outside of Nutrition

Students may opt to take all electives within nutrition or take some courses outside of the department. Students may take up to 3-6 hours of courses outside of nutrition, depending on their selected track. A student should check the online syllabus to determine if the course will meet his/her learning needs. Students should seek approval from the program director (Dr. Tiffany Hylton) before taking an outside elective. Some options for electives outside the department that can be taken by distance include:

Course	When Offered?
HHE 515: Advances in Health Promotion	Fall, Spring
HHE 520: Health Behavior	Fall, Spring
HHE 530: Health Promotion Techniques	Fall, Spring
HHE 589: Women and Health	Spring
CHS 520: Basic Epidemiology	Spring
CSM 537: Developing the Leader Within	Fall, Spring
CSM 547: Digital Resources	Fall, Spring
CSM 564: Digital Tools	Fall, Spring
CSM 575: Entrepreneurship in HES	Fall, Spring
NUR 510; Basic Concepts of Teaching Diabetes Self-Management Techniques	Winterim
NUR 516: Advanced Diabetes Management	Interim Only

Scholastic Requirements

Grade Point Average (GPA). Each student must have an overall graduate grade point average of 3.0 or better for all graduate courses undertaken at The University of Alabama.

Grades below "C" count in computing the GPA but do not carry credit toward a degree. Grade point averages are computed on the following grades: "A," "B," "C," "D," "F," "N" and "I." Grades of "P," "W," "NA," "NC" and "NG" do not count toward the GPA. In computing the GPA, an "I" or "N" counts as an "F" until replaced by the earned grade. All "I" and "N" grades must be removed within the first four weeks of the next term of enrollment if the overall GPA drops below a 3.0 as a result of the "I" or "N" grade(s).

Seventy-five Percent Rule. At least 75 percent of the hours taken must have been completed with grades of "A" or "B" at The University of Alabama. In applying this 75 percent rule, a maximum of 6 hours of thesis research may be counted, if appropriate.

Transfer credit. Courses completed at other post-secondary institutions and accepted for UA graduate credit are given a grade of "P" and are not calculated in the overall GPA.

Repeating a course. Regular courses (courses other than IDGR assistantship, thesis, dissertation, etc.) typically may not be repeated for graduate credit; this includes courses initially taken on an

audit basis. However, a course that is required in a student's curriculum in which a "D" or "F" is earned may be repeated once. Both grades contribute to the computation of the GPA. Only required courses where the student has received a B or better will be counted toward the degree requirements.

Federal Regulations limit the number of times a student may repeat a course and receive financial aid for that course. Questions about these regulations should be addressed to the [Student Financial Aid Office](#).

Unconditional Admission (Regular Admission). A graduate student with good academic standing whose GPA drops below 3.0 at any time after earning 12 semester hours will have earned **Academic Warning**.

Academic Warning – A student placed on Academic Warning has the next 12 hours of graduate work to raise the overall GPA to 3.0 or better. The overall GPA after the next 12 hours following academic warning must be at least 3.0 to avoid **Academic Suspension** (dismissal) from the Graduate School.

The department may dismiss a student from a degree program if there is unsatisfactory academic or other progress toward completion of the degree. Departmental dismissal also results in suspension from the Graduate School. **Students who are suspended may not attend class or enroll in any form of distance learning courses.**

Students are encouraged to use the time of the suspension in ways that assist their academic progress. Students may study in order to finish courses in which they have earned incomplete (I) or no grade (N) and may work with faculty members in this process. Students also may address other non-academic problems that have impeded their progress.

Conditional Admissions. Some students are admitted on a conditional basis. Their acceptance letter (sent as an email) will specify the conditions of their admission. These students must meet the conditions listed in their acceptance letter and the following policy listed in the graduate catalog.

A graduate student removes the condition by earning an average of "B" or better in the first 12 semester hours of graduate-level work completed and by satisfying any other conditions specified by the department or the Graduate School at the time of admission. If the 12 hours are completed in a term in which the total credits exceed 12, the evaluation is made on the basis of all graduate-level work completed at the end of that term of enrollment.

Failure to remove the condition within the first 12 hours of graduate work will result in the student's being dropped from the program. A student who satisfies the condition will assume automatically the status of a regularly admitted graduate student.

Academic Dismissal. Students may be dismissed from this program for failure to meet the requirements listed on page 1 of this document. Departmental suspension (dismissal) from a degree program also results in suspension from the Graduate School.

Required Capstone Experience

All students must complete a capstone experience toward the end of their degree program. The Capstone Experience is a culminating project (thesis or non-thesis research project) or comprehensive exam that integrates prior learning. Distance students can select from the two available options in the non-thesis track (Plan II). On campus students can select either the thesis option (Plan I) or one of the non-thesis options (Plan II). Students need to contact the director of the graduate program, Dr. Tiffany Hylton (tmhylton@ches.ua.edu), and convey their decision regarding their capstone experience at least one semester prior to the semester they wish to graduate. Students selecting the thesis track need to contact the director of the graduate program earlier.

Plan I - Thesis Option. Students interested in a thesis track should contact the graduate program director early in their studies. Thesis projects usually take two to three semesters to complete. Students completing a thesis will need to sign up for a total of six hours of NHM 599. These hours can count toward the required 18 hours in NHM designated courses needed for the degree. The thesis should focus on current nutritional concerns in which the student has a special interest. To complete the thesis option, students will need to:

- select a designated mentor (Chair) from the UA Nutrition faculty
- select a thesis committee of at least three members including their mentor (one member must be from outside of the nutrition department)
- write a proposal that includes an extensive review of the literature and proposed methods that could be used in the study
- receive approval of the proposal from their mentor
- seek guidance from committee members prior to collecting data
- formally propose the research plan to their committee and respond to feedback
- receive IRB approval for the project in their own institution and UA
- collect data
- analyze data
- interpret the data and write up the results
- discuss implications of the study
- seek final approval from committee members and formally present the research to the committee members and other faculty
- and electronically publish the thesis according to the University of Alabama's "Student Guide to the Preparation of Electronic Thesis and Dissertation" located at <http://graduate.ua.edu/etd/>.

Plan II - Non-Thesis Option. Students, who select the non-thesis option, will complete either a non-thesis research project (NHM 598) or the comprehensive exam. The majority of students prefer the comprehensive exams.

Non-thesis Research Project. The non-thesis research project will take at least two semesters to complete. In the semester the student plans to complete the project and graduate, he/she would take NHM 598 (Non-Thesis Research) with a designated mentor (UA Nutrition faculty) as the instructor. The course is worth 3 hours and can be applied to the 30 hours required for graduation and the required 18 hours in nutrition. Please note that this course is not offered in the summer. Students will need to write a proposal and seek approval by his/her designated mentor, seek and obtain IRB approval in their own institution and UA, collect data, analyze the data, and write up results using the brief manuscript style used by the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. If the student plans to complete research in their hospital or health care facility, then the project may require review by the medical IRB at UA. This group meets to review IRB proposals only once per month. Students must follow HIPPA guidelines when conducting medical research. Students should plan their project and seek IRB approval in the semester prior to registering for NHM 598.

Comprehensive Exam. The comprehensive exam is taken in the student's last semester. The material covered in the exam will vary depending on the track the student selected. Students must be enrolled in at least one hour of graduate coursework in the semester they take the comprehensive exam. Students do not enroll in a comprehensive exam course. Students taking the exams will receive a study guide for the exam early in the semester they plan to take the exam. This is typically the best option for distance learners, as coordinating research projects by distance is more difficult to coordinate.