

Master of Applied Nutrition (MAN) Program

Mission

The mission of the MAN program is to produce graduates who are competent dietetic professionals able to apply advanced theoretical and technical knowledge to work in a variety of settings, and with the critical appraisal and entry level technical skills to engage in practice-based research.

MAN Program Objectives

The broad objectives of the MAN program are:

- i) to develop the students' theoretical knowledge and skills related to research, critical appraisals, and communication through graduate course work
- ii) to foster research mindedness and practice-based research skills development by engaging students in a variety of research activities
- iii) to promote the acquisition and demonstration of professional competencies through practicum placements and reflection on practice

The MAN program is a one-year competency-based, coursework/practica master's degree that meets the practical training requirements to become a registered dietitian (RD).

Values and Principles of the MAN Program

- **Critical Thinking** – thinking critically in the practice of dietetics involves identifying and challenging assumptions used in practice as well as analyzing assumptions in the framework of the research literature. Graduate courses in nutrition and management build on the critical analysis skills developed in the undergraduate program through discussions of the research literature and assignments. Weekly seminars in the practicum courses focus on reflective analysis of practice experiences, considering similarities and differences in practices in different settings and the use of research for evidence informed decision making. Reflecting on the different practices and problem-solving approaches supports the development of practice theory, professional competence, and continuing professional growth¹. Reflective practice supports the development of transferable skills that can be applied in a variety of dietetic practice settings including practice-based research skills.
- **Graduate Courses** - Students take graduate courses in community nutrition/nutrition education, advanced clinical nutrition/assessment and foodservice management, which focus on the latest research in these fields. These courses provide strong theoretical underpinnings for the three broad areas of competency required for practice. Students increase their knowledge of the field while enhancing their skills in three areas: the research process, critical appraisal, and communication. Assignments in the courses apply theories to practice in real-life situations, demonstrating dietetic competencies and research mindedness.
- **Practicum Activities** – The three practica promote the acquisition of professional competencies through experience in practice and reflection on practice². The practicum activities contribute to the development of research mindedness by allowing students to explore how research can inform practice and what the research needs of practice are³.

¹ Schön DA. *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987.

² Bines H. Chpt. 2 Issues in course design. In Bines H & Watson D. *Developing Professional Education*. Birmingham, UK: The Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, 1992.

³ Centre for human service technology. Research Mindedness Virtual Learning Resource. http://www.resmind.swap.ac.uk/content/02_what_is/what_is_02.htm, 2005

The practicum activities in the MAN program provide:

- **Learning opportunities for the student to develop and demonstrate dietetic competencies in practice settings that include clinical, community and foodservice activities.** The student and the practicum supervisor develop the practicum plan based on the placement setting's dietetic-related activities. The tasks and projects use dietetic entry-level competencies, which are evaluated and documented on activity plans.
- **Services for the placement agency.** The tasks and projects contribute to the work and productivity of the agency. The projects provide the opportunity for students to critically appraise the literature in order to produce evidence-based resources and recommendations. By the end of the practicum, the student performs some dietitian responsibilities independently.
- **Individualized Program with Regular Review and Planning for Competencies** – Three different practica are planned for each student, to match skills and learning needs of the students with resources and needs of the placement agency. Regular review and planning for competencies throughout the program maximize potential for successfully completing Dietitians of Canada Entry-level competencies.

Progress of a Typical MAN Student

Semester I (Fall: September to December)

FRAN*6610 - Advances in Clinical/Nutritional Assessment

FRAN*6710 - Practicum in Applied Human Nutrition I

FRAN*6750 - Final Project in Applied Human Nutrition

Semester II (Winter: January to April)

FRAN*6510 - Nutrition in the Community

FRAN*6720 - Practicum in Applied Human Nutrition II

FRAN*6740 - Foodservice Management in Healthcare

FRAN*6750 - Final Project in Applied Human Nutrition

Semester III (Summer: May to August)

FRAN*6730 - Practicum in Applied Human Nutrition III

FRAN*6750 - Final Project in Applied Human Nutrition

Frequently Asked Questions

How are placements arranged?

There are three variables that are considered and balanced in arranging placements for a MAN student:

1. Experiences offered by community partners;
2. The learning needs of the whole cohort;
3. The learning needs of an individual student.

A matrix of possible placement is created. Combinations of three (3) experiences from different community partners are grouped into learning pathways that will allow a student to meet the Integrated Competencies. These learning pathways are presented to and discussed with the MAN cohort. MAN students are asked to identify and explain their top learning pathways.

Following, choices are reviewed and assigned. Note: top choices are not always guaranteed.

How long is each placement?

Each placement is 40 days long, totalling 320 hours.

If a student attends placement three days per week the placement will last 13 weeks. A student who attends placement four days per week would spend 10 weeks with a placement agency.

What does a typical week in the program look like?

MAN students spend Mondays in the fall and winter term on campus taking graduate courses. Between Tuesday and Friday students spend either three or four days per week at placement, depending on what timetable works best for the placement organization.

During the spring term, there are only two in person sessions. Thus, a MAN student could attend placement five days per week for eight weeks, if that works well for the placement agency and the student.

How are the final research projects arranged?

The AHN faculty member who coordinates the Final Project in AHN course will identify several projects for MAN students to work on. These projects can come from faculty research programs, community members as well as from PEN. Projects are discussed and assigned in September.

Can a MAN student work while in the program?

Due to the workload from the graduate course work and placement, working while in the MAN program is not recommended. Some students in the past have worked a limited number of hours as part of their personal life-work balance plan.

What are some examples of past learning pathways?

Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term
North Wellington Health Care	New Vision FHT	Homewood Health Care
St. Joseph Guelph	St. Joseph Hospital Hamilton	WDG Public Health
Langs Farm Village CHC	Credit Valley Hospital	College of Dietitians of Ontario
Cambridge Memorial Hospital	St. Joseph Guelph	Hamilton FHT
Niagara Health System	Niagara-on-the-lake FHT	Ontario Public Health Association
Baywoods Place	Runnymede Health Care Centre	Four Villages CHC
Niagara-on-the-lake FHT	Halton Health Care	Tim Horton's

How does the research project work?

Every year we develop partnerships with dietitians and community organizations who have nutrition-related research projects that they would like our help with completing. Students work in small groups (2-4 students) on the projects. They work with the community partners and the research course instructor to develop a plan for the research project and complete it over the 1-year MAN program.

How the matching works: Over the summer, the research course instructor will send the incoming MAN students a list of potential projects that are available and will ask students to rate their top 3 choices. Students are matched with projects based on their research interests and their physical location (ex. students living in Toronto will be more likely to be matched with a Toronto-based project)

The research course: This course continues through the entire year of the MAN program. In the fall semester, the research course runs once per week and we learn some basics about research methods, literature searching, and we make a research plan for the rest of the year. During the rest of the MAN program, students and the instructor meet as a group periodically to discuss the progress made and challenges encountered and can get one-on-one help from the instructor as needed.

Conducting research: In the winter and spring semesters, students work on their research projects relatively independently by following the plan laid out in the fall semester. Research projects are completed by the end of the MAN program in August.

What types of projects are available?

We have a wide variety of projects and they change from year to year. They can be clinical, food service or community projects. Here is a list of previous projects:

1. A needs assessment about what bariatric surgery patients need post-surgery to promote wellbeing
2. An evaluation of a train-the-trainer style cooking skills program in the Niagara region
3. An examination of the effects of a university foods course on the knowledge attitudes and behaviours of students
4. An investigation of the needs of dietitians to support them in completing more practice-based research

5. Using interviews to investigate the meal time experiences in Long term care
6. Using focus groups to investigate the meal time experience of patients in rehabilitation units
7. Development of a theory-based grocery store tour intervention
8. An environmental scan and development of an evaluation plan for a weekend food program for school-aged children with a community food security organization called “The Seed”
9. An evaluation of the effectiveness of school lunch programs in improving the academic scores of students.

Master of Applied Nutrition Practicum Organizations

The practicum organizations reflect dietetic practice in traditional and emerging areas of practice. Below is a sample of possible practicum organizations.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Celiac Association* • Canadian Diabetes Association • Cambridge Memorial Hospital • Campbell’s North America* • Compass Group* • City of Toronto Public Health • Credit Valley Hospital • Dairy Farmers of Canada (Ontario) • Dietetics in Motion (Brant region) • Dufferin Area Family Health Team • Eileen Freeman Consulting (KW region) • Extendicare Canada Inc. • Grandview Medical Centre (FHT) • Guelph Family Health Team • Halton Healthcare • Hamilton Family Health Team • Juravinski Cancer Centre (Hamilton) • Langs Farm Village Association • Loblaw Companies Limited • Middlesex Hospital Alliance • Nestle Canada (GTA) • Niagara Health System • Niagara on the Lake Family Health Team • North Lambton Community Health Centre • North Wellington Health Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporation • Nutritional Management Services Limited • Ontario Shores (Whitby) • Patient Care Solutions (Burlington)* • Perth District Health Unit (Stratford) • Regional Municipality of Halton • Regional Municipality of Peel • Regional Municipality of Waterloo • Regional Niagara Public Health • Six Nations Council (Ohsweken) • St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton • St. Joseph’s Healthcare Guelph • Sysco Canada • The Centre for Family Medicine • Toronto Rehabilitation Institute • Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Health Unit • World Vision Canada* • University of Guelph Student Health Services |
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*Affiliation agreement renewal or negation in progress

Job Description of a MAN Student (developed by the 2015-16 MAN Cohort)

Master of Applied Nutrition (MAN)

The Master of Applied Nutrition (MAN) program consists of one year (3 semesters) of graduate course work and competency-based practica. The MAN student is responsible for attending classes at the University of Guelph on Mondays and completing practicum activities at an assigned placement for the next three to four days of the week. Students will complete 40 days of placement each semester. Classes are highly interactive, and strong communication skills are necessary to succeed in the program. The student will be assigned various tasks and projects that will be used to fulfill specific competencies required by the Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice for becoming an entry-level registered dietitian. Coursework and practica activities will cover various areas of dietetics including clinical and community nutrition, and foodservice management. Students will also undertake a research project that will be completed by the end of the program. Successful completion of the competencies will allow graduates to write the Canadian Dietetic Registration Examination (CDRE) to become a member of the College of Dietitians of Ontario (CDO), or another provincial dietetic regulatory body.

The MAN Student is Expected to:

- Attend classes on campus every Monday during the semester
- Attend placement at an assigned facility three to four days of the week
- Must have access to a car to attend placements anywhere in Southern Ontario
- Complete assigned tasks and projects for school and placement, both individually and in groups
- Meet specific deadlines throughout each semester

Requirements:

- Four year honours degree within the previous three years from a dietetic program accredited by Dietitians of Canada
- Minimum average of at least 75% in the last two years of undergraduate program
- Credit in a one-semester course in applied statistics within the last five years (minimum grade of 75%), and a one-semester course in research methods within the last five years (minimum grade of 75%). These requirements may be in progress at the time of application
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Excellent teamwork and interpersonal skills
- Exceptional time-management and organizational skills
- Ability to be a self-directed learner
- Be open-minded and accept challenges