

# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES MAJOR (B.S.)

<https://chhs.unh.edu/human-development-family-studies/program/bs/human-development-family-studies-major>

## Description

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES MAJOR (B.S.)

Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) is an academic discipline focused on understanding the development of individuals and families over time and across the ecological contexts in which they live. HDFS is an applied field of study and a versatile undergraduate major for students interested in working to enhance the lives of individuals and families through in-demand careers in settings that include early childhood education, schools, hospitals, and social service agencies. The HDFS curriculum offers students the opportunity to take courses from child and adolescent development to adult development and aging; family, parenting, and interpersonal relationships; classroom curriculum, observation, and assessment; and family programming, policy, and law. Courses in the HDFS major emphasize diverse experiences across age, gender, race and ethnicity, nationality, and socioeconomic status and prepare students for inclusive programming and practice.

HDFS majors choose between three concentrations: [Child Development](#) (p. 1), [Family Support](#) (p. 2), and [Lifespan Development](#) (p. 2). There is some overlap in coursework and career opportunities across the three concentrations, but each offers unique areas of emphasis.

As a major public research university, UNH emphasizes hands-on experience and research opportunities for undergraduate students. Students in the Human Development and Family Studies program are provided with opportunities to put theory and research into practice through practicum and internship courses in the Child Study and Development Center, Family Connections Center, and many schools and community-based organizations across the Seacoast region of New Hampshire. Students in the Child Development concentration who complete the Early Childhood Education Teacher Preparation Program will be prepared for certification to teach children from Preschool through 3rd Grade. Family Support students who complete the Family Internship Program will be eligible to pursue provisional status as a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) at graduation.

#### HDFS Undergraduate Concentrations:

- [Child Development](#) (p. 1) focuses on infancy through childhood with an emphasis on learning, education, and developmentally-appropriate practices and activities.
- [Family Support](#) (p. 2) focuses on development within the context of families, close relationships, and communities.
- [Lifespan Development](#) (p. 2) focuses on understanding and supporting development across the entire lifespan.

#### Internship Opportunities

Internships are not required for students to complete their degree in HDFS; however there are exciting opportunities to gain hands on experience. Students who want to take part in an internship apply during their junior year for an internship experience that spans their full senior year. An Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher Preparation internship is available for qualified students within the Child Development concentration. The Family Support and Lifespan concentrations offer an internship that introduces high-performing students to careers in human services, advocacy, and policy through placements in the Seacoast Region of New Hampshire.

#### Undergraduate Minors

The HDFS department also offers three complementary undergraduate minors: Human Development and Family Studies, Adolescent and Youth Development, and Child Life. An undergraduate minor allows students to demonstrate a special area of interest, focus, or expertise and supports their academic major and future goals. Each HDFS minor highlights key aspects of individual and family development. Although the Human Development and Family Studies minor is only available to non-HDFS majors, HDFS majors may choose to minor in Adolescent and Youth Development or Child Life. A completed minor at UNH typically consists of 20 credits, or 5 classes, completed with a C- or better.

- [Human Development and Family Studies](#) minor complements undergraduate majors in the social sciences, health professions, and related disciplines by providing students with the opportunity to learn about individual and family development, interpersonal relationships, and the ecological contexts of development.
- [Adolescent and Youth Development](#) minor is an interdisciplinary minor that allows students to gain specialized knowledge and skills for working with adolescents and emerging adults in school, after-school, and community settings.
- [Child Life](#) minor introduces undergraduate students to the Child Life profession, which involves working with children, adolescents, and families facing challenges associated with hospitalization, medical procedures, illness, and disability.

### CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONCENTRATION

The Child Development concentration is intended for students who have a broad interest in working with children ranging in age from birth to age eight. The concentration has four major foci: child development, teaching methodology and curriculum development, developmentally appropriate learning environments for young children, and home-school-community relations. This concentration prepares undergraduates for careers in early childhood education and related fields requiring in depth knowledge of early development and early childhood programs. Students in the Child Development concentration may apply to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher Preparation Program during their junior year.

#### Child Development: Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher Preparation Program

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher Preparation program prepares students for a career in teaching young children. Course work for this program is designed to maximize in-classroom mentorship and to provide a broad range of exposure across the pre-kindergarten to 3rd-grade levels. This program within the Child Development concentration of the Human Development and Family Studies Department is approved by the New Hampshire State Board of Education. Juniors in the Child Development concentration who have maintained a minimum overall GPA of 3.2 and a departmental GPA of 3.2 are eligible to apply. Please note that this is a competitive program with limited enrollment. Those

accepted into the program must maintain this level of academic achievement throughout the program. Students must be prepared to have their own transportation for off-campus internship placements as needed.

#### **A Note about Obtaining State Teacher Certification**

Although students may graduate from UNH with a bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies, having completed the ECE coursework along with all student teaching requirements, they will not be eligible to apply for the New Hampshire State Teaching Certification without the required set of passing test scores. This is a state of New Hampshire requirement; not a condition for graduation from UNH. In order to fulfill a teaching contract with a public-school district, a prospective teacher must be certified by the state in which he/she is to be employed.

#### **Early Childhood Education (ECE) Internship Course Descriptions**

The ECE Internship course (HDFS 785 Seminar for Student Teachers) is a fall semester seminar-based course intended to prepare students, as teacher candidates, for the student teaching experience that takes place in the spring semester. This course emphasizes students' continued development as learners, researchers, and collaborators. Discussions and projects focus on the ways in which these three roles are developed within the classroom and school community. Students meet as a cohort in weekly/bi-weekly seminars on campus. Students should expect to spend a minimum of five hours per week in their assigned classroom (60+ hours). Other expectations for this course include but are not limited to: preparing a resume, observing at other sites, attending professional conferences, starting a professional portfolio to document their achievement of professional teaching standards, and completing additional assignments and readings.

HDFS 786 Seminar for Student Teachers and HDFS 788 Student Teaching Young Children: provide the student teaching experience in the spring semester of the senior year. Students should expect to spend a minimum of twenty-five hours per week (a minimum of 325+ hours total) in their assigned classrooms, gradually assuming increasing teaching responsibilities, culminating in the assumption of two to three lead-teaching weeks. Additional hours outside of actual classroom/program operation hours are expected for meeting and planning with cooperating teachers, preparing for teaching, and attending parent conferences and other school functions, as well as attending professional conferences. Seminars provide continued opportunity for reflection on students' development as teacher candidates, reflecting on classroom practices, identifying teaching strengths and weaknesses, and planning their first professional appointment as teachers of young learners. Students should be prepared to meet weekly after school hours and to complete and present their professional portfolio to faculty and related professionals in the field.

[Back to Top \(p. 1\)](#)

### **FAMILY SUPPORT CONCENTRATION**

The Family Support concentration focuses on individuals, couples, and families within their social and cultural contexts. Students in this concentration develop knowledge and skills that prepare them to work with individuals and families as they support healthy development and well-being in schools, social service agencies, and non-profit organizations.

Students in this concentration can apply for the status of Provisional Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) through the National Council

on Family Relations (NCFR). Because our HDFS program is a CFLE-approved undergraduate academic program through NCFR, our students can become certified simply by demonstrating the completion of our curriculum along with completion of our full-year, senior internship.

#### **Family Internship**

Students who plan to apply for Provisional CFLE certification are required to complete the Family Internship, in which students apply knowledge gained from their academic studies in a supervised environment. Students who do not plan to become CFLEs may also choose to complete the Family Internship. The internship involves a commitment of sixteen hours per week for two semesters, in addition to a three-hour seminar (HDFS 792 Family Internship Seminar) every other week. Students apply for the internship by March 1st of their junior year. Internship applicants must have completed a minimum of twenty credits of departmental coursework prior to their senior year with a minimum departmental GPA of 3.0.

#### **Certified Family Life Educator**

Students in the Family Support concentration who are accepted to the Family Internship are encouraged to apply for provisional status as a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE). Family life educators work in a variety of settings including social services, health services, child care, family support, youth programs, parent education, junior and senior high schools, and universities and colleges. The CFLE certification demonstrates expertise in a broad range of topics and increases professional credibility by validating students' education and experience. The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) has approved the Department of Human Development and Family Studies' Family Support concentration as meeting the standards and criteria required for CFLE certification. Students may apply to NCFR for provisional CFLE designation upon completion of required coursework (see marked courses in the table below.) Upon meeting additional requirements listed on the NCFR website, students can apply for full certification after graduation.

[Back to Top \(p. 1\)](#)

### **LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT CONCENTRATION**

The Lifespan Development concentration focuses on learning about developmental tasks and developmentally-appropriate practices across the entire lifespan. Students in this concentration take courses in each of the developmental periods: childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Students also gain expertise related to the social contexts impacting development, such as families and communities. Emphasis is placed on the impact of system dynamics, family systems, gender, and cultural differences on development. Students in the Lifespan Development concentration may also apply to take part in the [Family Internship program](#) during their senior year.

[Back to Top \(p. 1\)](#)

## **Requirements**

### **Major Requirements**

The core curriculum required of each Human Development and Family Studies student is designed to give a broad introduction to individual and family development and interpersonal relationships across the lifespan. Building off this curriculum, each student will select an area of concentration in Child Development, Family Support, or Lifespan

Development that will guide further required coursework. With assistance from faculty advisors, students also choose supporting courses that allow them an individualized component to the major, tailored to their specific interests and career objectives. Lastly, the senior year culminates in the required capstone experience and optional internship opportunity.

Candidates for the Human Development and Family Studies degree must satisfy all of the [University Discovery requirements](#) in addition to satisfying the requirements of their HDFS concentration.

## Core Curriculum

| Code  | Title                               | Credits |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------|
| HDFS 525  | Human Development                   | 4       |
| HDFS 545  | Intimate Relationships and Families | 4       |
| One Approved Statistics Course                                  |                                     | 4       |
| Selected Concentration (Requirements listed below)              |                                     | 24      |
| Capstone experience (Requirement listed by concentration below) |                                     | 4       |
| Supporting Courses (applies to all concentrations) <sup>1</sup> |                                     | 20      |

<sup>1</sup> Supporting courses are intended to provide an individualized component to the HDFS curriculum. Because HDFS is interdisciplinary, this allows students to explore related areas that contribute to their academic and professional goals. A supporting course may be any course, inside or outside of the HDFS department, that is:

1. At the 500-level or above
2. Approved by an HDFS adviser

Any non-required HDFS courses (including internships) may serve as supporting coursework. Other classes meeting supporting course criteria are often found in the psychology, sociology, social work, women's studies, education, and communication sciences and disorders departments.

## Concentrations and Requirements (p. 3)

[Child Development Concentration \(p. 3\)](#)

[Child Development Concentration: ECE Teacher Preparation Program \(p. 3\)](#)

[Family Support/Provisional CFLE Concentration \(p. 3\)](#)

[Lifespan Development Concentration \(p. 4\)](#)

*Note: Students apply to the ECE Teacher Preparation Program during their Junior year.*

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONCENTRATION Requirements

| Code   | Title   | Credits |
|--|---|---------|
| <b>HDFS Core Course Requirements</b>                           |   |         |
| HDFS 525   | Human Development   | 4       |
| HDFS 545   | Intimate Relationships and Families                       | 4       |
| One Approved Statistics Course                                 |   | 4       |
| <b>Child Development Requirements</b>                          |   |         |
| HDFS 623   | Developmental Perspectives on Infancy and Early Childhood | 4       |
| HDFS 635   | Teaching and Learning in Early Childhood Settings         | 4       |
| HDFS 709   | Child Development Internship                              | 4       |
| HDFS 734   | Curriculum for Young Children                             | 4       |
| HDFS 771   | Observation and Assessment of Young Children              | 4       |
| Select one additional HDFS course 500 or above                 |   | 4       |
| HDFS 743   | Families, Schools, and Community (Capstone)               | 4       |
| Supporting Course Requirements (applies to all concentrations) |   | 20      |

Supporting courses are intended to provide an individualized component to the HDFS curriculum. Because HDFS is interdisciplinary, this allows students to explore related areas that contribute to their academic and professional goals. A supporting course may be any course, inside or outside of the HDFS department, that is:

1. At the 500-level or above

2. Approved by an HDFS advisor

Any non-required HDFS courses (including internships) may serve as supporting coursework. Other classes meeting supporting course criteria are often found in (but are not limited to) the psychology, sociology, social work, women's studies, education, and communication sciences and disorders departments.

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT Concentration: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM requirements

| Code                                       | Title  | Credits |
|--|--|---------|
| <b>HDFS Core Course Requirements</b>       |  |         |
| HDFS 525                                   | Human Development  | 4       |
| HDFS 545                                   | Intimate Relationships and Families  | 4       |
| One Approved Statistics Course             |  | 4       |
| <b>Child Development: ECE Requirements</b> |  |         |
| HDFS 623                                   | Developmental Perspectives on Infancy and Early Childhood                    | 4       |
| HDFS 635                                   | Teaching and Learning in Early Childhood Settings                            | 4       |
| HDFS 709                                   | Child Development Internship   | 4       |
| HDFS 734                                   | Curriculum for Young Children  | 4       |
| HDFS 771                                   | Observation and Assessment of Young Children                                 | 4       |
| HDFS 743                                   | Families, Schools, and Community (Capstone)                                  | 4       |
| <b>ECE Required Courses<sup>2</sup></b>    |  |         |
| HDFS 785                                   | Seminar for Student Teachers   | 2       |
| HDFS 786                                   | Seminar for Student Teachers   | 2       |
| HDFS 788                                   | Student Teaching Young Children  | 8       |
| EDUC 500                                   | Exploring Teaching   | 4       |
| MATH 601                                   | Exploring Mathematics for Teachers I   | 4       |
| MATH 703                                   | Teaching of Mathematics in Grades K-5  | 4       |
| EDUC 706                                   | Teaching & Learning Literacy in the Elementary Classroom                     | 4       |
| EDUC 751A                                  | Inclusive Elementary Education: Literacies and Learning for Diverse Learners | 4       |
| or EDUC 760                                | Introduction to Young Children with Special Needs                            |         |
| EDUC 703F                                  | Teaching Elementary School Science   | 4       |
| EDUC 703M                                  | Teaching Elementary Social Studies   | 4       |

<sup>2</sup> ECE Required courses may be counted as supporting courses if the supporting course criteria is met.

## FAMILY SUPPORT /PROVISIONAL CFLE CONCENTRATION requirements

| Code  | Title   | Credits |
|---|---|---------|
| <b>HDFS Core Course Requirements</b>                              |   |         |
| HDFS 525  | Human Development   | 4       |
| HDFS 545  | Intimate Relationships and Families                           | 4       |
| One Approved Statistics Course                                    |   | 4       |
| <b>Family Support/Provisional CFLE Concentration Requirements</b> |   |         |
| HDFS 641  | Parenting Across the Life Span <sup>3</sup>                   | 4       |
| HDFS 746  | Human Sexuality <sup>3</sup>                                  | 4       |
| HDFS 760  | Family Programs and Policies <sup>3</sup>                     | 4       |
| HDFS 794  | Families and the Law <sup>3</sup>                             | 4       |
| or HDFS 776   | Children, Adolescents and the Law                             |         |
| HDFS 623  | Developmental Perspectives on Infancy and Early Childhood     | 4       |
| or HDFS 624   | Developmental Perspectives on Adolescence and Early Adulthood |         |
| or HDFS 625   | Adult Development and Aging                                   |         |
| HDFS 586  | Families at Risk  | 4       |
| or HDFS 553   | Personal and Family Finance for Family Life Professionals     |         |
| or HDFS 797   | Advanced Special Topics                                       |         |
| HDFS 757  | Race, Class, Gender, and Families (Capstone) <sup>3</sup>     | 4       |
| <b>Supporting Courses (Applies to all concentrations)</b>         |   |         |

Supporting courses are intended to provide an individualized component to the HDFS curriculum. Because HDFS is interdisciplinary, this allows students to explore related areas that contribute to their academic and professional goals. A supporting course may be any course, inside or outside of the HDFS department, that is:

1. At the 500-level or above
2. Approved by an HDFS advisor

Any non-required HDFS courses (including HDFS internships) may serve as supporting coursework. Other classes meeting supporting course criteria are often found in the psychology, sociology, social work, women's studies, education, and communication sciences and disorders departments.

<sup>3</sup> Required courses for provisional CFLE certification through NCFR. Plus HDFS 525 and HDFS 545. Students who wish to become CFLEs are required to complete the Family Internship, including HDFS 782 Family Internship and HDFS 792 Family Internship Seminar. The Certified Family Life Education designation acknowledges the preventive focus of family life education and assures the designate has met or exceeded the high standards and criteria needed to provide quality family life education.

## LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT Curriculum

| Code  | Title   | Credits |
|---|---|---------|
| <b>HDFS Core Course Requirements</b>  |   |         |
| HDFS 545  | Intimate Relationships and Families                           | 4       |
| HDFS 525  | Human Development   | 4       |
| One Approved Statistics Course  |   | 4       |
| <b>Lifespan Development Requirements</b>  |   |         |
| HDFS 623  | Developmental Perspectives on Infancy and Early Childhood     | 4       |
| HDFS 624  | Developmental Perspectives on Adolescence and Early Adulthood | 4       |
| HDFS 625  | Adult Development and Aging                                   | 4       |
| HDFS 641  | Parenting Across the Life Span                                | 4       |
| HDFS 746  | Human Sexuality   | 4       |
| HDFS 794  | Families and the Law  | 4       |
| or HDFS 776   | Children, Adolescents and the Law                             |         |
| HDFS 757  | Race, Class, Gender, and Families (Capstone)                  | 4       |
| Supporting Courses  |   | 20      |
| Supporting courses are intended to provide an individualized component to the HDFS curriculum. Because HDFS is interdisciplinary, this allows students to explore related areas that contribute to their academic and professional goals. A supporting course may be any course, inside or outside of the HDFS department, that is: |   |         |
| 1. At the 500-level or above  |   |         |
| 2 Approved by an HDFS advisor   |   |         |
| Any non-required HDFS courses (including internships) may serve as supporting coursework. Other classes meeting supporting course criteria are often found (but are not limited to) in the psychology, sociology, social work, women's studies, education, and communication sciences and disorders departments                     |   |         |

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students demonstrate a knowledge of the major models of marriage and family therapy and other systems related theories that support the MFT field students will acquire the clinical skills to assess and treat a wide range of problems from a systems paradigm demonstrate an understanding of multicultural diversity, larger systems and family/ individual development across the lifespan develop ethical principles and practices in the field of marriage and family therapy develop systemic knowledge of marriage and family therapy research, striving toward a theoretically driven and research informed clinical practice.