

UC Davis Health Dietetic Internship

Class of 2027-2028 Program Information



Agenda

- **About Us**
- **Application process**
- **Rotations:**
 - **Management**
 - **Clinical Nutrition Core**
 - **Adult Critical Care**
 - **Pediatric Acute Care**
 - **Ambulatory**
 - **Community**
 - **Elective / Specialty Area**
- **Speakers**
 - **Barbara Lusk, MFCS, RD, LDN, FAND - DI Director / CNM**
 - **Olivia Moss, MS, RD, CCTD – DI Coordinator / Clinical Dietitian**

About Us

- ACEND Accredited DI Program
- Founded in 2002
- Graduated 23 classes to date
- 10-month, full-time 40+ hours per week
- 1200 supervised practice hours required
- DI class size: 6 interns
- Focus/Concentration:

Clinical Nutrition within an Academic Health System



Program Strengths



- **Nationally renowned, multispecialty academic medical center**
 - 660-bed acute care teaching hospital with > 34,000 admissions annually
 - Nearly 1 million outpatient visits annually
- **Complex medical and nutritional diagnoses**
 - Critical Care: 9 ICUs
 - Level 1 Trauma Center, Regional Burn Center, Transplant Center, Comprehensive Cancer Center
 - Pediatrics: Children's Hospital
 - > 30 primary and specialty outpatient clinics
- **Innovative learning environment**
 - Sacramento's Farm-to-Fork medical center
 - Expert preceptors > 70 RD/RDNs
 - Intern member of multi-disciplinary healthcare team
 - 2 weeks of Supervised Staff Relief (*hone your skills*)
 - Didactic Class Mondays (*integrated learning*)
- **Extensive "learning by doing"**
 - Minimum 1200 supervised practice hours.
 - "See one, Do one, Teach one" methodology.

What Makes Our Program Different?



Extensive 1:1
preceptor
guidance



Individualized
learning
experiences



Exposure to high-
acuity clinical
nutrition practice



Advanced clinical
acute care and
ambulatory
experience



Broad medical
nutrition therapy
experience



Diverse
communities



Practice readiness

What Makes Our Program Different?

Advanced Clinical Acute Care & Ambulatory Experience

- 9 Intensive Care Units
- Level I Adult Trauma Center
- Level I Pediatric Trauma Center
- Level IV NICU
- Regional Burn Center
- Transplant Services
- Specialty and community outpatient nutrition clinics across the lifespan



What Makes Our Program Different?

Number of Preceptors with Broad Medical Nutrition Therapy Experience

Interns gain experience in medical nutrition therapy:

- Critical Care
- Cancer
- Diabetes & Endocrine Disorders
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Gastrointestinal Disorders
- Neurological Disorders
- Renal Disease
- Transplant
- Eating Disorders
- Obesity & Malnutrition



What Makes Our Program Different?

Diverse Communities

- Work with culturally diverse patients and healthcare teams throughout Northern California.



What Makes Our Program Different?



Practice Readiness

- Supervised Staff Relief
- Interprofessional Collaboration
- Research-Driven Clinical Practice

General Schedule

Rotation	Weeks
Orientation	1
Food Service / Management	4
Clinical Nutrition Core: Adult Inpatient	12
Advanced Clinical: Adult Critical Care	4
Advanced Clinical: Pediatric Acute Care	2
Ambulatory	4
Community Nutrition	2
Staff Relief + Elective	8
Weekend/Holiday Rotation	~4-6 days
Clinical Nutrition Quality Improvement Project	~20 hours

Schedule includes a two-week break during Winter holidays and a 1-week Spring break as well as UC Holidays.

Application Pathway and Timeline

ACEND
Dietetics Applicant and
Program Traffic Rules

<https://health.ucdavis.edu/dietetic-internship/how-to-apply/>

5 Aug. 2026 – 1 Oct. 2026

Internal Applicants

Current UC Davis graduate
students enrolled
at the time of application.

- * DICAS portal opens August 5th
- * **Applications due by October 1st**
- * Offer Notification by November 1st and
- * Decision Day by November 10th

Open Application

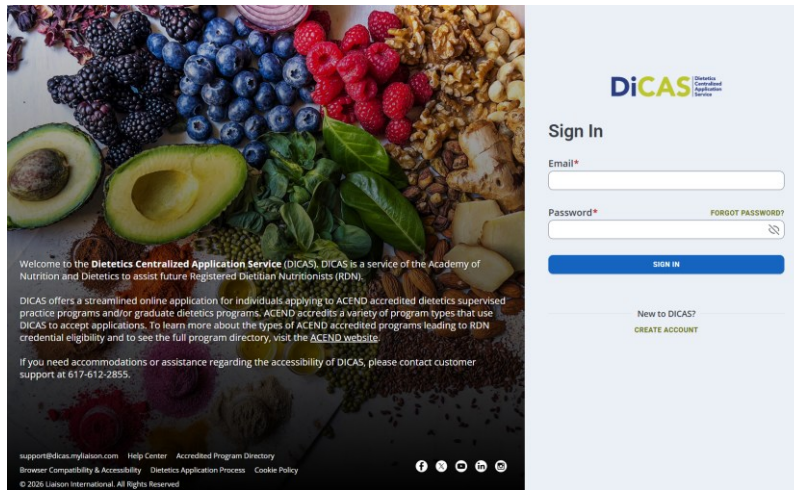
Open to All Applicants

(DiCAS reopened if any open slots)

12 Nov. 2026 – 12 Jan. 2027

- DICAS portal opens November 12th (UCDH DI)
- **Applications due by January 12th**
- Offer Notification by March 1st and
- Decision Day by March 10th

Application Information



<https://dicas.cas.myliaison.com/applicant/login>

- The following documents to be submitted in **DiCAS** prior to the submission deadline:

- ✓ Personal Statement
- ✓ UCDH DI Addendum Essay Questions (2)
- ✓ 3 Letters of Recommendation
- ✓ DPD Verification Statement/Declaration of Intent
- ✓ DPD Required Class List
- ✓ CV/Resume
- ✓ Original Transcripts are to be sent to DICAS

- UCDH DI Program Application Payment must be received prior to the deadline (separate from DICAS fee)
- Refer to our **application checklist** on the website to ensure all items are submitted prior to the deadlines

<https://health.ucdavis.edu/dietetic-internship/how-to-apply/>

Financial Information: Expenses

- **DiCAS Fees:** \$50 for the first application and \$25 for each additional application
- **UCDH DI Program:**
 - Application Fee: \$50 (non-refundable)
 - Administration Fees: \$5000
- Required to have reliable transportation to get to off-site rotations/events
- Medical center does not provide personal health insurance for medical, dental, or vision
- Student membership in Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) and the Northern Area District required
- Textbooks/references
- For information on additional expenses:
<https://health.ucdavis.edu/dietetic-internship/program-costs>

Note: Expenses and costs are estimates and are subject to change. Individual costs may vary.

Financial Information: Benefits



- **Benefits:**

- Professional liability insurance provided by the medical center
- Daily meal stipend to UCDH Food & Nutrition Services Cafés
- Nutrition Focused Physical Exam & Diagnosing Malnutrition Workshop Class included in DI program
(a \$500+ value)

Selection Criteria

- **Application Information – Selection Criteria** are considered and listed in order of importance:
 - 1) Academics
 - 2) Essay Questions
 - 3) Letters of Recommendation
 - 4) Work and Volunteer Experience
 - 5) Extracurricular Activities
 - 6) Interviews – scheduled with top candidates



1. Academics

- Minimum DPD GPA **3.0** on 4.0 scale
- Demonstrate good performance in upper division nutrition and science courses:
 - Advanced nutrition, medical nutrition therapy, nutrition and the lifecycle
 - Biochemistry, anatomy and physiology
- Completion of Master's Degree prior to program start date
- Recency: Completion of DPD academic coursework or graduate degree in nutrition within 3 years of start date

2. Essay Questions

- **DiCAS Personal Statement**
 - Address all components of the questions
 - Include specific examples
 - 1000 words or less
- **UCDH Addendum Questions**
 - Upload to DICAS
 - 2 questions, 300 words or less
- **Highlight your skills and suitability for the program**
 - Handling situation with minimal direction
 - Working with diverse groups
 - Opportunity to market yourself!

Showcase your written communication skills!

3. Letters of Recommendation

Three letters of recommendation (via DiCAS)

Requirement
One letter from academic reference: professor or academic advisor
One letter from work or volunteer supervisor
Third letter can be either supervisor OR academic reference

4. Work and Volunteer Experience

- Nutrition or foodservice-related experience is a plus
 - Exposure to a hospital setting is beneficial
- For non-nutrition related experiences, think about transferable skills
- Paid or unpaid internships, or practicum class-based experiences
- Involvement in student nutrition associations/clubs
- Responsibility, time management, problem solving, ability to work with others, leadership

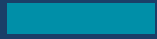
5. Extracurricular Activities

Demonstrate your individual strengths

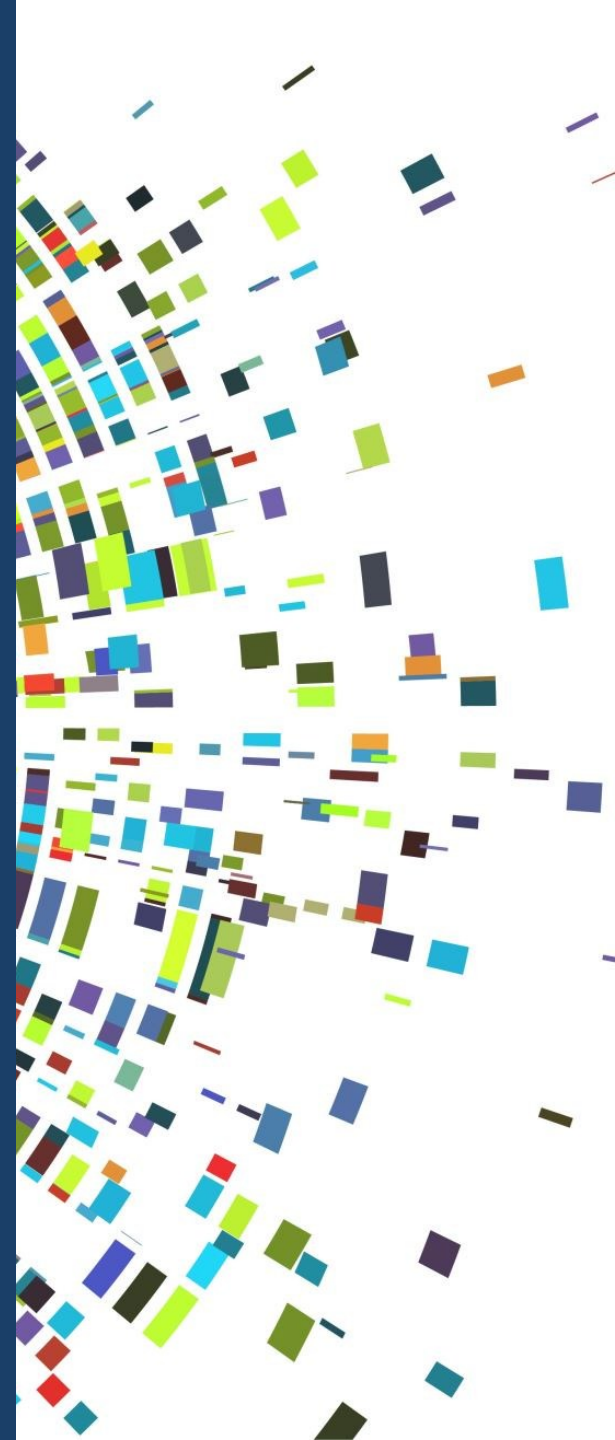
- Leadership
- Teamwork, collaboration with others
- Time management skills
- Problem solving skills

6. Interviews

- Video-based interview with top candidates
 - WebEx or Zoom
 - 25 minutes
- Scheduled in October (Fall acceptance) and February (Spring acceptance)
- Opportunity to demonstrate:
 - Professional, effective verbal communication
 - Ability to verbalize critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Opportunity to ask us questions to help inform your decision



Rotations and Learning Experiences



Management

- 4 weeks
- Self-operated Food and Nutrition Services Dept
- Serves > 3 million meals to patients, staff, and visitors annually
- Whole food and plant-based ingredients
- Locally sourced menu options
- National sustainability awards
- Management in:
 - Institutional food service
 - Retail food service
 - Clinical nutrition



Learning Activities
Daily Operations
Human Resources
Quality Assurance
Continuous Quality Improvement
Employee training
Patient Meal Project Developing new patient meals Recipe testing and acceptability survey Analysis of costs and resources Staff education Marketing communications





Clinical Nutrition Core

12 weeks

- Inpatient: Adults to Geriatrics
- Apply the Nutrition Care Process
 - Nutrition Focused Physical Exam
 - Malnutrition Diagnosing
- Document in Electronic Medical Record (EMR)
- Multidisciplinary care
- Additional opportunities
 - Observe feeding tube placement
 - Observe swallow evaluation
 - Observe surgery

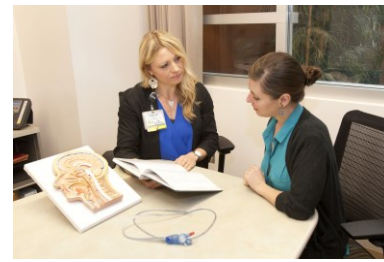
Advanced Clinical Nutrition



Adult Critical Care	Pediatric Acute Care - Basics
4 weeks	2 weeks
Intensive Care Units: • Cardiothoracic • Neurosurgery • Medical • Surgical • Trauma • Burn	• Infants to teenagers
	• Advanced Pediatrics elective option • Neonatal ICU (NICU) elective option
Multiple, complex medical conditions	Patient and family education
Complex enteral and parenteral regimens	Multidisciplinary team rounding

Clinics
Bariatrics
Cancer Center
Cystic Fibrosis
Family Medicine
Health Management and Education
Gastroenterology
Internal Medicine
Nephrology
Obstetrics
Primary Care Networks
Transplant Program

Ambulatory Nutrition



- 4 weeks planned, up to 10 if chosen as elective
- Adults and pediatrics
- Nutrition counseling and education
- Tailoring nutrition therapy for:
 - Learning needs
 - Health literacy
 - Readiness to change
 - Diverse regional community

Community Nutrition

- 2-5 weeks
 - 2 weeks at WIC (Women, Infant, Children)
 - 3-week elective option at DaVita Dialysis
- Nutrition education – individual and group
- Develop education materials and lesson plans



Other Learning Activities

- **Staff Relief:** Minimum of 2 Weeks
 - Gain efficiency and demonstrate independence
 - Reinforce entry-level practice
- **Electives:** 6 weeks
- **Didactic Classes**
 - 10% of internship program hours
- **Clinical case study**
 - Written and oral presentation on a patient focusing on the nutrition related care and literature related to their care (Capstone Project)
- **Journal club**
 - Intern critical evaluation of nutrition-related research and how applies to clinical practice with facilitated discussion led by the intern
- **Clinical Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Project**



2027-2028 Internship Class

- Class Size: 6 interns
- Program Start and Length: **September 20, 2027 to June 30, 2028** (10-month)
- Arrival to Sacramento 3 weeks before start date: **August 30, 2027**

Schedule Expectations:

- Full-time, 40+ hours per week*
- Daily schedule varies by preceptor/rotation*
- Additional time required outside of workday*
- Interns cover ~4-6 weekend shifts

Wellness Time / Time Away:

- 2-week Winter Break and 1-week Spring Break
- +UCDH observed holidays**

**For these reasons it is strongly encouraged that you avoid outside employment while participating in internship*

Important Dates to Remember

<https://health.ucdavis.edu/dietetic-internship/how-to-apply/>

5 Aug. 2026 – 1 Oct. 2026

Internal Applicants

Current UC Davis graduate students enrolled
at the time of application.

- * DICAS portal opens August 5th
- * **Applications due by October 1st**
- * Offer Notification by November 1st and
- * Decision Day by November 10th

Open Application

Open to All Applicants

(DiCAS reopened if any open slots)

12 Nov. 2026 – 12 Jan. 2027

- DICAS portal opens November 12th (UCDH DI)
- **Applications due by January 12th**
- Offer Notification by March 1st and
- Decision Day by March 10th

Q&A



Contact Us

- **Barbara Lusk, MFCS, RD, LDN, FAND**
Dietetic Internship Director
blusk@health.ucdavis.edu
- **Olivia Moss, MS, RD, CCTD**
Dietetic Internship Coordinator
oamoss@health.ucdavis.edu

