University of Puerto Rico
Rio Piedras Campus
Deanship of Graduate Studies and Research

GRADUATE CATALOG



2026-2027

University of Puerto Rico
Río Piedras Campus
College of Natural Sciences

Address: 17 Ave. Universidad Ste. 1701, San Juan, PR 00925-2537

Phone: 787-764-0000 ext. 89087

Emails:
Acting Chair, Nutrition and Dietetics Program &
Graduate Program Coordinator
Nivia A. Fernández Hernández, Ed.D., MMSC, RDN, LND, CFCS
nivia.fernandez1@upr.edu

Webpage: https://natsci.uprrp.edu/nutricion/prospective-msnd-students/

DEGREE: **Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics with Supervised Experiential Learning, Distance**

OFFERING MODALITY: Distance Program

ACCREDITATION: The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) is the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' (AND) accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as registered dietitian nutritionists.

FACULTY:

Colón Morales, Edgardo, Ph. D., Assistant Professor (Contract)
Correa Matos, Nancy Ph.D., RDN, Associate Professor
Fernández Hernández, Nivia A. Ed.D., RDN, LND, CFCS, Full Professor
Mir Franqui, Celia, Ed.D., RDN, LND, Full Professor
Pérez Velázquez, Carmen M., DrPH, RDN, LND, Assistant Professor (Contract)
Pinto López, Elsa, Ph.D., RDN, LND, Full Professor
Rivera Sánchez, Sasha M., Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Toro Enríquez, Brenda, Ph.D., LND, Full Professor

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

UPR Río Piedras Campus General Admission Criteria for Graduate Programs

1. Bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) from an accredited or recognized university or college.

2. General Grade Point Average (GPA) equal or greater than 3.00 on a scale of 4.00. Each program will address exceptional cases according to each applicant's merits.
3. Be able to communicate orally and in writing in two languages, one of which should be Spanish or English.

Pathways and Specific Admission Criteria for the Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics with Supervised Experiential Learning, Distance

1. Direct entry admission for students with an ACEND's accredited bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics and receive a Verification Statement upon completion.

- Verification Statement (Verification Statement Baccalaureate in Nutrition and Dietetics accredited by ACEND and receive the Verification Statement once passed" or VS) of the accredited, approved baccalaureate degree. If the degree is an ACEND-accredited Foreign Dietitian Education Program, you must submit the FDE Verification Statement.
- Minimum 3.00 Grade Point Average on a 4.00-point scale
- Three letters of recommendation, two these from university professors
- Short essay (500 words) indicating how pursuing graduate studies will contribute to your development.
- Spanish and English proficiency
- Students for whom English is a second language must obtain a minimum score in TOEFL exam of 550 (paper-based) or 213 (computer-based). Exam must have been taken no more than five-years prior.

2. Students with a bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics.

- Bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics or equivalent from an authorized and accredited higher education institution in the US
- Undergraduate courses that constitute the Alternate Second major in Nutrition and Dietetics, under the bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Río Piedras Campus.
- Must have approved with C or more undergraduate courses
- Minimum 3.00 Grade Point Average on a 4.00-point scale
- Minimum 3.00 Grade Point Average in science and math courses on a 4.00-point scale.
- Three letters of recommendation, two of these from university professors
- Short essay (500 words) indicating how pursuing graduate studies will contribute to your development
- Spanish and English proficiency
- Students for whom English is a second language must obtain a minimum score in TOEFL exam of 550 (paper-based) or 213 (computer-based). Exam must have been taken no more than five-years prior.

To be eligible and prior to submitting an admission application to the graduate program:

- The Program will determine if any additional coursework is needed to complete undergraduate requirements. A course-by-course evaluation is required by corresponding institutional academic departments.

- Conditioned admission:
  - If at the deadline for admission application to the graduate program the Alternate Second Major requirements are in progress, upon evaluation of an official transcript, the Program will determine eligibility for a conditioned admission to the graduate program.

  - Students with conditioned admission are allowed up to a maximum of 9 credits of required undergraduate courses.

  - Students with conditioned admission are allowed a maximum extension of time to the first semester of the graduate program.

  - During the allowed extension of time, the student must complete successfully all undergraduate requirements for official admission to the graduate program.

  - Students under conditioned admission who do not comply with all undergraduate requirements during the maximum extension of time of the first semester will be dismissed from the graduate program.

For approved Foreign Degrees: https://www.cdrnet.org/RDNeligibility

- If the degree is an ACEND-accredited Foreign Dietitian Education (FDE) Program and was issued a Verification Statement, the FDE Verification Statement must be presented.

- If the degree is from outside the US, it Is required to have the official transcript evaluated by an approved Foreign Degree Evaluation Agency. https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/students-and-advancing-education/international-students/foreign-degree-evaluation-agencies
  - ✓ After receiving the evaluation report, contact the MSND-SEL program director to request a review of the official transcript and foreign degree evaluation report.

- The program will determine if any additional coursework is needed to complete program undergraduate requirements. A course-by-course evaluation is required by corresponding institutional academic departments.

3. Students from a Bachelor's degree in science other than nutrition and dietetics, as well as those who come from disciplines other than science.

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent from an authorized and accredited higher education institution in the US
- Undergraduate courses that constitute the Alternate Second major in Nutrition and Dietetics, under the bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Río Piedras Campus
- Must have approved with C or more undergraduate courses
- Minimum 3.00 Grade Point Average on a 4.00-point scale
- Minimum 3.00 Grade Point Average in science and math courses on a 4.00-point scale
- Three letters of recommendation, two of these from university professors
- Short essay (500 words) indicating how pursuing graduate studies will contribute to your development
- Spanish and English proficiency
- Students for whom English is a second language must obtain a minimum score in TOEFL exam of 550 (paper-based) or 213 (computer-based). Exam must have been taken no more than five-years prior.

To be eligible and prior to submitting an admission application to the graduate program:

- Admission to the Alternate Second Major is required for a course-by-course evaluation by corresponding institutional academic departments.

- Also, if any additional coursework is needed to complete program undergraduate requirements.

- Conditioned admission:
  - If at the deadline for admission application to the graduate program the Alternate Second Major requirements are in progress, upon evaluation of an official transcript, the Program will determine eligibility for a conditioned admission to the graduate program.

  - Students with conditioned admission are allowed up to a maximum of 9 credits of required undergraduate courses.

  - Students with conditioned admission are allowed a maximum extension of time to the first semester of the graduate program.

  - During the allowed extension of time, the student must complete successfully all undergraduate requirements for official admission to the graduate program.

  - Students under conditioned admission who do not comply will all undergraduate requirements during the maximum extension of time of the first semester will be dismissed from the graduate program.

For approved Foreign Degrees: https://www.cdrnet.org/RDNeligibility

- If the degree is from outside the US, it is required to have the official transcript evaluated by an approved Foreign Degree Evaluation Agency. https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/students-and-advancing-education/international-students/foreign-degree-evaluation-agencies

- After receiving the evaluation report, contact the MSND-SEL program director to request a review of the official transcript and foreign degree evaluation report.

- The Program will determine if any additional coursework is needed to complete undergraduate requirements. A course-by-course evaluation is required by corresponding institutional academic departments.

Language Proficiencies

It is a requirement for admission that all applicants be proficient in both, Spanish and English.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION APPLICATION:

1. Application for Admission to Graduate Studies, electronic format. https://solicitud.upr.edu/
2. Three letters of recommendation, two from university professors
3. Three official transcripts with conferred degrees. Initially, may submit a copy to open the application file.
4. Short essay (500 words) indicating how pursuing graduate studies will contribute to your development.
5. Official results of the TOEFL exam, taken no more than five years prior to application date.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

At the UPR Río Piedras Campus, to qualify as a degree candidate, students must comply with the following requirements:

1. Satisfactory completion of program's coursework with minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.
2. Complete graduation requirements within the length of time established by the University.
3. Not having debts with the institution.
4. Official submission of the Graduation Request to the Registrar's Office during the semester in which is expected to complete program's requirements and, in any case, later than the stipulated date established in the Academic Calendar for the

specific semester. These requests become official once graduation fee is paid, which is non-reimbursable.

5. Degree recommendation by the College-specific program and the institutional administration.

Students who complete the 45 credits with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or more and completed the minimum of 1,000 hours of supervised experiential learning will be recommended to the Office of the Registrar to be granted the degree. After the degree is conferred by the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus, the Verification Statement will be provided to program graduates by the MSND-SEL Program director, which verifies completion of requirements necessary to sit for the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) credentialing exam.

PROGRAM OF STUDY:

Componentes Curriculares			
Cursos medulares			
Código	**Título del curso**		**Créditos**
MATE 6686	Diseño Experimental y Análisis Avanzado de Datos		3
NUTR 6002	Métodos de Investigación en Nutrición y Dietética		3
NUTR 6003	Metabolismo de los Nutrientes		3
NUTR 6004	Ética y Profesionalismo		1
	Subtotal		10
Cursos de Especialidad			
Código	**Título del curso**		**Créditos**
NUTR 6010	Fisiopatología y Terapia Médico Nutricional		3
NUTR 6011	Fisiopatología en el Ciclo de Vida		3
NUTR 6012	Nutrición en Educación y Consejería		3
NUTR 6013	Avalúo y Diagnóstico Nutricional		3
NUTR 6111	Nutrición Mundial		3
NUTR 6112	Administración de Servicio de Alimentos		3
NUTR 6113	Conceptos Avanzados en Nutrición		3
	Subtotal		21
Projecto de Investigación			
Código	**Título del curso**		**Créditos**
NUTR 6110	Proyecto de Investigación		3
NUTR 6110	Proyecto de Investigación (Continuación)		0
	Subtotal		3
Experiencia de Aprendizaje Supervisado (EAS)			
Código	**Título del curso**	**Horas contacto (Cada**	**Créditos**
NUTR 6014	Experiencia de Aprendizaje Supervisado en Nutrición Clínica	270	3

NUTR 6115	Experiencia de Aprendizaje Supervisado en Nutrición en la Comunidad	180	2
NUTR 6116	Experiencia de Aprendizaje Supervisado en Administración de Sistemas de Servicio Alimentos	270	3
		Subtotal	8
Electiva			
Código	Course Title		Créditos
NUTR 6117	Electiva (Alimento, Cultura y Sociedad)		3
	Subtotal		3
	Total		**45**

COURSES DESCRIPTION:

MATH 6686 Advanced Data Analysis and Experimental Design
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and two hours of laboratory per week.
Prerequisite: MATE 3026
This course will introduce the student to commonly used methods in Experimental Design and Statistical Data Analysis, with applications in Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Sciences, Nutrition, etc. The student will use statistical programming languages for performing the analysis of data sets using the techniques studied in the course. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid and online.

NUTR 6002 Research Methods in Nutrition and Dietetics
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4198, or research course at undergraduate level or equivalent. MATE 3026, or equivalent undergraduate statistical analysis course.
Discussion of study design, research concepts and terminology associated with nutrition research. Emphasis is given to interpretation of research and a thorough understanding of the role of research in nutrition and dietetics practice. Discussion of the validity and reliability of instruments and the use of biomarkers. Students are expected to develop a research proposal to serve as part of their research project requirement. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6003 Nutrient Metabolism
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and research per week.
Prerrequisitos: NUTR 4158, NUTR 4159 or equivalent.
The course focuses on the biochemical function and metabolism of macronutrients, micronutrients and bioactive components in foods in different tissues and organs and its impact in health and disease states. Recent research in nutrient deficiency and excess and its implications in prevention and treatment of different health and disease states will be reviewed. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6004 Ethics and Professionalism
One credit. Two hours of lecture and discussion per week.
This course discusses the various components of professionalism in Nutrition and Dietetics with special emphasis on practice according to ethical and legal frameworks. Includes the discussion of personal attributes that comprise professionalism such as effective communication, interpersonal relations, commitment to lifelong learning and cultural competence. Analysis of the Standards of Practice in various practice settings and of the Scope of Practice for the nutrition and dietetics professional. This course will be offered online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6010 Medical Nutrition Therapy and Pathophysiology
Three credits. Three hours of lecture, discussion, and research per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4158, NUTR 4042, NUTR 4165, and NUTR 4169.
The course focuses on the integration of the theories and principles of medical nutrition therapy into clinical practice. Case studies will be used to integrate and apply knowledge of nutrition, dietetics, metabolism, and physiology, with the goal of preparing students who can effectively plan and manage the nutritional care of a variety of patients using a critical thinking approach to evidence-based medical nutrition therapy. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6011 Pathophysiology of Life Span
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4160, NUTR 4163, NUTR 4169, NUTR 4040
The course discusses the life stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence, pregnancy, and older adulthood from physiological, environmental, and behavioral perspectives. Focuses on the nutritional needs of each life stage to promote overall health and wellbeing of these populations. Nutritional care in the prevention and treatment of different nutrition-related conditions across the lifespan will be discussed. The course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6012 Nutrition Education and Counseling
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4170 or equivalent.
This course discusses evidence-based communication strategies, following the principles of cultural sensitivity, used for group and individual practice settings. Includes hands-on practice activities to develop interviewing skills and application of education and behavior change theories in educational interventions and written materials. Emphasis on how to present complex information to diverse groups, to identify barriers to learning and adjustments of educational interventions. Methods to evaluate effectiveness of counseling and education interventions are discussed. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6013 Nutrition Assessment Diagnosis
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Prerrequisitos: NUTR 4158, NUTR 4042, NUTR 4165, NUTR 4166, NUTR 4169.
The course focuses on the analyses of advanced skills and methods of nutritional assessment for individuals and in the community. Measurement and interpretation of nutrition-focused physical examination, medication interactions and laboratory parameters will be assessed. Diagnosing malnutrition and nutrient deficiencies, including clinical characteristics used to identify and determine the degree of malnutrition will be discussed. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6110 Research Project
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4198, MATE 6686.
The course focuses on the application of research methods to complete a research project in foods and nutrition. Students will be guided under the supervision of a faculty member according to the stage of their project. This course will be offered online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English. Course constitutes a full-time academic load for the student.

NUTR 6111 Global Nutrition
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Fundamentals of health promotion and disease prevention using food and nutrition for individuals and communities, with emphasis on global food systems, international populations, their cultures, and geopolitical contexts. Concepts and methods for community-based screening and research programs as evidence for developing, implementing, and evaluating public health nutrition policy through skill-building and participatory activities, as well as developing critical thinking through the evaluation of community nutrition case studies in different contexts around the globe. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6112 Foodservice Management
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4055, NUTR 4068, NUTR 4075, NUTR 4076, NUTR 4086.Discussion of the processes of each of the subsystems in a foodservice. Emphasis on transforming resources into food quality and quantity, customer and employee satisfaction, and financial accountability. Discussion of management principles to achieve projects goals and objectives in an effective and efficient way. The course focuses on the competencies of the professional in nutrition and dietetics working in the institutional or commercial foodservice sector. Through emphasis on teamwork, case studies, and projects, students will demonstrate their competency in applying dietetic skills in a foodservice system. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6113 Advanced Concepts in Nutrition
Three credits. Three hours of lecture, discussion and research thesis or dissertation per week.
Prerequisite: MATE 6686.
Discussion of contemporary issues in foods and nutrition. Critical analysis of the scientific literature and the impact each topic may have in the population. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6014 Clinical Nutrition Supervised Experiential Learning
Three credits. Three hours of reading and discussion per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4165, NUTR 4169, NUTR 4166 or equivalent.
This course will provide 270 hours of supervised experiential learning experiences in clinical of institutionalized patients and outpatient clinics. The purpose of the course is to provide the student with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills in the clinical area in a real scenario. Learning experiences are offered off campus under the supervision of a preceptor or licensed nutritionist and dietitian. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English. Constitutes a full-time academic load for the student.

NUTR 6115 Community Nutrition Supervised Experiential Learning
Two credits. Lecture, discussion, and supervised practice.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4170, NUTR 4175, NUTR 4176 and NUTR 6111.
This course will provide 180 hours of supervised experiential learning experiences in the facilities that serve the community. The purpose of the course is to provide the student with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills in the community area in a real scenario. Learning experiences are offered in practice sites off campus under the supervision of preceptors or licensed Nutritionists and Dietitians. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English. Constitutes a full-time academic load for the student.

NUTR 6116 Foodservice Management Supervised Experiential Learning
Three credits. Three hours of lecture, discussion and supervised practice per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4075, NUTR 4076, NUTR 4085, NUTR 4086 and NUTR 6112.
This course will provide 270 hours of supervised experiential learning experiences in foodservice management. The purpose of the learning activities and assignments is to provide the student with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills in food service management in a health care setting. Experiences are offered in practice sites that may be off campus, under the supervision of preceptors or a licensed Nutritionist and Dietitian. This course can be offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. Course can be offered in Spanish or English. Constitutes a full-time academic load for the student.

NUTR 6117 Elective (Food, Culture and Society)
Three credits. Three hours of lecture and discussion per week
Prerequisites: None
This course focuses on a comprehensive analysis of environmental and sociocultural factors that shape human eating practices. Nutrition-focused, culturally specific eating

practices for chronic disease prevention and intervention are discussed. Cultural competency strategies for nutrition professionals are emphasized. The course will be online. The course can be offered in Spanish or English.

NUTR 6120 Research Project (Continuation)
Zero credits. Three hours of discussion and research per week.
Prerequisites: NUTR 4198 Research Methods in Nutrition, NUTR 6002 Research Methods in Nutrition and Dietetics, MATE 6686 Experimental Design and Advanced Data Analysis
The course focuses on the application of research methods to conduct and continue a research project in food and nutrition. Students will be guided under the supervision of a faculty member according to the stage of their project. This course will be repeated until the research project is completed. This course will be offered online. The course can be offered in Spanish or English. Constitutes a full-time academic load for the student.