

**Self-Study Report (SSR)  
Nutrition and Dietetics Internship Program (DI)  
ACEND® 2022 Accreditation Standards**

**Sam Houston State University MS/DI**

**Nutrition and Dietetics Internship Program**

**Comprehensive Self-Study Report**

for

**The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)**

August 15, 2022

**Substantive Program Change- ACEND Accreditation Standards – Cover Page**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Program name and type:** Sam Houston State University - DI  
**Sponsoring institution:** Sam Houston State University  
**City:** Huntsville **State:** Texas

**Provide a summary of the proposed changes, rationale and proposed date of implementation. Note that changes become effective at the time of approval by ACEND and may not be dated retroactively. Refer to the directions below for documentation to be provided to demonstrate continued compliance with the accreditation standards.**

The Department will undergo a name change effective 9/1/22. The Department name will change from the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences to the Department of Human Sciences. This will not affect the organizational structure, administrators, or program resources. Updated website and materials will be available for review at the site visit. Sam Houston State University is currently revising its Strategic Plan. This will influence the University's Mission, Vision, and Objectives. The new strategic plan is expected to be presented in Fall 2022. This will also influence future changes in the SHSU MS/DI Mission, Vision, and Objectives.

## Program Summary Information

**Directions:** The summary information on the following pages is used by the review team and the ACEND board for conducting your program's review. This information must be consistent with the detailed information in the self-study report, so be as accurate as possible. Please note that ACEND reserves the right to request additional information while conducting its review of the program.

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| <b>Program Name:</b>                            | Sam Houston State University MS/DI                                  |
| <b>Sponsoring Organization:</b>                 | Sam Houston State University  |
| <b>Sponsor's Accreditor or Recognition Body</b> | Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges |

### Executive Summary of the Program

Briefly (in one page or less) provide an overview of your program (including short history, options, degree granted, distance or onsite education, etc.) and any changes over the last seven years that have impacted the program. For programs applying for candidacy, describe where your program is in the curriculum approval process (including the institutional accreditation review processes).

The Dietetic Internship (DI) Program within the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) is under review for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). The following self-study report for the SHSU MS/DI program complies with the 2022 ACEND Standards. SHSU has been providing Texas with Registered Dietitians Nutritionists since 2001 through a 17- month combined Master of Science (MS) in Dietetics and Dietetic Internship (MS/DI). The concentration for the SHSU DI program is a community nutrition focus. A new Dietetic Internship Director, Dr. Tabbetha D. Lopez, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., assumed the program responsibilities in August 2020. Since December 2020, 17 Interns have completed the MS/DI program. The mission of the SHSU MS/DI Program is to prepare graduate students for evidence-based entry-level dietetics practice to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to enhance the health, wellness, and quality of life of individuals in the community, nation, and the world. The SHSU MS/DI Program has a total of 2 goals and 16 objectives that have been recently revised (Attachment 1).

The SHSU MS/DI's primary goal is that program graduates will be able to address individual and community nutritional needs as competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists. This is assessed through eight objectives, including program completion, RD exam completion, and employment. These objectives are assessed using REPS, Graduate surveys, and follow-up Employer surveys. Surveys are emailed out one year after graduation. The second goal of the program is that program graduates will demonstrate an evidence-based approach to their practice to enhance the health, wellness, and quality of life of individuals in the community, the nation, and the world. This goal is assessed through eight objectives, including evidence-based nutrition and self-assessment. These objectives are also assessed through the Exit survey and Graduate survey.

The following assessment instruments are used to assess Program strengths, areas of improvement, and outcomes: DI Exit survey, Graduate survey, Employer surveys, Rotation evaluations, and Professional Behavioral Evaluation (Attachments 2-6).

Overall Program strengths include: a high program completion rate within the allotted time frame, a high first-time pass rate for the RDN Exam, well trained MS prepared Interns who are mature and motivated, program/curriculum that provides a variety of experiences and flexibility in assignments, a diverse faculty, DI Director is available and supportive of Interns, and Preceptors are professional and demonstrate expertise in their area of practice. Areas in which the program has seen improvements since Dr. Lopez has assumed responsibilities include the addition of many new rotation sites, updated electronic paperwork, Preceptor Handbook (Attachment 43), new Intern orientation, graduation party for Interns, and increased RD Examination review/practice tests. In addition to updating the program to meet the 2022 ACEND Standards.

### History of the Program

SHSU is located in Huntsville, Texas, and was created by the Texas Legislature in 1879 as Sam Houston Normal Institute, dedicated to the education and training of teachers for public schools. In August of 2014, the Texas Board of Regents voted that all degrees and programs in FACS, including the Bachelor of Science in Food Science and Nutrition (FSN) (the single track for the undergraduate degree) and the Master of Science in Dietetics (offered at the Main Campus in Huntsville and on-site only), be moved to the recently formed College of Health Sciences. The approval was finalized in October of 2014. The previous DPD

Director was a part of the planning for the transition from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to the College of Health Sciences.

More recently, SHSU has expanded its reach by offering courses partially or fully online and at the SHSU Main Campus. While interns take some core courses through online delivery, SOCI 5314 Social Statistics, FACS 5367 Consumer Food and Technology, FACS 5375 Seminar of Recent Developments in Family and Consumer Science, FACS 5385 Sports Nutrition, and FACS 5396 Cultural Food Counseling. The remaining courses in the curriculum must be taken in a face-to-face setting; FACS 5079 Dietetic Internship Practicum (3 semesters), FACS 5330 Research Seminar, FACS 5395 Dietary Supplements, FACS 5383 Research Problems, FACS 5398 Public Health Nutrition.

#### History of Accreditation

In 2001, the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetic Education (CADE) granted developmental accreditation for a dietetic internship program combined with a master's program. The first cohort of graduate students for the combined MA/DI program was accepted for Fall 2001. The program was accredited (full accreditation) in 2015 for a term of seven years ending on December 31, 2022.

The MA in Home Economics name was changed to MA in Family and Consumer Sciences in 2001. Initial accreditation for the program was granted by CADE in 2004. In 2006, the MS in Dietetic degree was added, and the program became the combined MS in Dietetics and Dietetic Internship Program. Since 2006, the DI has adhered to the Standards of Accreditation, including the 2012 and 2017 accreditation standards and now the 2022 standards required for reaccreditation.

Significant quality improvements have been made since the initial accreditation of 2001 through additions to faculty lines, staff, resources, and funding support based on the President and her cabinet's strategic plans. Hiring new faculty has allowed the program to provide systematic offerings of courses consistent with the seventeen-month study plan. We have been able to minimize the need for having two levels of students in the same course because course offerings are more frequent. New campus relationships to support experiential learning activities have been established with the Recreational Center/Wellness and the Inter-Professional Education (IPE) working group.

Since the 2012 reaccreditation site visit, as mentioned above, the DI has moved to the College of Health Sciences (COHS), and a Nutrition Assessment and Counseling Center (NACC) was built within the Margaret Lea Houston Building. The NACC is a training opportunity for nutrition faculty, along with undergraduate and graduate students. An experiential learning space, it is a dry lab now equipped and designated for human assessment procedures, simulations, and classroom space. This resource supports the Nutrition Assessment and Clinical Nutrition courses. Funding has also been provided to update the food laboratory's small equipment and tools for the Food Selection and Food Science courses.

A second new facility is the Aramark/Mattie Bea Medford Teaching/Learning Kitchen which allows the faculty, students, and research partners to actively participate and learn through numerous food science projects which impact the medical nutrition therapy prescribed by physicians and dietitians for preventing disease and disease progression. Teaching the use of precision medical nutrition therapy through nutrigenomic science in a demonstration kitchen ensures best practices for training future nutrition professionals.

#### Summary of the Self-Study Process

Explain how the self-study process took place, briefly describing who was involved (administrators, faculty, preceptors, interns, graduates, employers, practitioners, other program directors, faculty/staff from other disciplines, etc.) and what they did.

The self-study process was initiated in the Fall of 2021 with the announcement of the new 2022 Standards.

Faculty involvement in implementing the Standards for 2022 began to plan for curriculum/rotation updates in the Fall of 2021. With ongoing adjustments until full implementation in Fall 2022. Food Science and Nutrition (FSN) Faculty, Program preceptors, and Chair of FACS regularly met with the Director of the DI to establish goals, grow the program, revise the curriculum and evaluate/monitor competency completion on a weekly, monthly, or annual basis. Templates provided by the ACEND education staff have been routinely updated and enhanced before the writing of this document. Recommendations for changes and adjustments have come directly from FSN faculty meetings, suggestions from preceptors, COHS, and FACS.

SHSU is currently revising its Strategic Plan. This will influence the University's Mission, Vision, and Objectives. The new strategic plan is expected to be presented in Fall 2022. The University Strategic Plan provides direction and support for the College, department, and Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives. DI Director, Dr. Tabbetha D. Lopez, Ph.D., RD, LD, along with the FACS Staff, Chair, faculty, and student workers have assisted in compiling the documents submitted along with the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Office of the Dean of COHS, Academic Planning and Assessment and historical archives from the research and instruction librarians. Nutrition Program faculty in the DPD and DI programs contributed to some of the content during our program area meetings. Preceptors and practitioners have contributed to some of the content in the self-study. Faculty serving on the Inter- and Interprofessional Education program (IPE) was consulted during revisions of course content. Students, graduates, and employers are asked about the improvements the SHSU DI program can make to its program routinely.

## Standard 1: Program Characteristics & Resources

All programs applying for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) must meet requirements including quality-assurance or oversight by other agencies, organizational structure, financial stability, sufficient resources, the awarding of degrees and/or verification statements, program length and program management.

**Directions:** Ensure that each Required Element is addressed below according to the Guidance Information, which may include specific narrative and appendices using ACEND-required templates.

### Required Element 1.1

The program must be offered by a college or university, health care facility, federal or state agency, or as a consortium with a college or university, health care facility, federal or state agency.

- a. A consortium is defined as two or more independent institutions working together under a formal written agreement to sponsor a single program. The consortium must consider itself a single education program.
- b. Colleges and universities must be located in the U.S. or its territories and accredited in good standing by a U.S. institutional accrediting body for higher education recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE).
- c. Hospitals must be accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), Det Norske Veritas (DNV), Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP) or other approved national accreditation organization or state agency.
- d. Facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities must be accredited by the Council on Quality and Leadership in Support for People with Disabilities or by TJC, DNV, HFAP or other approved national accreditation organization.
- e. Other health-care-related facilities must be licensed by an agency of the state in which it is located or accredited by TJC, DNV, HFAP or other approved national accreditation organization.
- f. Existing ACEND-accredited business entities or publicly- or privately-held corporations without oversight by one of the regulatory bodies listed above must meet all the requirements below:
  1. Be legally organized and authorized to conduct business by the appropriate state agency for a minimum of five years.
  2. Be in compliance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.
  3. Provide statements covering the past five years from a licensed public accountant that indicate a review of the company's financial statements shows no irregularities and a positive net worth.
  4. Have an entity external to the program that provides oversight for the program's operations.

### **Narrative:**

The program is housed at SHSU accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) through 2029 (Attachment 9). This is an 11-state region. The SACSCOC Reaffirmation Timeline was noted in the introductory remarks.

### Required Element 1.2

The program must be integrated within the administrative structure of the sponsoring organization, show this structure, such as in an organizational chart, and indicate where the program will be housed. In a consortium, an organizational chart must clearly show the relationship of each member of the consortium to the program and where the program will be housed.

### **Narrative:**

The COHS was formed in the fall of 2013, one of eight colleges within SHSU. FACS was relocated from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in October of 2014. The attached Organizational Charts for both the University, College, and FACS shows the location of the Graduate Nutrition Program (DI) in line with this department (Attachments 10-12).