



Sea Mar Community Health Centers is a non-profit health and human-service organization founded in 1978. Sea Mar's Dietetic Internship* (DI) offers interns a unique opportunity to work with clients from Latino and a variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Interns gain cultural competence that adds a competitive edge in a job search. The internship is 9 months long including orientation, winter and spring breaks.

Sea Mar's DI is located in Seattle, the Emerald City! Interns will enjoy Seattle life, with professional sports events, theater and concerts, museums, amazing restaurants, coffee and many food and farmers' markets, including the famous Pike Place Market. Ocean and mountains are nearby with plenty of hiking, skiing and biking trails close by. Even more importantly, Seattle offers renowned medical centers and community organizations with exceptional dietitians who support our program, acting as Preceptors and Educators. Lastly, it does not rain every day and the weather is quite temperate!

Each intern class has many opportunities to work together as a group, thus developing team-building skills and relationships of support that enhance the learning experience. Mondays may start off with an intern seminar (mostly in fall and spring), where interns gather to hear dynamic speakers, discuss assignments or present case studies and work on nutrition education projects that benefit those in need in the Seattle community. During the times in between, we check in at least weekly via email, group chat or video conference. Interns come together to talk about their rotation experiences and assist each other in problem solving and conflict resolution. A vehicle and ability to check email every day is necessary for this internship. All experiences take place in the Greater Seattle area; no international experience provided.

Community Nutrition is the focus and designated concentration, and dietetic students who desire careers in outpatient clinics, WIC, health clubs, public health and education are strongly encouraged to investigate this internship. In addition to clinical and food service administration rotations, other community nutrition rotations include long-term care, WIC, eating disorders, community nutrition administration, renal, and migrant/homeless services (see Generic Rotation Schedule). Each rotation differs in amount of objectives to complete/required supervised practice hours while performing real-life activities such as role-playing, simulations, case studies, etc. The Internship Director reviews and updates curriculum at minimum annually using intern and preceptor evaluations and communication & input from other internship directors, peers, past interns and Sea Mar staff. The Sea Mar DI offers learning experiences in a multicultural and bilingual environment and is in complete alignment with the organization's mission and goals. If a strong passion for community nutrition combined with exposure to cultural experiences, water & mountains make up the perfect internship, the Sea Mar Dietetic Internship has it all!

** This program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition & Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics (AND), 120 S Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995; 800.877.1600 ext. 5400; email at ACEND@eatright.org, URL: www.eatright.org/acend.*

Program Mission: The Dietetic Internship at Sea Mar Community Health Centers is committed to providing a comprehensive learning environment for those interested in community health, offering an emphasis in experiences serving multicultural and low-income communities, while preparing them to become entry-level Registered Dietitians.

Program Goals:

Goal #1: To contribute to the development of mature and responsible entry-level Registered Dietitians capable of utilizing knowledge and skills learned to meet the nutrition needs of society

Objectives:

- At least 80% of program interns complete program requirements within 14 months (150% of the program length) [ACEND Required]
- When surveyed at their exit interview, the mean rating for the question, “I feel that I have mastered the skills necessary to succeed in entry-level nutrition counseling and education position,” is marked as “Agree” or 1-3 by 85% of program graduates
- 12 months after completing the internship, employers will rate 85% of program graduates as “Prepared” when surveyed if “the employee is highly capable of meeting the nutrition needs of society.”

Goal #2: To provide quality training that supports the personal development and professional growth of program graduates

Objectives:

- 80% percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion [ACEND Required]
- The program’s one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80% [ACEND Required]
- When surveyed at their exit interview, the mean rating for the question “I have felt supported in my attempts to develop personally and to grow professionally” is marked as “Agree” or 1-3 by 85% of program graduates

Goal #3: To prepare program graduates to deliver nutrition services to population groups such as those at Sea Mar or other community healthcare clinics

Objectives:

- Of graduates who seek employment, 70% percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation. [ACEND Required]
- 25% of program graduates secure a position at Sea Mar or other community nutrition position within one year after graduation
 - 12 months after completing the internship, employers will rate 85% of program graduates as “Prepared” when surveyed if “the employee is able to provide nutrition care for individuals from across the lifespan and with diverse cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.”

Program outcome data measuring achievement of program objectives available upon request.

In addition to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND’s) Core Competencies required to become a Registered Dietitian, interns must meet Sea Mar’s **Community Concentration Competencies** in the community nutrition rotations.

They are as follows:

CO1. Conduct community-based food and nutrition program outcome assessment, evaluation and research

CO2. Manage nutrition care for diverse population groups across the lifespan by participating in nutrition surveillance and monitoring of communities

CO3. Develop community-based food and nutrition programs and/or a health promotion/disease prevention intervention project

Eligibility

- a) Students must have a Declaration of Intent to Complete or a Verification Statement from an ACEND-accredited Dietetics Didactic Program (DPD) or Foreign Dietitian Education* (FDE) program and have earned at least a bachelor's degree granted by a U.S. regionally accredited college/university or foreign equivalent.

**Students with degrees obtained outside the United States and its territories must review ACEND's guidelines for international applicants. The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) requires individuals with foreign degrees to meet specific requirements to obtain the Registered Dietitian*

Nutritionist (RDN) credential. Please refer to ACEND's website for International Students: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/become-an-rdn-or-dtr/international-students>

b) Master's Degree Requirement*

Option 1: Completion of a master's degree by the first day of the internship (mid-September).

Option 2: Master's degree in-progress.

- Must have completed at least 40% of master's program by the first day of the internship (mid-September).
- Students must submit proof of enrollment and agree to complete remaining coursework during the dietetic internship or within 150% of program length (i.e. students must complete their Master's degree 4.5 months following internship graduation).
- Coursework should be asynchronous (i.e. online and self-paced programs) or otherwise able to be scheduled around the internship schedule.

*Effective January 1, 2024 (class of 2023-2024), the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) will require a minimum of a Master's Degree to be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become a Registered Dietitian (RD).

Following successful completion of this internship, internship graduates with Master's Degrees will be eligible to sit for the credentialing examination, of which the CDR establishes requirements. Passing the exam leads to the RD/RDN credential and maintaining it requires ongoing professional development. Each state in which an RD practices will have its own scope of practice and requirements for obtaining certification or licensure.

For more information about becoming a Registered Dietitian, visit <https://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/registered-dietitian-rd-certification>

Sea Mar Community Health Centers does not discriminate based on age, race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, political ideology, marital status, Vietnam veteran status or any disability. We encourage you to explore Sea Mar's website to learn about our wonderful community health centers' vast array of services.

ACEND® Standard 10.2i. Policy for Prior Assessed Learning (PAL)

Policy: The PAL program grants credit towards supervised practice hours in specific rotations of the internship based on the qualified applicant's learning/knowledge, as demonstrated through paid work or volunteer experiences. The credit is not for experience, but is when the applicant demonstrates an increase in knowledge and learning. Experiences considered for PAL must meet competencies required by ACEND® and must not include experiences undertaken during undergraduate/graduate education or in the process of earning a DPD verification statement. No credit given for college coursework.

Purpose: Ensure that the SMCHC DI has a systematic process to administer, evaluate and document PAL. If the program grants credit, supervised practice hours or direct assessment for interns' prior learning, it must define procedures for evaluating equivalence of prior education or experience.

Sea Mar Community Health Centers Dietetic Internship Program will consider the Prior Assessed Learning (PAL) program recognized by ACEND if an intern chooses to pursue obtaining credit. This program design grants internship credit in specific rotations of the internship based on the qualified applicant's previous life experiences including work, volunteer, achievement, education or family responsibilities. Typically, the individual qualifying for this credit has significant, relevant work or life experiences.

Criteria

For consideration, the applicant must do the following:

- complete a portfolio or submit a resume. Do not submit this until **after** you have matched to the SMCHC DI. Provide samples of projects, reports, presentations, and professional practice that demonstrate advanced knowledge and skill in the area of dietetics for which assessment is requested and have a supervisor/peer be willing to validate samples provided and proficiency in such experiences
- complete all PAL Information. The Program Director will provide ACEND's educational competencies for specific rotations in this program and the applicant must adequately show/demonstrate advanced knowledge and skill, not just work history. A current/former supervisor/peer must validate proficiency as well
- understand that fees related to PAL evaluation are equivalent to tuition
- discuss pursuit of PAL with Program Director after accepted to the internship to allow for adequate evaluation

Requirements

The following requirements apply regardless of the amount of PAL credit qualified for:

- the SMCHC Dietetic Internship program is a full-time program; interns required to complete any required supervised practice hours as a full-time intern
- most interns who receive PAL credit must still complete at least $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of required hours in the rotation given credit for and omission of specific rotation projects and assignments will be determined by the Program Director with rotation preceptor input based on your demonstrated knowledge and skills
- tuition does not change if intern receives PAL credit

Evaluation

The Program Director will:

- evaluate submitted information in a timely manner
- request additional documentation or clarification as deemed appropriate
- formulate decision related to assessment of individual intern's prior learning based on evaluation of portfolio provided & any verification of information provided deemed appropriate

PAL Credit

In order to identify the equivalent credit hours for your PAL request, the evaluator will be looking for completion of related ACEND competencies in submission. Not every experience will be worth credit, but that does not devalue the experience. There is a difference in "skill-oriented" learning and "theoretical" learning.

Description of previous experience

- list the specific job, volunteer position, practicum experience and job tasks in relation to rotation applying for PAL
- describe experience from which learning is derived
- document the exact learning that occurred, do not just list what was done

Use the same examples for the competencies when appropriate. Include in discussion what was learned (for example, to use PowerPoint) but also deeper understanding of the knowledge. (For example, one must measure if a presentation was effective and what the audience learned, etc.)

After evaluation of application, the Program Director may grant credit in the following areas:

- Community Nutrition (COM) – 1-2 weeks of rotation hours
- Food Service Management (FSA) -- up to 2 weeks of rotation hours
- Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) – 2-3 weeks of rotation hours

Please note: The Sea Mar DI has a policy for assessing prior learning or competence but does not give credit for prior experience internationally.

Questions or concerns? Please contact: marisolthomas@seamarchc.org for further clarification.

Program Retention and Remediation Procedures:

Interns must meet ACEND core competencies, complete assignment/projects on time, pass supervised practice rotations and abide by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics. If an intern is displaying unsatisfactory performance at a practice site, the preceptor will hold a meeting with the intern to outline areas of concern and will notify the Program Director of the concerns. In a timely fashion, the intern, preceptor and Program Director will meet to discuss the performance issues and devise a performance improvement plan to pass the rotation. The rotation evaluation will outline the knowledge and skills needed and a date when reassessment occurs. The Program Director will encourage the intern to strengthen academic skills and be available for assistance. If the preceptor gives the intern a satisfactory rating at reassessment, the intern continues in the program. However, if the intern does not receive a satisfactory rating, the Program Director may find an alternate site for the intern. If the second site determines the intern's performance is unsatisfactory, the intern may be dismissed from the program and discuss other career paths for the intern.

Graduate Requirements

- To graduate, all interns complete at least 1200 hours of supervised practice. These hours may include direct/hands on supervised practice (minimum 900 hours), simulation, case studies or role-playing alternative learning experiences (less than 300 hours).

- Interns also must pass each rotation with a 3.0 average on each preceptor evaluation form, complete all assignments with a passing grade of 80% and have a final grade of at least 800/1000 points.
- Interns expected to complete the program within 13.5 months.
- After intern completes all requirements and submits final evaluation of the Sea Mar Dietetic Internship, Program Director issues Verification Statements with original and digital signature, typically done on the last day of the internship. This information is included in the Student Handbook sent out prior to the start of the internship.
- The Program Director completes a mid-internship evaluation and then a final evaluation at internship end. Evaluations with average less than 3.0 only effects ability of Program Director to write a letter of recommendation for the graduate, but is not part of passing the internship. Program Director and/or preceptors determine make-up projects, assignments and time owed to obtain required points, hours or score.

Program Costs

- Tuition **\$8,000** if paid in full first day of internship or can pay in three installments; \$4,100 is due on the first day of internship (includes \$100 administrative fee), \$2,000 due in December and \$2,000 due in March. Sea Mar accepts credit card payments for tuition.
- Non-Refundable Application Fee \$50
- Professional Liability Insurance ~ \$25-30
- Food Worker Card \$10
- ADA Student Membership ~ \$50
- Washington State Dietetic Association Annual Conference ~ \$50
- Housing ~ \$700-900/month
- Food ~ \$200-300/month
- Books & Materials ~ \$100
- Transportation/gas - \$200-300. A car is necessary and students must possess auto insurance
- Health Insurance Required, intern's own responsibility
- Intern may be required to pay for a national background check ~\$50 and/or drug screening ~\$25 for site placement

Sea Mar does NOT offer any financial aid, although there are a few scholarships from other area agencies to apply for once the internship commences.

If graduates go on to work for Sea Mar Community Health Centers, Sea Mar will reimburse \$1,000 of tuition at the end of that one-year anniversary of employment.

Health Requirements and Medical Responsibilities

- Interns are required to provide and pay for their own health and medical needs, including any costs related to injuries or illnesses sustained while in a facility for supervised practice.
- Each intern will need proof of the following immunizations **before the start of the Sea Mar DI. A few vaccinations are offered free of cost to Sea Mar interns during orientation. Please locate your vaccination records during the Summer.**
 - Covid-19 vaccine. At this time, the COVID 19 booster is strongly encouraged.
 - Measles, mumps and rubella vaccination (MMR) or blood titer indicating exposure to these diseases
 - Hepatitis B vaccination series or blood titer indicating exposure to Hep B
 - Current TB Test, Two-Step PPD or Quantiferon-TB
 - Flu shot (available at Sea Mar for free during orientation)
 - TDAP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough)) - available at Sea Mar for free during orientation.
 - Varicella (chickenpox)- you must provide a blood titer drawn by a clinic showing immunity or have a vaccination against chicken pox. History of the disease is not enough to comply with current health department standards.
 - **** If you opt out on the Flu shot or other vaccination, you may not be able to attend rotations. Contact the Program Director beforehand to discuss.**

For more information about Sea Mar's Dietetic Internship Program, contact Marisol Thomas, MS, RD at marisolthomas@seamarchc.org

Good luck on the internship application process!