

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES, MS

Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) focuses on helping children, families, and relationships thrive. Our students and faculty work from a lifespan ecological perspective on development and families, recognizing and supporting the many forms of diversity in individuals, families, developmental pathways, and contexts. We focus on discovering and applying new knowledge to strengthen individuals, families, relationships, and communities, and on preparing the next generation of professionals to serve and lead.

Human Development and Family Studies' (HDFS) students seek advanced employment or leadership positions in occupations serving children, adults, and families, or admission to PhD programs. All students complete coursework in lifespan human development, family science, research methods, statistics, and select additional courses aligned with their interest and career goals. Faculty research laboratories, The Children's Program, and collaborations with various agencies serving children and families across the state of Alabama provide opportunities for research and experiential learning.

Concentrations

Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) provides graduate students with high quality training in the theory, skills, and professional identity essential to competent practice in the field of marriage and family therapy. Students graduate equipped to treat a wide variety of individual, couple, and family mental health issues with diverse populations.

Child Life (CL) is for students who wish to pursue the healthcare career of a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS). Specialists support children and their families in the healthcare setting by providing education about diagnoses, support through procedures, and by promoting development. Through personalized advising and a flexible curriculum, the program accommodates students trained in other areas who wish to pursue a career in Child Life, as well as Child Life Specialists seeking advanced training.

Admission Requirements

A statement of purpose consistent with the goals of the program, letters of recommendation, a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and a completed departmental application are needed for regular admission.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Program Requirements

HDFS M.S.	Hours
HD 500 Lifespan Human Development	3
HD 562 Dynamics Of Family Reltn	3
HES 509 Research Methods	3
BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ	3
Credit Hours Subtotal:	12
Students must also complete a thesis or comprehensive exam.	
Thesis Requirements	
HD 599 Thesis Research	6
Advisor Approved Statistics Class	3
Total Hours	21

The HDFS M.S. with no concentration prepares students for advanced employment and leadership roles and/or for admission to PhD programs. In addition to the 12 credit hour Program Core, students option for a

thesis will complete 9 credit hours (plus the 9 credit hours of thesis requirements), whereas students opting for the comprehensive exam will complete 18 credit hours.

HDFS M.S. with no concentration	Hours
Choose 9-18 credits from the following:	9-18
Must include one Family Studies Course	
HD 561 Theories Family Studies	
HD 535 Parent/Child Relationship	
Must include one Developmental Course	
HD 512 Adult Development	
HD 602 Adv Infant Development	
HD 601 Advanced Child Development	
HD 603 Adv Adol Development	
Advisor Approved Electives	
Total Hours	9-18

The Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) concentration which prepares students to take the licensure examination leading to Clinical Membership in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. In addition to the 12 credit hour Program Core, students pursuing the MFT program of study will complete 39 credit hours (24 didactic + 15 practica and internship) of concentration courses. Clinical opportunities are provided in the College's Capstone Family Therapy Clinic.

HDFS M.S. with MFT Concentration	Hours
HD 640 Couple and Sex Therapy	3
HD 641 MFT Ethics (MFT Ethics)	3
HD 642 Assess Psychopathology MFT	3
HD 645 Cultural Diversity in Marriage and Family Therapy	3
HD 664 Family Therapy	3
HD 665 Advanced Family Therapy	3
HD 567 Pract Marriage Family Therapy	3
HD 568 Pract I Marriage Family Thery	3
HD 667 Pract II Marriage Family Ther	3
HD 668 Intern Marriage Family Therapy	6
Choose 6 credits from the following:	6
HD 535 Parent/Child Relationship	
HD 561 Theories Family Studies	
HD 631 Readings Human Developmt	
Advisor Approved Electives	
Total Hours	39

The concentration in Child Life prepares students to take the Child Life Professional Certification Exam to become a Certified Child Life Specialist. In addition to the 12 credit hour program core, students pursuing the Child Life concentration will complete 24 credit hours.

HDFS M.S. with Child Life Concentration	Hours
HD 550 Hospitalzd Child & Youth	3
HD 551 Loss And Bereavement	3
HD 591 Sp Prob Hum Dev Fam StdY	3
Choose 2 Developmental Courses	6
HD 602 Adv Infant Development	

HD 601	Advanced Child Development	
HD 603	Adv Adol Development	
HD 670	Internship in Child Life (Internship in Child LIfe)	9
Total Hours		24