

Opportunity for Change Scholarship

Erin McMahon

erinmcm@umich.edu

Future Registered Dietitian

Seattle Pacific University – Dietetic Internship Program

3.67 GPA at the University of Michigan

When I began university, I was unaware of which direction I would take with my undergraduate degree. I come from a family who attended community college having less career options to choose from as their careers were predetermined by their program choice. I did not have any guidance in attempting to choose my major, so it was very difficult to come to a decision about the specific area I wanted to pursue within my program. I have always worked in the food service industry, whether it be through waitressing, or as a dietary aide, and in my current position as a dietetic technician. It was not until the second year of my undergraduate degree, while working in a long-term care home, that I realized nutrition and health behaviors was a field I would be interested in pursuing. I often worked alongside a dietitian monitoring how they perform nutrition assessments and assisted in entering seasonal menu changes. Through observation and emulation during meal service, I was able to mentally determine whether a resident's diet order needed to be altered to texture modified. Additionally, I was able to build relationships with residents requiring assistance during feeding times. Although I was not qualified to alter a resident's diet order, being able to recognize when it should be reevaluated was satisfying and I realized I wanted to pursue a career in this field.

In one of my undergraduate courses, nutritional counsellors from The Bulimia Anorexia Nervosa Association (BANA) were invited to further elaborate on clinical treatment for adults, youth, adolescents attending the program. I became well informed on the types of treatment options offered at the Teen Health Clinic for families seeking therapy to aid in overcoming their specific disorder. I began enrolling in more courses to further my knowledge on this subject and realized this a discipline I am passionate about researching as it has affected me personally. I have always had a good relationship with food while growing up, but I could never seem to gain weight. I was often teased by my peers at school, family members, and even teachers who would comment on my appearance, resulting in poor self-confidence that has carried on through adulthood. My sister has also struggled with weight but on the opposite end of the spectrum, and consequently developed an eating disorder because of constant bullying. I understand the physical, mental, and emotional trauma the disease can incur on both the family and the individual. We often felt helpless as we were unaware of the treatment alternatives to manage her bulimia in her teenage years. I want to be able to do more for those competing with these disorders in adolescent years before they progress into adulthood, and this is what I aim to do upon completing my supervised practice hours in a dietetic internship program with Seattle Pacific University.

Growing up, I lived in the household of two alcoholic parents. At around 12 years of age, my father decided he wanted to get clean and attended an Alcoholics Anonymous program. With my mother's refusal to acknowledge her own wrongdoings and trickled pathway, my parents divorced leaving my sister and I to care for my mother. Although she was functional and could attend work most days, by the time she arrived home my sister and I were left to tend to the house, cook meals, and carry her to bed. While contemplating my parents battle with this disease, I recognized I did not want to follow that pathway as

alcoholism can be inherited in a family lineage, and it was then that I decided to apply to become a first-generation student and get a university education. I worked two part-time jobs while attending college full-time, participated in volunteer/extracurricular opportunities, as well as completed an internship. I fell in love with the nutrition aspect of my Kinesiology Movement Science degree, so I decided to re-locate permanently to the United States and continue my education in a nutritional sciences program. I began a full-time job at Michigan Medicine as a dietetic technician and enrolled in pre-requisite courses part-time prior to applying.

In my experience working at Michigan Medicine thus far, the ability to apply knowledge acquired from my nutrition background to my position has been extremely fulfilling. While working in the room service call center, I was required to monitor patients diet orders while ordering from room service, page nurses for patients on insulin receiving a meal within 30-60 minutes, contact patients who have consecutively missed meals, and enter meal orders for patients within the psychiatric care unit who are unable to contact us themselves. I am now working in the milk room at the C.S. Mott's Children and Women's Hospital at Michigan Medicine. I am required to calculate dietary formula recipes for infant formula and fortified breast milk to be signed by the primary medical doctor, mix infant formula, and fortify breast milk to then deliver to patient rooms, and communicate with mothers and family members as well as various members of the healthcare team to ensure safe handling and timely delivery between feeds. I have never felt more of a sense of belonging in my prior work experience than I have since pursuing this career path.

While living in the United States for two months, the COVID-19 pandemic began and closed the US-Canadian border. Although my mental and physical health had declined, I was able to persevere which led me to receive an acceptance in a Didactic Program of Dietetics at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. In my master's program, I maintained good academic standing, was elected Social Chair in 2021 and President in 2022 of the Nutritional Sciences Student Association (NSSA) on-campus, volunteered with the student-run free clinic providing nutrition advice to low-income adults, completed a summer internship with the dietitian at BANA (the non-profit organization that initially sparked my passions for working in this career field), and worked part-time at the hospital all while navigating a major change in lifestyle from the one I previously dueled in. My upbringing was not the greatest of circumstances, however I am a strong believer in the saying "everything happens for a reason." Without the resilience I maintained thus far in my life, I would not be where I am today. The primary motivator for my future career is the drive to alter the course of my life from the environment I was born into. In my ideal future, I will move to Seattle to continue my education in a post-bachelor's program in dietetics where I will complete my supervised practice hours, sit for the accreditation exam, and obtain my Registered Dietitian credentials to finally fulfill my dream career working with children in eating disorder treatment. In my future, I will work diligently to ensure my future children never have to endure the pain and trauma I went through in my childhood. Although I did not have the privilege of a support system, I hope to be able to support my children emotionally and financially throughout their lifetime while navigating their ideal future(s), whatever they may be. This scholarship will help me to pay toward my tuition so that I can achieve this life goal. If I am chosen as the winner for this scholarship, I would be forever grateful to *findrehabcenters.org* for giving me the chance to better not only my future but also my family lineage for generations to come.



DATE: July 7, 2022

TO: Find Rehab Centers - Opportunity for Change Scholarship Reviewers

FROM: Suzanne M. Cole, PhD

RE: Erin McMahan

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is written in strong support of Erin McMahan's application for an Opportunity for Change Scholarship. As a Lecturer in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, I have had the pleasure of knowing Erin since September 2020 as an instructor and her academic advisor. Although our acquaintance has not been lengthy, my interactions with Erin have been frequent over the last 21 months, therefore I believe I have sufficient information to evaluate her professional capacity and commitment to professional growth in public health and nutrition.

Erin completed a Master in Public Health degree in Dietetics from the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Michigan School of Public Health in May of 2022. She will be attending Seattle Pacific University this fall to complete her dietetic training. In graduate coursework, Erin was a conscientious and hardworking student in our program. I enjoyed having Erin in my courses because she was enthusiastic and dedicated in her pursuit of understanding and applying concepts and methods. Her questions reflected excellent critical-thinking skills as well as the ability to consider the application of course topics in various contexts including dietetics and public health as well as diverse populations. She regularly participated in class discussions demonstrating initiative and engagement in the class topic. I want to note that Erin's grades were lower in her first semester of graduate school, which coincided with the challenges faced by all during the first year of COVID. Erin's grades improved considerably during the winter term of her first year in the MPH program despite a semester that is typically challenging for most students due to the rigorous curriculum. The tenacity and determination exhibited by Erin during her MPH exemplifies her strength of character and her strong work ethic in pursuit of her career goals.

Erin is passionate about improving the health and well-being of children and adults through nutrition and fitness education. With respect to children, she completed a Maternal and Child Nutrition Certificate during her MPH in which she enrolled in five additional graduate courses focused on maternal and child nutrition and health. This is typical of Erin - she does not shy away from hard work or challenges, rather she demonstrates considerable initiative and perseverance.

Erin has gained a breadth of internship and work experience that ranges from diet technician responsibilities at the University of Michigan Hospital to community-based clinical counseling, and disordered eating and weight bias experience. In addition to her work experience, Erin demonstrates considerable initiative with respect to enhancing her professional skill-set, including leadership. For example, she provided leadership for a graduate student nutrition association that organizes professional development opportunities for graduate students in the School of Public Health.

In summary, Erin brings a multidisciplinary background and skill-set to the field of public health and nutrition. An Opportunity for Change Scholarship would support Erin as she completes her dietetic training over the next year. I wholeheartedly and with enthusiasm recommend her for your scholarship. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Cole

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Transcript of: Erin McMahon

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Paul Robinson
University Registrar

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR - ANN ARBOR, MI 48109-1382

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN DEGREES AWARDED

School/College: Public Health
Field(s) of Specialization: Maternal and Child Nutrition
Degree: Graduate Certificate
Awarded: 28-APR-2022

School/College: Public Health
Field(s) of Specialization: Nutritional Sciences
Dietetics
Degree: Master of Public Health
Awarded: 28-APR-2022

University of New England
Biddeford ME 04005
Wayne State University
Detroit MI 48202

Winter 2021

			Grade	Hours	MSH	CTP	MHP
NUTR	540	Maternal&Chld Nutr	A	2.00	2.00	2.00	8.00
NUTR	620	Multivariate Nutr	A	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.00
NUTR	622	Weight Bias & Health	A	2.00	2.00	2.00	8.00
NUTR	631	Vitamins & Minerals	A-	3.00	3.00	3.00	11.10
NUTR	688	Nutrition Seminar	S	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.00
PUBHLTH	513	PUBHLTH Sys Pol Mgt	A+	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.90
PUBHLTH	516	Leadership IP Pract	A+	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.30

Term Total GPA: 4.000 14.50 14.00 14.50 56.30

Fall 2021

			Grade	Hours	MSH	CTP	MHP
HBEHED	634	Child Health Develop	A-	3.00	3.00	3.00	11.10
NUTR	600	Prof Devl in NS	A	2.00	2.00	2.00	8.00
NUTR	621	Eat Dis Prev Treat	A	2.00	2.00	2.00	8.00
NUTR	636	Medical Nutrition Th	A-	3.00	3.00	3.00	11.10
NUTR	639	Pathophys of Obesity	B	3.00	3.00	3.00	9.00
NUTR	677	Growth Maturation	A-	2.00	2.00	2.00	7.40

Term Total GPA: 3.640 15.00 15.00 15.00 54.60

BEGINNING OF GRADUATE RECORD

			Grade	Hours	MSH	CTP	MHP
Fall 2020	Public Health						
BIOSTAT	521	Appl Biostat	B	3.00	3.00	3.00	9.00
NUTR	630	Prin Nutritionl Sci	B	3.00	3.00	3.00	9.00
NUTR	642	Community Nutrition	A	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.00
NUTR	688	Nutrition Seminar	S	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.00
PUBHLTH	507	SDOH Comm	A-	2.00	2.00	2.00	7.40
PUBHLTH	512	Prin Epid Pub Hlth	B-	3.00	3.00	3.00	8.10
Term Total	GPA: 3.250			14.50	14.00	14.50	45.50

Winter 2022

			Grade	Hours	MSH	CTP	MHP
HBEHED	540	Fund Reprod Hlth	A+	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.90
NUTR	585	Food Service Mgt	A	2.00	2.00	2.00	8.00
NUTR	637	Med Nutrition Th II	B+	2.00	2.00	2.00	6.60
NUTR	640	Nutrition Assessment	B+	3.00	3.00	3.00	9.90
NUTR	646	Nutrition Counseling	A	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.00
NUTR	796	Special Topics in NS	A	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.00
PUBHLTH	514	Pub Hlth Sci Environ	A	2.00	2.00	2.00	8.00

Term Total GPA: 3.837 16.00 16.00 16.00 61.40

Cumulative Total GPA: 3.691 59.00 60.00 217.80

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Paul Robinson
University Registrar

GRADUATE REMARKS

17-Sep-2021 Reduction of 2 credit hours in degree requirements granted for non-enrolled field placement (detached study) from May 10, 2021 through July 15, 2021.

END OF GRADUATE RECORD

End of Transcript
Total Number of Pages 2



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TRANSCRIPT GUIDE

DEFINITION OF AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

An Official Transcript is one that has been received directly from the issuing institution. It must bear the University seal, date and signature of the registrar. Transcripts received that do not meet these requirements should not be considered official and should be routinely rejected for any permanent use. This definition of an official transcript has been endorsed by the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

ACCREDITATION

The three campuses of the University of Michigan are accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools - Higher Learning Commission. Many of the departments and programs within the University are also accredited by various agencies. Detailed information about these agencies and the accreditation process is available from the Dean's office of each academic unit.

CALENDAR

The University of Michigan operates under the trimester calendar. A unit of credit is a semester hour.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ENROLLMENT

Unless otherwise indicated, a student is eligible to enroll.

EXPLANATION OF COLUMN HEADINGS

HRS = Elected Hours/Units; MSH = GPA Semester Hours; CTP = Credit Toward Program; MHP = GPA Honor Points.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR CREDIT CONDITIONS

AGC = Approved for Graduate Credit; CBE = Credit by Exam; DCO = Degree Credit Only; NDC = Not for Undergraduate degree credit; NFC = Not for Credit; NGD = Not for Graduate Degree Credit; REP = Repetition.

STUDY ABROAD

Study abroad credit is considered upper level unless otherwise noted.

LETTER GRADES

9.0 GRADING SCALE (A+ through B = Pass unless otherwise noted)

A+ = 9.0; A = 8.0; A- = 7.0; B+ = 6.0; B = 5.0; B- = 4.0; C+ = 3.0; C = 2.0; C- = 1.0; D+ = 0.0; D = 0.0; D- = 0.0; E = 0.0.

4.4 GRADING SCALE

A+ = 4.4; A = 4.0; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.4; B = 3.0; B- = 2.7; C+ = 2.4; C = 2.0; C- = 1.7; D+ = 1.4; D = 1.0; D- = 0.7; E = 0.0.

4.3 GRADING SCALE

A+ = 4.3; A = 4.0; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.3; B = 3.0; B- = 2.7; C+ = 2.3; C = 2.0; C- = 1.7; D+ = 1.3; D = 1.0; D- = 0.7; E = 0.0.

4.0 GRADING SCALE

A+ = 4.0; A = 4.0; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.3; B = 3.0; B- = 2.7; C+ = 2.3; C = 2.0; C- = 1.7; D+ = 1.3; D = 1.0; D- = 0.7; E = 0.0.

ADDITIONAL GRADES

EX = EXCELLENT; GD = GOOD; PS = PASS; LP = LOW PASS; F = FAIL (EX, GD, PS and LP = Pass)

CR = Credit; NC = No credit; S = Satisfactory; U = Unsatisfactory; P = Pass; F = Fail

I = Incomplete (I OR IL followed by a letter grade indicates an initial incomplete that has been given a final grade.); NR = No grade reported;

= Grade not submitted; ED = Unofficial drop; VI = Audit or Visit; W = Withdrew from course; Y = Extended multi-term class

M = Marginal; IPL = Incomplete Permanent Lapse; NRC = No Record COVID, a non-passing grade used to address a global pandemic

COMPUTATIONS FOR TERM OR CUMULATIVE GPA: Term GPA = Term MHP/Term MSH; Cumulative GPA = Cumulative MHP/Cumulative MSH; Example: 42.0 MHP/12.0 MSH = 3.5 GPA.