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## History of undergraduate courses of Instituto de Nutrição Josué de Castro: 75 years of activity

### Trajetória dos cursos de graduação do Instituto de Nutrição Josué de Castro: 75 anos de história

#### Abstract

Originally created in 1946 as an educational and research institution at Universidade do Brasil, the Instituto de Nutrição Josué de Castro (INJC) (Josué de Castro Nutrition Institute) of Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2021. The objective of this report - presented in the "Perspectives" modality - was to describe the trajectory of undergraduate courses at INJC, in undergraduate teaching, through interviews and testimonials of professors, the analysis of documents, reports, notes, annotations of the institutional collection and consultations with information systems and data storage of the university in the form of books, resolutions/laws/decrees that are relevant to the theme. The Institute offers two undergraduate courses. Nutrition was the first one, implemented in 1948 for the education of dietitians/nutritionists. Gastronomy was implemented later, in 2011; it was a pioneer in many aspects, e.g., it was located in southeast Brazil; it was held in a public institution; it was conceived as an undergraduate modality, with an innovative pedagogical proposal. Both degree programs were designed with highly qualified faculty with diverse backgrounds, who are intrinsically involved in teaching, research, and extension activities inside and outside the unit through partnership with other institutions, social organizations, and class entities, which ensure quality education of students. In celebration of its 75th anniversary, INJC reaffirms its commitment to solid, technical professional education for social transformations and in the defense of the human right to adequate and healthy food.

**Keywords:** Education. Nutrition. Gastronomy.

#### Resumo

No ano de 2021, celebra-se o aniversário de 75 anos do Instituto de Nutrição Josué de Castro (INJC), da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), criado em 1946 como instituição de ensino e pesquisa da, à época, Universidade do Brasil. O objetivo deste relato, na modalidade "Perspectivas", foi narrar a trajetória dos cursos do INJC no ensino de graduação, por meio de entrevistas e depoimentos de docentes, análise de documentos, relatórios, atas, anotações do acervo institucional e consultas aos sistemas de informação e armazenamento de dados da UFRJ, livros e resoluções/leis/decretos pertinentes ao tema. O Instituto abriga dois cursos de graduação, sendo o pioneiro o curso de Nutrição, implantado em 1948 para formação de dietistas/nutricionistas, o quarto em nível nacional; e o curso de Gastronomia, implantado em 2011, o primeiro na Região Sudeste do país em instituição pública, na modalidade de graduação, e com proposta pedagógica inovadora. O corpo docente

de ambos os cursos apresenta alta qualificação e diversidade de formação e está envolvido em atividades de ensino, pesquisa e extensão da unidade, ou em parceria com outras instituições, sejam de ensino, organizações sociais, entidades de classe, garantindo a qualidade de formação dos estudantes. Nas comemorações de seu jubileu de brilhante, o INJC reitera seu compromisso social na formação de profissionais tecnicamente competentes e comprometidos com as transformações sociais e na defesa do direito humano à alimentação adequada e saudável.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação. Nutrição. Gastronomia.

## INTRODUCTION

On January 21, 1946, the University Council of the Universidade do Brasil (UB) (University of Brazil) approved the incorporation of the assets of the Institute of Food Technology to the UB, assuming the commitment to create an academic institution in the field of Nutrition.<sup>1</sup> The two-year Dietitian Course was implemented in 1948. It was the fourth degree program created to educate dietitians/nutritionists in Brazil and the third in Rio de Janeiro.

When the Program to Restructure and Expand Federal Universities (REUNI) was launched by the federal government in 2007,<sup>2</sup> the Instituto de Nutrição Josué de Castro (INJC) (Josué de Castro Nutrition Institute) forwarded the following proposals to the University Council: creation of the second Nutrition course at the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) (Federal University from Rio de Janeiro), to be implemented in the then newly created Campus UFRJ Macaé; the expansion of vacancies for the INJC Nutrition course; and the creation of the Gastronomy course, thus meeting the need to expand the vacancies offered by UFRJ. The Nutrition course on the UFRJ Campus Macaé was implemented in the second half of 2009, and the first class of the Gastronomy degree program on Campus Cidade Universitária - Ilha do Fundão was taught in the second half of 2011.

As a major institutional mission, this paper aimed to describe the history of INJC in undergraduate education. This report was based on consultations to documents, reports, minutes and notes from the institutional collection, consultations to the Integrated Academic Management System (SIGA/UFRJ), books and resolutions/laws/decrees relevant to the topic, as well as interviews and testimonials from professors.

## HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUTRITION AND GASTRONOMY DEGREE PROGRAMS AT UFRJ

The written records of the INJC collections registered the first change to the curriculum and to the name of the course for dietitians to a course for nutritionists (which now has three years' of duration), in line with the recommendations of the I Brazilian Conference of Nutritionists, in 1958.<sup>3</sup> In 1963, the program was adapted to meet the minimum curriculum requirements established by the Conselho Federal de Educação (CFE) (Federal Council of Education), and the nutrition program at the Instituto de Nutrição da Universidade do Brasil (INUB) (Institute of Nutrition of the University of Brazil) was recognized by that same Council. In 1970, after the curriculum was redesigned, the program contained two educational cycles: the basic one, common to other courses in the field of health, and the professional one. In that same year, UFRJ adopted the credit system and organized the curriculum into academic semesters. The program was adapted to this new situation, and admission was offered through a single entrance exam for courses in the field of health, applied by the Cesgranrio/Combimed consortium. In 1975, the program was updated again in terms of class hours and distribution by study area to meet the recommendations of the minimum curriculum of the CFE and the Comisión de Estudios sobre Programas Académicos en Nutrición y Dietética de América Latina - CEPANDAL. In 1983, as a result of a Resolution of CFE, the INUB nutritionists' course was renamed 'Nutrition course'.<sup>3</sup> To date, adjustments have been made to the curriculum and the total number of class hours to meet scientific and marketing demands.

After the Presidential Decree No. 6.096, of April 24, 2007,<sup>2</sup> during the presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, REUNI was established. Among other goals, the program made changes to admission and to the structure of Brazilian public higher education, and increased the number of vacancies, especially for evening classes.<sup>2</sup> Six months after the publication of the aforementioned presidential decree, it was announced that UFRJ had adhered to the new national program, and the Restructuring and Expansion Program (PRE) was established. Among other activities, the program determined the need to increase the number of vacancies in on-site undergraduate courses, create new daytime and evening courses, create campuses in the countryside, reduce dropout rates and use idle vacancies.<sup>4</sup>

In this historical context, INJC implemented the Work Committee to discuss and organize the creation of the undergraduate degree program in Gastronomy at UFRJ. At that time, the director of the Instituto de Nutrição Josué de Castro (INJC) (Josué de Castro Nutrition Institute) was Prof. Elizabeth Accioly, and the Dean was Prof. Aloísio Teixeira, both of whom were supporters and enthusiasts of the proposal. Between 2008 and 2009, Prof. Nilma Morcerf de Paula, who had recently become a member of INJC faculty and had previous experience in other degree programs in Gastronomy and Hospitality, was the head of the committee (previously coordinated by Prof. Maria Lucia Mendes Lopes). The other members of the committee were professors Lúcia Andrade, Mirian Ribeiro Baião, Rosângela Alves Pereira and Vera Lúcia Mathias da Silva, in addition to the gastronomy technologist Jean Phillippe Lafond.

After extensive and careful work by the committee to formulate an innovative proposal that met the university's needs of the time, the University Council (CONSUNI), in a meeting on May 27, 2010, approved the creation of the undergraduate degree in Gastronomy at UFRJ.<sup>5</sup> To this end, partnerships were established with other departments and agencies at UFRJ, e.g., the Instituto Coppead de Administração (Coppead Administration Institute), the Escola de Belas Artes (School of Fine Arts), the Instituto Nutes de Educação em Ciências e Saúde (Nutes Institute of Education in Science and Health) and the Instituto de Pesquisas de Produtos Naturais Walter Mors (IPPN) (Walter Mors Natural Products Research Institute). All of them enthusiastically supported INJC's initiative and continue to collaborate with the program to date.

## ADMISSION AND CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

The courses that make up INJC are aimed at students who have completed high school. Most applicants are admitted through the Unified Admission System (SiSU/MEC), an online system that uses the scores of the High School National Exam to select students interested in applying to higher education institutions throughout Brazil. In addition to SiSU/MEC, some students are admitted by academic transfer, whose process includes the following situations: change of course and campus/hub; optional external transfer and special external transfer.

Currently, INJC's degree programs can be completed in eight academic semesters, but time for completion can be extended to a maximum of 12 semesters. The Nutrition degree program has a basic and a professional cycle of courses. It is a full-time program with a total number of 3,790 class hours distributed among 44 courses taught along eight semesters. Five courses correspond to supervised curricular internships to be performed in the last year of the course. There is a total of 1050 practical class hours (27.7%), 1680 theoretical class hours (44.3%) and 1060 hours of supervised curricular internship (28%). The Gastronomy degree program has three interdisciplinary areas, namely: Management, Hospitality and Food Studies. Since the first semester, the curriculum consists of theoretical and practical courses, complementary activities, supervised internships and undergraduate thesis/project. It has a total workload of 3,000 class hours in the form of credits, with 1,350 hours (45%) of theoretical classes, 1,050 hours (35%) of practical classes and 600 hours (20%) for internships. The latter are based on the aforementioned areas.

The pedagogical project of the Gastronomy degree program, which is still in force, was conceived with the participation of collaborators who added a multi-faceted and comprehensive vision of the program; for example, subject matter experts, the pedagogical supervisor and professionals actively working in the market.<sup>6</sup> The curriculum proposed for the Gastronomy program aimed to combine health promotion, environmental preservation with respect for biodiversity, competence, entrepreneurship and technological innovation; these aspects are highly emphasized in the project, and cover all the curriculum components. It offers classes in the afternoon and in the evening to meet the demands of teaching restructuring program.

Students in both degree programs at INJC come from different backgrounds. Many are the first people in their families to attend higher education classes. In the Gastronomy program, there is also an interesting point: more than half of the students were born/used to live in other states.

In the Nutrition program, this socioeconomic characteristic and students' difficulty in keeping up with the classes are certainly enhanced when they do not feel motivated about the subjects at the beginning of the program.<sup>7</sup> Although the courses have a solid and fundamental foundation in the biological area in the first semesters, and subsequently focus on contents more targeted at professional training, the reform of the curriculum of the undergraduate course in Nutrition at UFRJ is an old yearning of its academic community.<sup>8</sup> The curriculum reform aims to correct the deficiencies identified in previous diagnostic assessments, for example: the core and the professional cycles are separated, and students start to have professional practice courses later in the program.<sup>7</sup>

The new curriculum guidelines of the Nutrition program are based on the National Education Bases and Guidelines Law and on the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) for undergraduate degree programs in Nutrition.<sup>9</sup> The DCNs for Nutrition programs enable the transition from the traditional teaching model to the use of active methodologies in the teaching-learning process, the integration between theoretical and practical activities, the promotion of interdisciplinary education, in addition to the inseparability of teaching, research and outreach activities.<sup>8</sup>

In the basic cycle, students interact with contents and with professors from partner academic units, members of the Health Sciences Center such as IPPN, the Instituto de Ciências Biomédicas (Institute of Biomedical Sciences), the Instituto de Biofísica Carlos Chagas Filho (Carlos Chagas Filho Biophysics Institute), the Instituto de Microbiologia Paulo de Góes (Paulo de Góes Institute of Microbiology), the Faculdade de Medicina (Faculty of Medicine), the Instituto de Biologia (Institute of Biology) and institutions from other university centers at UFRJ, such as the Instituto de Economia (Institute of Economics), the Instituto de Psicologia (Institute of Psychology), the Escola de Comunicação (School of Communication), the Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais (Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences) and the Escola de Serviço Social (School of Social Service).

Nutrition science is extremely dynamic and, in view of the growing volume of information resulting from technological advances, it was concluded that the curriculum would need to offer generalist education and help prospective nutritionists to develop a broader view of health care since the first semester of the course. The proposal for the design of the new curriculum, however, was put on hold because institutional efforts had to be made to implement the Nutrition degree program on the *campus* UFRJ Macaé in 2009 and the Gastronomy course at INJC in 2011. Nevertheless, the proposal for the curricular reform of the Nutrition program was resumed in 2016 and is currently being processed at the higher levels of management at UFRJ.

After approval of the new curriculum, students will be able to perform practical professional activities from the beginning to the end of the program, with a more dynamic, streamlined and updated curriculum to meet current market demands. In the new proposal, the program will be expanded to nine semesters, with a total of 43 mandatory courses, five of which they can choose among the ones available. Also, the current five curricular internships will be maintained. The big difference compared to the current curriculum lies in the integration of contents, including the core area and the inclusion of activities in practical scenarios since the first academic semester of the course.

The implementation of the new curriculum is intended to promote a generalist education to nutritionists to make them capable of understanding the political, economic and sociocultural interfaces in the field of Food and Nutrition, so that they can work in an ethical, humanistic and critical-reflective manner.<sup>8</sup> The new curriculum is based on the principles of the Human Right to Adequate and Healthy Food; public policies in the field of health, food and nutrition, contributing to the improvement of the population's quality of life.<sup>8</sup>

With regard to the Gastronomy program, over a ten-year period, small adjustments were made to some courses. As of 2019, a process for curriculum adjustment was started with regard to class hours, course descriptions, and rearrangement of contents. The motivating factor for these changes were the experiences of professors from the program and particular features of the process of educating undergraduates in Gastronomy at UFRJ.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND INJC'S FACULTY**

Regarding infrastructure, INJC has a laboratory complex, consisting of 13 laboratories, namely: Laboratories of Bromatology and Food Composition; Dietetic Techniques and Cooking; Food Technology; Functional Foods; Fruit and Vegetable Processing; Nutritional Biochemistry and Nutritional Vivarium; Food Chemistry and Bioactivity and Coffee Research (Prof. Luiz Carlos Trugo); Nutritional Assessment; Food Development for Special and Educational Purposes; Center for Research and Extension in Clinical Nutrition-Laboratory and the Undergraduate and Graduate Computer Technology Laboratories, which aim to provide instrumental and methodological support to support INJC's undergraduate and graduate education as well as research and extension activities.

INJC undergraduate courses also count on the Dietetic Laboratory of UFRJ's Central University Restaurant to carry out practical activities in the field of food studies.

INJC is composed of four departments, namely: Nutrition and Dietetics, which comprises four sectors: Administration of Food Services, Conventional Nutrition, Maternal and Child Nutrition and Clinical Nutrition; Basic and Experimental Nutrition, which is divided into two sectors: Food Sciences and Dietetic Techniques; Social and Applied Nutrition, composed of three sectors: Nutritional Assessment, Public Health Nutrition and Nutritional Education; and that of Gastronomy, recently approved by the University Council, which will be composed of the following pillars: Management, Hospitality and Food Studies/others.

According to information collected from the Personnel Department, the current faculty of the INJC is made up of 69 permanent staff; almost all of them work full time, and 78% hold a doctoral degree. In all, 96% of the professors of the Nutrition program have a degree in nutrition. Owing to the specificities and interdisciplinary nature of the Gastronomy program, the faculty has a very diversified background; it is composed of professionals from the Exact Sciences, Human Sciences and also from the health area.

The professors of both courses are involved in research activities, either linked to the research lines of the INJC graduate programs, or in partnership with professors from other UFRJ units or from other higher education institutions.

The extension activities of the professors of the Nutrition and Gastronomy programs are noteworthy for the diversity of activities (projects, courses and events) in different areas of knowledge, meeting the demands of compulsory credit completion for students. A total of 37 professors were coordinating 39 active outreach activities until June 2021.

The professors of both courses are regular members of higher faculty committees and in advisory committees of UFRJ's top management. In addition, they are editors and reviewers of scientific journals, including the recently launched *Revista Mangút Conexões Gastronômicas* (ISSN: 2763-9029).

Nutrition professors at UFRJ have a close relationship with professional associations, e.g., the Conselho Regional de Nutricionistas (Regional Council of Nutritionists) and the Associação de Nutrição do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Nutrition Association of the State of Rio de Janeiro). They have assisted in several activities in such organizations over the years, showing their commitment to the education and professional practice of nutritionists. They also provide technical assistance to the Ministério da Saúde (Ministry of Health), in an area committee in the

Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior-CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel) and as referees in research funding agencies.

The courses have their own administrative structures to deal with matters relevant to professors and students, as provided for in Resolution CEG 02, of March 2, 2016,<sup>10</sup> which established the Academic Advice and Monitoring Committee (COAA), linked to an academic unit and responsible for advising and monitoring the students from their particular academic unit. In addition, according to Resolution CEG 02/2016, each academic unit must form a group of supervising professors (CPO), in order to assist advisees (undergraduate students) in understanding the academic procedures that affect them, as well as monitor the academic life of Student Aid beneficiaries, in order to advise them about the rules for requesting, granting, renewing and canceling their respective aid or housing benefit, as established by the higher authorities.<sup>10</sup>

To deal with pedagogical matters, INJC's undergraduate courses have established a Structural Faculty Center, with advisory, propositional, evaluative and assisting functions on academic matters. It is co-responsible for the preparation, implementation, update, consolidation and evaluation of the Course's Pedagogical Project, in compliance with federal regulations and regulated at UFRJ by CEG Resolution 05/2012.<sup>11</sup>

## STUDENT BODY AND GRADUATES

Graduates from INJC's Nutrition program can work in the following areas: Nutrition for Collective Feeding, Clinical Nutrition, Nutrition for Sports and Physical Exercise, Nutrition for Collective Health, Nutrition in the Production Chain, Industry and Food Trade, and Nutrition in Education, Research and Extension, as provided for in CFN Resolution No. 600, of February 25, 2018.<sup>12</sup>

Graduates from the Gastronomy program can work in different areas, e.g., professional kitchens (companies, schools and hospitals); *catering*; food services for cultural, corporate and sporting events; food service companies such as sweet shops, bakeries, restaurants, bars, cafeterias, as well as hotels, clubs, theme parks and other leisure and hospitality complexes. They can also work in public and private sectors in different types of services that involve consulting, technology and management. In addition to these possibilities, graduates from UFRJ's Gastronomy course can work with cultural production, scientific and news editing, and start their own businesses, developing social-biodiverse and sustainable business models.<sup>6</sup>

UFRJ's Nutrition degree program has scored high in the major rankings of performance evaluation in the last five years. It has reached prominent positions in the rankings by newspaper Folha de São Paulo and in the National Student Performance Exam (ENADE). According to the ranking by Folha de São Paulo, INJC is regularly ranked among the top five degree programs in Brazil. It ranked fourth in 2019, only behind USP, UFMG and UNICAMP. In the 2019 edition of ENADE, the course achieved the maximum score (five). The Gastronomy degree program has not yet been evaluated for student performance through ENADE or other sources of classification of undergraduate courses. To date, there is no estimation of a date for such assessments.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

In seven decades of existence, the Nutrition course has had many achievements in the pursuit of excellence in undergraduate education, which is INJC's major mission, thus consolidating the course's position on the national scene.

The following achievements of the Gastronomy program, throughout ten years after implementation, are particularly noteworthy: numerous extension projects, the recent approval of the specialization course in Drinks and



Gastronomy, and the creation of *Mangút*, an electronic journal that seeks to foster quality scientific production in the emerging field of Gastronomy, in an interaction with different areas of knowledge. The first issue was published in July 2021.

Over ten years of existence, partnerships have been established in the most diverse areas of knowledge, with emphasis on the partnership with the Museu do Pontal, which aims to develop cultural projects; with the Public Ministry, encouraging the development and job placement of transgender people; and with other social organizations in the third sector, aiming at accelerating gastronomy-related businesses. In 2020, the pandemic caused by COVID-19 posed the challenge of remote teaching and the suspension of academic activities by UFRJ. On the one hand, there were times of uncertainty regarding the future of institutional academic activities; on the other hand, there was resilience in accepting new challenges.

Teaching activities were partially resumed in August 2020, still experimentally, as an exceptional academic period; and as a regular teaching period in a virtual environment, as of November 2020.

In the 2021-2022 biennium, arrangements are being made to enable INJC's programs to offer on-site activities and to meet the demands previously repressed by the suspension of academic activities - owing to the requirement of social distancing, arising from the health crisis, especially as far as practical activities are concerned. In addition, the Nutrition program will also face the challenge of implementing the new curriculum.

INJC's faculty has been striving to demonstrate its commitment to quality education and to the demands of society, despite the adversities of these difficult times. Therefore, while celebrating its 75th anniversary, INJC reiterates its social commitment to educating technically competent professionals who shall engage in social transformations, by producing knowledge in response to society's demands and in defense of the human right to adequate and healthy food.

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