

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SCIENCES (PHD)

The Department of Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS) offers two graduate degrees: Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.).

Most Ph.D. students enter with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and concurrently obtain the M.A. in HDFS in roughly the first two years of the program, then proceed to the Ph.D. Students who are admitted with the M.A. in HDFS from another institution may potentially finish the Ph.D. program in a shorter time, however, they may have to take some required coursework in order to cover equivalent material to the HDFS degree completed at the University of Connecticut. Students entering with graduate degrees in disciplines other than HDFS must fulfill the requirements of both the M.A. and Ph.D.

The Ph.D. prepares students for research and teaching careers in human development, family sciences, and related fields such as psychology, education, sociology, anthropology, and social work or in leadership positions with non-profit organizations, private foundations, and local, state, or federal government agencies. The Ph.D. degree offers students the opportunity to focus on one of the following areas: Adulthood, Aging, and Gerontology; Child and Adolescent Development; Couples, Parents, and Family; Culture and Diversity; or Health, Wellbeing, and Prevention.

Location

- Storrs Campus

Modality

- In Person

Requirements

Total minimum of 61 credits of graduate coursework including 15 credits of GRAD 6950 Doctoral Dissertation Research. Students completing the M.A. concurrent to the Ph.D. do so through The Graduate School's Plan A option. Students are also required to complete methodology and specialization courses as listed below.

Course	Title	Credits
Required Core Courses		
HDFS 5001	Orientation to Human Development and Family Sciences	1
HDFS 5006	Professional Development in Human Development and Family Sciences	3
HDFS 5215	Models and Concepts of Lifespan Human Development	3
HDFS 5310	Patterns and Dynamics of Family Interaction	3
or HDFS 5311	Theories of Family Development	
HDFS 5312	An Intersectional Approach to Individual and Family Diversity in the U.S.	3
HDFS 5340	Prevention, Intervention, and Public Policy	3
Human Development Courses		
Select one of the following: 3		
HDFS 5101	Infant and Toddler Development	
HDFS 5102	Early and Middle Childhood Development	

HDFS 5103	Adolescent Development	
HDFS 5240	Aging: Personality and Social Interaction	
HDFS 5248	Adaptation and Development in Adulthood	
Methodology Courses		
Select 15 credits from the following:		15
HDFS 5003	Research Methods in Human Development and Family Sciences I	
HDFS 5004	Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research	
HDFS 5005	Qualitative Research Methods in Human Development and Family Sciences	
HDFS 5008	Quantitative Analysis for Human Development and Family Sciences	
Three additional credits from the following:		3
HDFS 5032	Research Seminar in Qualitative Methods	
EPSY 5605	Quantitative Methods in Research I	
EPSY 5607	Quantitative Methods in Research II	
Other courses in qualitative, quantitative, and/or mixed methods with approval of advisory committee		
Specialization Requirement		
GRAD 6950	Doctoral Dissertation Research	15
Specialization or thematic courses chosen from one of the following:		9-12
Adulthood, Aging, and Gerontology (https://catalog.uconn.edu/graduate/degree-programs/human-development-family-sciences-phd/#adult)		
Child and Adolescent Development (https://catalog.uconn.edu/graduate/degree-programs/human-development-family-sciences-phd/#child)		
Couples, Parents, and Family (https://catalog.uconn.edu/graduate/degree-programs/human-development-family-sciences-phd/#family)		
Culture and Diversity (https://catalog.uconn.edu/graduate/degree-programs/human-development-family-sciences-phd/#culture)		
Health, Well Being, and Prevention (https://catalog.uconn.edu/graduate/degree-programs/human-development-family-sciences-phd/#health)		

Total Credits 61-64

Area of Specialization or Thematic Courses

Students fulfill the specialization requirement of 27 total credits with 12 credits of HDFS courses (or any related discipline area approved by advisory committee), and 15 credits of GRAD 6950 Doctoral Dissertation Research. The recommended courses fill the area of specialization requirement as follows and can include practicum experiences and/or apprenticeships listed below.

Adulthood, Aging, and Gerontology

Course	Title	Credits
HDFS 5240	Aging: Personality and Social Interaction ¹	3
or HDFS 5248	Adaptation and Development in Adulthood	
Remaining courses from the following:		9
HDFS 5150	Human Attachment Across the Lifespan	
HDFS 5240	Aging: Personality and Social Interaction	
HDFS 5248	Adaptation and Development in Adulthood	

HDFS 5250	Close Relationships	
HDFS 5255	Living with Chronic or Life-threatening Illness	
HDFS 5342	Parenting, Parenthood, and Family Science Interventions	
Total Credits		12

¹ Apart from any chosen to fulfill the Human Development requirement.

Child and Adolescent Development

Course	Title	Credits
Select one of the following: ¹		3
HDFS 5101	Infant and Toddler Development	
HDFS 5102	Early and Middle Childhood Development	
HDFS 5103	Adolescent Development	
Remaining courses from the following:		9
HDFS 5101	Infant and Toddler Development	
HDFS 5102	Early and Middle Childhood Development	
HDFS 5103	Adolescent Development	
HDFS 5150	Human Attachment Across the Lifespan	
HDFS 5277	Human Sexuality	
HDFS 5550	Social Policy, Law, and Child Welfare	
Total Credits		12

¹ Apart from any chosen to fulfill the Human Development requirement.

Couples, Parents, and Family

Course	Title	Credits
HDFS 5310	Patterns and Dynamics of Family Interaction ¹	3
or HDFS 5311	Theories of Family Development	
Remaining courses from the following:		9
HDFS 5150	Human Attachment Across the Lifespan	
HDFS 5277	Human Sexuality	
HDFS 5250	Close Relationships	
HDFS 5321	Seminar on Parent-Child Relations in Cross-Cultural Perspective	
HDFS 5342	Parenting, Parenthood, and Family Science Interventions	
HDFS 5550	Social Policy, Law, and Child Welfare	
Total Credits		12

¹ Apart from any chosen to fulfill the Core Courses requirement.

Culture and Diversity

Course	Title	Credits
HDFS 5312	An Intersectional Approach to Individual and Family Diversity in the U.S. ¹	3
Remaining courses from the following:		9
HDFS 5020	Culture, Health and Human Development	
HDFS 5031	Culture, Health and Human Development Project	

HDFS 5321	Seminar on Parent-Child Relations in Cross-Cultural Perspective	
HDFS 5442	Latina/o Health Disparities	
Total Credits		12

¹ Apart from any chosen to fulfill the Core Courses requirement.

Health, Well Being, and Prevention

Course	Title	Credits
HDFS 5345	Designing and Evaluating Health and Wellness Interventions	3
Any two courses from the following:		6
HDFS 5255	Living with Chronic or Life-threatening Illness	
HDFS 5277	Human Sexuality	
HDFS 5342	Parenting, Parenthood, and Family Science Interventions	
HDFS 5442	Latina/o Health Disparities	
HDFS 5550	Social Policy, Law, and Child Welfare	
Total Credits		9

Practicum Experiences/Apprenticeships

Credits determined by advisory committee from the list of courses below. These optional courses include some combination of teaching, applied research/policy, service/outreach, and basic research apprenticeships as appropriate for the student's plan of study.

Course	Title	Credits
HDFS 5010	Practicum in University Teaching of Human Development and Family Sciences	3
HDFS 5030	Research Practicum	1-6
HDFS 5088	Supervised Field Work in Family Development	1-6
HDFS 5099	Independent Study	1-6

Comprehensive Examination

Ph.D. Students are required to complete a Comprehensive Examination, which consists of a comprehensive, critical review of the literature in a substantive area of the student's scholarly area of interest as articulated in collaboration with the student's advisory committee.

Learning Objectives

1. Knowledge: Demonstrate appropriate breadth and depth of disciplinary knowledge and comprehension of the major topics, theories, and issues of the discipline, including demonstration of specialized knowledge of a sub-field sufficient to carry out substantive independent research or creative pursuits.
2. Communication: Communicate proficiently and effectively to a specialist or non-specialist audience, verbally and in writing, a structured, coherent academic presentation, representation, or argument that cogently summarizes their research or creative pursuit, relevant literature, and its significance at the level appropriate to discipline.
3. Research/applied skills: Use disciplinary methods and techniques ethically and professionally to apply knowledge, critically analyze, and, as appropriate to the degree, create new knowledge or achieve advanced creative accomplishments.