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### 06/03/1988 - EIU's Supervised Practice Program in Dietetics Receives Approval

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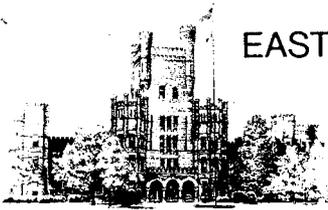
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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
Charleston, Illinois

# news

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EIU'S SUPERVISED PRACTICE PROGRAM IN DIETETICS RECEIVES APPROVAL

CHARLESTON, IL.--For the first time ever, Eastern Illinois University has been able to seek approval of its Pre-Professional Practice Program for candidates in the masters of science in home economics-dietetics option degree program.

And, the program has passed with flying colors, according to Dr. Ruth Dow, dietetics program coordinator at Eastern.

Eastern's Approved Pre-Professional Practice Program (AP4) consists of 1,050 clock hours of dietetic clinical/administrative/community experience.

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It is one of eight programs in the United States that has recently been approved for 10 years by the Council on Education Division of Education Accreditation/American Dietetic Association (ADA).

At Eastern, the AP4 is available only as part of the graduate dietetics option.

Dow said the ADA recently initiated this new approval process which is designed to strengthen and improve the quality of dietetic education.

"Although we already have a quality program, it is a very important step for our program to be approved. This new process indicates that we have undergone a rigorous review," Dow said.

The self-study required for ADA approval is a lengthy, meticulous process. Required documentation is the same as for accreditation, except that a site visit is not included.

The study was completed last November and involved the School of Home Economics faculty and administrators, the School Dietetics Advisory Council, supervised practice coordinators from all affiliated hospitals and others.

In its report, the ADA commended the program for its strong administrative support and well qualified program director.

Initiated in 1979 on a pilot basis, the current program received Illinois Board of High Education approval as a combined master's/clinical experience program in 1981.

Seven Illinois hospitals are now affiliated with the graduate dietetics program, which includes both courses and the Pre-Professional Practice Program.

They include Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center, Mattoon; Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana; St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital, Effingham; St. Mary's Hospital, Decatur; St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville; BroMenn Health Care, Bloomington; and United Samaritans Medical Center, Danville.

Dow said most students complete part of their graduate coursework before they begin the Pre-Professional Practice Program. However, it is possible for students at nearby facilities to begin classes and the supervised practice simultaneously.

Completion of the graduate dietetics program qualifies the graduate to write a dietetic registration exam.

Since 1979, a total of 58 students have graduated and written the exam or will be eligible to write the next exam.

"We have said from the inception of the program that our graduates are qualified to practice dietetics any place. However, we do think the experience and ability to practice in a non-metropolitan area is an asset," Dow commented.

She said there are many excellent job opportunities in dietetics, adding that most of Eastern's graduates become registered dietitians, employed as chief clinical dietitians, dietary consultants, nutritionists or food service directors.

There has also been a growing trend in the number of graduates who go into private dietetic practice, Dow commented.

Since Eastern's newly approved program will be included in the 1989 Directory of Dietetic Programs, she anticipates that the number of applicants from a broader geographical area will increase. The graduate program complements the current approved undergraduate dietetics program at Eastern.

Currently, there are approximately 10 graduate students completing their dietetic supervised practice program at area hospitals.