

HEALTH PROFESSIONS OFFICE

DIETICIAN

Registered dietitians (RDs) are food and nutrition experts who have met the following criteria to earn the RD credential:

- Completed a minimum of a bachelor's degree at a U.S. regionally accredited university or college and course work approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) of the American Dietetic Association (ADA).
- Completed a CADE-accredited supervised practice program at a healthcare facility, community agency, or a foodservice corporation, or combined with undergraduate or graduate studies. Typically, a practice program will run six to twelve months in length.
- Passed a national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR).
- Completed continuing professional educational requirements to maintain registration.

Some RDs hold additional certifications in specialized areas of practice, such as pediatric or renal nutrition, nutrition support, and diabetes education. These certifications are awarded through CDR and/or other medical and nutrition organizations. In addition to RD credentialing, many states have regulatory laws for dietitians and nutrition practitioners. Frequently these requirements are met through the same education and training required to become an RD, but not in all cases.

Employment Opportunities

- Hospitals, HMOs, or other health care facilities
- Sports nutrition and corporate wellness programs
- Food and nutrition-related businesses and industries
- Private practice
- Community and public health settings
- Universities and medical centers
- Research areas

Education

Here at UCSB, you will graduate with a degree that is not in dietetics. Therefore, you should have your college transcript evaluated by a director of a dietetics program accredited by the CADE (you should have the program director of every school you are thinking of attending evaluate your transcripts). The program director will evaluate your previous academic preparation and identify the courses that you would need to complete at that school to meet the academic requirements for dietetic registration. The number of courses you would need and the college's degree requirements will determine whether you need to complete another degree or not. Once the required coursework is completed (at the school where the dietetic program is), you are eligible to apply to a CADE-accredited supervised practice program. After completing the practice program, you can sit for the credentialing exam.

There are two possible routes to becoming an RD: Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) grants either a bachelor's degree or a master's degree and is only approved for the required dietetics coursework. After the DPD requirements have been met you must apply to a CADE-accredited Dietetic Internship to complete the supervised practical experience requirement. Then you are eligible to write the CDR registration examination for dietitians. Coordinated Programs (CPs) combine the coursework and the supervised practical experience required before sitting for the CDR exam.

California Schools: UC Berkeley, Cal State Chico, Cal State Fresno, Cal State Long Beach, Cal State Northridge, Cal Poly Pomona, San Jose State, Loma Linda University

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