



NUTR 590 – 01W
Introduction to Dietetics Practice
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Katharine Halfacre, PhD
Office Hours: By appointment
Office Phone: N/A
University Email Address: Katharine.Halfacre@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: **Email**
Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Recommended Texts

1. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (2023). eatrightPREP for the RDN Exam. Access at <https://www.eatrightstore.org/product-type/study-guides/eatrightprepfor-the-rdn-exam>
 - a. **REQUIRED FOR FUTURE RDNs**

Other materials and supplementary readings will be provided in the LMS.

Course Description

This course will focus on professional issues, including ethics, legislative issues, and advocating and marketing the profession. Personal professional development will be addressed through self-reflection, development of a resume and a letter of intent, and personal statement.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Perform self-assessment that includes awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles and cultural orientation and develop goals for self-improvement.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

2. Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career paths
3. Practice how to self-advocate for opportunities in a variety of settings.
4. Discuss trends affecting dietetics
5. Describe the legislative process and simulate applying the process to an issue in the dietetics profession.
6. Discuss nutrition policy that affects the practice of dietetics.
7. Apply the ADA Code of Professional Ethics and Responsibility to issues in practice. Prepare a resume and letter of intent/application
8. Discuss the difference between dietetic registration and state licensure
9. Discuss the organizational structure of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and identify the functions of each of its units

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Ability to utilize D2L, word processing, presentation, and database software;
ability to utilize university email

Instructional Methods

We will review various elements related to professional practice. Emphasis will be placed on preparations for the RDN examination materials.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

This graduate-level course will require students to be highly disciplined, motivated, and professional. Attendance, attentiveness, and quality of work should reflect that students are in professional preparation. Plan to dedicate about nine hours of effort each week to succeed in this course. This time will be committed to reading the course text, reviewing lecture materials, and completing assignments. Be focused, prepared, and hardworking.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

- A = 90%-100%
- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%
- F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 450- 500 Points

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

B = 400- 449 Points
 C = 350- 399 Points
 D = 300- 349 Points
 F = Less than 300 Points

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Grade Item	Point Value	Percentage of Final Grade
Professional Development Portfolio	100 points	20%
Portfolio Presentation	50 points	10%
Legislative Papers (2)	50 points each	10% x 2 = 20%
Legislative Presentations (2)	25 points each	5% x 2 = 10%
RDN Practice Tests (3)	30 points each	6% x 3 = 18%
RDN Simulated Test	50 points	10%
CAPSTONE	60 points	12%
TOTAL	500 points	100%

Assessments

Professional Development Portfolio

Each student will complete a self-assessment, a resume and a letter of intent for an internship, graduate school or job application. They will compile this into a portfolio. Specific details will be provided in the LMS.

Portfolio Presentation

Students will deliver a 3-7 minute job talk, highlighting their knowledge, skills, experiences, and goals. These job talks will be related to their desired profession, and will be meant to simulate their commentary during job interviews. Specific details will be provided in the LMS.

Legislative Papers

Students will work in teams to evaluate a current political issue impacting dietetics practice. After researching the issue and writing a three-page paper and 1 reference/cited work page, each student will develop a letter to their member of congress or senator in support of an issue. Specific details will be provided in the LMS.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Legislative Presentations

Each student will present the contents of their paper. This will simulate the act of advocating in a legislative chamber. Specific details will be provided in the LMS.

RDN Practice Exams

Students will access the university LMS to complete three targeted practice examinations designed to mimic the format and rigor of the credentialing exam. Specific details and testing windows will be provided in the LMS.

RDN Simulated Exam

Students will complete a comprehensive simulated RDN examination housed within the university LMS. This assessment draws upon all domains of dietetics practice. Specific details will be provided in the LMS.

CAPSTONE

Students will complete two tasks as part of their capstone evaluation. Part one is a final simulated RDN Exam administered through the LMS, serving as a comparative baseline to earlier testing. Part two will involve an instructor-approved project specific to each student's identified career goals. Specific details will be provided in the LMS.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.ETAMU.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@ETAMU.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Students can expect a response to contact (email preferred) within 48 hours. Generally, the instructor will attempt to respond to contact as soon as possible. Assignments will be graded and posted in a timely manner. Office hours are posted and appointments should be scheduled during those times.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Your engagement with course content is essential for success. If you experience an illness, emergency, or anything else that prevents you from participating in the course, please reach out as soon as possible. Late work will only be accepted with a valid, documented excuse.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.ETAMU.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).
<http://www.ETAMU.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).
<http://www.ETAMU.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@ETAMU.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M University Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903886-5868 or 9-1-1.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

East Texas A&M University Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.ETAMU.edu/counsel

AI Use in Courses

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

subject to change

NUTR 590 Planned Schedule		
--------------------------------------	--	--

Week	Topic	Assignments (Due Date)
------	-------	------------------------

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

1	Syllabus Introduction to Dietetics Professions History of Dietetics Legislation	Syllabus Acknowledgment (7/12) SWOT – Draft (7/12) RDN Practice Exam 1 (7/12)
2	Legislation Code of Ethics Principles of Dietetics	Legislative Paper 1 (7/19) Legislative Presentation 1 (7/19) Resume – Draft (7/19)
3	Nutrition Care for Groups and Individuals	RDN Practice Test 2 (7/26) Legislative Paper 2 (7/26) Legislative Presentation 2 (7/26)
4	Management of Food & Nutrition Programs Foodservice Systems	Personal Statement – Draft (8/2) RDN Practice Test 3 (8/2) RDN Simulated Test (8/2)
FINALS	Finals Week	Portfolio – Final (8/6) Portfolio Presentations (8/6) Capstone Project Submission (8/6)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.