

Curriculum Vitae

Melisa Portuondo Danho, MPH, RDN, LDN

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Education

University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston, TX	2014
Master of Public Health	
New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM	
Bachelor of Science Human Nutrition and Food Science	2012
Bachelor of Arts in Journalism	2012

Registration & Licensure

Registered Dietitian (RD# 1064428)	2014 - Present
Licensed Dietitian (TX) (License # DT83423)	2014 - Present

Professional Experience

Dietetic Internship Director, UTHealth School of Public Health	July 2023 – Present
Interim Dietetic Internship Director, UTHealth School of Public Health Houston, TX	August 2022 – July 2023

- Plan, schedule, coordinate, and supervise program operations.
- Develop and evaluate the program.
- Engage in strategic planning and managing finances for the program.
- Recruit and advise dietetic interns and ensure alignment between dietetic internship and MPH degree program requirements.
- Establish and manage an effective curriculum.
- Establish, maintain, and facilitate community partnerships and service opportunities for program participants, including nutrition education and wellness advocacy.
- Coordinate practicum sites and rotation schedules for students and preceptors.
- Maintain program accreditation and professional competency and skills required for professional practice.

Program Manager, UTHHealth Science Center, School of Public Health
Houston, TX

March 2020 – August 2022

- Planned, developed, coordinated, managed, and evaluated key population health initiatives (including research studies and community wellness programs) targeting chronic and nutrition-related diseases in underserved communities.
- Oversee program activities, including program implementation, data collection, and monitoring of project progress.
- Prepare and submit IRB protocol drafts and amendments.
- Assisted in writing/editing curricula that supported projects.
- Collaborate with internal and external partners to support programs and initiatives across schools, departments, institutions, and affiliates.
- Serve as Communications Co-Lead with the Health Equity Collective.
- Communicate with community members and professionals to share objectives and outcomes.
- Prepare/make presentations at professional meetings.

DIETITIAN II / PROGRAM COORDINATOR, McGovern Medical School
Nutritionist II

Dec. 2018 - July 2023

Sept. 2014 – February 2018

- Plan program implementation, recruitment, tracking, evaluation, and revision when needed.
- Supervise up to 11 staff and interns assisting with the program, assign tasks, conduct performance evaluations, provide coaching, conduct interviews, and maintain timekeeping and personnel records.
- Collaborate with various departments, clinics, and partner organizations relating to the referral process, procurement, outreach, media relations, etc.
- Oversee quantitative and qualitative data collection, including examination of the collection process for accuracy and fidelity to protocol.
- Coordinate meetings, including creating agendas, recording minutes, and following up on action items.
- Assisted in program delivery as needed, including providing nutrition education and counseling informed by the Nutrition Care Process and using motivational interviewing techniques.
- Coordinate professional development, including training and in-services; track staff compliance with required certifications and licensures.
- Create/manage employee schedules; assign tasks and duties to staff, practicum students, volunteers, and interns; approve/track time; review resumes and assist with conducting interviews for various positions; conduct employee reviews; set priorities, expectations, and goals; and evaluate staff progress.
- Counsel program participants according to nutritional needs and develop and implement treatment plans.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of patient nutritional care and provide follow-up nutrition care.
- Instruct patients and families in nutritional principles that support independence and proper monitoring of health conditions by developing patient teaching materials.
- Assess patient and family feedback for education.
- Engage in and identify continuous quality improvement activities to optimize nutrition care outcomes.

DIETITIAN, Spring Branch Community Health Center
Houston, TX

June 2014 – August 2014

- Provide nutrition counseling for individuals and groups; obtain/review/adapt education materials for group sessions relating to maternal health, child health, and diabetes; prepare for lessons including shopping for food/demonstration supplies and incentives; prepare food samples and choosing recipes.

NUTRITION EDUCATOR, Houston Food Bank
Houston, TX

May 2013 – January 2014

- Teach classes throughout the greater Houston area at community centers and other locations emphasizing basic nutrition, healthy shopping on a budget, label reading, specialized diets (heart healthy, diabetic), etc. Participate in community health fairs and events and give cooking demonstrations. Monitor CACFP meal distributions for adherence to food safety and other regulations.

TEACHING

PH1231 Advanced Medical Nutrition Therapy (Co-Instructor)	Fall 2022-2025
PH1229 Advanced Medical Nutrition Therapy Simulation Lab (Co-Instructor)	Fall 2022-2025
PHM 1496L - Capstone Seed to Plate (Co-Instructor)	Fall 2023-2025
PH5030 Diabetes Seminar (Co-Instructor)	Summer 2023-2025
PH5040/PH1498L Nutrition Research & Methods (Co-Instructor)	Spring 2023, Fall 2023-2025
PH9997-800 Community Nutrition Practicum (Instructor)	Spring 2023-2025
PH1499-1895 Independent Study (Instructor)	Spring 2023
PH9997-850 Clinical Nutrition Practicum (Instructor)	Spring 2023-2025
PH9998-1895 Culminating Experience (Instructor)	Spring 2024
PH1498 Leadership in Dietetics (Instructor)	Spring 2024
Houston Academy Simulation Lab (Instructor)	Summer 2023-2025
Dietetic Intern Orientation Series (Instructor/Coordinator)	Fall 2022-2025
Guest Lecture HEAL403 Rice University	Fall 2024

PUBLICATIONS

- Ai D, Heredia NI, Cruz V, Guevara DC, Sharma SV, Woods D, **Danho M**, McWhorter JW. Development of a Culinary Medicine Toolkit to Improve the Implementation of Virtual Cooking Classes for Low-Income Adults with Type 2 Diabetes. *Healthcare (Basel)*. 2024 Jan 30;12(3):343. Doi: 10.3390/healthcare12030343. PMID: 38338231; PMCID: PMC10855157
- McWhorter JW, LaRue DM, Almohamad M, **Danho MP**, Misra S, Tseng KC, Weston SR, Moore LS, Durand C, Hoelscher DM, Sharma SV. Training of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists to Improve Culinary Skills and Food Literacy. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2022 Aug;54(8):784-793. doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2022.04.001. Epub 2022 May 27. PMID: 35644786.
- McWhorter JW, **Danho MP**, LaRue DM, Tseng KC, Weston SR, Moore LS, Durand C, Hoelscher DM, Sharma SV. Barriers and Facilitators of Implementing a Clinic-Integrated Food Prescription Plus Culinary Medicine Program in a Low-Income Food Insecure Population: A Qualitative Study. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2022 Aug;122(8):1499-1513. doi: 10.1016/j.jand.2021.11.016. Epub 2021 Nov 25. PMID: 34839026.
- Sharma SV, McWhorter JW, Chow J, **Danho MP**, Weston SR, Chavez F, Moore LS, Almohamad M, Gonzalez J, Liew E, LaRue DM, Galvan E, Hoelscher DM, Tseng KC. Impact of a Virtual Culinary Medicine Curriculum on Biometric Outcomes, Dietary Habits, and Related Psychosocial Factors among Patients with Diabetes Participating in a Food Prescription Program. *Nutrients*. 2021 Dec 15;13(12):4492. doi: 10.3390/nu13124492. PMID: 34960044; PMCID: PMC8707163.
- John JC, Kaleemullah T, McPherson H, Mahata K, Morrow RB, Bujnowski D, Johnston A, **Danho M**, Siddiqui N, Walsh MT, Haley SA, Sirajuddin AM, Schauer T, Wu MJ, Rechis R, Galvan E, Correa N, Browning N, Ganelin D, Gonzalez J, Lofton S, Banerjee D, Sharma SV. Building and Advancing Coalition Capacity to Promote Health Equity: Insights from the Health Equity Collective's Approach to Addressing Social Determinants of Health. *Health Equity*. 2021 Dec 27;5(1):872-878. doi: 10.1089/heq.2021.0012. Erratum in: *Health Equity*. 2022 Mar 07;6(1):224-225. PMID: 35018321; PMCID: PMC8742293.
- Sharma SV, Chuang RJ, Byrd-Williams C, **Danho M**, Upadhyaya M, Berens P, Hoelscher DM. Pilot evaluation of HEAL - A natural experiment to promote obesity prevention behaviors among low-income pregnant women. *Prev Med Rep*. 2018 Apr 9;10:254-262. doi: 10.1016/j.pmedr.2018.04.005. PMID: 29868377; PMCID: PMC5984221.

PRESENTATIONS

- Houston's Food Is Medicine Mini Summit – Houston Food Bank, April 25, 2025
- Family Meals: Cooking, Connection, and Culture – Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living March 18, 2025
- TeachHER.Us.Them – Conference 2024 Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine – University of Houston -Nutrition Workshop September 2024
- Healthier Texas Summit, "Diabetes Management A La Minute: Merging Food Rx and Culinary Medicine to Manage the Chronic Disease," October 2022.
- Pilot evaluation of HEAL - a natural experiment to promote obesity prevention behaviors among low-income pregnant women. Poster presented at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, November 2018, San Diego, CA.
- Sharma SV, Danho M. HEAL – A natural experiment to promote obesity prevention behaviors among low-income pregnant women. Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living, UTHealth School of Public Health, May 2018.
- Afternoon Tea at the Dell Center: Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) – Overview & Outcomes, June 2014.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Certificate of Training in Obesity for Pediatrics and Adults (Commission on Dietetic Registration), September, 2025
- McGovern Center for Interprofessional Collaboration (CIPC) Distinguished IPE Faculty Program (Faculty Distinguished Program Facilitator Training) August 2025

SERVICE

- Co-Developed and led Culinary Medicine Module for McGovern Medical School's Interprofessional Course ICARE - Improving Care Access and Realizing Equity (ICARE) McGovern (Fall 2025)
- Co-Chair, Dietetic Internship Advisory Board (2022 to present)
- Member, Nourish Advisory Board (2022 to present)
- Member, Practice Council/Advisory Committee (January 2024 – present)
- Served as judge for Practice Day posters & videos
- Recruiting activities for Dietetic Internship
 - 9/11/23, 10/28/24, 9/29/25 - U of H Student Nutrition Association
 - 9/7/23, 10/21/24 – Texas Southern University
 - 9/25/23, 10/15/24 – Prairie View A&M University
 - 10/9/23 – Dietetic Internship Supervised Practice Fair – Orlando, FL
 - 10/6/24 - Dietetic Internship Supervised Practice Fair – Minneapolis, MN
 - 10/13/25 - Dietetic Internship Supervised Practice Fair – Nashville, TN
 - 10/14/23, 10/19/24, 9/13/25 – Texas A&M Dietetic Internship Practice Workshop
 - 9/19/23, 10/28/24, 9/17/25 – Texas Tech
 - 10/17/23, 11/6/24 – UT Austin
 - 4/14 - 4/15/24, 4/4 – 4/5/25 – Texas Academy Conference & Exhibition
 - 9/19/24, 10/23/24, 11/4/24, 11/22/24, 12/16/24, 1/7/25, 1/28/25, 5/19/25, 6/18/25, 8/8/25, 9/18/25, 10/3/25 – SPHDI Open House
 - Meet and correspond with individual prospective students throughout the year

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
 - Texas Affiliate – Southeastern Region
- Health Equity Collective
 - Co-Chair Communications Workgroup (2020 – 2024)