

**Palomar College**  
**Nutrition Program Advisory Committee**  
**Minutes from April 5, 2019**

**Committee Members in attendance:**

- Caryn Boyle, MS, RD, CDE, ACE-CPT Omada Health/Digital Health Coach
- Kathleen Bundy, MS, RDN Director of Food & Nutrition Services, Palomar Health
- Halle Elbling, MS, RD, CDE San Diego Association of Diabetes Educators; Adjunct Instructor, Palomar College
- Ellen Gowen, MS, RD North County Health Services WIC Program Manager
- Carrie Johnson, MPH, RD Adjunct Instructor Palomar College, Mesa College
- Amy Nguyen, AS CrossFit Coach/Personal Trainer/Director of Operations, Double Barrel Fitness
- Brenda O'Day, MS, RD Adjunct Instructor, Palomar College and SDSU, Sharp Health Care RD
- Becky Pietrenka, AS President of the Food Recovery Network, Events Coordinator of the Student Nutrition Organization at SDSU
- Naomi Shadwell, MS, RD Director of Nutrition Services, Oceanside Unified School District
- James Williamson, AS Sharp Memorial Hospital-FANS/Diet clerk
- Donna Wolf, MS, RD Private Practice RD

**Welcome and Introductions:** Solange called the meeting at 12:20 pm. Solange welcomed everyone for attending and asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

**Program Updates**

- **Enrollment:** Our enrollment continues to stay strong for the amount of classes we are offering. We increased our classroom size, and we also offered more sections. This resulted in some classes being cancelled, but the enrollment is about the same.
- **Student Achievements:** The nutrition club still going, and doing outreach. They have created a cookbook, a newsletter, and have a nutrition education seminar scheduled for later this month. The newly launched cohort is working on professional skill development projects and tasks as well.
- **Program Updates:** Solange informed the committee that we now have a Nutrition degree. When she first started there was no formal NUTR degree. Instead, students had to work with the counselors and Solange to complete their own cluster of classes for transfer. Different transfer institutions require different sets of prerequisite course work, and some students will graduate with an NUTR degree, and others will graduate with a degree in University Studies Health and Fitness or University Studies Math and Science. The differing options make it hard to track the number of graduates completing a degree to pursue a career in nutrition.
- **Labor Market Update:** The nutrition field is growing faster than average in San Diego County and California.
- **Actions Taken Since Last Meeting Regarding Functional/Alternative Medicine and Nutrition Topics for Inclusion into the Curriculum:** The overall consensus by the committee was that there should be a small introduction of these topics in the NUTR coursework. NUTR has started adding these topics into the courses, and is taking steps to determine where to add it in the COR.
- **Addressing Gaps:** In order to fill professional skill gaps that do not fit within the scope of a class but are required in order for students to be competitive internship applicants, NUTR created a cohort that completes activities and tasks designed to fill these gaps.

**Previous Committee Recommendations, purpose, and Outcomes/ Projects:** In a previous meeting, the committee recommended, students should perform approximately 150 total hours projects to develop various professional skills from the RD Grid in order for them to become more competitive candidates for internships. This is also supported by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics who registers dietitians. The nutrition club and cohort are designed to address this recommendation.

**Majors Info Session:** The advisory committee reviewed materials used during Majors Info Session that is held once per semester. It is an interactive workshop which helps students figure out if nutrition is the right career for them. Students learn about school and internship requirements as well as pay and job prospects. In this session, they are exposed to the RD Grid (a group of traits and skills they need to develop and will be evaluated on in order to be competitive for internships), and they begin to develop a strategic plan of how they will acquire those skills and traits beyond the classroom. This is not commonly offered at schools. Students do not usually see the grid until the semester they graduate from a university. All of this is done to help students become more competitive applicants. While the Majors Info Session is open to prospective students, current students often join the club based on what they learn. This will lead into club members being better prepared to enter and successfully complete the cohort.

**Nutrition Club:** The club is designed to be a fun and effective way for our students to obtain usable non-classroom skills needed to be competitive internship applicants. They do community outreach, have created pamphlets for students on campus regarding healthy eating snacks on campus, presented interactive presentations for groups on and off campus (i.e. the TLC, Boys and Girls Club, foster youth, and elementary schools). They work with social media, and some have also done a presentation with Solange where they earned coauthor and copresenter credits with an RD. These are significant advantages that help build strong resumes for the students. The nutrition club gives our students a lot of great experiences they can build off of and use as they progress in their education and careers.

**Cohort:** Once the club and the info session became stable enough to consistently run, it was passed on to a part-time faculty member so the cohort could be developed. It creates a chain of past and current students who work on monthly challenges all based on the RD grid. Each month the students will pick a challenge that will help them demonstrate a set of skills goal to make them competitive as can be for internship acceptance.

Previous Nutrition program alumni were present at the meeting. All of the students transferred to SDSU, and are currently holding professions in the Nutrition field. They attribute much of their success due to the Nutrition Majors info session, the Nutrition club and the Cohort. They were able to receive a lot of support and guidance in the right path between these resources. The students mentioned they felt much better off at SDSU, and better prepared compared to the other Nutrition major students at SDSU. One student said he felt more confident, and better prepared when looking for a job. Another student said she felt she would not have made it through the program if she did not have the support of the club and cohort. These are vital resources for the students. The club and cohort prepare the students for success, helps to guide them, and gives them skills needed for internships, and job placement. The club and cohort also help students to ensure that they are in the right field and then on the right path towards graduation and in continuing their education if they choose to transfer.

**Questionnaires:** The funding for these programs is in danger, how critical or important are the club, info session, and cohort, if it all. The committee was in agreement that all three are extremely important and beneficial for our nutrition students' educational and professional success. They advise to keeping all of them.

**Adjournment:** Solange adjourned the meeting at 1:41pm.