

# MAJOR IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES

Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) is an interdisciplinary major focusing on the health and development of individuals across the lifespan, within the context of diverse families and social identities. Students complete foundational coursework in human development (i.e., infancy and childhood, adolescence, emerging and young adulthood, middle and later adulthood/aging), family studies, and evidence-based prevention and intervention programming in human services. Students study theory and emerging research in the field and learn to identify risk and protective factors influencing cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development across the lifespan. During their final year, HDFS students apply knowledge and skills from foundational course work through participation in a semester-long internship. Internship is a hallmark of the degree program that serves as a culminating experience preparing students for a professional career with diverse populations, communities, and organizations. The HDFS major offers five concentrations that enable students to specialize within their degree and prepare for a variety of career paths in human services. In addition to selecting one of five concentrations, students have the opportunity to earn the Gerontology Interdisciplinary Minor (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/university-wide-programs/interdisciplinary-studies/gerontology-interdisciplinary-minor/>), work toward Director Qualifications in early childhood settings, or apply to the Major in Early Childhood Education (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/early-childhood-education-major/>). The HDFS department is committed to promoting the success and well-being of students from heterogeneous backgrounds and experiences.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate:

- Content knowledge and understanding of theory, research, and practice relevant to optimizing the development, health, and well-being of individuals and families across the lifespan in the context of the larger social environment.
- Effective written and oral communication skills appropriate to the field of human development and family studies.
- The ability to access, critically evaluate, and apply multiple forms of information related to individuals and families.
- Professional and leadership skills with individuals and families, including ethical and culturally sensitive conduct.

## Potential Occupations

Graduates with a major in HDFS are prepared to work in a range of human service sector settings including youth services organizations; early childhood, elementary, adolescent, and parent education programs; health-care settings; juvenile and adult corrections and criminal justice; family and community services; and programs serving older adults, including long-term care facilities. HDFS graduates are also well prepared to pursue graduate studies in mental health, behavioral and social sciences, education, health and medicine, policy and public health, and other professional programs. Students interested in teaching human development and family studies content at the secondary level should

explore the interdepartmental Major in Family and Consumer Sciences, Family and Consumer Sciences Education Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/education/family-consumer-sciences-major-education-concentration/>).

Some examples of career opportunities students may pursue with a bachelor's degree in HDFS include, but are not limited to: early childhood administrator and teacher, adult recreation programmer, administrator in adult and aging facilities, career development specialist, family services specialist, human development specialist, adult education teacher, human resources coordinator, youth agency administrator, community outreach worker, women's program administrator, youth intervention and prevention program administrator, youth employment, training, and development specialist, parent educator, children-family educator, child protection worker, family assistance worker, program administrator, public relations specialist, student affairs professional, youth services worker, case manager, nonprofit agency administrator, and residential center manager.

To help guide students in career planning, there are five concentrations within the Major in Human Development and Family Studies. The HDFS program of study consists of the HDFS foundational courses, which are required for all students regardless of concentration, 15 credits selected from the list of courses within students' chosen concentration, and additional electives to reach the minimum of 120 credits required for graduation. Students must declare at least one concentration and may declare up to two concentrations in the HDFS major. The declared concentration(s) are listed on the students' transcripts and thus indicate specialized training within the HDFS degree program.

## Human Development and Family Studies Concentration

The Human Development and Family Studies concentration is a general concentration available to HDFS majors who do not choose one of the more specific concentrations. This general concentration is an excellent choice for students who are interested in a lifespan or more general focus in HDFS and are not seeking the specialized training offered in the other four concentrations. Students choosing this concentration will be preparing to enter a variety of careers or graduate programs, as outlined above. The curriculum includes primarily HDFS, psychology, and social work courses as well as selected courses from other disciplines for a well-rounded and robust education in human development and family studies. By selecting this concentration, students have an opportunity to participate in a variety of experiential learning courses and internship options as they explore and prepare for their career path and additional credentialing options. Please note that the HDFS general concentration cannot be paired with one of the other concentrations because of the more general focus, and does not appear on students' transcripts.

## Early Childhood Professions Concentration

Courses in the Early Childhood Professions concentration prepare students for careers in early childhood education as well as professional work with children across a variety of settings, including working with children with disabilities, in healthcare settings, and community agencies. This concentration focuses on early childhood development from birth to eight years old and therefore is an ideal choice for first and second year HDFS majors who plan to apply to the competitive on-campus Major in Early Childhood Education (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/early-childhood-education-major/>) during their sophomore year. Additionally, this concentration is the preferred choice for students interested in early childhood education careers that do not require teacher licensure, for students who will pursue a graduate degree and

licensure in childhood education, and those interested in combining the concentration with another concentration in pre-health, prevention, and intervention sciences, or leadership and advocacy professions. Students interested in working with children with special needs, those seeking director qualifications in early childhood education, and those seeking other relevant credentials would also benefit from choosing this concentration. The curriculum incorporates courses from several disciplines that focus on early child development, education, diversity, and professional skills.

### Pre-Health Professions Concentration

Many students pursuing an HDFS degree plan to apply to graduate or professional programs in a variety of health professions. The Pre-Health Professions concentration prepares students for these careers and supports their goals of obtaining graduate and additional professional training. Some of the careers students in this concentration pursue are nurse, dentist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, optometrist, pharmacist, veterinarian, allied health practitioner, anesthesiologist assistant, child life specialist, chiropractor, dentist, medical doctor, music therapist, naturopathic or complementary medicine practitioner, physician's assistant, podiatrist, public health educator, or speech and language pathologist. The courses within this concentration include a focus on science and are designed to prepare students to work with individuals (and their families) with disabilities, mental and physical illness, or those experiencing death, dying, or grief. In addition, students in this concentration are strongly encouraged to consult with health professions advisers in the Collaborative for Student Achievement (<http://studentachievement.colostate.edu/>) for specific course (and corresponding course prerequisite) recommendations based on the credentials that they are pursuing, as the prerequisite requirements vary for graduate and professional programs.

### Prevention and Intervention Sciences Concentration

The Prevention and Intervention Sciences concentration is designed for students who are preparing for careers in the helping and human services professions such as counselors, educators, student affairs professionals, public health and social service providers, as well as for students seeking a research career in human development and family studies or a related field. This concentration offers students specialized training in programming related to promoting individual, family, and community health and wellness through the lifespan. This concentration is an excellent choice for students interested in careers requiring either a bachelor's degree or additional credentials. Coursework emphasizes evidence-based programs, and students will learn how to design and implement community-based prevention and intervention programs for youth, adults, and families. Students can focus on a specific aspect of the lifespan or choose courses across the lifespan. The course work also serves as an excellent second concentration for students focusing on early childhood, pre-health professions, or leadership and advocacy professions.

### Leadership and Advocacy Concentration

The Leadership and Advocacy Concentration guides students who are preparing for leadership in organizations that promote the optimal development of individuals and families, with a focus on equity and inclusion. Students in this concentration are prepared to work with diverse populations across a spectrum of human services positions in healthcare, education, mental health, government, business; as well as for a career pathway as directors, managers, or owners within these fields. This concentration includes coursework in advocacy and social justice as well as opportunities to study finance, management, marketing, public

policy, professional communication, and leadership. This concentration is also relevant for students seeking positions in student affairs, human resources, and non-profit organizations as well as students preparing for careers or advanced study in advocacy and legal services, such as advocates, lawyers or policy makers. Students in this concentration may also choose to pursue additional credentials in leadership, business, entrepreneurship, and design thinking.

## Online Degree Program

The major in Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) is offered in two formats, both leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. We offer classes to on-campus degree-seeking students and we offer distance students the HDFS degree through CSU Online (<http://www.online.colostate.edu/>). The major in Human Development and Family Studies offered through CSU Online provides a flexible, convenient, and accessible format for busy, working, or distance students. The online program of study is the same as the on-campus version, is fully accredited, and is indistinguishable on student transcripts and diplomas from the on-campus version. The Gerontology Interdisciplinary Minor (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/university-wide-programs/interdisciplinary-studies/gerontology-interdisciplinary-minor/>) and courses required to pursue a variety of certifications are also available online.

## Accelerated Program

The major in Human Development and Family Studies includes an accelerated program option (<https://provost.colostate.edu/accelerated-programs/>) for students to graduate on a faster schedule. Accelerated Programs typically include 15-16 credits each fall and spring semester for three years, plus 6-9 credits over three summer sessions (<https://summer.colostate.edu/acceleratedprograms/>). Students who enter CSU with prior credit (AP, IB, transfer, etc.) may use applicable courses to further accelerate their graduation. Visit the Office of the Provost website for additional information about Accelerated Programs (<https://provost.colostate.edu/accelerated-programs/>).

## Concentrations

- Early Childhood Professions Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/human-development-family-studies-major-early-childhood-professions-concentration/>)
- Human Development and Family Studies Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/human-development-family-studies-major-human-development-family-studies-concentration/>)
- Leadership and Advocacy Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/human-development-family-studies-major-leadership-advocacy-concentration/>)
- Pre-Health Professions Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/human-development-family-studies-major-pre-health-professions-concentration/>)
- Prevention and Intervention Sciences Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/human-development-family-studies/human-development-family-studies-major-prevention-intervention-sciences-concentration/>)

Learn more about the Human Development and Family Studies major on the Department of Human Development and Family Studies website (<https://www.chhs.colostate.edu/hdfs/programs-and-degrees/b-s-in-human-development-and-family-studies/>).