

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES, PLAN A

Human development and family studies (HDFS) focuses on processes of development across the lifespan at the individual level and within families. At the level of the individual, the emphasis is on the causes and correlates of developmental change and stability across the lifespan. Topics of study include biological bases of development, cognitive development (e.g., perception, learning, memory), social-emotional development (e.g., social competence, self-regulation, attachment styles), and development of and in social relationships across the lifespan.

Family studies is a broad, multidisciplinary area of inquiry that can be approached from different levels of analysis and with a wide range of methodological tools. Research addresses the study of family structures and the connection of family systems with other social structures (e.g., school, workplace, etc.), and their implications for changes in the nature and quality of family relationships. The field of family studies also focuses on the effect of family structure on the development of individuals within the family, as well as relationship dynamics among family members (e.g., parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, cross-generational relationships), and the influences of these dynamics on physical and mental development across the life course.

On their way to the master's degree, students gain knowledge about typical (i.e., normative) and atypical development at the individual level and at the level of the family and related social institutions. This includes knowledge about development-promoting and development-hindering conditions, such as poverty, health disparities, or social disadvantages, and how risk and resilience factors play out over the life course. Students also acquire skills in the application and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative research methods, the rigorous design of research studies, and program planning and evaluation.

Graduates of this program enter careers in different human service and educational settings, including schools, behavioral health organizations, advocacy organizations, organizations serving older adults, and organizations focusing on social policy and public health issues. Graduates are equipped to assist with the design of intervention programs, the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected by such programs, and the dissemination of research findings to a broad array of audiences.

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

[Students interested in graduate work should refer to the Graduate and Professional Bulletin.](#)

Learning Objectives

Students will learn the fundamental principles of human development and family studies from a lifespan developmental and life course perspective, and will specialize in a particular content area (e.g., early childhood development; adolescent development; adult development and aging).

Specifically, successful students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the fundamental propositions of lifespan developmental and life course theory, and develop a strong appreciation for the multidisciplinary nature of HDFS.
2. Demonstrate skills in the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods to design empirical studies addressing basic and applied research questions in a rigorous scientific way.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to analyze data in a rigorous way, and communicate research findings within the scientific community and to constituent audiences.
4. Apply findings from basic research to practical problems that have been identified as impediments to individuals' development and the optimal functioning of families.
5. Communicate and disseminate research findings generated in the field of HDFS effectively to a variety of audiences.

Requirements Effective Fall 2023

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
HDFS 500	Issues in Human Development & Family Studies	3
HDFS 524	Family Studies	3
HDFS 549	Research Methods I	3
HDFS 550	Research Methods II	3
HDFS 592	Grant Writing--Research/Program Development	3
HDFS 607	Prevention Science Across the Lifespan	3
HDFS 610	Risk and Resilience	3
HDFS 650	Multivariate Research Methods I	3
Selected Courses		
Select 12 credits from the following:		12
HDFS 611	Early Child Development	
HDFS 612	Adolescent Development	
HDFS 613	Adult Development and Aging	
HDFS 636	Aging and the Family	
HDFS 692A	Family Issues: Intimacy and Human Sexuality	
HDFS 692B	Family Issues: Parenting	
HDFS 792A	Seminar: Lifespan Socioemotional Development	
HDFS 792B	Seminar: Lifespan Cognitive Development	
Electives ¹		
Thesis		
HDFS 693	Capstone Seminar	3
HDFS 699	Thesis	3
Program Total Credits:		42

A minimum of 42 credits are required to complete this program.

¹ Select enough 500-level or above elective credits with approval of advisor and graduate committee to bring the program total to 42 credits.

Requirements for All Graduate Degrees

For more information, please visit Requirements for All Graduate Degrees (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/graduate-study/procedures-requirements-all-degrees/>) in the Graduate and Professional Bulletin (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/>).

Summary of Procedures for the Master's and Doctoral Degrees

NOTE: Each semester the Graduate School publishes a schedule of deadlines. Deadlines are available on the Graduate School website (<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/deadline-dates/>). Students should consult this schedule whenever they approach important steps in their careers.

Forms (<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/forms/>) are available online.

Step	Due Date
1. Application for admission (online)	Six months before first registration
2. Diagnostic examination when required	Before first registration
3. Appointment of advisor	Before first registration
4. Selection of graduate committee	Before the time of fourth regular semester registration
5. Filing of program of study (GS Form 6)	Before the time of fourth regular semester registration
6. Preliminary examination (Ph.D. and PD)	Two terms prior to final examination
7. Report of preliminary examination (GS Form 16) - (Ph.D. and PD)	Within two working days after results are known
8. Changes in committee (GS Form 9A)	When change is made
9. Application for Graduation (GS Form 25)	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School Website
9a. Reapplication for Graduation (online)	Failure to graduate requires Reapplication for Graduation (online) for the next time term for which you are applying
10. Submit thesis or dissertation to committee	At least two weeks prior to the examination or at the discretion of the graduate committee
11. Final examination	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School Website
12. Report of final examination (GS Form 24)	Within two working days after results are known; refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School website
13. Submit a signed Thesis/Dissertation Submission Form (GS Form 30) to the Graduate School and Submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates (Ph.D. only) prior to submitting the electronic thesis/dissertation	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School website.
14. Submit the thesis/dissertation electronically	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School website

15. Graduation

Ceremony information is available from the Graduate School website