

Nutrition and Dietetics Research

Embedded Undergraduate and Graduate Research

The Nutrition and Dietetics program focuses on preparing students to become registered dietitians through the Dietetic Practice Program (DPD), which follows completion of the four-year degree. The Nutrition and Dietetics DPD mission is to prepare program graduates by equipping them with the skills, knowledge, competence and confidence to succeed in their dietetic internship and thus serve as professionals capable of providing excellent entry-level dietetic services in community nutrition, food service, food management, and clinical dietetic settings. The program offers a comprehensive evidence-based curriculum that places students in a variety of practical experiences in the community. Learning objectives include cultural competence, problem solving, effectiveness and teamwork.

In AY 2014 and 2015 students in Nutrition and Dietetics were offered the opportunity to collaborate in various bench science experiments with researchers at the USDA Beltsville Experimental Research Station. Two of the graduate students were able to expand their research and incorporated their research project into their master's thesis. Both reported their research finding during their successful thesis defense and USDA researches served on the thesis committees.

At the undergraduate level, five students enrolled in the senior level Nutrition Seminar course under the directions of the Nutrition and Dietetics faculty worked on research projects at the UDC's Research Farm in Beltsville, Maryland. The Director of the landgrant Center for Urban Agriculture, also served as co-advisor to the student organization, MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) to enhance the students' exposure to the practice of more broadly defined nutrition sciences.

Embedded Course Specific Experiential Learning

A service learning experience, coordinated by the UDC Student Dietetic Association (SDA), engaged undergraduate and graduate students in the NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo. The expo represents the largest health and fitness event in the Washington, D.C. area. The free event attracts more than 10,000 visitors annually. SDA had an exhibit table at the event and offered free health screenings and nutrition information. Students confirmed the importance of their participation in the event and the valuable exposure it provided. Asked why it is important to be exposed to a general audience like the one the students met at the Expo, Kemi Adelola, a graduate student in Nutrition and Dietetics said "In 5-10 years, one out of every two people in the nation will be diagnosed with diabetes. That's scary. We have to reach people."

