

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
Department of Family Studies
Master of Science Degree

Core Area of Study: Child Development

The Department of Family Studies at the University of New Hampshire offers a program of study leading to a master of science degree with a core area of study in Child Development. In this core area of study, students examine the roles of social, cultural and political contexts in the lives of young children. *In what ways is a child's social, emotional, moral, and cognitive development impacted by human attachments, support systems, and the social networks of the people and institutions of community and society?* This core area of study presents an ecological and social constructivist framework for understanding the development of children from infancy through the early school years, considering both micro contexts, such as the family, and macro issues, such as adult work and social oppression. Students will be expected to develop a deep understanding of how the social construction of childhood has shaped and continues to shape parenting, schooling, and social policy. Students will be required to complete an internship in a program serving young children that is consistent with an ecological framework.

This core area of study is intended for students with experience working with young children and their families and who desire opportunities to work in leadership roles with children in community contexts, including a variety of social service positions. In addition, professionals seeking to enter interdisciplinary doctoral programs with a focus on research, leadership and practical applications can develop advanced knowledge and understanding of child development in context through this program of study. This area of study is appropriate for teachers and early childhood leaders seeking an understanding of childhood diversity that extends beyond the confines of the classroom.

Admission Requirements

Students in good academic standing with undergraduate degrees in any related field and a specific interest in serving as advocates are encouraged to apply. If a student's undergraduate program does not include an introductory statistics course or the equivalent, successful completion of such a course is required before beginning graduate work. Students seeking admission must submit recent scores from the Graduate Record Examination general test. Additional admissions information and personal interviews may be required of applicants.

M.S. Degree Requirements

Requirements include (1) completion of a 12-credit core curriculum: FS 991 *Professional Issues for Family Specialists*; FS 993 *Theoretical Approaches to Family Studies* and FS 994 *Research Seminar*; (2) an additional 18 credits of course work including at least 4 credits of FS 911 *CSDC*

Internship and /or FS 810 *Community Internship*, (3) FS 930 *Child Development in Context*, and an advanced statistics course; (4) successful completion and defense of a research thesis (FS 899 for 6-20 credits) **OR** a comprehensive exam in the core area of study plus 8 additional credits of electives.

Students will design a program of study that may include other departmental courses such as FS 843: *Families, Schools and Community*; FS 857 *Race, Class, Gender and Families*; FS 894 *Families and the Law* and FS872 *International Approaches to Child Advocacy*. Students may select related courses in other departments as well, such as ED 941 *Diversity and Child Development*, ED 942 *Sociocultural Perspectives on Teaching and Learning*; SOC 873 *Sociology of Childhood*; and Soc 975: *Sociology of the Family*.

Resources

Child Study and Development Center - <http://www.csdc.unh.edu/>

Carsey Institute for Children, Families and Communities - <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/>

Contact Information

For more information, contact Kerry Kazura or John Nimmo at 603-862-2146 or via e-mail at kerry.kazura@unh.edu or j.nimmo@unh.edu. Application for admission to the Graduate School must be made on the appropriate forms obtained directly from the Graduate School, 109 Thompson Hall, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824-1497. Visit UNH's graduate school website at <http://www.gradschool.unh.edu> and the Family Studies departmental website at <http://www.shhs.unh.edu/fs/>.