

The Graduate Program in Nutrition

Graduate Manual: A Guide to Success



UNC GREENSBORO

Department *of* Nutrition

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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to provide information about the policies, procedures, and degree requirements of the Graduate Program in Nutrition in the Department of Nutrition at UNCG. The information provided here adds to that already covered in the [University Catalog](#). Please contact the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition with any questions or to clarify issues related to the content of this manual.

We have limited much of the manual's coverage to the expectations, guidelines, and requirements that are held specifically for graduate students in the Department of Nutrition. The course work, research requirements, and expectations described here are the **minimum** that the faculty has agreed upon. You may be required by your advisor or Advisory Committee to perform course work over and above the minimum because of your specific research plans or because you lack appropriate background in some areas. All such issues are matters for discussion between you and your advisor.

New graduate students are advised to read this manual in its entirety and to consult with their advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition if any of the requirements described in it are unclear. Students should also be familiar with the university's regulations and policies for graduate students as they are described in the [University Catalog](#). To benefit from the information in this manual, you must be prepared to take responsibility for your progress in the program. Do not assume that your advisor or other faculty members will automatically remind you of every step that you need to take. We urge you to meet with your advisor regularly to review your progress. We welcome you to the Department of NUTRITION and wish you success in your graduate career.

II. THE DEPARTMENT'S MULTIDISCIPLINARY MISSION

The Department of Nutrition offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Science non-thesis (M.S. non-thesis), Master of Science thesis (M.S. thesis), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees. The faculty recognizes that "nutrition" is a broad discipline. People who consider themselves "nutritionists" participate from many different perspectives: sociological, behavioral, government and policy, public health, medical, agricultural, and biological approaches to nutrition are just some of the ways that "nutritionists" study nutritionally relevant questions. As a result, people who choose to study nutrition are faced with several challenges. First, they must understand the basic chemistry of nutrients, their metabolism, and their biological functions. Second, students of nutrition must also understand how the science of nutrition is applied in the practical arena. Finally, they should also acquire expertise in one or more of the support disciplines that nutrition relies upon (e.g., biochemistry, economics, public health, etc.).

The Graduate Program in Nutrition is grounded in the science of nutrition. We want all our students to understand the metabolism and function of nutrients as well as the scientific basis for diet and disease relationships. We also want our students to appreciate the ways in which nutrition science is utilized to improve the health of people and how research is utilized to set public policy. On top of those goals, we aim to be flexible so that we can help each student develop into the type of "nutritionist" that he or she wishes to become.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. You

While the faculty in the Department of Nutrition is committed to providing quality education for each student, it is the role of each student to take responsibility for his or her own education. Every student is responsible for reading and adhering to the policies, requirements, and timetables described within this manual. In addition, should any problems arise that might affect the educational experience while at UNCG, students should inform their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition to receive proper guidance and help through any difficulties. The Graduate Compact in Appendix A further outlines the roles of a graduate student in his or her education.

B. The Advisor

The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition is the advisor for the M.S. non-thesis students. While, for M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students, prior to the entry into the graduate program, a faculty mentor/advisor is assigned based upon the long-term career goals stated in the personal statement as part of the application.

The primary role of the advisor is to guide the student through the degree process. An advisor will counsel a student on his or her Plan of Study (i.e. courses to be taken), research directions, and career goals. During the writing of the thesis, thesis proposal, dissertation, or dissertation proposal, the advisor is also responsible for reading each draft of these documents and for teaching the student written communication skills. Students should meet with their advisor as often as necessary, but no less than twice a semester (once at the beginning and once at the end of each semester). While many faculty members have an “open-door” policy for graduate students, advisors are not obligated to see students without an appointment. Thus, students should respect the other obligations of the faculty and schedule meetings whenever possible. Optimally, the relationship between an advisor and student should be collegial and not antagonistic. A basic code of conduct for graduate faculty is in the Graduate Compact in Appendix A.

C. The Non-thesis/Thesis/Dissertation Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is a group of faculty whose primary function is to assist a student in the development of his or her Plan of Study. This committee approves the Plan of Study for students in each program.

The advisory committee for all M.S. non-thesis students is the Graduate Committee. For M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students, in consultation with the advisor/mentor, the graduate faculty from the nutrition and other departments are invited to serve on the committee. Like the advisor, members of the Thesis/Dissertation Committee will be available to advise the student on issues related to research directions and career goals.

There are three members on a M.S. Thesis Committee and four members on a Ph.D. Dissertation Committee. The chair of the Ph.D. Dissertation Committee must be a full member of the Graduate Faculty of the UNCG Graduate School. One member on the committee may be unaffiliated with the department or university provided he or she brings a unique expertise to the committee that would otherwise be absent. Each member of the thesis/dissertation committee should be selected based upon the expertise he or she can bring to the student’s training. Members should be contacted to help refine ideas and plans developed by the student and his or her advisor, or for specific help with technical difficulties related to thesis or dissertation research. Within the first semester of study, each M.S. and Ph.D. student should meet with his or

her advisor to identify faculty members who would be appropriate to serve on an Advisory Committee. Students should meet with individual members of their committee as often as they feel necessary.

D. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition

The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition is the faculty member who oversees and organizes the departmental graduate programs (M.S. non-thesis, M.S. thesis, and Ph.D.). His or her roles include student recruitment, admissions, management of departmental stipends, desk assignments to incoming students, teaching assistant assignments, orientation for new students, and counseling enrolled students on issues related to their research, courses, and career goals. If a student is having difficulties with his or her advisor or committee, he or she may discuss this matter in full confidentiality with the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition. In addition to the roles mentioned above, the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition also serves as the Chair of the Graduate Committee and is an *ex officio* member of the Nutrition Graduate Student Association.

E. The Graduate Committee

The Nutrition Graduate Committee typically consists of three or more graduate faculty members. The Graduate Committee is responsible for the formation and implementation of policies, procedures, and curriculum changes of the Nutrition graduate programs in accordance with the policies set down by the UNCG Graduate School. It reviews and approves the Plan of Study for all M.S. non-thesis students (and is therefore the Advisory Committee for all of these students). The Graduate Committee also reviews and decides student petitions for transfer credits and waiving course requirements. Upon request by a M.S. or PhD committee chair, the graduate committee is available to review and resolve issues that arise during the thesis/dissertation submission and approval process. Finally, the Graduate Committee evaluates applications to the Graduate Program in Nutrition and administers and grades the comprehensive examination given to M.S. non-thesis students.

F. The Nutrition Graduate Student Association

This association is open to all graduate students in Nutrition. There are six elected officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations/Media Chair, and the Service Event Coordinator. The Director of the Graduate Program in Nutrition is an *ex officio* member. The purpose of the association is to provide graduate students with social support, networking, career-building, and volunteer activities, and funding opportunities. The association is a vehicle for graduate students (and faculty when appropriate) to discuss directly, and on a regular basis, issues that may enhance or inhibit the well-being and progress of graduate students in their programs of study.

IV. GRADUATE REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

A. The Plan of Study Form:

The Plan of Study is a roadmap used by the student to guide his or her progress through the coursework necessary for the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. The Plan of Study must be outlined by the student and approved by the Non-thesis (or the Graduate Committee)/ Thesis/Dissertation Committee at the earliest possible time following admission of the student to the program. The Graduate Committee and the Graduate School recommend that the Plan of Study form be submitted at the end of the first semester of residence. Students in the M.S. program must submit this no later than completion of 50% of the program requirements. Students in the Ph.D. program must submit this no later than the completion of 18 semester hours. The plan must indicate:

- the specific courses that the student will take to complete the minimum degree requirements, including core courses, research technique training courses, and electives, and;
- a timetable as to when these courses will be taken

The non-thesis (or the Graduate Committee)/Thesis/Dissertation Committee must evaluate the student's Plan of Study to determine whether the proposed plan is appropriate and whether additional coursework is needed. A Plan of Study may include graduate level courses to be taken off-campus at another university. However, **prior** to taking such a course, the student should get final approval of the exact course from his or her committee and submit the request to the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition. Courses taken at other universities are generally applied as electives to a Plan of Study. After approval of the Plan of Study by the non-thesis (or the Graduate Committee)/Thesis/Dissertation Committee, the student must submit it to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval. Copies of the final Plan of Study are submitted to the Director of the Graduate Program in Nutrition for inclusion in the departmental records and to each member of the the Committee. Any changes in the Plan of Study after it has been approved must be reported to the Graduate School for review and approval. An amended plan of study must be approved by all committee members and the Director of Graduate Studies of the Nutrition Department. The form for plan of study is available on the nutrition website under the graduate tab/forms and policies.

B. Core Courses for the Nutrition Graduate Students:

There are several core courses that all degree students in the Graduate Program in Nutrition must take: NTR 625, NTR 626, NTR 627, NTR 628, NTR 609, a statistics course, and NTR 673. As a rule, students should work with their advisors to ensure that the core requirements are met as soon as feasible.

Description of Nutrition core courses:

- NTR 625, Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism; NTR 626, Energy, Carbohydrate, Lipid Metabolism; NTR 627, Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components; and NTR 628, Vitamins and Minerals:

This is a four-course sequence that aims to teach students the basic science that underlies the role of nutrients in physiology, biochemistry, and in diet and disease

relationships. Concepts in the area of nutrition, physiology, endocrinology, biochemistry and cellular and molecular biology are routinely discussed in an attempt to stress the integrated nature of nutrition science. Students are also taught to read and interpret the primary nutrition science literature. Class discussion and technical writing skills are emphasized.

b. NTR 673, Nutrition Research Methods:

This course covers the scientific research process, research ethics, and study design and analysis, and utilizes the primary scientific literature to introduce students to diverse research techniques used in cellular, small animal, and human experimental and community-based studies in nutrition. Included are orientation to research methodologies, critical analysis of the literature, ethical use of human (IRB) and animal (IACUC) models, and policy in nutrition.

c. NTR 609, Seminar:

This course brings NTR faculty and graduate students together to learn about recent developments in applied and basic nutrition. Seminars are presented by UNCG faculty, graduate students, and colleagues from other academic, industrial, and federal research institutions. Topics are varied to provide a balance between basic and applied topics in nutrition. NTR 609 may be taken for either one (NTR 609A) or two (NTR 609B) credits per semester and for multiple semesters. Enrollment for one (1) credit requires attendance at the weekly department seminar, participation in discussions, and submission of a written summary and critical evaluation for presentations. Students enrolled for two credits (NTR 609B) also meet these requirements. In addition, they either present a seminar about their own research activities or develop a scholarly essay on a topic from recent literature and then present a seminar. All Doctoral students must present a minimum of two seminars, one of which must concern their doctoral research activities. Faculty assigned to this course work closely with students to improve their written and oral communication skills. All students must present their seminars on the dates arranged with the instructor as scheduled. Failure to do so will result in an automatic "F" in the course. If the student is scheduled to present a thesis or dissertation seminar, he or she must present the data he or she has gathered at the time of the presentation regardless of his or her actual defense date.

C. Grading Policy:

Most content courses are graded on a scale of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, F/WF. The grade of "A" is awarded for "superior" performance and the grade of "B" is awarded for "very good" or "good" performance. A grade of "C" indicates that one's performance has been weak and marginal relative to the expectations of graduate students.

An overall average of "B" is required (equivalent to a 3.0 grade point average) for completion of a graduate degree program at UNCG. All grades except S and U will be counted in all courses that are attempted and carry graduate degree credit. No more than 6 semester hours of credit evaluated as C+ (2.3) and/or C (2.0) may be applied toward the minimum hours required of the Master's degree. However, this is not encouraged. Grades in all courses applied toward the

doctorate must be B (3.0) or better and additional hours must be taken for any hours earned with a grade of B- (2.7) or less.

Because grades of “C” are discouraged, the Graduate Committee will review the progress of students in any of the degree programs who receive a “C” in two or more classes. Students who receive a "C" in three or more courses, an “F” in two or more courses, or an “F” in one course and a “C” in two or more courses will be automatically terminated from the program. Students should refer to the University Catalog to learn about the University policy regarding withdrawing from courses and the grade of incomplete.

Students who are working on their thesis or dissertation research will receive "IP" (in progress) grades for their enrollment in 699/799 until they have completed the research. Upon completion, the "IP" will revert to a "S" (satisfactory) or a "U" (unsatisfactory). The grade of "I" may be given in content courses where the student is unable, for reasons beyond the student's control, to complete course requirements by the end of the term in which the course was offered. The "I" may be removed by completion of the deferred requirements in a time set by the instructor or within six months from the last day of examinations in the term, in which the course was taken. An "I" not removed within this time limit automatically becomes an "F".

D. Policy on General Nutrition Competency:

Students must demonstrate that they have mastered the information that is normally taught in an introductory human nutrition course to remain enrolled in the Graduate Program in Nutrition. This can be accomplished in one of two ways. First, the student may take an introductory human nutrition course (3 credit hour equivalent) prior to enrolling in the UNCG Graduate Program in Nutrition (e.g., a course taken as part of the undergraduate degree requirements). Second, the student may demonstrate mastery of the knowledge by getting a grade of “B” or better on all the tests and assignments that are normally taken in the UNCG Department of Nutrition course in introductory nutrition (NTR 213). The student may take these exams as part of the course or may take the tests following a period of self-study. **Regardless, the student must attempt to meet the general nutrition requirement by the end of the first semester following enrollment.** A student who fails to demonstrate mastery of general nutrition knowledge will be given one additional attempt to demonstrate his or her ability. Following two failed attempts, the student will be terminated from the Graduate Program in Nutrition. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition will monitor this process with the student.

Graduate students who have no previous background in nutrition, regardless of the GA or RA status, must meet an additional standard related to basic nutrition knowledge. This standard can be met by taking each of the tests and complete each of the assignments in NTR 213 (or NTR413 or NTR560). For GAs for NTR213 courses, these tests and assignments must be completed at least two weeks prior to the scheduled exam date or assignment due date that has been set for students enrolled in NTR 213. This will help ensure that the GA is capable of properly advising students.

E. Waiving Course Requirements:

Occasionally a student may have a significant amount of practical experience that directly supersedes courses that are a part of the Graduate Program in Nutrition's degree requirements. For example, a student may have acquired a significant number of technical or clinical skills in the workplace. Under these conditions a student may wish to request to have a specific course

requirement waived. Waiving a course requirement does not reduce the total number of courses or credits that a student needs to graduate. If you have practical experience that you feel eliminates the need to take some of the M.S. or Ph.D. requirements, you must first have the proposed waiver approved by your advisor and Advisory Committee. Following this approval, you should make a written request to the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition. Your advisor must sign the request. The request should include a detailed description of the practical experience and should outline how this experience relates to the course to be waived. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition will examine the materials you provide and decide whether the experience justifies a waiver. If acceptable, you must take additional (elective) courses or research credits in place of any waived course. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition will inform the Graduate School of the action taken. In rare cases, the Graduate School can overturn such decisions. If this occurs, the student must take the UNCG course for which a waiver was requested.

Some of the information in this section is university wide policy that was established by the UNCG Graduate School. Students should refer to the [University Catalog](#) to determine the details of these policies.

F. Transferring Courses Toward Graduate Degree Requirements:

Only courses that were not used to fulfill the requirements for another graduate degree can be used to replace course requirements in the Graduate Program in Nutrition. If you have taken graduate courses in another department or at another university that you wish to substitute for some of the department's M.S. or Ph.D. requirements, you must first have these courses approved by your Committee. Following this approval, you should make a written request to the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition. Your advisor must sign the request. Within this request you should include:

- copies of course syllabi
- a list of required textbooks and readings
- any other materials that describe the content of the courses

The materials you provide will be examined by the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition to decide whether the courses are acceptable for substitution. If acceptable, they can be entered on your transcript according to the university's policy for "transfer credit" and you will not have to take additional (elective) courses in their place. If the substituted courses were counted toward an earlier-received degree, the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition will specify whether additional courses will have to be taken to meet the minimum number of semester hours required for the degree program. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition will inform the Graduate School of the action taken. In rare cases, the Dean of the Graduate School can overturn such decisions. If this occurs, the student must take the UNCG course for which a substitution was requested.

G. Continuous Enrollment Policy:

The Graduate School requires that you pursue your graduate degree continuously from the time of entry through the completion of all required course work including the thesis (699) or dissertation (799). This [policy](#) is clearly stated in the beginning of the [University Catalog](#). It states that you should be enrolled for coursework that has been approved for your Plan of Study each Fall and Spring semester during the academic year, or one semester during the academic year in combination with one Summer session. If a student has completed all of the course

requirements for the degree, including all credit hours for the M.S. thesis (NTR 699) or doctoral dissertation (NTR 799), and they have not completed the thesis, dissertation, or passed the M.S. non-thesis comprehensive exam, they are required to enroll in a credit course each and every semester until the thesis, dissertation, or exam is completed and they have graduated. The proper course for this additional requirement is NTR 801 if they are completing a M.S. thesis or NTR 802 if they are completing a Ph.D. thesis. M.S. Non-thesis students who have not passed the exam should register for NTR 803. NTR 801, 802, and 803 are variable credit courses. It is up to the faculty supervisor of the research or academic advisor to determine how many credit hours per semester of these courses are needed (See [University Catalog](#), [Academic Regulations](#), for more details).

All thesis and dissertation students must be enrolled in either 699/799 or 801/802 for credit during the semester in which they complete their graduate work and are scheduled to receive their degrees (Note: This includes summer.) If you have been admitted with full graduate standing to a graduate degree program but have not completed any 500-level or above courses at the University for two consecutive semesters, or a semester and a summer session, you will be considered to have withdrawn from the curriculum (see section on Leave of Absence below). At that point, you will be required to file an application for readmission to the Graduate School to resume the course of study. A student who withdraws will be required to comply with regulations and requirements in effect at the time of readmission to the Graduate School.

H. Leave of Absence:

Graduate students may choose not to enroll in the University for one semester in a calendar year and they will still maintain continuing student status. Students who wish to be absent for more than one semester (summer is counted as one semester) must apply for (and receive) a leave of absence. If a student does not enroll for two or more continuous semesters and does not have an approved leave of absence, the student will be terminated from the program. Such a student may apply for readmission through the Graduate School but must first receive the endorsement of the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition. An **Educational Leave of Absence** is appropriate for students who will be engaged for the majority of the leave time in an activity, other than attending an accredited college or university, which is directly related to their formal academic careers. Students must complete three steps for an educational leave of absence: (1) apply in advance for the educational leave of absence, (2) be recommended by the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition, and (3) gain the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. Students can get application forms from the Department or Graduate School. Refer to the [University Catalog](#) for additional information about leaves of absence.

I. Establishing In-state Residency for Tuition Purposes:

Residency for tuition purposes is defined by North Carolina state statute. To qualify as a resident of North Carolina for tuition purposes you must have established legal residence ("domicile") in North Carolina and maintained that legal residence for at least 12 months before you apply for classification as a North Carolina resident. In addition to this 12-month physical presence requirement, there are numerous other factors that must be considered in determining whether an individual is a resident for tuition purposes.

Domicile is a legal term defined as a place where a person intends to remain and live permanently, and the place a person intends to return to after any absence. Permanency is the key. Thus, a person who lives in a place for a temporary purpose, for a vacation or to attend

college and who intends to live elsewhere when that purpose is accomplished, is not considered to be a legal resident for tuition purposes.

To obtain an in-state residency status for tuition purposes, University Administrators must be able to conclude from the information you provide them that your intent is to make North Carolina your permanent dwelling place. Rather than a single action, it is a cluster of events that must produce a preponderance of circumstantial evidence suggesting your intent to remain in North Carolina permanently. In other words, have you done the kinds of things that a permanent resident would do, or have you been acting like a temporary visitor? Each case has its own set of facts and there is no set checklist of items that will guarantee that you will be classified as a resident for tuition purposes. However, some important questions that are likely to be asked are:

- Do you have a current North Carolina Driver's License?
- Is your vehicle registered in North Carolina?
- Are you registered to vote in North Carolina?
- Where and when did you last vote?
- Where do you keep your personal property?
- Have you filed a North Carolina Income Tax return indicating that you were a resident during the last tax year?
- Do you own real estate in North Carolina?
- Do you participate in or volunteer for community activities away from the campus?
- Where did you live before enrolling in an institution of higher learning?
- Are you financially independent of your parents?

This is not a complete list, but it should give you an indication of the types of factors that will be looked at in deciding your residency status. Thus, to qualify for in-state tuition for a given term, you must prove the following:

- a. That you established your bona fide domicile in North Carolina 12 months before the beginning of the term in which you are seeking in-state residency status through:
 1. Being physically present in the state,
 2. Performing acts which support your intent to make North Carolina your permanent residence, and
 3. Performing acts which support the contention that you are not in North Carolina solely to attend a college or university program; and
- b. That you have maintained your domicile in North Carolina for at least 12 continuous months.
- c. You intend to make North Carolina your permanent home indefinitely (rather than being in North Carolina solely to attend college).

The [NC Residency Determination Service](#) (RDS) is the entity responsible for all classifications of residency for tuition purposes in North Carolina. Most graduate students applying for admission and seeking a residency determination for in-state tuition or state grant purposes will need to use RDS. To do this, students should create an online account with the NC Residency Determination Service website to complete the residency determination process. There are a few cases where students do not need to request a residency classification from RDS and are listed on the RDS website. Students can find information about the process under the

[NDS FAQ page](#). Students can contact the RDS toll-free at 844-319-3640, and via email at rsdinfo@ncresidency.org.

J. Changing Committee Members or Advisors (M.S. Thesis and Ph.D.):

Occasionally, a student may find it necessary to change advisors. Before this occurs, the student should first discuss the proposed change with the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition. Since M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students come to UNCG to work with a particular faculty member, changing advisors is generally discouraged, but can be arranged through consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition and the student's current advisor.

Changes in appointed MS thesis or doctoral committee can be made by filing and submitting the application to the Director of the Graduate Program in Nutrition who must approve any change in the composition of the committee. Such changes may be necessary because faculty leave the University, because your research focus changes, or because scheduling conflicts make the original committee structure untenable. It is inadvisable to change a committee between the approval of a proposal (M.S. thesis or Ph.D.) and completion of the research, because the new member may wish to recommend changes that will delay completion of the degree.

K. Policy on Professional Impairment:

Nutrition faculty are responsible not only for the development of their students, but also to the profession and to the public. The faculty has a responsibility to teach and supervise their students, which is typically done in the context of an amicable relationship. However, they also have a responsibility to protect the public from incompetent professionals and to maintain the standards of the profession. Unfortunately, it is possible that not all students are capable of becoming competent professionals who will maintain standards of the profession. In these cases, faculty is obliged to act when they have determined the student is professionally impaired. Students who experience continued serious difficulties and do not function effectively in academic and/or interpersonal situations will be counseled early, made aware of career alternatives, and if necessary, dropped from the program.

a. Definition of Professional Impairment

Professional impairment has been "defined broadly as an interference in professional functioning that is reflected in one or more of the following ways: (a) an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior, (b) an inability to acquire professional standards skills in order to reach an acceptable level of competency, and (c) an inability to control personal stress, psychological dysfunction, and/or excessive emotional reactions that interfere with professional functioning" (Lamb et al. 1987. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice 18: 597-603).

Examples of behaviors which may be evidence of professional impairment include the following. The list contains examples, and is not intended to be definitive; (1) violation of professional standards or ethical codes, (2) inability or unwillingness to acquire and manifest professional skills at an acceptable level of competency, (3) behaviors that can reasonably be predictive of poor future professional functioning, such as extensive tardiness or poor compliance with supervisory requirements, (4) personal unsuitability to the profession, e.g., substance abuse, chronic and disabling

physical problems, (5) interpersonal behaviors and intrapersonal functioning that impair one's professional functioning such as psychopathology, inability to exercise good judgment, poor interpersonal skills, and pervasive interpersonal problems.

b. Possible Actions to Follow Manifestations of Professional Impairment

This list contains examples and is not intended to be definitive. These actions are not hierarchical and need not be applied in each case; (1) a formal reprimand, (2) an unsatisfactory grade (U) in a practicum course with the requirement that the course be repeated, whether it was an elective or required practicum, (3) personal therapy, (4) leave of absence, (5) required additional practicum or course work, (6) increased supervision (e.g., more frequent supervision, more than one supervisor), (7) formal probation, (8) recommendation of withdraw from the program or changing to another program, (9) recommendation of formal dismissal from the program by the Dean of The Graduate School.

c. Due Process; Evaluation of Professional Impairment

1. There is a written policy on professional impairment that is systematically distributed to all NTR graduate students, with signatures evidencing student review of the policy. Copies of this will be included in each student's folder.
2. Each student/dietetic intern will review this policy and sign a form verifying that she/he has read and understands the policy. The signed form will be kept in the student's permanent file at UNCG.
3. Non-compliance with the Policy on Professional Impairment will be reported to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee for follow-up.
4. Students will be notified by the Director of Graduate Studies of report(s) of non-compliance with the Policy on Professional Impairment, including descriptions of specific incidences that may evidence professional impairment, via written notification and/or in-person meeting. Such notification will be documented and placed in the student's departmental file.
5. The student evidencing professional impairment will usually be given an opportunity for remediation (although individual circumstances may not allow this, and this is not legally required), with specific descriptions of problems, suggestions for remediation, time limit, and notice of consequences if remediation is not successful, all noted in writing. Such written evaluation will also be placed in the student's departmental file. See Section III of this document: Program Retention and Remediation Procedure.
6. When the judgment is made that serious professional impairment exists and that the consequences to the student are major, the student may request a hearing in which the student may present his or her view of the situation. The hearing will be convened by the Director of the Graduate Program in Nutrition and will include members of the Graduate Committee in Nutrition, the member(s) of the faculty who are making judgments of serious professional impairment, the student's adviser, and the departmental chairperson.
7. Following a hearing, the student will receive written notification within one week that includes: the nature of the problem, opportunities for revision if any, the basis for the decision, and the opportunity for appeal. Such written evaluation will also be placed in the student's departmental file.
8. After receiving written notification, the student may request an appeal within 14

days to the Chairperson of the Department of Nutrition. The appeal panel will include some persons who are different from those making the original decision, such as a faculty member within the department or school, a faculty representative of The Graduate School, and a member of the faculty selected by the student.

9. The results of the hearing and appeal will be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Department of Nutrition, who may accept, reject, or modify the recommendations. If the Department Chairperson accepts the recommendation to change to student's program of study, or dismiss the student from the program, this recommendation will be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School who, upon further consideration, will notify the student in writing.

d. Nutrition Department Retention and Remediation Procedure for Dietetic Interns with Identified Performance Problems

1. When the Dietetic Internship (DI) Director is notified by the DI Site Director that a dietetic intern's performance problems exist, the DI Director and DI Site Director will schedule a meeting with the dietetic intern to discuss her/his performance.
2. If the supervised practice rotation site will allow the dietetic intern an opportunity for remediation, an action plan for improvement, including timelines for follow-up and re-evaluation of performance at the site for determination of achievement of action plan items, will be developed by the DI Director in consultation with the DI Site Director and Director of Graduate Studies. The action plan will be shared with and explained to the intern for formal agreement.
3. In the event that the dietetic intern's supervised practice rotation site is no longer willing to host the dietetic intern for the planned supervised practice experience, then the dietetic intern has two options: a) withdraw from the program; or b) request consideration to be placed at another supervised practice site, if available. If the intern is granted her/his request to be considered for placement at another available supervised practice site, an action plan for improvement, including timelines for follow-up and evaluation of performance at the new site for determination of achievement of action plan items, will be developed by the DI Director in consultation with the DI Site Director and Director of Graduate Studies. The action plan will be shared with and explained to the intern for formal agreement. The UNCG DI Program is not obligated to secure additional sites for a dietetic intern who is terminated from a supervised practice rotation due to performance problems and professional impairment. Failure to complete the DI program's core competencies and scheduled supervised practice hours will result in the dietetic intern's being unable to complete the DI program.
4. The DI Director will follow-up on the action plan at regular intervals. In consultation with the DI Site Director and dietetic intern, a determination will be made as to whether the intern is making progress on achievement of the action plan items. If it is determined that the dietetic intern failed to achieve the action plan items according to the timeline stated in the action plan, then the DI Director will request a meeting with the Graduate Committee and the dietetic intern to discuss her/his performance.
5. Following the meeting with the intern, the Graduate Committee will determine

whether to extend the timeline for improvement or recommend formal dismissal from the Dietetic Internship Program.

L. Responsibilities of Graduate, Research and Teaching Assistants:

All graduate students holding positions as a GA or RA or TA are expected to maintain the highest professional behavior during their assignments. Examples of professional impairment are cited above. Any problems encountered by the GA or RA or TA during the assignments, including performing duties outside the normal job description of a GA, RA or TA or being asked to work longer hours than previously arranged, should be reported to the Director of the Graduate Program in Nutrition as soon as possible. At the end of each semester (fall or spring), each student's performance will be evaluated during a faculty meeting, involving discussion of performance and specific rating by the following three categories: below, average and, above average performance. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition, specifically, will meet with students receiving a below average rating to discuss performance issues and potential strategies to improve and meet the GA or RA or TA responsibilities. A copy of the evaluation and potential strategies discussed with the Director will be placed in the student's departmental file.

GAs, RAs and TAs are generally expected to begin their work responsibilities approximately four working days before the classes officially begin and end their work responsibilities on the last day of final exams. Any exceptions to these start and stop dates must be requested to the Director of the Graduate Program in Nutrition 3 weeks prior to the beginning and end of each semester. GAs, RAs and TAs are not expected to perform their duties on official university holidays, nor are they expected to make up these hours during the semester. GAs, RAs and TAs are expected to follow the assistantship work schedule for each academic year.

M. Policy on Length of Departmental Stipend Support:

Departmental stipends and in-state/out-of-state tuition waivers are awarded on a yearly basis and support is not guaranteed beyond that year of support. Additionally, waivers are assigned separately from stipends, so a student might receive a stipend, but not a waiver. Awards for support beyond the first year are assessed each spring for the following academic year, based on student performance in the GA or RA position, student progress towards completion of their graduate program, availability of stipend funds and waivers, and needs of the department and/or research programs. In general, the following guidelines are utilized when considering multi-year stipend support:

- a. M.S. student can receive no more than *two academic years* of stipend and waiver support from departmental sources.
- b. Ph.D. student coming to UNCG with a M.S. degree can receive no more than *three academic years* of stipend and waiver support from departmental sources.
- c. Ph.D. student coming to UNCG without a M.S. degree can receive no more than *four years*, including summers, of stipend and waiver support from departmental sources.
- d. The Graduate Committee will consider exceptions to this policy on an individual basis only after the student's mentor has discussed the extenuating circumstances with the Graduate Committee as a whole. Furthermore, the mentor must provide written documentation of the student's progress throughout his or her graduate work as described in this document (i.e. timely completion of plan of study, proposal meetings, etc.).

N. Policy About Students Receiving Assistantships and Working Outside the Department:

A student who receives a full-time graduate assistantship (stipend) from the Department of Nutrition or other sources is not able to be employed by another employer. If a student is found to be employed outside the department and is receiving a full-time assistantship, they will lose her/his stipend, and tuition waiver(s) (if applicable).

O. Policy About Final Research Presentation for M.S. and Ph.D.:

All graduate students are required to present a publicly-announced seminar of their research within two weeks of their M.S. or Ph.D. defense meeting with their committee members. This defense seminar may fulfill the requirement of a research presentation in NTR 609, provided that 1) arrangements can be made regarding the ‘open door’ defense policy of this university, 2) the presentation is within two weeks of the final defense, and 3) committee members are present for the presentation, 4) student receives permission from the instructor for NTR 609, and 5) all arrangements for ‘public announcement’ of the defense seminar are handled by the student and/or their advisor. If these criteria are not met, NTR-609 graduate seminar will not substitute for a final defense presentation. The student is responsible for having a notice of the public seminar posted one week prior to the seminar. For Ph.D. students, this notice is in addition to the form that must be submitted to the Graduate School two weeks in advance of the public seminar.

V. Master of Science Non-thesis (M.S. Non-thesis) Program

A. M.S. Thesis Advisor and Committee:

The Director of Graduate Studies serve as the advisor and the Nutrition Graduate Committee is the advisory committee. While this committee will guide you through your program, you are ultimately responsible for fulfilling the degree requirements and for completing all paperwork and other requirements prior to graduation.

This non-thesis, professional degree program requires at least **40** semester hours of course work. It is designed to prepare students for practitioner, teaching, extension, consulting, or administrative positions in dietetics, education, industry, or government.

A written comprehensive examination of core content knowledge must be passed near the end of the program of study. Required and elective course requirements are listed below. While a minimum number of semester hours have been established, students are encouraged to take additional courses to enhance the breadth or depth of their education and to improve their employment opportunities. At least 26 hours must be in 600-level courses.

B. M.S. Non-thesis Course Work:

a. Required Core (14 hours minimum)

- NTR 609 – Seminar in Food and Nutrition (3)
- NTR 625 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism (2)
- NTR 626 – Energy, Carbohydrate, Lipid Metabolism (2)
- NTR 627 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components (2)
- NTR 628 – Vitamins and Minerals (2)

- STA 571 – Statistical Methods for Research I (3) **OR**
- STA 661 – Advanced Statistics in Behavioral Science Research I (3) **OR** other graduate level statistic course (see current University Catalog)

b. Research Techniques (6 hours minimum)

- NTR 673 – Nutrition Research Methodology (3) **AND**
at least 3 hours in one or more of the following research courses:
- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition (1-6)
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition (3)
- NTR 653 – Problem in Food and Nutrition (2-4)
- NTR 670 – Research Skill Development (2-6)

c. Electives (20 hours minimum)

The student will select at least 20 hours from other 500 or 600 level courses in NTR, HEA or related area of study as approved by the student's advisory committee. Those students who are selected into the UNCG Dietetic Internship program can use the DI courses up to 15 student credit hours: NTR 602 (3 hours), NTR 693 (3 hours), Supervised Practicum components: NTR 606A (3 hours), 606B (3 hours), and 606C (3 hours), towards the elective requirements. See Section on VIII. Post-Baccalaureate Certificate – Dietetic Internship Program of this manual for more information.

C. Comprehensive Examination:

1. **Timing:** The Master's non-thesis comprehensive examination is administered to assess whether M.S. non-thesis students have achieved a reasonable, comprehensive mastery of the subject matter of nutrition. The exam is offered once a year, generally in the Spring semester. It may be taken after two-thirds of the Master's program requirements have been completed or by permission from the Director of Graduate Studies, but not until NTR 625, 626, 627, 628, and 673 have been completed with a grade of C or better (or a projected grade of C or better). The student's plan of study must have been submitted and approved by the Graduate committee in order to be eligible to take this exam. *Students must inform the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition, in writing, of their desire to take the exam one month prior to the end of the semester he or she wishes to take the exam.*
2. **Format of the exam:** The exam is a written, essay-based test that focuses on the application and integration of the information students learned from coursework. The test will consist of 5-7 essay questions. Two or three of these questions will be related to the core information on nutrition. This information includes topics such as:
 - Nutrient function/deficiency/status and assessment
 - Mechanisms of nutrient-disease relationship
 - Evaluation of research
 - Formulation and testing a hypothesis

In addition, questions will be related to more applied issues of nutrition, e.g.:

- Advanced/special dietary needs due to pregnancy, activity, disease, etc. (you will not be asked to design a diet)
 - Your opinion as a professional regarding a controversial topic in nutrition
 - Program/Policy decision making (educational issues, community/public health needs)
 - Dietary guidelines/RDA/MyPlate/Food label
3. **Comprehensive Exam Performance Evaluation:** The Graduate Committee serves as the examining committee and will read and evaluate the exam. Results are normally available within one week. Performance will be assessed based upon ability to communicate thoughts, as well as ability to utilize and integrate facts. Passing each question will be generally defined as “being able to clearly articulate major concepts in the breadth and depth required to demonstrate knowledge and skills, and application (if appropriate) to answer the question.” A student must get a passing assessment in all the questions asked in the exam. If a student fails any question on the exam, that student will take an oral exam with the Graduate Committee. The oral exam can include questions about any nutrition-related topic. If a student does not pass the exam, written or oral, he or she may retake the written exam at the next regularly scheduled exam administration. Only one re-examination is permitted. Students who do not pass the exam the second time will not receive their degree. Please note that admission to the Dietetic Internship Program is contingent upon a student’s passing the exam prior to beginning the Dietetic Internship program.

D. Applying for Graduation:

Students must make a formal application for graduation, and pay a graduation fee, to The Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes of the term in which the degree will be granted. The specific date for this deadline can be found on the [University Registrar’s Office website](#) for the official academic calendar each semester. All applications for graduation are completed online via UNCGenie, under the “Student” tab, “Student Records”, and “Apply to Graduate” link. Students should refer to the [Graduate School website for Graduation Applications](#) for additional instructions for this process. Degrees are granted at the end of each semester and the second summer session. Students who do not graduate in the semester for which they originally applied may be charged an additional fee when they reapply for graduation.

E. Tentative Time-line for the M.S. Non-thesis:

<i>Action</i>	<i>Time</i>
Complete and get the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Committee approval for the Plan of Study and the MSN Committee Appointment form	During 1 st year
Submit both the forms to the graduate school	During 1 st year

Comprehensive Exam	<p>After the majority (2/3) of required graduate coursework is completed, specifically only after completion of NTR 625, 626, 627, 628, and 673.</p> <p>And meeting other criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ have passing grade (C or better) or a <u>projected</u> passing grade in NTR 673 and the NTR 625 to 628 series; ▪ Plan of study is approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition or student will <u>not</u> be permitted to sit for the exam, and; ▪ Provide written notification of wanting to take the exam to the Director of Graduate Studies.
Apply for graduation**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of the first week of classes in the semester planning to graduate (e.g., the first week of the Spring semester for May graduation, see current Academic Calendar).

***Application for graduation may happen before or after the comprehensive exam depending on when plan to graduate.*

VI. Master of Science Thesis (M.S. Thesis) Program

A. M.S. Thesis Advisor:

Students will select M.S. thesis advisors based upon shared research interests. Generally, this is done well before the student arrives on campus. However, *students should not continue in the M.S. thesis program if they cannot define a faculty member and a research project by the end of the first semester.* The advisor chairs the thesis committee and guides in designing the thesis project.

On rare occasions, a person who is not a departmental faculty member advises student on the thesis research project. However, Nutrition faculty member must be chosen to be the Chair of the Committee.

B. Thesis Committee:

The committee members participate in evaluating student's thesis proposal and the thesis, both in oral and written format. The committee consists of at least three faculty members, at least two of whom, including the Advisor (chair), must be a faculty member from the Department of Nutrition. *Faculty from other departments or institutions with official adjunct appointments to the Nutrition department are considered faculty in Nutrition.* The Thesis Committee must be formed during your first year in the program. Along with the Plan of Study form, the Committee Appointment form are signed by the thesis committee and the Director of Graduate Studies. A copy of the completed forms is retained in your file within the department.

C. M.S. Thesis Course Work:

The M.S. thesis degree program requires the completion of a minimum of **37** semester hours of course work and thesis research beyond the Baccalaureate degree. The degree program must be completed within five years of enrollment. Required and elective course work and research are listed below. While a minimum number of semester hours have been established, students are encouraged to take additional courses to enhance the breadth or depth of their education and to improve their employment opportunities. At least 26 hours must be in 600-level courses.

a. Required Core (15 hours minimum)

- NTR 609 – Seminar in Food and Nutrition (4)
- NTR 625 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism (2)
- NTR 626 – Energy, Carbohydrate, Lipid Metabolism (2)
- NTR 627 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components (2)
- NTR 628 – Vitamins and Minerals (2)
- STA 571 – Statistical Methods for Research I (3) **OR**
- STA 661 – Advanced Statistics in Behavioral Science Research I (3) **OR** Other graduate level statistics course (see current [University Catalog](#))

b. Research Techniques (9 hours minimum)

- NTR 673 – Nutrition Research Methodology (3) **AND**
at least 6 hours in one or more of the following research courses:
- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition (1-6)
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition (3)
- NTR 653 – Problem in Food and Nutrition (2-4)
- NTR 670 – Research Skill Development (2-6)

c. Electives (7 hours minimum)

With approval of the thesis advisor and committee, a student will select one **3** hour course from any other NTR courses at the 500 or 600 level and at least **4** additional hours in either NTR or other science courses at the 500 or 600 level.

d. Thesis (6 hours): Capstone Experience

- NTR 699 – Thesis (6)*
*Maximum credit allowed for the thesis is 6 semester hours. Additional 801 hours may be required but will not count toward the degree.

D. Master's Thesis Proposal:

As soon as you and your advisor have formed preliminary plans for a Master's research project, you should prepare a proposal for approval by your Thesis Committee. It is expected that you will work closely with your advisor to complete your proposal. Your advisor should work with you on this document before it is submitted to the committee. The proposal must be submitted to the committee members at least one week prior to the proposal review meeting. At this meeting the committee will discuss the merits of the proposal and suggest changes intended to improve the quality of the research. The proposal meeting is intended to be advisory, not evaluative, and frequently leads to important improvements in the research project. The

committee may approve the research as proposed or may ask for revisions in which case another proposal meeting may be required.

Nutrition Proposal Format Guidelines:

The thesis proposal is a description of the research you intend to conduct for your M.S. degree. It should contain a clear conceptual basis for the research, as well as a concise description of the methods to be used to complete the research. Because M.S. thesis projects are often assigned to students by their advisors, cooperation between the advisor and the student is essential to the completion of a quality thesis proposal. Students should write the proposal during their first year of enrollment in the program. The proposal should be no longer than 20, double-spaced, type written pages of text, figures, or tables; references are not counted towards the page limits. The font size should be 12 point. Within the proposal, three sections should be clearly delineated:

a. Introduction (3 pages maximum). This section describes the rationale and the intellectual basis for the proposed research. M.S. thesis proposals should clearly define a research hypothesis, as well as one or two specific aims related to the hypothesis that is to be accomplished by the proposed research.

b. Review of Literature (12 pages maximum). This section explains the research that has been conducted by other investigators pertaining to the proposed research. Students should avoid simply listing results of published research. They should interpret and integrate these studies and clearly explain how these studies led to the formulation of the research hypothesis and the specific aims of the proposed thesis research.

c. Study Design and Methodology (5 pages recommended). In this section, students should describe the study(ies) that will be used to test the research hypothesis and complete the specific aims of the proposed thesis research. The description of methods should be sufficient to demonstrate that the student has a clear understanding of the procedure. They are not intended to serve as a step-by-step protocol to complete a given procedure.

E. Master's Thesis Defense:

When you have completed data collection and data analysis for your M.S. thesis project, it must be written as a thesis and submitted to your M.S. Thesis Committee. Typically, the advisor works very closely with the student until he or she is satisfied that the write-up is sufficiently complete for a meeting of the entire committee. At such time, the student arranges a suitable time and place for the meeting. The student must provide committee members with a draft of the thesis at least one week prior to the defense date. In the great majority of cases, the Master's defense meeting will result in a number of suggested or required content related revisions in the thesis. The specific format requirements set forth by the Graduate School are listed in the Appendix B (The UNCG Graduate School Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Requirements).

The thesis defense will begin with a presentation of the thesis research. This portion of the process will be open to the university community and will be announced through the department office. After a period of open questioning by all that are in attendance, a closed

session will commence where committee members will ask the student questions related to the thesis research and the intellectual foundations of the research. After the questioning, the committee will deliberate to assess the performance of the student. Three outcomes are possible: acceptance, provisional acceptance, and rejection. Acceptance of the thesis indicates that the student has met the standard set forth for thesis by the department. Minor revisions may still be required of an acceptable thesis prior to submission. However, the major advisor can supervise these revisions. Provisional acceptance indicates that there are substantial format, content, or analysis problems with the thesis that make it unacceptable as written, but that upon revision, the document will likely be acceptable. The committee will outline the problems in writing and present them to the student. Prior to acceptance the student must convene an additional meeting to explain the revisions to the entire committee. All committee members must approve of the revised thesis. Provisional acceptance may also be granted if the student's thesis is fully acceptable, but his or her ability to defend the thesis is inadequate. In such cases, the committee will clearly define the steps needed for the student to overcome the inadequacy. Inability of a student to rectify any inadequacies will result in a rejection of the thesis. A thesis is rejected if the student has not adequately conducted, analyzed, or interpreted the research that was proposed. In such cases, the student will be either dismissed from the program or will be required to initiate a new thesis project.

F. Filing the Thesis with the Graduate School:

The thesis must conform to rules and formatting guidelines established by the Graduate School. The guidelines include the margin, the font, page numbering and related requirements. It is strongly recommended to build-in some time in formatting thesis and meeting graduate school formatting guidelines, available in [The Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#) from the Graduate School.

Students must file the thesis electronically via the [online submission system](#) available on The Graduate School's website. The approved electronic submission must conform to the format requirements stated in the guide and must be uploaded by the deadline date as specified in the [academic calendar](#). The student must pay associated publishing and microfilming fees. Your committee members may also request a paper copy of your thesis.

The electronic submission has two components: submitting the approval copy and submitting the final copy and following are the key steps for final submission of thesis. Again, it is strongly recommended to build-in some time to complete the following steps or successfully do the electronic submission of thesis to the graduate school by the set deadline.

The Approval Copy

1. Submit the approval copy of the thesis (PDF file) via the online submission site. Please note that there is a deadline for the submission of the approval copy. See the [academic calendar](#).
2. The Thesis/Dissertation Evaluator will respond to your online submission, informing you of any necessary corrections.
3. Make the corrections in your original document and save again as a PDF.

The Final Copy

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit the final copy of the thesis (PDF file) via the online submission site. Please note that there is a deadline for the submission of the final copy. See the academic calendar. 2. Mail or deliver the signed originals of the Title Page and Approval Page and the completed ETD Release form directly to The Graduate School, UNCG, 241 Mossman Bldg, 1202 Spring Garden Street, Greensboro, NC 27412 |
|--|

G. Applying for Graduation:

Students must make a formal application for graduation, and pay a graduation fee, to the Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes of the term in which the degree will be granted. The specific date for this deadline can be found on the [academic calendar](#) for each semester. All applications for graduation are completed online via UNCGenie, under the “Student” tab, “Student Records”, and “Apply to Graduate” link. Students should refer to the [Graduate School website for Graduation Applications](#) for additional instructions for this process. Degrees are granted at the end of each semester and the second summer session. Students who do not graduate in the semester for which they originally applied may be charged an additional fee when they reapply for graduation.

H. Tentative Time-line for the M.S. Thesis:

<i>Action</i>	<i>Time</i>
Selection of major advisor	Done generally before the starting the program
Selection of thesis committee members	By end of the 1 st year
Plan of Study approved by advisor and committee (Submit plan of study and related forms to the graduate school)	By end of the 1 st year
Thesis proposal written and presented to the committee and	Before the start of the 3 rd semester
Thesis written and presented to the committee	During the 4 th semester (no later than 1 week prior to defense meeting)
Thesis defense meeting	During the 4 th semester
Submit MS Thesis Oral Exam Results form to the Graduate School (if approved)	Following the Thesis defense
File final submission of Thesis to the Graduate School	By deadline set by the Graduate School each semester, see current Academic Calendar
Applying for graduation**	By the end of the first week of the semester in which the degree is sought (e.g. the first week of the Spring semester for May graduation)

**Application for graduation may happen before defending the proposal depending on when plan to graduate.

VII. Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program

The Ph.D. is a degree that trains students to conduct research in one of three areas of specialization: (1) Community Nutrition and Nutrition Education, (2) Human/Clinical Nutrition, and (3) Cellular and Molecular Nutrition. While research is the primary focus of the Ph.D., many people do not go on to research careers after completing their degrees. Thus, it is the intellectual (e.g. integrative thinking, organization, logic, analytical approaches to problem solving, etc.) and communication (both written and oral) skills developed during the research endeavor that are generally considered to be the most prized end-products of the Ph.D. training.

A. Selecting Your Ph.D. Dissertation Advisor:

Students will select Ph.D. dissertation advisors based upon shared research interests. This is routinely done for Ph.D. students well before they arrive on campus. However, *students should not continue in the Ph.D. program if they cannot define a faculty member and a research project by the end of the first semester.* In rare cases, a student will be permitted to declare a Ph.D. advisor who conducts research outside the department. This can only be done with the prior approval of the Graduate Committee. Requests for such an arrangement should be submitted prior to entry into the program and must include a description of the proposed research project. The proposed off-site advisor must sign the request and a letter from the proposed advisor must accompany the request. If such an arrangement is accepted, the student must form his or her Dissertation Committee within the first semester, without exception. Such students will also get an academic advisor, who will be a member of the Dissertation Committee and who will guide the student and the non-departmental research advisor through the UNCG Graduate Program.

B. Selecting Your Ph.D. Dissertation Committee:

Students will select a dissertation committee as early as possible in the degree process, no later than the end of one full year of study. The committee consists of a minimum of four persons, including the advisor. The selection of committee members should be a joint decision between student and advisor. At least two members of the committee (including the chair) must be full members of the Graduate Faculty, and no more than one person outside the department faculty can be appointed to a four-member committee. *Faculty from other departments or institutions with official adjunct appointments to the Nutrition department are considered Nutrition faculty.* Committee members should be chosen based on their expertise relative to the student's area of specialization and dissertation research. A person with specific research expertise is in a better position to assist the student and to examine the student's competence and progress through the degree process. After prospective committee members have consented to serve on the committee, the student should file the Doctoral Advisory/Dissertation [Committee Appointment form](#) with the Graduate School. The student is responsible for obtaining all the necessary signatures for approval.

C. Changing from the M.S. Program into the Ph.D. Program:

If you are currently a M.S. student, but wish to change to the Ph.D. program, you need to submit a new application to the graduate school. The Nutrition graduate faculty members will evaluate your application and assess your prospects as a Ph.D. student.

D. Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Course Work:

The Ph.D. degree program requires a minimum of **63** hours beyond the Baccalaureate degree. Required and elective course work and research are listed below. *At least 75% of all coursework, exclusive of dissertation hours, must be at the 600 or 700 level.* Asterisked (*) courses could have been fulfilled at the Master's level. Doctoral students who have completed a Master's degree program in another institution or department must fulfill (or have comparable substitutions for) all of these requirements before commencing doctoral study. The degree program must be completed within seven years of enrollment. While a minimum number of semester hours have been established, students are encouraged to take additional courses to enhance the breadth or depth of their education and to improve their employment opportunities.

a. Required Core Courses (16 hours minimum)

- NTR 609 – Seminar in Food and Nutrition (8)*
- NTR 625 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism (2)*
- NTR 626 – Energy, Carbohydrate, Lipid Metabolism (2)*
- NTR 627 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components (2)*
- NTR 628 – Vitamins and Minerals (2)*

b. Research Techniques (21 hours minimum)

With approval of the Advisory/Dissertation Committee, a student will select a minimum of one statistics course (**3-4** hours, i.e. STA 661), NTR 673 (Nutrition Research Methodology – **3** hours), and two or three additional courses for developing technical competency to enhance research skills and competitiveness (**8** hours minimum, i.e. BIO 594, STA 662). Students will also take at least **6** hours in one or more of the following research courses:

- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition (1-6)
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition (3-12)
- NTR 653 – Problems in Food and Nutrition (2-4)
- NTR 670 – Research Skill Development (2-6)

Additional Statistics (as recommended by student's advisory committee)

c. Electives (8 hours minimum)

With approval of the Advisory/Dissertation Committee, a student will select **6** hours from other NTR courses at the 500-700 level and an additional **2** hours minimum in NTR or a supporting program at the 500-700 level.

e. Research and Dissertation (18 hours minimum)

- NTR 790 – Independent Doctoral Research (6)
- NTR 799 – Dissertation Problem (12 minimum/24 maximum) [Students cannot register for NTR 799 until they have passed their oral and written proposal defense]

f. Comprehensive Examination

The defense of the dissertation proposal represents the comprehensive exam.

* Students who have completed their M.S. degree in the Department of Nutrition at UNCG will have already completed the majority of the Required Core Courses, Nutrition Research Methodology, and at least one statistics course. Therefore, their program of study will

include primarily Research Techniques credits and Research and Dissertation credit hours. Credit received for courses taken as part of the M.S. degree cannot be counted towards the Ph.D. degree. The majority of credit hours must be at the 600-700 level. Their **minimal** coursework is shown below:

a. Required Core Courses (6 hours minimum)

- NTR 609 – Seminar in Food and Nutrition (6)

b. Research Techniques (14 hours minimum)

- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition (1-6)
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition (3-12)
- NTR 653 – Problems in Food and Nutrition (2-4)
- NTR 670 – Research Skill Development (2-6)
- Additional Statistics (as recommended by student’s advisory committee)

c. Electives (8 hours minimum)

With approval of the Advisory/Dissertation Committee, a student will select **6** hours from other NTR courses at the 500-700 level and an additional **2** hours minimum in NTR or a supporting program at the 500-700 level.

e. Research and Dissertation (18 hours minimum)

NTR 790 – Independent Doctoral Research (6)

NTR 799 – Dissertation Problem (12 minimum/24 maximum) [Students cannot register for NTR 799 until they have passed their oral and written proposal defense]

f. Comprehensive Examination

The defense of the dissertation proposal represents the comprehensive exam.

E. Gaining Graduate Teaching Experience:

NTR 645 (Teaching Practicum in Nutrition) is strongly recommended if you are interested in academic teaching as a career. Thus, you will have some supervised teaching experience prior to leaving our graduate program. Usually, the student takes the Teaching Practicum with a faculty member who is teaching an undergraduate course during the desired semester. The student serves as a co-instructor, taking increasing responsibility for class lectures as the semester progresses. The student may spend the first several weeks observing the class and discussing the class’s instructional needs with the supervising professor. During the middle weeks of the course, the student will begin to take responsibility for some of the lectures. The supervising faculty member will assess these lectures and the student will receive feedback from him/her after each lecture. During the last 5 or 6 weeks of the semester, the student may be teaching once a week.

F. Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy and the Dissertation Proposal:

Before a student can proceed to the dissertation, he or she must write a proposal stating the goals and aims of the dissertation research, which provides a detailed plan to carry out the objectives of the research. The Dissertation Committee must approve this proposal. The purpose of the Dissertation Proposal and defense is for the student to demonstrate that he or she has mastered technical writing skills and is able to synthesize material from courses and self-study into a plausible, testable hypothesis. A student must successfully defend his or her proposal

before the Dissertation Committee. Students should follow the guidelines and timelines presented below. For students who enter the Ph.D. program with a M.S. thesis degree, proposal defense will usually be within the first three semesters of attendance, while students who enter the Ph.D. program with a B.S. degree will usually defend the proposal within the first five semesters of attendance.

a. The dissertation proposal and defense:

Student will develop a Dissertation Proposal in consultation with his or her advisor/ research mentor and with the assistance of the Dissertation Committee. Briefly, the proposal is similar to a “seed” grant for an investigator who is initiating a new line of research. As such, the feasibility of the project will be evaluated based upon the student’s logical arguments that have been built upon the primary literature and historical data from the research mentors’ experiments. As a result, a greater emphasis will be placed on the skills that are needed to complete the proposed project and whether the student has acquired those skills or defined how he or she will acquire those skills. A high-quality proposal will be hypothesis-driven, rather than methods-driven.

The student has the responsibility to schedule the Dissertation Proposal defense. Students must submit the finished proposal two weeks prior to the scheduled defense date to give the committee ample opportunity to review and comment on the document. On the scheduled review day, the committee will assemble and provide written comments regarding the proposal to the committee chair. At this point, the proposal will be discussed in the presence of the student. The student must be prepared to defend the details of the proposal (e.g., logic, hypothesis, experimental design, etc.) and to discuss all issues regarding the scientific and intellectual foundations of the proposed research.

During the development of the proposal, the mentor is active and is expected to guide the student towards a worthwhile project. The mentor should also assist the student by discussing issues related to the research (e.g. philosophy, aims, and methodology) and by editing versions of the document as it develops. However, at the proposal defense the mentor plays a different role. If the research mentor is a full member of the Graduate Faculty and is the Chair of the Dissertation Committee, he or she will facilitate the meeting. In this role, the mentor will introduce the student, set the agenda for the meeting, and make sure that the defense proceeds in a timely and orderly fashion. Beyond that role, the mentor is only an observer during the dissertation defense. In other words, the mentor does not ask questions to the student related to the dissertation research and may not speak in an attempt to lead the student or clarify a student’s answer. After questioning has ended and the student leaves the room, the mentor will fully participate in the evaluation of the student’s performance. The reason for this policy is that the faculty wishes to ensure that the student can independently explain and defend the proposal.

Several factors will be utilized to assess whether a student has successfully defended his or her thesis (and is formally accepted into Ph.D. candidacy). First, the written proposal will be evaluated as a stand-alone document. In this case, the student’s ability to effectively communicate his or her ideas and research plan will be

evaluated based upon readability, clarity, logic, and completeness. Next, the student will be asked about the content of the proposal to determine whether he or she can clearly explain the details of the proposal. During this process the student will be expected to know the intellectual and scientific foundations that underlie the proposed research (e.g. educational theories, energy metabolism, gene expression). Finally, the student will be expected to defend the proposed work from criticism levied by the Dissertation Committee. The student's performance in these three areas is evaluated as an overall picture, not as three separate entities.

There are three possible outcomes to the proposal defense: acceptable, acceptable with the need for improvement, and unacceptable. An acceptable outcome indicates the student is prepared for Ph.D. candidacy and that his or her proposal can be viewed as an approved roadmap for completion of the dissertation. Thus, any major changes in an approved proposal should be discussed with, and approved by, the Dissertation Committee. Once the proposal is approved, the Dissertation Committee cannot require any major modifications of the dissertation during the defense (see section I. Defending the Dissertation below). When a proposal is deemed "acceptable with the need for some improvement", this is an indication that the idea and the experiments proposed are adequate, but that student performance in one of the three areas of evaluation was inadequate. The Dissertation Committee will provide a written evaluation that explains how the student is to "improve" and a timeframe within which the student must meet the conditions set by the committee. Common outcomes may require a student to take another course or revise the written proposal. Failure to meet the conditions of the Dissertation Committee within the time frame set by the committee may result in dismissal from the program. An unacceptable Dissertation Proposal lacks clarity and focus and is poorly presented and poorly defended. Following this outcome, a student may resubmit a revised proposal and set a new review date no earlier than 3 months and no later than 6 months after the initial review. If the second dissertation review also leads to an unacceptable rating, the student will be terminated from the program. Because the purpose of the Dissertation Proposal and review are to aid the student in the planning of the dissertation research, a completed dissertation will not be accepted until one year after an acceptable proposal has been submitted to the Dissertation Committee.

G. The Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal Format Guidelines:

The dissertation proposal is a description of the research you intend to conduct for your Ph.D. degree. It should contain a clear conceptual basis for the research, as well as a concise description of the methods to be used to complete the research. The proposal should be about 20-25 pages, double-spaced, type written, references are not counted towards the page limits; a 5 page appendix for tables and figures, and other items may be included. To clarify page limitation requirements, page numbering for the dissertation should start with 1, and should be placed on the bottom of the page. All proposals are to be submitted on standard 8.5 x 11 inch paper with typing on one side of the paper only. In addition, the margins must be at least 1 inch on all sides and the font size must be 12 point. Each student's major advisor will provide more specific guidance regarding format and content, which may vary from these general guidelines. The proposal should have the following elements:

a. Long-term Goals and Specific Aims (1 page). This section is a concise summary of the proposal. It should briefly clarify the importance of the area under study and explain the long-term goal of the project. The long-term goal could be a goal that is beyond the scope of the proposed project. The proposal should then identify 2-4 specific aims or research questions that address hypotheses directly related to the long-term goals. The experimental approach that will be used and the expected outcome of the proposed research should be stated.

b. Background and Significance (3-4 pages). The most significant published work in the field related to the long-term goals of the project should be clearly discussed. The gaps in knowledge or controversies in the field that justify the research questions should be clearly identified. Because of the page limitation, this section must be clearly focused, and it is not a broad review of literature. However, students will be expected to read more broadly in the areas related to their research.

c. Preliminary Studies (4-6 pages). Data generated by the student, or historical data from the mentor's research lab that are pertinent to the proposed research, should be included in this section. In addition to studies that support the need to study the research questions proposed, this section may also include data that demonstrate that the student has gained mastery of methodological procedures that are essential for the completion of the proposed project.

d. Research Design and Methods (12-14 pages). The hypotheses being tested, or the questions being asked, as well as the methodology being applied to the proposed project, must be stated explicitly. This section should include:

- A description of the studies proposed in the sequence in which they are to be performed.
- The techniques to be used to complete the studies. If a student has not yet done the technique, it should be clearly stated how the student proposes to acquire the skills.
- The means by which the data will be analyzed.
- The expected results.
- The pitfalls that may be encountered and potential alternatives.
- A timeframe for completion of the proposed work.

e. References. Key references cited in the proposal.

f. Appendices. Relevant research tools to be used for the project (e.g. questionnaires, screening tools, recruitment flyers, etc.)

Note: Students develop a more detailed Literature Review while preparing their dissertation proposal. This may be included as a separate section for the advisory committee's review.

H. Filing for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy:

When you have completed all required course work, apart from NTR 799, and have passed the dissertation defense, you may apply to the Graduate School for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. It is the responsibility of the student to complete this essential

step. Students who fail to submit the proper forms for admission to Ph.D. candidacy will not be permitted to graduate.

I. Defending the Dissertation:

It is the advisor's role to determine when the written dissertation is acceptable and defensible. A student cannot schedule a dissertation defense without the approval of the research advisor. As with the proposal, the final dissertation should not, in the advisor's view, need major foreseeable modifications. On the other hand, the student should understand that revisions would almost certainly be forthcoming. The student must give each committee member a copy of the dissertation no less than two weeks (10 business days) prior to the scheduled defense date. Students should follow the guidelines set forth by the UNCG Graduate School when preparing the thesis. These define the margin and type requirements needed to have a completed dissertation processed for an electronic copy. Additional format requirements set forth by the Graduate School are listed in Appendix B (The UNCG Graduate School Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Requirements).

The Graduate School requires that all Ph.D. students submit the Final Oral Examination Schedule form at least two weeks prior to the scheduled oral defense (see the [academic calendar](#)). The dissertation defense will begin with a presentation of the completed dissertation research. This portion of the process will be open to the university community and will be announced through the department office. After a period of open questioning by all that are in attendance, a closed session will commence where committee members will ask the student questions related to the dissertation research. Because the committee approved the dissertation proposal, further requirements that constitute major modification of the dissertation cannot be required to graduate. After the questioning, the committee will deliberate to assess the performance of the student. Three outcomes are possible: acceptance, provisional acceptance, and rejection. Acceptance of the dissertation indicates that the student has met the standards set forth for dissertation by the department. Minor revisions may still be required of an acceptable dissertation prior to submission to the Graduate School. However, the major advisor can supervise these revisions. Provisional acceptance indicates that there are substantial format, content, or analysis problems with the dissertation that make it unacceptable as written, but that upon revision, the document will likely be acceptable. The committee will outline the problems in writing and present them to the student. Prior to acceptance of a revised dissertation, the student must convene an additional meeting to explain the revisions to the entire committee. All committee members must approve of the revised dissertation. Inability of a student to rectify any inadequacies will result in a rejection of the dissertation. A dissertation is rejected if the student has not adequately conducted, analyzed, or interpreted the research that was proposed. In such cases, the student will be dismissed from the program or will be required to initiate a new dissertation project. When the committee accepts the dissertation, a form is filed with the Graduate School.

J. Filing the Dissertation with the Graduate School:

The process for submitting the dissertation to The Graduate School has two components: submitting the signed approval copy and submitting the final copy. Be sure to note the specific instructions and deadline date for the final dissertation submission to the Graduate School. These dates are available in the [academic calendar](#).

Students file the dissertation electronically via the [online submission system](#) available on The Graduate School’s website. In final form, the dissertation must comply with the rules prescribed by the Graduate School in addition to the requirements of the Department of Nutrition. The approved electronic submission must be uploaded by the deadline date as specified in the [academic calendar](#). Publication of the dissertation by ProQuest is required by The Graduate School. The candidate must pay associated publishing and microfilming fees. Your committee members may also request a paper copy for their files.

The Approval Copy –

1. Submit the approval copy of the dissertation (PDF file) via the online submission site. Please note that there is a deadline for the submission of the approval copy. See the [academic calendar](#).
2. Mail or deliver the signed originals of the Title Page and Approval Page to The Graduate School. Items must be received by the approval copy deadline.
3. The Thesis/Dissertation Evaluator will respond to your online submission, informing you of any necessary corrections. In some cases, The Graduate School will send you a link to “The Survey of Earned Doctorates.”
4. Make the corrections in your original document and save again as a PDF.

The Final Copy –

1. Submit the final copy of the dissertation (pdf file) via the online submission site. Please note that there is a deadline for the submission of the final copy. See the University calendar.
2. Mail or deliver the completed [ETD Release](#) form and the Survey of Earned Doctorates completion certificate, if provided to you by the Thesis/Dissertation Evaluator, directly to The Graduate School, UNCG, 241 Mossman Bldg, 1202 Spring Garden Street, Greensboro, NC 27412

K. Applying for Graduation:

Students must make a formal application for graduation, and pay a graduation fee, to The Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes of the term in which the degree is sought. The specific date for this deadline can be found on the [academic calendar](#) for each semester. All applications for graduation are completed online via UNCGenie, under the “Student” tab, “Student Records”, and “Apply to Graduate” link. Students should refer to the [Graduate School website for Graduation Applications](#) for additional instructions for this process. Degrees are granted at the end of each semester and the second summer session. Students who do not graduate in the semester for which they originally applied may be charged an additional fee when they reapply for graduation.

L. Tentative Time-line for the Ph.D.:

<i>Action</i>	<i>Time</i>
Selection of major advisor	Generally occurs prior to starting the program during acceptance in the program or application approval

Selection of Advisory Committee	By the end of the first year
Dissertation Proposal defense	By the end of the second year
Plan of study , Committee Appointment for Doctoral Dissertation form , Dissertation Topic Approval form signed by the advisor and committee	By the end of the second year (generally during proposal defense)
Submit the above 3 forms to the Graduate School	By the end of the second year (generally after the proposal defense)
Submit Results of Doctoral Preliminary Examinations form to the Graduate School	Following the successful completion and full approval of written and oral proposal defense by the advisor and the dissertation committee
Apply for candidacy (submit Application for Admission to Candidacy to the Graduate School)	Following the successful completion and full approval of written and oral proposal defense by the advisor and the dissertation committee
Submit Final Oral Presentation Schedule Form to the Graduate School	Complete and file 2 weeks prior to the scheduled dissertation defense
Submission of written dissertation to the committee and oral defense meeting	In the fourth or fifth year or after completion of dissertation research
File dissertation and original signature pages with the Graduate School for approval	By deadline set by Graduate School each semester (typically early Nov. in fall & mid-March in spring, see current academic calendar)

VIII. Post-Baccalaureate Certificate – Dietetic Internship Program (PBC-DI)

The accredited Dietetic Internship is a Post-BS Certificate Program administered through the Graduate School and the Department of Nutrition at UNCG. See University Catalog for more information. DI students must submit a Plan of Study and must apply for graduation as a requirement of this program. All those who complete this 15-credit certificate program will receive an official certificate from UNCG and their transcript will indicate completion of the program as well.

Graduate students who are completing both their graduate program (M.S. or Ph.D.) and the Post-BS Dietetic Internship program must apply for both programs separately but can maintain the graduate degree program as their primary program of study. A Plan of Study is required for both programs; however, they can be combined under one Plan of Study. Please note that such a combination (i.e., including the 15 graduate credits that comprise the Post-BS Certificate – Dietetic Internship program as part of the graduate degree Plan of Study) means that students cannot **graduate** until all of the courses for which the student is registered pertaining to the respective Plan of Study have been completed. In other words, students cannot graduate until

any grades of Incomplete have been removed and a grade change has been submitted. If a student wishes to graduate before completing the Dietetic Internship courses (15 credits), none of those 15 credits may be part of the graduate degree Plan of Study. Again, students must apply for graduation for both their graduate degree program and the Post-BS Dietetic Internship program. Please check with the Director of the Dietetic Internship about any questions you might have about these items. The post-BS certificate DI plan of study must be submitted by the end of the fall semester of entry into the DI program.

A. Post-BS Certificate – Dietetic Internship course work:

a. Required Courses (15 hours)

- NTR 602 – Supervised Preparation for Professional and Community Engagement (3)
- NTR 693 – Supervised Preparation for Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (3)

NTR 602 and NTR 693 must be completed with a grade of B or better prior to enrollment in the following:

- NTR 606A – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics: Management (3)
- NTR 606B – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics: Clinical (3)
- NTR 606C – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics: Community (3)

b. Additional Information

Students will receive a certificate from The Graduate School upon completion of the required course of study and may apply for registration eligibility through the Commission on Dietetic Registration to sit for the national certification examination for the credential of Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. Students must also file a Plan of Study and apply for graduation for this Post-B.S. Certificate Dietetic Internship program.

B. Combining a M.S. Non-thesis with the Post-B.S. Certificate - Dietetic Internship:

Students who wish to become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists may qualify to enter the UNCG Post-B.S. Certificate - Dietetic Internship program prior to completion of their M.S. non-thesis program. This can only be determined on a case-by-case basis. Students interested in this option should meet with Prof. Laurie Allen, the DPD Program Director, and Prof. Babbi Hawkins, the Director of the Dietetic Internship Program at UNCG, to discuss this possibility as early as possible after entry into the degree program. A separate application is required for the DI program.

C. Requirements and Application Process for Pre-Selection in the DI program:

The Preselection option is available for current UNCG Nutrition Department graduate students only. Up to 10 highly qualified graduate students per year may be selected for the DI program via the pre-select process. **Application does not guarantee acceptance.** Requirements to apply include an original DPD Verification Statement or Statement of Intent to Complete an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics, submission of a paper application including resume, transcripts, GRE scores, 3 letters of recommendation and personal statement as well as an in-person interview. Students who plan to apply to the DI program via the Pre-select option should meet with Prof. Allen and Prof. Hawkins early in their course of study to ensure that they will meet the minimum requirements for eligibility to apply to the program. If preselected, the applicant will be required to complete a form accepting the offer of admission into the UNCG DI program, including original signature. This form must be submitted to Prof.

Babbi Hawkins by the specified deadline. Prof. Hawkins will then notify ACEND and D&D Digital Systems, Inc., that preselected applicants who accepted admission will not participate in the computer matching process.

D. DI Concentration Areas:

The UNCG DI program offers 2 areas of concentration – Track 1 Professional Engagement and Track 2 Teaching in Nutrition and Dietetics. Track 1 is open to any applicant (both MS and PhD students). Track 2 is available only to current UNCG Nutrition Department doctoral students via a Pre-select process. Please see Prof. Hawkins for more information on DI concentration areas.

E: DPD course requirements and inclusion in the graduate program

Students enrolled in the MS or PhD program may be able to complete the Didactic Program in Dietetics concurrently by incorporating DPD courses into their graduate plan of study. Students who wish to complete the DPD program as a graduate student in our department should meet with Prof. Allen early in their course of study to discuss this option.

IX. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND TRAVEL

The Department attempts to provide support for all eligible students. The support is intended to (1) assist students in meeting the expenses of graduate study without having to find employment outside of the university, and (2) provide student assistance to faculty in meeting their research and teaching responsibilities.

A. Departmental Assistantships

Initial offers of support are made to the best-qualified applicants at, or shortly after, an offer of admission is extended, with highest priority to Ph.D. students. If you are not offered support prior to enrollment, it is unlikely that you will be offered departmental support during your degree program. Support from the department is a 9-month appointment as teaching/research assistants (referred to as graduate assistantships or GAs). GAs are obligated to work *10 hours per week as a teaching assistant* to one of the NTR undergraduate courses and *10 hours per week for the research mentor*. See section IV.M. on Policy on Length of Departmental Stipend and Waiver Support for more information.

Funds for stipends may be available from individual faculty. These funds are usually offered to students to work as a research assistant (RA) on a specific research project. Summer support might also be available from the Graduate School and from individual faculty members. In addition to an assistantship (GA or RA), some in-state waivers are also available. Out-of-state students may be granted an out-of-state tuition waiver (or money in lieu of the waiver), which pays the out-of-state portion of tuition costs. If you are not already a North Carolina resident, we urge you to seek residency as soon as possible to reduce the demand on the limited number of tuition waivers available. See section IV.I. Establishing In-state Residency for Tuition Purposes for the details on gaining status as a North Carolina state resident.

As noted above, the service required by a departmental assistantship may be teaching, research, administrative assistance, or some combination of these. The Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition, in consultation with the Graduate Committee and Department Chair, makes

service assignments at the beginning of each academic year. The service obligation of a GA will vary somewhat with the size and format of the course that you are teaching and whether you have previous experience teaching the course. Assistantship workweeks begin 4 days prior to the first week of classes each semester and end the last day of final exams. Hourly assignments can vary from week to week, depending on project timetables and the needs of students. As far as possible, your assignment will be made by mutual agreement with you and your supervisor, but you must remember that these assignments are an obligation of the assistantship that you have accepted. If you refuse to carry out your assigned duties, you may lose your assistantship. If you believe that you are being asked to perform excessive or inappropriate work as a graduate assistant, you should discuss this with your supervisor. If you cannot resolve the problem, you should discuss it with the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition and/or the Department Chair. The payment stipends attached to graduate assistantships are paid in 4 monthly installments each semester.

B. Scholarships and Fellowships

The School of Health and Human Sciences (HHS) and the Department of Nutrition also offer several fellowship and scholarship awards each year to graduate majors in the school. The amounts of the awards vary from year to year. Some are based largely on need; some on merit only. Applications are distributed to students in all departments in HHS, typically late in the fall semester. Completed applications are due in the Dean's office on the date stated on the application, typically early spring semester. Information about the application process and requirements, as well as deadline for submission of the completed application, is posted each year on the HHS website and throughout the departments. Students cannot be considered for HHS or Nutrition scholarships or fellowships unless they apply through this process. Awards are typically announced at the HHS Spring Honors Convocation.

C. Summer Assistantships

Each spring semester the Graduate School asks Deans and Department Chairs to nominate deserving students for summer assistantships. Some full-summer and half-summer assistantships are available on a competitive basis. The Department Chair and/or the Director of Graduate Studies in Nutrition will announce the availability and criteria for appointment of the assistantships and confer with faculty and students before making their requests to the Dean of the Graduate School.

D. External Grants

Some private foundations and federal funding agencies make grants available to support graduate student research and dissertation progress. You are strongly encouraged to explore these types of funding opportunities by inquiring at the Office of Research Services and by looking for announcements in newsletters of professional organizations, as well as those that may be posted on the nutrition announcement area, or others that your advisor may know about. Your advisor can assist in identifying possible sources of external support and in the preparation of the proposal. Formal proposals for research often must be routed through the [Office of Research and Engagement](#). If the application process requires a formal proposal for your research, the proposal may need to be approved by the University review committees for use of animal and human subject research.

E. Other Funding for Research and/or Travel

Departmental funds:

The department sometimes has funds available to support graduate student travel to professional meetings to present their original research. Written requests must be sent to the Department Chair well in advance of the travel dates, and requirements for these requests vary each year, so check with your Faculty Advisor for requirements. Sometimes faculty members have funds associated with their research grants that can be used to support your travel. When traveling on University business, you should always fill out an official travel form prior to the travel date, as instructed. To be eligible for any departmental travel monies, a student must complete the Department of Nutrition Graduate Students Request for Travel Funds.

School (HHS) funds:

Sometimes HHS has funds available for graduate students to travel to professional meetings. Travel grants are usually limited to students who are presenting at regional or national meetings. Information about funding available and the application process, requirements, and deadlines is typically available from the [HHS Dean's office](#). Check with your Faculty Advisor for more information.

Graduate Student Association (GSA) funds:

The GSA represents the interests of graduate students on campus. Each department that grants graduate degrees, including Nutrition, has representatives. The GSA ensures that graduate students have a voice in all aspects of university life. The GSA also sponsors some activities of interest to graduate students and provides funds for some professional activities (in addition to those that you may have received for the same activities through the Department or the School).

The GSA office in Elliot Center has application forms for thesis/dissertation awards and for travel support awards, and additional information is available on the [GSA website](#). The completed application forms must be submitted to the GSA Mailbox in the Campus Activities and Programs office, 257 Elliot University Center. Funding is in the form of reimbursement for incurred expenses and receipts must be submitted within 45 days of the purchases made. All paperwork must be submitted with original receipts and signatures. All students can apply for up to a total of \$1000 per year (\$500 per semester) from GSA funds. There are three different funds to choose from when applying for reimbursement from GSA—the Professional Development Fund, the Thesis/Dissertation Fund, and the Research Capstone Fund. All paperwork must be submitted with original receipts and signatures. *Students should check with the GSA office for any updates to the funding available, application process, and requirements, as these may change on a yearly basis.*

Student Government Association (SGA) funds:

Through participation in NGSAs, graduate students may receive [SGA allocations](#) for group travel expenses. Students must be actively enrolled in NGSAs to be eligible for these funds. SGA funds will only cover the costs associated with travel (flights or gas if driving), hotel, and conference registration fees. Applications for SGA funds should be submitted via the online [Group Travel Request Form](#) at least 4 weeks prior to travel. The travel application should include information about the event and the group mission statement. Applicants will need to provide three price quotes for flights and hotels with the travel application, SGA will fund the cheapest option. For lodging, SGA funds will cover \$79.50 per person per night (out of state) and \$67.30 per person per night (in state). When completing the travel application, students must provide the

gender breakdown of all members travelling in the “additional info” section. For further information about SGA travel funds contact the Finance Committee at finance.uncgsga@gmail.com.

F. Scholarly Activities

Students are encouraged to present their research at professional meetings held annually. These annual symposiums provide graduate students an opportunity to present their work to other faculty, professionals, and graduate students from comparable universities. Some of the meetings which are of interest to graduate students include the following: The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics annual meeting held in October, and the North Carolina Academy of Science annual symposium held in March. Your advisor will inform you of appropriate professional meetings for presenting your research and the application dates for submitting abstracts for presentation.

XI. APPENDICES

Appendix A.

The Graduate Compact:

It is essential that graduate students:

- **conduct** themselves in a mature, professional, and civil manner in all interactions with faculty and staff.
- **recognize** that the faculty advisor provides the intellectual and instructional environment in which the student conducts research, and may, through access to teaching and research funds, also provide the student with financial support.
- **recognize** that faculty have broad discretion to allocate their own time and other resources in ways which are academically productive.
- **recognize** that the faculty advisor is responsible for monitoring the accuracy, validity, and integrity of the student's research. Careful, well-conceived research reflects favorably on the student, the faculty advisor, and the university.
- **exercise** the highest integrity in taking examinations and in collecting, analyzing, and presenting research data.
- **acknowledge** the contributions of the faculty advisor and other members of the research team to the student's work in all publications and conference presentations.
- **maintain** the confidentiality of the faculty advisor's professional activities and research prior to presentation of publication, in accordance with existing practices and policies of the discipline.
- **take** primary responsibility to inform themselves of regulation and policies governing their graduate studies.
- **devote** an appropriate amount of time and energy toward achieving academic excellence and earning the advanced degree.
- **be** aware of time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and program staff.
- **take** the initiative in asking questions that promote understanding of the academic subjects and advance the field.
- **communicate** regularly with faculty advisors, especially in matters related to research and progress within the graduate program.

It is imperative that graduate faculty members:

- **interact** with students in a professional and civil manner in accordance with university policies governing nondiscrimination and sexual harassment.
- **impartially** evaluate student performance regardless of religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, or other criteria that are not germane to academic evaluation.
- **serve** on graduate student committees without regard to the race, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin of the graduate student candidate.
- **prevent** personal rivalries with colleagues from interfering with their duties as graduate advisors, committee members, or colleagues.
- **excuse** themselves from serving on graduate committees when there is an amorous, familial, or other relationship between the faculty member and the student that could result in a conflict of interest.
- **acknowledge** student contributions to research presented at conferences, in professional publications, or in application for copyrights and patents.
- **teach** and demonstrate ethical behavior in research/creative efforts.

Appendix B.

The UNCG Graduate School Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Requirements:

The Graduate School has very specific formatting guidelines that must be met before the University will accept a Thesis or Dissertation. To access resources and further information about the ETD process, visit the [Graduate School ETD Website](#). Students should check the [Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#) before starting their writing. All theses and dissertations must be submitted electronically. Students file their thesis or dissertation electronically via the ProQuest online submission system at the Graduate School website (<http://grs.uncg.edu/current/>). Students must pay the associated publishing fee.

ETD Workshops:

The Graduate School offers ETD workshops designed to provide a step-by-step review of the online submission process for electronic theses or dissertations. Formatting tips are emphasized with hands-on exercises including creating a Table of Contents, PDF conversion, and establishing an UMI/ProQuest account. Students are encouraged to bring an electronic copy of their document to the workshop. To view the schedule of workshops, visit the [Workshops and Events page](#) and select the link for “Graduate School Workshops”.

Organization of the ETD:

1. Abstract (Required) (≤350 words for theses and dissertations): This is a brief synopsis of the research hypothesis and specific aims, experimental approaches, and major findings of the thesis or dissertation.
2. Preliminary Materials:
 - a. Title Page (Required)
 - b. Copyright Page (Required if seeking copyright)
 - c. Dedication (Optional)
 - d. Approval Page (Required)
 - e. Acknowledgments (Optional)
 - f. Preface (Optional)
 - g. Table of Contents (Required)
 - h. List of Tables (Recommended)
 - i. List of Figures (Recommended)
3. Text (Required)
 - a. Introduction (3 pages for both theses and dissertations): This section describes the rationale and the intellectual basis for the proposed research. In other words, “Why is this research important?” M.S. theses should clearly define a research hypothesis, as well as one or two specific aims related to the hypothesis that is to be accomplished by the proposed research. Ph.D. dissertations should clearly define the research hypothesis and usually include three specific aims related to the hypothesis.
 - b. Review of the Literature (approx. 30 pages for theses and dissertations): This section explains the research that has been conducted by other investigators pertaining to the

thesis or dissertation research. The length of this section can be explicitly defined by the Thesis or Dissertation Committee prior to initiation of writing. Students should be selective in the areas that are reviewed, and they should avoid rambling discussions of issues only peripherally related to the thesis or dissertation research. Students should avoid simply listing results of published research. They should interpret and integrate previous studies and clearly explain how these studies led to the formulation of the research hypothesis and the specific aims of the proposed thesis research. This section should include all of the references that were cited in the Introduction and the Review of Literature. The citations can be listed in any one of several journal formats: The Journal of the American Medical Association, the Journal of Nutrition, the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, or the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.

- c. Research Articles: Research is reported to the nutrition community in the form of research communications. Students should organize their research into publishable manuscripts. The journal format is at the discretion of the student and should be chosen after consultation with his or her advisor. The department requires only that the student identify the journal format used for each manuscript (each manuscript format may be different from one another). This will be accomplished by including the information (along with the title of the article and a listing of all authors) on a face page before the abstract for the manuscript. There is no set limit to the number of manuscripts that are required for a Thesis or Dissertation. A reasonable guideline to follow is one or two manuscripts for a M.S. Thesis and three manuscripts for a Ph.D. Dissertation.
 - d. Epilogue (3-4 pages for theses, 5-6 pages for dissertations): The aim of this section is to integrate the information that was presented in the research articles into a coherent whole and to provide an overall conclusion to the thesis or dissertation research. This is particularly important if the thesis or dissertation has more than one manuscript. In addition, a student should use this section to describe the problems that were encountered during the research process and suggest alternate approaches that might be used to overcome such problems. Finally, the student should give his/her opinion regarding the directions that their research project might take in the future.
4. References/Bibliography (Required)
 5. Appendices (Optional): This section should include any relevant information that was not included in the manuscripts, but which is necessary for a complete understanding of the research. Students should consult with their advisors for specific inclusions. Some appropriate items include:
 - data collection instruments
 - preliminary data that were not included in the manuscripts
 - fully detailed descriptions of unique methods developed in the course of the thesis or dissertation research.

Appendix C.

Guidelines on the Ownership of Research Data:

Many students ask the question, “Who does my Thesis/Dissertation research and data belong to? My mentor or me?” This can be a difficult question to answer, unambiguously, for all students in all circumstances. The faculty in Nutrition believes that this issue should be discussed early in the degree process. Clear, open, and frequent communication and unambiguous documentation of agreements is probably the only way to prevent future disputes. Generally, the faculty believes that all data that are generated during the thesis or dissertation belongs to the research group. Thus, all original pieces of data, documentation, and data files should remain with the research group when the student leaves UNCG. However, because the student has generated the data and may need the data to write manuscripts after they leave UNCG, students should have free and open access to the data they have generated during their thesis or dissertation research. A reasonable compromise is that students may copy the data they generated. Of course, after a student has left UNCG, he or she should respect the rights of his or her mentor and should not share unpublished data from the thesis or dissertation without consulting with their mentor first. A more difficult issue is how students and their mentors should address the possession of ideas. Intellectual property rights are an area of legal controversy; there are no clear guidelines regarding who “owns” an idea – especially one generated during routine discussions between the student and the mentor. A rule of thumb is that, if an idea is generated after a student has entered the research group, it is the possession of the research group, unless a statement to the contrary is clearly stated in writing by the research leader. Ideas that are developed by a student prior to enrollment and then brought to the research group belong to the student. The student may wish to document the existence of these ideas to ensure they were in existence prior to joining the research group. Again, it should be stressed that clear communication and open discussion of these issues is the only way to limit the potential for future disputes regarding ownership of either ideas or data.

Appendix D.

Faculty in Nutrition:

Laurie Allen, AP Assistant Professor and Director of Didactic Program in Dietetics, M.Ed., R.D.N., L.D.N., University of North Carolina Greensboro.

Seth M. Armah, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Iowa State University. Dietary approaches to address micronutrient deficiency with focus on iron and zinc. Influence of dietary factors on markers of inflammation.

Jigna Dharod, Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Ph.D., University of Connecticut. Understanding the relationship between acculturation, food insecurity, and dietary intake among immigrants and refugee populations in the U.S.

Keith M. Erikson, Professor, Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University. Micronutrients and brain development, function, and neurotoxicity.

Steven Fordahl, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of North Carolina Greensboro. Neurobiology of food seeking and intake behaviors: How dietary composition alters brain reward systems.

Lauren Haldeman, Professor, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Ph.D., University of Connecticut. Child nutrition; community nutrition intervention design and evaluation; nutrition education and behavioral change theories; food assistance and insecurity; nutritional epidemiology.

Babbi Hawkins, AP Associate Professor and Director of Dietetic Internship, M.S., R.D.N., L.D.N., East Carolina University.

Deborah E. Kipp, Professor, Ph.D., R.D.N., Cornell University. Role of nutrients, bioactive food components, and hormones in regulating collagen production and key aspects of bone remodeling.

Cheryl A. Lovelady, Professor Emeritus, Ph.D., R. D.N., University of California at Davis. Nutrition and women's health issues with emphasis on nutrient needs during lactation; nutrition and exercise; assessment of energy intake and expenditure.

Jared McGuirt, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., M.P.H., University of North Carolina. Impact of a food environment intervention aimed at increasing accessibility to healthy foods on dietary behaviors.

Michael K. McIntosh, Professor Emeritus, Ph.D., R. D.N., University of Georgia. Influence of nutrients and hormones on the growth, differentiation, and metabolism of adipocytes; obesity; energy metabolism; food choices of school-aged children and obesity.

Ron Morrison, Associate Professor and Chair, Ph.D., East Carolina University. Transcriptional regulation of adipocyte growth and development; obesity; cancer; diabetes

Amy Moyer, AP Assistant Professor, Accredited Programs Coordinator, M.Ed., R.D.N., L.D.N., University of North Carolina Greensboro.

Maryanne Perrin, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., M.B.A., R.D.N., North Carolina State University. Human milk research including factors impacting changes in composition, the rise of peer-to-peer milk sharing, and how processing and storage impact the quality of banked donor milk.

B. Burgin Ross, AP Associate Professor, M.S., R.D.N., L.D.N., F.A.N.D., University of North Carolina Greensboro.

Lenka H. Shriver, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Oklahoma State University. Child nutrition and childhood obesity with emphasis on parental factors that influence dietary intake and food availability in low-income families; nutrition & exercise; body image & body esteem in children.

Martha L. Taylor, Associate Professor Emeritus, Ph.D., University of Maryland, R.D. Disease prevention and health promotion; nutrition education; nutritional needs in chronic disease and aging.

Zhanxiang Zhou, Professor and Co-Director of the UNCG Center for Translational Biomedical Research, Ph.D., Ehime University, Matsuyama, Japan. Nutritional factors in the pathogenesis and treatment of alcoholic liver disease.