

2017 Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics Member Survey

Proposed Membership Category Changes

Overall, the PA affiliates indicated that they would be in favor of making changes to the associate membership category. However, comments submitted suggest that additional consideration and review may be warranted in finalizing the proposed recommendations. While many members agree that including individuals with an associate degree (56%), who are working in nutrition related profession, is desirable many expressed concern over the inclusion of certain professionals including but not limited to dental hygienists and sports professionals. Members noted concerns over the potential misuse of the associate membership status diminishing the reputation of our profession, as well as continuing to attribute to the public's misunderstanding of nutrition professionals. Members also agreed that the associate membership should align with professions and trades that work alongside dietetic professionals (64%) and those with a BS in certain areas (computer science, agriculture, microbiology etc). One member commented that including new members could produce new ideas while others felt that AND should focus on strengthening the active membership category. Again, some felt that expanding the membership to include all of the proposed professions and trades could lead to misuse and abuse of the "associate member" and confuse clients. A few comments indicated that educators of dietetic professional should be included but questioned why those with computer science or hospitality education be included in this category. Members agree (61%) that associate member fees should be reduced as long as they have limited benefits and privileges. Additional comments in respect to fees included increasing the benefits to AND members and focusing on recruiting active members who chose to not be members due to cost. The specific questions asked and detailed comments follow.

1. Q1 Do you agree that Associate Membership in the Academy be expanded to include individuals listed in item 1 above who have earned a minimum of an Associate Degree? Answered: 168 Skipped: 1 (Yes =56.55% (95 responses) No= 43.45% (73 responses)
*Interpretation: The membership is split on this topic. The written responses however point to **strong opposition** of inclusion of Associate Degree inclusion in Associate Membership in the Academy of those opposed. Several members questioned inclusion of other professions such as dental hygienist, hospitality professionals etc. and questioned the reason behind requesting inclusion of these professions in Associate Membership.*
2. Q2 Do you agree that Associate Membership in the Academy be expanded to include professionals that work alongside dietetic practitioners such as educators of dietetics professionals and other aligned groups such as certified in comprehensive food safety, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker, and nurse practitioner? Answered: 168 Skipped: 1
Yes= 64.88% (109 responses) No=35.12% (59 responses)
Interpretation: This question leaned toward "yes" with approximately 2/3 of the respondents voting yes. There were 21 written responses and most were commenting on categories of professions that would be acceptable/unacceptable for Associate Membership. There were many opinions on acceptability and several members suggested caution as to the rights and privileges of the Associate membership if these individuals could join our Academy.

3. Q3 Do you agree that Associate Membership in the Academy be expanded to include those with at least a bachelor's degree in the following educational degree areas: agriculture, biochemistry, microbiology, computer science, family and consumer science, home economics, hospitality and tourism, as well as hotel, restaurant and institutional management. Answered: 167 Skipped: 2
Yes= 61.68% 103 (responses) No= 38.32% 64 (responses)
Interpretation: This question leaned toward "yes" with a little less than 2/3 of the respondents voting yes. There were 21 written responses and most were commenting that computer science and hospitality degrees were not appropriate for Associate Membership. Most of the written responses were indicating limitations on extending categories of Associate Membership.
4. Q4 Do you agree that dues for Associate Membership in the Academy be reduced from \$232.00 to \$170.00/year? Answered: 167 Skipped: 2
Yes= 61.68% 103 (responses) No= 38.32% 64 (responses)
Interpretation: This question was again approximately 2/3 yes. There were 18 written responses containing various opinions concerning level of benefits and cost of benefits with most responses indicating that the cost of membership (Associate and Active) is higher than desired.
5. Q5 What additional information or thoughts would you like to share? **Answered: 28** Skipped: 141
Interpretation: Of the 28 written respondents, most of the respondents commented that caution would be wise concerning expanding our membership categories/criteria. There were four members that felt that expanding our membership criteria would be helpful to increase diversity/communication with other professions. There was one member that was strongly opposed to expanding the criteria for Associate membership. Several members discussed the impact on our profession (in a negative manner) and the perception of the public of our profession. Several members discussed the cost of membership dues for Active members. One comment of note concerned the RDs/RDNs that are currently not members of our Academy. Although only 28 members responded in writing, these members had thoughtful and measured responses to this question.
6. Q6 Name and Contact Information. This is optional but would be very helpful. Answered: 37 Skipped: 132
Interpretation: Of the 37 members that added their name and contact information to this survey, many of these individuals are present or past volunteers with the Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and as such have years of experience and are able to provide informed opinions on the subject of criteria for Associate Membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

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