



**HOWARD**  
**UNIVERSITY**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL**

# **GRADUATE PROGRAM IN NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES**



# **STUDENT MANUAL**

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## Welcome



Dear Current/Prospective Student:

The graduate faculty of the Department of Nutritional Sciences is pleased to have you as a current or prospective student. We are dedicated to guiding and assisting you with your educational and career goals.

The graduate program in the Department has been in existence since 1974 and is one of many programs in the Graduate School. Since its inception the Department has produced Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy graduates who are making meaningful contributions to the nutrition profession locally, nationally and internationally.

The Department of Nutritional Sciences offers three concentrations, namely, Community Nutrition, Experimental Nutrition, and Dietetics (Coordinated Program in Dietetics/CP). Our graduates work as college and university faculty, federal, state, and local dietitian nutritionists/researchers, nutritionists/researchers with private corporations, clinical dietitian nutritionists, media professionals, and private consultants. We look forward to your contributions to this tradition of excellence.

The graduate faculty is available to provide explanations of the policies and procedures contained in the Manual and we look forward to being with you on your journey of graduate studies at Howard University.

Sincerely,

Oluwakemi Adeola. Ph.D., RD, LDN  
Director of Graduate Studies

## About This Manual

The Department of Nutritional Sciences has developed this handbook to inform students of the policies and guidelines that govern their matriculation in the Graduate Program in Nutritional Sciences. The manual is a summary of information that all graduate students should know and understand. It does not contain all the detailed information pertinent to matriculation at Howard University but includes information that is both important and useful. Additional resources are available on the Graduate School website:

<https://gs.howard.edu/academics/academic-regulations>. Of note, students in the Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics are also governed by the policies and procedures outlined in the CP Manual, which is separate from but aligned with the policies and procedure contained herein.

The manual is a dynamic document. It will be amended, modified and/or expanded over time as the Department deems appropriate or necessary. All students covered by the manual must sign the Acknowledgment Form that appears at the end of the document to agree that they have reviewed the manual and understand its contents. The acknowledgment also states that the student agrees to remain up-to-date on any changes by checking the online manual ([Nutritional Sciences \(M.S.\) | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#); [Nutritional Sciences \(PhD\) | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#)) where all amendments and other changes will be communicated. All new students are introduced to the manual during their orientation session, after which they will sign the Acknowledgment Form.

This manual supersedes all prior handbooks, manuals, policies, and procedures issued by the Department as to the subject matters addressed herein. Any prior handbooks and manuals are hereby revoked and withdrawn.

## **Mission**

In keeping with the University's mission, the mission of the Department of Nutritional Sciences is to advance the understanding of the role of nutrition in human health and disease, and to train undergraduate and graduate students from diverse backgrounds in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields to become global leaders in the field of nutrition, conduct innovative research, and develop evidence-based approaches to promoting health and preventing disease. In addition, the Department is committed to serving communities experiencing nutrition-related-health disparities and inequity, engaging in outreach activities to promote public understanding of the importance of nutrition for health, providing compassionate nutrition care to individuals and groups in the community, using an interprofessional approach, and contributing to solutions for nutrition-related conditions and diseases.

## **Vision**

The vision of the Department of Nutritional Sciences is to deliver state-of-the-art programs based on innovative, artificial intelligence-driven research in personalized nutrition that leads to innovative nutrition-related solutions to chronic diseases and leadership in the global community. To become the premiere choice for underserved students from diverse backgrounds seeking quality undergraduate and graduate education. Faculty with vast expertise and active engagement in nutrition-related research, bring a wealth of knowledge and real-world experience to the classroom. Our students will have access to state-of-the-art facilities and resources, fostering an inclusive environment of innovation and discovery. Through the purposeful curriculum, students will receive targeted exposure in emerging fields in nutrition and be uniquely prepared to improve outcomes in populations from diverse backgrounds adversely affected by various social determinants of health. Students will leave Howard University as highly competent professionals and change agents, positioned to make significant impact in the field of nutritional sciences locally and globally.

## **Objectives**

The Graduate Program in Nutritional Sciences has three major objectives:

1. To foster a program of excellence with specialized expertise in the study of human nutritional issues with particular emphasis on the needs of the underserved poor, ethnic minorities, and disadvantaged populations
2. To prepare competent graduate professionals in the field of human nutrition, with the skills and abilities to improve the nutritional wellbeing and the quality of life for individuals and families
3. To conduct disciplinary and interdisciplinary research to improve the nutritional wellbeing and the quality of life of ethnic minorities and the underserved.

## **Admission Policies**

Howard University promotes academic excellence through a highly selective admissions process. Individuals who are admitted must show strong personal motivation along with backgrounds of consistent academic growth and achievement. The University also attracts and seeks out socially and economically disadvantaged students who show promise of gaining from a Howard education. To protect its character and standards of scholarship, the University reserves the right, and the applicant concedes to the University the right, to deny admission to any student at any time for any reason deemed sufficient by the University. Applications for admission to the Graduate School may be obtained from the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions, Graduate School, Howard University, Washington, DC 20059. Telephone: 1-800-822-6363. The application detail can be found at the Graduate School website: <https://gs.howard.edu>.

The final responsibility for the fulfillment of all admission requirements lies with the applicant.

### **Caution to Prospective Students**

The Board of Trustees of Howard University on September 24, 1983, adopted the following policy statement regarding applications for admission: "Applicants seeking admission to Howard University are required to submit accurate and complete credentials and accurate and complete information requested by the University. Applicants who fail to do so shall be denied admission. Enrolled students who as applicants failed to submit accurate and complete credentials or accurate and complete information on their application for admission shall be subject to dismissal when the same is made known, regardless of classification."

### **Admission to the Graduate School**

Any graduate with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0, an undergraduate baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution, or any international student with equivalent qualifications is eligible to apply for admission to the Graduate School. Graduate work is under the authority of the Graduate Faculty of various departments.

A student is expected to have adequate undergraduate training in the field in which the individual plans to do graduate work. If a student's training is found to be inadequate, the individual will be required to take such additional courses as the department may prescribe. Admission to the Graduate School does not automatically admit a student to candidacy for an advanced degree.

Applications for admission can be obtained from the Office of Admissions of the Graduate School, Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20059 or via the Graduate School website at [www.gs.howard.edu](http://www.gs.howard.edu). No application will be considered complete until official transcripts, a resume, a statement of interest and/ or goals, and three letters of recommendation are received by the Graduate School Office of Admissions.

International students are also required to provide the Graduate School with Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam scores. Submission of an official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score report with a minimum score of 233 CBT (computer-based test) or 90 iBT (internet-based test) is required. Howard University's institutional code is 5297. Send your TOEFL score report via the [TOEFL](#) website; or submission of an official International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) score report with a minimum overall band score of 6.5, with no individual band score below 6.0. Individual departments and schools may require additional submission from the applicants.

The application for the Graduate School at Howard University requires the following documents:

- Statement of Academic Interest & Professional Goals
- Autobiographical Sketch
- Resume
- Three letters of recommendation (minimum)
- Official transcripts from each university or college attended.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytical Writing scores reported to Howard University School Code (5297).
- Interview (applies only to applicants to the Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics.)

## **Transfer Students**

A transfer student is any person who has been enrolled in a college or university other than Howard University, irrespective of course load or credits earned. A general admissions application, the \$75 application fee, and two official transcripts from each college level institution attended must be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions. In all instances where transfer of credit is granted, it must be the judgment of the student's major department that the credits in question are comparable to those awarded by the department and that they meet the same course objectives as those of the department. Departments may accept a limited number of transferred credits to satisfy requirements for the master's and PhD degrees with the approval of the dean of the Graduate School. Credentials delivered in person or sent to the University by the student are not accepted. To qualify for admission on a transfer basis, the student must have been in good standing at all institutions previously attended.

## **International Students**

Persons applying to graduate programs must have a superior academic record and the equivalent of Howard University's four-year baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. International students are advised to begin the admissions process at least one year in advance of the time they wish to enter the University because of the tests required, delays in international mail, etc. International students must submit the following materials by March 1 for the fall semester:

- An application with the \$75 application fee in bank draft U.S. dollars in the form of a money order or a certified check made payable to Howard University. Cash should not be sent.
- Original certificates and/or official final secondary school records, official university transcripts, mark sheets, official translations, and syllabi.
- Results from the tests required for regular degree students.
- Scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as required for applicants whose native language is not English. (Some Howard University colleges and schools require the TOEFL from all international applicants). Once applications have been received, the Office of Admissions will inform students as to whether they must take this test. For information on the test, applicants may write to: TOEFL, Educational Testing Service, Box 899, Princeton, New Jersey 08540, U.S.A.

Immigration Form I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility), needed to obtain a student visa is not issued until the applicant has (1) been accepted by the Office of Admissions, (2) paid the enrollment fee, and (3) submitted a financial statement indicating how expenses will be met while the student is attending the University. The I-20 form will accompany the permit to register.

Regulations of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service require that all students on F-1 visas must pursue a full course of study at all times. This means that graduate students must take a full course of study, nine (9) credit hours if study is course work only, or some combination of course work and research or writing of a thesis or dissertation. Each international student is responsible for maintaining immigration status while in the United States. Failure to do so will jeopardize the student's stay in the United States. Students who have been accepted at Howard are not guaranteed housing, and most international students do not live in university dormitories. Upon arrival in Washington, those who need assistance in finding housing should contact the Office of Residence Life or the Office of International Student Services.

In addition to the requirements listed above, all international applicants **MUST** include in their application packet the following: Official transcripts, final certificates and/or mark/grade sheets must be sent directly from the college or university to the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions (photocopies or transcripts in the applicant's possession are not acceptable)

If the documents are not in English, they must be accompanied by an official translated copy. An academic evaluation by a [NACES member](#) is required from **all international students who have studied outside of the United States**. All transcripts from non-US post-secondary educational institutions must be sent directly to the evaluation agency by the issuing institution. This is a requirement before full admission can be granted. The academic evaluation requirement **cannot be waived**. Moreover, if your transcript is in a foreign language, an official English translation is required. **We highly encourage you to select a NACES member with electronic delivery**. We are currently able to receive evaluations electronically via [IEE](#) and [WES \(ICAP\)](#). If you have recently requested an academic evaluation to be delivered to our office via mail, please contact us



at [hugsadmission@howard.edu](mailto:hugsadmission@howard.edu). Evaluations will not be accepted via email/fax. All documents must bear the same name that appears on the admissions application unless an official document so submitted indicating a change of name. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) a score of 90 on the Internet base (IBT) is required for applicants whose native language is not English. Official TOEFL scores must be sent directly from ETS. The TOEFL test is only waived if the applicant has received a degree in the U.S. In lieu of the TOEFL (if not offered in your country), applicants may submit results from IELTS (International English Language Testing System) with an overall score of a 6.5.

## **Application Deadlines**

Completed applications for admission to the Graduate School must be received at Howard University on or before December 1 (early deadline), and latest April 15 (Final deadline) for the fall semester. For details, visit the Graduate School website: [Application Deadlines & Requirements | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#).

Applications from students seeking readmission must be received at Howard in time to be approved 30 days before registration. A period of at least one semester must elapse between a student's dismissal for academic reasons and readmittance.

## **Submission of Application**

All applications are submitted electronically via the GradCas platform. Learn more about navigating this platform here: <https://gs.howard.edu/admissions/navigating-grad-school-application-virtual-series>. Please do not send any credentials to the department to which you are applying. This will delay the processing of your application. The Office of Graduate Admissions will not be responsible for credentials not sent directly to the office as requested.

## **Categories of Admission**

### **A. Regular Student**

Applicants who meet the stated requirements for admission to a graduate program in the Graduate School shall be accepted as regular students. Students with a minimum cumulative grade point average greater to or equal to 3.0 and a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution, (including any international student with equivalent qualifications,) are eligible to apply for admission to the Graduate School as a regular student.

### **B. Provisional Student**

Applicants who have deficiencies in preparation or scholarship but are judged by the department to be capable of completing a graduate degree program may be accepted on a provisional basis. The student in this category will be allowed to take a maximum of ten (10) credit hours per semester for a maximum of two semesters and shall also satisfy all specific requirements set by the department before the student may qualify for admission as a regular degree student. Upon review of the conditions established at the time of admission, the Director of Graduate Studies may recommend to the Dean that the status of the

provisional student be changed to that of a regular student. Failure to meet the requirements of the provisional admission within two semesters will result in dismissal from the graduate program.

### **C. Unclassified Student (Non-Degree Student)**

An unclassified status is an elected category for the student who wishes to pursue “course work only.” The applicant must meet all general admission requirements, and any additional requirements prescribed by the department. A non-degree student, upon approval and recommendation of the department, may qualify for another category of admission in the Graduate School. Departments will determine the number of non-degree students they can accept on a yearly basis. Students may transfer no more than two (2) courses earned as a non-degree student to a degree program.

### **Admission to the Department of Nutritional Sciences**

The department in which the student plans to study shall determine whether the student meets the qualifications for admission to graduate study in that department. In addition to other requested materials, the applicant shall provide the Graduate School Office of Admissions with a complete transcript of academic performance of work done at Howard and/or other institutions of higher education that the applicant has attended. Upon receipt of the completed application, the Office of Admissions shall determine whether the student meets the general Graduate School admission requirements. The Office of Admissions shall notify the department and shall request that the department evaluate the students’ credentials. The department shall communicate its decision to the Graduate School Office of Admissions, which will then communicate with the students.

In those cases where a graduate student wishes to transfer from one graduate program in the Graduate School to another, he/she must submit an appropriate application to the Office of Graduate Admissions and receive approval of the department in which he/she wishes to enroll. Unless approved by the Board of Trustees, a student may not matriculate simultaneously in two graduate programs.

In the Department of Nutritional Sciences, admission requirements include a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 based on a 4.0 scale, and successful completion of the following undergraduate courses **with a grade of B or above, WITHIN THE PAST FIVE (5) YEARS:**

- Two semesters of General Chemistry (lecture and laboratory)
- Two semesters of Organic Chemistry (lecture)
- One semester of Organic Chemistry Lab
- One semester of Biochemistry (lecture and laboratory)
- Two semesters of Introductory Nutrition (Introduction to Nutrition, Life Cycle Nutrition)
- Two semesters of Anatomy and Physiology

Lack of these courses constitutes deficiencies and may result in provisional admission status.

### **Readmission to the Graduate School**

Any student dismissed for reasons other than the second failure of the comprehensive examination or the oral defense of the thesis/the dissertation may seek readmission to the Graduate School. First, the student must complete an application to the Graduate School Office of Admissions and include a complete record of prior academic performance at Howard University. Second, the student must submit a written request for readmission to the Dean of the Graduate School. Third, the student must receive approval for readmission from the Dean of the Graduate School and from the department in which the student wishes to enroll. Reinstatement requires fulfillment of conditions formulated by the department in which the student is a degree candidate and approved by the Dean. Following approval, the Dean will notify the students of these conditions. Students who are readmitted to the Graduate School are subject to the rules and regulations in place at the time of readmission.

Returning students who were absent from, or not registered at, the University for one entire semester (summer session not included) are required to apply for readmission.

### **Graduation Schemes**

The scheme in effect at the time a student is admitted into the program is the scheme with which the student must graduate.

## **Registration and Enrollment**

Students must register for classes during the registration period and follow procedures for registration as outlined in the Course Catalog and on Bison Hub. Prior to registration, all students must meet with either the Director of Graduate Studies (for CP students, the Director of the Coordinated Program in Dietetics), or their Graduate Advisor to discuss the upcoming schedule and receive approval to register. Failure to communicate and seek approval from an advisor, may result in delayed graduation timelines.

### **Permanent Record**

The official permanent record of a student's enrollment in the university, registration for classes, grades earned, and other qualifications fulfilled are maintained in the Office of the Registrar.

### **Student Load**

Nine credit hours is considered a full-time schedule for students prior to being admitted to candidacy. After admission to candidacy, enrollment for at least one credit hour of PhD

dissertation or dissertation writing may constitute a full-time schedule. The maximum load for a graduate student is fifteen credit hours. Enrollment in more than twelve credit hours requires approval by the Director of Graduate Studies of the department. Courses without credit allowance will not be included as part of the regular student load.

## **Leave of Absence for Exceptional Family Circumstances**

In recognition of the effects that childbirth, adoption, illness, disability, caring for incapacitated dependents (such as children, ill or injured partners, or aging parents), military service, or similar circumstances may have on the time and energy that graduate students must devote to their educational programs, the University allows students in such circumstances to apply for a leave of absence.

### **Length of Leave**

Students who apply for a leave of absence should indicate the length of the requested leave of absence and explain why their circumstances warrant a leave of that length. Leaves of absence more than four semesters are disfavored and will not be granted absent extraordinary circumstances or as required by law.

### **Application Procedures**

A leave of absence for childbirth, adoption, illness, disability, dependent care, or similar circumstances normally must be requested and approved prior to the beginning of the academic term for which it is being requested. A letter of request should provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances leading to the request and a justification of the length of the requested leave. Each student should describe the progress they have made in their graduate program and indicate if the requested leave of absence is expected to affect the time-to-degree, course viability, or course-restoration limitations set forth elsewhere in these rules. The letter of request should be sent to the Dean of the Graduate School and, in cases of disability, the Office of Special Student Services. The letter of request must also state whether the request is supported by the student's faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Studies and include supporting documentation. The faculty advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, Office of Special Student Services, and/or the Graduate Dean may request a doctor's statement to document any limitations arising from a student's disability or illness.

### **Special Considerations**

#### **1. Registration Requirements**

Students on approved leaves of absence are not registered at the University and, therefore, do not have the rights and privileges of registered students. Upon the conclusion of an approved leave of absence, a student may register without applying for readmission to the University. Students must be registered during a semester in which they fulfill a university or departmental degree requirement, such as taking

comprehensive examinations or submitting a dissertation/thesis. In addition, students must also be registered to be eligible for any form of university financial aid (e.g., a teaching or research assistantship) and to be certified as full-time students.

## **2. Impact on Funding**

When contemplating a leave of absence, graduate students are advised to consult the sources of their funding to determine whether a leave might involve a long-term financial support loss. Since academic programs and financial aid packages may be constructed and sequenced over a period of years, individual interruptions to the normal sequence of academic progress and scheduled employment may result in a loss of future funding and a slower time to completion of degree. In some programs, a leave of absence may mean that students may have to begin a new project upon return, with the likelihood that their research may take longer to complete. Whenever a leave of absence is being considered, a student should meet with the advisor to develop a plan for resumption of study and gain a clear understanding of future funding opportunities. Some outside funding agencies frown on interruptions to a degree program. Some only allow leaves for medical reasons or military service. Others require prior approval of the fellowship agency.

Students with outstanding educational loans need to consider the effect of taking a leave of absence on their loan status. For some student loans, a grace period for repaying the loan begins once the student stops registering. If the leave period is longer than the grace period, then the student may have to begin repaying the loan while on a leave of absence. Prior to taking a leave, students should arrange to meet with a Student Financial Aid officer, and/or contact their lenders.

## **3. International Students**

Non-immigrant F-1 and J-1 students and their dependents must always maintain legal immigration status. Students with F-1 or J-1 visas must be enrolled full-time every semester at the University while they remain in the United States. The only possible exception that might allow a student to remain in the United States while on an approved leave of absence might be a serious illness or medical condition. Students are advised to consult with the staff of International Student Services for more information when considering a leave of absence.

## **4. Student Accounts**

Students are advised to check with the Enrollment Management Office prior to taking an approved leave of absence to determine the status of their student accounts. Students are advised that accounts that are overdue will be subject to regular procedures in accordance with University guidelines, notwithstanding any approved leave of absence: specifically, late fees and finance charges will continue to accrue, students will be blocked from future registration upon their return, and accounts will

be referred for collection, with the imposition of additional collection charges, for non-payment in accordance with regular timeframes.

## **5. University Housing and Other Resources**

The University's general policy is that students must be registered to be eligible for university housing. For specific information about continued eligibility for university housing during an approved leave of absence, students are advised to contact the Department of Resident Life. Students who are on a leave of absence do not have a valid Howard University identification card and therefore are not entitled to use University resources, such as the libraries, shuttle buses, and other services covered by mandatory fees.

# **Grades and Course Credits**

## **Letter Grades and Their Values**

### **The Grading System**

The grading system for all graduate level courses leading to a graduate degree awarded by the Graduate School shall be as follows:

Letter Grade	Numerical Value for the Purpose of Calculating a Grade Point Average
A	4.0
B	3.0
C	2.0
D	1.0
F	0

### **A. D and F Grades**

No degree credit may be earned for D and F grades received in graduate level courses. Such courses must be repeated and a grade of B or higher must be earned to satisfy graduate degree requirements. Grades of D and F are a permanent part of the record, however, and are used in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average.

### **B. Incomplete Grades**

All incomplete grades, except those for thesis, dissertation, or research courses, shall carry an alternate grade designation. The grade "I" with an alternate letter grade indicates that the work was incomplete at the end of the course. The alternate letter grade indicates the grade that will be recorded if the work is not completed by the end of the last day of the next

semester in which the student is enrolled. This grade may be given to a graduate student who, upon petitioning the instructor in writing, has provided adequate justification for partial completion of the course requirement when the final grade report is due.

Completion of a course in which an incomplete grade has been given will involve the submission of required documents, e.g., term papers, exams, and notebooks, or may also include completion of contractual period of service not corresponding to the grading period. At the time the alternate letter grade is assigned, the instructor and student must complete an Incomplete Grade Processing Form (IGPF) with details of what the student must do and by what date to remove/change the incomplete grade. A copy of the IGPF must be placed in the student's file in the department office. The incomplete grade must be removed by the end of the next semester in residence by the date specified in the university calendar.

The grade of "W" will be reported for a graduate student who withdraws from a course after the end of the add/drop period according to the University calendar. The "W" remains a permanent part of the student's academic record.

### **C. Assignment of Grades for Thesis and Dissertation Writing Courses**

Thesis and dissertation writing courses shall be assigned a grade of satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) while the work is in progress. These grades may be removed after completion of the final oral examination on the thesis.

### **Change of Grade**

A grade assigned for work in a graduate level course is not subject to change. Exceptional cases (such as errors in the computation of final grades) may be considered upon submission of a petition by the instructor of the course to the Dean of the Graduate School no later than one month after the beginning of the next semester in which the student is enrolled.

### **Approval for New or Additional Courses**

Students may not receive graduate degree credit for courses not duly authorized for this purpose by the Graduate School.

### **Auditors**

A student may audit a graduate level course and is required to pay the regular tuition and other fees. An auditor is not required to take examinations and will not receive credit for the course. An audited course will be recorded on the student's permanent record with an assigned grade of AD.

## **Undergraduate Courses Taken by Graduate Students**

Undergraduate courses taken to fulfill entrance deficiencies will not be calculated into the grade point average (GPA). Graduate students are not permitted to take undergraduate courses at Howard University with the understanding that this will not be covered by financial aid.

## **Graduate Courses Taken by Undergraduate Students**

The Department of Nutritional Sciences may permit a Senior Howard University undergraduate student to take not more than two graduate courses in his/her senior year. When the credits earned in graduate courses exceed the total number of credits required for the baccalaureate degree, these credits may, with department approval, be counted toward requirements for a graduate degree at Howard University.

## **Transfer of Credit to Graduate Degrees**

Departments may approve transfer of credits for graduate courses, earned in other graduate programs, where the grade is B or better, and where the courses are not older than five (5) years. However, it must be the considered judgment of the department that the work is relevant and meets the objectives of comparable courses. In no case may transfer credit hours exceed the limit specified in General Requirements for the Master of Science Degree, and General Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree. Such transfer may not be used to satisfy the residency requirement specified for the Master of Science Degree, and the Doctor of Philosophy Degree, and must be approved by the Graduate School.

# **General Requirements for The Master of Science Degree**

## **Admissions to Graduate Studies in the Department of Nutritional Sciences**

A committee of faculty members will review and recommend all candidates seeking admission into the graduate programs in Nutritional Sciences. On an emergency basis, the Director of Graduate Studies may set up an ad hoc committee of no less than three faculty members to review and recommend candidates for admission.

### **A. Residency**

A minimum of six credit hours per semester constitutes residency. A student must be in residence in the Graduate School for at least one semester to be recommended for a degree. Credits transferred from other accredited graduate institutions may not be used to meet the residency requirement.



## B. Minimum Credit Requirements

The minimum number of credits required for the master's degree in the Graduate School is thirty (30). However, the department may require credits greater than this number, and various factors may result in a student taking more than the minimum number of credit hours prior to satisfactorily completing the degree requirements. The completion of minimum course requirements or credit does not guarantee receipt of the degree. **The minimum number of credits required to fulfill the master's degree is forty-three to forty-five (43-45) in the Department of Nutritional Sciences).**

The distribution of credits for the degree shall be as follows:

1. At least thirty-seven (37) in coursework, fifteen (15) of which shall be earned in the core subject.
2. No more than six (6) credits in thesis writing courses may count towards the requirements of the degree.

## Qualifying Examination

All new Master of Science (MS) dietetic students in the Graduate Nutritional Sciences program must take a preliminary/qualifying examination to assess their standing in the science of nutrition. The qualifying examination will be administered to MS dietetics students at the end of their first semester in the program. Students who score less than 80% in the examination will be required to take additional courses for a semester to strengthen their background in sciences of nutrition including but not limited to macronutrient, micronutrient, community nutrition, evaluation of nutritional status, advanced physiology and or biochemistry.) Failure to pass the exam on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CP). Students who are dismissed from the CP, but remain in good standing otherwise, may select another concentration and remain enrolled in the MS in Nutritional Sciences Program.

## Comprehensive Examination

All students enrolled in the Master of Science Program in Nutritional Sciences must successfully complete a comprehensive examination. The examination must be taken prior to submission of the application to candidacy, and after the student has taken the core courses in nutrition (please see core courses later in the manual and on the graduate program schemes).

**As of Fall 2022, the examination is competence-based and encompasses acquired knowledge and skills from each nutrition core course taken by the student.** A passing score of eighty percent (80%) on each examination is required. CP students will be guided by the comprehensive exam section in the CP manual. The Comprehensive Examination will be administered on the last Monday and Wednesday of **October** (Fall) and **March** (Spring)

The comprehensive examination is intended to evaluate the candidate knowledge of advanced nutrition and research in the following areas:

**1) Theory**

Test knowledge fundamentals of nutrition, nutrition evaluation, metabolism of nutrients, and community nutrition.

**2) Application**

Application of nutrition to research and human development.

Students must complete the Comprehensive Examination Eligibility Form and receive formal approval from the Director of Graduate Studies. Eligibility requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 and completion of all required core Nutritional Science courses specified in the program scheme. Refer to page 22 for the list of core courses. Once approved, students will be enrolled in the comprehensive examination Canvas course site. Comprehensive examinations will be administered electronically in person over a maximum of two days. The examination will not exceed 8 hours per day with two fifteen (15)-minute breaks, and one thirty (30) - minute break for each examination day. The student must complete an ongoing examination and log out of the examination portal before each break.

- A student or candidate would have completed all required core nutritional science courses specified in the emphasis scheme, excluding thesis and dissertation before taking the comprehensive examination.
- The comprehensive examination will be administered in the Fall and Spring semesters.
- The comprehensive examination has a mandatory written section. Two unsuccessful attempts at the examination will result in expulsion from the program.
- The examination will be administered by the Office of the Director of Graduate Studies or in the absence of the former, by the Office of the Department Chairperson in coordination with the director of graduate studies.
- The examination will be evaluated within four (4) weeks. A formal notification of the outcome will be issued to the student, their advisor and the department chairperson.
- Results of the examination will be uploaded to the student's record on Bison Hub by the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chairperson.

## **Core Course Requirements & Substitutions**

All core courses for the graduate program must be completed at Howard University. Substitutions are permitted only in documented extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. The substituted course must be equivalent in content, competencies, and learning objectives to the department's core course. It is the student's responsibility to identify the equivalent course through a consortium institution and submit a formal written request to the Director of Graduate Studies for review, which includes examining the course syllabus, competencies, and assessment methods. Approval of any substitutions must come from the Director of

Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, and the Graduate School. Students with approved substitutions must still take and pass the corresponding comprehensive examination offered by the Department of Nutritional Sciences.

### **C. Admission to Candidacy**

Admission to a master's degree program does not automatically admit a student to candidacy for the master's degree. A student will be admitted to candidacy upon completion of most of the requirements for the master's degree, except the thesis or its equivalent.

Prior to admission to candidacy, a student must:

1. Submit an admission to candidacy form available from your adviser or the Director of Graduate Studies. It must include a list of graduate courses completed, those in process, and those courses in the field yet to be completed.
2. Pass all the required core courses.
3. Pass the comprehensive examination administered by the department.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in expository writing in addition to satisfying the RCR requirement as described in Other Requirements for the Degree, Pass the foreign language examination or fulfill the approved substitute where applicable.
5. Secure the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or other institutional committees as required for the research project.
6. Receive approval of a thesis subject or an optional requirement as determined by the advisory committee in the major department.
7. Receive the endorsement of the advisory committee in the major department.
8. Receive the approval of the Graduate School.

Admission to candidacy must be achieved at least six weeks **prior to** the end of the semester in which the student expects to receive his/her degree.

Candidacy for the master's degree shall be valid for no more than **two academic years**. Any student seeking renewal of candidacy must apply to the Graduate School through the department for reinstatement. The department in which the student is seeking the degree shall determine the conditions under which he/she may be reinstated, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee of the Graduate School.

**The responsibility for fulfilling these requirements on time is that of the student.** The departmental Director of Graduate Studies should be consulted regarding any of the stated requirements. Students should carefully note the specific requirements of their department relative to admission to candidacy and regard them as additional to these general requirements.

The Department of Nutritional Sciences offers the MS degree in Nutrition with three emphases. The emphases include (1) Community Nutrition and (2) Experimental Nutrition (3) Dietetics.

Course requirements for all three emphases of the MS degree are outlined later in the manual and can also be accessed with the link: <https://gs.howard.edu/nutritional-sciences-ms>

## **General Candidacy Requirements**

- A. Students must meet with their MS advisor to review the candidacy application before submitting to the director of graduate studies for review and applying for candidacy to the Graduate School.
- B. The Advisor will present the candidate to the rest of the committee members for a vote to ensure that the applicant has met the requirements to move forward with the submission of the candidacy application to the Graduate School.
- C. The completed application will have a copy of an unofficial transcripts, a certificate of passing the comprehensive examination, signed forms required by the graduate school, a copy of the approved IRB or IACUC application, and approved thesis/dissertation proposal.
- D. The credentials of all prospective candidates must be presented by the advisor to the Department of Nutritional Sciences Director of Graduate Studies to the faculty for approval for a student to advance to candidacy. This will occur upon notification of intent to file an application for candidacy by the student's advisor. All faculty must approve the credentials for the prospective candidate to proceed to candidacy.
- E. All graduate DNS requirements must be fulfilled before a candidacy application may be filed with the graduate school.
- F. Application filed prematurely without approval by the faculty must be withdrawn by the student's advisor upon request by faculty majority vote.

## **Credits and Course Recertification**

Credit may not be granted for required core courses in the graduate degree disciplines if the course is:

- More than five (5) years old for the master's degree.

Courses that do not meet the stated stipulations must be retaken. Only courses taken and recertified at Howard University may be considered for satisfying candidacy requirement.

## Presentation and Publication Requirements

Effective Fall of 2024, all graduate students in the department of Nutritional Sciences in collaboration with their research advisor must present at least one poster or oral presentation of their original research at a professional meeting of their choosing before graduation. **CP students are required to present as assigned by the program guidelines and outlined in respective course syllabi.**

## Thesis Requirements

All Theses must have a primary research component. Except for the Coordinated Program in Dietetics, no theses will be approved by DNS faculty that has no primary research component. **Example**, the use of NHANES data, although permitted, must be accompanied by a community-based primary study that augments or supports the former study. At the master's level, all Experimental Nutrition thesis must have a primary/laboratory research component. **Primary research component means, a study in which the author generates the study data themselves.**

## Advisor Selection

- A) All new entrants to the DNS graduate program must select an advisor no later than the end of their first semester in the program.
- B) Students in the master's degree program are encouraged to complete their research proposal no later than their second semester in the program.

## Expository Writing Requirements

Expository writing requirements can be fulfilled through the online program suggested by the Graduate School. The program can be accessed via: [McGraw Hill Connect Expository Writing](#). **Successful completion of the Expository Writing Examination remains valid for a period of five years. After five years, a student must either request an exemption from the Expository Writing Examination or re-engage the department's Expository Writing Examination process.** All graduate students are expected to attend a mandatory writing seminar sponsored by the Department of Nutritional Sciences. The date for the seminar will be announced each semester by the seminar coordinator. Additional details can be found on the Graduate School website: [Article IV. Other Requirements for the Degree | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#)

## Course Requirements

The Department of Nutritional Sciences offers the master's degree in nutrition with three emphases. The emphases are (1) Community Nutrition, (2) Experimental Nutrition, and (3)

Coordinated Program in Dietetics (for details about the Coordinated Program in Dietetics, see the separate program manual).

## **GRADUATE NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES CORE COURSES\***

### **MS IN COMMUNITY NUTRITION (19 credits.)**

- Micronutrients I\*\* (4)
- Macronutrients I\*\* (4)
- Community Nutrition (3)
- Evaluation of Nutritional Status (3)
- Techniques in Community Nutrition (2)
- Health Planning and Promotion\*\*\* (3)

### **MS IN EXPERIMENTAL (15 credits.)**

- Micronutrients I\*\* (4)
- Macronutrients I\*\* (4)
- Research Methods in Experimental (4)
- Evaluation of Nutritional Status (3)

\* Refer to CP Scheme for CP-specific core courses

\*\* Advanced Nutrition and Human Metabolism for CP Students

\*\*\* Core course pending approval

Please note that students admitted prior to Fall 2022, must follow the schemes provided upon admission to the Graduate Program. All students admitted after Fall 2022 are governed by the schemes outlined herein.

**Academic Program Leading to the Master of Science Degree  
(Experimental Nutrition Emphasis)  
Program Scheme**

**YEAR ONE**

<u><b>Fall Semester</b></u>		<u><b>Spring Semester</b></u>	
NUTG 310 Graduate Seminar in Nutrition	1	CHEM 251 Chemistry I (Bio Chem I)	3
+NUTG 516 Macronutrients I	4	BIOC 203 Biochemistry Lab	3
+NUTG 319 Research Method Exp Nutrition	4	*Statistics I or Biostatistics	3-4
+NUTG 316 Evaluation of Nutrition Status	3		
+NUTG 517 Micronutrients I	4		
Total Credits		16	9/10

**YEAR TWO**

<u><b>Fall Semester</b></u>		<u><b>Spring Semester</b></u>	
NUTG 518 Nutrition Health and Disease	3	NUTG 501 Global Health and Nutrition	3
** Elective	3	NUTG 600 MS Thesis <sup>1</sup>	3
NUTG 300 MS Research	3	** Elective	3
Total Credits		9	9

**Total (Minimum) Credit Hours = 43-44**

\*Course may be selected from Introduction to Statistical Methods (HUDE-205), Statistics I (PSYC-207), or Biostatistics (BIOG - 430).

\*\*Courses may be selected from Dietetics & Nutrition Education (NUTG 350), Nutrition in Aging (NUTG 208) or any other NUTG course after consulting with your advisor.

+ Core courses.

<sup>1</sup>MS Thesis can only be taken after admission to candidacy. The course must be taken in consultation with a thesis advisor.

**Note:** Students are required to apply for the Comprehensive Examination. Comprehensive Examination is graded as PASS or FAIL

**Academic Program Leading to the Master of Science Degree  
(Community Nutrition Emphasis)  
Program Scheme**

**YEAR ONE**

<u><b>Fall Semester</b></u>		<u><b>Spring Semester</b></u>	
NUTG 310 Graduate Seminar in Nutrition	1	*Statistics I or Biostatistics	3/4
+NUTG 516 Macronutrients I	4	NUTG 503 Nutrition Policy	3
+NUTG 284 Community Nutrition	3	+NUTG 502 Health Planning and Promotion	3
+NUTG 316 Evaluation of Nutrition Status	3	+NUTG 318 Techniques in Community Nutrition	2
+NUTG 517 Micronutrients I	4		
Total Credits		15	11-12

**YEAR TWO**

<u><b>Fall Semester</b></u>		<u><b>Spring Semester</b></u>	
NUTG 301 MS Research	3	NUTG 501 Global Health and Nutrition	3
NUTG 518 Nutrition Health and Disease	3	NUTG 401 MS Thesis <sup>1</sup>	3
** Elective	3	** Elective	3
Total Credits		9	9

**Total (Minimum) Credit Hours = 44-45**

\*Course may be selected from Introduction to Statistical Methods (HUDE-205), Statistics I (PSYC-207), or Biostatistics (BIOG-430)

\*\*Courses may be selected from Dietetics & Nutrition Education (NUTG 350), Nutrition in Aging (NUTG 208) or any other NUTG course after consulting with your advisor

+ Core courses.

<sup>1</sup> MS Thesis can only be taken after admission to candidacy. The course must be taken in consultation with a thesis advisor.

**Note:** Students are required to apply for the Comprehensive Examination. Comprehensive Examination is graded as PASS or FAIL



**Academic Program Leading to the Master of Science Degree  
(Coordinated Program in Dietetics Concentration)  
Program Scheme**

<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>			<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>		
NUTG-310	Graduate Seminar	1	NUTG-325	NCM I	3
NUTG-501	Adv Nutr & Hum Met	3	NUTG-410	MNT I	3
NUTG-510	Dietetics and Nutr Edu	3	NUTG-415	MNT Dry Lab I	2
NUTG-519	Food Serv Syst Mgmt	3	NUTG-521	Org & Mgm	3
NUTG-520	Prac Food Serv	1	NUTG-522	Prac Org & Mgm	1
	*Statistics	3	NUTG-318	Tech in Comm Nutr	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	

<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>			<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>		
NUTG-411	NCM II	4	NUTG-420	Practicum Comprehensive	6
NUTG-413	MNT II	3	NUTG-600	MS Thesis <sup>1</sup>	3
NUTG-418	MNT Dry Lab II	2			
NUTG-301	MS Research	1			
**NUTG-504	Health Disparities	3			
NUTG-523	Prac Community Nutr	1			
<b>Total</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	

**Total Credit Hours = 51**

\*Course may be selected from introduction to Statistical Methods (HUDE-205), Statistics I (PSYC-207), or Biostatistics (BIOG-430).

\*\*Course can be substituted with Cultural & Social Determinates of Health.

<sup>1</sup>MS Thesis can only be taken after admission to candidacy. The course must be taken in consultation with a thesis advisor.

## **Length of Time for Completion of the Master's Degree**

Students are expected to complete a master's degree within a maximum of five years from the date of initial registration in the program. Students who exceed the five-year period may be dismissed from the Graduate School. After five years, a student wishing to continue, must petition for readmission. Readmission may be considered upon fulfillment of academic conditions recommended by the Director of Graduate Studies and approved by the Executive Committee of the Graduate School, subject to the rules for readmission to the Graduate School.

A Petition for Extension of Time to Complete Degree Requirements Form can be obtained from the Director of Graduate Studies in each graduate program or from the Office of Graduate Studies in the Graduate School. The form must be filed out completely and the necessary signatures must be obtained prior to submitting it to the Graduate School. Students who are in time-to-degree status will not be allowed to register for courses or enroll at the university as a former student returning until approval is granted to continue the program of study. If approval is not granted to continue, students will receive an official program dismissal notification letter from the Graduate Dean. Note that there are specific deadline dates that the form is to be submitted to the Graduate School for review and approval:

Fall Semester Review – August 15th

Spring Semester Review – January 15<sup>th</sup>

NOTE: Students who have gone beyond five years can only petition to extend the program time for two additional academic semesters. No additional petitions will be accepted. Failure to complete the program within the designated approval time will result in an automatic dismissal.

## **Course Viability**

The Graduate School has a fundamental interest in ensuring that its graduating MS students have currency of knowledge in their fields. Therefore, the Graduate School places limits on the age of courses that can be counted toward the fulfillment of graduation requirements.

## **Course Restoration**

If a student has been granted a leave of absence or if the student's progress towards a degree has been delayed, the student may apply in writing to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee and the Dean for an exception to the foregoing limitations on course viability and course restoration. A copy of any such application must be provided to the Office of Special Student Services. Such exceptions are strongly disfavored where the courses exceed the foregoing time limitations because of the Graduate School's fundamental interest in ensuring that graduating students have currency of knowledge in their disciplines.

## **Program Scheme for Returning Master's Students**

Graduate students who take a leave of absence or otherwise interrupt their enrollment are required to follow the curriculum in effect at the time of their return to the program. The academic clock does not stop during a leave of absence. Students should review the program scheme for the master's degree (see p. 23-25), section on course restoration requirements, and the section on the length of time for completion of the master's degree.

### **Timeline and Expectations**

- 1–2 Years of Interruption: Students may resume the program, subject to any significant curriculum changes implemented during their absence.
- 3–5 Years of Interruption: Students should expect a strong likelihood of needing to restart the entire program due to course viability limits and time-to-degree limitations.
- 5 Years: Students will be required to restart the program in full, as they will have reached the maximum time to complete their degree.

NOTE: Courses older than 5 years cannot automatically count toward the degree. Students may petition to restore courses within this period by taking and passing a restoration examination administered for that purpose. Approval must be granted by the Academic Advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, Department Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

## **Enrollment in Thesis Writing Courses**

A student who has met course credit requirements but continues to use the university facilities or is actively working in person with the thesis advisor, must continue to enroll in a thesis-writing course (**MS Thesis [600 series]**) If a student has already accumulated the maximum number of hours (**six**) permitted for thesis writing courses, he/she shall register as an auditor. Thesis writing courses are to be taken only after admission to candidacy.

## **Assignment of Grades for Thesis Writing Courses**

Thesis writing courses shall be assigned a grade of satisfactory “S” or unsatisfactory “U” while the work is in progress. These grades are removed after completion of the final oral examination on the thesis.

## **Enrollment in the Semester in Which the Degree is Conferred**

A candidate for a degree must be enrolled in the Graduate School during the semester in which the degree is conferred.

## **Program of Study**

The department in which the student is enrolled shall specify the program and departmental requirements for each of its candidates. An approved Program of Study for each student must be filed with the Graduate School no later than the end of the first semester in residence. The responsibility of submitting the individualized Program of Study is that of the student. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in suspension of enrollment privileges at the University.

The Program of Study is outlined herein and available from your advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies. Please note that students admitted prior to Fall 2022, must follow the schemes provided upon admission to the Graduate Program. All students admitted after Fall 2022 are governed by the schemes outlined herein.

## **Grades and Academic Status**

- A. A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (B) is required for graduation.
- B. A student who falls below the 3.00 GPA shall be warned and informed by the Graduate School and must raise the quality point index to 3.00 in the next two terms in residence. Students failing to do so will be dismissed from the Graduate School.
- C. A student may earn no more than two grades below B, or he/she will be dismissed from the Graduate School.
- D. A student who demonstrates an inability to perform satisfactorily at the graduate level should be recommended for dismissal.

## **Transfer of Credit**

Course work taken in another graduate program may be approved for transfer up to a maximum of six credits provided the courses to be transferred were not applied to satisfy requirements for a degree. The specific courses for which these six credits may be transferred shall be determined by the Director of Graduate Studies in the major department subject to the approval of the Graduate School. Official transcripts must accompany any request for transfer of credits. Viability of transfer courses shall be governed by the rules specified above. Transfer credits are accepted only after receiving approval from the director of the Graduate Studies or in his/her absence, the DNS chairperson. This process must be completed no later than the first semester in the program,

Students currently enrolled in a program of the Graduate School who wish to seek admission to another program in the Graduate School must obtain written permission from the department in which the student is enrolled for transfer to another program. A copy of the approved document must be submitted to the Graduate School. The student must formally apply for admission into the new program. The rules on transfer of credits noted above will apply to students who desire to switch programs.

## **Foreign Language Requirement for a Master's Degree**

The Department of Nutritional Sciences does not have a foreign language requirement.

## **Thesis or its Equivalent: Committee, Document, and Defense**

The master's degree program in the Department of Nutritional Sciences requires the submission of a thesis. A member of the Nutritional Sciences Department Graduate Faculty who shall act as his/her primary advisor must supervise students preparing a required document. Said advisor must be a member of the department in which the degree will be granted. Students are advised to consult their departments concerning requirements and options, because departments, in accordance with disciplinary practices, determine acceptable projects.

The subject of the thesis or its equivalent shall be determined as early in the program as possible, preferably during the first semester of enrollment in the program. The thesis proposal must be completed by the end of the first year of matriculation in the program.

The committee for the thesis or its equivalent must consist of the thesis advisor and at least two other members, a majority of whom must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Howard University. Each member of the committee is responsible for fully reviewing and approving both the process and the final document (i.e., the thesis or its equivalent). Final approval of the thesis or its equivalent in all aspects is the responsibility of the full committee acting on behalf of the Graduate School.

### **A. The Document**

The document shall be prepared in accordance with the conventions of the discipline and shall conform to requirements of the Graduate School and the Department as specified in the Thesis and Dissertation Manual available at [Article V. General Requirements for the Master's Degree | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#)

### **B. Defense**

The candidate is required to pass a final oral examination in defense of the thesis or its equivalent. In accordance with the academic calendar of the Graduate School, the department must notify the Graduate School to schedule the examination. In scheduling the examination, the student's major department shall furnish the names of the members of the oral defense committee. The examination shall be based primarily on the research, the field of research, and related areas of study. The majority of the oral examination committee must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Howard University.

The final examination shall be open to members of the faculties of the University, and to other persons who may be invited by the candidate's major department and by the candidate.

A candidate who fails such an examination on the first try may sit for a second examination, provided that the second examination is not administered earlier than two months from the date of the first examination. Failure on the second examination will result in dismissal from the Graduate School.

## **Steps In Obtaining the MS Degree In Nutrition\***

- Attend scheduled orientations (Graduate School and Department of Nutritional Sciences)
- Obtain academic advisement by assigned graduate faculty advisor or initially by the coordinator (Director) of the Graduate Studies.
- Register online\*\*
- Attend classes and see advisor for adjustments to the course schedule.
- Submit approved Program of Study by end of first semester enrolled.
- Complete the Expository Writing Requirement.
- Submit a request during the first semester enrolled for the Transfer of Credit for graduate hours earned in other graduate programs where appropriate.
- Meet with academic advisor to discuss academic progress at least once each semester.
- Select a research advisor and develop a research topic for the thesis with the guidance of the advisor by the end of the first semester of enrollment in the program.
- Select members of the thesis committee
- Complete Responsible Conduct in Research Workshop, and the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) biomedical basic course module
- Develop research proposal by the end of the first year of matriculation in the program.
- Distribute proposal to thesis committee.
- Respond to comments from the committee.
- Give oral presentation of thesis proposal.
- Prepare final draft of thesis proposal.
- Obtain approval of thesis research proposal<sup>1</sup>
- Obtain required approval of proposal from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) for experimental animals.
- Complete comprehensive examinations
- Submit application for Admission to Candidacy to the Graduate School, on schedule\*\*
- Conduct thesis research.
- Complete course work
- File Registration for Graduation in the Graduate School on schedule\*\*

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that any changes in the proposal after its approval must be approved by the student's committee members.

- Prepare thesis.
- Distribute thesis to the thesis committee.
- Revise thesis based on comments from the committee.
- Approval of thesis by the thesis committee
- Have oral defense of thesis.
- Submit final thesis to the Graduate School by the deadline specified in the Graduate School's Graduation Deadlines\*\*
- Obtain graduation clearance.
- Graduate

\*Not listed in the order of completion

\*\*It is the student's responsibility to be aware of deadlines and complete the steps in a timely manner.

# **General Requirements for The Doctor of Philosophy Degree**

## **Admissions to Graduate Studies in the Department of Nutritional Sciences**

A committee of faculty will review and recommend all candidates seeking admission into the programs. On emergency bases, the director of graduate studies may set up an ad hoc committee of no less than three faculty members to review and recommend candidates for admission.

### **A. Residency**

A minimum of six (6) credit hours per semester constitutes residency. A student must be in residence in the Graduate School for at least four (4) semesters to be recommended for a degree. Credits transferred from other accredited graduate institutions may not be used to meet the residency requirement.

### **B. Minimum Credit Requirements**

The minimum course credit for the degree is seventy-two (72) graduate credits (inclusive of dissertation) beyond the bachelor's degree. However, departments may require credits more than this amount, and various factors may result in a student's taking more than the minimum number of credit hours prior to satisfactorily completing the degree requirements. No more than twelve (12) credits in dissertation writing courses may count towards the requirements for the degree. The completion of minimum course requirements or credit does not guarantee receipt of the degree. In the Department of Nutritional Sciences the minimum, course credits for the degree are seventy-four (74-75) credits.

### **Qualifying Examinations**

All students enrolled in the PhD Program in Nutrition must successfully complete a qualifying examination in nutrition. The qualifying examination will be administered to PhD students at the end of their second semester in the program. Students that score less than 80% in the examination will be required to take remedial courses to strengthen their background in sciences of nutrition (including but not limited to macronutrient, micronutrient, community nutrition, evaluation of nutritional status, advanced physiology and or biochemistry.)

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

All students are required to take a comprehensive examination administered by the Graduate Faculty of the department in which the student is enrolled. The examination should be taken prior to submission of the application to candidacy, and after the student has taken the core courses in nutrition. A separate examination is given for each nutrition course taken by the student. The comprehensive examination will be administered to all students in the graduate



program once a semester. PhD students should take the examination while earning his/her first forty-eight (48) credits towards the PhD degree, or as required by the department concerned. Students must consult their departments for specific information on the examination(s).

Students must consult their departments for specific information on the examination(s). **As of Fall 2022, the examination is competence-based and encompasses acquired knowledge and skills from each nutrition core course taken by the student.** A passing score of eighty percent (80%) on each examination is required. The Comprehensive Examination will be administered on the last Monday and Wednesday of **October** (Fall) and **March** (Spring)

The comprehensive examination is intended to evaluate the candidate knowledge of advanced nutrition and research in the following areas:

**1. Theory**

Test knowledge fundamentals of nutrition, nutrition evaluation, metabolism of nutrients, community nutrition, and nutrition policy.

**2. Application**

Application of nutrition to research and human development. Statistical principles and application.

Students must complete the Comprehensive Examination Eligibility Form and receive formal approval from the Director of Graduate Studies. Eligibility requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 and completion of all required core Nutritional Science courses specified in the program scheme. Refer to page 38 for the list of core courses. Once approved, students will be enrolled in the comprehensive examination Canvas course site. Comprehensive examinations will be administered electronically in person over a maximum of two days. The examination will not exceed 8 hours per day with two fifteen (15)-minute breaks, and one thirty (30) - minute break for each examination day. The student must complete an ongoing examination and log out of the examination portal before each break.

- A student or candidate would have completed all required core nutritional science courses specified in the emphasis scheme, excluding thesis and dissertation before taking the comprehensive examination.
- The comprehensive examination will be administered in the Fall and Spring semesters.
- The comprehensive examination has a mandatory written section. Two unsuccessful attempts at the examination will result in expulsion from the program.
- The examination will be administered by the office of the director of graduate studies or in the absence of the former, by the office of the department chairperson in coordination with the director of graduate studies.

- The examination will be evaluated within four (4) weeks. A formal notification of the outcome will be issued to the student and their advisor and the department chairperson.
- Results of the examination will be uploaded to the student's record on Bison Hub by the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chairperson.
- For unsuccessful attempts, a grading rubric will be made available to the student. Review of the examination is not permitted under any circumstances.

Comprehensive examination must be offered at both master's and PhD levels, and the PhD comprehensive examination is separate from the master's examination. The master's comprehensive examination does not substitute for the PhD comprehensive examination. Therefore, in cases where nutrition courses were completed and assessed at the master's level at Howard University and subsequently transferred to the PhD program, these areas of competence will be retested in the PhD comprehensive examination. If a student transfers a core course from their Howard University master's program into the PhD program, they must still take the corresponding PhD comprehensive examination. Students who believe they already possess the requisite knowledge may request to test out. In such cases, the student will take a test to determine competency. Students who pass the test become eligible to take the comprehensive examination for the related course without retaking it. Students who do not pass must retake the course before becoming eligible to sit for the comprehensive examination.

A candidate who fails the examination on the first try may sit for a second examination. Once an examination has started, it is considered an attempt. Failure (including an attempt) on the second examination will result in dismissal from the Graduate School. There are no exceptions.

## **Core Course Requirement & Substitution**

All core courses for the graduate program must be completed at Howard University. Substitutions are permitted only in documented extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. The substituted course must be equivalent in content, competencies, and learning objectives to the department's core course. It is the student's responsibility to identify the equivalent course through a consortium institution and submit a formal written request to the Director of Graduate Studies for review, which includes examining the course syllabus, competencies, and assessment methods. Approval of any substitutions must come from the Director of Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, and the Graduate School. Students with approved substitutions must still take and pass the corresponding comprehensive examination offered by the Department of Nutritional Sciences.

## Admission to Candidacy

Admission to the PhD program does not automatically admit a student to candidacy for the PhD degree. A student shall be admitted to candidacy upon completion of most requirements for the PhD degree, except the dissertation.

A PhD student can be admitted to candidacy upon meeting the following requirements:

1. Submit an admission to candidacy form available from your adviser or the
2. Director of Graduate Studies. It must include a list of graduate courses completed, those in process, and those courses in the field yet to be completed.
3. Pass all the required core courses.
4. Pass the comprehensive examination administered by the department.
5. Demonstrate proficiency in expository writing in addition to satisfying the RCR requirement as described in Other Requirements for the Degree.
6. Pass the foreign language examination or fulfill the approved substitute (where applicable)
7. Secure the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional
8. Biosafety Committee (IBC), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or other institutional committees as required for the research project.
9. Receive approval of a dissertation topic via a process determined by the advisory committee in the major department. A copy of the approved dissertation proposal must accompany the request for the admission to candidacy.
10. Receive the endorsement of the advisory committee in the major department.
11. Receive the approval of the Graduate School.

Admission to candidacy must be achieved at least one semester **prior to** that in which the student expects to receive the degree.

Candidacy for the PhD degree shall be valid for no more than five academic years. Any student seeking renewal of candidacy must apply to the Graduate School through the department for readmission. The department in which the student is seeking the degree shall determine the conditions under which the student may be reinstated, subject to approval of the Graduate School.

**The responsibility for fulfilling these requirements is that of the student.** Students should consult the Director of Graduate Studies in their department if in doubt as to any of the requirements. Students should carefully note the specific requirements of their departments relative to admission to candidacy and regard them as additional to these general requirements.

## **General Candidacy Requirements**

- A. Students must meet with their PhD advisor to review the candidacy application before submitting to the director of graduate studies for review and applying for candidacy to the graduate school.
- B. The Advisor will present the candidate to the rest of the committee members for a vote to ensure that the applicant has met the requirements to move forward with the submission of the candidacy application to the Graduate School.
- C. The completed application will have a copy of an unofficial transcripts, a certificate of passing the comprehensive examination, signed forms required by the graduate school, and a copy of the approved IRB or IACUC application, and approved thesis/dissertation proposal.
- D. The credentials of all prospective candidates must be presented by the advisor to the Department of Nutritional Sciences (DNS) director of graduate studies to the faculty for approval for a student to advance to candidacy. This will occur upon notification of intent to file an application for candidacy by the student's advisor. All faculty must approve the credentials for the prospective candidate to proceed to candidacy.
- E. All graduate DNS requirements must be fulfilled before a candidacy application may be filed with the graduate school.
- F. Application filed prematurely without approval by the faculty must be withdrawn by the student's advisor upon request by faculty majority vote.

## **Credits and Course recertification**

Credit may not be granted for required core courses in the graduate degree disciplines if the course is:

- More than seven (7) years old for the PhD degree.

Courses that do not meet the stated stipulations must be retaken. Only courses taken and recertified at Howard University may be considered for satisfying candidacy requirement.

## **Presentation and Publication requirements**

Effective Fall of 2024, all graduate students in the department of Nutritional Sciences in collaboration with their research advisor must present at least one poster or oral presentation of their original research at a professional meeting of their choosing before graduation. Also,

it is expected that doctoral students will submit a minimum of one manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal before graduation.

## Dissertation Requirements

All dissertations must have primary research component. Dissertations will not be approved by DNS faculty that have no primary research component. **Example**, the use of NHANES data although permitted, must be accompanied by a community or experimental-based primary study that augments or supports the former study. **Primary research component means, a study in which the author generates the study data themselves.**

## Advisor Selection

- A) All new entrants to the DNS graduate program must elect an advisor no later than the end of their first semester in the program.
- B) Students in the PhD degree program are encouraged to complete their research proposal no later than their fourth semester in the program.

## Expository Writing Requirements

Expository writing requirements can be fulfilled through the online program suggested by the Graduate School. The program can be accessed via: [McGraw Hill Connect Expository Writing](#). **Successful completion of the Expository Writing Examination remains valid for a period of 5 years; after 5 years, a student must either request an exemption from the Expository Writing Examination or re-engage the department's Expository Writing Examination process.** Additional details can be found on the Graduate School website: [Article IV. Other Requirements for the Degree | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#). All graduate students are expected to attend a mandatory writing seminar sponsored by the Department of Nutritional Sciences. The date for the seminar will be announced each semester by the seminar coordinator.

## Course Requirements

The Department of Nutritional Sciences offers the PhD degree in Nutrition with two emphases. The emphases are (1) Community Nutrition and (2) Experimental Nutrition. Students must have a master's degree from an accredited institution to enter the Doctoral Program in Nutrition.

Students who have demonstrated excellence in their undergraduate work and in advance standing as determined by the department of nutritional sciences may be admitted to the PhD program.

Course requirements for both emphases of the PhD degree appear below. Please note that students admitted prior to Fall 2022, must follow the schemes in force at the time of admission into the Graduate Program. All students admitted after Fall 2022 are governed by the schemes outlined herein.

**PhD IN COMMUNITY NUTRITION (30 credits)**

- Micronutrients I and II (8)
- Macronutrients I and II (8)
- Community Nutrition (3)
- Evaluation of Nutritional Status (3)
- Techniques in Community Nutrition (2)
- Nutrition in Health and Disease\*\*\* (3)
- Health Planning and Promotion\*\*\* (3)

**PhD IN EXPERIMENTAL NUTRITION (29 credits)**

- Micronutrients I and II (8)
- Macronutrients I and II (8)
- Research Methods in Experimental (4)
- Evaluation of Nutritional Status (3)
- Community Nutrition (3)
- Nutrition in Health and Disease\*\*\* (3)

\*\*\* Core course pending approval

**Academic Program Leading to the Doctor of Philosophy Degree  
(Experimental Nutrition Emphasis)  
Program Scheme**

**YEAR ONE**

<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>		<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
NUTG 310 Graduate Seminar in Nutrition	1	NUTG 311 Graduate Seminar in Nutrition	1
*Statistics I	3	CHEM 251 Biochemistry I	3
+NUTG 319 Research Method Exp Nutrition	4	BIOC 203 Biochemistry Lab	3
	4	+NUTG 526 Macronutrients II	4
+NUTG 516 Macronutrients I	4	+NUTG 527 Micronutrients II	4
+NUTG 517 Micronutrients I			
Total Credits		16	15

**YEAR TWO**

<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>		<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
NUTG 400 PhD Research	3	CHEM 252 Biochemistry II	3
+NUTG 518 Nutrition Health and Disease	3	*Statistics II	3
+NUTG 284 Community Nutrition	3	**Elective	3
+NUTG 316 Evaluation of Nutritional Status	3	**Elective	3
Total Credits		12	12

**YEAR THREE**

<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>		<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
NUTG 400 PhD Research	3	NUTG 700 PhD Dissertation <sup>1</sup>	3
BIOL 441-Endocrinology Lecture/Lab	4	** Elective	3
*** Epidemiology	4	****Elective	3
Total Credits		11	9

**Total (Minimum) Credit Hours=75**

\*Course may be selected from Introduction to Statistical Methods (HUDE-205), Statistics I (PSYC-207), or Biostatistics (BIOG-430).

\*\*Courses may be selected from Dietetics & Nutrition Education (NUTG 350), Nutrition in Aging (NUTG 208), Nutrition Policy (NUTG 503), Global Health and Nutrition (NUTG 501) or any other NUTG course after consulting with your advisor.

\*\*\*Epidemiology in consortium

\*\*\*\* Course may be selected from Health and Communication of African American (CCMS 730), Qualitative Research (CCMS 702), Advanced Qualitative (CCMS 716), Health Comm and Culture

(CCMS 718), Health Comm (CCMS 728), Intercultural Communication (CCNS 726) or any other that aligns with your interest after consulting with your advisor.

+ Core courses.

<sup>1</sup>PhD Dissertation can only be taken after admission to candidacy. The course must be taken in consultation with a dissertation advisor.

**Note:** Students are required to apply for the Comprehensive Examination. Comprehensive Examination is graded as PASS or FAIL.



**Academic Program Leading to the Doctor of Philosophy Degree  
(Community Nutrition Emphasis)  
Program Scheme**

**YEAR ONE**

<u>Fall Semester</u>		<u>Spring Semester</u>	
NUTG 310 Graduate Seminar in Nutrition	1	NUTG 311 Graduate Seminar in Nutrition	1
+NUTG 516 Macronutrients I	4	+NUTG 502 Health Planning and Promotion	3
+NUTG 284 Community Nutrition	3	+NUTG 526 Macronutrients II	4
*Statistics I	3	+NUTG 527 Micronutrients II	4
+NUTG 517 Micronutrients I	4	+NUTG 318 Techniques in Community Nutrition	2
Total Credits		14	

**YEAR TWO**

<u>Fall Semester</u>		<u>Spring Semester</u>	
NUTG 316 Evaluation of Nutrition Status	3	NUTG 501 Global Health and Nutrition	3
+NUTG 518 Nutrition Health and Disease	3	NUTG 503 Nutrition Policy	3
NUTG 400 PhD Research	3	*Statistics II	3
**** Elective	3		
Total Credits		9	

**YEAR THREE**

<u>Fall Semester</u>		<u>Spring Semester</u>	
NUTG 400 PhD Research	3	NUTG 700 PhD Dissertation <sup>1</sup>	3
** Elective	3	* Elective	3
*** Epidemiology	3	**Elective	3
****Elective	3	****Elective	3
Total Credits		12	

**Total (Minimum) Credit Hours = 74**

\*\*\*\* Course may be selected from Health and Communication of African American (CCMS 730), Qualitative Research (CCMS 702), Advanced Qualitative (CCMS 716), Health Comm and Culture (CCMS 718), Health Comm (CCMS 728), Intercultural Communication (CCNS 726)

\*\*\*Epidemiology in consortium

\*\*Courses may be selected from Dietetics & Nutrition Education (NUTG 350), Nutrition in Aging (NUTG 208)

\*Course may be selected from Introduction to Statistical Methods (HUDE-205), Statistics I (PSYC-207), or Biostatistics (BIOG-430)

+ Core courses.

<sup>1</sup>PhD Dissertation can only be taken after admission to candidacy. The course must be taken in consultation with a dissertation advisor.

Students are required to register for NUTG 710 Comprehensive Examination.

Comprehensive Examination is graded as PASS or FAIL.

## Length of Time for Completion of the PhD Degree

Students are expected to complete a PhD degree within a maximum of seven (7) years from the date of initial registration in the program. A student who exceeds this period may be dismissed. After seven years, students must petition for readmission and may be readmitted only upon fulfillment of conditions recommended by the departmental Committee on Graduate Studies and approved by the Executive Committee of the Graduate School, subject to the rules for readmission to the Graduate School.

An electronic Petition for Extension of Time to Complete Degree Requirements Form must be completed and approved by the student's academic advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, program/department Chair, and the Executive Committee of the Graduate School. The petition and supporting documents must be filled out completely and the necessary signatures must be obtained prior to submitting the petition to the Graduate School. The petition can be located on the Graduate School's Website ([gs.howard.edu](http://gs.howard.edu)). Petitions that are not signed **will not** be accepted.

NOTE: Students must consult with their academic advisor to determine the feasibility of completing the program and any outstanding program requirements within the two extended academic terms allowed by the petition if approved.

Students who are in time-to-degree status seven years will not be allowed to register for courses or enroll at the university as a former student returning prior to receiving approval of the petition to extend the program of study submitted to the executive committee of the Graduate School. Students who are attempting to apply as a former student returning and who have not been enrolled in a program of study beyond seven years will not be eligible to petition to extend their program.

NOTE: Students approaching the end of the seven-year time to degree period are strongly encouraged to petition to extend their program of study.

If approval is not granted to continue the program of study, students will receive an official program dismissal notification letter from the Graduate Dean. Note that there are specific deadline dates that the petition form is to be submitted to the Graduate School for review and approval:

Fall Semester Review – August 15th

Spring Semester Review – January 15th

NOTE: Students who have gone beyond seven years can only petition to extend the program time for two additional academic semesters. No additional petitions will be accepted. Failure to complete the program within the designated approval time will result in an automatic dismissal.

## **Course Viability**

The Graduate School has a fundamental interest in ensuring that its graduating PhD students have currency of knowledge in their fields. Therefore, the Graduate School places limits on the age of courses that can be counted toward the fulfillment of graduation requirements.

## **Course Restoration**

Credit for courses pursued 5-7 years prior to the term in which the students present themselves the final oral examination can be counted toward the fulfillment of degree requirements only if they are restored as described in this paragraph with the approval of the departmental Committee on Graduate Studies (or its equivalent by not by a single faculty member or program director) and the Graduate Dean. For a course to be restored under this paragraph, the student must pass an examination administered expressly for the purpose of restoration of credits in the course concerned in the field in which the course falls.

If a student has been granted a leave of absence on account of childbirth, adoption, illness, caring for incapacitated dependents, disability, military service, or similar circumstances or if the student's progress toward a degree has been delayed as a result of such conditions or circumstances but without the need for a leave of absence, the student may apply in writing to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee and the Dean for an exception to the foregoing limitations on course viability and course restoration. A copy of any such application must be provided to the Office of Special Student Services. Such exceptions are strongly disfavored where the courses exceed the foregoing time limitations because of the Graduate School's fundamental interest in ensuring that graduating students have currency of knowledge in their disciplines.

## **Program Scheme for Returning PhD Students**

PhD students who take a leave of absence or otherwise interrupt their enrollment are required to follow the curriculum in effect at the time of their return to the program. The academic clock does not stop during a leave of absence. Students should consult the PhD program scheme (see p. 39-41) as well as the section on course restoration requirements, and length of time for completion of the PhD degree section.

### **Timeline and Expectations**

- 1–3 Years of Interruption: Students may resume the program, subject to any significant curriculum changes implemented during their absence.
- 4–6 Years of Interruption: Students should expect a strong likelihood of needing to retake courses or restart major portions of the program due to course viability requirements and time-to-degree limitations.
- 7 Years: Students will be required to restart the PhD program in full, as they will have reached the maximum time to complete their degree.

NOTE: Courses older than 7 years cannot automatically count toward the degree. Students may petition to restore courses within this period by taking and passing a restoration

examination administered for that purpose. Approval must be granted by the Academic Advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, Department Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **Enrollment in Dissertation Writing Courses**

A student is not permitted to register for dissertation writing courses [PhD Dissertation, seven hundred (700) series] until he or she has been admitted to candidacy. A student who is using the University facilities or is conferring in person with the dissertation advisor must continue to enroll in a dissertation writing course. **The student must register as an auditor if he/she has already accumulated the maximum number of hours permitted for dissertation writing courses (12 credit hours).**

### **Assignment of Grades for Dissertation Research Courses**

Dissertation research courses will be assigned a grade of satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U), while the work is in progress. The “S” or “U” grades will be removed upon successful passage of the final oral examination for the dissertation.

Enrollment in the Terminal Semester

A degree candidate must be registered for at least one graduate credit hour during the semester in which the degree is conferred.

### **Grades and Academic Status**

A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 (B) is required for graduation. A PhD student will be permitted only two grades below B and will be dismissed after he/she receives a third grade below B. Grades below B earned at the master’s level at Howard University or elsewhere are not included in this count; the reference here is to grades below B in PhD course work done at Howard University.

A student who falls below 3.00 GPA will be given due notice by the Graduate School that he/she must raise his/her quality point index to 3.00 in the next two terms in residence. Students failing to do so will be dismissed from the Graduate School. A student who demonstrates an inability to perform satisfactorily at the graduate level may be recommended for dismissal.

### **Program of Study**

Each department in which the student is enrolled shall specify the programs and the requirements for each matriculating degree student. An approved Program of Study for each student must be filed with the Graduate School no later than the end of the first semester in residence. The responsibility of submitting the individualized Program of Study is that of the

student. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in suspension of enrollment privileges at the University.

The Program of Study is outlined herein and available from your adviser or the Director of Graduate Studies. Please note that students admitted prior to Fall 2022, must follow the schemes provided upon admission to the Graduate Program. All students admitted after Fall 2022 are governed by the schemes outlined herein.

### **Transfer of Credit to the PhD Degree**

Students holding a bachelor's degree who were admitted directly into the PhD program may, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, transfer a maximum of eighteen (18) semester credit hours of graduate credits with a grade of B or better into the PhD program. Students holding a master's degree from a recognized accredited institution, or an equivalent international institution may transfer no more than twenty-four (24) graduate course credits with a grade of B or better into the PhD program, dependent upon approval of the Committee on Graduate Studies in the major department. Official transcripts must accompany any request for transfer of credits. Transfer credits are accepted only after receiving approval from the director of the Graduate Studies or in his/her absence, the DNS chairperson. This process must be completed no later than the first semester in the program,

Students currently enrolled in a program of the Graduate School who wish to seek admission to another program in the Graduate School must obtain written permission from the department in which the student is enrolled for transfer to another program. A copy of the approved document must be submitted to the Graduate School. The student must formally apply for admission into the new program. The rules on transfer of credits noted above will apply to students who desire to switch programs.

### **Foreign Language Requirement**

The Department of Nutritional Sciences does not have a foreign language requirement.

### **Dissertation Proposal, Committee, Document, and Defense**

PhD programs require the submission of a dissertation in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree. A member of the Graduate Faculty who shall act as the student's advisor must supervise students preparing the dissertation document. Said advisor must be a member of the department in which the degree will be granted. Students are advised to consult their departments concerning requirements.

## **A. Dissertation Proposal**

The subject of the dissertation shall be determined as early in the program as possible, preferably during the first semester of enrollment in the program. The proposal must be completed by the end of the fourth semester of matriculation in the program. As a condition for admission to candidacy, the student must present an approved proposal for his/her doctoral dissertation research as authorized by his/her advisor and members of the dissertation committee.

The proposal should include an outline of the proposed research including the nature, scope, and significance of the problem, the theory, methodology, and a tentative title. A copy of the approved dissertation proposal must accompany the admission to candidacy form submitted to the Graduate School. The proposal and candidacy application must be approved by at least four members of the Graduate Faculty with a majority of members from the department.

## **B. Dissertation Committee**

The dissertation committee must consist of the dissertation primary advisor from the Department of Nutritional Sciences. The majority of the official four (4) dissertation committee members must come from the Department of Nutritional Sciences Graduate Faculty, and an external member of comparable stature as determined by the Director of Graduate Studies (at least one publication in a peer-reviewed journal within the past five years). Each member of the committee is responsible for fully reviewing and approving both the process and the final dissertation document. Final approval of the dissertation, in all aspects, is the responsibility of the full dissertation committee acting on behalf of the Graduate School.

## **C. Dissertation Document**

The candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree is required to present a dissertation, which is the result of significant and sustained research in his/her discipline. The student must demonstrate ability to organize and effectively present the findings and results of his/her research. When completed, it is expected that such research will make a meritorious contribution to the field of knowledge.

The document shall be prepared in accordance with the conventions of the discipline and shall conform to requirements of the Graduate School and the Department as specified in the Thesis and Dissertation Manual available at [Article VI. General Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy Degree | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#)

#### **D. Final Oral Examination and Defense of the Dissertation**

The candidate shall be required to pass a final oral examination in defense of the dissertation. The examination shall be based primarily on his/her research, the field of his/her research, and related areas of study.

The oral examination committee shall consist of a minimum of five members, four of whom must be current members of the Graduate Faculty at Howard University, and at least one of whom shall be from outside the University and be of comparable stature. Upon the recommendation of the advisory committee in the department where the degree is earned, the Dean of the Graduate School shall appoint members of the oral examination committee.

The process for the conduct of the final oral examination shall be as follows:

1. The advisory committee in the major department shall request permission from the Graduate School to conduct an oral examination, adhering to the published deadlines. A copy of the approved candidacy form must accompany the request. Currency of courses as stipulated in **Course Viability** must be established and affirmed in the memorandum to request the scheduling of an oral examination.
2. The advisory committee in the department shall submit to the Dean a list of recommended examiners. The Dean of the Graduate School or designee shall appoint an examination committee and shall notify each member of the committee of the date, time, and place of the examination.
3. The Dean and Associate/Assistant Deans of the Graduate School shall be ex-officio members of all oral examination committees.
4. The final oral examination shall be open to members of the faculty of the University, and to other persons whom the candidate's major department or the candidate may invite. Final approval of the dissertation in all aspects is the responsibility of the full committee acting on behalf of the Graduate School.

A candidate who fails the oral examination on the first try may sit for a second examination, provided that the second examination is not administered earlier than two months from the date of the first examination. Failure on the second examination will result in dismissal from the Graduate School. A student dismissed for this reason will not be readmitted to the Graduate School.

A department can recommend dismissal of a student who, after failing the dissertation oral defense the first time, does not resubmit the dissertation and present himself/herself for reexamination within a six-month period.

## Steps In Obtaining the PhD Degree in Nutrition\*

- Attend scheduled orientations (Graduate School and Department of Nutritional Sciences)
- Obtain academic advisement initially by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies and graduate faculty members.
- Register online\*\*
- Attend classes and see advisor for adjustments to the course schedule.
- Submit approved Program of Study by end of first semester enrolled.
- Complete the Expository Writing Requirement
- Submit a request during the first semester enrolled for the Transfer of Credit for graduate hours earned in other graduate programs where appropriate.
- Meet with academic advisor to discuss academic progress at least once each semester.
- Complete required nutrition courses
- Select a research advisor and develop a research topic for the dissertation with the guidance of the advisor by the end of the first semester of enrollment in the program.
- Select members of the dissertation research committee
- Complete Responsible Conduct in Research Workshop, and the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) biomedical basic course module
- Develop research proposal by the end of the third semester of matriculation in the program.
- Distribute proposal to dissertation research committee.
- Respond to comments from the committee.
- Give oral presentation of the dissertation research proposal.
- Prepare final draft of the dissertation research proposal.
- Obtain approval of the dissertation research proposal<sup>2</sup>
- Obtain required approval of proposal from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) for experimental animals\*\*
- Complete comprehensive examinations
- Submit application for Admission to Candidacy in the Graduate School, on schedule by the semester before graduation.\*\*
- Conduct dissertation research.
- Complete course work
- File Registration for Graduation in the Graduate School, on schedule\*\*
- Prepare dissertation.
- Distribute dissertation to the dissertation research committee.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that any changes in the proposal after its approval must be approved by the student's committee members.



- Revise dissertation based on comments from the committee.
- Approval of dissertation by the dissertation research committee
- Have oral defense of dissertation in the Graduate School
- Submit final thesis to the Graduate School by the deadline specified in the Graduate School's Graduation Deadlines
- Obtain graduation clearance.
- Graduate

\*Not listed in the order of completion

\*\* It is the student's responsibility to be aware of deadlines and complete the steps in a timely manner.

# **Policy and Procedures for Admission and Retention in The PhD Program in Nutrition for Students Entering with The BS Degree**

## **Admission**

Applicants must apply to and meet the requirements (GRE, TOEFL etc.) for admission to the Graduate School and the minimum requirements of the Department for entering the Graduate Program in Nutrition. Additional minimum requirements for admission into the PhD Program for recipients of a baccalaureate degree only include having nutrition as an undergraduate major; a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale; a science (including nutrition) GPA of 3.8, and documentation of research competency.

## **Retention**

The progress of students in the B.S./PhD track will be closely monitored by the student's advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the Department Chairperson. Retention will be based on maintaining a cumulative GPA of at least 3.2 [minimum of nine (9) credit hours per semester] and abiding by the rules and regulations of the Department and the Graduate School. Students must comply with the terms of the contract signed upon admission. Course requirements are the same as those specified above for the PhD degree.

## **Graduate School Master's in Passing (MIP) Requirement**

The Department of Nutritional Sciences may grant the Master's-In-Passing to students in the doctoral program who have met the stipulations of the Graduate School. There is no difference between a master's degree awarded "in passing" and a regular master's degree. Both degrees appear on the transcript as an MS degree. Students who elect to exit the PhD program may request a Master's-in-Passing degree if they have fulfilled all the requirements for the master's degree. Students who decide to end their matriculation in the PhD program after earning the Master's-In-Passing must reapply to the PhD program should they choose to be readmitted.

Students that request the "Master's-in-Passing" award must complete thirty (30) credit hours of required core courses, six (6) credit hours of elective courses, and at least three (3) credit hours of PhD dissertation coursework. Meeting the program's cumulative GPA requirement and being in good academic standing as outlined in The Graduate School's "Rules and Regulations," complete a written master's thesis, and a successful oral defense of the thesis before a three-member committee is requirements. The MS thesis must be a scholarly presentation of original research that is defended as partial fulfillment of requirements for the Master's-in-passing degree.

Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the Master's-In-Passing in Nutritional Sciences:

- Students must have a faculty advisor to be eligible for the Master's-in-passing.
- Students who have already earned the master's degree at another institution and have transferred twenty-four (24) credit hours to their PhD program must earn, minimally, eighteen (18) credit hours at Howard University before being eligible for a second master's degree.
- Students can petition for the master's-in-passing after they have successfully completed all core courses and/or earned thirty (30) credit hours (18 of which have been earned at Howard University) and after they have passed comprehensive exams at the master's or PhD level.
- Students must have an approved program of study from the doctoral program on file, and that program of study must confirm that the master's degree requirements have been met.
- Students seeking to earn the master's-in-passing must be awarded the master's degree no later than 5 years after being admitted to the PhD program.
- Students who leave the PhD program may request a terminal master's degree if they have fulfilled all the requirements for the master's degree.
- Students who opt to end their matriculation in the PhD program after earning the master's- in-passing must reapply to the PhD program for consideration to be readmitted.

The Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chairperson in the absence of the Director of Graduate Studies determining if all course requirements for the proposed degree have been met, as indicated in the M.S. coursework plan. PhD students who wish to be awarded the Master's-In-Passing and have met the requirements stipulated must:

- A. Complete the form requesting a Master's-In-Passing.
- B. Submit the Master's-In-Passing form to the faculty advisor, graduate program director, and department chair for approval.
- C. Upon approval by the principals, submit the Master's-In-Passing form to the Graduate School for processing.

The master's degree will be awarded at the end of the semester in accordance with Howard University graduation policies and procedures<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>Adopted from the Graduate School Master's in Passing Policy.

## **Policy On Transition from Master's (MS) To Doctoral (PhD) Without Completing the Master's Degree**

- Student seeking to transition from MS to PhD program must apply formally for admission to the PhD program as a first-time applicant. All Graduate School requirements apply.
- The student must formally withdraw from the MS program at the end of the last semester that the student is registered in the MS program.
- Only six (6) credits will be eligible for transfer to the PhD program for students that have not completed the MS requirement and graduated.

## **Other Requirements for The Degree (Master's And PhD)**

In addition to departmental requirements for the degree, **all** graduate students must demonstrate competency in the English language and pay all degree fees. All graduate students must participate satisfactorily in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) workshop or equivalent.

### **Responsible Conduct of Research**

Effective Fall 2018, the Graduate School will require a half day Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) workshop for all master's and doctoral students matriculating in the Graduate School. In addition, graduate students will continue to be responsible for the research ethics training completed through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) on-line course available at [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org). The CITI on-line course also includes an RCR training component that will be used to govern certification along with participation and completion of the workshop. A registration fee is not required to take the on-line course with the organization affiliation identified as the Howard University Medical Center.

The Office of Research and Regulatory Affairs and the Graduate School now mandate half day workshop on CITI and on-line course with the RCR Module. Any graduate student who has not been advanced to candidacy by the published deadline, will be required to present these certifications when applying for IRB and candidacy advancement approvals. [There will not be any exceptions.](#)

The CITI on-line course includes core topics and federal regulation guidelines that oversee the practice of responsible and ethical research projects. All participants who successfully complete the CITI on-line course with the RCR Module will receive an immediate score report. Each on-line participant should print and retain the score report as proof of RCR training certification. The RCR workshop is a onetime participation requirement.

Also, effective immediately, all graduate students seeking to advance to candidacy must include a copy of the CITI on-line score report, with the RCR Module, to fulfill the certification requirement.

## **Advisement Policies**

### **Academic and Research Advisement**

Initially, the Director of Graduate Studies academically advise graduate students. Once the student has a faculty research advisor to direct his or her thesis/dissertation research, this selected advisor serves as the academic advisor.

Graduate students should meet with their advisors at least once each semester to have courses approved prior to registration. This meeting also helps the advisor to monitor academic progress to ensure the success of graduate students. The Director of Graduate Studies is always available to advise graduate students.

## **Appeal of Academic Decisions**

Grievance procedures, as detailed under the “Policy on Student Academic Procedures” in The Student Reference Manual, the H-Book and other University publications, are applicable in the case of challenges to academic decisions. The procedure approved by the Board of Trustees on April 23, 1994, is as follows:

### **The Informal Process**

- A. A student who believes that he/she has been aggrieved must first attempt to seek an informal resolution with the other party involved in the dispute, e.g., a grade dispute with the instructor.
- B. If the student is unable to resolve the dispute with the primary party of the dispute, then the student is advised to seek the intervention of his or her departmental chairperson.
- C. All disputes, which are not resolved at the departmental level, are then brought to the Dean’s Office, whereupon the Dean or his/her designee will seek to reach an informal resolution through mediation between the parties.
- D. If mediation at the Dean’s level fails, then the student’s grievance is consigned to the committee designated by the school/college to address student grievances herein referred to as the Student Grievance Committee.

## **The Formal Process**

- A. Student grievances, which are consigned to the Student Grievance Committee, must be specified in writing by the student and given to the Dean or his/her designee.
- B. The student's written statement, along with supportive evidence, constitutes a case document, which will be submitted to each member of the committee.
- C. The second party to the dispute is also requested to provide to the office of the Dean with his or her written account of the matter in dispute, which becomes a part of the case document that is forwarded to each member of the committee.
- D. The Student Grievance Committee is then required to set a date for convening a meeting to hear the case as expeditiously as possible.
- E. After the date has been set, each party to the dispute is sent a certified letter, which informs him or her of the charges, and date of the meeting as well as a statement requesting his or her presence.
- F. During the hearing, the student presents his/her case; after, the accused party is allowed to present the other side. Each side is permitted to have witnesses.
- G. Following the hearing, members of the committee after deliberation on their assessment of the case reach a decision as to how the case should be resolved.
- H. The committee's decision is sent to the Dean of the Graduate School in the form of a recommendation.
- I. The Dean then informs the student in writing of the decision, which may be based upon the committee's recommendation or upon a modification of it.

## **Registration for Graduation**

### **M.S. and PhD Students**

All prospective graduates are required to complete Registration for Graduation online the semester in which they intend to graduate. All students must be financially enrolled for at least one credit hour in the semester in which they graduate.

## **Research Proposal Presentations**

Each graduate student (MS or PhD) is required to make an oral presentation of his or her proposal prior to its approval. The oral presentation is scheduled by the director of Graduate

Studies after review by the members of the Thesis Committee (in the case of an MS student) or the Doctoral Dissertation Committee in Nutrition (in the case of a PhD student). Committee members must give approval for the oral presentation. Attendance of the oral presentation is open to all persons desirous of attending.

## Financial Aid

Financial support for graduate studies is available through a variety of graduate and research assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and tuition scholarships based on merit. Loans, college work-study, and Howard University Student Employment Program work-study assistance is granted based on need. The Graduate Schools' goal is to attempt to meet the financial need of graduate students by utilizing financial resources from all sources in ways which assist the student in achieving a quality education.

The Graduate School Administers the Following Forms of Support Programs:

### New Students

- **Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Assistantship** is awarded to new PhD students who wish to pursue a degree in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. The award package includes tuition and a stipend of \$24,000 for the academic year. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/edward-alexander-bouchet-doctoral-scholars-assistantship>
- **The Frederick Douglass Doctoral Scholars Fellowship** is designed to recruit academically talented students with an interest in college or university teaching to pursue PhD studies from all disciplines to Howard University. The award includes tuition and an \$24,000 stipend per year of eligibility. The award is offered for up to five years to new students matriculating from a baccalaureate degree and up to three if enrolling from a master's program. All applicants must be nominated by the academic chair to compete for this fellowship. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/frederick-douglass-doctoral-scholars-assistantship>
- **The Ronald E. McNair Graduate Assistantship** is designed to support new and continuing students who were McNair scholars as undergraduates. The McNair assistantship is available on a competitive basis to students pursuing doctoral studies from all disciplines. This award is offered for up to three years including tuition and a stipend of \$24,000 per year of eligibility. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/ronald-e-mcnair-graduate-assistantship-program>
- **GEM Fellowship** offers MS and Ph.D. level students an outstanding opportunity and access to dozens of the top Engineering and Science firms and Universities in the nation. The GEM Fellowship was designed to focus on promoting opportunities for individuals to enter industry at the graduate level in areas such as research and

development, product development, and other high level technical careers. GEM also offers exposure opportunities to a number of opportunities in academe. This award is offered for up to three years including tuition and a stipend of \$24,000 per year of eligibility. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/gem-fellowship>

For more information about university-wide Financial Aid Resources please refer to the Office of Financial Aid, Scholarships and Student Employment (<http://www.howard.edu/financialaid/>)

## **External Funding Sources for Graduate School Departments by Division**

### **Arts and Humanities:**

Art, Education, English, Communication and Culture, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Philosophy, Mass Communication and Media Studies, Modern Languages and Literature.

### **Biological and Life Sciences:**

Anatomy, Biochemistry, Biology, Genetics and Human Genetics, Microbiology, Nutritional Sciences, Pharmacology, Physiology and Biology, Psychology, Health, Human Performance, and Leisure Studies, Pharmaceutical Science

### **Engineering and Physical Sciences:**

Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering, Systems and Computer Science, Atmospheric Science, Physics and Astronomy

### **Social Sciences:**

African Studies, Economics, History, Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology, Social Work.

Applications for financial support administered by the Graduate School should be mailed to: Office of Retention, Mentoring and Support Programs Howard University Graduate School 4th and College Streets, NW Washington, DC 20059

## **Continuing Students**

- **Ernest E. Just-Percy L. Julian Graduate Research Assistantship** is designed to give Ph.D. students an opportunity to gain experience in their respective academic field by working as a research assistant on a faculty member's or an administrator's research project or on their own project under the close guidance of a faculty member. This award is intended to assist in preparing graduate students to undertake their own future research endeavor(s) and also to provide an opportunity to secure supplemental financial assistance through grant funding and/or other external funding



sources. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/ernest-e-just-percy-l-julian-graduate-research-assistantship>

- **The Esther Ottley Fellowship** is a one-year, non-renewable award offered to a female doctoral graduate student exemplar who demonstrates the qualities of leadership exhibited by former dean Dr. Esther Ottley. Dr. Ottley is the only woman to serve as dean of the Graduate School. The Ottley Fellowship includes a tuition waiver and a \$24,000 stipend for the academic year. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/esther-ottley-fellowship>
- **The Sasakawa Peace Foundation Fellowship Program (SYLFF)** - funded by the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Foundation Fund: established by an endowment of \$1 million awarded to Howard University. The SYLFF program is designed to provide full financial support to outstanding PhD students admitted to candidacy with a research concentration in international affairs and/or world peace. The fellowship provides a tuition waiver, stipend of \$30,000, student fees, book allowance and travel funds for two academic years. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/sasakawa-peace-foundation-fellowship-program>
- **The Hawthorne Dissertation Research Fellowship Award** is a non-service, merit-based award available to students admitted to candidacy and in the terminal year of PhD studies. The award, named for Edward Hawthorne, former dean of the Graduate School, is designed to provide partial support in the amount of \$2,000 for research related expenses. <https://gs.howard.edu/resources/hawthorne-dissertation-research-fellowship>
- **Graduate Assistantships:** Merit-based financial support for Graduate Students is available through graduate research and teaching assistantships, fellowships, and tuition scholarships. Each category of support is awarded **annually on a competitive basis**. Award recipients are expected to perform specified duties for 15 hours per week during the academic year. The responsibilities, often described as an internship, are defined and evaluated by the academic department or the Graduate School depending upon the appointment.

### **Other Resources**

For more information about university-wide Financial Aid Resources please refer to the Office of Financial Aid, Scholarships and Student Employment (<http://www.howard.edu/financialaid/>)

## **Department Faculty Research Interests**

**Katherine M. Manuel, PhD, RD, LDN, EIM, FAND (Howard University)**

**Interim Chair and Director of the Coordinated Program in Dietetics**

**Research Interests:** Obesity with a focus on nutrition competence in the medical profession; nutrition education in patients with chronic diseases; exercise and bariatric surgery; food habits and obesity in the Eastern Caribbean.

**Thomas V. Fungwe, PhD, CFS, FACN (Texas Tech University)**

**Associate Dean, Research, Institutional Assessment and Operations**

**Research Interests:** Nutrigenomics: Role of diet in chronic disease prevention (obesity, diabetes, cancer); cardiovascular disease and other metabolic conditions.

**Chimene Castor, PhD, Ed.D., CHES, RD, LDN, FAND (Columbia University)**

**Associate Professor**

**Research Interests:** Health disparities: impact of sleep on dietary intake; metabolic syndrome; diabetes and cardiovascular disease in minority males; use of technology for tailored interventions.

**Oyonumo E. Ntekim, PhD, RD, LDN, MHSA, MD (Howard University)**

**Associate Professor**

**Research Interests:** Molecular Bases for Alzheimer's disease, dementia and metabolic Syndrome; bioactive medical plant constituents, efficacy; functional genomics.

**Tahar Hajri, PhD (University of Paris XI)**

**Associate Professor**

**Research Interests:** Gene-nutrient interactions and their impact on health outcomes and metabolic diseases at three levels: tissue culture using both human and animal cells, genetically altered animal models, and translational studies.

**Oluwakemi Adeola, PhD, RD, LDN (Howard University)**

**Director of Graduate Studies and Clinical Coordinator of the Coordinated Program in Dietetics**

**Research Interests:** Clinical Nutrition, Functional and Integrative Nutrition, Chronic Disease Prevention and Management.

**Keilia Phillips, MS, RD, LDN, CPXP, PMP (Howard University)**

**Clinical Assistant Professor**

**Research Interests:** Medical Nutrition Therapy; Clinical Nutrition Management; nutrition informatics; patient experience; project management.

## **Adjunct Graduate Faculty Research Interests**

**Njwen Anyangwe, PhD (Wayne State University, Detroit)**

**Adjunct Assistant Professor**

**Research Interests:** Role of Nutrients in Prevention of Chronic Diseases (Cancer, Type II Diabetes Mellitus, Cardiovascular Disease, and Alzheimer's Disease).

**Pascale C. Jean, PhD, MPH, CHES RD, (Florida International University)**

**Adjunct Assistant Professor**

**Areas of expertise:** Public Health, Evaluation, Quality Assurance Program Design, Policy, Program Management, Evaluation, Health & Nutritional Education strategy, Communications, Project Management, Research and Data Analysis, Infection Control, Statistical Analysis, Curriculum Writing, Community Outreach, Grants Management, and Contracts.

# Student Manual Acknowledgement Form



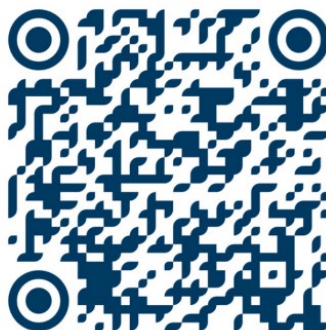
Howard University Graduate School

Department of Nutritional Sciences

Graduate Program in Nutritional Sciences

## STUDENT MANUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Access the form using the QR code or link below.



[https://howard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_4GvmXgbjnvacMBM](https://howard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4GvmXgbjnvacMBM)