

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES

Degree Requirements

Master of Science (M.S.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

Students who enter the graduate program without a master's degree must complete a master's degree en route to the Ph.D. For the Master of Science degree, a minimum of 31 credits at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level is required, with at least 18 credits in the 500 and 600 series combined. Students are required to complete the following:

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
HDFS 501	Human Development Across the Lifespan	3
HDFS 503	Human Development Intervention: Analysis of Theories and Approaches	3
HDFS 525	Introduction to Family Studies	3
<i>Research Methods</i>		
HDFS 516	Methods of Research in Human Development	3
HDFS 519	Methods of Statistical Analysis in Human Development	3
<i>Methods Lab</i>		
HDFS 518	Applied Statistics Laboratory	1
<i>Substantive Field</i>		
A minimum of 9 credits of course work (400 and 500 level) in their substantive field, 6 of which must be in HDFS (excluding HDFS 596 independent study)		9
Culminating Experience		
HDFS 600	Thesis Research	6
	or HDFS 610 Thesis Research Off Campus	
Total Credits		31

The thesis must be accepted by the advisers and/or committee members, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and the student must pass a thesis defense. Course work completed for the HDFS master's degree at Penn State can be applied to satisfy the degree requirements for the HDFS Ph.D.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

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For the Ph.D., a minimum of 42.5 credits at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level is required. Students are required to complete the following:

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
HDFS 501	Human Development Across the Lifespan	3
HDFS 503	Human Development Intervention: Analysis of Theories and Approaches	3
HDFS 525	Introduction to Family Studies	3

HDFS 590	Colloquium (Professional Development Orientation) ¹	1
HDFS 515	Professional Issues in Human Development and Family Studies ²	1.5
<i>Research Methods</i>		
HDFS 516	Methods of Research in Human Development	3
HDFS 519	Methods of Statistical Analysis in Human Development	3
HDFS 523	Strategies for Data Analysis in Developmental Research	3
HDFS 526	Measurement in Human Development	3
<i>Methods Lab</i>		
HDFS 518	Applied Statistics Laboratory	1
Electives		18
A minimum of 6 additional credits in methodology		
A minimum of 6 credits in non-methodology courses.		
Total Credits		42.5

¹ Must be taken in the first year.

² Must be taken by the end of the second year in the program.

All doctoral students must pass a qualifying examination, a comprehensive written and oral examination, and a final oral examination (the dissertation defense). To earn the Ph.D. degree, doctoral students must also write a dissertation that is accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.