

# Nutrition and Food Sciences, MS, PhD

**Department:** Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences Department

**College:** College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences

## Overview

### About This Degree

The nutrition and food science program focuses on the chemical and biological components of food and the ways in which these ingredients affect health. Students learn the chemical, biological, microbiological, nutritional, engineering and economic aspects of food, as well as the social impacts of the foods people eat, including how they affect various issues, including economy, psychology, and culture.

Due to an increased awareness in recent years of how food directly affects the population's health, there is a greater demand for professionals trained in nutrition and food science. The general public has begun to realize just how important it is to eat well-balanced meals. This means that the opportunities for careers in nutrition are at an all-time high.

## Career Options

Graduates in nutrition and food sciences can pursue the following careers:

- Nutrition specialist
- Food scientist
- Research and development for food companies
- Quality control and safety assurance work
- Biomedical research
- Work in secondary schools as a nutrition specialist
- Pharmaceutical sales
- Food sales and marketing
- Quality assurance specialist
- Product development scientist
- Food technologist
- Food production manager
- WIC Nutritionist
- Nutrition education
- Food service manager
- Patient services manager

## What it takes

### Admissions Requirements

Applicants are not required to have bachelor's degrees in nutrition or food sciences, but they must have strong backgrounds in science and mathematics. There may be prerequisite courses needed for make up in some situations. These can be taken concurrently with graduate coursework and are determined on a case-to-case basis.

To be accepted to the program, it is recommended that applicants first contact a specific faculty member with whom they are interested in working. If the faculty member is accepting graduate students and agrees to work with the student, the student can then apply by completing the following application requirements:

### Application Requirements:

- Complete the [online application](#)
- Pay the \$55 application fee
- Score at or above the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on the GRE
- Have a 3.0 or higher GPA on your last 60 semester or 90 quarter credits
- Provide transcripts of all college/university credits
- Provide three contacts for letters of recommendation

International students have [additional admissions requirements](#).

## Admissions Deadlines

The nutrition and food sciences graduate program has rolling admission, meaning the department will continue to consider and accept applications until the program is full. The time it takes to process an application is primarily dependent on the speed with which the School of Graduate Studies receives letters of recommendation, transcripts, and test scores. For most students, this process may take six to eight weeks. Applicants should plan accordingly.

Additionally, students may have better opportunities to receive funding if they apply in time for fall semester.

## Master's Degree Plan Options

Students can receive the MS by pursuing the following option:

- In the **Plan A** option, students complete graduate-level coursework and must write a thesis.

## Financial Assistance

All students typically receive some kind of [assistantship](#); however, the department will accept students who are self-funded if there are no available assistantships remaining.

The Gandhi Scholarship is also available on a competitive basis to support outstanding students during their graduate education in food science. Awards are available for entering master's degree students, as well as for PhD candidates. Applications are due February 1. To obtain an application, visit the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences website or contact the department.

A variety of additional funding opportunities are available, including [fellowships](#), [scholarships](#), [tuition awards](#), and [travel support](#). Additionally, students may be eligible for subsidized [health insurance](#) through qualifying assistantships.

Graduate students in the department receiving a 0.5 FTE assistantship may not accept additional employment without written permission of their major professor and the department head; this policy is to ensure that graduate students have sufficient time available to complete the academic requirements of their degree in a timely fashion.

## Program Requirements

[Click here](#) to see course requirements for the **Master of Science**.

[Click here](#) to see course requirements for the **Doctor of Philosophy**.

### PhD Qualifying Exams:

When a PhD student has completed the courses listed in their program of study, they schedule a meeting of their committee for the comprehensive examination. This is usually an oral examination, although committee members have the option of providing a written exam. Typically students will be asked questions related to their area of concentration and their field of research, but the comprehensive exam can also be used to test the student's overall knowledge of food science or nutrition.

## Contact

### Advisor(s)

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## Get Involved

### Professional Organizations, Honor Societies, and Clubs

**American Dietetic Association:** The American Dietetic Association is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education, and advocacy.

**Institute of Food Technologists:** With members from virtually every discipline related to food science and technology, and from more than 100 countries around the world, IFT is a professional organization for those dedicated to the science of food. IFT's professionals collaborate to address critical issues, such as hunger, malnutrition, and sustainability.

### Labs, Centers, Research

**Center for Advanced Nutrition:** The CAN provides a multi-disciplinary venue for the discussion, discovery, and dissemination of information about the biological, physiological, and psychological mechanisms of proper nutrition. The scope of discovery is broad and falls into four distinct but overlapping focus areas: bioactive foods, nutrition and the brain, ingestive behavior, and personalized nutrition.

**Center for Human Nutrition Studies:** The "Center for Human Nutrition Studies" at Utah State University provides the organizational structure and logistic support for research scientists with interests in conducting clinical studies with an emphasis on nutrition. The Center, with a core staff consisting of experienced clinical researchers, community interventionist, research dietitian, clinic coordinator, laboratory research associate and support staff, coupled with an outstanding clinical facility and research kitchen, is designed to serve as a resource to Utah State University researchers in efforts to secure extramural research funding and industry contracts and partnerships. The Center also provides opportunities to both undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to gain experience in the design and conduct of human nutrition clinical studies. The Center is managed by the USTAR Applied Nutrition Research Team in conjunction with the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Science and under the administrative oversight of the College of Agriculture.

**Center for Integrated BioSystems:** The CIB leads a progressive, interdisciplinary effort in research, core services, and education serving agriculture and life sciences. The CIB is where the first hybrid animal, a mule, was cloned, and was named one of "30 Awesome College Labs" by Popular Science magazine. The CIB has a research program with several active projects in diverse areas of life science that encompass plant, animal, and microbe functional genomics.

**Utah Agricultural Experiment Station:** The UAES is part of a network of researchers and facilities at the nation's land-grant universities and is committed to improving agriculture and managing natural resources for the people of Utah. At research facilities on the USU campus and throughout the state, UAES supports hundreds of research projects that promote agriculture and human nutrition and enhance the quality of rural life.

**Western Dairy Center:** The Western Dairy Center conducts basic and applied research in dairy products and ingredients, and then transfers the results to the dairy industry. The center provides expert assistance in these

important areas: fluid milk and ice cream, fermented products (cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, buttermilk), milk protein chemistry (coagulation, denaturation, separation), food engineering (membrane, extrusion and injection processing), genetics and bioengineering of lactic acid bacteria, ultra-high temperature and extended-shelf life products.