



The University of Vermont

Dear Prospective Preceptor:

The [University of Vermont Master of Science in Dietetics \(UVM MSD\) Program](#) is a 2-year distance graduate coordinated program in dietetics, accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), in which students complete a 30-credit hour graduate degree and a 1000+ hour supervised practice experience (SPE). The program concentration is Community Health and Nutrition, with a focus on professional practice through a lens of sustainable food systems. After successful completion of the program, students are eligible to sit for the registration examination for dietitians. This letter is designed to help you understand your role as a preceptor, should you agree to supervise a UVM MSD student.

About the UVM MSD Program Distance Option

Currently the program accepts up to 10 students annually with the option to complete their SPE anywhere within the United States. Students wishing to complete their SPE outside of Vermont must coordinate their own SPE schedule prior to applying to the UVM MSD program in February of each year. This includes receiving commitment letters from qualified preceptors for each required rotation experience. The SPE begins in mid to late January of the students' second semester and concludes in mid-December of the students' third semester. Students are expected to be in rotations for an average of 32 hours/week, generally Tuesday - Friday, since Mondays are reserved as a coursework day. Students may complete hours on weekend days, as needed.

Because the UVM MSD program is a distance program and not all students will be located in Vermont or near the UVM campus, students will complete all coursework and access all required materials via the online educational platform Blackboard. As such, students are required to have internet access at all times throughout their SPE.

To ensure that they meet the required entry-level competencies established by ACEND, all students will have a list of assignments and experiences they are expected to complete during each SPE rotation. A list of all required assignments and experiences to be completed throughout the SPE on the UVM MSD program website. Additional guidance will be provided for the assignments and experiences in documents available to both students and preceptors. Preceptors will be responsible for evaluating student performance on required assignments and experiences as well as their professionalism.

In addition to the required assignments, students must complete a series of pre-rotation readings and assignments prior to the start of each new SPE. Preceptors may ask students to complete additional readings and assignments, so long as those required by the program are also completed.

Preceptor Roles & Responsibilities

As the preceptor, you will be asked to:

- complete the preceptor training materials available;
- oversee the supervised practice experience opportunity for the student, which includes being present all or most of the time when the student is in rotation;
- allow the student to shadow and observe you; then—
- supervise the student as they perform as many of your duties as possible;
- co-sign the student's notes and recommendations, where applicable;
- provide the student with ongoing feedback and opportunities to ask questions;
- complete a rotation evaluation form related to the student's work performance and professional behavior at the conclusion of the rotation and discuss with the student.

Preceptor Training & Support

As a preceptor you will have access to relevant information related to all of the SPE assignments, experiences, and evaluation expectations. You will also be able to access a series of preceptor training modules to help prepare you for precepting. Additionally, you will be invited to attend an online, interactive preceptor orientation with the UVM MSD Program Director, during which the SPE experience will be explained in more detail. In addition, you will be invited to the fall preceptor meeting during the year(s) you are precepting UVM MSD students to remain abreast of program updates. And, the Program Director is always available to provide support to you in your preceptor role.

Legal & Liability Information

Also know that:

- Students must maintain professional liability insurance.
- Students are required to carry their own health insurance.
- Students must provide a completed health/medical examination form, which includes immunization records, proof of TB testing, and an annual flu immunization.
- Students are required to be certified in HIPAA and ServeSafe and proof of training is maintained in the student's permanent record.
- The UVM MSD program hires an accredited agency to conduct criminal and abuse background checks for incoming students. The results of the checks will be maintained in the student's placement file. If any questionable behavior is discovered, appropriate preceptors will be informed and necessary steps taken.

Written affiliation agreements are required between the students' SPE sites and the UVM MSD Program. Affiliation agreements, written by UVM legal counsel, will be signed by the UVM administration and the SPE site after you have agreed to supervise a student in their SPE rotation. In the event that a facility

prefers to use their own version of an agreement, the UVM legal counsel and SPE facility will work together to find mutually acceptable language.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions or concerns. Thank you for considering hosting a UVM MSD student. Your commitment to the education of future dietetics professionals is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Amy Nickerson, MS, RDN

Senior Lecturer & UVM MSD Program Director