

Proposed Changes to the Associate Membership Category

HOD Fact Sheet

House of Delegates

December 2016

Background

The Member Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) has recommended to the House of Delegates that the qualifications for membership in the Academy’s Associate category be updated.

www.eatrightPRO.org/AssociateMember

<p>The Associate membership category was approved by the HOD in 2011, and is currently available to individuals who have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in addition to training, certification, or license in one of the specified professions below (<i>*indicates proof of bachelor’s degree required</i>):</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certified dietary manager, certified food protection professional* • certified midwife • certified professional - food safety* • certified culinary professional* • certified sports medicine practitioner* • dental hygienist* • dentist • health education specialist • occupational therapist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pharmacist • physical therapist • physician • physician assistant • registered environmental health specialist/registered sanitarian • registered nurse* • school nutrition specialist* • speech-language pathologist

Privileges of Associate Members

Associate members shall have access to applicable Academy benefits, products, and services and be eligible to hold appointed positions at the national, affiliate (state), and dietetics practice and member interest group (DPG and MIG) levels.

Academy Associates shall NOT have the right to:

- Hold elected positions on the national, affiliate (state), and dietetic practice group and member interest group (DPG and MIG) levels
- Vote in national, affiliate (state), and DPG/MIG elections
- Be listed in Find an RDN (or Expert)
- Post to member blogs
- Take the Commission on Dietetic Registration’s (CDR) Certification Courses
- Receive discounted professional liability insurance through the Member Advantage Program

Membership History

Overall, the Associate category is the Academy’s smallest membership category, with 56 Associates in 2014 being the category’s highest membership. The majority of Associates are physicians and registered nurses.

Year	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16
Associate Members	17	51	56	43	42

MSAC Proposed Changes

1. Educational Parity - The educational qualifications for Associate membership should be commensurate with the training requirements for the trades and professions it includes.

- ✓ **Rationale** - The current bachelor's degree minimum is not commensurate with some of the trades already included in this category (e.g. chefs).
- The current Associate membership qualifications are not inclusive and require the following qualifying trades/professionals to obtain degrees above and beyond the minimum educational requirement needed to obtain their certifications, making it impractical, if not impossible, for them to join the Academy:
 - certified dietary managers, certified professionals - food safety, certified culinary professionals, dental hygienists, registered nurses, school nutrition specialists, and those who are certified in sports medicine.
- The MSAC recommends that individuals with these certifications qualify for Associate membership if they hold only an associate degree (granted by a US regionally accredited college/university) so long as that degree is related to the training, certification, or license they are applying under.

2. Alignment - Align the qualifying professions and trades with those who work alongside dietetics professionals today.

- ✓ **Rationale** - The current list of Associate professions excludes educators of dietetics professionals and other aligned groups expressing interest in this category.
- The MSAC recommends to align the specified professions and educational backgrounds in the qualifications to include educators of dietetics professionals and allied professionals who work alongside dietitians.
 - MSAC recommends the following trades/professions now qualify: certified in comprehensive food safety, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker, and nurse practitioner.
 - MSAC recommends those with at least a bachelor's degree in the following educational degree areas also qualify: agriculture, biochemistry, microbiology, computer science, family and consumer science, home economics, hospitality and tourism, as well as hotel, restaurant and institutional management.

3. Alignment – Alter annual dues rate from \$232 to \$170.

- ✓ **Rationale** - \$170 mirrors the rate for Academy membership in other categories with similarly scaled back benefits.
- The MSAC also recommends that the dues structure for the Associate category be commensurate with the Academy's other membership options. In this case, the \$170 rate mirrors the International category, as they both offer members limited privileges and limited benefits.

What HOD Needs from You

Talk to your delegate(s) about this proposed update to the current Associate membership category. Would this category update enable your non-dietetics like-minded collaborators to join as an Associate? The deadline for submitting feedback is **January 11, 2017**.