



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES PROGRAM

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES PROGRAM GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

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GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

There are many academic and administrative steps involved in earning a degree from the Nutritional Sciences Program (NSP or Program). The Program, the School of Public Health, and the UW Graduate School each have specific requirements. This Student Handbook is intended to provide an overview of important information regarding Program and Graduate School policies and procedures. It is an overview rather than an exhaustive document. Please consult the following for additional information regarding policies and procedures for your academic program.

- [University of Washington Graduate School](#)
- [School of Public Health](#)
- [Nutritional Sciences Program](#)

Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) – Elizabeth Kirk

The Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) is an official NSP faculty representative who acts as a liaison between the Program and the Graduate School. The primary role of the GPC is to advise, counsel and assist graduate students, or to assure that all students receive this service from another member of the graduate faculty. The GPC serves as your faculty advisor until you graduate or unless you choose to complete a thesis or dissertation, in which case your thesis /dissertation advisor becomes your advisor. The GPC can assist with questions about selecting a culminating project - your capstone, thesis, or dissertation project - or forming your supervisory committee. The GPC also monitors students' academic progress regularly to ensure that program milestones are met and academic progress is satisfactory.

Graduate Program Adviser (GPA) – Susan Inman

The Manager of Student & Academic Services serves as the Graduate Program Adviser (GPA), the official NSP staff representative and liaison between the Program and the Graduate School. They are one of three, with the senior adviser and operations specialist, who make up the student and academic services team. The GPA and team can assist with program requirements, policy, degree audits, registration, teaching assistantships, program scholarships and funding, the student concern policy, health and wellness, graduation, events, community building, and just about anything that you are not sure how to address.

Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics Director, MPH Director – Anne Lund

The NSP MPH Director is your primary contact for MPH nutrition degree requirements including the practicum (NUTR 595) and fieldwork (NUTR 532). The MPH nutrition director sits on the SPH MPH Steering Committee. As the Director of the RDN training program, they ensure accreditation standards are met by each student completing the RDN training program. This includes overseeing the curriculum and site placement with over 100 local nutrition and dietetic practitioners.

Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics, Student Services Coordinator – Lacey Henderson

The GCPD student services coordinator is your primary contact for student services questions pertaining to the RDN-training program. They manage the GCPD admissions process and work closely with the GCPD Director to ensure the program is meeting accreditation standards.

Nutritional Sciences Program Core, Interdisciplinary, and Clinical Faculty

The NSP core faculty are the primary instructors of the Program. Additionally, they serve on Program committees (Admissions and Curriculum) and as primary advisors and [committee chairpersons/members](#) for students completing

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theses or dissertation projects. A larger group of interdisciplinary and clinical faculty serve as an extension of the NSP Core Faculty. Interdisciplinary faculty chair and serve on student committees, guest lecture in our courses, and often support and involve students in their research. Clinical faculty may be involved in instruction, serve as faculty advisors for capstone, and frequently provide practice experience mentorship for students in the Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics. The list of core, interdisciplinary, and clinical faculty can be found [online](#).

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Registration

Registration is completed online through [MyUW](#). Quarterly class schedules and schedule line numbers (SLNs) are available in the [Time Schedule](#).

Entry or Faculty Codes

Please see [Graduate Student Resources](#) for instructions and required forms to obtain entry or faculty codes for:

- Independent Study, Thesis, or Dissertation Credits (600, 700, 800)
- Fieldwork or Practicum Credits (NUTR 532, 595)

If you are registering for a course in another department or program that requires an add code, please contact the department offering the course to request a code.

Grading Policies

In reporting grades for graduate students, the program shall use the system described by [Memo 19](#) from the UW Graduate School. All required courses for the MPH, MS, PhD and RDN Training Program must be taken for a numerical grade unless the course is only offered with Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grading or the quarter has been deemed an extraordinary circumstances quarter

A minimum grade of 3.0 is required for the successful completion of the core Nutritional Sciences (NUTR) classes. A minimum course grade of 2.7 is required for a non-NUTR course to count toward other program requirements, degree requirements, and the Graduate School's graded and total credit counts.

Electives may be taken for a numerical grade, CR/NC, or Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory (S/NS) if you have satisfied the Graduate School's minimum requirement for numerically graded credits. See: [Master's Degree Policies](#) or [Doctoral Degree Policies](#).

Maintaining Your GPA

At the end of each quarter, the Graduate School requires the Program to review your academic progress. To maintain graduate standing and to be eligible for a degree, you must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for all courses numbered 400 and above. A GPA below 3.0 will be reviewed by the GPC and may result in a warning. If it continues for more than one quarter, it could result in academic Probation.

Continuous Enrollment Requirements

To maintain graduate status, a student must be enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis or be in "On-Leave" status from the time of first enrollment in the Graduate School until completion of all requirements for the graduate degree. Failure to maintain either continuous enrollment or On-Leave status constitutes evidence that the student has resigned from the Graduate School.

A full-time load during the academic year is defined as at least 10 credits. RAs, TAs, and trainees are required to take at least 10 credits in autumn, winter, and spring quarters and 2 credits in summer quarter during the quarters they are in their position. You must also enroll in a minimum of 2 credits in the quarter in which you graduate.

On-Leave Status (Requesting a Leave of Absence)

Graduate students are required to maintain graduate status during their program of study. If you plan to be away from the university (not registered) in any quarter other than summer, you must apply for On-Leave status. Eligibility

requirements, policies, and procedures for requesting On-Leave status are further explained by the UW Graduate School via [Memo 9](#).

Failure to maintain graduate status through registration or an approved request for On-Leave status effectively ends a student's continuation in the program and requires a formal application to the Graduate School, approval by the Program, and a \$250 fee to obtain reinstatement.

Satisfactory Progress

A student admitted to the Nutritional Sciences Program may continue in the program if they maintain satisfactory performance and progress toward completion of their graduate degree. Satisfactory progress requires meeting expectations for graduate student performance and progress within the Program. That includes, but is not limited to, required coursework, research, scholarship, professional behavior relevant to the program, fieldwork, practicum requirements, and length of time allowed for completion of various phases of the program.

Student performance is reviewed each quarter for satisfactory progress by the GPA. Satisfactory progress reviewed includes:

- Successful completion of coursework each quarter (≥ 3.0 in each core NUTR class and cumulative GPA ≥ 3.0)
- Compliance with non-course program requirements and deadlines
 - Pre-requisite completion
 - UW Health Sciences Immunization Program (HSIP) compliance
 - Others, such as completion of required trainings and background checks, mentoring agreements, NSP Portfolio

Performance issues that would lead to a warning, probation, or drop status, are outlined in the [Graduate School Memo 16](#). The goal of each step is to establish clear expectations and outline a path to return to satisfactory progress.

1. **Warn:** This is an early status for a student who has failed to meet expectations for performance or progress. Warnings are optional in the probation process and are managed internally by the program with a goal of resolving problems before escalating to probation. A student issued a warning letter will meet with their Program Director and the Program GPC and GPA (or others, as requested by student) to develop and agree upon a plan to get back on a trajectory for satisfactory progress. The warning letter and agreed upon plan will be placed in the student's file.
2. **Probation:** This status is used for a student who has failed to resolve problems with their performance or progress that the Program has previously documented and communicated to the student. The Program sends a probation recommendation to the student with a copy to the Graduate School no later than the 10th business day of the probation quarter. All probation letters will cite:
 - a. the reason for the probation,
 - b. steps the student must take to remove the probation, and
 - c. the consequences the student will face if steps were not taken to remove the probation.

The Graduate School will review the probation letter drafted by the Program and, if accepted, place a probation notice on the student's record.

3. **Final Probation:** This status is used for a student who has failed to resolve the documented problems in their probation status as submitted to the Graduate School. The Program sends a final probation recommendation to the student with a copy to the Graduate School no later than the 10th business day of the final probation quarter. All final probation letters will cite:
 - a. the reason for the final probation,
 - b. steps the student must take to remove the final probation, and
 - c. the consequences the student will face if steps were not taken to remove the final probation.

The Graduate School will review the final probation letter and, if accepted, place a final probation notice on the student's record.

4. **Drop:** Drop is an official action that terminates a student's enrollment from the Program because either the student has failed to resolve documented problems in their final probation status, or the student has performance issues as outlined above and/or in [Graduate School Memo 16](#). The Program submits drop recommendations to the Graduate School prior to the start of the quarter but no later than the fifth business day of the drop quarter. The Graduate School approves the drop and drop status will appear on the student's official transcript. When dropped, a student is not eligible to complete the Program or return later to complete the degree.

Health Sciences Immunization Policy

During your course work and training, you may be in environments that present a risk for certain infections or serve vulnerable client and patient populations. For this reason, completion and documentation of all Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended Health Care Personnel (HCP) immunizations and testing for tuberculosis are mandatory requirements for all students in the Nutritional Sciences Program. You are required to participate in and maintain compliance with the UW Health Sciences Immunization Program (HSIP). You will be charged an annual health fee. If you do not complete the HSIP requirements, a registration hold will be placed on your account. Please see the [HSIP website](#) for detailed information on the required immunizations, program forms and required documentation, a complete list of HSIP services, and current fees.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH/MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE INFORMATION

This section is intended to highlight some information pertaining to the pursuit of your master's degree. Use this section in conjunction with advice from your thesis chair or capstone advisor, the Graduate School, and the NSP.

Graduate School

- [Master's Degree Policies](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Nutritional Science Program

- [Master of Science Degree Requirements](#)
- [Master of Public Health Degree Requirements](#)

Time Limit

All work for a master's degree must be completed within **six years upon acceptance into the program**, including quarters registered and on-leave.

MPH Degree Requirements

All MPH students complete a structured curriculum comprised of required courses and electives and required milestones including participation in a public presentation and a culminating project (capstone or thesis) which is also known as an Integrative Learning Experience (ILE).

Course Requirements & Degree Progress Tracking

Degree progress and course requirements are tracked through the University's Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). DARS, which you access through your MyUW account, is a computerized degree audit that helps you monitor your progress toward completing your degree. Student and Academic Services staff may run a DARS report but you are ultimately responsible for checking on your progress. Questions about the DARS report or your requirements can be directed to gradnutr@uw.edu.

Graduate Student Portfolio

The portfolio is an important milestone to demonstrate and document competency achievement, professional skill-building, and progress toward degree completion. The portfolio consists of reflections on where and how NSP and Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) competencies were achieved, a resume, and a self-assessment summarizing goals and achievements. The goal is for students to identify strengths as well as areas for development and continued training as they enter their second year of studies and begin work on their culminating project.

Portfolios are submitted at the end of Spring Quarter during the student's first academic year. They are reviewed by faculty who provide feedback to the student. Information about the portfolio is provided in a spring quarter orientation and [online](#).

Culminating Project

Master's students complete either a capstone or thesis.

The School of Public Health provides additional [guidelines](#) for the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) requirement of the MPH degree, which can be met by the capstone or thesis. An ILE demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies.

Capstone Project

Most students will complete a practice-based capstone project. Taken in the autumn of year 2, capstone is a client-focused, client-driven project where students will work directly with a community partner to complete a nutrition focused project. A session will be scheduled to provide more information about this option and help you navigate whether to proceed with this culminating project option or to switch to a thesis.

Master's Thesis

The purpose of a thesis is to provide experience with developing a research question, testing this question, obtaining

data, analyzing the data, and writing the results. Please see the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website for the current thesis manual.

MPH Degree Requirements

The MPH curriculum has required practicum and fieldwork experiences which will give you first-hand experience in a field setting. It is each student's responsibility to work with the NSP Practicum Faculty Advisor to find, arrange, and complete practicum and fieldwork projects that fulfill program requirements.

International MPH Students

While enrolled in the Practicum, Fieldwork, and the GCPD Practice Experience, students with an F-1 visa must be registered for [Curricular Practical Training](#) (CPT). Work with the University's International Student Services (ISS) office to apply for CPT. Students with a J-1 or J-2 VISA must also meet with their ISS advisor to apply for [Academic Training](#).

Preparing for Graduation

Student and Academic Services will provide steps to graduation on the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website.

MS Degree Requirements

All MS students complete a structured curriculum comprised of required courses and electives and required milestones including participation in a public presentation and a culminating project (capstone or thesis).

Due to separate curriculum requirements, course sequencing, and course access, it is not possible for MS students to switch to the MPH after enrollment.

Course Requirements & Degree Progress Tracking

Degree progress and course requirements are tracked through the University's Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). DARS, which you access through your MyUW account, is a computerized degree audit that helps you monitor your progress toward completing your degree. Student and Academic Services staff may run a DARS report to check on your progress but you are ultimately responsible for checking on your progress. Questions about the DARS report or your requirements can be directed to gradnutr@uw.edu.

Graduate Student Portfolio

The portfolio is an important milestone to demonstrate and document competency achievement, professional skill-building, and progress toward degree completion. The portfolio consists of reflections on where and how NSP and Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) competencies were achieved, a resume, and a self-assessment summarizing goals and achievements. The goal is for students to identify strengths as well as areas for development and continued training as they enter their second year of studies and begin work on their culminating project.

Portfolios are submitted at the end of Spring Quarter during the student's first academic year. They are reviewed by faculty who provide feedback to the student. Information about the portfolio is provided in a spring quarter orientation and [online](#).

Culminating Project

Master's students complete either a capstone or thesis.

Capstone Project

Most students will complete a practice-based capstone project. Taken in the autumn of year 2, capstone is a client-focused, client-driven project where students will work directly with a community partner to complete a nutrition focused project. A session will be scheduled to provide more information about this option and help you navigate whether to proceed with this culminating project option or to switch to a thesis.

Master's Thesis

The purpose of a thesis is to provide experience with developing a research question, testing this question, obtaining data, analyzing the data, and writing the results. Please see the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website for the current thesis manual.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE INFORMATION

This section is intended to highlight some useful information pertaining to the pursuit of your doctoral degree. Use this section in conjunction with advice from your chairperson and supervisory [committee](#), the Graduate School, and the NSP.

Graduate School

- [Doctoral Degree Policies](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)

Nutritional Science Program

- [Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)

Time Limit

All work for the doctoral degree must be completed within **ten years**, including any quarters of leave.

NSP Degree Requirements

All PhD students complete a curriculum comprised of required courses and electives. Additionally, you will complete several required milestones including annual participation in the Student Research Symposium and completion of the Nutritional Sciences Graduate Student Portfolio, a PhD teaching requirement, general exam, dissertation, and final exam.

Course Requirements & Degree Progress Tracking

The PhD curriculum offers flexibility in selecting courses to satisfy several content areas. It is expected that you will plan courses to satisfy the requirements in consultation with your adviser and dissertation chair.

Degree progress and course requirements are tracked through the University's Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). DARS, which you access through your MyUW account, is a computerized degree audit that helps you monitor your progress toward completing your degree. Student and Academic Services staff may run a DARS report but you are ultimately responsible for checking on your progress. Questions about the DARS report or your requirements can be directed to gradnutr@uw.edu.

Graduate Student Portfolio

The portfolio is an important milestone to demonstrate and document competency achievement, professional skill-building, and progress toward degree completion. The portfolio consists of reflections on where and how NSP and Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) competencies were achieved, a resume, and a self-assessment summarizing goals and achievements. The goal is for students to identify strengths as well as areas for development and continued training as they enter their second year of studies and begin work on their culminating project.

Portfolios are submitted at the end of Spring Quarter during the student's first academic year. They are reviewed by faculty who provide feedback to the student. Information about the portfolio is provided in a spring quarter orientation and [online](#).

PhD Teaching Requirement

PhD students are required to have teaching experience. This requirement may be fulfilled by a teaching assistantship under the direction of a faculty instructor, providing at least 1 guest lecture in an undergraduate or graduate course, teaching experiences at other institutions, or completion of the course GRDSCH 630: Teaching & Learning in Higher Education.

Doctoral Supervisory Committee

Your supervisory committee should be formed in your second or third year of study following approval of the Portfolio. This committee oversees your academic work throughout the program. The doctoral supervisory committee consists of a minimum of four members, at least three of whom (including the Chair and the Graduate School Representative [GSR]) must be members of the Graduate Faculty with an endorsement to chair doctoral committees. A majority of the members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

GSRs are selected by the student in consultation with the committee chair. All endorsed graduate faculty, with the exception of affiliates, are eligible to serve as a GSR. GSR assignments are unlimited with the exception that faculty are limited to no more than four concurrent appointments within a specific department. The GSR cannot hold any departmental affiliations in common with the student or with the doctoral committee chair. The GSR's roles are to represent the broad concerns of the University with respect to high standards of scholarly performance; to provide, for The Graduate School, a non-specialist's view of the quality of the student's work, ensuring that the student's mastery of the subject matter is broad and comprehensive; and to assure that all procedures are carried out fairly and according to the guidelines of The Graduate School. For more information on the roles of doctoral committee chairs, members, and GSRs, visit [Memo 13: Supervisory Committee for Graduate Students](#).

In order to allow time to identify a suitable GSR, it is suggested that the doctoral supervisory committee be established at least four months prior to the intended date of the General Examination.

Once approved, submit your committee membership to Student and Academic Services by e-mail to gradnutr@uw.edu and copy the GPC. Your committee will be registered with the Graduate School for approval. If you select someone from off-campus to serve on your committee, a Curriculum Vita (CV) must accompany a letter to the Graduate School requesting an ex-officio appointment. Your supervisory committee should convene at least once a year to review your progress, discuss current issues, and determine future plans and activities.

Research Requirements & General/Final Exams

The process for preparing your dissertation proposal, planning your general exam, and working toward the completion and submission of your dissertation are described in the Doctor of Philosophy: Degree Requirements & Dissertation Process Guide available on [Graduate Student Resources](#).

Preparing for Graduation

Student and Academic Services will provide steps to graduation on the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website.

GRADUATE COORDINATED PROGRAM IN DIETETICS

Students in the Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics (GCPD) work simultaneously toward completion of a graduate degree in Nutritional Sciences and the coursework and practice experiences necessary to become a Registered Dietitian (RD) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). The RD and RDN are interchangeable terms for a single credential. Graduates of the program engage in client centered health promotion, disease prevention, medical nutrition therapy, public health practice, and nutrition policy development. Please refer to the GCPD Handbook for more information, policies, and requirements.

Admissions

Applicants to the GCPD must also apply and be admitted to a Nutritional Sciences Program degree program; except for PhD students who can apply to the GCPD once enrolled in the degree program. Students currently enrolled in the NSP who wish to apply or reapply to the GCPD must meet with the program director and apply to the program by December 1 for the following year. Current students of the NSP are not given priority for admission to the GCPD. The GCPD admissions committee will solicit NSP faculty for recommendations on admissions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Academic Integrity

Students at the University of Washington (UW) are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct, professional honesty, and personal integrity. Review the [SPH Policy](#).

Email

Important notices and information will also be sent to you via e-mail, so it is important that you check your University of Washington email often.

Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)

The Graduate Student Advisory Council Includes representatives from each cohort and degree program to provide a formal way of sharing feedback and engaging with the Program. SAC meetings are scheduled 2-3 times per year.

Graduate Student Representatives

Two graduate students each year serve as our representatives on the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS). The GPSS represents UW graduate student concerns such as tuition, TA and RA salaries, and insurance coverage.

Health Sciences Express, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and South Lake Union Shuttle

Faculty, staff, and students are provided free shuttle buses between the UW and various hospitals, clinics, and research facilities. [Health Sciences Express](#), [UW/Fred Hutch/South Lake Union Shuttle](#)

Nutritional Sciences Student Room

The NSP has a student room located in 330 Raitt Hall. It is available during regular building hours. There are computers available for student use, as well as a printer, conference table, whiteboard, and a small collection of resources.

Photocopy Services

Copy facilities for student use are not available in the NSP Office or in Raitt Hall. There are copy centers located nearby in the Communications Building, Odegaard Library, and Suzzallo Library. There are also photocopy businesses on University Way.

Raitt Hall Access and Security

The doors to Raitt Hall are opened at 7:30 a.m. and are locked at 6:00 p.m. The building is locked on weekends and holidays. The UW buildings are public and many people pass through them daily. The UW is not responsible for personal property brought into the buildings. Report thefts and suspicious persons to the University Police at 911. For non-emergency issues or questions, the UW Police Department can be reached at 206-685-8973.

Seminars, Lectures, and Grand Rounds

The UW is a prestigious teaching and research university. You are encouraged to attend the many seminars, lectures, and grand rounds available. Notices are posted on the bulletin boards in the hallway just outside the Nutritional Sciences Program Office and in several locations in the Health Sciences Building.

Student Concern Policy

The School of Public Health (SPH) [Student Concern Policy](#) was revised in 2019 to better partner with students to resolve conflicts and address concerns that arise during the student's educational program. Students are invited to pursue resolution of concerns that arise because of their enrollment in SPH through informal or formal mechanisms. Faculty, staff, and administrators will act in good faith to listen, understand, and work in partnership with students to resolve issues that impact students individually, and to consider the totality of reported concerns to improve the school climate and educational outcomes for all students. Students are encouraged to attempt to address concerns as they arise informally, seek assistance for redress pathways, and when necessary, pursue a formal resolution process.

If desired, students can anonymously report issues that have caused concern to dcinfo@uw.edu . This email account is managed by School of Public Health Office of the Dean. Anonymous concerns will be brought to the attention of the most likely resolution body within the school and will be included in aggregate reports of concerns received.

Anonymous reporting of bias, discrimination, intimidation, and/or microaggressions can be submitted to <https://sph.washington.edu/about/diversity/bias-concerns>. Notifications received through this anonymous link will be viewed by the Assistant Dean for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and the Director for Student and Academic Services and addressed based on the concern, the desired outcomes, and in consultation with other school and departmental administrators, faculty, staff, and students as appropriate.

Teaching Assistantships

Many NSP graduate students serve as teaching assistants (TAs) for undergraduate NUTR classes. Applications for TA positions are distributed each quarter for employment the following quarter. These 20 hour per week appointments are compensated with a stipend, tuition, and health benefits. Expectations vary somewhat from class to class, but in general, TAs engage with students by leading discussion sections, grading student assignments and/or exams, and assisting the instructor(s) in course support. TAs receive training and orientation to their roles when their appointments begin. Instructors and TAs interact during the quarter to assess and assure that TAs are teaching content competently, and to provide guidance regarding content, presentation, and student involvement.

Graduate students who are not native speakers of English may be appointed as TAs with teaching duties if they fulfill the following three requirements as explained in [Graduate School Memo 15](#):

1. Meet the general English language proficiency (ELP) requirement
2. Meet the additional spoken English language proficiency requirement.
3. Participate in the International Teaching Assistant Program at the Center for Teaching and Learning.