

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER
COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

MEDICAL NUTRITION EDUCATION

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) Master of Medical Nutrition (MMN) degree program is administered through the College of Allied Health Professions Medical Nutrition Education Division and is dedicated to the education of students who strive to become competent and caring nutrition therapists. The UNMC MMN program provides more than 1500 hours of supervised experiential learning combined with professional and graduate coursework to address specific competencies as required by the Accreditation Council for Education in Dietetics and Nutrition (ACEND). Essential functions, as distinguished from academic standards, refer to cognitive, physical, and behavioral abilities necessary for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and for the development of professional attributes required for successful completion of the program.

Students admitted to the program will be able to demonstrate essential knowledge-based functions that include:

- *demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make ethical evidence-based practice decisions*
- *demonstrate effective and professional oral and written communication and documentation*
- *demonstrate counseling techniques to facilitate behavior change*
- *use the nutrition care process to make decisions, to identify nutrition-related problems and determine and evaluate nutrition interventions*
- *develop interventions to affect change and enhance wellness in diverse individuals and groups*
- *develop an educational session or program/educational strategy for a target population*

Students must be able to communicate effectively, sensitively, and efficiently in English with patients and members of the healthcare team. They must be able to elicit information from patients, perceive nonverbal communications, and describe changes in mood, activity and posture. Communication includes not only speech, but listening, writing, reading, interpreting tables, figures, graphs and computer literacy. Appropriate communication may also rely on the student's ability to make a correct judgment in seeking assistance and consultation in a timely manner.

Students must demonstrate the intellect necessary to analyze and resolve problems. Intellectual abilities include numerical recognition, measurement, calculations, reasoning, analysis, judgment and synthesis of complex medical information. The student must be able to identify significant findings from the patient's history, the physical examination and laboratory data and identify nutrition-related problems, their causes, and significance. This is an ongoing, nonlinear, dynamic process that involves initial data collection, continual reassessment and analysis of the patient's status compared to specified criteria. The student must work with the interdisciplinary team to select and implement appropriate nutrition interventions, monitor progress and measure outcomes.

Approximately 75% of each day is spent standing or walking and 25% is spent sitting in an indoor setting; lifting up to 25 pounds of equipment/supplies may be required. Frequent interaction via computer, interpretation of visual presentation on screen, and repetitive hand movements are required.

Students must possess attributes that include integrity, responsibility and tolerance. Each student must show respect for self and others, work independently and in teams, and project an image of professionalism.

Students must possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, to exercise good judgment and efficiently complete all responsibilities. The development of mature, sensitive, effective and professional relationships with patients and members of the health care team is essential. They must be able to tolerate taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the healthcare environment. Compassion, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are desired in a health professional and assessed during the admissions and education process.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center shall provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities otherwise qualified to complete the essential functions of the curriculum. However, such essential functions must be completed by the student in a reasonably independent manner. The safety and welfare of a patient shall never be put in jeopardy as a result of an effort to reasonably accommodate a student.

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with UNMC Accessibility Services Center (UNMC ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact UNMC ASC (Location: Student Life Center, Suite 2031; Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unmcasc@unmc.edu).