



## **THE NUTRITION ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

# **FIELD EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES**

**Parts I, II, III**



Spring 2010

## FOREWORD

In collaboration with Registered Dietitians from various San Francisco Bay Area community nutrition and health care programs and hospitals, we offer a valuable hands-on training opportunity for the students of the Nutrition Assistant Program of City College of San Francisco. We hope that you will find these Guidelines useful to facilitate the field experience component of the vocational program. Your suggestions for future improvements will be very much appreciated. Please communicate them to the Program Coordinator at any time.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The on-campus Nutrition Clinics are planned in collaboration with CCSF Student Health Center and Physical Education Department's Health & Wellness Center to provide the Nutrition Assistant Program students experience in one-on-one nutrition counseling under the supervision of a faculty Registered Dietitian.

### *FIELD EXPERIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:*

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- *Field Experience Preceptors*

The Advisory Committee also acknowledges Sonia S. Scanlan, MNS, RD, who was instrumental in the development of the Nutrition Assistant Program, for her vision, leadership, and commitment to excellence.

The format for listing the competencies and objectives, learning activities, evaluation and resources is based on *Guidelines for Community Nutrition Supervised Experiences*, Public Health/Community Nutrition Practice Group, The American Dietetic Association, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2003.

The final performance evaluation is adapted from *Training in Health Education* by UCLA School of Public Health, 1992.

The progress evaluations of student's performance are adapted from *Training Manual, Nutritionist Assistant Career Studies Certificate Program*, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College and Division of Public Health Nutrition WIC Program, Department of Health, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, August 1992.

Additional information from *Dietetics Preceptor Training Program* by Commission on Dietetics Registration, American Dietetic Association, 2009.

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\*electronic version of forms available—see HOEC 106 Field Experience link at [www.ccsf.edu/lyamashi](http://www.ccsf.edu/lyamashi)

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# **PART I**

## **OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM AND FIELD EXPERIENCE**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Field Experience Guidelines provide supporting materials for the field experience component of the Nutrition Assistant (NA) Program at City College of San Francisco. It contains an overview of the program, guidelines for students and preceptors, evaluation forms, and required competencies and objectives which are linked with learning activities, and recommended resources. The Guidelines also include an optional worksheet (Field Experience Learning Activities) to help plan and document learning activities on a weekly basis to serve as a guide for students and preceptors. For convenience, electronic versions of all forms and evaluation tools can be accessed from the HOEC 106 Field Experience link from the website at [www.ccsf.edu/lyamashi](http://www.ccsf.edu/lyamashi).

The didactic part of the program covers the following required courses: *Nutrition for Health; Foodways Nutrition and Health; Life Span Nutrition and Assessment; and Clinical and Community Nutrition.*

The field experience applies and builds on the knowledge learned from the didactic part of the NA Program. It consists of a total of 160 hours of training under the supervision of a registered dietitian (RD) at various field experience sites in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The field experience offers planned learning activities for the student to achieve the following competencies: nutrition screening and risk assessment, nutrition education, nutrition counseling, intercultural communication, menu planning, foodservice sanitation and safety, community resource referral, and job-specific computer skills.

The performance evaluation of students will be based on continuous evaluation, verbal feedback from preceptors, a midterm progress evaluation and a final performance evaluation.

For students, we hope that you will find the field experience a valuable opportunity to develop marketable job skills in the field of nutrition and health. For preceptors, we hope it will be a mutually beneficial experience, adding rewards and challenges to your jobs. Our sincere appreciation and thanks for mentoring our future nutrition paraprofessionals, and for your valuable contributions to our program and profession.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT**

The Nutrition Assistant (NA) Program values the promotion of healthy living through education, nutrition resources, meal programs, support and referral in our diverse multi-ethnic populations. The program is committed to train students to provide culturally sensitive, quality nutrition care to help clients achieve optimal health and well-being at every stage of life.

## **PROGRAM GOAL**

The goal of the Nutrition Assistant Program is to promote knowledge and develop skills and competencies in the delivery of nutrition education, nutrition services, and community resource referrals in public health programs and hospitals.

## **OBJECTIVES OF FIELD EXPERIENCE**

- to apply theoretical principles and didactic preparation to a field experience assignment, under the guidance of a registered dietitian (R.D.), nutritionist, or registered dietetic technician (D.T.R.).
- to integrate concepts of community nutrition, including screening, assessment, eligibility determination, delivery of services and evaluation, and to validate knowledge and skills in order to identify areas for further career development.

## **PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

**Courses** for Semester 1 of the Nutrition Assistant Program of City College of San Francisco are: Nutrition for Health (HOEC 99) and Foodways, Nutrition and Health (HOEC 100). In HOEC 99, students are introduced to the study of the nature and physiological roles of nutrients, their food sources and requirements using a practical approach; relation of diet to health; evaluation of dietary adequacy. HOEC 100 teaches the cultural, social, and economic influences on food habits, their diet-related health risks and implications; foodservice safety and sanitation.

**Courses** for Semester 2 are: Life Span Nutrition & Assessment (HOEC 104) and Clinical & Community Nutrition (HOEC 105). In HOEC 104, students will learn nutritional needs and special nutrition concerns throughout the life cycle, including pregnancy and lactation; nutrition screening parameters for each age group, and interviewing and counseling techniques. HOEC 105 provides an introduction to the principles of medical nutrition therapy and nutrition in public health.

**Field experience** starts after the completion of the didactic part of the program so that the students will have the opportunity to acquire as much theoretical background from their courses as possible to make their field experience more meaningful. The field experience consists of the equivalent of two eight hour days per week for a total of ten weeks. During this time the student will learn job specific skills under the supervision of a registered dietitian (R.D.).

## STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

### **Purpose of Field Experience:**

To enable the student to apply theoretical knowledge and acquire practical skills in delivering public health nutrition services.

**Core Competencies:** Upon completion of the field experience, the student will be expected to:

1. Describe the nutrition program, its goals/purposes, and delivery of services.
2. Apply knowledge of basic nutrition principles in the provision of nutrition services.
3. Use appropriate communication skills.
4. Determine program eligibility based on established criteria, if applicable.
5. Administer nutrition screening and follow up to nutrition participants, where applicable.
6. Assist in nutrition assessment and documentation, if applicable.
7. Provide nutrition education to participants as needed.
8. Follow correct procedures in the provision of food for the program.
9. Refer participants to appropriate community services and conduct community outreach presentation(s).
10. Use appropriate computer skills to carry out job responsibilities.

*NOTE: It is strongly suggested that students who are interested in potential employment with WIC attend ISIS training outside of the basic 10 week field experience.*

### **Schedule**

1. Student will be assigned to a field experience site for the equivalent of twenty 8-hour sessions (160 hours minimum).
2. Hours of operation will vary depending on site. A lunch break will be provided.
3. Students need to discuss and arrange with preceptor any deviations from the above schedule.
4. For successful completion of the field experience, the students are required to be punctual.
5. Because of the limited space and equipment, students are required to be flexible and willing to work within regular program staff schedules and field experience site routines.
6. **While students are placed at geographically dispersed internship sites, they will maintain communication and collaboration with classmates and faculty through Insight online course management software. Through Insight's online communication tools, each student's unique experiences will be shared, thus broadening and enriching each individual's field experience beyond the scope of his/her placement site.**

**Requirement:** Students are expected to post Weekly Learning Summaries and read/respond to classmates' postings regularly, spending the equivalent of 1 hour minimum per week online.

### **Duties:**

1. During the field experience, the duties will be coordinated by the preceptor.
2. During the field experience, the students are representing their respective field experience site; therefore, their clothing, appearance and behavior should always be maintained at a professional standard.

### **Procedural Issues:**

1. Should a concern arise between a student and another person (e.g. program participant, staff member, preceptor), it is the responsibility of the student to discuss it with the preceptor.
2. If a concern is raised by staff or participant, the preceptor will meet with the student. At the preceptor's discretion the meeting may involve the affected staff or participant.
3. In case the problem remains unresolved, the student can request a meeting with the CCSF field experience coordinator and the field experience preceptor.
4. While working at their assigned field site, the students will maintain strict confidentiality. The personal records of participants are to remain confidential. This includes reference to or verification of program participation by an individual.
5. The placement of students at field sites is at the discretion of the CCSF NA program coordinator and the field experience site director. The student's preference will be taken into consideration.

**The student pledges in good faith to observe these standards of practice. Failure to comply with any of these standards may result in termination from the NA Program.**

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# **PART II**

## **GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS AND PRECEPTORS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The field experience portion of the Nutrition Assistant Program provides an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge acquired during the academic part of the program in a work site setting. The field experience facilitates learning and development of practical skills needed for the delivery of nutrition services.

The Nutrition Assistant (NA) Program Field Experience Guidelines serve as a working guide for students and preceptors during the ten weeks of field experience. The competencies and objectives can be achieved through a series of learning activities that are listed in these guidelines. Progressively, the students will be expected to take on more responsibilities and perform tasks expected of a nutrition assistant. They will be given as many opportunities as possible so that they can practice and acquire job specific skills. The student should strive to use these opportunities wisely in order to gain the most out of the field experience. The students will work cooperatively with the preceptors and mentors/health workers at all times.

## **ROLE OF THE PRECEPTOR**

The preceptor is the on-site field training supervisor. As a professional staff person, the preceptor serves as a mentor for the students. The role of the preceptor is an evolving one. As a student is guided, observed, and evaluated in acquiring new skills, the preceptor has an opportunity to expand her/his experience and teaching technique.

### **Preceptor**

- Provides student with essential information and procedures for learning a competency:
  - a. identifies the steps needed to master a competency
  - b. assesses current skill level of the student in relation to competency
  - c. gives student essential information
  - d. demonstrates correct procedure for student to observe
- Creates opportunity to practice skills necessary to master a competency and to achieve the objectives of the field experience.
- Provides student with reinforcement and constructive feedback throughout learning process, serving as an accessible and approachable mentor. Ongoing assessment activities should have improvement as the primary goal, and include feedback that is frequent, ongoing and constructive.
- Provides opportunity for student to work independently.
- Evaluates student's performance.
- Serves as appropriate resource person and role model for professional and ethical behavior.

Adapted from 'The Preceptor' A manual of training behaviors for professionals, 1980.

## **During the field experience:**

- 1.** Preceptor will provide an overview of the assigned program, including
  - a.** the goals of the specific work site
  - b.** the delivery of services
  - c.** the structure of the work site's program
  - d.** community contacts and referrals
  - e.** policies and procedures
- 2.** Preceptor will introduce students to staff and establish links between students and community persons. Student-Mentor teams will be formed between students and staff members if appropriate.
- 3.** Preceptor will provide support and ongoing supervision of students at work sites.
- 4.** Preceptor will explain and demonstrate the procedures that the student is expected to learn during field experience.
- 5.** Preceptor will observe students performing specific assigned procedures.
- 6.** Preceptor will plan assignments and work schedule for a student according to objectives for field experience.
- 7.** Preceptor will provide opportunity for student exposure to all aspects of the work site's function.
- 8.** Preceptor will encourage students to participate in staff training.
- 9.** Preceptor will allocate regular time to administer progress evaluation and to receive feedback from student.
- 10.** At the end of field experience preceptor will prepare a final performance evaluation and will discuss it with student.

## **ROLE OF THE STUDENT**

The role of the student is an active, independent and responsible one. As the student researches, observes, practices, and refines new skills, she or he has the opportunity to gain experience in applied nutrition in the community setting.

### **Student Responsibilities**

**It is the student's responsibility to be on time, be prepared, and participate fully in all supervised practice experiences, classes, and events.**

- The student should have a positive attitude, that is, be prepared and eager to learn what the curriculum prescribes - even when the value of the experiences may not be immediately evident to the student.
- The student should be internally motivated, that is, be interested in learning because they want to become excellent practitioners, team members, and professional leaders. Grades and other extrinsic reward are less important than what the student learns.

**It is the student's responsibility to communicate regularly and appropriately with preceptors and others so that expectations, arrangements, responsibilities etc. are understood and agreed upon.**

- The student should be open to new information, ideas, experiences, approaches, ways of accomplishing things, and opportunities even when these seem to be or are in conflict with the student's personal beliefs and prior experiences.
- Students should be willing to approach each new situation with the same openness and eagerness that they had at the beginning of their supervised practice experience.
- The student should remember that preceptors, wonderful as they are, are not mind-readers.

**It is the student's responsibility to plan carefully and thoroughly as their preceptor asks them to do. It is also the student's responsibility to follow through with all supervised practice plans and to prepare for the unexpected.**

- The student should be organized and willing to assume responsibility for their own learning.
- Students should be flexible and willing and able to adapt appropriately as situations change and circumstances warrant.
- Students should remember that providing patient/client care and/or high-quality food and nutrition services should be their preceptor's priority.

**It is the student's responsibility to learn when to ask for guidance and when to be appropriately self-directed.**

- Students should learn when to ask others questions and when to search for the answers themselves.
- Students should be able and willing to build upon their prior learning.
- Students should be able to integrate new information and concepts with those that they learned previously. (Preceptors do not have the time nor should they be expected to teach or re-teach theory that students should have mastered previously.)

**It is the student's responsibility to maintain an appropriate perspective and stay focused on learning and the tasks at hand.**

- Students should manage their personal lives so that they can take full advantage of the experiences the program and their preceptors are providing for them.
- Students should expect that completing a supervised practice experience will be time-consuming and challenging. Without challenge and stretching, there will not be growth.

**It is the student's responsibility to look for connections**

**-between theory and practice**

**-to what is already known and understood**

**-between and among the new things being learned**

**-between the training environment and future roles**

- Students should expect to spend time in reflection and self-assessment.
- Students should be patient with patients, clients, employees, preceptors, and themselves. Learning and the development of professional skills takes time, effort, practice, and patience.
- Students should understand that not everyone is great at everything. They should expect their assessments from you will generally reflect the fact that there is room for them to improve.
- Students should understand that they are expected to develop and demonstrate entry-level competence for all of the CADE competencies. If they are not able to do so in the time allotted, they should be prepared to devote additional time and energy in these areas.

**It is the student's responsibility to take care of him or herself.**

They should:

- Eat well
- Exercise
- Get enough rest
- Manage their stress

**It is the student's responsibility to be organized, respectful, and appreciative.**

- Student behaviors should reflect their recognition that many are doing extra tasks and giving generously of the time, energy, and talents so that students can be in this facility, having these learning experiences.
- Students should not take their supervised practice program or the guidance of their preceptors for granted or make unwarranted assumptions.

## GUIDELINES FOR WRITING WEEKLY LEARNING SUMMARIES

The purpose of the Weekly Learning Summary is to help you develop discipline in keeping track of significant learning activities and progress towards reaching the 10 core competencies. Students will reflect, analyze, summarize, and evaluate the week's learning activities by posting a 100-word minimum summary on a weekly basis. What did you experience and observe? What new skills did you learn? What feedback do you have? What helpful feedback did you receive? Which competencies and objectives did you work towards? How do you evaluate your performance? What went well? What areas need improvement or more practice?

The Weekly Learning Summaries also provide:

1. a chronology of events important in your learning and professional development as perceived by you
2. feedback to the preceptor and indications if consultation or assistance is required
3. a basis for analysis of the process of reaching your objectives, writing reports, evaluating results achieved.

Please be sure to highlight significant experiences and observations that occur during your field experience. Relate the skills you acquired to the objectives of the given session.

Please post your Weekly Learning Summary to the appropriate Insight discussion forum by end of each week, and read and respond to new postings several times a week, if not daily. "Netiquette" rules apply at all times!

### Discussion Forum Rubric:

	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Quality of postings</b>	Postings reflect, analyze, summarize, and evaluate the week's learning activities, new skills learned, and progress towards achieving the competencies (minimum 100 words).	Postings are not relevant or substantive.
<b>Quantity of postings</b>	Responds to at least two other classmate's postings.	Neglects to respond to any postings; dominates the threads with excessive postings
<b>Timeliness of postings</b>	Responses occur on time.	Fails to submit Weekly Learning Summary by due date.

## GUIDELINES FOR “Learning Journey” Presentation

Create a multimedia presentation to document achievement of the 10 core competencies. Post in the Discussion Forum of Insight for peer review by the specified due date. Also share the presentation with your preceptor as part of the final evaluation and feedback. **NOTE: Students who do not complete this final project will NOT pass HOEC 106, and will not be eligible for the certificate.**

Objective or Performance	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
<b>Content and organization of presentation</b>	Content addressed all 10 core competencies in a thorough, clear, and organized fashion. Included examples of specific learning activities completed to achieve the competencies.  Very detailed and organized	Content addressed all 10 core competencies. One or more of the competencies are not thoroughly and clearly addressed. Included specific learning activities completed to achieve the competencies.  Generally detailed and organized	Content addressed most of the core competencies. Two or more of the competencies are missing. Some learning activities are not included.  Parts of the presentation were not detailed or organized.	Content did not address many of the core competencies. Several of the competencies were not addressed or achieved. Many of the learning activities are not included.  Lacks detail and is unorganized
<b>Graphic design and layout</b>	Excellent graphic design and layout. Incorporated best practices for creating multimedia presentations.  Includes photos and/or graphics.  Consists of at least 12 slides  Very creative	Above average graphic design and layout. Could be improved in one or more areas.  Includes photos and/or graphics  Consists of at least 12 slides  Creative	Graphic design and layout is of average quality, and could be improved in two or more areas.  More photos and/or graphics would enhance the presentation.  Consists of less than 12 slides  Could be more creative	Graphic design and layout of presentation is poor.  Does not include any photos or graphics.  Consists of less than 12 slides  Lacked creativity
<b>Insight Computer Skills</b>	Successfully uploaded the file to the Discussion Forum of Insight for peer review. Responded to at least two other students' postings.	Successfully uploaded the file to the Discussion Forum of Insight for peer review. Responds to less than two other students' postings.	Successfully uploaded the file to the Discussion Forum of Insight for peer review. Neglects to respond to other postings.	Did not post or respond; minimal participation
<b>Teamwork (if applicable)</b>	Worked cooperatively and effectively with team. Members contributed equally to group effort and learned from each other.	Worked cooperatively with team.	Some challenges in working together as a team. Presentation was not fully coordinated between the members.	Much difficulty working together as a team. Work load was not equitable.

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# **PART III**

## **EVALUATION FORMS**

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**NUTRITION  
ASSISTANT  
PROGRAM**

## MID-PROGRESS EVALUATION

*To be completed by student*

*The purpose of the Mid-Progress Evaluation is to reflect and discuss with your preceptor any feedback, concerns, suggestions, or advice, and to check on your progress towards meeting all the competencies. This form does not need to be turned in to your preceptor or Field Experience Coordinator. Use it as talking points to guide your discussion.*

1. Review the 10 Core Competencies. Discuss with your preceptor the learning activities which have helped meet the specific competencies, and which competencies do you need more experience or improvement to achieve mastery.
  
2. Comments about the highlights of the internship and accomplishments to date:
  
3. Other suggestions/ideas for improvement:

5 highest      1 lowest  
←—————→

Rate yourself on the following:	5	4	3	2	1
4. I was inspired to learn more than required					
5. I seek help if I need it and am proactive.					
6. I complete my assignments/projects in a timely manner.					
7. I have integrated comfortably into my new work environment.					
8. I have established a good working relationship with preceptor.					
9. I demonstrate professionalism and good communication skills.					
10. I regularly log-in to Insight to post Weekly Learning Summaries and interact with classmates.					

# FIELD EXPERIENCE

## FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION



**NUTRITION  
ASSISTANT  
PROGRAM**

### TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRECEPTOR AND THE STUDENT

Final performance evaluation is an evaluation of objectives and competencies achieved during the field experience.

#### Note to the preceptor:

When evaluating the student, please include explanatory comments, especially for a rating of **4** (excellent) and **1** (improvement needed in certain areas).

<b>4</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	Performance consistently exceeds expected standards.
<b>3</b>	<b>Good</b>	Performance is above average.
<b>2</b>	<b>Average</b>	Performance meets expected standards.
<b>1</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	Performance meets minimum standards only. Needs improvement in certain areas as noted.

To earn a “Credit” grade in the field experience, the student must earn a rating of 2 (average) or better for at least 75% of the competencies.



# FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

**Preceptor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Site:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>COMPETENCY</b>	<b>4</b> excellent	<b>3</b> good	<b>2</b> average	<b>1</b> needs improvement
<p><b>1. Nutrition Program Overview</b></p> <p>Demonstrates knowledge of nutrition program and delivery of services.</p>				
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b> (specific examples, constructive feedback, etc.)</p>				
<p><b>2. Nutrition Principles</b></p> <p>Applies knowledge of basic nutrition principles in the provision of nutrition services.</p>				
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b></p>				
<p><b>3. Communication Skills</b></p> <p>Uses appropriate communication skills.</p>				
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b></p>				

<b>COMPETENCY</b>	<b>4</b> excellent	<b>3</b> good	<b>2</b> average	<b>1</b> needs improvement
<p><b>4. Eligibility Screening</b></p> <p>Determines program eligibility based on established criteria, if applicable.</p>				
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b> (specific examples, constructive feedback, etc.)</p>				
<p><b>5. Nutrition Screening</b></p> <p>Administer nutrition screening and follow up to nutrition participants, where applicable.</p>				
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b></p>				
<p><b>6. Nutrition Assessment and Documentation</b></p> <p>Assist in nutrition assessment and documentation, if applicable.</p>				
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b></p>				

<b>COMPETENCY</b>	<b>4</b> excellent	<b>3</b> good	<b>2</b> average	<b>1</b> needs improvement
<b>7. Nutrition Education</b> Provide nutrition education to participants as needed.				
<b>COMMENTS:</b>				
<b>8. Food Delivery System</b> Follow correct procedures in the provision of food for the program.				
<b>COMMENTS:</b> (specific examples, constructive feedback, etc.)				
<b>9. Referral and Community Outreach</b> Refer participants to appropriate community services and conduct community outreach presentation(s).				
<b>COMMENTS:</b>				
<b>10. Computer Skills</b>  Use appropriate computer skills to carry out job responsibilities.				

## FINAL EVALUATION AND COMMENTS

TO BE COMPLETED BY PRECEPTOR

### STUDENT'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / POTENTIAL

e.g. conflict resolution skills, problem solving skills.

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT/POTENTIAL

e.g. participant related skills, confidence in delivery of classes and services.

*I have read and discussed the above evaluation with my preceptor. I have included my own comments (if any) on the back side.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor's signature \_\_\_\_\_