



Memorandum

#12-005

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Linda Brumble, Unit Manager
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

DATE: January 20, 2012

SUBJECT: Dietetic Internship 2013 Important Information

The application period for the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship is now open. We are now using the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application system (DICAS). All applications must be completed online by June 15, 2012. The application can be accessed at <https://portal.dicas.org> (e-mail DICASinfo@DICAS.org). The fee is \$40.

Please note that if you are going to apply for the 2013 class, you must log in to the DICAS system and **start the application prior to April 1, 2012.** You can finish your application until it is due on June 15, but you must open the application prior to April 1.

DICAS requires a personal statement, online application, official transcripts and 3 letters of recommendation. In addition we require you to upload a resume and a Texas WIC DI Supplement (attached) to DICAS.

The DICAS application includes the following:

1. **Reference letters:** When completing the online application form, applicants must include the name and contact information (specifically an email address) for each reference. This will trigger an email message requesting the completion of a reference form. The form will be completed online by the person writing the reference letter(video for reference letter writers is available at <http://www.eatright.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=186>).
2. **Personal Statement:** Include content about personal and professional goals, interests, experience, continuing education, strengths, weaknesses, and reasons for pursuing the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship, and any other information helpful to the selection process.
3. **Transcripts:** Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be sent to:

DICAS – Transcript Dept, P.O. Box 9118, Watertown, Ma 02472.

4. **Verification Statement:** Complete the requested information on the application and your DPD Program Director will be emailed by DICAS for your verification statement. Students currently enrolled in classes must submit a “Declaration of Intent” listing courses in progress. Successful applicants must supply signed verification statements and final transcripts to the Texas WIC DI prior to the start of the internship.
5. ***Resume:** A current summary of your academic, employment and professional activities. Please include your email address. You will upload to the DICAS application.
6. ***Texas WIC DI Supplement:** These forms can found attached to this WIC memo or email mary.vaneck@dshs.state.tx.us for a copy.

Applicant must upload to DICAS application

Be sure to read the 2013 Texas WIC Dietetic Handbook for Prospective Interns and Texas WIC Questions and Answers. That and other information is found available at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/interns/intern-FAQ.shtm>

Watch a helpful video about DICAS at <http://www.eatright.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=186>

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Mary Van Eck, Texas WIC Dietetic Internship Director, Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit, Nutrition Services Section, at (512) 341-4510 or at mary.vaneck@dshs.state.tx.us.

Attachments

2013 Texas WIC Dietetic Internship Supervisor's Information Form

Applicant Name _____

WIC Local Agency or DSHS Region/Section _____

1. How many WIC Registered Dietitians (RDs) or Licensed Dietitians (LDs) does your agency employ? _____
2. How many WIC nutritionists (non-RDs) does your agency employ? _____
3. Is there a WIC RD in your agency that would be willing to serve as a preceptor for the community supervised practice rotation?
____ yes ____ no

If yes, list name _____

4. If the above named applicant is selected for an internship, what new and/or expanded job duties will this person have upon successful completion of the internship and writing the RD exam successfully? **Please attach current job description and planned job description or list of new responsibilities.**
5. Will the applicant receive a salary increase upon successful completion of the internship and writing the RD exam successfully? (This will not affect applicant's selection.) ____yes ____no

I, _____, certify that the above named applicant has maintained satisfactory work performance or better while employed at WIC local agency or Department State Health Services (DSHS).

Signature of Applicant's Supervisor (If not the same as WIC Local Agency Director

Date

Signature of WIC Local Agency Director or DSHS Unit Manager

Date

**Agency Agreement for Nutritionist
to Participate in DSHS Dietetic Internship**

_____, and its umbrella agency,
Name of WIC Local Agency or DSHS Region/Section

_____, hereby grant permission for
Name of Umbrella Agency

_____ to participate in the Texas WIC Dietetic
Name of Applicant
Internship for the period of January 2012 through August 2012.

_____, if selected to be a Texas WIC dietetic intern, will:
Name of Applicant

_____ continue to be paid his/her regular salary during hours spent in internship
_____ take leave without pay during hours spent in internship

If the above named applicant is selected to be a Texas WIC dietetic intern,

Name of Umbrella Agency
agrees to have the employee /intern sign a *Letter of Agreement* with the Agency regarding employee obligation to work for the agency for a minimum of 24 months full-time or the equivalent part-time after the completion of the dietetic internship. The *Letter of Agreement* will stipulate a financial payback should the employee resign prior to completion of the obligation.

Signature of WIC Local Agency Director or DSHS Unit Manager

Date

**Signature of Umbrella Agency CEO,
DSHS Regional Director, or DSHS Section Director**

Date

**Agreement for Access to Transportation,
Computer Laptop, Portable Printer, Internet, and E-mail Address**

I, _____ accepted into the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship, will provide
(Name of Applicant)

my own transportation to the various locations and facilities to complete the required supervised learning experiences. I agree to have/obtain a laptop computer, and internet access including an e-mail address accessible throughout the entire internship.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Language Skills

1. What languages do you speak and write in fluently?

_____ English _____ Spanish _____ Other, list: _____

Acknowledgement of Work Obligation And Pay Back for Non-Completion

I, _____, acknowledge that if I am accepted into the
(Name of Applicant)

Texas WIC Dietetic Internship, that I will sign a *Letter of Agreement* with my umbrella agency regarding my obligation to work for this agency for a minimum of 24 months full-time or the equivalent part-time after completing the dietetic internship. The *Letter of Agreement* will stipulate a financial payback to this agency if I resign employment before completion of the obligation.

I agree that if I leave the internship after the successful completion of the initial probation period (the first 160 hours of supervised experiences), I will be required to make monetary restitution to my agency. If I am dismissed from the internship after the initial probation period I may be asked to make monetary restitution to my agency.

Signature of Applicant

Date



Texas WIC Dietetic Internship Prospective Student Brochure 2013

The Texas WIC Dietetic Internship (TX WIC DI) is designed to assist qualified nutritionists employed within the Texas WIC program, either by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or WIC local agencies, to become registered dietitians. The application deadline is June 15, 2012. You must use the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS) to submit an application for the 2013 class.

Accreditation Status

The Texas WIC Dietetic Internship is currently granted Initial Accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606-6995, (312) 899-0040 ext. 5400.

Upon satisfactory completion of the program, interns will be eligible to become active members of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and take the Registration Examination for Dietitians.

Vision

Graduates of the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship will positively impact the nutritional status of Texans.

Mission

The mission of the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship is to prepare culturally competent entry-level dietitians to enhance the quality of nutrition services delivered to WIC clients and their communities.

Goals and Measurable Outcomes

Achievement of these goals is assessed through the use of established outcomes and appropriate measures. The goals of the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship are to:

GOAL 1: Prepare graduates who have attained the core professional competencies and nutrition education concentration competencies as defined by the Accreditation Standards of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Accreditation Council to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians.

Measure 1: Eighty percent of interns successfully complete the internship within 150% (13 months) of the time planned for completion.

Measure 2: Eighty percent of internship graduates who take the Registration Examination for Dietitians for the first time pass it.

Measure 3: One hundred percent of graduates will have attained the core competencies, student learning outcomes and nutrition education competencies as evaluated by preceptors and administrators.

GOAL 2: Prepare graduates who are confident in their abilities to provide nutrition and health services to high risk WIC participants.

Measure 1: Eighty percent of responding graduates report an increased confidence in their abilities to provide nutrition and health services to high risk WIC participants.

Measure 2: Eighty percent of responding graduates rate the effectiveness of the internship in preparing them to perform responsibilities of a dietitian as average three (3) or better on a five (5) point scale with 5 being excellent.

Measure 3: Eighty percent of responding WIC Agency employers rate the effectiveness of the internship in preparing employee for an entry-level dietitian position as average three (3) or better on a five (5) point scale with 5 being excellent.

GOAL 3: Prepare graduates who are culturally competent to provide leadership and nutrition expertise to their local communities and WIC agencies.

Measure 1: Internship classes are diverse in respect to ethnicity, culture and gender and contain at least 25 percent minorities and/or males.

Measure 2: Internship classes contain at least 25% bilingual interns.

Measure 3: One hundred percent of graduates will have attained the student learning outcomes for cultural competency as evaluated by preceptors and administrators.

Program Completion Requirements

Graduates of the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship will meet practitioner competencies stated in the Accreditation Standards specified by the Accreditation Council for Education in Dietetics Education (ACEND). Upon completion of the TX WIC DI, interns will receive a verification statement showing they have fulfilled the internship requirements and are eligible to apply to write the Registration Examination for Dietitians.

In order to receive a verification statement, interns must successfully complete all required competencies by due dates set by Dietetic Internship Director or preceptors and follow the policies and procedures of the internship and facilities. To be verified, interns must demonstrate that they are competent to practice dietetics.

Program Description

The internship provides the opportunity for nutritionists employed within the Texas WIC program to become registered dietitians. The internship is based upon the Accreditation Standards of the ACEND of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and provides the practitioner competencies essential to perform the specialized functions of a Registered Dietitian. The program concentration is nutrition education. This builds on the core professional competencies required to prepare dietetic practitioners for the breadth of dietetic practice including health promotion and disease prevention, nutrition therapy, and food service management. Program graduates should be able to work effectively to plan and participate in nutrition education programs in WIC and other community settings.

The dietetic internship is a eight month program that begins in January and ends in August. It provides supervised practice experiences reflecting the breadth of dietetics practice. Interns will complete their internship rotations and requirements while remaining employed by DSHS or their respective local WIC agency. Interns will participate full time (40 hours per week) in the internship.

Upon successful completion of the internship, the intern will be eligible to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians given by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. Passing the registration examination is the third and final requirement to become a registered dietitian. In addition, interns must agree to work full time for at least 24 months, or the equivalent part time, within DSHS or their respective Texas WIC local agency after passing the registration exam.

The Texas WIC Dietetic Internship is able to sponsor a maximum of twelve students per year. In the selection of interns, consideration is given to applicant's length of service in WIC programs and the need for registered dietitians in specific geographical areas of the state, in addition to standard application requirements.

Between September 2012 and January 2013, interns will be required to complete a number of assignments to prepare them for the formal internship rotations. Satisfactory and timely completion of all these assignments is required during this preparation period, and the intern can be dismissed from the internship class for failure to show expected progress. The intern may be dismissed, or allowed to reapply after the completion of specified college-level nutrition coursework to better prepare them for the rigors of the internship. Interns will also be expected to arrange to take time from work to meet with the internship administrators and preceptors.

The Texas WIC Dietetic Internship provides 1250 hours of supervised practice, and over 300 hours of on-site seminar time, to achieve the core competencies and nutrition education competencies required for entry-level registered dietitians. Supervised practice experiences will be scheduled to include the following:

Food Service Management = 160
Medical Nutrition Therapy = 524
Community Nutrition/Nutrition Education = 464

Total = 1250

Registered dietitians or other professionals under the direction of the Dietetic Internship Director supervise interns in these experiences. Sites for supervised practice will be individualized for each intern. If possible, supervised practice sites will be utilized in the area of the state where the intern is employee.

Supervised practice sites include:

- School Districts
- Acute Care Facilities (Hospitals)
- Pediatric Acute Care Facilities
- Long Term Care Facilities
- DSHS Public Health Regional Offices
- DSHS and WIC State Offices
- WIC Local Agencies
- County Extension Services
- Senior Nutrition Program or Adult Day Care Centers
- Private Practice Dietitians
- Food Banks or Food Pantries
- Early Childhood Intervention Programs

The supervised practice component of the internship is augmented with seminars and self paced instructional learning activities. Completion of readings, study guide and reports is to be done at times not designated for work or supervised experiences.

Registered Dietitian Credentialing Process

There are three steps to becoming a registered dietitian. The first step is the successful completion of an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics approved Didactic Program in Dietetics after which a verification statement is issued. The second step is the successful completion of an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics accredited supervised practice program after which a verification statement is issued. The Texas WIC Dietetic Internship is an accredited supervised practice program. The third step is the successful completion of the Registration Examination for Dietitians.

Admission Requirements

The admission requirements for the internship are:

1. current employment with a Texas WIC local agency or a Texas Department of State Health Services WIC Program
2. supervisor's confirmation of applicant's job performance as satisfactory or better
3. a minimum of a baccalaureate degree
4. completion of an ACEND approved Didactic Program in Dietetics
5. ability to provide own transportation
6. a reliable laptop computer, e-mail address and internet service
7. signed approval for applicant to participate in the dietetic internship by:
 - (a) WIC local agency director or DSHS Unit Manager and
 - (b) WIC local agency CEO, DSHS Regional Director, or DSHS Section Director.

Application Process

Applications for admission to the 2013 class must be completed by June 15, 2012. The Texas WIC DI participates in the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS). The program can be accessed at <https://portal.dicas.org> (email DICASinfo@DICAS.org). The fee is \$40 for the first application and \$20 for each additional application.

DICAS requires a personal statement, online application, official transcripts and 3 letters of recommendation. In addition we require you to upload the following to DICAS:

1. A current resume
2. Texas WIC DI Supplement (These documents are attached to WIC memo #12-005 or you can request by email from mary.vaneck@dshs.state.tx.us.)

Completing the DICAS application:

1. DICAS Online application: Register with DICAS before April 1, 2012 and complete the online application by June 15, 2012. The application can be accessed at <https://portal.dicas.org>
2. Reference letters: When completing the online application form, applicants must include the name and contact information (specifically an email address) for each reference. This will trigger an email message requesting the completion of a reference form. The form will be completed online. Students submitting more than one application will need to use the same individuals as reference for each application. You should have at least 1 academic reference.
3. Personal Statement: Include content about personal and professional goals, interests, experience, continuing education, strengths, weaknesses, and reasons for pursuing the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship, and any other information helpful to the selection committee.
4. Transcripts: Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be sent to:

DICAS - Transcript Dept, P.O. Box 9118, Watertown, Ma 02472.
5. Verification Statement: You must provide the requested information on the DICAS application and your DPD Program Director will be emailed for an original verification statement. Students currently enrolled in classes must submit a "Declaration of Intent" listing courses in progress. Successful applicants must supply signed verification statements and final transcripts to the Texas WIC DI prior to the start of the internship.
6. **Resume:** A current summary of your academic, employment and professional activities. Please include your email address. You will upload to the DICAS application.

7. **Texas WIC DI Supplement:** Email mary.vaneck@dshs.state.tx.us for a copy. Allow yourself ample time (4-6 weeks) to get these forms completed and signed. This supplement must be uploaded to your application.

If you have any questions about the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship application process, please contact Mary Van Eck.

Mary Van Eck, M.S., R.D., L.D.
Director, Texas WIC Dietetic Internship
Texas Department of State Health Services
Nutrition Services Section
P.O. Box 149347, Mail Code 1933
Austin, TX 78714-9347

Phone: (512) 341-4510 or (512) 413-7320; Fax: (512) 341-4473 or E-mail:
Mary.VanEck@dshs.state.tx.us

All applicants will be notified by August 15, 2012, as to whether or not they have been selected to participate in the internship for the 2013 year.

COMPUTER MATCHING

Applicants to the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship are exempt from participating in the American Dietetic Association's computer matching requirement. This internship only accepts individuals currently employed by Texas DSHS and Texas local WIC agencies.

Recency of Education

If more than 5 has lapsed since you graduated from an accredited DPD program, you may be required to complete additional coursework before acceptance into the Texas WIC DI. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Texas WIC interns are paid their regular salary from their WIC employer during the internship. Dietetic interns do not receive stipends in addition to their salaries provided by their employer. Interns must provide their own transportation. Housing during seminars in Austin and supervised practice rotations and other costs listed below are the responsibility of the intern. All intern expenses are WIC eligible, so WIC local agencies may choose to assist the intern with expenses, such as housing, travel, conference fees, books, etc.

COSTS TO THE INTERN

The intern will be responsible for any costs that are not routinely associated with his/her work. The employer WIC agency may choose to help with some of these expenses, but this is not an expectation. The following costs to the intern are estimates and subject to change.

1. Books	\$ 1,000
2. Medical Insurance (provided by employer or provided by intern)	\$ 0 - 1,500
3. Liability Insurance	\$100
4. American Dietetic Association Membership	\$43
5. Texas Dietetic Association Annual Meeting (registration, travel, housing) and other Professional meeting	\$200 - 600
6. Laboratory Coats or Uniforms (if required by site)	\$150
7. Medical Exam and vaccinations (if required by site)	\$200
6. Food Service Sanitation Certification (if required by site)	
7. Criminal background check (if required by site)	\$52
8. Drug testing (if required by site)	\$50
9. Laptop computer, portable printer, and internet access	\$1500
10. Copying cost for research articles	\$100
11. Transportation to seminars	\$500 - 1500
12. Own transportation	\$500
13. Additional food costs	\$500
14. Housing Costs (6 - 20 weeks) - Average \$100 - \$400 per week *	\$ 600 - 8,000
15. Inman's Review Course for the ADA Registration Examination	\$300

- estimated costs, depending on housing arrangements

TOTAL \$5,795 - \$ 16,095

The above expenses reflect the costs incurred directly by participation in the program. The estimate for housing, car and other expenses are costs that will be incurred while living away from the present job site. This will occur during seminars and may occur during foodservice management, nutrition therapy and community nutrition supervised experiences. Other automobile

expenses and cost of living expenses (rent, utilities, food, clothing, etc.) already being incurred by an intern while being employed at the present job site are not included. During some of the supervised experiences, interns will continue their present transportation and living arrangements.

Although many interns are able to continue living at home during the supervised practice rotations, there is no guarantee that you will have a placement in your community. You must be able and willing to relocate, if necessary, for up to 20 weeks of the internship. All expenses will be born by the intern.

INTERN/ EMPLOYEE OBLIGATION

Prior to beginning the internship, the intern/employee must sign a letter of agreement with his/her employer, e.g., WIC local agency or DSHS. This affirms his/her understanding that, upon successfully completing the internship, he/she will continue to work with his/her respective Texas WIC local agency, DSHS Region, or DSHS Section. It is recommended that the intern remain employed by their respective agency for a minimum of 24 full months, or the equivalent part time, after passing the dietetic registration examination. If the intern/employee terminates his/her employment with his/her agency prior to completing the obligated time, or fails to take the dietetic registration examination within one (1) year of program completion, it is expected that the intern will reimburse their employer/agency at the rate of \$25 per hour of completed supervised practice experiences (maximum of 1000 hours/\$25,000).

Interns who choose to leave the internship after successful completion of the initial probation period (the first 160 hours of supervised experience) will be required to make monetary restitution to their employer/agency. Interns who are dismissed from the internship may be asked to make monetary restitution to their employer/WIC local agency. The recommended reimbursement rate is \$25 for each hour of supervised experiences completed. No expenses involved with the internship will be returned to an intern who leaves the internship.

WIC Prior Learning Credit

Working as a nutritionist in the WIC Program has afforded the interns an opportunity to achieve many of the CADE competencies. Interns with WIC experience can apply for up to 120 hours of community nutrition supervised practice prior learning.

**TEXAS WIC DIETETIC INTERNSHIP
CALENDAR FOR 2013
Including Supervised Experiences**

ALL DATES ARE TENTATIVE

January 9 - January 13	*Seminar: Introductory and Food Service Management
January 17 - February 10	Food Service Management Supervised Experiences
February 13-24	*Seminar: Medical Nutrition Therapy
February 27 - March 23	Basic Acute Care Nutrition Therapy Supervised Experiences
March 26-April 20	Adv. Acute Care Nutrition Therapy Supervised Experiences
April 23- May 4	*Seminar: Pediatrics and Community Nutrition
May 7-11	Community Nutrition Education Project Preparation
May 14-June 8	Nutrition Therapy Supervised Experiences - Pediatrics
June 11 - 15	*Seminar: Community Nutrition and Supervised Experiences Community Health Intervention Research Project
June 18- August 23	
August 25-26 - August 27-30	*Review Course *Community Health Intervention Research Project Presentation
August 31	*Graduation

Questions and Answers Regarding Texas WIC Dietetic Internship (DI) - 2013

1. Why does Texas WIC have a dietetic internship?

The mission of the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship is to prepare culturally competent entry-level dietitians to enhance the quality of nutrition services delivered to WIC clients and their communities.

2. Will the WIC State Agency provide financial assistance to WIC local agencies if they have an applicant selected for an internship?

Yes. While the nutritionist participates in the internship program, his or her salary continues to be a WIC allowable cost which can be billed through regular WIC funding. In addition, the State Agency will supplement the local agency's regular WIC funding by providing extra special funding equal to approximately 90% of the intern's salary and benefits for the 8 months that he/she is participating in the internship, and an additional small sum (varies each year) to help defray other costs (travel, supplies etc.) for the intern. If the intern has to take leave without pay to participate in the internship, the state agency will not provide this additional financial assistance. This extra financial assistance is provided to the WIC local agencies so they may hire temporary staff to help cover the clinics while their employee is participating in the internship or to help pay for the costs of the intern while he or she is participating in the internship.

3. How many interns can be selected for each class?

The internship can select up to twelve interns per year.

4. Is there a minimum number of years required working for WIC before a nutritionist can apply?

Any nutritionist currently working for a WIC local agency or WIC State Agency is eligible to apply. A WIC local agency may have its own policy about the minimum time the nutritionist has to be employed by the local agency before supporting the application.

5. Is a nutritionist in a part-time position or a temporary position eligible to apply?

A WIC nutritionist in a part-time position is eligible to apply. A WIC nutritionist in a temporary position will have to check with their local agency/DSHS employer regarding their employment situation. If the local agency or DSHS can not assure that the employee will remain employed during the internship as well as the 2 years after taking the registration examination for dietitians, then the nutritionist will not be eligible to apply.

6. **Will more than one nutritionist from each local agency be able to apply?**

The Texas WIC Internship will accept more than one application from the same local agency. The local WIC agency director/DSHS Unit Manager may not be able to allow more than one nutritionist to participate in the internship each year.

7. **Are DSHS Region and State Agency nutritionists eligible to apply for the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship?**

If the nutritionist is funded on a WIC budget, then a DSHS nutritionist who works in a DSHS region or DSHS Central Office is eligible to apply as long as they meet the other admission criteria.

8. **Will preference be given to local agencies that lack registered dietitians (RDs)?**

Lack of RDs in a WIC local agency is taken into consideration. However, this should not discourage WIC local agency directors who employ RDs from encouraging their nutritionists to apply for the Texas WIC DI. Although a WIC local agency may have one or more RDs on staff, there may be a need for additional RDs because of the large number of clinics that still may be left un-served by an RD.

9. **What are the selection criteria?**

All parts of the application are important, including:

- **Grade Point average** - following completion of the internship, the intern must pass the registration exam in order to become a registered dietitian. Dietetic internship programs are evaluated by The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' credentialing agency (ACEND) based on the percentage of interns who pass this exam on the first try. That is why it is critical that interns have demonstrated academic abilities. Dietetic internship programs can be put on probation or even discontinued if this pass rate is not acceptable. College GPA is the best indicator of the intern's ability to pass the registration exam.
- **Recommendation letters** - the letters that co-workers, supervisor and professors write are extremely important in the application process. We require a recommendation letter from the applicant's supervisor and highly recommend one from a college instructor. Three recommendation letters are required for each applicant.
- **Need of the community** -Underserved areas of the state are given a high priority during the selection process. Local agencies that have difficulty finding RDs are also given priority. Being bilingual is also seen as an asset during the selection process.
- **Local agency and geographic diversity** within the class. An attempt is made to select interns each class from diverse areas of the state.
- **Facility availability** - Ability finding facilities and preceptors factors into the selection process.

- **Application Completeness** and professionalism
- **Other considerations** - writing ability, maturity, motivation, career goals and other qualities all are important considerations in the application process.

10. What is a DPD verification statement and where do you get one?

A *Didactic Program in Dietetic (DPD) Verification* form is the method used by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to ensure that the required academic preparation has been obtained by the individual. This form *must* be submitted as part of the application. As part of the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS) you will be asked to provide your DPD Director's email address. DICAS will request the DPD verification statement. Many professors are not working during the summer months, and students who wait until late May or June to ask for verification statement may not be able to get one before the application deadline. Your application will not be reviewed without this verification statement.

To obtain a hard copy of your *DPD Verification Statement*, contact the DPD Director of the University where you received your degree. If you do not know how to contact the DPD director of your university, please refer to the website:

http://www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/career_2192_ENU_HTML.htm.

11. Can a nutritionist apply for the Texas WIC DI if they have a Plan IV Verification Statement from an undergraduate program in dietetics?

No. Dietetic internships can only enroll individuals with a verification statement indicating completion of a Didactic Program in Dietetics. Individuals who have completed Plan IV and wish to become Registered Dietitians should contact a university with a Didactic Program in Dietetics and have their transcripts reviewed. The Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics will determine what academic coursework that individual will need to obtain a DPD verification statement. A nutritionist may try contacting the university he/she graduated from or a nearby university. A complete list of universities with Didactic Programs in Dietetics may be found at the website www.eatright.org.

12. Who is on the selection committee?

All of the applications will be screened and reviewed by an internship selection committee including:

- Director, Texas WIC Dietetic Internship
- Texas WIC DI Coordinators
- Manager, Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
- other state agency staff or internship partners may be asked to participate

13. Will an interview be required of the applicants?

Telephone interviews may be conducted with applicants at the discretion of the selection committee.

14. Can a WIC nutritionist who has not yet completed all of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics-approved Didactics Program in Dietetics courses apply?

Students currently enrolled in classes must submit a "Declaration of Intent" listing courses in progress. Successful applicants must supply signed verification statements and final transcripts to Texas WIC DI prior to the start of the internship. DICAS provides for your DPD director to login and submit the verification statement of declaration of intent statement. Please verify with your DPD director that they have done so.

15. Can interns complete their supervised learning experiences in their own communities?

Not necessarily. When possible, supervised practice sites will be utilized in the area of the state where the intern is employed. There is no guarantee that the intern will be placed in his/her home community. Most of the community nutrition supervised learning experiences can be accomplished within the intern's local WIC agency if there is a willing RD preceptor. If there is not an RD in the intern's LA, then a nearby LA with a willing RD may be sought. There will be approximately 7- 10 weeks that the interns will be in Austin for seminars, supervised experiences and the major project presentations and graduation. Also interns will be required to attend the TDA annual meeting in the city that is scheduled. See *Texas WIC DI Calendar For 2013*.

16. What is the expected role of the WIC preceptor?

The WIC preceptor will assist the intern in scheduling all supervised experiences and assignments within the WIC local agency and other community sites. The WIC preceptor must review community assignments and complete evaluation forms for the intern indicating whether or not he/she met the expected competencies for the community portion of the supervised learning experiences. The WIC preceptor does not have to be present at all times with the intern, but should be present at regular intervals in order to be able to evaluate the intern's performance. The WIC preceptor will also be asked to give feedback to the dietetic internship director in order to improve the quality of the internship.

17. Is there a minimum GPA and/or DPD GPA requirement?

No, but preference will be given to applicants with a cumulative GPA and a DPD GPA of 2.7 or better on a 4.0 scale.

18. What can an applicant do if their undergraduate GPA and/or DPD GPA are less than 2.7?

The applicant should consider taking graduate courses in advanced nutrition and nutrition therapy.

19. Is participation in the internship an allowable WIC cost?

Yes, USDA has stated in a policy memorandum that federal WIC funds can be used to support the development and operation of a dietetic internship that is approved / accredited by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Texas WIC Dietetic Interns will

charge their time to WIC Nutrition Education, if they are receiving a salary while participating in the internship. Other expenses that the WIC local agency may pay the costs for include professional textbooks and travel to internship facilities.

20. Is the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship approved by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics?

Yes, the Texas WIC DI is currently granted initial accreditation by the Accreditation council or Education in Nutrition and Dietetics(ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 S. Riverside Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, (312) 899-0040, extension 5400.

21. If a WIC local agency does not pay the intern's salary during the time he/she is participating in the internship, is the intern still expected to sign a *Letter of Agreement* with the WIC local agency specifying a work obligation and financial payback if failing to complete the work obligation?

Yes. The intern is still receiving substantial benefits by participating in the Texas WIC DI even if he/she has to take leave without pay. Most dietetic internships have significant tuition costs and few internships allow the intern to remain employed while completing an internship. Although each local agency can specify the terms of the contract (*Letter of Agreement*) with his/her employee, we have listed recommendations in the *Prospective Student Brochure*. The intern's salary is just a portion of the total costs of administering the Texas WIC DI. Because there is a significant financial investment that WIC State Agency is making with the internship, a good return on the investment is expected, e.g., registered dietitians providing high-risk nutrition counseling services in local agencies that previously had few or no RDs on staff. For a sample *Letter of Agreement*, please contact the Texas WIC DI Director. The DI Director can also provide a list of WIC local agencies that have had an intern in the DSHS DI in past years. These WIC Directors may be able to answer administrative questions that are common to other WIC local agencies.

22. Can an applicant apply more than one time to the Texas WIC DI?

Yes

23. Once an applicant is accepted into the Texas WIC DI, is there any preparation before the internship begins?

Yes, there is a substantial time commitment for the intern between September 2011 and when the internship begins in January 2012. Many assignments and case studies are required during this time period. Many former interns report that they spend 10-20 hours each week researching and completing these assignments. Interns are expected to satisfactorily complete all these assignments during this time period, and can be dismissed from the internship for poor performance on these assignments.

24. How should letters of recommendation and official transcripts be submitted with the application?

All letters of recommendation should be sent along with the application. We suggest applicants send a self-addressed stamped envelope to each individual from which you are requesting a letter of recommendation. They can then return these to the applicant, who should include them in the application packet. Official college transcripts should be sent to the applicant and the applicant should place them in the application packet.

25. Do I need to find my own facilities and preceptors?

No, you do not need to find your preceptors. However, when you know for sure that you are going to apply (and have your WIC Director's approval) to the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship, please email mary.vaneck@dshs.state.tx.us or call her at 512-341-4510 to inform her that you are planning on applying. In many areas of the state, established relationships already exist for facilities, but for others, we will need to find new facilities and preceptors.

26. Do I get any credit for my WIC experience?

Once you are accepted into the program, you will be asked to assess your WIC experience as it relates to required ACEND competencies. Then a determination of prior learning credit will be made by the internship administrators.

26. Still have questions?

Email or call Mary Van Eck at mary.vaneck@dshs.state.tx.us or 512-341-4510 or 512-413-7320.