

## **Prior Assessed Learning Policy**

### **East Carolina University**

The East Carolina University's (ECU) MS-DI and DI Only Option's Prior Assessed Learning policy is designed to grant varying degrees of internship credit in specific rotations of the internship through paid work with significant documentation. This allows for students to complete the MS-DI or DI Only program without having to complete components of the supervised experiential learning rotations. The experiential learning rotations are as follows:

- NUTR 6031 Practicum in Clinical Dietetics
- NUTR 6032 Practicum in Community Dietetics
- NUTR 6033 Practicum in Food Service Systems and Management
- NUTR 6102 Current Issues in Clinical Dietetics

Experiences considered for PAL must meet competencies required by ACEND that are equivalent to an entry-level dietitian. Internship credit is given for learned and/or gained knowledge through the work experience of a professional career. The credit is not for work experience but is awarded when an applicant demonstrates an increase in knowledge and competence in defined areas.

The tuition and fees for the Internship will remain the same, regardless of the amount of PAL granted. Students receiving credit for NUTR 6031, 6032, 6033, 6102 through PAL must still pay tuition related to those courses and complete required course assignments.

#### **Rules:**

- Experiences submitted for PAL will have taken place after completion of all DPD courses and within 18 months of starting the MS-DI or DI. The date listed on a DPD verification statement indicates the time at which the DPD was completed. Any work completed prior to this date will not be accepted for PAL. A student can accrue experiential learning during the first year of online asynchronous MS coursework.
- Experiences must document activities that demonstrate one or more of the ACEND CRDN competencies based off the 2022 Standards. All documentation will be uploaded to ECU Canvas and e-mailed to the DI Program Director after acceptance into the program. The ECU DI Director will provide students who wish to apply for PAL specific documents guiding the organization of competencies.
- PAL hours awarded will in no instance exceed the number of hours assigned to interns for a rotation. For example, the Food Service rotation is 240 hours, thus more than 240 hours will not be granted. Total PAL credit cannot exceed 1000 hours. Credit will only be granted for full rotations (i.e. no credit for 120 hours out of 240 for a community rotation).
- Credit granted is based on learning and knowledge gained, not number of hours in an experience alone.
- Students granted >960 hours PAL are waived from mandatory orientation, however, will need to meet 1:1 with DI Director prior to the start of the fall semester to discuss expectations for courses with ECU.

#### **Application Process:**

- PAL applications are evaluated only after admission into the program. Program applicants are welcome to discuss potential PAL activities with the Program Director, but applications are not accepted or evaluated prior to matching to the program. Decisions regarding the awarding of PAL credit are at the sole discretion of the Internship Director. Submission of a request for PAL credit does not guarantee that such credit will be awarded.
- Application for PAL credit should be submitted to the Internship Director by May 1<sup>st</sup> the year you will start supervised practice rotations. This allows applications to be evaluated in a timely manner, and applicants informed of credit awarded (if any) prior to the start of the internship term. There is no "advance PAL" for work that has yet to be completed.
- Following review of the PAL application by the Internship Director, the intern is informed as to which competencies have been assessed as "met" and the hours of internship time to which this is being applied. Hours are then deducted from the applicable rotation(s), and the intern schedule adjusted accordingly.

#### **Procedure for Submission:**

- To apply for PAL credit, a student must track completed competencies and hours on the respective forms for each rotation (NUTR 6031, 6032 and 6033, 6102). A supervisor or manager must attest to the hours and activities on the forms provided.

- Each CRDN met requires a narrative describing how the activity met the competency. These should demonstrate active learning and understanding, not a basic descriptive writeup. Also upload supporting materials where applicable. Appropriate materials may include summaries of projects, reports, presentations, and educational materials produced by the applicant, job descriptions, performance evaluations, meeting minutes where you had active involvement. Remove all patient identifiers before uploading.
- All documents will be uploaded to ECU Canvas and e-mailed to the Program Director and organized by rotation. A student can upload multiple documents to each Canvas assignment, but it needs to be clearly labeled with which competency you are describing (ex: a presentation file that may meet a specific competency that would not be able to be included in a word document). All time sheets need to be in their respective folders.
- Additional documentation / clarification of activities must be provided to the DI Director upon request. Failure to do so in a timely manner may preclude obtaining PAL credit.

**Examples of work or volunteer experiences that may be granted PAL:**

NUTR 6031 Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (480 hours)

- Experience as Dietetic Technician in acute care or Skilled Nursing/Rehab Facility – assessments, enteral feedings, educations, interdisciplinary team involvement

NUTR 6032 Practicum in Community Dietetics (240 hours)

- Nutritionist in Women Infants and Children/health departments
- Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP) or weight management programs
- Community outreach such as food pantries, farm to table, cooking demonstrations
- Experience in private practice

NUTR 6033 Practicum in Food Service Systems, Management (240 hours)

- School Nutrition Supervisor, or school food service, after school or summer programs
- Management in a food service operation
- Restaurant owner
- Culinary trained, chef experience
- Camps that involve cooking and making meals for attendees

Examples of experiences that would not count towards PAL: (not limited to)

- Personal trainer
- Nutrition coaching
- Restaurant experience (waiting tables/hosting)
- Self-employed experiences

Please contact the Program Director, Roxanne Wilder, for more information: [wilderro21@ecu.edu](mailto:wilderro21@ecu.edu)

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