



Florida Department of Health in Pasco County Dietetic Internship

Student Identified Graduate Degree Option

The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County Dietetic Internship is a graduate-level program. Students will not receive a Verification Statement of Completion or qualify to sit for the Registered Dietitians Examination until proof of earning a graduate degree has been provided to the program director.

The program accepts students who already have a graduate degree. If that is you, proof of that degree will be provided in your application packet. If you do not already have a graduate degree, you have the option to complete a student identified graduate degree during the program. If you choose to complete your graduate degree during the program, you must abide by the following.

1. **Student identified graduate degree:** Students completing a graduate degree during the program can select a degree of their choice. We recommend degree programs that allow for the use of the state employee tuition waiver (for WIC employees) and that are related to the field of nutrition and dietetics. Preferred options are degrees in human nutrition, food and nutrition, dietetics, public health, and food systems management.
2. **Graduate degree completion date:** Students completing a graduate degree during the program must provide proof that they have no more than four courses to complete during the program and that they will graduate by the Spring semester after the program starts. For the 2027-2028 class year, students will need to provide proof that they will earn their graduate degree in Spring of 2028. **Acceptable proof of the remaining courses and anticipated graduation date is a signed attestation from the graduate program director.**
3. **FERPA release:** Students completing a graduate degree during the program must sign a FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) release form acceptable to their graduate program that allows the graduate program director to provide status updates to the program director. This helps the program director verify that the student is on track to graduate as anticipated.
4. **Official transcripts:** Students completing a graduate degree during the program must provide official transcripts to the program director at the end of the Summer semester, Fall semester, and Spring semester. The Spring semester transcript should contain the degree awarded date. If the student fails to earn their graduate degree in Spring, they will need to provide a transcript for every additional semester they are in school earning their degree. **Students who have not completed their graduate degree within two years of starting this program will be removed from the program.**

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Cost

Costs associated with completing a graduate degree during the program vary by institution and degree type and are separate from costs related to this program. Students are responsible for understanding these costs.

Students using the state employee tuition waiver to save on tuition costs are responsible for knowing the procedures and specific dates related to using this benefit of their employment.

Although the program is not eligible to offer financial aid, students earning their graduate degree during the program may qualify for financial aid through their graduate program.

Program completion deadline

Students in the program sign a contractual agreement with the Bureau of WIC Program Services in Florida. This agreement mandates students complete the program within two years of the program start date. If students completing a student identified graduate degree do not earn their degree within two years of the program start date, they will be removed from the program and considered in breach of the agreement.