

# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SCIENCE

## Graduate Programs

Graduate study in the Department of Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) is designed to prepare students in the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge focused on reducing risk and enhancing resilience within individuals and among families. HDFS offers graduate study leading to the Master of Science degree and Doctor of Philosophy degree. Graduate study in HDFS emphasizes the integration of theory, research and application to address key issues in risk and resilience. The MS options include Aging Sciences, Applied Human Services, Developmental and Family Sciences, Early Childhood Education, Family and Community Services, and Marriage and Family Therapy. The PhD is in Human Development and Family Science. Students work with their advisors and advisory committees to develop flexible yet rigorous programs that meet degree requirements and professional competencies in the area of the specialization. Graduate programs in HDFS are central to departmental research. Faculty and students engage in the integration of theory and research to advance the development and application of knowledge to reduce risk and enhance resilience for individuals and families across cultures and generations.

HDFS has provided high quality graduate education programs for decades and has graduates in leadership positions across the state and nation in all areas of specialization. The department includes five centers/institutes that enhance student experiences in graduate study:

1. the Child Development Laboratory (CDL), licensed by the state of Oklahoma and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC);
2. the Center for Family Services (CFS) offers high quality marriage and family therapy to the public and a training environment for master's degree students who choose the Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) option;
3. the Gerontology Institute focuses on advancing the quality of life for aging populations through interdisciplinary programs of instruction, research, and public service;
4. the Center for Family Resilience (CFR) focuses on the promotion of resilience and reduction of risk among individuals, couples, and families across the lifespan in rural and urban areas of Oklahoma through multidisciplinary research, education and outreach; and
5. the Institute for Developmental Disabilities learns from and works alongside individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

## The Master of Science Degree

The MS degree in Human Development and Family Science is awarded in five options. Applicants specify the option in which they are seeking the MS degree as part of the application process: Aging Sciences, Applied Human Services, Developmental and Family Sciences, Early Childhood Education, and Marriage and Family Therapy (COAMFTE Accredited).

Admission to the MS program is selective and requires the completion of a bachelor's degree. Admission decisions are based on a variety of criteria, including grade-point average, GRE scores (MFT only), TOEFL scores (required for students for whom English is a second language, 79 minimum), three letters of recommendation, statement of student goals,

and a résumé or vita. Admission is available only for the fall semester in the Marriage and Family Therapy option.

Students in each option take department core courses designed to prepare them to integrate theory, research and application focused on reducing risk and enhancing resilience within individuals and among families across cultures and generations. Additional coursework (ranging from a minimum of 12 semester hours to a maximum of 44) in each option, approved by the advisor and student's advisory committee, is focused on integrating theory, research and application within the option. All options offer both a thesis and non-thesis option. The minimum number of semester hours required for each option is: Aging Sciences requires 36 hours; Applied Human Services requires 33 semester hours; Developmental and Family Sciences requires 30 semester hours; Early Childhood Education requires 30 semester hours for thesis plan or 32 for non-thesis plan; and Marriage and Family Therapy requires a minimum of 60 semester hours.

The Aging Sciences option engages students in an in-depth study of adulthood, the aging process, needs of aging individuals and family care providers, and services for aging populations.

The Applied Human Services option provides leadership in diverse human services careers. Graduates (a) demonstrate an ability to describe, discuss and integrate theory, research and application to address key issues related to individual and family risk and resilience; (b) establish a solid theoretical foundation in Human Development and Family Science, and (c) gain experiences and establish competence related to professional issues in human services. Students select a specialization area based on career goals and interests. This program can also be done as a 4+1 BS/MS degree program.

The Developmental and Family Sciences option is offered as an in-flight degree as part of the HDFS PhD. Coursework focuses on the integration of theory and research in human development and family science, research methods and statistics.

The Early Childhood Education option emphasizes child development as a foundation for the study and practice of professional education of children from birth through age eight. This program can be completed as a 4+1 BS/MS program for students seeking both the BS and MS specializing in Early Childhood Education prior to entering the profession. The integrated program is designed to be completed in five years, including two summers. The MS option is also open to graduates from other departments or universities. To help students gain a strong understanding of how theory and research inform classroom and professional practice, students take courses in history and theory, curriculum, issues and observation and assessment. Students also complete a field experience in early childhood education as part of the degree program. This degree program prepares graduates for careers including: early childhood teacher educator; staff training and development; administration and evaluation; child, family and educational advocate; early childhood consultant; early childhood classroom teacher (requires teacher certification prior to the MS program).

The Marriage and Family Therapy option is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. The Marriage and Family Therapy option provides students with basic knowledge, clinical skills and a professional identity essential for entry level practice of marriage and family therapy. Students specializing in marriage and family therapy operate the Center for Family Services, an on-campus family therapy clinic. The MFT curriculum takes at least two

and one-half years (including summers) to complete. The academic course work includes courses in systems theory, marriage and family therapy techniques, ethics and professionalism, and research. Course work provides a framework for the application of marriage and family therapy theory and research in clinical practice. In addition, all students are required to take at least 18 months of clinical practice. Graduation requirements include the completion of required coursework, a minimum of 500 client contact hours, and the completion of either a thesis or non-thesis plan.

More information on HDFS MS programs may be obtained from the HDFS department, on the web at <https://education.okstate.edu/departments-programs/human-development-family-science/index.html> (<https://education.okstate.edu/departments-programs/human-development-family-science/>) or by e-mail: [humansciences.hdfs@okstate.edu](mailto:humansciences.hdfs@okstate.edu).

## Online Master of Science Degrees

The Department of Human Development and Family Science offers the following online Master of Science programs that are delivered collaboratively through the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance: Aging Studies, Family and Community Services, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, and Family Financial Planning.

The Master of Science in Aging Studies is designed and tailored for working professionals interested in beginning or advancing a career in the field of aging and human services. Coursework covers topics including adult development and aging; family systems; care providers; physical, mental and social changes; economics; nutrition and physical activity; and environments and public policy.

The Master of Science in Family and Community Services focuses on the development and implementation of public, private and voluntary support services for individuals, families and communities. This program prepares individuals to function in a variety of occupations promoting family life and family/community well-being.

The Master of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences Education provides focused, relevant studies for individuals planning to advance a career in Family and Consumer Sciences Education. Courses are designed for Cooperative Extension Service educators, public school teachers, and professionals in related areas who are not seeking teacher certification.

The Master of Science in Family Financial Planning prepares students for a career creating and delivering financial strategies. The curriculum includes topics such as estate planning, retirement planning, insurance planning, investing, personal income tax, and financial counseling. The program is a CFP® Board-Registered (<https://www.cfp.net/>) program that satisfies the educational requirement to sit for the CFP® Certification Exam.

For additional information on the online master's program please visit the website at [gpidea.okstate.edu](http://gpidea.okstate.edu) (<http://gpidea.okstate.edu/>).

## The Doctor of Philosophy Degree

The HDFS Ph.D. is a research doctoral program designed to promote breadth, depth and integration of knowledge in HDFS. Doctoral students collaborate with faculty and other graduate students on research projects which integrate the theoretical and empirical knowledge bases of Developmental Science and Family Science, and investigate key processes associated with risk and resilience. Graduates develop into scholars able to conduct high quality basic and applied research, to provide relevant instruction, develop effective interventions, and

contribute to the development of informed public policy that reduces risk and enhances resilience within individuals and among families across cultures and generations.

The HDFS Ph.D. program is a 72-hour doctoral program that can be done straight from a bachelor's degree or after completing a master's degree. The first 30 hours of the doctoral program confers an in-flight Master's Degree in Developmental and Family Science. Students can pick either a Developmental Science or Family Science Option for advanced study.

PhD graduates are prepared to apply knowledge in human development and family science in a collaborative manner in diverse settings. To accomplish this goal, the program is designed around four primary themes: breadth (knowledge of substantive content across the two disciplines of human development and family science), depth (knowledge of substantive content within one discipline, either human development or family science), integration (knowledge synthesized to capitalize on the strengths of the disciplines of human development and family science) and experience (knowledge through involvement in research, instruction and a variety of applications associated with reducing risk and enhancing resilience of individuals and families).

To achieve breadth, depth and experience in the primary emphasis area and in the integration between human development and family science, students take courses and participate in individualized experiences, approved by their major advisor and doctoral advisory committee, that guide the student in mastering the forms (teaching, research and service) and functions (discovery of knowledge, integration of knowledge, application of knowledge and transmission of knowledge) of scholarship expected of doctoral graduates in HDFS.

Admission to the PhD program is selective and requires the completion of a bachelor's degree. Admission decisions are based on a variety of criteria, including grade-point average, GRE scores, TOEFL scores (required for students for whom English is a second language, minimum score of 79 on the internet-based TOEFL), three letters of recommendation, a statement of student goals and a résumé or vita.

More information on the PhD option in HDFS may be obtained from the HDFS department at <https://education.okstate.edu/departments-programs/human-development-family-science/index.html> (<https://education.okstate.edu/departments-programs/human-development-family-science/>) or by e-mail: [humansciences.hdfs@okstate.edu](mailto:humansciences.hdfs@okstate.edu).