In the Name of God

Islamic Republic of Iran

Ministry of Health and Medical Education

Deputy for Education

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Food & Nutrition Policy

Total Course Credits

- Core: 24 credits
- Non-core (Elective): 6 credits
- Dissertation: 20 credits
- Total: 50 credits

Program Description

The Ph.D. program in Food and Nutrition Policy is a multidisciplinary field that focuses on studying the stages of policymaking within the food and nutrition system, including production, distribution, and consumption, with perspectives ranging from macro to micro and with both short-term and long-term outlooks. This program also deals with analyzing the impacts and potential consequences of both macro and micro-level policies on food and nutrition security and the outcomes of changes in these policies.

Admission Requirements

- Accepts qualified graduates of recognized universities, colleges or schools who hold a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), and a Master's Degree in one of the following fields: Nutrition Science, Public Health Nutrition, Health Economics, Healthcare Management, Epidemiology, Health Education, Biostatistics, Food Science and Technology (with a focus on Quality Control and Food Safety), Food Safety and Hygiene, or Nutrition in Emergencies and Disaster Management.
- Applicants with insufficient background in nutrition, public health, biostatistics, or other relevant fields may be required to take prerequisite or compensatory courses to address these deficiencies. These courses will not count toward the Ph.D. credit requirements.
- Admission is based on the regulations and standards set by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, which include: passing a competitive entrance examination, attending and successfully completing an interview.
- Applicants must submit the following documents for evaluation: official academic transcripts, copy of the Master's degree diploma, certificate of English proficiency (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS), application fee for international students, and medical fitness certificate.

The Aims of the Course:

The primary goal of this program is to train and cultivate a significant number of internationally qualified graduates who possess the analytical, drafting, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation skills required for effective food and nutrition policies and programs while fostering a competitive spirit.

Expected Competencies at the End of the Program:

General Competencies*

By the end of the program, graduates should be able to:

- Describe and analyze food and nutrition issues and challenges at various levels within the country
- Conduct and lead research related to food and nutrition policymaking
- Develop, articulate, and advocate for reformative policies in food and nutrition programs and projects
- Manage and coordinate multidisciplinary sectors in a manner that reflects the analysis and formulation of food and nutrition policies
- Design, monitor, and evaluate food and nutrition plans and programs

Specific Competencies and Skills

- **Communication Skills**
- **Policy-Making Skills:** Formulating related policies, planning, management, and evidence-based decision-making in both normal and crisis situations
- **Analytical Matrix Development:** Designing analytical matrices for food security in the community
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Process monitoring, quality control, and evaluation
- Teaching and Training Skills
- **Research and Scientific Writing:** Skills in conducting research and authoring scientific articles
- **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving**
- **Indicator Analysis:** Extracting and analyzing nutritional and developmental indices
- **Economic Evaluation:** Estimating and analyzing the economic aspects of programs and related processes
- **Household Economics Analysis**
- **Advanced Search Skills:** Locating, analyzing, and conducting meta-analysis on scientific and analytical resources
- **Food Security Assessment**
- **Guideline Development:** Formulating localized guidelines and standards for food and nutrition
- **Economic Analysis:** Assessing the economics of programs and related processes

Educational Strategies, Methods and Techniques:

The following teaching methods and techniques will be applied:

- Integrated Student and Teacher-Centered Approaches
- Combined (Hybrid) Approach
- Problem-Oriented Learning
- Community-Oriented Learning
- Task-Based Approach
- Life-Long Learning Techniques

Student Assessment (Types and Methods):

The assessment of students will be conducted using the following types and methods:

- **Formative Assessments**:
    - Participation in class discussions and group activities
    - Completion of assignments, projects, and case studies
    - Presentation and defense of policy briefs or analytical reports
- **Summative Assessments**:
    - Written exams (midterm and final)
    - Oral exams and comprehensive evaluations
    - Dissertation proposal and final dissertation defense
- **Skill-Based Assessments**:
    - Practical exercises and fieldwork evaluations
    - Policy analysis and design tasks
    - Critique of food and nutrition policy frameworks
- **Research Performance**:
    - Assessment of research proposals and progress reports
    - Quality of published articles or conference presentations

Ethical Considerations:

The program is developed with an emphasis on the following ethical values:

- Upholding divine and moral principles in preserving human dignity
- Respecting human beings and promoting a human-rights-based approach
- Health-centered perspectives and improving the quality of life
- Emphasizing community orientation and collective well-being
- Advocating for the right of all individuals to sufficient, safe, and high-quality food
- Ensuring non-discriminatory access to nutrition services and resources
- Adhering to social and ethical standards in all related affairs
- Managing and preserving national resources for future generations
- Demonstrating the highest ethical conduct to gain public trust and respect

Tables of the Courses

Table 1. Compensatory Courses

Code of the Course	Title of the Course	Credits			Teaching Hours			Prerequisite or Concurrent Courses
		Theoretical	Practical	Tota l	Theoretical	Practical	Total	
01	Medical Information System*	0.5	0.5	1	9	17	26	-
02	Sociology of Food & Nutrition	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
03	Basic Nutrition I	3	-	3	51	-	51	-
04	Basic Nutrition II	3	-	3	51	-	51	-
05	Advanced Nutrition	2	-	2	34	-	34	03 and 04
06	Population, Environment, and Nutrition	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
07	Advanced Biostatistics	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
08	Epidemiology of Diseases	2	-	2	34	-	34	07
09	Advanced Nutritional Epidemiology	2	-	2	34	-	34	08
10	Nutrition in Health and Disease	2	-	2	34	-	34	03 and 04
11	Mathematical Economics	2	-	2	34	-	34	14
12	Microeconomics	3	-	3	51	-	51	-
13	Macroeconomics	3	-	3	51	-	51	-
14	General Mathematics	2	-	2	34	-	34	07
15	Community Nutrition Assessment	1	1	2	17	34	51	-
	Total							35

The student is required to complete a maximum of 16 credits from the compensatory courses (Table 1), as determined by the academic department and approved by the Graduate Studies Council.

* Completion of this course as a compensatory course is mandatory for all students who have not previously completed this course.

Table 2. Core Courses

Code of the Course	Title of the Course	Credits			Teaching Hours			Prerequisite or Concurrent Courses
		Theoretical	Practical	Total	Theoretical	Practical	Total	
16	Social. Cultural, Economic, and Environmental Determinants of Food Intake and Physical Activity	2	-	2	34	-	34	12 and 13
17	Biomarkers and nutrition indicators in health and disease	2	-	2	34	-	34	05
18	Food and Nutrition Policy Analysis	2	1	3	34	34	68	07
19	Introduction to and Communication of Evidence-Based Policies to Stakeholders	1	1	2	17	34	51	18
20	Food and Nutrition Policy Processes	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
21	Food Security and Development	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
22	Food Choice and Nutritional Behavior: A Social Psychology Approach	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
23	Economic Analysis of Nutrition Projects	1	1	2	17	34	51	-
24	Strategic Planning and Management	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
25	Household Economics	2	-	2	34	-	34	12
26	Advanced Analytical Methods for Food and Nutrition Policy Research	3	-	3	51	-	51	-
	Total							24

Table 3. Non-Core Courses

Code of the course	Title of the course	Credits			Teaching Hours			Prerequisite or Concurrent Courses
		Theoretical	Practical	Total	Theoretical	Practical	Total	
27	International Trade and Globalization	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
28	Food and Nutrition Program Planning and Management	1	1	2	17	34	51	15
29	Food Safety Standards	-	2	2	-	68	68	-
30	Agricultural Economics and Policy	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
31	History of Thought in Food and Nutrition	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
32	Political Economy of Food and Nutrition	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
33	Food System Management	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
34	Communication and Advocacy	2	-	2	34	-	34	-
	Total							16

The student must complete 6 credits from the courses listed above (Table 3), in accordance with the topic of the proposed thesis, after obtaining the approval of the thesis advisor and the Graduate Studies Council.

The thesis is worth 20 credits, which is conducted in accordance with the approved program during the permitted academic semester, as determined by the thesis advisor.