Help Families Thrive... Make a Difference!

Do you enjoy working with individuals and families in communities? Are you interested in learning about healthy relationships and how to promote child and family well-being? Do you want a fulfilling career that improves the quality of life for diverse families and communities?

If so, the Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) program may be just the right fit! HDFS is an applied, research-based, interdisciplinary field of study focused on the many complex factors affecting well-being and healthy development over the lifespan.

HDFS is a jointly offered academic degree program of the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS).

FEATURES

- Choose from five concentrations
  - Adolescent Development and Services
  - Adult Development and Aging
  - Child Development, Education, and Services
  - Family Health and Well-Being
  - Family Research, Policy, and Advocacy

- Gain real-world experience through a 270-hour internship

- Become a provisional Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) established by the National Council on Family Relations

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About HDFS

This academic program provides the foundation necessary for students to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities to critically analyze the many complex factors that influence family functioning, health, and well-being. The program is also practice-based and prepares students to use family-centered, strengths-based, and culturally-responsive approaches to develop, implement, evaluate, and manage programs and services for individuals and families across the lifespan.

Course Requirements

HDFS Minor (15 credits)
- HDFS 200 Individual and Family Development (online or face-to-face)
- HDFS 400 Advanced Family Processes
- Elective Courses

HDFS Major (120 credits)
- Mason Core Coursework
- College-Level Required Courses
- HDFS Major Coursework (includes a required 6-credit, 270-hour internship)
- Concentration Courses (See the front of the flyer for a listing of concentrations)
- Elective Courses

Internships and Certification

Students who major in HDFS will complete a 270-hour internship. This internship helps you integrate lessons learned in the classroom with service fieldwork, and prepares you for the complexities of working with families. The experience also provides real-world knowledge and skills that employers value. The HDFS program is aligned with competencies established by the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR). Students who major in HDFS may also receive a provisional Certified Family Life Educator designation from NCFR upon graduation.

Careers in the Field

Because the HDFS program prepares students to understand and effectively engage with families in diverse settings, there are many career opportunities available to students. HDFS is also an excellent foundation for graduate study in counseling, law, human resources, psychology, sociology, public health, social work and related fields. The following are occupations and employment settings HDFS majors could pursue. Some may require additional training or education. Use this list as a starting point to inspire your choice of a career path!

- Family social services in government and community agencies and nonprofit organizations
- Early childhood care and education, child life, youth organizations, schools, parent liaison offices
- Health agencies, mental health organizations, hospitals
- Individual, relationship, marriage and family counseling services
- Senior centers, long-term care facilities
- Juvenile and adult corrections
- Family advocacy and public policy