



**UNE Online**  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

*University of New England  
College of Professional Studies  
Doctor of Clinical Nutrition*

*Student Handbook  
Released January 2025*

*Disclaimer: The provisions of this handbook do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between The University of New England and any applicant, student, student's family, or faculty or staff member. The University of New England reserves the right to change the policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and information in this handbook at any time. Changes will become effective at the time the proper authorities so determine and the changes will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. This handbook is intended to provide students with information about what is required and expected of them and to provide general information, but it is not intended to, nor does it, contain all expectations or requirements that relate to students.*

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## Welcome to the UNE Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Program!

We are honored that you have chosen the UNE Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) program to complete your advanced degree!

The DCN program is housed in the Graduate Program in Applied Nutrition (GPAN) within the College of Professional Studies (CPS) at the University of New England (UNE). The College of Professional Studies is at times referred to as UNE Online. The Graduate Program in Applied Nutrition and CPS physical offices are located on UNE's campus in Portland, Maine

The DCN student handbook provides a centralized location for important and pertinent information about program policies and procedures. This handbook is intended to help answer many questions students may have about the program and online learning. If you have additional questions or would like clarification about information contained in this handbook, please email [DCN@une.edu](mailto:DCN@une.edu) or contact the DCN Program Director.

Policies and procedures presented in this handbook include those that are specific to the DCN program as well as institutional policies and procedures published in other UNE handbooks and policy resources. This handbook does not supersede UNE and CPS policies, expectations, or requirements. Each student is expected to become familiar with policies, expectations, and requirements published in the following UNE catalogs and handbooks.

- [Academic Catalog](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#) – Note: The DCN follows the Online Academic Calendar.
- [UNE Student Handbook](#)

## **Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Administration, Faculty, and Staff**

### **Program Address**

University of New England  
College of Professional Studies  
Graduate Program in Applied Nutrition  
716 Stevens Ave  
Portland, ME 04103

### **Program Administration and Full Time Faculty**

Dr. Elizabeth (Ellie) Dodge, PhD  
Director, Graduate Program in Applied Nutrition  
Associate Clinical Professor  
Phone (207) 221-4785 | Email: [edodge1@une.edu](mailto:edodge1@une.edu)

Dr. Deborah Hutcheon, DCN, RD, LD  
Director, Doctor of Clinical Nutrition  
Associate Clinical Professor  
Phone (207) 221-4752 | Email: [dhutcheon@une.edu](mailto:dhutcheon@une.edu)

### **Program Staff**

Stacy Mears  
Academic Program Manager, Applied Nutrition  
Enrollment and Retention Counselor, Applied Nutrition  
Phone (207) 221-4958 | Email: [smears@une.edu](mailto:smears@une.edu)

Blair De Roo  
Program Coordinator, Applied Nutrition  
Phone (207) 221-4966 | Email: [bderoo@une.edu](mailto:bderoo@une.edu)

Camden Crosby  
Senior Enrollment and Retention Counselor, Applied Nutrition  
Phone (207) 221-4924 | Email: [ccrosby3@une.edu](mailto:ccrosby3@une.edu)

## General Overview of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Program

The Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) at the University of New England is a 48-credit program that prepares Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) to competitively progress in their careers and excel in positions of advanced nutrition practice, practice-based research, and leadership in healthcare and academia. Didactic coursework is offered 100% online in 8- or 16-week sessions, depending on the course, and covers topics related to nutrition practice, leadership, and research.

Students may choose to complete the DCN through either a full-time or part-time pathway. The full-time pathway requires students to take 2 courses (5-6 credits) per semester, allowing them to finish their degree in 3 years, or 9 consecutive semesters. Students in the part-time pathway may finish their degree in 4 or 5 years.

The DCN is a professional practice doctorate that integrates and applies critical thinking, nutrition practice, scholarship, leadership skills, and educational theory to practice. Students engage in practice-based research throughout the program. There is an emphasis on the provision of evidence-based nutrition services, scientific inquiry and research, adaptive and responsive leadership, higher education administration, advocacy and innovation, and interprofessional collaboration. There are multiple opportunities for students to produce publication-worthy manuscripts.

Students are expected to select a leadership focus so that they can tailor their course projects, research, and residency hours. Focus areas include leadership in higher education administration, healthcare and clinical management, and community health services.

- The focus in Leadership in Higher Education and Administration is designed for students who are currently employed in higher education or are interested in faculty or administrative positions. This focus area seeks to prepare graduates to implement evidence-based best-practices in higher education administration and apply appropriate pedagogical and andragogical approaches to undergraduate and graduate programming.
- The focus in Leadership in Healthcare and Clinical Management is designed for students who are currently employed in or aspire to achieve a clinical management position or other healthcare leadership role. This focus area seeks to prepare graduates to implement evidence-based best-practices in healthcare and clinical management settings and lead the delivery of services through strategic guidance and management of personnel.
- The focus in Leadership in Community Health Services is designed for students who are currently employed in or aspire to lead community health services and related programming. This focus area seeks to prepare graduates to implement evidence-based

best-practices in community services and lead community education initiatives through the development, implementation, and evaluation of targeted programming.

All students in the DCN must complete the same required core courses (46 credits). With faculty oversight and approval, students can achieve focus area competencies by completing course projects, research, and their advanced practice residency aligned with their chosen focus area. Students must also complete one elective course (2 credits) based on their chosen focus area.

The program culminates in students completing 320 hours of an advanced practice residency and a doctoral research project which are individualized to the student's professional goals and focus area.

The program's curriculum is designed to support the academic core values of the UNE CPS including critical and innovative thinking, oral and written communication, ethical reasoning and practice, and application of scholarship and research. Students demonstrate mastery of each of these academic core values through the advanced practice residency, the doctoral research project and related research practicum, and an ePortfolio.

### **Program Mission**

The mission of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program is to prepare Registered Dietitian Nutritionists to be scholar-practitioners with advanced skills and competence to lead the integration of evidence-informed health care services, critical thinking, and/or research in professional settings.

### **Program Goals**

1. Provide safe, ethical, equitable, and culturally relevant evidence-based healthcare, education, and community services.
2. Lead integration of evidence-informed best practices, critical thinking and/or research in professional settings.
3. Model leadership and management skills in organizational, healthcare, and academic settings.
4. Work collaboratively in interprofessional settings to provide comprehensive approaches to health care services and education.

### **Program Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be prepared to:

1. Apply adaptive and responsive leadership skills in healthcare, higher education, and community settings. (depending on focus area).
2. Apply evidence-informed approaches when generating, appraising, and utilizing research.
3. Lead the provision of safe, ethical, and evidence-based healthcare, higher education, and community services.



## DCN Program Admission Requirements

Prospective students from diverse backgrounds and a rich variety of professional and academic experiences are strongly encouraged to apply. No GRE is required for admission.

The application process includes completion of the [UNE Online Application](#).

For consideration, applicants to the DCN are required to have:

1. Current credentialing as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (For U.S. Applicants), or Equivalent Credential that meets U.S. Standards by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (For International Applicants).
2. A master's degree or above from a regionally accredited institution.  
\*See [International Admissions](#) for details regarding the evaluation of international degrees for grade and degree equivalency.  
\*Applicants nearing completion of a master's degree may apply for conditional acceptance pending receipt of a final official transcript evidencing conferral of the degree.
3. Graduate cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better.  
\*Applicants with a GPA lower than 3.0 may be considered for admission with a statement of the rationale for the GPA and plans for future success.
4. Computer with internet connection, including the hardware and software requirements described in our [Technical Requirements](#). Must also possess sufficient computer skills to navigate the internet as all classes are completed 100% online.

Applicants must submit the following materials with their application:

- Resume or Curriculum Vitae
- Admission Essay Questions
  - Reasons for pursuing the DCN, including short- and long-term professional goals and research interests, and how the DCN aligns with achieving these goals and areas of research.
  - Brief description of professional work experience, specialized training, credentialing, and research interests and how these elements prepare the applicant for pursuing an advanced practice DCN.
  - Identification of three potential advanced practice residency sites and mentors.
- Two Professional or Academic References – One from a Supervisor and One from an Academic or Professional Mentor
- Official Graduate Degree Transcript(s)
- Copy of current Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) credentialing card with number, or equivalent credential verification that meets U.S. standards by CDR (for international applicants)

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit a website link (URL) to their professional E-portfolio. The E-portfolio is an opportunity for applicants to showcase their professional

background, a professional writing sample, and other professional artifacts that demonstrate proficiency in dietetics practice, professionalism, critical thinking, and communication skills.

Applications are processed and reviewed upon receipt with rolling admissions three times per year – Fall, Spring, and Summer. Applications are reviewed in a comprehensive and holistic manner taking into consideration the applicant's previous academic coursework, professional credentials and experience, and professional goals. Upon reviewing application materials, applicants may be invited for a virtual interview prior to the admissions decision. Applicants are typically notified of an admission decision up to four weeks following submission of their completed application.

*Please Note: The Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program and the DCN Admissions Committee in collaboration with the College of Professional Studies reserve the right to make exceptions to the admissions criteria and to make changes or exceptions to policies and procedures, on a case by case basis, when it deems such a decision is necessary and appropriate.*

## DCN Program Tuition, Fees, and Other Costs

### Tuition and Fees

Information about current tuition and fees for the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition is available at <https://www.une.edu/sfs/online/costs>.

### Malpractice Insurance

The DCN program purchases professional and general liability coverage for students during their Advanced Practice Residency (DCN 855 and DCN 875) and Research Practicum (DCN 865). This coverage is purchased and provided by the program using the Malpractice Insurance Fee billed to students when they register for DCN 855 Residency I. This fee provides coverage over a consecutive 12-month period. Students whose program of study results in the need to extend satisfactory completion of DCN 855, DCN 865, and/or DCN 875 beyond the initial 12-month fee and coverage period will be billed an additional Malpractice Insurance Fee for each additional 12-month period where coverage is needed to complete DCN 855, DCN 865, and/or DCN 875 requirements.

Under certain circumstances, an affiliation agreement may require a student to purchase additional professional liability coverage. Students may purchase additional professional liability insurance through [Proliability](#), a partner of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

### Lab Fees – Medical Clearance, Background Check, and Drug Testing

Students are assessed a lab fee during DCN 855 Residency I, DCN 865 Research Practicum, and DCN 875 Residency II. The lab fee covers costs associated with processing a basic criminal background check, drug testing, compliance tracking (i.e., immunization and medical clearance verification), and UNE name badge as required by affiliate sites. If an affiliate site requires a level-2 background check (such as fingerprinting), the costs are additional beyond what is covered by the lab fees. The additional costs are the responsibility of the student. Expenses related to completing the physical exam and obtaining required vaccinations or titers as required for immunization and medical clearance are the responsibility of the student.

### Student Health Insurance

In the event of illness or injury while at an affiliate site, students are required to carry health insurance that will cover their medical expenses in the state in which the site is located. Cost will vary based on student location, employment situation, etc. Additional information, including options for purchasing health insurance, is available at <https://www.une.edu/studentlife/shc/student-health-insurance>. Students must provide proof of health insurance before registering for their first advanced practice residency and/or research practicum course.

### Textbooks, Software, and Other Materials

Students are responsible for costs associated with purchasing or renting textbooks, software, or other resources required to complete didactic coursework, the advanced practice residency, and the doctoral research project. Costs vary depending on the textbook, software, or resource.

Students can review required textbook information and associated costs through the [UNE Portland Campus Bookstore website](#). Textbook lists are released by session and are sent to students by their Enrollment and Retention Counselor as soon as the list becomes available, typically about 4 weeks prior to the session start. Students are welcome to purchase their course materials anywhere they are available.

### **Transportation**

With didactic courses offered 100% online, students are not responsible for costs associated with travel to and from campus for didactic coursework. Students are responsible for securing a dependable mode of transportation and all costs associated with transportation to and from their advance practice residency site(s) and any sites for completing their doctoral research project. The location of sites and therefore transportation costs will vary. Students may use the following site to estimate fuel costs if driving their own vehicle: <https://www.fueleconomy.gov/trip/>.

## Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Academic Plan of Study

The UNE Doctor of Clinical Nutrition is designed to be completed in four years part-time but may be completed in 3 years full-time or extended to five years part-time. The Doctor of Clinical Nutrition admits students three times a year, in Fall, Spring, and Summer.

Students must complete 48 credits of program coursework, as outlined below.

- DCN 800: Nutrition Research Theory and Implementation – 1 credit
- DCN 805: Nutrition Assessment and Therapy – 4 credits
- DCN 810: Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research I – 3 credits
- DCN 815: Nutrition Pharmacotherapy – 2 credits
- DCN 820: Counseling and Health Behavior Change – 3 credits
- DCN 825: Adaptive Leadership – 3 credits
- DCN 830: Advanced Nutrition Practice – 3 credits
- DCN 835: Healthcare Ecosystems and Management – 3 credits
- DCN 840: Responsive Leadership in Practice – 3 credits
- DCN 845: Food Justice and Advocacy – 2 credits
- DCN 850: Advanced Topics in Health Professions Leadership I – 3 credits
- DCN 855: Residency I – 2 credits
- DCN 860: Focus Area Elective – 2 credits
- DCN 865: Research Practicum – 3 credits
- DCN 870: Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research II – 3 credits
- DCN 875: Residency II – 2 credits
- DCN 880: Fundamentals of Manuscript Preparation – 3 credits
- DCN 885: Advanced Topics in Health Professions Leadership II – 3 credits

An example 4-year part-time plan of study is provided on the next page.

**Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN)  
4-Year Part-Time Plan of Study**

Plan of Study for **Part-Time** Student Seeking Admission, Fall Semester \_\_\_\_\_ Year

Session	Fall A	Fall B	Spring A	Spring B	Summer A	Summer B
<b>Year 1</b>	DCN 800 (1 cr) Nutrition Research Theory & Implementation (16 weeks)  DCN 815 (2 cr) Nutrition Pharmacotherapy (16 weeks)		DCN 805 (4 cr) Nutrition Assessment and Therapy (16 weeks)		DCN 820 (3 cr) Counseling and Health Behavior Change (8 weeks)	DCN 825 (3 cr) Adaptive Leadership (8 weeks)
<b>Year 2</b>	DCN 810 (3 cr) Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research I (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 800 + Program Approval</i>		DCN 835 (3 cr) Healthcare Ecosystems & Management (8 weeks)	DCN 840 (3 cr) Responsive Leadership in Practice (8 weeks)	DCN 845 (2 cr) Food Justice and Advocacy (8 weeks)	DCN 860 (2 cr) Focus Area Elective (8 weeks)
<b>Year 3</b>	DCN 830 (3 cr) Advanced Nutrition Practice (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 810 + Program Approval</i>		DCN 850 (3 cr) Advanced Topics in Health Professions Leadership I (8 weeks)	DCN 885 (3 cr) Advanced Topics in Health Professions Leadership II (8 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 850</i>	DCN 855 (2 cr) Residency I (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 830 + Program Approval</i>  DCN 875 (2 cr) Residency II (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite or Corequisite DCN 855</i>	
<b>Year 4</b>	DCN 865 (3 cr) Research Practicum (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 830 + Program Approval</i>		DCN 870 (3 cr) Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research II (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 865</i>		DCN 880 (3 cr) Fundamentals of Manuscript Preparation (16 weeks) <i>*Prerequisite DCN 870</i>	

Note: A student's plan of study may change if there is a delay in prerequisite course completion, research progress, securing APR mentor/site, fully executing an affiliation agreement with a APR or Research Practicum site, or verification of medical/legal clearance to begin APR hours. Changes to a student's plan of study will be determined through conversation with the DCN Program Director. Taking fewer than 3 credits in a semester will impact a student's financial aid eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their Enrollment and Retention Counselor and Student Financial Services to discuss their financial aid eligibility.

## Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Degree and Graduation Requirements

Candidates for the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition degree must fulfill all program requirements and are required to earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be eligible to graduate.

Program requirements for the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition degree include the following:

1. Earn 48 credits through successful completion of all courses outlined in the DCN Academic Plan of Study. All courses outlined in the DCN Academic Plan of Study are required to earn the degree.
2. Achieve a minimum grade of B- (80%) in all program courses. Earning a grade of B- or better constitutes successful completion.
3. Maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.0.
4. Complete at least 320 hours in a program-approved Advanced Practice Residency (APR).
5. Achieve a rating of "Attained" in all APR Competencies.
6. Complete and successfully defend a Doctoral Research Project (DRP). Earning a grade of B- or better in both DCN 870 and on the DRP Defense constitutes successful completion and defense, respectively.
7. Submit a publication-ready DRP manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal. The DRP manuscript and peer-reviewed journal to which it is submitted must be approved by the DCN Program Director prior to submission in order for this requirement to be considered met. Documentation of submission is required in DCN 880.

### Timeline for Completion

Students are encouraged to maintain continuous progress toward degree requirements through regular registration and completion of coursework. Students are expected to complete all requirements toward the degree within five years after entrance. Students who have not completed the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program within five (5) years will be administratively withdrawn from the program and be required to apply for readmission. Under unusual circumstances, students may petition for an extension beyond five years.

### Graduation

Candidates must fulfill all program requirements and are required to earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be eligible to graduate. All students must file an Application to Graduate with the registrar's office via UNE Compass. Please see the [UNE Graduation Information](#) for complete instructions and the answers to frequently asked questions.

### Application to Graduate and Receipt of Diploma

In the last year of enrollment, students who anticipate completion of all degree requirements must submit an online application to graduate. The Application to Graduate form is available via the "Application to Graduate" link in [UNE Compass](#). The completed form sets into motion all final processing towards verification of the degree completion, correct spelling of name on the diploma, correct mailing address, and indication of plans to participate in the May commencement ceremony.

If a mailing address should change after submission of the form, the student is responsible for notifying the Registrar's Office of a new address. The office's goal is to verify/post degree completions and mail out diplomas within six (6) to eight (8) weeks of a student's completion of studies.

Students who complete their degree requirements in the Fall, Spring, or Summer terms can take part in the May Commencement Ceremony. However, each student is only allowed to participate in one Commencement Ceremony for their degree. Additionally, graduate and professional students will be invited to attend their program's hooding ceremony and can also take part in the university commencement ceremony.

Students who are within two course requirements of completing their degree and plan to take those courses in the Summer following May Commencement can apply to participate in Commencement before finishing their degree. These students must submit an Application to Graduate by January 30th and will receive ticketing information from the Office of Student Affairs.

Guidelines for submission of the Application to Graduate form are as follows:

<b><i>If graduation is anticipated by the end of:</i></b>	<b><i>Submit the petition to graduate by:</i></b>
Summer Semester (August 31 Graduation)	June 30
Fall Semester (December 31 Graduation)	September 30
Spring Semester (May Graduation/Commencement)	January 30

The degree awarded date will correspond to the term where the last course requirement was completed and graded. The exception is where one or more courses are completed late (after the end of the term in which the course was provided). In the case of late completion of course requirements (e.g., due to an "Incomplete" grade), the degree will be awarded in the current term (in progress) when the final course requirements are completed. This practice is consistent with graduation reporting to external sources. Further information regarding graduation procedures can be obtained through the Office of the University Registrar or by launching the link: <http://www.une.edu/registrar/graduation>.



## Advanced Practice Residency Requirements and Site Selection

Students must complete 320 hours of advanced practice residency (APR) in a professional practice setting during DCN 855 and DCN 875 to fulfill degree requirements. The APR is mandatory for all students to provide experiences for demonstrating attainment of advanced practice competencies.

The purpose of the advanced practice residency (APR) is to provide students with an opportunity for focused growth and application of advanced nutrition theory and skills, clinical reasoning, decision-making, and scientific inquiry within a professional practice environment aligned with their career goals and focus area. Students will be mentored by one or more advanced practice professionals while completing a total of 320 hours of experiential learning through DCN 855 Residency I and DCN 875 Residency II. Students must demonstrate competence in advanced nutrition practice and achievement of program learning outcomes through delivery of person-centered nutrition care within a chosen area of specialized nutrition practice.

Students are responsible for securing their APR placement with guidance and oversight provided by the DCN Program Director. The DCN Program Director must approve mentor and site placement before an affiliation agreement is executed. Affiliation agreements must be executed prior to registration for Residency I/II courses and completion of residency hours.

The DCN program has established criteria for the APR to support a quality and meaningful experience for the student. Facilities where students complete APR hours must meet the following criteria:

- Desire to mentor a professional practice doctorate student who is credentialed as a RDN.
- Time, willingness, commitment, and operational capacity to provide the full mentorship experience.
- Possession of credentials and maintenance of current licensing as an advanced practice professional (i.e., PhD, EdD, DCN, MD, DO, DNP, PharmD).
- Advanced professional expertise in the student's focus area (i.e., higher education administration, healthcare and clinical management, community health services) as evidenced by professional positions held, years of experience, specialized training and certification, and professional contributions.
- Demonstrated skills in effective communication, responsive and adaptive leadership, and teaching and instruction that support a positive student mentorship and learning experience.
- Provision of diverse, robust, and dynamic quality experiences related to nutrition scope of practice that support the student's ability to attain all of the required APR competencies.
- Adequate staffing to provide a positive learning experience for the student, including proper supervision and instruction by the mentor(s).

- Adequate time, mentorship, and instruction for APR skill and competency development and attainment.
- Completion of a fully executed affiliation agreement between UNE and the site.

It is the student's responsibility to locate their APR mentor(s) and site(s) in the geographic location in which they desire to complete the APR. It will be important for the student to be flexible and research the geographic location where they wish to complete the APR. Based on availability of experiences, students may need to travel to another geographic region to complete the APR.

Students may complete all APR hours through one mentor/site or may divide APR hours between no more than two mentors/sites. Placement of students in the APR is for educational purposes only. Students cannot be used to replace facility employees. Students require mentor supervision throughout the experience.

Students may complete the APR within their workplace but must be mentored by an advanced practice professional who is not their direct supervisor and does not demonstrate a conflict of interest. Advanced Practice Residency hours cannot be completed as part of a student's regular employment requirements.

Affiliation agreements in content and form acceptable to and agreed upon by UNE are required for all sites where students are participating in APR activities. The DCN Program Director will approve mentors and sites that can provide the appropriate breadth and depth of experiences and opportunities for students to achieve required competencies. Affiliation agreements must be in place before students start their APR. Students are advised that this process can take on average 2 to 4 months, or longer, to complete depending on the site and parameters of the affiliation agreement.

Should a student encounter a situation where a mentor or site is unable to continue to accommodate the student, the student must immediately contact the DCN Program Director. The DCN Program Director and student will discuss and determine the appropriate course of action. The DCN Program Director will help the student review other potential mentors and sites in their geographic area that they might be able to contact for possible APR hours.

### **Advanced Practice Residency Mentor/Site Selection and Approval Process**

Students are responsible for securing their APR placement with guidance and oversight provided by the DCN Program Director. Students are encouraged to initiate the mentor and site selection process according to the following timeline to not delay their progress in the DCN program. Delays in APR mentor/site selection may hinder overall program progress and timeline to graduation.

1. Prior to beginning the DCN, prospective students must identify at least three potential APR mentors and sites. This information must be submitted as part of the DCN application process and is reviewed by the DCN Admissions Committee.
2. Upon acceptance into the DCN, students will work with the DCN Program Director through advising to identify and confirm potential APR mentor and site options. Students are responsible for engaging in professional outreach with potential mentors and sites. As part of the outreach process, students should follow the Guidelines for Contacting Potential APR Mentors (see Appendix A) and should send prospective mentors the following documents:
  - Resume/CV
  - UNE DCN APR Competency List (see Appendix B)
  - UNE DCN Program Letter to Potential Mentor (see Appendix D)
3. Once a student receives stated willingness from an advanced practice professional to mentor and host the student for the APR, the student is responsible for promptly notifying the DCN Program Director of the mentor's qualifications by asking the prospective mentor to complete the [DCN APR Mentor Qualification Form](#).
4. Upon review of the DCN APR Mentor Qualification Form, if the DCN Program Director provides provisional approval of the mentor/site, the student will be asked to introduce the mentor to the DCN Program Director via email. The DCN Program Director will respond to outline next steps in the process toward providing full approval.

The following steps must be completed before the DCN Program Director will provide full approval for an APR mentor/site:

- The mentor should review brief online videos that will be provided to explain the DCN program and APR expectations.
- The student and mentor should meet to complete the DCN APR Competency Plan. The DCN Program Director will email a copy of the DCN APR Competency Plan to the student and mentor. In the plan, the student and mentor will propose experiences and deliverables that the student can complete during the APR to develop and demonstrate each APR Competency.
- The mentor and student should schedule time (30 minutes) to meet virtually with the DCN Program Director. During the meeting, the DCN Program Director will review and discuss appropriateness of the mentor/site, APR expectations, and the student's UNE APR Competency Plan. This meeting will determine whether or not the DCN Program Director provides full approval for the mentor/site.

The DCN Program Director must provide full approval of a mentor/site before an affiliation agreement can be executed.

5. If the DCN Program Director provides full approval for the mentor/site, the student must obtain information from the mentor/site for the point of contact through whom the affiliation agreement must be executed. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate this information via email to the DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator in a timely manner.
6. The DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator will navigate the process for executing the affiliation agreement. The DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator will inform the student of any actions that the student must complete before UNE is able to fully execute the affiliation agreement. These actions include, but are not limited to, completion of medical and legal clearance tasks and required training. Completion of these actions requires timely completion on the part of the student. Failure on the part of the student to complete these actions in a timely manner may result in the affiliation agreement being delayed or unable to be fully executed. Delays in execution of an affiliation agreement may impact the student's plan of study and timeline for graduation.
7. The Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator will notify the student and mentor via email when a fully signed agreement has been reached and all student requirements for site placement have been met (i.e., medical and legal clearances and training). The DCN Program Director and the student's Enrollment and Retention Counselor will be copied on the email.
8. Once the affiliation agreement has been fully executed and all student requirements for site placement have been met (i.e., medical and legal clearances and training), the DCN Program Director will approve the student to register for residency coursework.

A student may not register for residency coursework until a fully executed affiliation agreement is achieved and all student requirements for site placement have been met (i.e., medical and legal clearances and training). Students may not complete APR hours outside of enrollment in residency coursework (APN 855 Residency I or APN 875 Residency II).

### **Advanced Practice Residency Affiliation Agreements**

Students will only be placed in APR sites that have affiliation agreements with UNE or in sites that are within the UNE organization. These affiliation agreements will designate that students are not to replace employees, and if the student is an employee of the organization, they will not complete APR hours under the mentorship of their direct supervisor or other personnel that demonstrates a conflict of interest. They may not complete APR hours as part of their regular employment requirements. These agreements also lay forth the expectations of the University and the affiliate site, and they address student liability and insurance coverage.

Affiliation agreements are required for all facilities outside of the UNE organization where students are participating in APR activities and are demonstrating achievement of APR

competencies. Facilities must demonstrate that they are able to provide the appropriate breadth of experiences, opportunities for students to achieve required competencies, and qualified mentors as aligned with the student's focus area and career goals.

When a mentor/site is deemed appropriate for the required APR hours, the DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator will share the UNE Affiliation Agreement with the prospective site and ask for a signature. The site administrators may suggest edits using "track changes" in Microsoft Word. If the site prefers to use their own Affiliation Agreement template, they must contact the DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator via email for review and submission to UNE's Contract Administrator. The Contract Administrator will then work to achieve a fully executed agreement.

All affiliation agreements must be fully executed and delivered to both UNE and the affiliate site before students can register for residency coursework and start their APR hours. Students should anticipate 2 to 4 months to finalize agreements, depending on any affiliation agreement changes needed. However, it is possible for the process to take 6 months or longer.

A fully signed copy of the final agreement will be kept on file through the UNE Contracts Office.

### **Advanced Practice Residency Schedule**

Advanced Practice Residency hours must be completed only at APR sites and with APR mentors approved by the DCN Program Director and through which formal affiliation agreements between UNE and the APR site have been established. Students must complete all APR hours under the direct supervision of the mentor. Students are expected to establish the APR schedule with their mentor and schedule hours in a manner that provides meaningful and continuous learning, permits frequent and recurrent demonstration of APR competencies, and allows them to achieve no less than 160 hours by the end of APN 855 Residency I and no less than the total 320 hours by the end of APN 875 Residency II. Residency I and Residency II are each 16 weeks in length. Students may complete their hours following a full-time (up to 40 hours per week) or part-time (no less than 10 hours per week) schedule. Students must complete their hours in intervals of no less than 4 hours per day in order to facilitate a cohesive and robust learning experience.

APR hours will be scheduled by the mentor in coordination with the student's availability and schedule. Students must be flexible regarding scheduling APR hours, recognizing that quality advanced practice learning experiences aligned with one's focus area and APR goals may be offered outside of normal business hours. Weekend, early morning, and/or evening hours may be required during some experiences. Rearrangement of the APR schedule without prior approval of the mentor and DCN Program Director will be considered a professionalism violation.

Students are expected to work with their mentor to identify opportunities for learning and mentorship aligned with the APR competencies. Students are responsible for demonstrating

achievement of half of the APR competencies by the end of APN 855 Residency I and all APR competencies by the end of APN 875 Residency II. Students who are unable to demonstrate achievement of APR competencies by the end of each residency course may be required to complete additional hours until APR competencies are achieved. The student is responsible for all costs incurred if additional hours are required. Failure to achieve all competencies by the end of APN 875 Residency II, including additional time allotted for remediation, may result in dismissal from the program. Please see APR remediation policies below for additional details.

### **Advanced Practice Residency Professionalism Requirements**

Students must arrive for their APR experiences on time, prepared and ready to begin their hours at the time scheduled with their mentor. Attendance and punctuality is vitally important and must be documented with strict accuracy on the weekly timesheets completed by the students.

Students are responsible for being familiar with content relevant to the APR to perform adequately in the experience. Students should review major concepts related to the APR experience. If, during the APR, a mentor identifies any concepts/skills/resources that a student should review, the student should consider this a requirement for the experience, and should determine a plan in consultation with the mentor for meeting this requirement.

Students are required to uphold the professional policies and norms of behavior within the APR setting. These policies and norms include, but are not limited to, acceptable dress, lunch and break times, eating and drinking in designated locations, and/or gum chewing. Cell phones must be turned off or set to vibrate and calls should not be placed or answered. Similarly, the reading or answering of text or other messages (including email) during APR hours is prohibited. Cell phones may be used with mentor permission for professional purposes only (such as to access phone-based applications or the internet). Smoking should only occur in designated areas and only if permitted by the site's policies. Swearing or loud boisterous conversations must not occur during the APR.

Unless there is a concern about illegal behavior, behavior that violates a site's policies, or behavior that could pose a threat to the health of a patient, students should make every effort to avoid becoming embroiled in or contribute to office politics, co-worker disputes, or the veritable rumor mill that students might encounter at any particular APR site. If a student has any concerns about any improper behavior at the APR site, the student should address their concern with either their mentor, if appropriate, or the DCN Program Director. Likewise, if a conflict arises between the student and a staff member at the APR site, the student should address the concern with their mentor, if appropriate, and/or the DCN Program Director.

Students should treat any and all tasks assigned by their mentor (unless the tasks are illegal or dangerous) as opportunities for learning. If students are concerned about the tasks assigned to them, or they feel that these additional tasks interfere with their ability to take advantage of other meaningful learning opportunities at the facility, they should address these concerns with the mentor and DCN Program Director. Students wishing to file a formal complaint regarding a

mentor should follow the process for a complaint regarding a nonacademic matter, as outlined in the section of this handbook titled Grievance Process.

### **Advanced Practice Residency Performance Monitoring**

Student residency performance will be assessed and monitored at regular intervals from the beginning to the end of each residency course. Each residency course includes regular formative student self-assessments, a mid-point student and mentor formative assessment, and an end-point student and mentor summative assessment. Each formative and summative assessment will be graded using a rubric. The residency mentor is expected to provide qualitative feedback in addition to quantitative scoring on each assessment. Residency faculty will also review and provide feedback on each assessment.

Students must complete at least 160 hours per residency course and achieve an “attained” rating on all residency competencies tied to each residency course by course completion. Students are responsible for demonstrating achievement (“attained rating”) of half of the APR competencies by the end of APN 855 Residency I and all APR competencies by the end of APN 875 Residency II.

Students who are not achieving satisfactory performance in the residency, which is defined as not actively progressing toward completion of 160 hours by course end and/or achieving a rating below “attained” on one or more residency competencies, will have access to remedial instruction and tutorial support through the residency mentor, course faculty, and the DCN Program Director. Students are responsible for utilizing remediation resources to improve residency performance.

### **Advanced Practice Residency Remediation**

If a student is not achieving satisfactory performance as identified through regular and/or mid-point formative assessment, or communication directly from the student and/or mentor, the residency faculty will contact the student, mentor, and DCN Program Director to schedule a meeting to discuss the student’s performance and develop a written remediation and improvement plan (“the Plan”), which will be placed in the student’s academic file. Options for remediation may include additional on-site or off-site training (i.e., completion of a skills course, webinar, or self-directed learning resource) and/or additional residency hours. Failure by the student to achieve satisfactory performance after remediation may result in dismissal from the program since satisfactory performance in the Advanced Practice Residency is required for degree conferral.

The procedure for Advanced Practice Residency (APR) remediation and subsequent dismissal from the program due to unsatisfactory performance in the APR is as follows:

1. The residency mentor at the affiliate site will notify the student, residency faculty, and DCN Program Director of the student’s unsatisfactory performance.

2. A conference will be held including the student, the residency course faculty, the student's Enrollment and Retention Counselor, and the DCN Program Director. At this time, a written remediation and improvement plan ("the Plan") for remediation and improvement will be developed and signed by all the parties at the conference. The Plan will define specific knowledge, skills, and competence that must be satisfactorily demonstrated and the expected time frame for completion. The fully executed Plan will be placed in the student's academic file.
3. The residency mentor, residency faculty, and DCN Program Director will explore possible tutorial support and remedial instruction available to the student. The student will also be informed of student support services available to them that have the potential to be of assistance.
4. If the student meets the performance expectations, including the timeframe, set forth in the Plan such that they demonstrate improvement to an acceptable level, the student may continue in the program.
5. If the student fails to meet the performance expectations, including the timeframe, set forth in the Plan such that they fail to demonstrate improvement to an acceptable level, the student may earn a failing course grade and may be required to repeat the residency course. Students are restricted to no more than two repeat attempts per residency course.
6. A student may not be a party to more than one advanced practice residency (APR) remediation plan. If a student's APR performance falls below expectations such that more than one APR remediation plan would be necessary for a student to continue in the program, the student will be dismissed from the DCN Program. It may be possible for a student to explore alternate certificate and/or degree pathways to use what they have learned and the credits they may have obtained within the DCN Program for transfer into another program.



## DCN Program Requirements – Doctoral Research Project (DRP)

Central to the mission of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program is the preparation of RDNs to be scholar-practitioners with advanced skills and competence to lead research in professional settings. While principles and practices of applied research and leadership are integrated throughout program courses and the advanced practice residency, one third of program coursework (16 credits) is dedicated to supporting students in developing, honing, and implementing applied research skills integral to advanced practice. These courses culminate in students proposing, conducting, and defending their doctoral research project (DRP). Students will also generate a publication-worthy manuscript to disseminate their research findings.

The DRP is a novel research project which uses existing knowledge, theory, observations, and practices within nutrition, healthcare, education, or community settings to answer questions and generate scientific evidence that can be immediately applied and incorporated into professional practice. The project seeks to generate, analyze, and interpret data through rigorous scientific research methods. Ideally, the DRP should align with a student's career goals, program focus area, and advanced practice residency experience so that each student develops and hones expertise in a focused area of practice.

In generating their topic and novel research question for the DRP, students are encouraged to think about research opportunities within their current practice setting or aligned with their career goals and aspirations. Students are also encouraged to think about how their Advanced Practice Residency experience might align with their research interests and provide an opportunity for them to directly participate in practice-based research.

A student must successfully conduct and defend a novel doctoral research project (DRP) and submit a related publication-ready research manuscript to a scholarly peer-reviewed journal to fulfill degree requirements.

The research course sequence includes the following courses, each of which are a full semester (16 weeks) in length:

- DCN 800: Nutrition Research Theory and Implementation – 1 credit
- DCN 810: Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research I – 3 credits
- DCN 830: Advanced Nutrition Practice – 3 credits
- DCN 865: Research Practicum – 3 credits
- DCN 870: Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research II – 3 credits
- DCN 880: Fundamentals of Manuscript Preparation – 3 credit

In each of these courses, students will engage with and be mentored by course faculty through conceptualization, drafting, iteration/revision, and approval of the key DRP deliverable(s).

The DCN Program Director will serve as each student's main research advisor. The DCN Program Director must approve each key DRP deliverable (as outlined in the Key Doctoral

Research Project (DRP) Deliverables, Approvals, and Timeline Table) before a student is permitted to progress and register for subsequent DRP coursework. DCN Program Director approval is in addition to course faculty approval. Additional faculty, APR mentor(s), and content experts may be assigned and consulted to engage in the DRP advisement and approval process as necessary.

Between research courses, students may be required to participate in research advisement (non-credit) with the DCN Program Director and/or other faculty as assigned to ensure that they are making continuous and timely progress toward completion of the DRP. Students who do not participate in DRP advising sessions and/or who do not meet DRP deadlines may delay their timeline to graduation. Doctoral research project advisement is considered part of program requirements and counted toward the time allotted to complete program requirements.

The DCN Program seeks to create an environment of mutual respect, mentorship, and professional growth through the research process. The research process takes time as regular review, feedback, iteration, and self-reflection are required. Students are responsible to maintain regular communication with their course faculty and research advisor(s) regarding research progress, timelines, and deliverables. Students must allow sufficient time for course faculty and the research advisor(s) to review and assess their work. Faculty and the research advisor(s) likewise carry the responsibility to respond as promptly as circumstances allow. Students are expected to demonstrate a growth-mindset and respectfully receive feedback provided by research faculty and mentors.

### **Doctoral Research Project Coursework**

Students begin their research coursework in DCN 800 Nutrition Research Theory and Implementation. Full-time students are advised to take this course during their first program year, ideally during their first semester. Part-time students are advised to take this course no later than the beginning of their second program year. Because this course is a prerequisite to other program courses, a delay in taking DCN 800 may negatively impact a student's timeline to graduation, including time allocated to complete the program.

DCN 800 Nutrition Research Theory and Implementation reviews foundational knowledge of ethical research practices and methods. Students apply ethical research practices and methods by generating a novel research question, identifying a pre-existing data set for secondary data analysis in order to answer the research question, and writing a prospectus for conducting a secondary data analysis research project. Students must submit a complete, viable, and approved secondary data analysis research prospectus by the end of this course. A grade of 80% (B-) or better on the Secondary Data Analysis Research Prospectus and in the course is required to pass the course and progress into DCN 810 Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research I.

DCN 810 Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research I develops advanced skills in scholarly inquiry, critical evaluation of professional literature, and doctoral-level research and writing. Students conduct a secondary data analysis research project based on the research prospectus developed in DCN 800 and author a publication-ready manuscript based on their research methods and findings. Students also conceptualize and draft a novel research question and viable prospectus for their DRP. The DRP prospectus must be submitted and approved by course faculty and the DCN Program Director by the end of this course to progress into DCN 830 Advanced Nutrition Practice.

Students who complete DCN 810 with a passing grade but do not have a complete and viable prospectus approved by course faculty and the DCN Program Director must participate in 1:1 research advisement (non-credit bearing) until the student submits a complete and viable prospectus and the submission is approved by the DCN Program Director. Students who fail to demonstrate progress toward completion and approval may be dismissed from the program for inability to achieve program requirements.

DCN 830 Advanced Nutrition Practice supports students in translating their DRP prospectus into a formal DRP proposal for defense and submission to the UNE or an affiliate Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students must demonstrate progress toward development of the DRP proposal by the end of this course, recognizing that post-course research advisement may be required to finalize and submit the proposal to the IRB. Students must have an approved DRP prospectus and obtain permission from the DCN Program Director to register for DCN 830.

DCN 865 Research Practicum provides the opportunity for students to conduct their DRP from study implementation through all data collection. All data should be collected by the end of this course unless prior permission is received from the DCN Program Director. Students must earn a passing grade (80% or better) in DCN 830, receive IRB approval for their DRP, and obtain permission from the DCN Program Director to register for this course. A student must earn a passing grade (80% or better) to proceed into DCN 870.

DCN 870 Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research II engages students in preparing, analyzing, and interpreting research data collected in DCN 865 to answer their novel DRP research question. Students synthesize research findings to draw valid conclusions and produce recommendations for application to practice. Students begin to draft their DRP manuscript. Students must earn a passing grade in the course (80% or better) and successfully defend their DRP (passing grade of 80% or better) to progress into DCN 880.

DCN 880 Fundamentals of Manuscript Preparation guides students through the process of writing a publication-worthy scholarly manuscript to disseminate their research findings. The writing process is iterative and takes time. Students should dedicate significant time during this course for focused and intensive periods of writing. Students should prepare to receive regular constructive feedback and mentorship from their peers, course faculty, and research advisor during this phase of the DRP. Students must produce and submit a publication-ready DRP manuscript to an approved scholarly peer-reviewed journal by the end of this course to fulfill

course and degree requirements. The DRP manuscript and peer-reviewed journal must be approved by the DCN Program Director prior to submission in order for this requirement to be considered met. Documentation of submission is required.

## Key Doctoral Research Project (DRP) Deliverables, Approvals, and Timeline

Course	Key Deliverable	Approval Required	Approval Timeline	Additional Considerations
DCN 800	Secondary Data Analysis Research Prospectus	Course Faculty	End of DCN 800	*Both a course grade and prospectus grade of 80% (B-) or better are required to pass the course and proceed into DCN 810. Students may repeat this course no more than two times.
DCN 810	DRP Prospectus	Course Faculty + Program Director	End of DCN 810/ Before DCN 830	*The DRP Prospectus must be approved by the DCN Program Director before a student is approved to register for DCN 830. Students may repeat this course no more than two times.
DCN 830	DRP Proposal and Proposal Defense  IRB Documents (submission-ready)	Course Faculty + Program Director	End of DCN 830	*The DRP Proposal must be approved by the DCN Program Director and Residency Mentor (if research will be conducted at APR site) before a student is approved to register for DCN 865. Students may repeat this course no more than two times.
Research Advisement	IRB Submission (After DCN 830)	Program Director	After DCN 830/ Before DCN 865	*The student must successfully defend their DRP Proposal in DCN 830 before IRB submission.  *The IRB Documents must be approved by the DCN Program Director and Residency Mentor (if research will be conducted at APR site) before IRB submission.  *UNE IRB and affiliate IRB approval, as applicable, are required to register for DCN 865.  *Where applicable, an affiliation agreement with the research practicum site must be fully executed and all student clearance and training requirements met before a student is approved to register for DCN 865.
DCN 865	Research Data	Course Faculty + Program Director	End of DCN 865/ Before DCN 870	*All data must be collected and ready to analyze to receive a passing grade (80% or better) in DCN 865 and proceed into DCN 870. Students may repeat this course no more than two times.

DCN 870	DRP Draft Manuscript  DRP Defense	Course Faculty + Program Director	End of DCN 870/ Before DCN 880	<p>*The DRP Draft Manuscript and Defense Presentation must be approved by the DCN Program Director and Residency Mentor (if research was conducted at APR site) before defense.</p> <p>*Both a course grade and defense grade of 80% (B-) or better are required to pass the course and proceed into DCN 880. Students may repeat this course no more than two times.</p>
DCN 880	Publication-Ready Manuscript  Submission of Manuscript to Scholarly Journal	Course Faculty + Program Director	End of DCN 880/ Before Approval to Graduate	<p>*The DRP Publication-Ready Manuscript must be approved by the DCN Program Director and Residency Mentor (if research was conducted at APR site) before submission to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. Both individuals must also approve the journal to which the student plans to submit.</p> <p>*Documentation of manuscript submission to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal approved by the DCN Program Director is required before approval to graduate. This documentation must be submitted to the course.</p> <p>*Students may repeat this course no more than two times.</p>

## Doctoral Research Project Performance Monitoring

Course faculty and the student's research advisor (DCN Program Director) monitor student DRP performance and progress at regular intervals as defined by DRP formative assessments and key DRP deliverables (see the above Key DRP Deliverables, Approvals, and Timeline Table). Course faculty and/or the DCN Program Director will communicate with students who are not performing and progressing in order to support early detection and intervention of academic difficulty. Faculty may also communicate any student concerns with the student's Enrollment and Retention Counselor and the DCN Program Director.

As the student's research advisor, the DCN Program Director will advise and counsel students who are not performing and progressing in the DRP as to options to improve their research performance or to withdraw from the research course or program. Options for improving research performance may include, but are not limited to, access to remedial instruction and tutorial support, creating a time management plan, participating in research advisement, and repeating a research course. Students may not repeat any research course (i.e., DCN 800, DCN 810, DCN 830, DCN 865, DCN 870, DCN 880) more than two times. Students who fail to demonstrate progress toward completion and/or approval of key DRP deliverables may be dismissed from the program for inability to achieve degree requirements.

### Doctoral Research Project Remediation

If a student is not achieving satisfactory performance toward approval of a key DRP deliverable as defined by the Key DRP Deliverables, Approvals, and Timeline Table, the DCN Program Director will contact the student and research course faculty (as applicable) to schedule a meeting to discuss the student's performance and develop a remediation plan, which will be documented in the student's academic file.

The procedure for doctoral research project (DRP) remediation and subsequent dismissal from the program due to unsatisfactory performance in receiving approval of key DRP deliverables and completion of the DRP is as follows:

1. Research course faculty will notify the student and DCN Program Director of the student's unsatisfactory performance.
2. A conference will be held including the student, the research course faculty, the student's Enrollment and Retention Counselor, and the DCN Program Director. At this time, a written remediation and improvement plan ("the Plan") for remediation and improvement will be developed and signed by all the parties at the conference. The Plan will define specific knowledge, skills, and competence that must be satisfactorily demonstrated and the expected time frame for completion. The fully executed Plan will be placed in the student's academic file.
3. The research course faculty and DCN Program Director will explore possible tutorial support and remedial instruction available to the student. The student will also be

informed of student support services available to them that have the potential to be of assistance.

4. If the student meets the performance expectations, including the timeframe, set forth in the Plan such that they demonstrate improvement to an acceptable level, the student may continue in the program.
5. If the student fails to meet the performance expectations, including the timeframe, set forth in the Plan such that they fail to demonstrate improvement to an acceptable level, the student may earn a failing course grade and may be required to repeat the research course. Students are restricted to no more than two repeat attempts per research course.
6. A student may not be a party to more than one doctoral research project (DRP) remediation plan. If a student's DRP performance falls below expectations such that more than one DRP remediation plan would be necessary for a student to continue in the program, the student will be dismissed from the DCN Program. It may be possible for a student to explore alternate certificate and/or degree pathways to use what they have learned and the credits they may have obtained within the DCN Program for transfer into another program.

### **Research Practicum Affiliation Agreements**

Students are encouraged to align their DRP with opportunities available through their APR mentor/site, where feasible. Depending on the nature of the DRP, students may conduct their DRP in other facilities. Students are responsible for securing Research Practicum placement, as applicable, with guidance and oversight provided by the DCN Program Director. The DCN Program Director must approve the research facility before an affiliation agreement is executed. Affiliation agreements must be executed prior to registration for DCN 865 Research Practicum. The research study cannot be initiated nor data collected until an affiliation agreement has been fully executed and delivered to both UNE and the research site.

Affiliation agreements are required for all facilities where students are participating in research practicum activities. Students will only be able to conduct research within facilities that have affiliation agreements with UNE or in sites that are within the UNE organization. These affiliation agreements will designate that students are not to replace employees, and if the student is an employee of the organization, they will not complete their research practicum under the mentorship of their direct supervisor or other personnel that demonstrates a conflict of interest. They may not complete Research Practicum responsibilities as part of their regular employment requirements unless written approval is provided to the program by their employer (i.e., direct supervisor). These agreements also lay forth the expectations of the University and the affiliate site, and they address student liability and insurance coverage.

Appropriateness of a Research Practicum site will vary based on the student's proposed DRP. In general, a Research Practicum site should evidence the following criteria:

- An institutional entity that oversees research (i.e., Office of Research, Institutional Review Board, etc.) and demonstrates regulatory research compliance.



- Adequate operational capacity to provide a positive learning experience for the student, including proper supervision, and instruction.
- Time, willingness, and commitment of a site-designated and approved mentor to oversee the research experience. The mentor must have current, documented training and expertise in conducting research aligned with the type of research (i.e., population, methods, etc.) proposed by the student.
- Ability to support student completion of their DRP within the time parameters of the Research Practicum course and student's plan of study.
- Provision of IRB review, approval, and continuing oversight of the research project – may be cooperative or dual review with UNE.
- Ability to provide required documentation to submit to the UNE IRB.
- Ability to execute a letter of collaboration with UNE.
- Ability to execute a data sharing or data use agreement, as applicable, with UNE.
- Ability to execute an affiliation agreement with UNE.

When a site is deemed appropriate for the student's Research Practicum, the DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator will share the UNE Affiliation Agreement with the prospective site and ask for a signature. The site administrators may suggest edits using "track changes" in Microsoft Word. If the site prefers to use their own Affiliation Agreement template, they must contact the DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator via email for review and submission to UNE's Contract Administrator. The Contract Administrator will then work to achieve a fully executed agreement.

The DCN Program Director and Applied Nutrition Program Coordinator will inform the student of any actions that the student must complete before UNE is able to fully execute the affiliation agreement. These actions include, but are not limited to, completion of medical and legal clearance tasks and required training. Completion of these actions requires timely completion on the part of the student. Failure on the part of the student to complete these actions in a timely manner may result in the affiliation agreement being delayed or unable to be fully executed. Delays in execution of an affiliation agreement may impact the student's plan of study and timeline for graduation. Students should anticipate 2 to 4 months to finalize agreements, depending on any affiliation agreement changes needed. However, it is possible for the process to take 6 months or longer.

A student may not register for DCN 865 Research Practicum until an affiliation agreement has been fully executed and delivered to both UNE and the affiliate research site, UNE IRB and affiliate IRB approval (as applicable) is received, and the DCN Program Director has approved registration. Students may not complete any element of the Research Practicum, including, but not limited to, initiating the DRP study and collecting data, outside of enrollment in DCN 865 Research Practicum.

A fully signed copy of the final agreement will be kept on file through the UNE Contracts Office.

# Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity, and Professionalism Policies

## UNE Code of Student Conduct

Students are required to abide by the UNE Code of Student Conduct as outlined in the [UNE Student Handbook](#) (Part I, Section C). Administrative Resolution, Restorative Resolution, and University Student Conduct Board Procedures as well as Grievance Policies are also outlined in the UNE Student Handbook (Part I, Section D through Section H).

## College of Professional Studies (CPS) Code of Professional Conduct

The College of Professional Studies (CPS) is committed to promoting in all students a sense of professionalism; students are expected to exhibit the highest standards of professional conduct, avoiding impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

The Code of Professional Conduct exists to promote honorable conduct on the part of all students in the college and instill in students a life-long commitment to the principles embodied within the code. Its purpose is to create an environment where honesty, integrity and respect are rewarded and unethical, dishonest or disrespectful behaviors are prevented, deterred, or do not exist. The credibility of any professional is based on the high degree of trust accorded by the individuals they serve.

College work is geared to prepare students to enter their respective professions and have a unique, particular obligation to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects honesty, integrity and respect for others.

Responsibility for the success of the Code of Professional Conduct lies principally with the individual student as well as with the collective academic community of students, faculty, and staff. Ultimately, the value of the code depends on students monitoring their own behavior and discouraging violations of the code.

No set of policies or procedures can anticipate every issue or situation, and circumstances may, at times, require alterations or adaptations. What follows are the general policies that will govern these situations routinely while maintaining the College's commitment to these policies and to applying them fairly. The College of Professional Studies does, however, reserve the right to modify policies and/or procedures at any time as may be necessary.

A student enrolled in the College of Professional Studies is expected to demonstrate professional behavior and conduct by:

- Behaving in a responsible, reliable and dependable manner -- e.g. to manage time well; be on time for assignments, meetings, and appointments; to plan ahead and to follow through with commitments; to cooperate with person(s) in charge of programs; and to take responsibility for absences or missed assignments.

- Demonstrating personal integrity, honesty, and self-discipline – e.g. to be consistent and truthful, to show appropriate personal control, to take on tasks that they can manage; to be honest in reports and self-evaluations.
- Projecting a professional image in manner, interpersonal relationships, and writings, including social media, that is consistent with the profession's accepted contemporary standards.
- Recognizing their personal limitations and biases, whether they are intellectual, physical or emotional; to strive to correct them (e.g. overcome negative behaviors such as procrastination); to learn to be a team member; to adapt to new situations; and to avoid discriminatory conduct or speech.
- Demonstrating the professional and emotional maturity to manage tensions and conflicts which occur among professional, personal, and family responsibilities. e.g. to meet with supposed antagonists to resolve misunderstandings; to get needed help from faculty, student support, tutors, learning assistance professionals and other qualified persons; to show ability to prioritize appropriately one's personal, professional, and academic expectations and activities; to accept decisions of persons of authority at the CPS and UNE as well as in the professional environment.
- Demonstrating the ability to exercise sound judgment and to function under pressure – e.g. to request help when needed and to avoid endangering others; to remain focused on the task at hand; to remember that as a student they represent CPS to the greater community at large.
- Demonstrating the ability to self-assess, to continually learn and to learn from mistakes and failures and to heed admonitions and warnings from faculty and administrators (or their staff representatives) of CPS and from preceptors – e.g. to be responsive to feedback and constructive criticism regarding professional behavior and attitude; and, to understand the seriousness of academic and disciplinary warnings.
- Demonstrating compassion and respect toward others – e.g. to be respectful of others; to work cooperatively with differences and diversity in personalities and in cultural backgrounds as well as with differences in social and in economic status; and, to respect the privacy, confidentiality and individual choice of others.
- Demonstrating respectful behavior at all times toward the faculty, staff, and students.
- Respecting individuals from diverse backgrounds as a part of a university education. Prejudices against individuals because of race, ethnic or cultural background, gender, disability or other personal characteristics will not be tolerated.
- Displaying mature judgment and abiding by the reasonable decisions communicated by faculty and staff. Profane language or disrespectful behavior by students is unacceptable.

Misunderstandings, changes in curricula or mistakes in administrative aspects of the program will occur from time to time. Appropriate mechanisms exist to communicate student concerns about the operation of the college through the program administration, faculty members, and college administrators.

These standards are taken very seriously and evaluated regularly. Failure to abide by these standards may result in academic warning, prescribed or proscribed actions, probation, or dismissal from the student's program.

### **UNE Academic Integrity Policy**

The University of New England values academic integrity in all aspects of the educational experience. Academic dishonesty in any form undermines this standard and devalues the original contributions of others. It is the responsibility of all members of the University community to actively uphold the integrity of the academy; failure to act, for any reason, is not acceptable.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Cheating, copying, or the offering or receiving of unauthorized assistance or information.
- Fabrication or falsification of data, results, or sources for papers or reports.
- Action which destroys or alters the work of another student.
- Multiple submission of the same paper or report for assignments in more than one course without permission of each instructor.
- Plagiarism, the appropriation of records, research, materials, ideas, or the language of other persons or writers and the submission of them as one's own.

Charges of academic dishonesty will be reviewed by the Program Director. Penalties for students found responsible for violations may depend upon the seriousness and circumstances of the violation, the degree of premeditation involved, and/or the student's previous record of violations. Appeal of a decision may be made to the Dean whose decision will be final. Student appeals will take place through the grievance process outlined in this handbook.

Additional information on Academic Integrity at UNE may be located at <https://www.une.edu/studentlife/student-affairs/student-conduct/academic-integrity>.

### **Nutrition and Dietetics Professional Standards, Credentialing, and Behavior**

The DCN program has a societal responsibility to train practitioners that demonstrate knowledge, critical judgment, technical skills, and ethical behavior that align with current scope and standards of practice for the proficient to expert level RDN. Current [Scope and Standards of Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist](#) are available through the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Additionally, the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics \(Academy\) and Commission on Dietetic Registration \(CDR\) Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession](#) outlines explicit principles and ethical standards for professional behavior and ethical conduct as a nutrition and dietetics practitioner.

Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and following all principles outlined in the CDR Scope and Standards of Practice for the RDN and the AND/CDR Code of Ethics. In all educational settings, including the Advanced Practice Residency and Research Practicum, students should uphold community standards for scope of practice, professional behavior, and ethical practice. Students who perform outside of their scope of practice or fail to demonstrate professional behavior and ethical conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures or dismissal from the program.

Students must maintain current credentialing as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (or international equivalent) for the duration of program enrollment. Students whose credential lapses or who are subject to an action or decision by the Academy or CDR (or equivalent international credentialing agency) may be subject to disciplinary procedures or dismissal from the program.

### **DCN Technical Standards**

Related to the DCN program's societal responsibility to train practitioners that demonstrate knowledge, critical judgment, technical skills, and ethical behavior that align with current scope and standards of practice for the proficient to expert level RDN, the DCN defines technical standards that students are expected to exhibit. These technical standards include nonacademic criteria that reflect the student's ability to:

- Gather knowledge from online courses and other instructional methods for translation to experiential learning and professional practice.
- Identify, comprehend, analyze, and interpret instruction as disseminated through diverse educational approaches and learning modalities (i.e., written, verbal, technological).
- Use the correct equipment, instruments, tools, or apparatus to gather and interpret data relevant to the field of study, practice, or research.
- Adhere to universal safety precautions and standard operating procedures to prevent contamination and cross-contamination from infectious agents, toxins, and other hazardous substances and chemicals.
- Solve problems and think critically to develop appropriate products and services (e.g., nutrition care plan, a scientific experiment).
- Synthesize information to develop and defend conclusions regarding observations and outcomes.
- Exercise intellectual capability, sound judgment, and task completion within appropriate timeframes for the given setting.
- Communicate in a clear, effective, mature, and appropriate manner based on the needs of the audience and outcomes to be achieved.
- Maintain confidentiality and security in sharing, transmitting, storing, and managing sensitive and protected information.
- Operate in a safe manner and respond appropriately to emergencies and urgent situations.

- Demonstrate emotional stability and resilience to function effectively under stress and adapt to dynamic environments inherent to clinical, academic, community, and other professional contexts.

Students who are unable to demonstrate the DCN technical standards may be subject to remediation or dismissal from the program.

### **College of Professional Studies Communication Etiquette**

The College of Professional Studies seeks to foster a positive and supportive learning environment for all students so they may attain their educational goals. Active, yet respectful, discourse is encouraged in all courses and in any other forum. Online learning is a form of social interaction and, as such, has its own rules for interacting with others. This guide is intended to be an overview of appropriate etiquette for interaction in this online environment.

A key distinguishing feature of an online course is that communication occurs primarily via the written word. Because of this, body language, voice intonation, and instantaneous listener feedback of the traditional classroom are absent. These differences need to be taken into consideration both when posting to a discussion and when reading the posts of others. Keep in mind the following points:

- Respect others and their opinions. In online learning, students from various backgrounds come together to learn. It is important to respect their feelings and opinions though they may differ from your own.
- Tone down your language. Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Do not capitalize words as emphasis (as this is equivalent to shouting) and avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the excessive use of exclamation points.
- In general, avoid humor and sarcasm. These frequently depend either on facial or tone-of-voice clues absent in text communication.
- Be aware that the thoughts and ideas that you post on the discussion board are public. Make sure you are sensitive to those who may read your comments when talking about your work, environment, or coworkers.
- Use proper spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.
- In general, avoid emoticons and acronyms, unless of a professional nature and spelled out with first use, as their use may make your message difficult to read.
- Cite all references used. Students are required to use proper citations in all contributed work.
- Refer to and follow the Discussion Board Rubric provided by the instructor in the course syllabus for participation and contribution requirements.
- Be concise and ensure that all of your responses remain on topic.
- Test for clarity. Messages may appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to the reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it is comprehensible.

## **College of Professional Studies Social Media Guidelines**

The blending of public and private communications is a new reality. While many would like to think that personal accounts are private, it is hard for others to distinguish the difference between online personal and professional opinions. As members of the University of New England community, what students do and say may reflect directly on the institution, including activity on social media. Remember that social media is not private, no matter how strict one may be with privacy settings nor how private a group they join may appear.

Students should maintain the highest level of professionalism and should keep in mind that any post, either on their private/public account or within a private/public group, may eventually be seen by patients, clients, coworkers, bosses, friends, family, faculty, program and university administration, and future employers. Students should be aware that most graduate programs in the College of Professional Studies are guided by national professional associations that adhere to a specific Code of Ethics.

Students should use their program's Code of Ethics to guide their communication on social media sites.

Use of social networking sites can have legal ramifications. Comments made regarding interaction with patients or clients or that portray you or a colleague in an unprofessional manner can be used in court or other disciplinary proceedings. Anything you write in an e-mail, text, tweet, or on social media sites is stored electronically, out of your control and can be copied or distributed without your prior knowledge, or subpoenaed for legal cause.

Under no circumstances should photos of patients or clients be displayed online, even if you have permission. Also under no circumstances should any student comment on a patient or client, even if deidentified.

### **Examples of Prohibited Behavior**

- Postings that are unprofessional, defamatory, harassing, or that otherwise violate UNE's codes of conduct or other applicable policies. Postings are considered to be information, text, video, photos, music or other online items placed, linked or forwarded via electronic media.
- Starting or administering social media pages or groups that utilize the UNE DCN program name, logo, or other identifying information that may misrepresent that the program has sanctioned the group or page
- Profane, vulgar and otherwise unprofessional postings do not reflect the values of the College of Professional Studies, UNE, or the Profession and must be avoided if there is even the slightest possibility that the student will be considered to have an affiliation (e.g. the student is otherwise identified as a student elsewhere) with the College of Professional Studies or University.
- Malicious use of online social networking programs. This includes false and disparaging statements about others; gratuitously demeaning statements about or threats to any third party; photos, memes, reposts, "likes" or statements depicting hazing, sexual

harassment, vandalism, stalking, underage drinking, illegal drug use, or any other behaviors considered inappropriate and unprofessional for any student.

- Posting any online materials that could be interpreted as a violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), or any professional/ethical code, policy or agreement mandating confidentiality.

Clear violations of this College of Professional Studies policy or suspected evidence of such violations in the content of social networks or digital platforms will be subject to investigation and sanction under the CPS Code for Professional Conduct. Any behaviors considered to be illegal may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation and potential prosecution. If multiple laws and/or policies apply to a particular situation, the most stringent of these laws/policies will take precedence.

Please remember that a student's online activity may be subject to other UNE policies, including but not limited to the following:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Nondiscrimination, harassment, and bullying policies
- Information security policies
- Acceptable use policies

### **Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress in a professional manner for all course presentations, whether live or recorded. Professional dress always applies to all APR hours and the conduct of research (i.e., Research Practicum). For the APR and Research Practicum, attire will vary depending on the site. The student should obtain a copy of the dress policy of the facility prior to the first day of the APR or Research Practicum. The dress code guidelines of the site must be followed.

Hygiene and neatness are important. Hair must be clean and neatly styled. Fingernails must be short and clean. Jewelry and makeup must not detract from assignment messaging and should meet APR/Research Practicum site policies. Policies governing tattoos and piercings are at the discretion of the APR/Research Practicum site.

If a student's dress or physical appearance is considered inappropriate by course faculty, DCN program administration, or the APR/Research Practicum site, the student will be asked to correct the issue. Corrective action may include, but is not limited to, points deducted from the assignment grade, removal from the APR/Research Practicum site until the issue is resolved, and making up APR hours that were missed.

Shorts, crop or tank tops, spaghetti straps, open toe shoes, sweat or yoga pants, leggings, or wrinkled apparel are never acceptable as they are not considered professional attire.



## **Professional Organizations and Meetings**

Students are strongly encouraged to be active members of professional organizations related to their area of practice and program focus area. Students are encouraged to hold leadership positions and attend meetings held by local, state, or national chapters of those organizations. Students may have opportunities to attend professional presentations and seminars of interest to them. Professional dues, registration fees, and travel expenses related to membership and attendance are the student's responsibility.

Membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is not required. Students should be aware that some courses require students to purchase resources only available through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. These resources are available for purchase by both Academy members and non-members. Discounts are often available for members.

## **Outside Employment**

The DCN program is designed for working professionals. Students should evaluate their schedules, professional and personal responsibilities, academic aptitude, and time management skills to confirm they have adequate time to devote to program coursework, research, and advanced practice residency requirements.

Students are expected to spend approximately 20-25 hours per week on course work when enrolled in a 3 credit, 8-week course and 10-15 hours per week when enrolled in a 3 credit, 16-week course. Time-management during the program is critical.

External employment obligations do not serve as an excuse for not completing program coursework expected to be successful at the graduate level; APR hours cannot be completed as part of a student's employment requirements.

## Student Academic Policies

### Academic Calendar

The DCN Program follows the UNE Academic Calendar (Online), which may be located at <https://www.une.edu/registrar/calendars/academic-calendars>. The UNE academic calendar defines each course session start and end date as well as course withdrawal deadlines, incomplete grade deadlines, application for graduation filing deadlines, course grade deadlines, and degree conferral dates.

The Summer Term is the first term of the academic year. Course sessions are designated as terms – A, B, or AB. Courses that are 8-weeks in length are offered during A or B terms. Courses that are 16-weeks in length are offered during AB term. Terms are labeled according to the trimester in which they are offered – i.e., Summer A, Summer B, or Summer AB.

### Course Schedule

The DCN Program follows the UNE Online trimester schedule with coursework offered year-round. Program courses are offered in 8-week and 16-week sessions, depending on the course (see DCN Plan of Study). Each course session typically begins on a Wednesday and concludes on a Sunday. Each course week begins on a Wednesday and concludes the following Tuesday.

### Vacation and Holidays

Vacations and other planned time away, including professional travel, should be planned around academic programming and APR hours. Following the UNE Online year-round academic calendar, the DCN program does not observe any scheduled breaks (i.e., fall break, spring break, etc.) during a course session. Students should review the academic calendar to note any breaks between sessions for vacation planning purposes and schedule time away accordingly. Typically, an extended winter break is built into the course schedule from end of December to mid-January to accommodate observance of winter holidays. Students are encouraged to schedule extended vacations or time away during this time to not conflict with academic programming.

If vacation and other planned time away conflicts with academic programming and APR hours, it is the student's responsibility to communicate this conflict with the DCN Program Director and course faculty, as applicable, as soon as the conflict is known. Depending on the impact on coursework and other program requirements, students may be advised to pause their coursework, recognizing that any pause may delay their program progress and graduation timeline.

## **Graduate Student Enrollment Status**

The DCN program follows UNE policy regarding [graduate student enrollment status](#) as published in the UNE Graduate Catalog and stated below.

The University of New England classifies student credit load status for the purposes of financial aid loan deferments. Doctoral students are classified as full-time students when enrolled in 6 or more credits per semester and half-time students when enrolled in 3.0 to 5.9 credits per semester. Students taking fewer than 3 credits in a semester may not be eligible for federal financial aid. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their Enrollment and Retention Counselor and Student Financial Services to discuss their financial aid eligibility according to their plan of study and course registration.

## **Registration and Enrollment Confirmation**

The DCN program follows UNE policy regarding registration and enrollment confirmation as published in the [UNE Graduate Catalog](#) and stated below.

Students matriculated in any graduate program can register for courses during dates established in the [University's Academic Calendar](#).

At the beginning of each session, all students must confirm their enrollment within specified timelines using methods provided by the University Registrar's Office. Instructions for enrollment confirmation are communicated to each student via UNE email.

Course registration can only be confirmed after fulfilling all other university obligations, including resolving matters with Student Accounts, Financial Aid, the Health Center, Security, or any other relevant offices necessary for complete enrollment at the university.

Changes to course schedules are permitted only during a designated add/drop period, as outlined in the current academic calendar. Detailed instructions and timelines regarding the add/drop process are emailed to each student. It's important to note that tuition and/or financial aid may be adjusted based on the number of credit hours enrolled during this period.

The original source of this policy is available in the UNE Graduate Catalog at <https://www.une.edu/catalog/2024-2025/graduate-catalog/academic-policy-and-regulations>.

## **College of Professional Studies Course Withdrawal Policy**

The DCN program follows the College of Professional Studies Course Withdrawal Policy regarding course withdrawal as published in the [UNE Graduate Catalog](#) and stated below.

**Add/Drop Period:** A student may add or drop a course during the time frames published on the [UNE Academic Calendar](#). Courses dropped during the add/drop period will not appear on a student's official transcript.

**Course Withdrawal Period:** A student may withdraw from a course after the add/drop period has ended through the designated withdrawal deadline, which is approximately at the 60% point of the course's length. The withdrawal period for each semester and session is published on the [UNE Academic Calendar](#).

**Grade for the Course Withdrawal:** A course withdrawal during the withdrawal period results in a grade of W, which will appear on a student's official transcript. The grade of W is awarded only if a student has submitted a completed Course Withdrawal Form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline. The W grade does not impact the term or cumulative GPA.

**Consultation Before a Course Withdrawal:** Before deciding to withdraw from a course, students must consult their Program/Academic Director and are encouraged to discuss the situation with the instructor. International students must obtain the approval of the Office of Global Education, as withdrawals may affect visa status. Students are strongly urged to consult with Student Financial Services, as course withdrawals may affect financial aid or Veterans benefits.

**Course Withdrawal Process:** Students who wish to withdraw from a course must submit a Course Withdrawal Form, signed by their Program/Academic Director and Office of Global Education (if applicable), to the Registrar's Office before the Course Withdrawal deadline. Ceasing to attend classes or notifying the instructor does not constitute an official withdrawal.

**Late Withdrawal:** Requests to withdraw from a course after the withdrawal period will only be considered in extreme circumstances. To request a late withdrawal, a student must consult with their Program/Academic Director and submit a completed Academic Petition stating the extenuating circumstances and a letter of support from an advisor, faculty member, or Program/Academic Director to the College's Dean's Office offering the course for consideration. If approved, a W grade will appear on the transcript, not impacting the GPA calculations. Late withdrawal petitions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the last day of the class.

Note: All deadlines, procedures, and policies related to course withdrawal are subject to the guidelines specified on the [UNE Academic Calendar](#).

### **College of Professional Studies Attendance Policy**

**16 week course:** Students taking online graduate courses through the College of Professional Studies will be administratively dropped for non-participation if a graded assignment/discussion post is not submitted before Friday at 11:59 p.m. of the second week of the term. Reinstatement is at the purview of the Dean's Office.

**8 week course:** Students taking online graduate courses through the College of Professional Studies will be administratively dropped for non-participation if a graded assignment/discussion

post is not submitted before Sunday at 11:59 p.m. of the first week of the term. Reinstatement is at the purview of the Dean's Office.

### **UNE Tuition Refund Policy**

For refund information related to dropping or withdrawing from a course, students should visit <https://www.une.edu/sfs/money-matters/une-refund-policies> and contact Student Financial Services (<https://www.une.edu/sfs/online>). Final determination of any tuition refunds will be made by the University.

For financial aid recipients, withdrawal can affect your financial aid eligibility ("Return to Title IV"), resulting in a balance owed to the University. It is very important to contact Student Financial Services before withdrawing from a course/program to discuss the impact on your financial aid, if applicable. Please refer to the [Return to Title IV Policy for Online Students](#) for more information. Please consult the [Graduate Academic Catalog](#) for other pertinent financial information.

### **College of Professional Studies Leave of Absence (Academic Stop-Out)**

The College of Professional Studies recognizes that matriculated students in CPS degree and certificate programs are working professionals with many external responsibilities. As such, students may stop out of their program for up to two (2) semesters. Students need to coordinate stop-outs in advance with their assigned Enrollment and Retention Counselor and the DCN Program Director, and stop out time is considered part of the time allotted to complete the academic program. Application for readmission is not necessary if the student returns as planned.

However, the student who exceeds two (2) semesters of stop out will be administratively withdrawn and will be subject to readmission procedures. Readmitted students are subject to the re-admittance term's catalog (this may mean that policies and/or program requirements have been changed or updated since previous admission, and should be reviewed for potential impact on degree requirements, time to complete the degree, and degree planning).

Note: It is the responsibility of the student to contact their Enrollment and Retention Counselor and Student Financial Services to indicate a change of plans; stop out time can affect financial aid eligibility and repayment.

### **Medical Leave of Absence**

In the event that a leave of absence is taken due to medical reasons, a doctor's note generally is required in order to return to active standing within the program.

### **Program and/or University Withdrawal**

If a student decides to withdraw from the DCN Program, the student must schedule a meeting with the DCN Program Director to discuss whether the student will permanently withdraw from

the program or take a temporary leave of absence. Refunds of tuition and fees for the program will be processed according to the UNE policy (see Tuition Refund Policy).

All matriculated students who wish to withdraw from the University must complete notification documentation available from the Registrar's Office. Documentation must be signed by designated academic and administrative authorities.

For more information, students should refer to the University Withdrawal Policy in the [UNE Graduate Catalog](#).

### **Program Readmission**

Students who have been withdrawn from the program for any reason must reapply if they wish to continue their studies. The application procedures, academic policies, and program requirements that are in effect at the time of readmission will apply. Students who re-enroll following withdrawal will have their previous coursework evaluated for applicability to the existing academic requirements. Coursework that is more than five (5) years old may not be accepted for credit in the program. Previously completed Advanced Practice Residency hours and the Research Practicum may not be accepted for credit in the program and may need to be repeated.

Students who have been administratively withdrawn from the program (see CPS Course Withdrawal Policy) may petition for readmission after a full semester has elapsed. The petition letter must provide a justification for readmission that addresses how past issues have been resolved and will not re-occur. The letter should be attached in the application portal.

### **Transfer Credit**

Upon acceptance, students may apply to transfer up to three (3) courses, or a maximum of nine (9) credits, into the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program. To request consideration for transfer credit, a student must provide an official transcript and a course syllabus for each course. Transfer credit is awarded at the discretion of the College of Professional Studies based on specific program details. Requests for approval of transfer credit should be submitted to and will be granted at the discretion of the Program Director.

Transfer credit must be classified as graduate level, have been taken within five (5) years of application, have been completed with a grade of "B" or better, and be equivalent to one of the required program courses or an elective course that meets the goals of the student's education.

### **Experiential Credit**

The DCN program does not grant academic credit for life experiences or previous work experience.

## Grading Scale

The DCN Program follows the UNE College of Professional Studies grading scale.

GRADE	GRADE POINT	GPA
A	94 – 100	4.00
A-	90 – 93	3.75
B+	87 – 89	3.50
B	84 – 86%	3.00
B-	80 – 83%	2.75
C+	77 – 79%	2.50
C	74 – 76%	2.00
C-	70 – 73%	1.75
D	64 – 69%	1.00
F	00 – 63%	0.00

### Minimum Grade Point Average and Academic Progress

The DCN follows UNE policy regarding minimum GPA and academic progress as published in the [UNE Graduate Catalog](#) and stated below.

Matriculated graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) or better. Failure to do so will result in academic probation and possible termination from the program. Any student receiving a grade below B- on any individual course has failed that course and must re-enroll and repeat the course to achieve a grade of B- or better. Any student who receives a grade of F in two or more courses or who has failed (grade less than a B-) a repeat-restricted course three times is dismissed from the program. For repeat-restricted courses, please see the Repeat to Replace a Course Policy below. Please note: A minimum of a 3.0 GPA is required for degree conferral.

### Repeat to Replace a Course

A student may repeat a course to improve their grade. However, only the second or last course taken will receive credit on the student's transcript, and only the second or last grade received will be calculated into the cumulative GPA. Transfer courses cannot be taken to replace a grade.

Matriculated DCN students are restricted from repeating a DCN doctoral research project or advanced practice residency course (DCN 800, DCN 810, DCN 830, DCN 855, DCN 865, DCN 870, DCN 875, DCN 880) more than twice.

### **Incomplete Policy**

Students are expected to complete all course work by the appointed end date of the course. The instructor may assign an incomplete (I) grade to a student who is performing satisfactorily in a course but cannot finish the work on time due to circumstances beyond their control. An incomplete may not be granted by the course instructor without consultation with the Program Director.

To qualify for a grade of “Incomplete” the student must be:

1. Currently on track to complete the course with a passing grade.
2. Able to show consistent progress within the course with no less than 80% of the course completed.
3. Able to document a severe extenuating circumstance\* that hindered progress in the course.
4. Able to show a history of communication with the faculty member regarding course progress and/or the extenuating circumstance.

\*Circumstances such as work obligations, other coursework demands, studying for entrance exams, the routine care of family members, and other predictable or expected events are not considered extenuating circumstances and do not qualify for a grade of Incomplete. Students who have not yet begun their course, have made minimal progress in the course, are not on track to pass, have not experienced a severe extenuating circumstance, have not been in contact with their faculty member, and/or whose course end date has passed are not eligible for a grade of Incomplete.

The (I) grade must be resolved within a timeframe set by the instructor, not exceeding six (6) weeks after the end of the semester or thirty (30) days for sessions lasting eight (8) weeks or less. Until resolved, the (I) grade postpones the calculation of credits and grade points for the course. If the work is not completed within the specified timeframe, an administrative F grade is assigned for the course. Upon resolution of the (I) grade, the student’s academic standing will be updated based on standard criteria. If a course is completed after the term in which it was offered due to an (I) grade, the degree awarded date (if applicable) will be recorded in the current term when all requirements are fulfilled. This is consistent with reporting graduation status to external entities. Students with incomplete grades are ineligible for the Dean’s List.

### **Semester and Term Grades**

Semester and term grade reports are issued at the close of each semester or term and are viewable on UNE Compass. Semester and term grades reported by faculty members to the Registrar’s office are final.



## **Grade Changes**

Students who have concerns about the accuracy of a grade should reach out to the respective instructor for resolution. If there is a valid reason for a grade change, the instructor will submit a Faculty Request to Change a Grade form to the Registrar's Office. It's important to note that grade changes will not be considered for students who have been separated from the course or the University for two (2) semesters, or for those whose degree has already been conferred.

## **Course Participation**

Courses within the DCN Program are demanding and exacting. Students are expected to be present in course discussions and group activities, prepared for class, and actively engaged as evidenced by critical thinking and meaningful participation. Students are expected to schedule their personal and/or professional obligations and their course registrations so as to maintain continuous and complete participation throughout courses. Any absence from course activities will impede learning. However, circumstances may arise that cause students to be absent from active course participation on either a preplanned or an emergency basis.

Active course participation is defined as engaged participation in group activities, fulfilling discussion requirements within the published timeline, and submitting assignments within the published timeline. Absence is defined as lack of engaged participation in group activities and not fulfilling discussion requirements within the published timeline, and/or not submitting assignments within the published timeline.

Both preplanned and emergency "absences" are to be kept to a minimum and should not exceed, cumulatively, 10% of the assignments in a course. Exceeding this limit may result in grade reduction for the course or failing the course. Students are to make arrangements in advance of the "absence" with the instructor for submission of assignments and discussion participation, in accordance with specifications communicated in the course syllabus. An emergency "absence" is one that students do not know about in advance and often involves situations such as health issues. In this case, students are to notify the instructor as soon as possible and make arrangements for submission of assignments and discussion participation in accordance with specifications communicated in the course syllabus.

## **College of Professional Studies Late Policy**

Assignments submitted after the due date and time will receive a deduction of 10% of the total possible grade for each day it is late. After three days, the assignment will not be accepted. No assignments will be accepted after the course ends.

For discussion posts, if the initial post is submitted late, acceptance of the discussion board is at the discretion of the faculty. Any posts submitted after the end of the Discussion Board week will not be graded.

Students are encouraged to make every effort ahead of time to contact their instructor and their student support specialist if they are not able to meet an assignment deadline. Arrangements for extenuating circumstances may be considered by faculty.

### **Student Academic Performance Monitoring and Remediation**

Students are required to maintain good academic standing based upon performance and progress in didactic coursework, the advanced practice residency, and the doctoral research project. Good academic standing is defined as achieving a minimum grade of B- (80%) in all program courses and at all times maintaining an overall GPA of at least 3.0.

#### ***Didactic Coursework Performance Monitoring***

Student academic performance is assessed and monitored continuously at weekly intervals from the beginning to the end of each didactic course. Each course includes weekly formative assessments and a culminating summative assessment. Each formative and summative assessment is graded using a rubric, and faculty provide qualitative feedback in addition to quantitative scoring on each assignment. Assignment grades and related feedback are posted to the course gradebook in Brightspace which is maintained and visible to students throughout the entire course for continuous performance monitoring.

Students receive feedback on each assignment usually within three days of the submission deadline (possibly longer for larger projects and papers, in which the course instructor will inform students). Grades and assignment feedback are posted to the course gradebook in Brightspace. Students should review assignment feedback and use the feedback to maintain or improve course performance, particularly when completing subsequent assignments. Students who earn a grade below B- (80%) on an assignment or who have a grade below B- (80%) in any course should contact the course instructor at their earliest convenience to discuss resources and strategies to improve performance.

Faculty monitor student performance and progress in the course at weekly intervals and communicate with students who are not performing and progressing in order to support early detection and intervention of academic difficulty. Faculty may also communicate any student concerns with Enrollment and Retention Counselors and the DCN Program Director.

Each student is assigned an Enrollment and Retention Counselor who also monitors student performance and progress. The Enrollment and Retention Counselor contacts students who are not performing and progressing in coursework and communicates with the DCN Program Director when a student is not demonstrating satisfactory academic performance in the course. The Enrollment and Retention Counselor counsels the student as to options to improve academic performance or withdraw from the course. Options for improving academic performance may include access to remedial instruction and tutorial support, creating a time management plan, and requesting reasonable accommodations through the Student Access Center.

### ***Didactic Coursework Remediation***

Students who are not achieving satisfactory academic performance in a didactic course, which is defined as maintaining a passing grade of B- or better, have access to remedial instruction and tutorial support through course faculty and the DCN Program Director. Students are responsible for utilizing remediation resources to improve academic performance in didactic courses.

Remediation for a didactic course is not offered once the course has ended and the final course grade is issued. If a student does not achieve a passing grade in the course, the student has the option to repeat the course to earn a passing grade. Students who repeat a course are not permitted to re-use or re-submit the same work submitted in the course during their previous attempt. Students who repeat a course are required to complete all assessments as new work and provide a new submission for grading. Under rare and extenuating circumstances, exceptions may be granted at the discretion of and with written approval by both the course faculty and the DCN Program Director, which will be documented in the student's academic file.

### **Student Academic Performance and Progress for Financial Aid Requirements**

The University of New England is required by federal law to regularly monitor a student's academic progress. The standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) measure a student's performance in three areas:

1. Completion Rate – A student must pass a minimum of 67% percent of the total attempted credits. This is measured by comparing the number of attempted credit hours to the earned credit hours.
2. Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) – Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0.
3. Maximum Time Frame – A student cannot attempt more than 150% of the normal credits required for their degree or certificate program.

The following are considered when evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress:

- Withdrawals, incompletes, and failures are considered attempted but not earned hours.
- Passing credits received for pass/fail courses are considered attempted and earned credits; failing grades in pass/fail courses are considered attempted but not earned.
- Repeated courses and courses for which the student has been granted academic amnesty are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned hours.
- Audited courses are not considered credits attempted or earned.
- Remedial courses are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned hours.
- A Leave of Absence (LOA) period is considered as a part of the time allotted to complete an academic program.

The SAP policies apply to all financial aid programs. Students who are not successfully meeting all SAP requirements risk losing financial aid. SAP is reviewed at the end of each semester, and students failing to meet requirements will be notified and placed on Financial Aid Probation for the following semester. During the probationary semester, students will continue to receive financial aid. At the conclusion of the probationary semester, if students are still not meeting SAP requirements, financial aid will be suspended until all SAP requirements are successfully met.

When students' academic records indicate that they have attempted more than 125% of their degree or certificate credit hour requirements, they will receive a warning that they are approaching the Maximum Time Frame. Students remain eligible for federal financial aid during that time but may want to plan coursework accordingly to complete their degree within the Maximum Time Frame. Students who exceed the Maximum Time Frame before finishing studies become ineligible for federal financial assistance but may continue studies and complete their programs under their own funding.

For more information, students should refer to the [University General Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#).

### **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

A student will be placed on academic probation if their cumulative grade point average (GPA) is below the minimum acceptable level of 3.0. A student placed on academic probation will be granted two terms (4 sessions) to raise their cumulative GPA to the minimum acceptable level. Failure to meet this criteria will result in automatic dismissal from the University for academic deficiency. Following dismissal, any student wishing to re-enroll at the University of New England must apply through the Office of Admissions. Academic probation is not subject to appeal.

Any student who receives a grade of F in two courses will be dismissed from the program. Any student who fails a repeat-restricted course (grade below B-) three times will be dismissed from the program.

### **Disciplinary and Termination Procedures**

Students are required to comply with all University of New England, CPS, DCN, and affiliating institution policies. Failure to comply with these policies, including policies regarding professionalism and ethical practice, may result in the student receiving a disciplinary warning, being placed on disciplinary probation, or being terminated from the program.

Student violation of institutional policies pertaining to the UNE Code of Student Conduct will be handled according to the Administrative Resolution, Restorative Resolution, and University Student Conduct Board Procedures for Students as outlined in the [UNE Student Handbook](#) (Part I, Section D through Section H).

Student violation of affiliating institution policies will result in the student being notified verbally and in writing by the DCN Program Director. A formal meeting will be scheduled to address the infraction. This meeting will include the DCN Program Director, mentor at the affiliate institution, and student. Documentation of the infraction and the meeting will be placed in the student's file as a permanent record. Depending upon the infraction, and as deemed necessary, the DCN Program Director may consider probation or termination for the student based on policies and guidelines outlined in the [UNE Student Handbook](#) (Part I, Section D through Section H).

Termination from the DCN Program may occur when the DCN Program Director becomes aware of one of the following:

1. Surrender of Commission on Dietetic Registration as a Registered Dietitian (or equivalent for international students) for disciplinary reasons.
2. Documented Academic Dishonesty.
3. Documented Professionalism Violation including but not limited to UNE Code of Conduct and/or Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics/Commission on Dietetic Registration Code of Ethics Violation.
4. Academic Failure (see Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy Above).

## **Student Records and Information Policies**

The DCN program follows UNE policies related to Student Records and Information as published in the current [UNE Academic Catalog](#) and stated below.

### **Student Records and Protection of Privacy**

The University does not maintain a single record or file consisting of all materials and information pertaining to students in any one location. Instead, various segments of the education record are kept in a variety of offices including but not limited to the University Registrar's Office and the Graduate Programs in Applied Nutrition Office.

The DCN program follows the U.S. Department of Education Guidance Issued on Protecting Student Privacy While Using Online Educational Services. UNE will collect and maintain only the data necessary to fulfill its duties in executing affiliation agreements and meeting accreditation standards. The program will de-identify any data used for product development, research, marketing or other purposes. In the event of a security or privacy incident including personally identifiable information, the DCN program will immediately notify the student or graduate. The program takes precautions to ensure student privacy and positively identify students during distance learning and testing.

Student files, including those held at the program level, are maintained under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and kept in accordance with UNE file retention policies. All information in the student's file is private. Students have the right to review their personal file upon request.

### **Student Academic Records**

Student academic records are kept in the University Registrar's Office on both the Biddeford and Portland campuses. Records are maintained/retained under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and upon recommendations made by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).

The institution maintains a student's official academic record in perpetuity. The University Registrar's Office is the custodian of this record. No other record is officially designated as a permanent record. Other records can be expunged at the discretion of specific department heads wherein a record resides. Access rights shall be honored before the destruction of records where the student has requested such access. Departments and offices that maintain education records may have specific policies regarding access to and retention of such records consistent with this policy and FERPA.

Under the terms of the Buckley/Pell amendment to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students have the right to review and inspect all official records, files, and data, including all material that is incorporated into each student's cumulative record folder. However,

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has said that clarifying amendments provide that letters of recommendation submitted on the basis of a pledge of confidentiality prior to January 1, 1975 need not be shown to students, and that a student may be allowed but not required to waive his/her right of access to letters of recommendation received after that date. The amendments also provide that a financial statement submitted by a parent need not be shown to the student. Release of records is allowed only upon written student approval, unless FERPA permits disclosure without consent of the student or others.

University students wishing to review their records may do so by providing a written request to the Registrar's office at least 48 hours in advance of the desired appointment.

### **Student Conduct Records**

Each campus's Dean of Students Office maintains student conduct records and related files under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The Office of the Dean of Students maintains all student conduct and related files for no less than four years after separation from the University. Records may be destroyed at that time. Disciplinary records may be retained for more extended periods of time or permanently if specified in terms of disciplinary sanctions.

### **Student Access and Annual Notification**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. Under FERPA, students who are presently enrolled at the University of New England (but not applicants seeking admission to the University), former students, and alumni have certain rights with respect to their education records. Full FERPA information may be found in the current [UNE Academic Catalog](#) under Student Records and Administrative Policy.

### **Directory Information and Disclosure**

The University normally will not supply non-related organizations with personally identifiable student information, including "directory information." organizations with personally identifiable student information, including "directory information."

Two exceptions to this policy are:

1. THE USA PATRIOT ACT: Section 507 of the USA PATRIOT ACT amends FERPA by permitting educational agencies and institutions to disclose - without the consent or knowledge of the student or parent - personally identifiable information from the student's education records to the Attorney General of the United States or to his designee in response to an ex parte order in connection with the investigation or prosecution of terrorism crimes. In addition, the school is not required to record such disclosures.

2. THE SOLOMON AMENDMENT: The Solomon Amendment explicitly states that military recruiters must be given equal access that is provided to other recruiters. UNE is therefore obligated to release data included in the list of "student recruiting information," upon request.

Directory information is defined as:

- Student Name
- Address
- Appropriate personal athletic statistical data
- Class Level (PR, GR, UG - Senior, Junior, Sophomore, Freshmen)
- Date of Birth
- Dates of Attendance (Fall, Spring, Summer)
- Degrees and Awards received (including dates)
- Enrollment Status (full/part-time)
- Most recent previous educational institution attended
- Participation in sports and activities
- Phone
- Program of Study
- UNE assigned email address
- Photo

Active students who wish to have directory information withheld from release must do so in writing on a "per academic-year" basis. Request forms are available in the Registrar's office and the Student Affairs offices at either campus. Requests must be submitted prior to September 30th (if first-time enrollment for academic year is fall semester) or January 30th (if first-time enrollment for academic year is spring semester) to affect a "withhold" status.

Please remember: active students must renew a request for non-disclosure each year to keep such requests in effect. The University may disclose directory information about former students without meeting notification requirements; however, at the last opportunity as a student (just prior to departure from the University), written requests for nondisclosure will remain in effect until a written request to change non-disclosure status is made by the student.

The University of New England Privacy Notice can also be found at <https://www.une.edu/communications/privacy-policy>.



## Petition and Grievance Policies and Processes

### Overview

The College of Professional Studies provides avenues for students to voice their concerns through clearly defined channels depending upon the level and nature of the concern. Student petitions fall into one of two categories: 1. Academic\* or 2. Professional Behavior.

Petitions are resolved at the program level. Prior to pursuing a grievance, students are encouraged to communicate with the faculty member or other parties involved in an attempt to resolve the issue.

\*A petition for a grade change may only be filed in instances where a student disagrees with the faculty evaluation based on: 1. Arithmetic, clerical, or factual error or 2. Arbitrariness or 3. Allegedly discriminatory behavior. Barring these three categories, the academic judgment used in determining the merits of the grade is not reviewable.

### Petition Processes

Student concerns and grievances should be approached in the following manner:

1. The student is encouraged to try to resolve the issue with the faculty or other person involved as soon as possible. If the student is unsatisfied with the attempted resolution or if an attempt at resolution with the faculty member or others involved would not be appropriate given the nature of the grievance, the student should contact their Enrollment and Retention Counselor (for the matter being petitioned) within five (5) business days of the communication with the faculty member.
2. The Enrollment and Retention Counselor will facilitate the petition process and will provide the student with the necessary petition form to complete. The completed petition must include a clear statement of the student's requested action, a summary of the conversation(s) with faculty or other involved parties as applicable, and appropriate supporting materials (including any items that provide relevant history or context of the issue).
3. The student must return the completed petition to the Enrollment and Retention Counselor no later than five (5) business days after the petition process has been initiated as referenced in step 2 above. The petition will be sent to the Program Director\* by the Enrollment and Retention Counselor.
4. The Program Director\* will review each petition and may contact the student, instructor, Enrollment and Retention Counselor, or other university personnel should additional information be necessary or helpful before rendering a decision. Depending upon the nature of the petition, students may be prevented from registering for a subsequent session or term until the petition is resolved. Decisions will be communicated to the student and Enrollment and Retention Counselor through UNE email by the Program Director\* within seven (7) business days of receipt of the petition, unless more time is

necessary for the evaluation of the grievance. The Enrollment and Retention Counselor will record the decision in the student's record.

\*Note: Depending on the nature of the complaint, the petition may go directly to the Dean.

### **Appeals Process**

If the student is not satisfied with Program Leadership's decision, the student may appeal the decision to the Dean of the College of Professional Studies within five (5) business days of the student's receipt of the decisions. Such appeals shall be in writing and must be based on:

- a. New evidence that could not have been presented at the time of the original decision, or
- b. Procedural errors in the original review process that had a substantial impact on or otherwise prejudiced the original determination.

The grievance should succinctly state all facts relevant to procedural violations that are alleged to have had an impact on the original decision and/or the new evidence and why it could not have been presented at the time of the original decision.

Upon receipt of the appeal, the Dean will appoint an Ad Hoc Appeals Committee comprised of the Dean or Designee, an unbiased Faculty member from the program, and a member of the executive committee of CPS Faculty. The student will present the grievance to the Appeals Committee via phone or web meeting within 10 business days of the appointment of the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will review the grievance and supporting documentation.

In presenting to the Appeals Committee, the student should provide an overview of the issue and introduce material of a substantiating nature; the Committee may request additional information from specific sources or individuals. Within 5 business days of the hearing, the Committee will forward to the Dean a summary of the grievance and its recommendations for resolving the grievance. Depending upon the nature of the grievance, students may be prevented from registering for a subsequent session or term until the grievance is resolved. The Dean, while taking the committee's recommendation into consideration, will render the decision on the grievance. The Dean's decision will be communicated via writing to the student and program within 7 business days of receipt of the Committee's report. The decision by the Dean is final.

### **Non-Discrimination and Title IX**

The University of New England ("the University" or "UNE") is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, work, and study. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law and University policy, the University prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, trustees, student body, vendors, volunteers, or visitors to campus, whether they

are guests, patrons, independent contractors, or clients, from harassing and/or discriminating against any other member of the University community because of that person's race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, creed, color, genetic information, physical or mental disability, HIV status, or status as a veteran.

UNE's complete policy, which includes contact information for the Senior Director, Office of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance and others, can be found in the UNE Student Handbook – <https://www.une.edu/pdfs/2024-une-student-handbook>.

With respect to sex discrimination, which includes sex-based harassment, retaliation, and all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation, UNE has a specific policy that is consistent with Federal Law under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, as amended by the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, the Maine Human Rights Act and other applicable federal and state laws.

The complete policy, which includes contact information for the Senior Director, Office of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance and others, can be found in the UNE Student Handbook – <https://www.une.edu/pdfs/2024-une-student-handbook>.

## Online Learning and Course Policies

### Faculty Office Hours

Course faculty will post office hours each course session. Course faculty are expected to be available for at least one hour (60 minutes) per week outside of regular business hours to meet with students. Appointments will typically occur via Zoom. Students are strongly encouraged to attend office hours to ask questions and receive support in their academic journey.

### Course Textbooks and Resources

Each course syllabus outlines which textbooks are required or recommended for a course. Students may purchase an electronic or paper version of the text. In some cases, course textbooks and other resources may be available in electronic format for free through the [UNE Library](#).

### American Medical Association Writing Format

In keeping with the requirements of the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* and the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, the *American Medical Association (AMA) Manual of Style, 11th edition* is the required writing format for all program courses and is available through the UNE Library – [AMA Style Guide](#). Additional support for academic writing and AMA format is provided through the DCN Orientation and Resource Portal and throughout program coursework.

### Graduate Writing Statement

As professionals in the field, you will consistently be expected to clearly and concisely articulate advanced concepts for diverse audiences at a variety of educational levels.

Graduate students are expected to integrate and apply current scientific evidence and scholarly practice guidelines when completing assignments. Theories, ideas, concepts, and other information obtained or generated through review of the scholarly literature must be synthesized and summarized across multiple sources and correctly attributed.

Graduate students are expected to produce work that is their own and that is their best quality work. Students are expected to screen and proofread their work prior to submission for proper attribution of sources and authority, clarity, grammar, spelling, formatting, and mechanical issues.

While there is often a portion of each assignment's rubric dedicated specifically to grammar, spelling, mechanics, and formatting, it is critical to understand that failure to submit work that has been adequately proofed may result in a reduction of points in other areas of the rubric. These may include, but are not limited to metrics rating professionalism or content knowledge

and synthesis; work submitted in graduate courses should provide evidence of strategic reading, writing, and academic speaking skills essential for success in the discipline.

Please note that the Graduate Programs in Applied Nutrition, which includes the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program, holds the position that Grammarly and other artificial intelligence (AI) writing and generative technology should not be used when completing course assignments, unless explicitly permitted by course faculty and assignment instructions. These tools do not support a student's personal and direct capacity to develop and hone skills in creativity, logic, critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, theorization, and writing, which are central to graduate level rigor, assessment, and research. Use of these tools may result in an academic integrity infraction.

### **Turnitin**

The College of Professional Studies uses Turnitin to help deter plagiarism and to foster the proper attribution of sources. Turnitin provides comparative reports for submitted assignments that reflect similarities in other written works. This can include, but is not limited to, previously submitted assignments, internet articles, research journals, and academic databases.

Students can learn more about Turnitin here: [Understanding the Similarity Score for Students.](#)

### **RefWorks**

RefWorks is citation management software that works with word processing programs to automatically format in-text citations and paper reference lists according to a chosen writing style (i.e., AMA). [RefWorks](#) is available through the UNE Library. Students are encouraged to become familiar with RefWorks and utilize it in the completion of course assignments. Students should note that citation management software, such as RefWorks, is not fail proof, and reference list format may contain errors. Students are responsible to proofread and correct reference lists before assignment submission.

### **Submission of Coursework for Publication or Presentation**

Students interested in submitting a manuscript or other work completed in the course for publication or presentation external to UNE must obtain written approval from the course instructor and DCN Program Director prior to submission. The student should contact the course instructor or DCN Program Director to obtain a copy of the DCN Permission to Publish/Present Form which must be completed by the student per the form's instructions. Failure to follow these steps and complete the form prior to submission for publication/presentation or abide by the requirements therein will result in a professionalism violation. If granted permission to publish or present, the student is expected to indicate that the manuscript or other work was prepared as part of course and degree requirements while a student in the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition at the University of New England. University affiliation for publications, abstracts, posters, or other presentations should be listed as "Graduate

Program in Applied Nutrition, College of Professional Studies, University of New England." Please contact the DCN Program Director for UNE templates and logos that must be used for posters and presentations.

### **Course Evaluation Policy**

Course surveys are one of the most important tools that the University of New England uses for evaluating the quality of your education, and for providing meaningful feedback to instructors on their teaching. In order to assure that the feedback is both comprehensive and precise, we need to receive it from each student for each course. Evaluation access is distributed via UNE email at the beginning of the last week of the course.

## Student Technology Policies

### Computer and Technology Requirements

Students in the DCN Program are required to have the following computer and technology requirements. These requirements are established to provide students with the best possible experience in the online learning environment.

	Mac	Windows
Operating System	OSX 10.13 or newer	Windows 7 or newer
Processor	2.4 GHz+	2.4 GHz+
Memory (RAM)	4 GB	4 GB
Web Browser	Chrome and Firefox	Chrome and Firefox
System Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An application that can output .docx file formats (e.g. Microsoft Word*, Google Docs, Apple Pages).</li><li>• An application that can output slide presentation formats (e.g. PowerPoint*, Keynote).</li><li>• Adobe Reader, or another PDF viewer, to view PDFs.</li><li>• Zoom for web conferencing.</li></ul>	
Webcam	Internal or external webcam with 115-degree wide angle lens	
Speakers	Internal or external speakers	
Microphone	Microphone	
Internet	Access to reliable Internet speeds of 1.5 Mbs download and upload; basic broadband (4 Mbs) recommended *To test your internet speed, go to <a href="http://www.speedtest.net">www.speedtest.net</a> .	
Printer/Scanner	Access to a printer and scanner is also required.	

\*UNE students have access to Microsoft Office 365 for free with @une.edu account via [Office 365](https://office365.com).

For additional information: <https://online.une.edu/online-learning/technical-requirements/>.

Students are responsible for ensuring continuous access to computer and technology requirements throughout their program of study. Course faculty will not ordinarily accept computer or other technology issues as an excuse for assignments that are not submitted per instructions, that are submitted late, or are missing a submission.

### Computer Proficiency Requirements

In order to comfortably participate and succeed in an online course environment, online students must have basic computer literacy skills and, at a minimum, have proficiency with the following:

- Using a keyboard and mouse
- Sending and receiving email
- Using common software applications including, but not limited to those found in Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) or similar office suites such as Google Apps

- Recording video presentations with your computer camera and microphone and uploading to video hosting services such as YouTube
- Using a text editor (changing fonts, inserting links, using spell check, etc.)
- Saving and retrieving files in different formats (.docx, .pdf, .pptx, etc.)
- Installing and updating software
- Selecting, copying, and pasting text
- Accessing the internet using a web browser such as Chrome or Firefox
- [Resetting basic browser settings](#) (clearing cache/history, cookies, etc)
- Performing basic internet searches with appropriate search terms
- Locating and copying web addresses/URLs
- Browsing for files to attach and upload; extracting zip files

## Mobile Devices

For info about accessing the UNE Learning Management System's (BrightSpace) via a mobile device, please see this link: <https://www.d2l.com/the-best-mobile-learning-experience/>.

## Okta

All students and staff use [Okta](#) as a single sign-on portal. From Okta, you will have quick links to Brightspace, your UNE email, Office 365, and other applications and sites like UNE Compass. Within UNE Compass, you will find your course schedules, financial aid information, grades, transcripts, and account balances. Clicking on a tile in Okta will open the selected application in a new browser tab. You might consider bookmarking Okta to your browser since it will lead to most of the common sites that you will need as a UNE Student.

## Email

The University of New England provides every student with an e-mail account and a Brightspace user ID and password for the delivery of course materials while they are enrolled in CPS courses. Brightspace software is used for instruction. While classes are being delivered via Brightspace, students should check their Brightspace website for course messages or other correspondence on a daily basis.

The email account (@une.edu) is recognized as the official means of communicating with students for all UNE correspondence including, but not limited to, announcements, list-servers, course instructor evaluations, online grading, emergency response, and other systems as developed. Students are responsible to review e-mail messages on a regular basis.

If a student elects to have correspondence from their UNE e-mail forwarded to another e-mail account, it is their responsibility to ensure he/she is receiving all forwarded documents and information. A student is responsible for all University and CPS information or correspondence provided via their UNE e-mail account. Faculty and staff members will not make provisions or accommodations for a student if they miss University or CPS information because they did not read email messages or the message was forwarded to another e-mail account. E-mail



communications are subject to all applicable university policies. A student is responsible for all University and CPS information or correspondence provided via their UNE email account.

Other people's opinions matter, and in the professional world, their perception of you will be critical to your success. Some basic email rules of etiquette:

- Your subject line must match the message, should be descriptive and concise
- Start with a greeting and the recipient's name
- If you are uncertain whether the recipient recognizes your email address or name, include a simple reminder of who you are in relation to the person you are reaching out to.
- Be concise, but refrain from sending one-liners. "Thanks," and "Oh, OK" do not advance the conversation in any way.
- Avoid using shortcuts to real words, emoticons, jargon or slang. Words from professionals using shortcuts such as "4 u" (instead of "for you"), "Gr8" (for "great") in business-related email is not acceptable. If you wouldn't put a smiley face or emoticon on your business correspondence, you shouldn't put it in an email message. Any of the above has the potential to make you look less than professional.
- NEVER USE ALL CAPS or all lowercase. Do not use non-standard fonts and colors.
- Use spell check and punctuation functions and proofread prior to sending. Remember, misspelled words make you look unprofessional.
- Try to refrain from sending an email when you are angry or emotional. It is usually best to wait for at least 24 hours, revisit, revise any drafted email, and respond.
- Seek to resolve conflicts directly and not through email. Resolving conflicts through email is seldom fruitful. Meeting in person, on the phone, or on Zoom is usually a much more productive way to work through a conflict.
- Remember - once the email is sent, it is unrecoverable and remains a permanent record of what you have said. Also, be aware that things posted on the internet in places such as Facebook, Twitter, and other social media, even in "closed" groups may make its way to places you don't expect. Always consider maintaining confidentiality and professionalism in all use of social media.

## **Brightspace**

UNE Online uses D2L Brightspace to house all course-related content. You will be using Brightspace from day one to access your course and associated learning materials, participate in discussions, and submit assignments.

## **Student Authentication Process**

Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, UNE and the DCN program shall authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The DCN program uses secure, multi-factor authentication (MFA) credentialing/login and password protection within applicable

record-keeping systems and course management systems, which is specifically referenced in the federal regulation as an appropriate and accepted procedure for verifying a student's identity.

### **Student Identity Verification**

All credit-bearing courses and programs offered through distance learning methods must verify that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit. One or more of the following methods must be used:

- Secure login and pass code;
- Proctored examinations; and/or
- New or emerging technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

Students enrolled in UNE online or hybrid courses must access the campus learning management system (Brightspace) through UNE's Single Sign-On system Okta, by using their Nor'Easter ID provided at the time of enrollment. Electronic coursework must be submitted only through the LMS or through the University of New England (student@une.edu) Office365 email system.

Additional methods of authentication that may be used at the University's discretion are proctored examination systems, third party publisher platforms (McGraw Hill Connect, Pearson MyLab, etc.), and the use of personally identifiable information to verify identity (e.g. student ID, date of birth, address, etc).

All methods of verifying student identity in distance learning must protect the privacy of student information.

Personally identifiable information collected by the university may be used, at the discretion of the institution, as the basis for identity verification. For instance, a student requesting that their learning system password be reset may be asked to provide two or more pieces of information for comparison with data on file.

### **Technical Support and ITS Helpdesk**

Students should notify their course instructor and Student Support Specialist if they encounter technical difficulties or issues related to courses in Brightspace. Examples of such issues include accessing a course, posting to a discussion forum, using course email, and submitting or posting assignments or quizzes online. This notification should occur promptly and proactively to support timely resolution.

For other technology issues that are not related to Brightspace, such as accessing OKTA, UNE Compass, UNE email, or other software/hardware issues, students should contact the IT

HelpDesk. The IT HelpDesk is available any day and any time that students need technical assistance related to the following:

- Support for basic hardware, software (other than Brightspace), ISP and Internet browser issues.
- General software/hardware support for both PCs and MACs.

The IT Help Desk will attempt to resolve issues immediately; however, some of the highly advanced hardware issues may require additional assistance. If this is the case, the IT Help Desk may suggest seeking assistance from the student's local computer repair establishment.

IT Help Desk staff are available to work on "trouble tickets" during normal business hours (Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. E.S.T.).

#### IT Help Desk Contact Information

- Phone: Monday to Friday (207) 602-2487
- Phone: After Hours/Weekends: (877) 518-4673
- E-mail: [helpdesk@une.edu](mailto:helpdesk@une.edu)
- Website: <https://www.une.edu/its>

When placing calls to the IT Help Desk, students will be asked to answer two questions to help provide proof of identity. These questions may include date of birth, zip code, student ID number (PRN), or last four digits of a student's social security number. IT Help Desk representatives do not have access to full SSNs.

To access the IT Help Desk via the web self-service, you will need your UNE email address and the associated password.

When submitting a self-service ticket, students should check to confirm that their contact number is correct and if necessary provide an alternative contact number.

## Student Safety and Health Policies

### Identification Cards

All students in the DCN must obtain and possess a current, valid UNECard. The UNECard is the official University identification card. The UNECard is needed for identification, security, and access to University services as well as for field placement (e.g., Advanced Practice Residency). While on campus, you should carry it with you at all times. As the card may permit access to secured areas, you may not leave your card unattended or permit anyone to “hold” your card at any time. You must produce your ID Card upon request to any university official.

DCN students should refer to instructions in the DCN Orientation and Resource Portal for how to obtain a UNECard. Lost or stolen cards should be reported to Portland Campus Safety & Security by calling (207) 602-2298.

### Health Insurance

All matriculated DCN students are required to carry health insurance in the event of illness or injury while at an affiliate site. Health insurance should cover medical expenses in the state in which the affiliate site is located. The University of New England provides group plans for the consideration of Undergraduate, Graduate, and Medical students through UnitedHealthCare Student Resources as a convenience. Options for purchasing health insurance through UNE are available at <https://www.une.edu/studentlife/shc/student-health-insurance>. Students must provide proof of health insurance before registering for their first advanced practice residency and/or research practicum course.

All students with full-time status or are enrolled in at least 7 credits or more are required by the University to have complete health insurance coverage and will be billed automatically for health insurance with every fall billing. Included with the fall billing, students will receive literature that will explain the plan in greater detail and instructions on the enrollment/waiver process.

Students may accept the University-suggested health insurance plan, may locate their own comparable plan, or if already covered by another equivalent plan, may opt out of the program by submitting an online waiver. All UNE full time students are required to either enroll or waive the Health Insurance Plan by going to the UnitedHealthCare Student Resources (UHCSR) website: <https://studentcenter.uhcsr.com/school-page>. The insurance fee will be removed from the student’s bill only if an online waiver showing proof of coverage is completed by the due dates.

### Professional and General Liability Insurance

The DCN program purchases professional and general liability coverage for students during their Advanced Practice Residency (DCN 855 and DCN 875) and Research Practicum (DCN 865). This coverage is purchased and provided by the program using the Malpractice Insurance Fee billed to students when they register for DCN 855 Residency I. This fee provides coverage

over a consecutive 12-month period. Students whose program of study results in the need to extend satisfactory completion of DCN 855, DCN 865, and/or DCN 875 beyond the initial 12-month fee and coverage period will be billed an additional Malpractice Insurance Fee for each additional 12-month period where coverage is needed to complete DCN 855, DCN 865, and/or DCN 875 requirements.

### **Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen**

Students must be aware that affiliation agreements established with facilities or sites that host DCN students for completion of program requirements (e.g., Advanced Practice Residency) may require students to clear a criminal background check and/or drug screen prior to placement. It is the protocol of the DCN program that all students complete a basic background check and drug screen prior to APR/Research Practicum placement. A student whose background check and/or drug screen returns unsatisfactorily may be prevented from access to the affiliate facility or site, and progress toward completing degree requirements may be impacted.

Per affiliation agreements established with APR/Research Practicum sites, the DCN program may be required to disclose to the affiliate site any incident returned from a student's criminal background check and drug screen. Depending on the incident, a site may decline placement. DCN administration, faculty, and staff are not responsible for finding alternate facilities or sites for students who are rejected from placement because of criminal histories or drug use.

### **Immunizations**

Immunizations offer safe and effective protection from vaccine-preventable diseases. The University of New England (UNE) strongly supports the use of vaccines to protect the health of our individual students and our campus communities and affiliates. Students are expected to meet the following immunization requirements before they begin their first advanced practice residency and/or research practicum course. These immunizations are commonly required by affiliate sites. Affiliate sites may have additional immunization requirements beyond those outlined below. Expenses related to obtaining required vaccinations or titers, including required reports and records, as required for immunization/medical clearance are the responsibility of the student.

- a type of DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) vaccination, such as DTaP, Tdap and Td, within 10 years of the first day of attendance (Note: Students for whom the 10 years will elapse during their anticipated matriculation are expected to obtain a booster at the appropriate time.),
- if born after 1956 – have completed two MMR (measles/rubeola, mumps, and rubella) vaccines after the student's first birthday with at least 28 days between doses OR must provide evidence of immunity with laboratory titer, and the positive titer must be documented by an appropriate health care provider (laboratory report provided),
- administration of 2-shot series live varicella vaccine after the student's first birthday with a minimum of four weeks separating the doses OR must provide evidence of immunity

with laboratory titer, and the positive titer must be documented by an appropriate health care provider (laboratory report provided),

- administration of the polio series, minimum 3 shots OR must provide evidence of immunity with laboratory titer, and the positive titer must be documented by an appropriate health care provider (laboratory report provided),
- have completed administration of a 3-shot (e.g., Recombivax HB or Engerix-B) or 2-shot series (Hepelisav-B) Hepatitis B vaccine PLUS quantitative anti-HBs serologic test (titer) with documentation by an appropriate health care provider (laboratory report provided),
- current seasonal influenza vaccination (Note: Students who are completing their residency and/or practicum requirements during the fall and/or winter months are expected to obtain the vaccination at the appropriate time.)
- two-step tuberculin skin test (TST) which is defined as a TST on two separate occasions separated by one to three weeks OR TB Interferon-Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) blood test (QuantiFERON TB Gold or T-SPOT TB). Proof of administration and results must be documented by an appropriate health care provider within the year in which the student begins the advanced practice residency through UNE,

While COVID vaccination and booster are not required by UNE, we do recommend that students are properly vaccinated against COVID, particularly for the protection of patients whom the students will serve during clinical rotations. Although UNE does not require COVID vaccination, UNE does not and cannot control the vaccination policies of the clinical sites where students will complete their required clinical clerkships, rotations, or off-site service-learning experiences. Therefore, as with any other vaccination required by a clinical site, not being vaccinated for COVID could impede placement of a student in a clinical rotation, which could in turn impede a student's progression and graduation.

### **Vaccination Exemptions**

Students may request a vaccination exemption by contacting the DCN Program Director. Vaccination exemptions require appropriate documentation and may be limited to those allowed by state law in accordance with the location of the student's affiliate site and the site's policies and procedures. It is the responsibility of the student to confirm how their vaccination exemption request complies with state law and site policies and procedures before requesting an exemption.

Unvaccinated students may not be permitted to participate at affiliate sites. In such cases, progress in program completion and graduation are likely to be affected. Alternate programming for unvaccinated students cannot be guaranteed by the University nor its affiliated organizations. In the case of an actual or threatened outbreak, unvaccinated students may be required to stay out of their placement site.

Please contact the DCN Program Director if interested in more information about requesting a medical vaccination exemption and other guidance on vaccination requirements.

## **Physical Exam**

All students matriculating into the DCN must have a current physical exam on file before they can begin their first advanced practice residency and/or research practicum course. The [Physical Exam Form](#) must be completed and submitted for verification as part of the medical clearance process for affiliate site placement. Expenses related to completing the physical exam are the responsibility of the student.

## **Castlebranch**

The DCN program has partnered with CastleBranch, one of the top ten background check and compliance management companies in the nation, to facilitate and track completion of criminal background check, drug testing, immunization, and other compliance requirements as required by affiliate sites before students begin their first advanced practice residency and/or research practicum course.

The DCN Program Director will provide students with instructions for when and how to access Castlebranch in advance of registering for their first advanced practice residency and/or research practicum course.

The DCN Program Director will provide the student with one PIN to order a criminal background check, drug testing, and compliance tracker through Castlebranch. During the entirety of the student's time in the DCN program, UNE will pay for only one PIN. The student is financially responsible for additional screenings. Affiliate sites may require additional screenings or a more advanced level-2 background check (i.e., state specific background checks, fingerprinting, or more in depth drug screening), which is the financial responsibility of the student. If a student needs to delay, extend, or repeat DCN 855, 865, and/or 875 coursework for any reason, the student may be financially responsible to pay for another Castlebranch PIN or additional background checks and/or drug testing out of pocket.

## **Liability for Safety in Travel**

The location of advanced practice residency and research practicum sites vary and may require students to drive or secure other forms of transportation to travel to and from sites. Students are responsible to secure their own transportation to and from sites. Students are responsible to have a valid driver's license and valid car insurance and/or another dependable mode of transportation. Students are responsible for all travel fees and expenses related to travel to and from sites. These fees and expenses include, but are not limited to, fuel, parking, tolls, and car maintenance. The student is responsible for their own liability and safety during travel to and from advanced practice residency sites, research activities, professional meetings, and any other program-related activity.

## **Accident, Injury, or Illness at Affiliate Sites**

In the event of injury or illness while at an affiliate site, the student should contact their site mentor immediately and the DCN Program Director as soon as possible.

In the case of an accident or injury while at the site, the student should seek appropriate medical attention and treatment while following the facility's policies and procedures.

In accordance with the affiliation agreement with the site, in the event of an emergency within a clinical facility, the facility agrees to provide emergency care and treatment as is reasonably available during the hours the student is engaged in the advanced practice residency or research practicum. In the case of the advanced practice residency or research practicum occurring within a non-clinical environment, the student will be assisted by the site mentor to obtain emergency care during the hours the student is engaged in DCN program activities.

In case of illness, the student must follow the rules of the facility which will be provided at the start of the advanced practice residency or research practicum. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss attendance and sick leave policy with the site mentor at the start of the advanced practice residency or research practicum.

If an illness or injury requires the student to leave or miss hours at a facility, it is the student's responsibility to contact the site mentor as soon as possible and arrange a schedule to make up missed hours. The DCN Program Director must also be notified of the arrangements.

The student is liable for all fees and charges incurred resulting from treatment of injury or illness and any make-up hours.

## **Compensation Policy**

The DCN considers all advanced practice residency and research practicum experiences to be part of the program's curriculum and overall learning experience provided to the student within an academic setting and to meet academic degree requirements. As such, students are not compensated and may not receive compensation for any services provided as part of the advanced practice residency, research activities, professional meetings, or any other program-related activity while acting in the role as a student.

Advanced practice residency and research practicum sites and mentors will be informed that students may not be placed in a situation where they are replacing an employee in their absence or performing roles and responsibilities as an employee. Students will perform roles and responsibilities as a student with the site mentor providing oversight and responsibility for the care of patients/clients and the activities delivered by the student.



## **Student Support Services**

### **Enrollment and Retention Counselors (ERCs)**

Once applicants are admitted to the DCN program, they are assigned an Enrollment and Retention Counselor (ERC), who has a conversation with the student welcoming them to the program and helping them navigate through processes such as financial aid, orientation, and registration. An ERC interacts with every student (who is taking a class) via email or phone at least once during the term. The ERC is often the first point of contact when a student requires assistance, and they help connect students with other resources such as the Student Access Center (SAC), Financial Aid Office, Registrar, or Career Services. They also facilitate the petition-filing process by ensuring that all appropriate forms and supporting materials are included and complete before forwarding them to the program.

### **Student Success Team**

While each DCN student is personally assigned an Enrollment and Retention Counselor (ERC), the ERC is just one of a larger Student Success Team at UNE Online (College of Professional Studies) that is committed to supporting DCN students throughout their academic journey. DCN students are encouraged to contact the Student Success Team for assistance on anything related to UNE, including, but not limited to: course planning, current problems or issues in a course, technology concerns, or personal emergencies. The DCN Student Success Team can be reached via email at [nutrition@une.edu](mailto:nutrition@une.edu) or via phone at 855-751-4447.

### **Student Access Center (SAC)**

The Student Access Center exists to ensure that the University fulfills the part of its mission that seeks to promote respect for individual differences and to ensure that no person who meets the academic and technical standards requisite for admission to, and continued enrollment at, the University is denied benefits or subjected to discrimination at UNE solely by reason of his or her disability. Staff in the Student Access Center are available to answer questions and help students requesting academic adjustments or accommodations navigate the process.

Any student who would like to request, or ask any questions regarding, academic adjustments or accommodations must contact the [Student Access Center](#) at (207) 221-4438 or [pcstudentaccess@une.edu](mailto:pcstudentaccess@une.edu). Student Access Center staff will evaluate the student's documentation and determine eligibility of accommodation(s) through the Student Access Center registration procedure. Accommodations can be requested at any time during a course session but are not applied retroactively.

### **Online Research and Teaching Librarian (ORTL)**

An ORTL, a full-time staff person of the UNE library, is shared among the five graduate programs within CPS. The ORTL provides asynchronous orientation and instruction for online

students on the use of the library to access scholarly literature. The ORTL also works closely with the program to ensure that electronic and print versions of textbooks are easily accessible to online students and instructors. To learn more and connect with the DCN ORTL, visit <https://library.une.edu/about-contact/contact-us/>.

### **UNE Online New Student Orientation**

All CPS students, including DCN students, are expected to complete a general orientation. This self-paced orientation is designed to prepare students for success and provides an introduction and overview to UNE. Activities in the orientation show students how to navigate the online learning environment, familiarize students to both UNE and CPS policies, introduce students to university resources (such as the library), and inform students about tools and strategies to ensure a meaningful and collaborative learning experience throughout the program.

The UNE Online New Student Orientation is delivered completely online in Brightspace, UNE's LMS. It is estimated that four to six hours are required to complete the orientation. Students can begin the orientation after their initial conversation with SSS and work through the modules at their own pace. All orientation activities must be completed before the first day of class.

### **DCN Student Orientation and Resource Portal**

Once accepted to the program, all DCN students are enrolled in the DCN Orientation and Resource Portal. Students are expected to review the orientation materials by the end of their first semester in the program. This portal is housed within the UNE learning management system (LMS) Brightspace and contains information and resources on graduate student skills, evidence-based practice, academic integrity, and scientific writing that students should utilize throughout the program.

### **Complete Access to Student Services**

All UNE provided services are available to all online students and can be found in the UNE Student Handbook: <https://www.une.edu/studentlife/handbook>.

## Appendix A: Guidelines for Contacting Potential APR Mentors

You can contact potential APR mentors via phone or email. When you reach out, share the following information:

- Brief introduction of yourself - who you are and why you are reaching out.
  - At minimum, explain that you are a student in the UNE Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Program.
  - Briefly describe your professional background as a registered dietitian, your career and APR goals, professional skill sets related to the APR (i.e., what you can offer the site/mentor through the APR), and APR opportunities desired.
  - You are responsible for selecting the APR mentor and affiliate site for completing 320 hours of an Advanced Practice Residency.
  - The DCN program has established minimum competencies that you must achieve and demonstrate through the APR hours, which is what you are hoping to achieve through the site and mentorship process.
- Dates (day/hours) you are requesting to be at the site (see DCN Plan of Study and consult with the DCN Program Director for timeline of APR completion).
- Total number of hours you need to be at the site and under direct mentorship.
- The date by which you need to have a commitment from the mentor.
- When you will reach out again if you haven't heard from the mentor.

Attach the following documents with the communication and alert the prospective mentor that these documents are attached.

- Resume/CV
- UNE DCN APR Competency List (see Appendix B)
- UNE DCN Program Letter to Potential Mentor (see Appendix C)

### Other Tips

- Be familiar with the mentor qualification requirements and mentor responsibilities should they agree to host you. Prospective mentors will likely have questions about their role, expectations and the overall process. These will be discussed in more detail during a call including you, the mentor, and the DCN Program Director prior to mentor approval.
- Maintain professionalism in all communication. Express appreciation and thanks to each contact, even if the contact is not able to assist and host you.
- Prospective mentors may request an interview with you. In this case, be sure to dress professionally and approach the interview as if it were a job interview. Arrive prepared to discuss why you would be a great student and well versed in the APR requirements for that site.
- If there are questions you cannot answer, document the questions and contact the DCN Program Director. Let the prospective mentor know you will get back to them with answers as soon as possible.

## Appendix B: DCN Advanced Practice Residency Competency List



### **DCN Program Mission**

The mission of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program is to prepare Registered Dietitian Nutritionists to be scholar-practitioners with advanced skills and competence to lead the integration of evidence-informed health care services, critical thinking, and/or research in professional settings.

### **DCN Program Goals**

1. Provide safe, ethical, equitable, and culturally relevant evidence-based healthcare, education, and community services.
2. Lead integration of evidence-informed best practices, critical thinking and/or research in professional settings.
3. Model leadership and management skills in organizational, healthcare, and academic settings.
4. Work collaboratively in interprofessional settings to provide comprehensive approaches to health care services and education.

### **DCN Program Learning Outcomes**

1. Apply adaptive and responsive leadership skills in healthcare, higher education, and community settings.
2. Apply evidence-informed approaches when generating, appraising, and utilizing research.
3. Lead the provision of safe, ethical, and evidence-based healthcare, higher education, and community services.

### **DCN Advanced Practice Residency (APR) Purpose**

The purpose of the UNE DCN APR is to provide students with an opportunity for focused growth and application of advanced nutrition theory and skills, clinical reasoning, decision-making, and scientific inquiry within a professional practice environment aligned with their career goals and focus area. Students will be mentored by one or more advanced practice professionals while completing a total of 320 hours of experiential learning through DCN 855 Residency I and DCN 875 Residency II. Students must demonstrate competence in advanced nutrition practice and achievement of program learning outcomes through delivery of person-centered nutrition care within a chosen area of specialized nutrition practice.

### **DCN APR Competency Development**

The UNE DCN APR Competencies were developed using a variety of accreditation and professional practice standards and publications pertaining to advanced practice in the field of nutrition and dietetics. Please see the reference list for details.

The UNE DCN APR Competencies are aligned with each of the program's goals, which in turn are aligned with the program's mission. In addition to the program-defined APR competencies, each student will reflect upon their professional interests, career goals, and focus area to define at least two (2) personal competencies per focus area goal which will be approved by the DCN Program Director and APR mentor.

### **DCN APR Competency Achievement**

Students are expected to work with their mentor(s) to identify opportunities for learning and mentorship aligned with the APR competencies. Students are responsible for demonstrating achievement of half of the APR competencies by the end of APN 855 Residency I and all APR competencies by the end of APN 875 Residency II. Students must achieve an "Attained" rating on each competency in order for it to be considered achieved.

**DCN Program Goal 1:** Provide safe, ethical, equitable, and culturally relevant evidence-based healthcare, education, and community services.

- 1.1 Advocate for viable, sustainable, equitable, ethical, and evidence-based healthcare, educational, or community policies and/or services (based on student focus area).
- 1.2 Design strategies to address barriers and expand safe, ethical, equitable, and culturally relevant nutrition care and/or the provision of nutrition services within healthcare, academic, or community settings (based on student focus area).
- 1.3 Manage high quality patient-centered nutrition care or nutrition services using current, evidence-based methods of screening, assessment, diagnosis, intervention (including coordination and transition of care), and monitoring and evaluation.
- 1.4 Implement culturally humble and competent communication strategies (e.g., counseling, coaching, education) and resources to enhance health and nutrition literacy, behavior change, and desired outcomes.
- 1.5 Adapt communication approaches to the needs of the audience and to optimize achievement of common goals.
- 1.6 Apply ethical frameworks to support deliberate, adaptive, and responsive decision-making.
- 1.7 Respect client autonomy to make informed decisions about proposed services.
- 1.8 Comply with departmental, organizational, local, state, national, and/or international rules, regulations, policies, and standards pertaining to scope of practice and the provision of nutrition care or nutrition services within healthcare, academic, or community settings (based on student focus area).

**DCN Program Goal 2:** Lead integration of evidence-informed best practices, critical thinking and/or research in professional settings.

- 2.1 Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize current and emerging research to inform, challenge, and transform nutrition practice.
- 2.2 Formulate and articulate evidence-based rationale for recommendations and decisions.
- 2.3 Justify decisions through the application of best available scholarly evidence.
- 2.4 Create, implement, monitor, and/or evaluate evidence-based tools, algorithms, guidelines, protocols, procedures, or pathways to inform and transform nutrition practice and outcomes.
- 2.5 Design new programs or processes, or improve existing programs or processes, to address data-driven needs.
- 2.6 Develop a system to collect, analyze, evaluate, and interpret key performance indicators to inform decisions, policies, practices, and/or programs.
- 2.7 Translate and disseminate research findings to inform and transform healthcare, nutrition, and/or higher education practice and outcomes.

**DCN Program Goal 3:** Model leadership and management skills in organizational, healthcare, and academic settings.

- 3.1 Exemplify organizational mission, vision, principles, and values.
- 3.2 Prioritize roles, responsibilities, and workload in alignment with organizational goals and timelines for deliverables.
- 3.3 Anticipate potential problems and develop contingency plans to overcome them.
- 3.4 Engage in shared-decision making to solve complex problems in a timely manner.
- 3.5 Negotiate common ground to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
- 3.6 Develop relevant and viable strategies (i.e., strategic planning) to innovate, guide change, and mobilize resources within an organization.
- 3.7 Operationalize one or more elements of an organizational (i.e., program, unit, department, division, or institutional) strategic plan.

3.8 Apply systems thinking to analyze problems and generate solutions that are timely, efficient, and cost-effective.

3.9 Propose innovative and transformative concrete solutions to advance nutrition practice, patient care, and/or healthcare outcomes within the national or global healthcare landscape.

3.10 Use statistical and financial methods and metrics to measure and monitor financial and other key performance indicators of a policy, procedure, program, or initiative.

3.11 Perform ongoing self-assessment, reflective practice, and mindful evaluation of feedback from others to support continuous development of expertise and demonstration of competence.

**DCN Program Goal 4:** Work collaboratively in interprofessional settings to provide comprehensive approaches to health care services and education.

4.1 Build and foster collaborative intraprofessional and interprofessional relationships to accomplish roles, responsibilities, and organizational goals while recognizing and maintaining appropriate rapport, trust, and boundaries.

4.2 Collaborate with key stakeholders and decision-makers to constructively influence and optimize healthcare, academic, or community policy and practice (per student focus area).

4.3 Communicate with decorum, professionalism, and civility across diverse and dynamic organizational cultures to achieve common goals.

4.4 Apply cognitive and non-cognitive attributes (e.g., emotional, social, and cultural intelligence, self-regulation, self-awareness) to address dynamic and complex situations with a variety of constituencies (i.e., patients/clients, colleagues, mentors, staff, administrators).

4.5 Implement interprofessional, team-based strategies to mitigate risk and adverse events to constituents (i.e., patients, clients, students) and support desired outcomes.

4.6 Lead quality improvement initiatives (e.g., conceptualization, implementation, and/or evaluation) to enhance nutrition practice and outcomes.

4.7 Leverage funding (i.e., grants) and other resources (e.g., teams) to support existing or novel nutrition practice or research initiatives.

4.8 Utilize advanced technology in an ethical, valid, and reliable manner to support efficient, cost-effective, and outcomes-minded nutrition practice.

4.9 Train and mentor others in skill building and competence development to advance and transform nutrition practice.

## **Leadership in Higher Education Administration (HEA)**

HEA Goal 1: Implement evidence-based best-practices in higher education administration.

1.1 *Student to develop.*

1.2 *Student to develop.*

HEA Goal 2: Apply appropriate pedagogical and andragogical approaches to undergraduate and graduate programming.

2.1 *Student to develop.*

2.2 *Student to develop.*

## **Leadership in Healthcare and Clinical Management (HCM)**

HCM Goal 1: Implement evidence-based best-practices in healthcare and clinical management settings.

1.1 *Student to develop.*

1.2 *Student to develop.*

HCM Goal 2: Lead the delivery of services through strategic guidance and management of personnel.

2.1 *Student to develop.*

2.2 *Student to develop.*

## **Leadership in Community Health Services (CHS)**

CHS Goal 1: Implement evidence-based best-practices in community services.

1.1 *Student to develop.*

1.2 *Student to develop.*

CHS Goal 2: Lead community education initiatives through the development, implementation, and evaluation of targeted programming.

2.1 *Student to develop.*

2.2 *Student to develop.*



## Appendix C: Sample Email to Potential APR Mentor

The following is a sample email that may be used as a template for drafting an email to a potential APR mentor as part of the outreach process. Students should adapt and modify this sample letter to meet their individual APR focus area and needs.

Dear Dr./Ms./Mr. [Last Name]:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a registered dietitian with \_\_\_\_\_ years of experience in \_\_\_\_\_ (area of expertise/practice setting) and a student in the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) program at the University of New England. I found your contact information through \_\_\_\_\_. OR: I was referred to you by \_\_\_\_\_ whom I met at \_\_\_\_\_. OR: We have worked together on \_\_\_\_\_.

One of the requirements for the DCN is completing 320 hours of an Advanced Practice Residency (APR), which is an opportunity for students to hone and demonstrate skills and competence in advanced nutrition practice as aligned with their career goals and program focus area. The APR requires achievement of program-defined competencies within a professional practice setting and under the mentorship of an advanced practice provider, such as yourself. A copy of the DCN APR Competency List and a Letter from the DCN Program Director are attached to this email for your review.

I am interested in completing my APR with [Mentor Name, Organization Name] because \_\_\_\_\_ [discuss alignment with your experience, career goals, and program focus area]. As such, I would also be able to support your practice (or program) by \_\_\_\_\_ [discuss professional skills that could contribute value toward the practice/program during the APR]. A copy of my resume/CV is attached which provides additional information about my professional background and qualifications.

Based on my plan of study, I am interested in completing my APR hours \_\_\_\_\_ [provide month/year timeframe]. My schedule is flexible on days of the week and number of hours per week. OR: My schedule would allow me to be available \_\_\_\_\_.

I would be grateful for an opportunity at your convenience to meet or talk by phone about the DCN program and APR requirements.

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration of this request, and I hope that we will be able to speak soon.

Respectfully,

[Include your professional email signature in addition to your full name]

## **Appendix D: Letter from DCN Program Director to Potential Mentor**

Please attach a copy of the letter (as a separate Word document or PDF) on the following page to the initial communication with a potential APR mentor.

Dear Prospective Mentor:

The University of New England (UNE) offers a fully-online Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) designed to be completed in 3 years based on full-time enrollment or up to 5 years based on part-time enrollment. The DCN is a professional practice doctorate that integrates and applies critical thinking, nutrition practice, scholarship, leadership skills, and educational theory to practice. Information about the UNE DCN is available on the program website: <https://online.une.edu/doctor-of-clinical-nutrition/>.

Students in the DCN must complete 320 hours of an advanced practice residency (APR). The purpose of the APR is to support students in elevating their career trajectory by acquiring and demonstrating advanced practice skills and competence within a professional practice setting and under the direct mentorship of an advanced practice professional. Students select their APR mentor and experiences based on their career goals and program focus area. Program focus areas include Leadership in Higher Education and Administration, Leadership in Healthcare and Clinical Management, and Leadership in Community Health Services.

Students are responsible for securing their own APR sites and mentors and obtaining site/mentor approval by the DCN Program Director. Students are expected to establish the APR schedule with their mentor and schedule hours in a manner that provides meaningful and continuous learning, permits frequent and recurrent demonstration of APR competencies, and allows them to achieve no less than 160 hours by the end of APN 855 Residency I and no less than the total 320 hours by the end of APN 875 Residency II.

Residency I and Residency II are each 16 weeks in length. These courses are scheduled during the last third of the program (typically program year 3 for full-time students or program year 4 for part-time students). Students may complete their hours following a full-time (up to 40 hours per week) or part-time (no less than 10 hours per week) schedule, taking into consideration the schedule and availability of the mentor and their personal schedule. Students must complete their hours in intervals of no less than 4 hours per day in order to facilitate a cohesive and robust learning experience.

The DCN program has established criteria for the APR to support a quality and meaningful experience for the student. Mentors must meet the following criteria:

- desire to mentor a professional practice doctorate student who is credentialed as a RDN.
- time, willingness, commitment, and operational capacity to provide the full mentorship experience.
- possession of credentials and maintenance of current licensing as an advanced practice professional (i.e., PhD, EdD, DCN, MD, DO, DNP, PharmD).
- advanced professional expertise in the student's focus area (i.e., higher education administration, healthcare and clinical management, community health services) as evidenced by professional positions held, years of experience, specialized training and certification, and professional contributions.
- demonstrated skills in effective communication, responsive and adaptive leadership, and teaching and instruction that support a positive student mentorship and learning experience.

- provision of diverse, robust, and dynamic quality experiences related to nutrition scope of practice that support the student's ability to attain all of the required APR competencies.
- adequate staffing to provide a positive learning experience for the student, including proper supervision and instruction by the mentor(s).
- adequate time, mentorship, and instruction for APR skill and competency development and attainment.
- completion of a fully executed affiliation agreement between UNE and the site.

If you meet the mentorship criteria and agree to serve as an APR mentor, you will be asked to:

- provide opportunities for students to achieve APR competencies within your site of practice;
- allow the student to shadow and observe you;
- mentor the student in advanced practice skill and competence development;
- supervise the student as they perform skills and other duties to demonstrate achievement of required competencies (a competency assessment form will be provided);
- co-sign the student's notes and/or other documentation according to site protocol and requirements;
- complete evaluation forms on the student's work and professional behavior, and verify hours and the competencies the student has achieved during their time at your site and under your mentorship.

Your role as an advanced practice mentor is valuable. You are the expert that will provide guidance, practical experience, and training to the DCN student. In doing so, you will be contributing to the advancement of nutrition, academic, healthcare, and/or community practice. In turn, the DCN student may be able to contribute nutrition, advocacy, innovation, leadership, scientific inquiry, and research expertise to your practice. DCN students engage in practice-based research throughout the program and are encouraged to utilize these skills within their APR.

Affiliation agreements are required between the student's Advanced Practice Residency site and UNE prior to the beginning of the student's participation in APR hours at the site. UNE has a pre-approved affiliation agreement, though occasionally some sites prefer to use their own version of an agreement. In that case, the legal counsel of UNE and that of the site will work together to find mutually acceptable language, if possible. Affiliation agreements must be completed between UNE legal counsel and the practice site prior to the student's participation in APR activities.

In addition to establishing a formal affiliation agreement between your site of practice and UNE, please be assured that:

- UNE maintains professional liability insurance for each of our students.
- The student is required to carry their own health insurance.
- The student will have completed and be able to provide documentation for a physical examination, immunization records, proof of 2-step TB testing, background check, drug screening, or any other requirements specified by the affiliate site.
- The student will complete and adhere to any HIPPA forms required for their APR.
- The student is expected to adhere to a strict code of professional and ethical behavior at all times, as well as comply with your institutional requirements.

- Both you and the student will be given a list of the APR competencies that must be achieved in advance of the APR hours.

Please do not hesitate to contact our program if you have any questions or concerns. Contact information is provided below. Your commitment to the education of advanced practice nutrition and dietetics professionals is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Deborah A. Hutcheon*

Deborah A. Hutcheon, DCN, RD, LD  
Director, Doctor of Clinical Nutrition  
College of Professional Studies  
UNE Online | University of New England  
Phone (207) 221-4752 | [dhutcheon@une.edu](mailto:dhutcheon@une.edu)