



Applied Human Sciences: Hospitality Management and Dietetics



The Evaluation of the Food, Nutrition, and Wellness degree at Western Kentucky University

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HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT AND DIETETICS MAJOR

- ❖ Three Concentrations
 - ❖ Hospitality Management
 - ❖ Nutrition and Dietetics
 - ❖ Food, Nutrition, and Wellness



FOOD, NUTRITION, AND WELLNESS CONCENTRATION

- ▶ Added as a concentration in 2003.
- ▶ The WKU faculty decided there was a need for a food and nutrition focused concentration to provide a 4 year degree outside the nationally accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD).
- ▶ The second degree would help the DPD program meet its goals.

Goal 2: The program will prepare students to successfully compete for supervised practice experiences that lead to eligibility for the Commission on Dietetics Registration Examination

- Program completion: 80% of students enrolled in the professional courses in the third year of the DPD program are expected to complete program/degree requirements within three years
- Supervised Practice Application Rate: Over a 5 year period, 65% of the graduates will apply to supervised practice programs within 12 months of graduation.
- Supervised Practice Acceptance Rate: over a 5 year period 50% of those applying to supervised practice programs within 12 months of graduation will be accepted.
- Within 4 years following graduation the mean graduate rating on the quality of preparation for an internship will be at least a 3.5 on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0, with 5.0 being the best level of preparation.



FOOD, NUTRITION, AND WELLNESS CONCENTRATION

- ▶ The target audience for the Food, Nutrition, and Wellness concentration were:
 - ▶ Students who did not want to complete a Dietetic Internship.
 - ▶ Students who did not meet the admission requirements for the WKU DPD program.
 - ▶ Students who had a low chance of obtaining a dietetic internship due to academic shortcomings or other factors.



FOOD, NUTRITION, AND WELLNESS CONCENTRATION

- ▶ The problem:
- ▶ The WKU faculty felt this degree was a “fallback” degree for students in the DPD program initially.
- ▶ The faculty were concerned that the degree was not providing a definable career path.
- ▶ The faculty were interested in the graduates’ professional careers, satisfaction with the degree, and recommended curricular changes for the concentration.



FOOD, NUTRITION, AND WELLNESS CONCENTRATION

- ▶ The purpose of this research was:
- ▶ To investigate the career paths of graduates of the FNW degree.
- ▶ To seek information regarding how the FNW degree could be revised to provide better opportunity, knowledge, and skills for the graduates of the program.
- ▶ To determine the perceived value the graduates of the program have toward the program.
- ▶ To study what led the graduates to choose the FNW concentration.



LITERATURE REVIEW

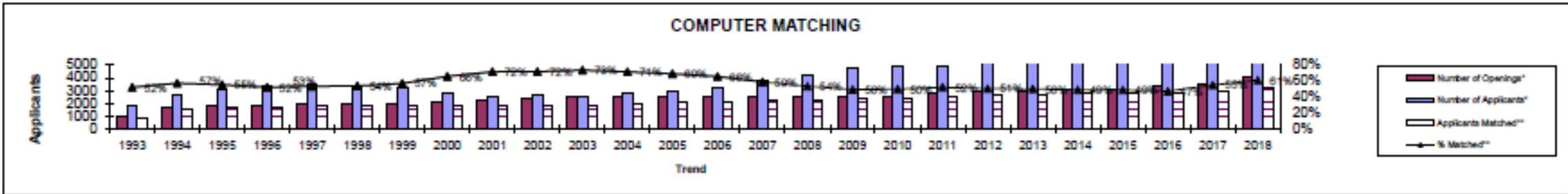
- ▶ 2018 DPD students match rate to Dietetic internship was 62%, which is an increase from 56% in 2017 (ACEND, March 2020)
- ▶ Competition for internships is “extremely fierce” (ACEND, March 2020).
- ▶ GPA “Make sure that your GPA is above the minimum required by the internship.” (ACEND, March 2020).
- ▶ GPA is one of several criteria reviewed when assessing internship applications, it is often a factor that is weighted significantly (ACEND, March 2020).



DI PROGRAMS COMPUTER MATCHING

Percent change in number of openings, applicants, and applicants matched to DI Programs participating in Computer Matching Process (April/November)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% chge one year
Number of Openings*	1005	1681	1,824	1,900	1,995	2,036	2,026	2,163	2,305	2351	2542	2509	2533	2522	2520	2476	2531	2483	2797	2926	2963	3078	3158	3389	3568	4043	13%
Number of Applicants*	1811	2722	3,075	3,370	3,522	3,400	3,184	2,859	2,561	2622	2607	2782	2992	3263	3793	4252	4799	4864	4945	5386	5444	5804	5853	5944	5484	5292	-4%
Applicants Matched**	947	1561	1,702	1,761	1,884	1,838	1,817	1,882	1,832	1877	1916	1989	2062	2144	2235	2275	2385	2436	2589	2732	2738	2854	2870	2823	3026	3248	7%
% Matched**	52%	57%	55%	52%	53%	54%	57%	66%	72%	72%	73%	71%	69%	66%	59%	54%	50%	50%	52%	51%	50%	49%	49%	47%	55%	61%	11%



APRIL MATCH ONLY	2007	2008	%Chge	2009	%Chge	2010	%Chge	2011	%Chge	2012	%Chge	2013	%Chge	2014	%Chge	2015	%Chge	2016	%Chge	2017	%Chge	2018	%Chge
Number of Openings*	2289	2283	0%	2323	2%	2426	4%	2570	6%	2719	6%	2745	1%	2836	3%	2864	1%	2992	4%	3181	6%	3609	12%
Number of Applicants*	3354	3765	12%	4214	12%	4328	3%	4425	2%	4811	9%	4851	1%	5140	6%	5192	1%	5200	0%	4839	-7%	4727	-2%
Applicants Matched**	2032	2081	2%	2184	5%	2235	2%	2379	6%	2539	7%	2523	-1%	2618	4%	2608	0%	2676	3%	2713	1%	2940	8%
Unfilled Positions	257	190	-26%	139	-27%	206	48%	208	1%	180	-13%	222	23%	218	-2%	256	15%	316	19%	468	32%	669	30%
% Matched**	61%	55%	-9%	52%	-6%	52%	0%	54%	4%	53%	-2%	52%	-1%	51%	-2%	50%	-1%	51%	2%	56%	8%	62%	10%

*Number of openings, applicants and number of matched students includes preselects

Preselect students	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Preselect students	77	101	124	114	147	133	140	159	187	226	196	127	129	181	93	232



METHODS

- ▶ Qualitative Study
- ▶ Total of 38 2012 – 2016 graduates of the FNW concentration were contacted or attempted to be contacted by WKU faculty and a graduate student.
- ▶ Contact was attempted through last known email address, Facebook, LinkedIn, and faculty professional connections.
- ▶ 12 (31.5%) graduates of the concentration agreed to participate and were interviewed.
- ▶ IRB approval was obtained.



METHODS

- ▶ The interview protocol was reviewed and discuss by three dietetics faculty until agreement on the interview questions was obtained.
- ▶ All interviews were conducted by a WKU faculty member using a semi-structured format.
- ▶ All interviews were conducted via telephone.
- ▶ Interviews were transcribed and coded.
 - ▶ Themes and trends were identified.
 - ▶ Three individuals coded and analyzed the interviews.



METHODS

▶ Examples of the Interview Questions

- ▶ Please walk me through your career/work history since graduating including your current position.
- ▶ In your work life, what are you passionate about?
- ▶ Upon declaring as a food, nutrition, and wellness major how did you envision your professional career?
- ▶ Since graduating with the food, nutrition, and wellness degree have you returned to school to pursue another degree or certification? If so, what degree or certification?
- ▶ How has your food, nutrition, and wellness degree prepared you for your current career?
- ▶ What are the most valuable or beneficial skills you gained through the food, nutrition, and wellness program?
- ▶ What could be changed about the food, nutrition, and wellness degree to make it more valuable?
- ▶ Based on what you know now would you still decide to major in food, nutrition, and wellness? Please explain.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- ▶ 12 participants
 - ▶ 3 Males; 9 Females
 - ▶ 3 participants working in non-degree related positions
 - ▶ 6 participants work in managerial/supervisory roles
 - ▶ 1 participant returned for a second Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

▶ Current Professions

- ▶ Nurse
- ▶ Supply Chain Research
- ▶ Medical Device Sales
- ▶ Food Program Manager on an Army base
- ▶ Senior Sales Executive (Non-nutrition/food based)
- ▶ Restaurant General Manager
- ▶ Business Owner – gym
- ▶ Dietary Manager – Nursing Home
- ▶ Fitness Director – gym
- ▶ Family and Consumer Sciences Cooperative Extension Agent
- ▶ Cafeteria Manager in a School System
- ▶ Nutrition Supervisor in a Hospital Setting



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- ▶ Of the 12 participants 11 started in the Nutrition and Dietetics concentration
 - ▶ Stated reasons for moving to FNW concentration included:
 - ▶ Did not want to do an internship (6)
 - ▶ Academics (4)
 - ▶ Participant 6 stated “If I was to get an internship, I would have to have straight A’s for everything I took...And it made more sense to not be so risky.”
 - ▶ Did not want to work in a “hospital or nursing home”
 - ▶ Participant 7 stated “I never wanted to go into the hospital setting and stuff like that”
 - ▶ More interested in “food service” than “dietetics”
 - ▶ Time commitment to become a Dietitian (2)
 - ▶ Likes sales and “did not want to be in an office”
 - ▶ Was interested in nutrition and wellness, not disease states, clinical settings
 - ▶ Participant 9 stated “I wish it wasn’t so much learning about someone with a disease but maybe relating more to a healthy individual.”
 - ▶ Two participants described themselves as “body builders”



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- ▶ What degrees or certificate obtained or working toward obtaining since graduating
 - ▶ Completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing
 - ▶ Group fitness certificate
 - ▶ CDM (2)



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

▶ Most “Beneficial” Classes

- ▶ MNT Classes (2)
- ▶ Cooking Classes (5)
- ▶ Senior Seminar (2)
- ▶ Nutrition Research Theory
- ▶ Finance/Accounting
- ▶ Advanced Nutrition
- ▶ Wellness and Fitness Assessment (2)
- ▶ Human Resource Management (2)
- ▶ Management 210
- ▶ Community Nutrition
- ▶ Hospitality Management Classes
- ▶ Cost Control

▶ Least “Beneficial” Classes

- ▶ Hospitality Management Classes (2)
- ▶ Cost Control
- ▶ Medical Nutrition Therapy (4)
- ▶ Organic Chemistry (2)



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- ▶ Perceived Benefits of the FNW degree
 - ▶ Provided a 4 year college degree
 - ▶ Provided a degree that paired well with medical device sales and pharmaceutical sales
 - ▶ Ready for entry level foodservice management jobs
 - ▶ Use the nutrition and wellness information everyday in personal lives
 - ▶ Good base degree for personal training, physical training
 - ▶ Able to provide general nutrition advice (The FNW majors repeatedly stated they knew they were not legally allowed to provide MNT nor did they feel comfortable providing MNT, that was for RDNs only)
 - ▶ Provided knowledge needed for school nutrition management/educating the “kids” on nutritional choices.
 - ▶ Provided a good base of management principles.
 - ▶ Provided a “well-rounded” degree.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- ▶ Recommended changes to the FNW concentration by former graduates.
 - ▶ Addition of an internship/practicum to the concentration
 - ▶ Communicate the different types of career opportunities available to students in the concentration. Have former graduates of the program come and speak. Learn about graduate school and programs that align well with the FNW concentration
 - ▶ Increase focus or add a class to build customer service skills, interpersonal communication skills, soft skills, employee relations.
 - ▶ Participant 4 stated “I think I did pretty well with the management, but...having people under me, working with them...that was definitely not something that I was used to.”
 - ▶ Participant 7 stated “Becoming ...a people person: just taking my knowledge and trying to transmit it to others.”
 - ▶ Increase focus on nutrition and wellness and/or nutrition for healthy individuals vs. specific diseases
 - ▶ Add exercise science classes
 - ▶ Recommended the degree would be able to lead to becoming a DTR.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- ▶ FNW participants evaluation of the degree
 - ▶ 9 of the 12 participants would choose to major in FNW again
 - ▶ 2 of the 9 participants would add another major (1 business; 1 exercise science)
 - ▶ 3 of the 12 participants would choose not to major in FNW again
 - ▶ 1 participant would choose a nursing degree
 - ▶ 1 participant would choose a business degree
 - ▶ 1 participant would choose a psychology degree



POST INTERVIEW ACTIONS

- ▶ The degree requirements for the FNW concentration changed the MNT classes to electives.
- ▶ Increase electives in exercise science, public health, and sports and recreations to allow students to customize the degree to their interests.
- ▶ Changed a 400 level management class to a “Classroom as an Organization” (Putzel, 2007) format, which focuses on communication skills, building trust, giving and receiving constructive criticism, management skills, and what is often referred to as “soft skills”.



CONCLUSIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- ▶ Dietetics was perceived as a very narrowly focused profession/degree, FNW appealed to individuals not interested in clinical dietetics but other areas of nutrition.
- ▶ FNW graduates indicated they felt dietetics focused too much on nutrition and disease states rather than nutrition and health promotion.
- ▶ Academic markers and/or internship requirements were often considered in determining a students switch from the DPD program to the FNW program.



QUESTIONS WKU FACULTY STARTED TO DISCUSS

How do we communicate the field of dietetics to include all the different roles that dietitians fill?

How do we recruit students interested in the business of foodservice and nutrition?

How do we communicate to students the role dietitians play in nutrition in healthy individuals as well as individuals suffering from nutrition related illnesses?

How is the focus on academic markers impacting the diversity of DPD program graduates?

How much should academic performance impact the selection process of dietetic interns?

Is the “innovative climate low” because the pressures of competing for dietetic internships results in risk adverse applicants.

Because of the shortage of intern spots compared to applicants are we decreasing the diversity of dietetic interns?



REFERENCES

- ▶ ACEND (March, 2020). Percent change in the number of openings, applicants, and applicants matched to DI programs participating in computer matching process (April/November).
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