

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the best way to get started with the SFS Curriculum?

This Implementation Guide offers “Step-by-Step Guidance for Integrating Sustainable Food Systems Content in Dietetics Education,” which includes 1) Formulating a Team, 2) Determining Competencies and Identifying Appropriate SFS Activities within the SFS Curriculum and Guide, 3) Integrating New Activities, 4) Implementing and Assessing Activities with Students, and 5) Re-Assessing Annually (available on page 4). There are supporting documents available to assist directors and educators, such as a [Worksheet](#) to facilitate the process of identifying and incorporating new activities (available on page 16 of this Guide) and [Sample Rubrics](#) (available on page 24).

How many supervised practice hours is the full curriculum?

In total, the SFS Curriculum activities are designed to take approximately 120 supervised practice hours. The curriculum has value even if not implemented in full, and we encourage programs to implement individual activities as they are able. Each individual activity is estimated to take 5-10 hours depending on students’ availability and interest.

How can the curriculum be integrated into a dietetic internship?

The curriculum can be completed 1) as a full three-week rotation, 2) adopted as a concentration, or 3) as 12 stand-alone activities. The curriculum has value even if not implemented in full, and we encourage programs to implement individual activities as they are able. See the [Case Studies at Four University Sites](#) section for examples of how different program types – including in-person, distance, and hybrid programs of varying cohort sizes – have implemented the curriculum (available on page 5 of the Guide).

How can I manage these assignments when students are at different sites?

The curriculum is designed to be completed asynchronously. View [Sample Plan](#) on page 15 of the Guide as an example of how the activities can be integrated within supervised practice. **Table 2** provides suggestions for the undergraduate or graduate courses for each activity and examples of in-person and virtual modifications.

The interactive webinar series is another set of activities designed for students at different sites. The webinars can be offered as optional, supplemental activities or fully incorporated into required activities (available on pages 11 - 12 of the Guide). By participating in the webinar series, students can 1) engage in a recorded webinar and learn from a food systems expert, 2) practice a hands-on activity at their own pace, and 3) reconvene virtually for synthesis and evaluation.

How will this impact preceptors?

The four University Sites shared an overwhelmingly positive response from the preceptors who assisted students in completing activities within the SFS Curriculum. One preceptor shared that “helping interns complete activities within the SFS Curriculum has sparked a former passion in engaging in food systems”.

If preceptors feel that they lack experience to assist students with these activities, the Sustainable Food Systems Primer is an excellent resource that offers 2.0 CPEU and can provide preceptors

with a foundational knowledge of how sustainable food systems is related to the practice of nutrition and dietetics (available on page 13 of the Guide).

Where can I meet, connect and engage with other educators incorporating content related to sustainable food systems?

One of the most valuable ways to build capacity in a new focus area is to find a network of educators with whom you can share success stories and challenges. This Implementation Guide was conceptualized and guided by a working group of nutrition educators and students. Our working group was a productive and supportive space for educators to share success stories, challenges, resources, and connections. We encourage educators to connect with others who interested in sustainable food systems content in a similar way.

Options for connecting with others include:

- See the SFS Educational Directory on the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation's [Future of Food](#) page to identify other sites that may be implementing the SFS curriculum or are incorporating sustainable food systems content into their programs in other ways. There are sites that have incorporated food systems content into dietetics education long before the curriculum was developed, and there is a great depth of knowledge within the profession.
- Connect with Dietetics Practice Groups with an interest in this area, including Hunger and Environmental Nutrition (HEN) and the Food and Culinary Professionals (FCP) Agriculture Subgroup.
- Attend annual Nutrition and Dietetic Educators and Preceptors (NDEP) Regional Meetings

How can I identify sites that offer virtual farm or food manufacturing tours?

In-person farm and manufacturing tours are becoming increasingly challenging to fit within a supervised practice or other dietetics education program. Strategies that programs found useful include:

- Connect with cooperative extension agencies within your state
- Reach out to land-grant universities or the local/state extension agents. Many land-grant institutions still have functional agriculture, farm, or dairy operations that already integrate students and education within their operations. While these provide only one perspective for a farm or manufacturing operation, they may already offer tours for student groups.
- Think creatively about food manufacturing. For example, a brewery/distillery or local coffee roasting house may offer a unique perspective for the process of turning raw product into food or beverages.
- Reach out to organizations that already offer tours to the public and see if there are existing tours that your students can join.
- Don't be afraid to ask a place that has never offered a tour. The curriculum offers good discussion questions to aide a follow-up student conversation and reflection.
- Consider virtual tours. These are becoming much more popular and are available from a variety of large manufacturers.

Are there alternatives to an in-person farm tour?

While an in-person farm tour is the best way to engage students in agricultural practices, there are a variety of virtual farm tours available online. Some examples are offered from the [National Agriculture in the Classroom](#), [FarmFood360](#) and the [U.S. Dairy Alliance](#)

How can I assess student work if I lack familiarity with the topic area?

A sample rubric is available on page 24 of the Guide, which focuses on the quality of work, intended audience, and overall mechanics and organization. The Sustainable Food Systems Primer is another resource that offers 2.0 CPEU and can provide preceptors or educators with foundational knowledge of how sustainable food systems relates to the practice of nutrition and dietetics (available on page 13 of the Guide).

Does the entire curriculum need to be used?

The SFS Curriculum can be completed as different stand-alone activities. Whether you are able to incorporate one component or all of the curriculum, we hope that students will begin to gain an understanding of how food systems and sustainability relate to food, nutrition, and dietetics practice.

Can the curriculum activities be modified to fit my program?

Absolutely! The case study examples from the four University Sites show concrete ways to modify the curriculum for various dietetic education settings, including within a stand-alone internship, combined MS/DI, and/or distance internships. **Table 2** offers descriptions of in-person and virtual modifications that program sites used during the 2019-2020 academic year.

Can the curriculum be modified for virtual learning?

You can [download a summary](#) that offers how each of the SFS Curriculum activities can be modified for online or distance learning. For example, if the activity includes a 20-minute presentation, this presentation is suggested to be a virtual webinar. Or for the School Foodservice Program, in place of interviewing the school foodservice director, you can conduct a virtual interview and research how schools are adapting to school closures during COVID-19 and ways in which they are providing meals to children. Write a 2-page paper summarizing the 1) problem, 2) solutions from 2+ school systems, and 3) compare the approach.

The two new webinar series ([Exploring Malnutrition Through the Lens of System Thinking](#) and [Gaining Ground: Applying, Individual, Policy, System, & Environmental Change to Sustainable Food Systems Initiatives](#)) are also excellent ways to engage students and interns in virtual learning.

Can the curriculum be implemented in undergraduate or graduate coursework?

Yes, **Table 2** provides suggestions for the undergraduate or graduate courses for each activity. For example, the Food Preservation Workshop activity could be incorporated in a Quantity Foods course or the Food Policy Activity could be included as an assignment in a Dietetics Practice or Advanced Nutrition course. Activity assignments could be modified for graduate coursework by increasing the required readings, required peer-reviewed journal, and page length.

What if students are not interested in these topics?

One part of education is effectively balancing what students need to learn for practice in the field with what students are interested in learning. Our University Sites shared that students who completed experiential learning in sustainable food systems developed skills in problem-solving, critical thinking, systems thinking, and evidence-based analysis. After completing the activities, students reported an increased interest in engaging in sustainability and food systems during their academic career. Those with demonstrated knowledge of sustainability and food systems

have a competitive advantage when seeking employment. Dietetic programs offering activities in food system and sustainability provide unique training for the next generation of food and nutrition professionals.

What additional resources are available to support implementing the curriculum?

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation's [Future of Food](#) page includes a variety of educational resources at the intersection of agriculture, food systems, and nutrition. The pre-reading material within the SFS Curriculum and Beyond the Curriculum section within this Guide also provide additional learning resources that are available to support implementing the curriculum.

I am a distance student, are there any specific requirements for potential locations of in-person activities?

The activities are designed to be completed in a variety of settings, including clinical, food service, or community rotations in addition to undergraduate and graduate courses. If completing activities in-person is a challenge, **Table 2** describes modification recommendations for students to complete the curriculum in an asynchronous distance learning format.

Should I have these activities set up when applying to or before matching to an internship?

The majority of distance dietetic internships provide recommendations for setting up rotation sites before applying or matching with their program. While it is likely helpful to have the activities identified before you match with a program, it is not a requirement in order to complete the activities.

What experiences may qualify me for Prior Assessed Learning (PAL) credits?

There are dietetic internships that accept Prior Assessed Learning (PAL) credits, a program recognized by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) to grant internship credit based on the qualified student's previous life experiences. Contact your program directly to learn more about what might be eligible.

What career resources does the Academy Foundation provide to match dietetic interns with jobs in the food system?

In some cases, "who you know" is just as important as "what you know" when applying for jobs. Networking with other professionals working within the food system is an excellent way to learn more about career opportunities and potentially land a job within the field. A good way to network is by joining Dietetics Practice Groups within the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that have a focus in this area, including the Hunger and Environmental Nutrition (HEN) Sustainable Food Systems Subgroup and the Food and Culinary Professionals (FCP) Agriculture Subgroup.