

# **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS TO DIETETIC EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS**

## **2009-2010**

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# **2009-2010 PACKET INTRODUCTION**

## **THIS PACKET OF INFORMATION!**

This packet is unique to the Purdue DPD. It is organized with general information about the process (how you locate information, what to look for, etc.) followed by specific information on each aspect of the usual application. Do **not** use information from former packets.

## **APPLICATION PATHWAYS AT PURDUE**

Students in the DPD at Purdue have 2 ways to apply for an experience program. Both require completion of the DPD before beginning the experience program. In the last year of the DPD, students may apply for Purdue's Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CPD), which occurs within the B.S. degree, or for Dietetic Internship (DI) experience programs which occur after receipt of the B.S. degree. You may **NOT** apply for both at the same time, or hold an appointment in one while applying for the other. The pathways are further described on the last page of this packet.

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS TO DIETETIC EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS**

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# **TIME LINE OF DEADLINES FOR SPRING 2010 APPLICANTS**

(Details are in the packet re. each of these responsibilities)

- Take GRE
- Select Programs of Interest
- Request Application Packet
- Request Transcripts from Other Universities
- Draft Application Letter
- Strengthen Weakness Areas by Building Resume
- Request Off-Campus References
- Join Professional Memberships (WIDDA and ADA)

**Summer 2009-  
October 2009**

## **DPD-DI Callout, September 2<sup>nd</sup>**

- Wednesday 9/2 @ 5:30pm SMTH 108
- All DPD Juniors and Seniors

## **Before October 14<sup>th</sup>**

- Meet with Dr. Mobley or Mrs. Kennedy to discuss DI choices and answer questions regarding application
- Obtain transcripts from any other college of university attended

## **October 14<sup>th</sup>**

- Submit DI packets to Dr. Mobley for initial review
- DI Ranking Sheet
- Each DI should have its own packet with ADA application complete, personal statement and requirements of DI.
- Must submit Writing Lab Verification Statement that your personal statements have been reviewed.

## **DI Meeting – December 7<sup>th</sup>**

- Monday 12/7 @ 5:30pm, UNIV 001
- All DI applicants must attend
- DI packets will be returned to students
- Students must schedule an individual meeting with Dr. Mobley at this meeting for 1<sup>st</sup> week of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.
- Students should request on-campus references

## **Before January 11<sup>th</sup>**

- Correct and refine DI applications
- Secure all references
- Prepare for individual meeting with Dr. Mobley
- Request and obtain Purdue transcripts

## **After January Meeting w/ Dr. Mobley**

- Alter application according to Dr. Mobley to receive declararion of intent.

## **Before February 12<sup>th</sup>**

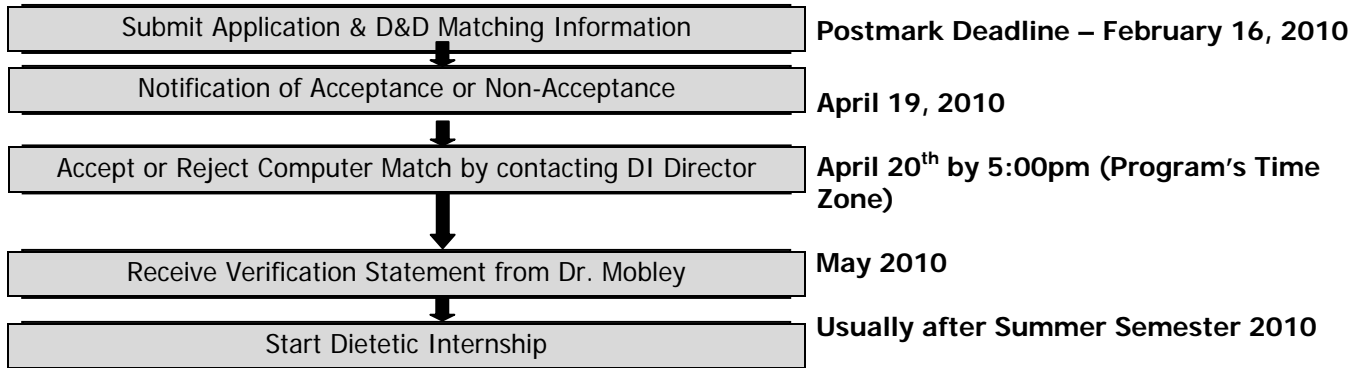
- Complete Computer Information D&D Digital

## **Before February 16, 2010**

- Mail (certified) Application

**September  
2009-  
February  
2010**

## Process of Applying to Dietetic Internships



**PLEASE DO NOT WAIT FOR THE DEADLINE TO MAIL APPLICATIONS AND D&D MATCH INFORMATION. Remember the blizzard of 2007 on Valentine's Day? It caused problems for those that had waited to mail their applications on the 15th!**

## **TIME LINE OF DEADLINES FOR FALL 2010 APPLICANTS**

(more detail is in the packet re. each of these responsibilities)

**Everything listed on the previous page for fall semester should be done by fall applicants over the summer.**

- Take GRE
- Select Programs of Interest
- Request Application Packet
- Request Transcripts from Other Universities
- Draft Application Letter
- Strengthen Weakness Areas by Building Resume
- Request Off-Campus References
- Join Professional Memberships (WIDDA and ADA)

**Fall 09 -  
Summer 10**

### **DPD-DI Callout, September 2<sup>nd</sup>**

- Wednesday 9/2 @ 5:30pm SMTH 108
- All DPD Juniors and Seniors

### **During the Spring Semester 2010**

- Meet with Mrs. Kennedy to discuss DI choices and answer questions regarding application
- Obtain transcripts from any other college of university attended

### **Late Summer**

- Students should request on-campus references
- Submit DI packets to Dr. Mobley for initial review
- DI Ranking Sheet
- Each DI should have its own packet with ADA application complete, personal statement and requirements of DI.
- Must submit Writing Lab Verification Statement that your personal statements have been reviewed.
- Request and obtain Purdue transcripts

### **Fall Semester 2010**

- Students must schedule an individual meeting with Dr. Mobley at this meeting for 1<sup>st</sup> week of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.
- Correct and refine DI applications
- Secure all references
- Prepare for individual meeting with Dr. Mobley

### **After Meeting w/ Dr. Mobley**

- Alter application according to Dr. Mobley to receive declararion of intent.

### **Before September 24th**

- Complete Computer Information D&D Digital

### **Before November 24, 2010**

- Mail (certified) Application

**Spring –  
Fall 2010**

## General Application Information

1. Applicants may apply to as many programs as they wish. All programs meet the same minimum criteria to be a supervised practice program. Programs will vary considerably, and there is no ranking. However you are free to ask specific questions of the program which indicates their quality and the quality of the applicants they accept. For example, their success rate on the RD examination.
2. The **official** listing of acceptable programs is the ADA web site. It is constantly updated, and is accessible without being a member. At [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) click on Accreditation/Dietetics Education on the left side. At the next page, on the left, click on Accredited Education Programs. At the next page click on Dietetic Internships. The programs are listed by state. They list an emphasis area. Most will list "general" which means they offer a variety of experiences in clinical, foodservice management, and community settings. A few will list other emphasis areas such as business, wellness, research, clinical, community, management, etc. At this web site, programs will have their web link where you can access information about the program including their application materials. Also here will be all contact information for the PD. If they do not have a web site, then write to the PD for the information.
3. Another resource for you is available for overnight loan from the PD. The Applicant Guide to Supervised Experience Programs is published each fall by dietetics educators. The PD will let you know when the latest copy has been received and you can check it out. This resource lists the actual number of weeks in each type of experience in the internship-so you can see how much time is spent in an "emphasis" area, and the sites where the rotation will be, as well as other tidbits of information such as how they rate applications, the GPA of those accepted, more specific cost information, etc. This document may help you match an interest to a specific program. Perhaps you're interested in a program with experiences in a specific area e.g. pediatrics, or a longer time in wellness, or a longer or shorter time in a specific area. Perhaps your work experience isn't the best or most extensive; then you would wish to apply to programs which ranked work experience lower in their decision process.
4. Some programs will offer and/or require graduate credits, or an entire graduate degree along with the internship. The program information will specify this for you and the cost. Out of state students may pay more for any credits earned. Programs with graduate degrees are longer, more expensive, and usually the total cost is your responsibility. Some programs with graduate work/degrees basically give you graduate credit for the experience portion versus graduate credit for advanced courses normally associated with a graduate program/degree. Almost all combined internship/graduate degree programs are not as long as it would take to complete a separate internship and graduate program. You should carefully consider if the graduate degree is one with a sound foundation in knowledge beyond your DPD, and in discovery, both characteristics of a sound graduate degree. You should consider that if you do an internship and graduate program separately, you will have had the opportunity during the internship to decide in which area you would like to do further study, and which type of graduate degree you want, AND the graduate work can most likely be paid for

via assistantships, etc.

Most internships, and all those with graduate credit will require that you take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). It is suggested you take it in September, October, or November of your senior year (or the summer if graduating in December). The later in the semester you wait, the more you risk that there will not be room for you to take the exam in time. The GRE is taken on-line but you must register for it at a specific time and complete it in an exam facility. Not taking the GRE will severely limit the internships to which you can apply. Also should you not be initially placed in an experience program via the computer match, not having taken the GRE will severely limit your applicability to programs that have openings. You may receive the GRE exam information through the graduate office in Young. You will choose a specific date and time to take it at the Sylvan Center in Lafayette. The GRE is similar in format to the SAT. You only need to take the general exam. If you have not taken an exam via computer before, be sure to take advantage of practice sessions offered on campus. In 2008 the exam cost was \$140.

5. Most programs follow the same time schedule for applications with a few exceptions. Usual times are to apply in February and learn the results in April, or apply in September and learn the results in November. Programs with graduate work usually require separate graduate school applications which are often due earlier than the internship applications; so expect some graduate school applications may need to be mailed in December or January before the internship applications in February. Internships associated with the Armed Forces (eg the Army or Air Force) require a visit/interview on a base facility, and a physical before the application is completed, so those programs need attention earlier. They pay for your transportation/physical. Dr Mobley is a graduate of the Army internship so will be a resource to you re. that program. In 2007, only the Army offered a program; not the Air Force. These programs typically only take 4-6 students and are VERY selective.
6. Always receive a program's application materials from the program. This ensures you have the forms they require. **IF the program has a web site on the ADA site, they prefer this is the way you access information about their program.** Be sure you thoroughly review this information BEFORE contacting them with specific questions as MOST questions should be answered in their information.
7. If/when you do need to contact a program, make it very professional. If writing, do not use personal stationary or notebook paper. If contacting via e-mail, set it up as a business letter and do not use any e-mail slang. Spell out all words (for example do not use "u" for "you"; capitalize words that should be just like you would be in a formal letter, etc.) If your e-mail address is cutesy, change it! "Boilerbabe", "Big Man on Campus" or "Blondie" just doesn't cut it! It's time to act professional!
8. Applications are YOUR responsibility. While the PD is glad to answer questions for you about anything in your application, and make suggestions to help, the PD does not "proof" your application packet. You are responsible for putting the application together and ensuring all required items are in the packet, and then mailing the packet. Enlist family, friends, even the writing lab to help you "proof" the materials in

your application packets.

9. All programs have minimum grade point criteria to apply. This is usually around a 3.0, and based on your total GPA. It is useless to apply to a program if you do not meet the GPA criteria. If the program lists a 2.8 for application-but in actuality the last classes they have taken all were over a 3.0, you could still apply with a 2.8, but realize they are obviously taking those students with a higher GPA than their minimum. Still, apply if you meet the minimum as each year their applicant pool is different. If you are just under the listed minimum (2.97 for a 3.0), ask them if you should apply.
10. Programs may have additional criteria such as acceptance of students from other countries. **If you are in the U.S. on a student Visa**, you must check with the International Office ASAP to start any processing that will allow you to remain in the U.S. for an experience program should you be accepted. **Do not wait until you are accepted to arrange for this**. Do not accept a quick "yes" from ISS. Be sure your Visa status is THOROUGHLY checked and you receive in writing that you will be allowed to stay for the experience program. In general, programs will accept more than one student from the same DPD program. Still, it is a good idea to **talk to your classmates about where they are applying and try to avoid competing with each other!** A list of where Purdue students have gone the last several years is posted on the bulletin board outside the second floor F&N office. These are good places to apply as they know our program, and our students almost always leave a good impression. Remember this when you are in a program; we are depending on you to pave the way for future Purdue applicants!
11. Each year more programs are requiring telephone interviews, video tapes of your answering pre-sent questions, or require you come for a personal visit. They will tell you if any of these are a required part of their application process. A personal visit is always helpful to you. This gives you a much better idea of whether or not you would be happy in the program and at it's location. If you wish to visit be sure to make an appointment. You can usually do this via e-mail but remember to make all contacts professional.

Many programs specify official "visit" days. These are posted on the student ADA web site, available only to members. The PD will also post them on the bulletin board outside F&N but does not always receive the complete listing that is on the ADA student web site. They are usually in late fall and during break times. You can attend these as a junior if you wish. When a program plans a specific program visit day, they prefer you come at that time, if at all possible, versus make individual visit appointments. Some will ask that you RSVP. Please honor any RSVP.

If you are scheduled for a telephone interview, **PRACTICE** for it! Typical interview questions are listed on page 27. Don't just think of how you might answer the sample questions. PREPARE FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS BY ACTUALLY VERBALLY PRACTICING THE ANSWERS OUT LOUD TO A FRIEND. Stay up to date with ANY professional news from the ADA and CADE related to dietetics education, and even national news related to foods and nutrition as these are good questions. If you are expecting a phone call either to set up an interview or for the interview, program your answer machine to sound professional. **There should be no music or cutesy, silly, loud, or funny**

**greetings.**

12. Some internships request a resume. In addition you will need one for employment. Therefore, you may wish to begin work on one if you don't already have an updated one. The university provides guidance through the Career Center and you received the basics in F&N 106. Your advisor can also help you by critiquing your draft.
13. Be sure to follow the directions for each program very specifically as often there are differences in what they require.
14. Keep a clean copy of **everything** in the application. If you do not receive an appointment by computer match, there will be some opportunities for you to apply to programs that have openings after the computer match. You may need to move fast to meet their deadlines. If you have copies, this task is easier. Keep this in mind when you put together your materials and be sure to have one extra of everything.
15. Programs may do fairly extensive background checks on applicants to check for any documented offences such as criminal, sexual, drug, etc. Some states have laws that require these for any person who will be in a health care facility, including faculty and preceptors who will be in the facility. If you happen to have a record related to anything illegal, it's best to be up front and ask the internship director if you can still apply. The applicant is charged for the background checks.

## Associated Expenses

1. There will be a fee (\$140) to take the GRE exam.
2. There will be fees for transcripts from universities other than Purdue. (They're free at Purdue!) Transcript fees range from \$2-\$10 per transcript.
3. Most programs have an application fee. It is not returnable. It will vary from \$20 to \$50. The fee is mailed in with the application. There may be costs for an internship visit(s).
4. There is a fee for the computer matching service. In 2008 it was \$50. This is mailed at the same time as the program applications. It is one fee; not \$50 per application.
5. It will cost \$4-5.00 per packet to mail the applications and computer information by registered mail.
6. Background checks, if required, can cost up to \$100.

## Specific Application Information

All applications require a verification statement, transcript(s), an application form, an application letter (or statement or answers to specific questions), and references. This section discusses each of these components of the application in detail.

### VERIFICATION STATEMENTS

1. All **graduates** of a DPD receive a formal statement called a "verification" statement when they graduate. This verifies completion of the DPD program and/or receipt of at least a bachelor's degree. The statement is given in accordance with the Purdue policy stated in the DPD Handbook on the F&N web site. If you have credits from outside the U.S., check the policy for specific requirements necessary before a verification statement can be issued to you. (This primarily only applies to international students; not to students on an exchange program through Purdue.) The verification can only be supplied/signed by the official PD. The verification statement is required for entry into a supervised practice program, application to the ADA for some levels of membership, application to the Commission on Dietetic Registration to take the certification examination to become a Registered Dietitian (RD), and in some states to apply for licensure, certification, or other state mandated requirements for the practice of dietetics.

After your graduation is confirmed, typically the Wednesday after final exams are over, copies of the final verification will be mailed to you. At this time you must send one copy to the experience program in which you were accepted, and save the others for later purposes such as those mentioned above.

2. A version of the verification statement is required to **APPLY** to an experience program

and must be mailed in with the application. This statement is called Declaration of Intent to Complete Degree and/or CADE Minimum Academic Requirements. It can only be supplied/signed by the official PD. It verifies your intent to complete the DPD program, and receive a degree, before you enter the practice program. These will be prepared for you over December holiday break, or during the summer if you will be a fall applicant. DPD students do not need this version if they are not applying for experience programs before they graduate.

3. The following page is an example of the Declaration of Intent that will be provided to students following an application approval by Dr. Mobley.

**DECLARATION OF INTENT TO COMPLETE  
DEGREE AND/OR CADE MINIMUM  
ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**



**FOR DIETETICS EDUCATION**  
American Dietetic Association  
216 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995

Based upon courses already completed, projected courses listed below, and completion of at least a baccalaureate degree, the following applicant will meet the minimum academic requirements for the Didactic Program in Dietetics accredited/approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) of the American Dietetic Association.

**Applicant's name:** NAME

**College or University Didactic Program in Dietetics:** Purdue University

**Degree granted or to be granted:** Bachelor of Science

**Month/Year Degree completed or to be completed:** May 2010

**College or University conferring Degree, if different from above:** \_\_\_\_\_

Attach official transcript(s) for courses completed to date.

**LIST COURSE(S) AND DATES(S) OF PROJECTED COMPLETION**  
CADE Minimum Academic Requirements

<u>Course:</u>	<u>Date Completed:</u>
F&N 520 Medical Nutrition Therapy	May, 2010
F&N 580 Geriatric Nutrition	May, 2010
F&N 424 Communication Techniques in Foods and Nutrition	May, 2010
F&N 530 Public Health Nutrition	May, 2010

Electives:

<u>Course:</u>	<u>Date Completed:</u>
F&N 490H Independent Undergraduate Research Thesis	May, 2010

**Didactic Program Director Name:** Stacey L. Mobley, PhD, RD, CNSD

**Director's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** DATE

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8/00 AEPSO

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

1. **EACH** application will require an original, official, and usually sealed transcript from each college/university you have ever attended. Even if you did not take any DPD courses at another institution, if the courses you did take contributed to the B.S. degree at Purdue (even as electives), you will need a transcript. Programs with separate graduate school applications will require 1 or 2 transcripts to be sent with the graduate application....so read the directions very carefully!
2. You do not need separate transcripts from regional campuses such as IPFW, Calumet, etc. **unless** you were registered at the regional campus as an IU student. Then a transcript must come from IU. If registered as a Purdue student, the regional campus coursework will be listed on the Purdue transcript just as if it were taken here.
3. **FOR UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES OTHER THAN PURDUE**: Order these EARLY (in early fall, or early summer) by selecting a number that you think will cover the number you will need. This is to allow for the time needed to receive these (sometimes up to several months!) There is a charge, usually between \$2 and \$10 each.
4. **For PURDUE transcripts**: either order these in December before you leave for holiday break OR this can be done as soon as you return in January. Transcripts are not usually posted with the fall grades until the first/second week of January. They should have your fall grades on them so earlier copies are wasteful. You request them from the Registrar's office. Ask that they be official, in sealed envelopes, and not sent until the fall grades are on them. **Order one more than you need so you can open one to check them for accuracy and to be sure the fall grades are on them. Purdue transcripts are free!**
5. You may have these sent to the PD or they can come directly to you. Some experience programs will require the transcripts come directly to them, and all graduate programs will require they be mailed directly to them. In these cases, simply put on the request form the program and address to which they are to be mailed.

## **APPLICATION FORMS**

1. Use the application form from the program. Most programs will use the standard form, but a few will have their own form, and some programs will have additional information they want as part of the application form. **Be sure to check to see if the programs to which you are applying are using the same form. The date on the standard forms is in the bottom right corner. You can find the most current version at [www.depdpg.org](http://www.depdpg.org)**
2. The forms ask for the telephone number where you can be reached to set up an interview or on the day of appointment. Put either your cell phone or another number which has a message machine on it. Remember to make your voice mail message professional! This can be a real turn-off to internships calling to set up an interview. Most of you will have the result settled and not need a call coming in the actual appointment day.

3. The most recent form ask for all work experiences, including volunteer, to be listed together. Previous forms only ask for dietetic related experiences and gave separate pages for listing volunteer experiences. Be sure you match your responses to the form.

4. Recent forms ONLY want you to list your DPD coursework. List it in the same order as it is on your transcript. (At the end of this packet is a list of the courses for Purdue's DPD). Use the abbreviation for the course title that is on your transcript. If you retook a course, list it in the order you took it, listing both courses. Then do not count the credits twice; only using the credits in the second listing. The most recent form asks you to figure your GPA just for the DPD coursework, and gives you directions for doing this. If you have transfer credit for which the grade did not transfer, you must use the original grade from wherever you took the course, and, of course, there will be a transcript from the other institutions. Your DPD GPA does not include electives but those will be included on the application form where you report your overall GPA. A few programs may ask you to divide your coursework into categories and determine the GPA for each category. Common categories are science, professional (F&N and HTM), and communication or social sciences. Usually what courses would go into the categories are specified for you when this is requested. Some programs figure this on their applicants but don't ask you to do it. If you do not have enough space, attach an additional page with the same grid and complete the information there. The examples in this packet needed to use more space.

5. A few programs will request a copy of Purdue's DPD program. The PD can give you an official copy to include when this is requested.

6. See the PD before December break to clarify anything about the course listings. Remember to proof everything carefully!

7. Keep a copy of the application form in case you need it later.

## **LETTERS OF APPLICATION**

1. Most programs require a letter of application from you or responses to specific questions.

2. Programs may specify handwritten and/or printed/typed, and specify what they wish you to cover in the letter, so pay careful attention to the directions. If handwriting, place a piece of lined notebook paper behind the plain paper to help you keep straight lines. Address the letter to the program director or to the "Selection Committee". Use plain white 8 X 11 paper. Try to use a business format, but since this does take up a lot of space and the letter is sent with an application form, you can leave off their address and your return address. Use proper names and addresses. NEVER use first names. **Remember the professional spelling of dietitian is with two "t's", and no "c".**

3. **Be very specific in addressing what you are ask to address.**

If there are not specific directions, the types of information you should include are:

- Introductory paragraph of intent and interest
- Specify as much as possible why you are applying to the program - be honest. If you are interested in a program because of it's location or cost or whatever, it's

fine to say that. Internship Program Directors are not dummies! They know location, cost, and length are primary factors in your choice.

- State your short and long term goals
- Speak to your strengths and areas you've identified to work on  
For example "I like everything organized. I need to work on accepting people who do not organize their work as I do but still get the work done in time."
- Summarize your academic and work experience, and related activities/involvements in dietetics (A summary is sufficient because you will be giving them the detail on the actual application form)
- Close out the letter

4. All the above can be done in 2 pages and many programs will limit you to 2 pages. How concisely you can cover the above points is a good evaluation of your abilities. The letter will be judged on content, format, neatness, grammar, spelling, etc.

5. Your advisor and/or the PD will be glad to critique **drafts** of your letter and make suggestions re. organization, content, etc. Have all this done **BEFORE** December or summer break. It is important the letter reflect you. The PD will NOT critique or offer suggestions after the letter is ready to be mailed.

**Students report this part of the process takes a lot of time. Plan to accomplish this BEFORE you return to school.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS/REFERENCES**

**BE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THIS PROCESS SO YOU CAN EXPLAIN IT TO YOUR REFERENCES CORRECTLY.**

1. Most programs wish 3 recommendations, and most use a standard form for the references. The standard form can also be transferred to a disk which you can give to those writing the references.

2. The program will usually state the type of individual they wish for the references. References should reflect professional contacts (faculty/professional staff from whom you have taken classes, work experience supervisors, advisors, etc.). References should not be personal contacts (neighbors, ministers, house mother, etc.) Normally 3 are requested. Do not send more unless the program gives you permission to send more. The 3 usually include:

- At least 1 **faculty\*** member from foods and nutrition.
- A faculty member from the foodservice area (HTM or 442 instructors). If it just states "2 faculties", then you can use F&N faculty for both, or perhaps a faculty member from HKLS or your honors project, etc.
- A work reference

If the third reference is not specified to be from a work experience, that is still an excellent one to include for the 3<sup>rd</sup> reference. Other choices would be your advisor or profs from different courses you have taken and know well. A program may specify the PD or an

advisor and have a different form for them to use. In this case they are assuming this person knows you best. If this is not the case, talk to the PD about what substitute is best and how to let the program know that.

\***Faculty** are: Boushey, Buhman, Burgess, Campbell, Daniel, Fleet, Evers, A. Mobley, S. Mobley, Mattes, Morre, Santerre, Savaiano, Story, Teegarden, and Weaver. Retired professors are also appropriate. Continuing lecturers, advisors, or other professional staff in F&N, may know you best and be the best person for your reference. Those in continuing lecturers, advisors, and professional staff positions in F&N include Clark, Dalder, Kennedy, Martin, Mayfield, McKenzie, Vandergraff, and Troyer. It is fine to use an F&N lecturer, versus a faculty member, for the main F&N reference when they were your instructor. Some of these will be a good work reference if you worked for them. Ask these individuals to specifically describe their interactions with you in their references. Professional staff also make for excellent 3<sup>rd</sup> references in addition to an F&N faculty member.

3. Ask for references at least one month in advance. In general request on-campus references by 11/15 and off-campus references by November 1.

4. You do not need an extra copy of references from on campus, but you may need an extra copy of those off campus for later use. Campus references are easy to get. Writing and processing references take a lot of time. Faculty, and others, do not appreciate supplying multiple copies that will then not be needed.

5. You should supply the reference provider with a signed waiver page for EACH reference you need. If you are asking for 10 copies, then they need 10 signed waiver pages. Your signature either waives or does not waive your right to access the letter. The waiver right is the result of a federal law which gives you the right to access information about you. Students often ask how they should sign the waiver. Consider the following in making your individual decision. In general, people writing and reading references perceive the reference is more open and useful when the right to see it has been waived. Even if you do not waive your right, the references are usually required to be in sealed envelopes with signatures over the flap. Therefore you receive them sealed and should not open them. You do not need to give the person envelopes for the references as it is best if they are in the letterhead envelopes from the facility where they were written. If they are being returned to the PD versus you, ask the reference person to put the name of the internship program on the front of the envelope as well as you name.

6. References should be printed or typed on the reference form. Attached letters are not necessary and do **not** substitute for the check-list of the form or for the information on the second page. If a person wants to write a letter, they can do so and attach it to the reference form. They would still complete the grid and need to be sure to address "strengths" or "areas for further development" in the letter. Usually space is ample for this on the form if using a computer to fill them out. If more space is needed, or the person wishes to write a letter, they should just put "See attached letter" and then attach a letter to both pages of the form. If the information on the FORM is not included/completed, your reference will not be considered, which means you lose points in the selection process. Refrain from asking for a reference anyone who would not know you well enough to speak to your strengths as well as areas for improvement. They should know you well enough to

be able to give examples of the characteristics they checked on the first page.

7. Original signatures belong on each reference. This can be accomplished by printing off the number of copies needed and then signing each one individually. You can give them the form on disk.

If your work experience reference does not have word processing capability, have them send the reference to the PD in writing with permission for the PD to make the copies and sign their name. They should also send their letterhead envelopes. This ensures the off campus references will also look professional.

8. Give the person writing the reference specific information on how to return them. A few programs will ask they be mailed directly from the person writing the reference. In general, people are more comfortable in returning the references to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (in this case to the PD), versus handing them to you. The PD prefers all references in your file are sealed and does not read references sent in for your file. Sealed references can also be returned to you. If returning to the PD, give them a large envelop addressed to the PD:

Stacey L. Mobley, PhD., RD, CNSD  
700 West State Street  
Department of Foods and Nutrition  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907

9. When you waive your right, the PD is then ethically bound to not give them to you to read. If you waive your right, you are ethically bound by that decision when the references are in your possession.

Opening references when you have waived your right is unethical, and can come back to haunt you as it almost becomes apparent when this happens. In general, just do not open reference letters. People who placed them in envelopes and sealed them have the right to believe they will not be opened. If you do not waive your right, and you want to see them, you can ask the person writing them to let you see them before they are sealed. You should not be asking a person for a reference that you believe will not be truthful-so you should not need to see them. To avoid this, have the references sent to the PD and leave any extra reference letters in the PDs file, versus yours. After you receive an appointment, all extra letters are destroyed.

10. The following 3 pages are a form for you to complete and give to the people from whom you are requesting a reference. TYPE one and duplicate it for each person you ask for a reference. In completing the form you will need to think about your goals, strengths, and areas for improvement. This will help you with your application letter.

**Required information to be completed by students requesting letters of reference for internships, scholarships, work experience, etc.**

I am requesting a reference for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify purpose)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Local phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Professional Goal:**

a. What is your professional goal with relation to your major?

b. How do you see yourself functioning as a professional in your major (e.g., as a dietitian?)

c. What are your short term goals?

d. What are your long term goals?

e. What do you see as your strengths?

f. What do you see as areas in which you need further development?

**II. Academic Record**

a. What is your overall GPA:

b. List all the courses in which you earned lower than a B grade:

c. If you have one or more weak semesters, please describe any contributing factors i.e. personal or family illness or problems, financial difficulties, or change in career objective.

d. List all the courses you took as electives: (Note, PES courses can be grouped together as PES and the total number of hours).

e. If you concentrated your elective hours in any specific area(s), state the area and why:

### III. Work Experience:

a. List **ALL** the **PAID** work experiences during the last four years from the most recent first to the least recent:

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
<u>Dates</u>	

b. List any employment areas prior to college, or over four years ago that were relevant. Do not list irrelevant ones.

c. Has working been necessary to financially contribute to your educational expenses, or has it been primarily for personal spending money and/or experience? Explain

d. List here any **volunteer** (non-paid) work experiences. List whether or not the volunteer activity is on an on-going basis, or was a one time activity. Designate if the activity was part of a group function, e.g., a sorority function, or on your own.

IV. Activities

a. List the activities (clubs, societies, church affiliations, etc.) in which you are involved AND specify your involvement (officer, member, etc.)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Involvement level</u>	<u>Dates</u>
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V. Please list/discuss anything else that you believe would contribute to a well-rounded reference letter about yourself. Continue on back if needed.

## **ASSEMBLING AND MAILING THE PACKETS**

1. Keep your materials in files or folders while preparing them. A few programs will ask you to submit them in a file folder.
2. In general do not staple the materials together. Most programs need to make multiple copies of your materials for the selection committee. You can clip the application form and check together, and your letter.
3. For mailing, address an envelope large enough to mail the application flat. It should be brown or white. It is best to print the address on labels versus hand write. After all this work, you want to be sure there are no delivery problems due to handwriting! Be sure to put your return address.
4. Some programs will have a cover sheet for you to use as a check list of what is to be included. Some programs have a required order for the packet materials. **BE SURE TO FOLLOW IT.** If they do not specify an order, place the materials in the following order: application form with check attached, application letter, verification intent form, transcripts, and reference letters.
5. **BE SURE** the packets are postmarked by the required date. Those not postmarked on time will **NOT** be considered. **Do not wait until the exact deadline.** Something could come up as an emergency, such as the 2007 Valentine's day blizzard, that prevented you from getting them off.
6. **Mail EACH packet REGISTERED MAIL with return receipt.** This will cost approx. \$4-5 per packet. It will take some time at the PO to do this. You could go by earlier and collect the cards you need to complete for each one and complete those elsewhere before you go to save time. Registered Mail with return receipt means the packet will need to be signed for when delivered and an attached card will be returned to you so you will know they were delivered.
7. Also send the computer match information by Registered mail, return receipt, and by the same deadline. The exact computer match instructions will be given to you in a class session and they are in writing with the match card/envelope.

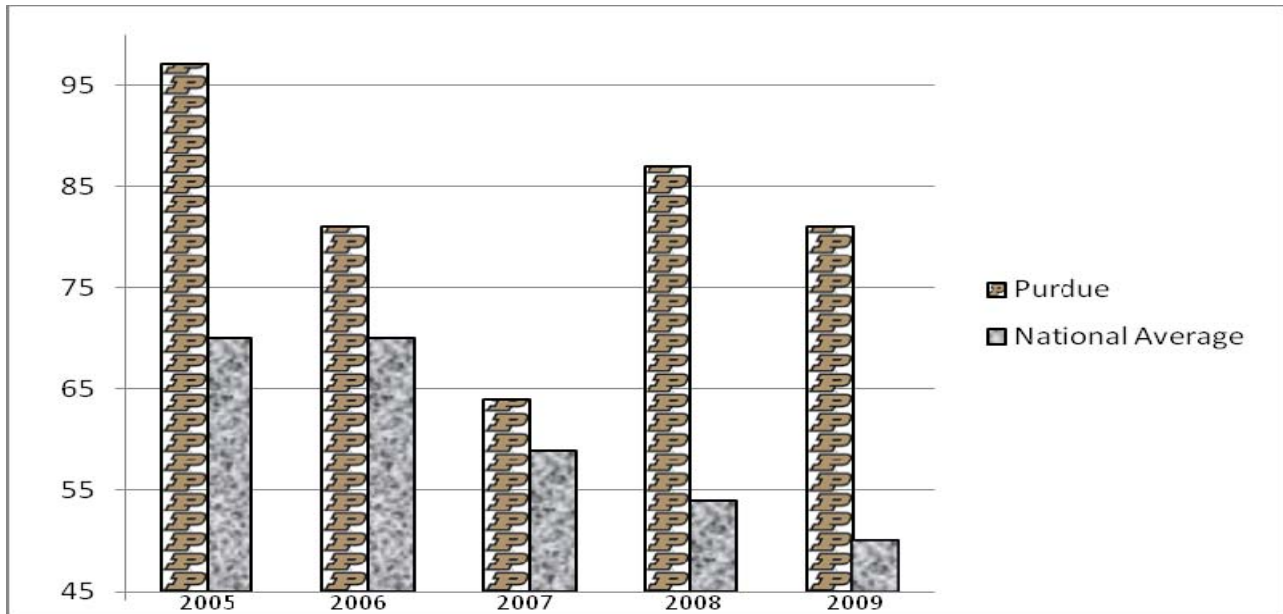
## **COMPUTER MATCHING INFORMATION**

1. With few exceptions, noted in the official program booklet, ALL programs use the required computer matching process. The exceptions are those programs in which you must already be enrolled in their graduate program before acceptance into their experience program.
2. You will be asked to rank all the programs to which you apply in preference order. All the programs to which you apply will rank the applicants they find acceptable in a preference order. The computer will then match programs and applicants and you will be offered ONE appointment only. If you have participated in a computer match for sorority RUSH, it is the same process. Do NOT apply to a program that you don't wish to attend as any program on your list could become your match.
3. The computer match materials are given to you by the PD. Therefore, even though a program will give you the address for the materials, if you are still in school, you get the materials from your PD. There is ONE copy per student. To avoid losing the materials, the PD will distribute them in January.
4. Remember the cost is \$50 (2009 fee) due when mailed.
5. This packet includes a handout on the Top 10 Questions re. Computer Matching as well as information from the computer company re. the match process. It also includes a listing of your responsibilities in the process. You can access other information on computer matching on the ADA website.

## **NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE or NONACCEPTANCE**

The acceptance process is refined each year. It will be explained to you fully when it is determined for this coming year-usually in November. It is outlined in detail in the computer match materials you will receive. These materials are updated each year and not sent to the PD until late Fall.

## ACCEPTANCE RATES and APPLICATION OPPORTUNITIES AFTER THE COMPUTER MATCH



Every year there are MANY openings not filled in the initial computer match. Students who were not accepted, or didn't even apply at the usual time frame, are welcome to apply for any of the openings. **MOST of the openings are programs with graduate work, require the GRE and a 3.0,** and are the more expensive ones. After the computer match announcements are finalized, you will have access to a list of all the programs with openings and the list will be posted. If you are interested in any of the programs you will need to meet whatever deadlines they have for the application. There is not another computer match process. At this point, appointments are the sole responsibility of the internship program. Some require applications be sent immediately and fill their slots with 12-24-48 hours. Others move more slowly in the process-but all seek to complete their class within a month.

If you wish to apply for any openings after the computer match is completed, the PD will fax or e-mail references since these are normally confidential, but it is the student's responsibility to send the application/ letter/ transcripts/ verification statement to the program. Applications and letters can often be sent via e-mail attachment IF the program will accept them in that manner. Entire packets cannot be faxed from F&N.

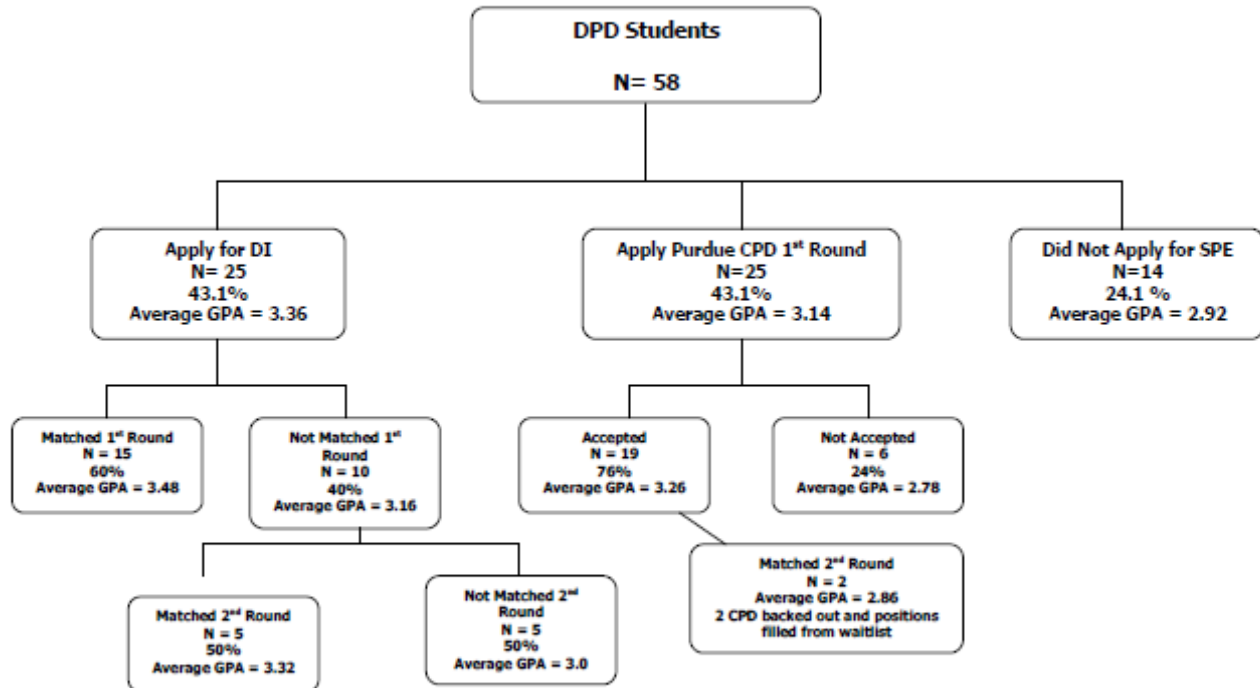
### Common reasons for students not receiving a match

Common reasons for applicants who are not matched include low GPA, poor application (misspelled words, messy, etc), lack of work experience, poor references, poor letter of application, unrealistic goals stated in letter or in response to questions, etc. **PAYING ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS IN THE PACKET IS IMPORTANT! WAITING UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO PULL TOGETHER YOUR APPLICATION ALMOST ALWAYS RESULTS IN A POORLY PRESENTED ONE.** In the past, most unmatched students did not appear on any internship's list as acceptable, meaning they just didn't meet the criteria or they presented a poor application. Actually the MOST common reason for not receiving an appointment is severely limiting the number of places to which you apply. Plan to apply to a minimum of 6-8, more if you are on the border with grades, work experience, or activities. Restriction to 1-2 places is **not** a wise choice.

Remember your entire application is important. A student with a GPA over a 3.0 was not accepted in Spring, 2007. Her application contained several spelling errors! No GPA, no matter how high, is a guarantee of acceptance. Students do get accepted with GPA's below 3.0 but are often the ones who have to scramble for the openings after the computer match. Which courses have grades lower than a B may be a deciding factor when the overall GPA is acceptable. When we get a student matched who had below a 3.0 GPA, that student typically had ALL other application factors just excellent! (letter, references, leadership activities, work experience, etc.).

## Flow Chart for Dietetics Students

### 2008 – 2009 DPD STUDENTS



	Purdue DPD Graduates (2008)	Target Measures
% Applied	64.1%	60%
DI matched	80%	80%

## ADA Membership Information

You are **STRONGLY** encouraged to join the American Dietetic Association. There is a membership category with special rates for students - the Associate category. You will receive all ADA and IDA (Indiana Dietetic Association) mailings, special mailings to student members, and each month's Journal of The American Dietetic Association. You can join on the web. **USE YOUR PERMANENT ADDRESS ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND NOT YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL ADDRESS.** The membership year runs from June 1 to end of May. Joining later in the year will not result in a lower membership cost. In your senior year, you will find having the journal very helpful as frequently there will be articles that pertain to your coursework. Also, if you wish to apply for ADA Scholarships that you could then use in an experience program, you **MUST** be a member by the end of 2009 to meet the deadline for scholarship applications in February, 2010.

## POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Any question about recent professional or lay news re. dietetics.
- Discuss the current suggestion to require all RDs to have a MS.
- Why did you choose to apply to this internship over other programs?
- What is your experience and background that you think qualifies you for our program?  
What would you uniquely bring to our program?
- Explain an experience when you dealt with constructive criticism.
- How did you prepare for this interview?
- Describe an example of when you went the extra mile
- What are your greatest strengths? What is your greatest weakness?
- What are your long term goals? What are your short term goals?
- From your experience in food administration, what do you feel is the greatest experience you received or learned that is applicable towards your future in dietetics?
- Have you had any clinical experience, for example consulting with patients or writing in medical charts?
- What is the MNT for diabetes? Cardiovascular disease? Renal disease? Pancreatitis?
- Describe several behavioral theories for learning.
- Calculate a diet for 1800 Kcal for a person with diabetes.
- As a supervisor, what would you do if when you first arrived in the morning, a diet aide had called in sick and you needed to quickly cover her position on floors?
- How did you choose the field of dietetics?
- Name one professor you admire and tell why?
- Name one professor you do not admire and tell why?
- What do you see the role of the dietitian as?
- What are your future career goals?
- What do you see as the primary role of the dietitian in patient's health care?
- What supervisory type are you? How would you deal with a problem employee?
- What is the difference between clinical nutrition and diet therapy?
- What was the worst illness that you have dealt with in a job or personally in your life or family?
- What has been your experience with TPN, tube feeding, acid/base balance? Can you calculate a TF or TPN feeding?
- Discuss patient focused care
- You've got a care plan due and another group project; a head supervisor asks you to another project. What would you do?
- What did you like least and most about your professors?
- What subject matter did you like most and least in dietetics?
- What would you do if you did not receive an internship appointment?
- Name one current legislative issue that involves the profession of dietetics?
- What is your responsibility as a R.D. with regard to nutrition legislation?
- Does a clinical nutritionist have a management role? Why or why not?

## **Dietetic Internship Interview Questions ~ 2008**

### **Loyola**

1. Why you chose this program? What do you hope to get out of it?

### **Ingalls**

1. What was your biggest challenge and how did you overcome it?

### **Mount Mary**

1. If you were a public health nutritionist in the community what would be the first thing you would approach?

### **Penn State**

1. Ask about work experience and volunteer experience
2. Tell me about a time when you were thrown into a situation and you didn't know what to do. How did you handle it?
3. It is Friday afternoon and there are 4 patients and only one can be seen. Who would you see and why? (Diabetic, HIV, Renal patient on dialysis, myocardial infarction with high lipids)
4. There is an 80 year old patient that just came in. You think they are malnourished, but you don't have lab values. How do you determine if they are malnourished?

### **University of Kentucky Hospitals**

1. Tell me about a time when you had a difficult group member. How did you handle the situation?
2. Tell me about a time when you were forced to take on a leadership role.

### **Johns Hopkins**

1. Why do you want to do your DI at Johns Hopkins and why did you want a program with a strong emphasis in clinical nutrition?
2. How would you describe yourself in 3 words?
3. You have a patient with renal failure on dialysis what nutrients do you need to watch for?
4. Your patient is a middle aged lower socioeconomic and low literacy man with type 2 diabetes. You are in charge of his patient education. How would you approach it and what would your short and long term goals be?
5. You are on rounds and your preceptor steps out for a minute. You are asked a question that you do not know the answer. What do you do?
6. Please describe a time when you felt a professor treated you unfairly and what did you do?
7. What do you think is the biggest challenge of the Johns Hopkins internship will be?
8. What would you do if you weren't accepted to a DI?
9. If there anything you would recommend for John's Hopkins to improve their internship?
10. What are the indications for enteral nutrition?
11. A fellow intern did something unethical – what do you do?
12. Describe a time where you had to work with a difficult person.

### **St. Louis VA and Bay Pines VA**

1. Describe your ideal job in dietetics
2. Tell me about a time you had more tasks to do than time to do them. How did you prioritize the tasks? What was the result? How were you feeling? What would you have done differently?
3. What kind of support system do you have in place to make it through the internship?
4. Tell me about a time a supervisor did something you disagreed with. How did you handle it? What was the result?
5. Tell me about a time you went the extra mile for a customer. What was the result?
6. Tell me about a time you dealt with an upset/difficult patient or client. How did you handle it? What was the result?
7. Why this internship?
8. What can you uniquely bring to this internship?

### **St. Louis University**

1. Different field/practice areas in dietetics
2. How can public health dietitians affect obesity?
3. What personal attributes make you a good fit for this internship?
4. Why do you want to be an RD?
5. What are your career goals?

### **University of Kentucky**

1. What was one time you researched, planned, and carried out a project.
2. Give an example of a time in which you did something that left an impact through your actions.
3. What/Why were you drawn to this DI?
4. What three unique things can you bring to the UK DI?

### **Adagio Health**

1. Why did you choose to go into Dietetics?
2. Why did you choose this particular internship?
3. What are your strengths/weaknesses?
4. Describe yourself on a scale of 1-10 on handling a crisis.
5. What thrills you most in life?
6. What is the funniest thing that has ever happened to you?
7. You have just explained to a client about a gluten-free diet. He says "no it's too expensive, too difficult" What do you say?
8. How will you support yourself next year?
9. Describe what a typical day in the internship will be like
10. Describe what a dietitian might do in a clinical/community setting.
11. What do you prefer, clinical, foodservice, management, community?
12. Describe your leadership skills
13. Describe your work experience in Dietetics
14. Are you interested in graduate study?

### **St. Francis Medical Center**

1. What has been your biggest accomplishment and why?
2. Name a time you had a challenge in your life and how you overcame it
3. Name a time you had a conflict with someone and how you pulled through the conflict
4. Where do you see the future of dietetics moving towards?
5. Name a time where you had to make a tough decision and did you make the right choice?
6. Name a time where you had to work in a group with a difficult member, how did you handle it?
7. Name a time you had to learn to multi-task. What is you do?

## **DI Questions for 2009 Applicants**

### **Hines VA Hospital Phone Interview**

#### **Email sent to applicants:**

Congratulations on making it to the interviewing stage of the Hines VA Internship selection process. We are going to ask you some questions related to your time management skills, motivation, attitude, creativity, and interpersonal communication skills. We think these characteristics or qualities are important for interns to have while they are completing their pre-professional practice experience with us. We are going to use Performance Based Interviewing methods for the interview. Performance Based Interviewing focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that are job related. It is based on the belief that past behavior and past performance predicts future behavior & performance. So when you interview, please use school experiences & projects, work experiences, volunteer work, or any other experience that demonstrates your past performance or behavior in response to the questions we ask you regarding time management, motivation, etc. We will not be able to give you the questions in advance because we want to see how well you can think on your feet, so to speak, at this point in your career. However, it is perfectly acceptable to pause and take some time to think of examples and answers to the questions right after the question is asked. Just be very honest with your responses.

1. Explain a little bit about yourself as an introduction.
2. What made you interested in this internship?
3. Explain a situation when you encountered a difficult person, how did you handle it?
4. Explain a situation where you needed to think outside the box to solve a problem.
5. Describe your work ethic and a situation to explain further.
6. Describe a situation where you were in a leadership position and were given feedback on your performance. What was the feedback and how did you handle it?
7. Describe an experience where you were critiqued on your performance, how did you handle this criticism?
8. Describe your time management skills and an experience where you had to prioritize to accomplish things.
9. What do you think this internship experience will be like?

## Loyola

1. Tell a little about myself
2. Discussing strengths and areas of improvement
3. Why I want to do a community focused internship
4. She asked about Ireland and what was different about what they do there
5. Why I choose to apply to Loyola
6. What experiences I have had that prepared me for a dietetic internship
7. If there was anything that scared me or made me nervous about doing the internship
8. Asked about substandard grades in non-F&N courses.

<b>Didactic Program in Dietetics</b> <b>Program Requirements</b>
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Purdue University  
College of Consumer and Family Sciences  
Department of Foods and Nutrition

Course Number	Course Title	Credit
<b>Professional Courses</b>		
FN 106	Profession of Dietetics	1
FN 205	Food Science I	3
FN 315	Fundamentals of Nutrition	3
FN 330	Diet Selection and Planning	3
FN 424	Communication Techniques in FN	3
FN 436	Nutritional Assessment	2
FN 437	Macronutrient Metabolism in Human Health and Disease	3
FN 438	Micronutrient and Photochemical Metabolism in Human Health and Disease	3
FN 442	Foodservice Systems Management	2
FN 453	Food Chemistry	4
FN 520	Medical Nutrition Therapy	4
FN 530	Public Health Nutrition	2
FN 580	Geriatric Nutrition	2
HTM 212/OLS 274	Org. and Mgmt. in the Hospitality/Tourism Industry	3
HTM 291L	Quantity Food Production & Service Labs	2
HTM 311	Procurement Management for Foodservice	3
HTM 312/OLS 252	Human Resources Mgmt. for the Service Industries	3
<b>Physical, Biological Sciences, Mathematics</b>		
BIOL 203/301	Human Anatomy and Physiology	4/3
BIOL 204/302	Human Anatomy and Physiology	4/3
BIOL 221	Introduction to Microbiology	4
BCHM 307/CHM 333	Biochemistry	3
BCHM 309	Biochemistry Lab	1
CHM 111/115	General Chemistry	3/4
CHM 112/116	General Chemistry	3/4
CHM 257/255&256	Organic Chemistry	4/3/3
MA 159/153&154	Pre-calculus	5/3/3
STAT 301	Elementary Statistical Methods	3
<b>Behavioral and Social Sciences</b>		
ECON 210	Principles of Economics	3
PSY 120	Elementary Psychology	3
SOC 100	Introductory Sociology	3
<b>Communication Courses</b>		
COM 114	Fundamentals of Speech Communication	3
ENGL 106/108	First Year Composition	4/3

Rev. 6/30/09

# Top 10 Questions about Computer Matching for Dietetic Internships (DIs)

10. What is computer matching?
9. If computer matching is one part of the process, what else do I need to do to apply to DIs?
8. Is there a limit to the number of programs that one can apply to and rank for computer matching?
7. Is it possible to receive a match to more than one DI?
6. If a program offers both a full and part-time option, can I apply to both?
5. When does computer matching occur?
4. Are there deadlines for the computer matching/internship application process?
3. If I don't receive a match the first time I apply, can I apply again?
2. How can I increase my chances of receiving a DI appointment?
1. Where can I get more information about this whole process?

## 10. What is computer matching?

Computer matching is one part of the process necessary to obtain an appointment to most DIs. ADA has contracted with D&D Digital Systems to facilitate matching through a computerized process. An applicant is "matched" with the highest ranked program that offers the applicant a position. In this way, computer matching helps applicants to obtain a position in the DI of their choice and helps DI programs obtain the applicants of their choice. It eliminates premature decisions by programs about applicants and acceptance at multiple programs by applicants.

Computer matching occurs using the applicant's prioritized list and the programs' prioritized lists until all possible matches are complete. There is a fee for computer matching that must be submitted at the time you submit your mark or sense card to D&D Digital Systems. The process is explained in detail in the "Instructions to Applicants" booklet provided by D&D Digital Systems.

## 9. If computer matching is one part of the process, what else do I need to do to apply to DIs?

To begin the application process, you must request and complete the application materials from the DI programs of your choice. Most DIs participate in computer matching for their admission process. Those that are exempt accept applications only from individuals employed by the sponsoring organization. These are noted on ADA's Web site in the [DI list](#).

Each DI reviews its own applications and submits a priority listing of acceptable applicants to D&D Digital Systems, along with the number of positions to be filled. Computer matching does **not** change the applicants' or programs' selection process.

## 8. Is there a limit to the number of programs that one can apply to and rank for computer matching?

No. Just remember that an application must be submitted to each program you list on the mark (sense) card you submit to D&D. If you do not rank a program with D&D Digital on the mark or sense card, the program cannot consider your application.

## 7. Is it possible to receive a match to more than one DI?

No. Only one match is made, the highest priority choice for which a program match occurs.

## 6. If a program offers both a full and part-time option, can I apply to both?

Yes. Be sure to check the computer matching codes for each option. Many programs have one code number for the full-time option and one code number for the part-time option. If you wish to be considered for both options, you need to rank the full and part-time options according to your preference and list both codes on the mark (sense) card.

#### **5. When does computer matching occur?**

Computer matching occurs in April and November of each year. The DI list includes information about when each DI appoints its students. Programs may participate in either one or both computer matching periods.

#### **4. Are there deadlines for the computer matching/internship application process?**

Yes, there are two deadlines that you must be aware of when applying to DIs. First, each program should have a deadline line date in their materials that tells you when all application materials must be submitted to the program. It is very important that you adhere to this deadline; otherwise your application may be invalid if it is not received by the deadline date.

Second, there is a deadline established by ADA and D&D Digital Systems, Inc. for return of the mark (sense) cards with your prioritized list of DI programs and your computer matching fee payment. The deadline for the February match is generally during the 2nd week of February and for the November match approximately September 25th. However, you should check with your DPD program director, ADA Accreditation staff & Student Operations or D&D Digital Systems for the exact deadline date. If your mark (sense) card and fee payment is not postmarked by the established deadline date to D&D Digital Systems, your mark (sense) card and computer matching fee will be returned by D&D Digital Systems. You will not be in the match and the DI Programs cannot consider your application. Please be sure to allow sufficient preparation time so that you will have your materials ready to be mailed on or before the postmark deadline date.

#### **3. If I don't receive a match the first time I apply, can I apply again?**

Yes. You may continue to apply as often as you wish and in both April and November. New application materials and mark (sense) cards must be completed for every matching period.

#### **2. How can I increase my chances of receiving a DI appointment?**

Appointments to these programs are very competitive. Program Directors are looking for students with high academic ability (GPA), work experience, strong letters of recommendation, and professional potential. An application package that follows directions explicitly, and is neat is very important. If required, a well-written application letter may be a good reflection of your maturity and communication skills. Be flexible about your Program choices. The ability to relocate from densely populated urban sites also may be helpful.

#### **1. Where can I get more information about this whole process?**

If you are still in school, your Didactic Program Director and/or faculty advisor should be your resource person for information and guidance with the appointment process. The Accreditation staff & Student Operations at ADA is also available to answer questions. Call 1-800-877-1600 ext. 5400 or e-mail [education@eatright.org](mailto:education@eatright.org). D&D Digital Systems can provide information about the computer matching process. Visit their Web site at <http://www.dnddigital.com/>, call 515-292-0490, or e-mail [dnd@netins.net](mailto:dnd@netins.net).

*June 2004*

# Computer Matching: Applicant Responsibilities

All complete computer matching information, including computer matching dates with deadlines, is on the ADA/CADE Web site at [www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/CADE\\_2408\\_ENU\\_HTML.htm](http://www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/CADE_2408_ENU_HTML.htm)

## **APPLICATION PHASE**

Applicants are responsible for obtaining current application materials from the Dietetic Internships (DI). The basic steps in this process are:

- Obtain current application materials from selected DIs at least 6 months prior to the computer match in April and November annually. Please note that DI application forms are not available on the ADA Web site or from ADA staff. You must get all required application information from the DI programs.
- Discuss application materials with your Didactic Program Director, if available.
- If required, apply to take Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
- Obtain the Declaration of Intent to Complete form or a Verification Statement from your Didactic Program Director. One of these standardized forms is provided by the Didactic Program Director and is required as part of the DI application materials.
- Request references from advisor/faculty/employers and order official transcripts as needed for each DI application.
- Complete each DI application according to instructions provided with the application and submit the materials to the DI director by the designated deadline date. Questions about completing applications should be referred to the DI Director or your DPD Director, not ADA staff.
- Provide telephone number(s) with applications where you can be reached on Appointment Day.
- Send all materials before the postmark deadline and by receipted mail for proof of mailing date and delivery. Enclose a self-addressed stamped postcard if you want to be notified of receipt of the DI application from the program.
- Submit to D&D Digital a mark/sense preference card and a release card mark/sense card with the prioritized list of selected Dietetic Internships and the computer matching fee (\$50.00) before the postmark deadline date. **Beginning with the November 2007 match, you will be able to register on the D&D Digital Web site at [www.dnddigital.com/](http://www.dnddigital.com/), pay the fee with a credit card and submit your DI preferences online.** If you choose to mail the computer matching materials, you should sent by certified mail with a return receipt requested. D&D Digital will not send notification of receipt. Applicants should call D&D Digital if the certified mail receipt is not returned within three weeks.

**Important Note:** Applicants should select DI priorities carefully; no changes will be accepted by D&D Digital once DI preferences are submitted.

## COMPUTER MATCHING PHASE

- Applicants are responsible for notifying D&D Digital, in writing, of a decision to withdraw from the matching process if circumstances will prevent them from accepting a match that may occur.
- Applicants are responsible for telephoning D&D Digital if they cannot access the D&D Digital Internet site to view their personal matching results on Notification Day.

## APPOINTMENT PHASE

- Applicants who receive a computer match DI appointment are responsible for accepting or rejecting the match by telephone or fax by 5:00 pm (of the program's time zone) on Appointment Day.
- Applicants who submitted a Declaration of Intent to Complete form with their DI applications must obtain a signed DPD Verification Statement from their DPD Program Director and official transcript documenting completion of the bachelor's degree before they may begin the DI.

## IMPORTANT APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Participants in the computer matching process are expected to adhere to the results of the match and accept a match that may occur. It is unethical to decline a match in order to pursue appointment to another program.

Programs with open positions will be posted on the D&D Digital Web site the day following Appointment Day. Applicants who **do not receive a computer match** must not contact any program with open positions until the day following Appointment Day. In addition, please do not ask your Didactic Program Director to inquire about programs with open positions until the day programs with open positions are posted. This allows the DI programs time to confirm acceptance from their matched applicants and determine the process they will use to fill open positions.

**Dates for Computer Matching Process  
November 2009 through November 2010**

The following deadline dates and appointment dates for computer matching Dietetic Internship appointments have been established in conjunction with D&D Digital.

Computer Matching Period	Deadline for Submitting Computer Matching Information Online	Applicant Notification Day	Applicant Appointment Day	Posting Date of Programs with Open Positions
November 2009	September 25, 2009	November 16, 2009	November 17, 2009	November 18, 2009
April 2010	February 16, 2010	April 5, 2010 beginning at 6:00PM CDT	April 7, 2010	April 8, 2010
November 2010	September 24, 2010	November 7, 2010 beginning at 6:00 PM Central Time	November 9, 2010	November 10, 2010

**Please note:** Students must accept/reject the computer match within 24 hours of Notification Day. Students must notify the Dietetic Internship Program Director if they accept/reject the computer match by 5:00 pm on Appointment day of the program's time zone.

**Contact Information:** D&D Digital  
304 Main Street  
Ames, IA 50010  
Phone: 515-292-0490  
Fax: 515-663-9427  
E-Mail: [dnd@sigler.com](mailto:dnd@sigler.com)

## Personal Statement Guidelines from Purdue's Online Writing Lab

### **1. Writing the Personal Statement**

The personal statement, your opportunity to sell yourself in the application process, generally falls into one of two categories:

1. The general, comprehensive personal statement:

This allows you maximum freedom in terms of what you write and is the type of statement often prepared for standard medical or law school application forms.

2. The response to very specific questions:

Often, business and graduate school applications ask specific questions, and your statement should respond specifically to the question being asked. Some business school applications favor multiple essays, typically asking for responses to three or more questions.

#### **Questions to ask yourself before you write:**

- What's special, unique, distinctive, and/or impressive about you or your life story?
- What details of your life (personal or family problems, history, people or events that have shaped you or influenced your goals) might help the committee better understand you or help set you apart from other applicants?
- When did you become interested in this field and what have you learned about it (and about yourself) that has further stimulated your interest and reinforced your conviction that you are well suited to this field? What insights have you gained?
- How have you learned about this field—through classes, readings, seminars, work or other experiences, or conversations with people already in the field?
- If you have worked a lot during your college years, what have you learned (leadership or managerial skills, for example), and how has that work contributed to your growth?
- What are your career goals?
- Are there any gaps or discrepancies in your academic record that you should explain (great grades but mediocre LSAT or GRE scores, for example, or a distinct upward pattern to your GPA if it was only average in the beginning)?
- Have you had to overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships (for example, economic, familial, or physical) in your life?
- What personal characteristics (for example, integrity, compassion, persistence) do you possess that would improve your prospects for success in the field or profession? Is there a way to demonstrate or document that you have these characteristics?
- What skills (for example, leadership, communicative, analytical) do you possess?
- Why might you be a stronger candidate for graduate school—and more successful and effective in the profession or field than other applicants?
- What are the most compelling reasons you can give for the admissions committee to be interested in you?

#### **General advice**

##### **Answer the questions that are asked**

- If you are applying to several schools, you may find questions in each application that are somewhat similar.

Don't be tempted to use the same statement for all applications. It is important to answer each question being asked, and if slightly different answers are needed, you should write separate statements. In every case, be sure your answer fits the question being asked

### **Tell a story**

- Think in terms of showing or demonstrating through concrete experience. One of the worst things you can do is to bore the admissions committee. If your statement is fresh, lively, and different, you'll be putting yourself ahead of the pack. If you distinguish yourself through your story, you will make yourself memorable.

### **Be specific**

- Don't, for example, state that you would make an excellent doctor unless you can back it up with specific reasons. Your desire to become a lawyer, engineer, or whatever should be logical, the result of specific experience that is described in your statement. Your application should emerge as the logical conclusion to your story.

### **Find an angle**

- If you're like most people, your life story lacks drama, so figuring out a way to make it interesting becomes the big challenge. Finding an angle or a "hook" is vital.

### **Concentrate on your opening paragraph**

- The lead or opening paragraph is generally the most important. It is here that you grab the reader's attention or lose it. This paragraph becomes the framework for the rest of the statement.

### **Tell what you know**

- The middle section of your essay might detail your interest and experience in your particular field, as well as some of your knowledge of the field. Too many people graduate with little or no knowledge of the nuts and bolts of the profession or field they hope to enter. Be as specific as you can in relating what you know about the field and use the language professionals use in conveying this information. Refer to experiences (work, research, etc.), classes, conversations with people in the field, books you've read, seminars you've attended, or any other source of specific information about the career you want and why you're suited to it. Since you will have to select what you include in your statement, the choices you make are often an indication of your judgment.

### **Don't include some subjects**

- There are certain things best left out of personal statements. For example, references to experiences or accomplishments in high school or earlier are generally not a good idea. Don't mention potentially controversial subjects (for example, controversial religious or political issues).

### **Do some research, if needed**

- If a school wants to know why you're applying to it rather than another school, do some research to find out what sets your choice apart from other universities or programs. If the school setting would provide an important geographical or cultural change for you, this might be a factor to mention.

### **Write well and correctly**

- Be meticulous. Type and proofread your essay very carefully. Many admissions officers say that good written skills and command of correct use of language are important to them as they read these statements. Express yourself clearly and concisely. Adhere to stated word limits.

### **Avoid clichés**

- A medical school applicant who writes that he is good at science and wants to help other people is not exactly expressing an original thought. Stay away from often-repeated or tired statements.

## ***2. Examples of Successful Statements***

### **Statement #1**

My interest in science dates back to my years in high school, where I excelled in physics, chemistry, and math. When I was a senior, I took a first-year calculus course at a local college (such an advanced-level class was not available in high school) and earned an A. It seemed only logical that I

pursue a career in electrical engineering.

When I began my undergraduate career, I had the opportunity to be exposed to the full range of engineering courses, all of which tended to reinforce and solidify my intense interest in engineering. I've also had the opportunity to study a number of subjects in the humanities and they have been both enjoyable and enlightening, providing me with a new and different perspective on the world in which we live.

In the realm of engineering, I have developed a special interest in the field of laser technology and have even been taking a graduate course in quantum electronics. Among the 25 or so students in the course, I am the sole undergraduate. Another particular interest of mine is electromagnetics, and last summer, when I was a technical assistant at a world-famous local lab, I learned about its many practical applications, especially in relation to microstrip and antenna design. Management at this lab was sufficiently impressed with my work to ask that I return when I graduate. Of course, my plans following completion of my current studies are to move directly into graduate work toward my master's in science. After I earn my master's degree, I intend to start work on my Ph.D. in electrical engineering. Later I would like to work in the area of research and development for private industry. It is in R & D that I believe I can make the greatest contribution, utilizing my theoretical background and creativity as a scientist.

I am highly aware of the superb reputation of your school, and my conversations with several of your alumni have served to deepen my interest in attending. I know that, in addition to your excellent faculty, your computer facilities are among the best in the state. I hope you will give me the privilege of continuing my studies at your fine institution.

(Stelzer pp. 38-39)

#### **Statement #2**

Having majored in literary studies (world literature) as an undergraduate, I would now like to concentrate on English and American literature.

I am especially interested in nineteenth-century literature, women's literature, Anglo-Saxon poetry, and folklore and folk literature. My personal literary projects have involved some combination of these subjects. For the oral section of my comprehensive exams, I specialized in nineteenth century novels by and about women. The relation ship between "high" and folk literature became the subject for my honors essay, which examined Toni Morrison's use of classical, biblical, African, and Afro-American folk tradition in her novel. I plan to work further on this essay, treating Morrison's other novels and perhaps preparing a paper suitable for publication.

In my studies toward a doctoral degree, I hope to examine more closely the relationship between high and folk literature. My junior year and private studies of Anglo-Saxon language and literature have caused me to consider the question of where the divisions between folklore, folk literature, and high literature lie. Should I attend your school, I would like to resume my studies of Anglo-Saxon poetry, with special attention to its folk elements.

Writing poetry also figures prominently in my academic and professional goals. I have just begun submitting to the smaller journals with some success and am gradually building a working manuscript for a collection. The dominant theme of this collection relies on poems that draw from classical, biblical, and folk traditions, as well as everyday experience, in order to celebrate the process of giving and taking life, whether literal or figurative. My poetry draws from and influences my academic studies. Much of what I read and study finds a place in my creative work as subject. At the same time, I study the art of literature by taking part in the creative process, experimenting with the tools used by other authors in the past.

In terms of a career, I see myself teaching literature, writing criticism, and going into editing or publishing poetry. Doctoral studies would be valuable to me in several ways. First, your teaching assistant ship program would provide me with the practical teaching experience I am eager to acquire. Further, earning a Ph.D. in English and American literature would advance my other two career goals by adding to my skills, both critical and creative, in working with language. Ultimately, however, I see the Ph.D. as an end in itself, as well as a professional stepping stone; I enjoy

studying literature for its own sake and would like to continue my studies on the level demanded by the Ph.D. program.  
(Stelzer pp. 40-41)

### ***3. Advice from Admissions Representatives***

**Lee Cunningham**

**Director of Admissions and Aid**

**The University of Chicago Graduate School of Business**

The mistake people make most often is not to look at what the questions are asking. Some people prepare generic statements because they're applying to more than one school and it's a lot of work to do a personal essay for each school. On the other hand, generic statements detract from the applicant when we realize that we're one of six schools and the applicant is saying the same thing to each and every school despite the fact that there are critical differences between the kinds of schools they may be applying to. They don't take the time. They underestimate the kind of attentions that is paid to these essays. Take a look at what the essay asks and deal with those issues articulately and honestly.

At least 2, and sometimes 3, people read each essay. I read them to make the final decision. Our process works so that each person who reads the application does a written evaluation of what he or she has read and the written evaluations are not seen by the other reader.

(adapted from Stelzer, p. 49)

**Steven DeKrey**

**Director of Admissions and Financial Aid**

**J. L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management (Northwestern University)**

We're looking for a well-written, detailed essay that responds directly to the question. The questions are about extracurricular activities, motivation, challenges, commitment to the school that kind of thing. We see a variety and that's fine. Our approach is very individualized. The way the applicant devises the answer, determines the length, develops the response, is all part of the answer. The level of effort applicants put into essays varies considerably, which sends messages to the admissions committee as well. Over-involved, elaborate essays send one message, while very brief and superficial essays send another message.

Trying to second-guess what we are looking for is a common mistake—which we can sense.

We can tell when applicants use answers to other schools' questions for our essays; we're sensitive to this. Poorly written essays are a bad reflection on the applicant.

Don't over-elaborate; we're reading a lot of these kinds of essays. Also, don't be too brief or superficial. We like to have major ideas presented well.

( adapted from Stelzer, p. 55)

**Michael D. Rappaport**

**Assistant Dean of Admissions**

**UCLA School of Law**

Applicants should take the time to look at what the law school is asking them to write about. At UCLA, we say, "we know you have lots of extracurricular activities—we want to know how you differ, what makes you unique? What can you bring to the first year class that's going to make you distinctive from the other 99 people who are already there?" The fact that you were active in your fraternity or sorority is really not going to do it. What we're looking for is somebody who, in their personal statement, stands out as being so unusual, so diverse, that they're extremely attractive as a law student for the first-year class. Maybe what's going to make them distinctive is the fact they spent six months living in a log cabin in Alaska. You try to give the law school some justification for admitting you. With a lot of people, there's nothing that's going to make them distinctive. If that's

the case, they've got to recognize that, indeed, the essay is not going to make that much difference here at UCLA.

We're also asking if there's any reason their LSAT or grades are not predictive. You'd be amazed at the number of people who completely ignore this—they don't take advantage of the opportunity. Most law schools operate fairly similarly. There's a certain group of applicants whose grades and LSAT scores are so high that the presumption is that the applicants are going to be admitted unless they do something terribly stupid to keep themselves out. I have seen applicants whose personal statement has done that, but it's extremely rare. At the other extreme is another group of applicants who, no matter what they write, are not going to get in.

The applicant has to realize, first of all, where he or she stands. If you have a straight-A grade point average and a perfect LSAT score, you don't have to spend a lot of time worrying about your personal statement. On the other hand, if you know you're in the borderline area, that's where the personal statement becomes very, very important.

The applicant should take the time to read the application to see what the schools are asking for. Sometimes the school will ask for a general description of why you want to go to law school, or why they should admit you, something of that nature. In such case you can be fairly sure that the school is just interested in the essay to see how well you write. So what you say isn't as important as how you say it. On the other hand, some schools are more specific—UCLA being a very good example of that.

Make sure the essay is grammatically and technically correct and well written. Avoid sloppy essays, coffee stained essays, or ones that are handwritten so you can't read them. You'd be amazed at what we get!

(Stelzer, pp. 70-71)

### **Beth O'Neil**

#### **Director of Admissions and Financial Aid**

#### **University of California at Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall)**

We're trying to gauge the potential for a student's success in law school, and we determine that, principally, on the basis of what the student has done in the past. The personal statement carries the responsibility of presenting the student's life experiences.

Applicants make a mistake by doing a lot of speculation about what they're going to do in the future rather than telling us about what they've done in the past. It is our job to speculate, and we are experienced at that.

Applicants also tend to state and not evaluate. They give a recitation of their experience but no evaluation of what effect that particular experience had on them, no assessment of what certain experiences or honors meant.

They also fail to explain errors or weaknesses in their background. Even though we might wish to admit a student, sometimes we can't in view of a weakness that they haven't made any effort to explain. For example, perhaps they haven't told us that they were ill on the day that they took the LSAT or had an automobile accident on the way. Such things are legitimate reasons for poor performance. I mean, we understand that life is tough sometimes. We need to know what happened, for example, to cause a sudden drop in the GPA.

Another mistake is that everyone tries to make himself or herself the perfect law school applicant who, of course, does not exist and is not nearly as interesting as a real human being.

Between I and 5 people read each application.

(Stelzer, p. 72)

**Dr. Daniel R. Alonso**  
**Associate Dean for Admissions**  
**Cornell University Medical College**

We look for some originality because nine out of ten essays leave you with a big yawn. "I like science, I like to help people and that's why I want to be a doctor." The common, uninteresting, and unoriginal statement is one that recounts the applicant's academic pursuits and basically repeats what is elsewhere in the application. You look for something different, something that will pique your interest and provide some very unique insight that will make you pay some notice to this person who is among so many other qualified applicants. If you're screening 5,500 applications over a four- or six-month period, you want to see something that's really interesting.

I would simply say: Do it yourself, be careful, edit it, go through as many drafts as necessary. And more important than anything: be yourself. Really show your personality. Tell us why you are unique, why we should admit you. The premise is that 9 out of 10 people who apply to medical school are very qualified. Don't under any circumstances insert handwritten work or an unfinished piece of writing. Do a professional job. I would consider it a mistake to attempt to cram in too much information, too many words. Use the space as judiciously as possible. Don't submit additional pages or use only 1/20th of the space provided.

(Stelzer, p.81)

**John Herweg**  
**Chairman, Committee on Admissions**  
**Washington University School of Medicine**

We are looking for a clear statement that indicates that the applicant can use the English language in a meaningful and effective fashion. We frankly look at spelling as well as typing (for errors both in grammar and composition). Most applicants use the statement to indicate their motivation for medicine, the duration of that motivation, extracurricular activities, and work experience. So those are some of the general things we are looking for in the Personal Comments section.

We also want applicants to personalize the statement, to tell us something about themselves that they think is worthy of sharing with us, something that makes them unique, different, and the type of medical student and future physician that we're all looking for. What they have done in working with individuals—whether it's serving as a checker or bagger at a grocery store or working with handicapped individuals or tutoring inner city kids—that shows they can relate to people and have they done it in an effective fashion? What the applicant should do in all respects is to depict why he or she is a unique individual and should be sought after. Of course, if they start every sentence on a whole page with "I," it gets to be a little bit too much.

(Stelzer, p. 82)

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An excellent source of help is a book available in the Writing Lab (226 Heavilon Hall): Richard Stelzer's *How to Write a Winning Personal Statement for Graduate and Professional School* (Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guides, 1989). \$9.95

The book has guidelines for writing, examples of successful statements, and advice from admissions officers. This handout summarizes Stelzer's guidelines and contains a few of the examples he includes of statements and admissions officers' advice. If you wish to read more examples and do not purchase the book, you may read the Writing Lab's copy, which is on reserve in the lab.

## ***4. Personal Statement: Top 10 Rules and Pitfalls***

### **Writing the Personal Statement: Top 10 Rules**

1. Strive for depth rather than breadth. Narrow focus to one or two key themes, ideas or experiences
2. Try to tell the reader something that no other applicant will be able to say
3. Provide the reader with insight into what drives you
4. Be yourself, not the 'ideal' applicant
5. Get creative and imaginative in the opening remarks, but make sure it's something that no one else could write
6. Address the school's unique features that interest you
7. Focus on the affirmative in the personal statement; consider an addendum to explain deficiencies or blemishes
8. Evaluate experiences, rather than describe them
9. Proofread carefully for grammar, syntax, punctuation, word usage, and style
10. Use readable fonts, typeface, and conventional spacing and margins

### **Writing the Personal Statement: Top 10 Pitfalls**

1. Do not submit an expository resume; avoid repeating information found elsewhere on the application
2. Do not complain or whine about the "system" or circumstances in your life
3. Do not preach to your reader. You can express opinions, but do not come across as fanatical or extreme
4. Do not talk about money as a motivator
5. Do not discuss your minority status or disadvantaged background unless you have a compelling and unique story that relates to it
6. Do not remind the school of its rankings or tell them how good they are
7. Do not use boring clichéd intros or conclusions
  - "Allow me to introduce myself. My name is..."
  - "This question asks me to discuss..."
  - "I would like to thank the admissions committee for considering my application."
  - "It is my sincere hope that you will grant me the opportunity to attend your fine school."
  - "In sum, there are three reasons why you should admit me..."
8. Do not use unconventional and gimmicky formats and packages
9. Do not submit supplemental materials unless they are requested
10. Do not get the name of the school wrong
11. Do not incorporate technical language or very uncommon words

Stewart, Mark Alan. *Perfect Personal Statements*. New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1996.