Bridging the Gap between Dietetics and Functional Nutrition

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Objectives

1. Identify factors to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice in the integrative and functional medicine curriculum.

2. Utilize practicum-based tools to apply functional medicine principles through case-simulations, mentoring, in-clinic case work-ups, cooking demonstrations, etc.

3. Identify and review various approaches that integrative and functional medicine-based institutions programs utilize to expose their students to the practicum
Disclaimer

I am not an academic expert, but I am a conventionally trained RDN with a conventional master’s degree in nutrition and a doctorate degree in integrative and functional nutrition from MUIH. I teach at Saybrook University for the Integrative and Functional Nutrition Master’s Degree Program.
We are here to brainstorm and open a dialogue:

About how to bridge the gap between traditional dietetics and integrative and functional nutrition education.
My Observations
Curriculum Comparison Master’s Degree in Nutrition. Colorado State University (CSU) vs Maryland University of Integrative Health (MUH)

CSU
- Advanced Nutrition Science 1
- Advanced Nutrition Science 2
- Nutrition Epidemiology

MUlh
- Principles and Practice of Self Care
- Foundations in Organic Chemistry
- Physiology 1: Healthy Function
- Nutritional Biochemistry
Curriculum Comparison CSU vs MUIH

CSU
- Recent Developments in Human Nutrition: Protein, vitamins And Minerals
- Recent Developments in Human Nutrition: Carbohydrates, lipids and energy
- Recent Developments in Human Nutrition: Genomics, Proteomics and Metabolomics

MUIH
- Intro to Complementary and Integrative Health
- Physiology II: Movement Away from Health
- Redefining Nutrition
- Human Nutrition II: Micronutrients
Curriculum Comparison CSU vs MUIH

CSU
- Thesis Nutrition
- Thesis Food Service Management
- Research Methods Courses
- Electives 10 credits

MUIH
- Human Nutrition I: Macronutrients
- Life Cycle Nutrition
- Research MSNIH Comprehensive Exam
- Research Literacy in Complementary Health
- Academic Research and Scholarship
- Required Cooking Labs:
  - Cooking With Whole Foods I and II
MUIH Goals and Learning Outcomes of MS in Nutrition and Integrative Health

- Apply biochemical, clinical (laboratory testing, anthropometric measurements, and physical exams), and nutritional knowledge to guide nutrition interventions and monitoring.
- Analyze the macro- and micronutrient content, nutrient density, and additional food components of a client’s diet.
- Design culturally sensitive food plans that support changing nutritional needs during the various lifecycle stages and promote disease prevention and management.
MUIH Goals and Learning Outcomes of MS in Nutrition and Integrative Health

Formulate comprehensive clinical intervention plans that incorporate whole foods, supplements, lifestyle changes, and other integrative health approaches.

• Apply the nutrition care process to assess status, develop nutrition diagnoses and interventions, evaluate, and monitor the client’s progress using a functional nutrition approach.

• Develop personal mindful eating practices and guide groups or clients in mindfulness practices.
The Master of Science degree in Food Science and Nutrition with specialization in Nutrition includes work in advanced nutrition science, supporting basic and applied sciences and the communication of nutrition principles in the community. Ultimately this area of specialization focuses on the relationship between nutrition and health. The program provides students with training for doctoral studies in basic and applied sciences, advanced preparation for professional degrees and careers in industry. A minimum of 35 credits is required for the M.S. degree.
**Different Emphasis at MUIH**

- Cooking with Whole Foods
- Supplements
- Laboratory Testing
- Self Care Class
- Different concentrations: Community Nutrition, Herbal Medicine or Clinical Nutrition
- Supervised clinical experiences for herbal medicine and clinical nutrition
- Possibly more focused to step into direct client care right away
- No inpatient focus
Practicum at MUIH

- MS nutrition students complete practicum at University CARE Clinic. Two students meet with one patient. Complete the CARE plan and present this to the supervisor for approval.
- Two semester classes are required for the practicum.
- There is an online option of working up your own cases and presenting them to a supervisor.
- Prepared to take CNS exam when finished with the MS degree.
Practicum at Saybrook

- Students complete a class in case simulations for integrative nutrition therapy.
- Seek their own off-site internship that they arrange themselves. This can contribute 200 hours toward CNS.
How Can Standard Dietetics Programs Incorporate Integrative Nutrition?

Offer:

- A concentration in integrative/functional nutrition.
- Classes in how to research and use dietary supplements, and complementary healing modalities
- Classes in how to interpret laboratory work.
How Can Standard Dietetics Programs Incorporate Integrative Nutrition?

- Offer classes in cooking whole foods and designing therapeutic diets.
- Have a class that explores other complementary methods of healing: yoga, meditation, massage, acupuncture, etc.
- Allow internships to occur at functional nutrition or functional medicine clinics.
Open to Discussion