

5-5-1998

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University Marketing and Communications, "05/05/1998 - Easterns Dietetics Internship Receives Accreditation.pdf" (1998). 1998. 134.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1998/134

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98-186

May 5, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EASTERN'S DIETETICS INTERNSHIP RECEIVES ACCREDITATION

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University's Dietetic Internship has recently been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation/Approval for Dietetic Education of The American Dietetic Association (ADA).

The internship is an integral part of the Master of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences-Dietetics Option and is available only as part of that graduate degree program.

The program features a nutrition education emphasis and is among the first to be accredited under the more stringent 1997 ADA Standards of Education. "We are delighted to have achieved this milestone," said program director Ruth Dow, RD, Ph.D., FADA.

Program strengths cited by the accreditation team after their site visit last September are the expertise and dedication of the director; strong faculty and administrative support; clinical preceptors who are highly qualified, professional, excellent role models and dedicated to the success of the program; strength in nutrition education, meeting the

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Society for Nutrition Education criteria for nutrition education specialist; university courses and internship which complement each other; flexibility of the program to meet intern needs; and excellent communication among dietetic interns, preceptors and the School of Family

and Consumer Sciences. The site visit team stated, "we are really impressed with the program; it is a wonderful program."

Currently 10 graduate dietetic interns are in the six hospitals affiliated with the program to provide a minimum of 27 weeks' experience in clinical, foodservice/management and community dietetics: BroMenn Health Care, Bloomington; Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana; Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center, Mattoon; St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital, Effingham; St. Mary's Hospital, Decatur; and Provena United Samaritans Medical Center, Danville. "We are very grateful for the outstanding support of all involved with the program on campus, at cooperating agencies, and at the six affiliated facilities," Dow noted.

She led the development and has directed the graduate program in dietetics, first as a pilot program in 1979, with approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in 1981. The program evolved from individualized supervised practice combined with a master's degree, to an Approved Preprofessional Practice Program, to a dietetic internship eligible for accreditation. At Eastern's May 9 commencement, the 200th graduate will receive a master's degree in the dietetics program.

In addition to the extensive self-study preceding the site visit and accreditation

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decision, the program produced a short video depicting interns at the affiliated facilities and community agencies.

Dow recently was honored as an Outstanding Dietetic Educator from the Illinois Dietetic Association and The American Dietetic Association Area V (six midwestern states).