LEARNING, DEVELOPMENTAL AND FAMILY SCIENCES

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Overview
The MA program in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences (LDFS) prepares students to facilitate the teaching/learning process and to lead and work in community-based environments. Thus, many students pursue the degree to enhance their skills as professional classroom teachers or lead in the community. The degree also provides skills necessary for a variety of roles in educational and teaching settings or community environments where knowledge of learning, development, understanding family and community systems, motivation, and research is essential such as teaching at the community college and teaching-based colleges and universities levels, teaching adults, consulting, developing assessments, community-based leadership, and conducting program development and evaluation. Other students seek the MA as preparation for advanced study in educational psychology, psychology, learning sciences, family science and human development, research, or related fields.

Areas of Study

Two major areas of concentration are available: Learning and human development and family relations:

- Regardless of the concentration area selected, all students must demonstrate competence in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences by successfully completing 30 semester hours of relevant course work;
- Students complete a capstone experience, either an applied project or a master's thesis in consultation with their faculty advisor based on the students' professional and academic goals. Please see culminating capstone experience section for more details.

Learning

The concentration is committed to the systematic study of psychological, social, and cultural processes of learning and development, and design of environments that support optimal learning and development, drawing upon multidisciplinary nature of work. The concentration examines learning in various formal and informal contexts (e.g., learning in classrooms, schools, centers, communities, homes) from multiple perspectives (e.g., psychological, sociocultural, critical, design-based, neuroscience). Within the networks of professional and academic communities, students will engage in designing adaptive learning environments that facilitate optimal learning and developmental opportunities for participants in diverse educational and community contexts, including our unique urban context. The Learning concentration offers courses such as:

- Human Learning
- Human Development Over the Life Span
- Designing Environments for Learning and Development
- Mind, Brain, and Education
- Cognition and Instruction
- Motivation in Contexts
- Advanced Child Growth and Development
- Social Contexts of Adolescence

Human Development and Family Relations (HDFR)

Students will engage in developing their skills to work in and lead community-based organizations including, but not limited to secular, faith-based, for profit, nonprofit, school-based, and local, state, federal and international organizations. The importance of family diversity and social justice is stressed throughout the HDFR curriculum through its courses and experiences. Students can also develop their knowledge in family relations in preparation for doctorate studies in family science and human development or related areas.

The LDFS program does provide a pathway for MA students (HDFR and Learning areas) to pursue their PhD in Education and Human Development with a Family Science and Human Development concentration. For more information, please visit our School of Education and Human Development.

The HDFR area also provides classes to all School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) graduate programs, offering courses in family theories, family dynamics, and diverse family systems, Latino family, school and community systems, family resource management, leadership and organizations, grant writing and fundraising, program development and other family relations based courses.

Programs


Faculty

Professor: Ruben Anguiano, PhD, Founding Program Chair

Associate Professors:
- Jorge Chavez, PhD, University at Albany, State University of New York
- Cristina Gillanders, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Early Childhood Education
- Remi Kalir, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison | Learning Design & Technology
- Jung-In Kim, PhD, University of Texas Austin

Clinical Associate Professor:
- Antwan Jefferson, PhD, University of Colorado Denver

Assistant Professor:
- Diana Schaack, PhD, Erikson Institute/Loyola University Chicago

Clinical Assistant Professor:
- Rebecca Vlasin, PhD, Early Childhood Education
Human Development and Family Relations (HDFR) Courses

HDFR 5002 - Family Life and Community Programming I (3 Credits)
This course teaches the principles, philosophies, models, and strategic methods of family life education for strengthening interpersonal and family relationships. Culturally competent students will learn about the development and implementation of effective educational programs and experiences within different community settings. Cross-listed with HDFR 4002. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5003 - Leadership and Organizations (3 Credits)
This course provides an understanding of leadership theory and practice in community and educational environments. Students will learn about important aspects about leading diverse community and educational organizations including staff supervision, strategic planning, advancing the organization and maintaining integrity. Cross-listed with HDFR 4003. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5004 - Family and Comm. Prog. II Grant Writing/Fundraising (3 Credits)
This course provides an understanding of developing skills on grant writing and fundraising as related to family, community and educational organizations/ agencies. Students will learn about important aspects about grant writing, fundraising fundamentals and funding models for sustainability. Cross-listed with HDFR 4004. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5010 - Family and Cultural Diversity (3 Credits)
The examination of familial, gender, cultural, linguistic, social and other ecological factors on diverse family systems in the United States will be covered. An ecological theoretical analysis of minority family systems within a familial, educational and social justice perspective will be explored. Cross-listed with HDFR 4010. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5020 - Black and Latino Children in Families and Schools (3 Credits)
With a focus on application of scholarship to practice, this interdisciplinary course will introduce graduate students to scholarly literature from family sciences, sociology, education and related fields to understand Black and Latino children within family, school and community systems. Restriction: Restricted to graduate level students. Cross-listed with ETST 5021. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Restriction: Graduate level students

HDFR 5040 - Latino Families in School and Communities (3 Credits)
This course will use ecological systems theory perspectives as a foundation for understanding diverse Latino family dynamics, the intersection between Latino families, schools and community systems and other critical issues that Latino family systems face in the United States. Cross-listed with HDFR 4040. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5045 - Abuelos (Grandparents) Latino Families (3 Credits)
The course will focus on the social gerontology of Latinos families in later life. Specifically, the course will examine how ecological factors including familial, cultural, social, economic, health, cognitive and educational, impact the lives of Latino older person’s in the contexts of family systems. Cross-listed with HDFR 4045. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5080 - Global Family Resource Management (3 Credits)
This course examines the allocation of family resources (social, financial and material assets), the influence of various ecological systems, the effect on family functioning and goal-setting from a global perspective. Practical applications for Family Relations professionals are included. Cross-listed with HDFR 4080. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5180 - Family and Community-Centered Classroom Practice (3 Credits)
This intensive course is designed to help teachers develop a responsive, collaborative, and theory-based understanding of the interaction of schools, families and the local community. In this course, you will examine the impact that various social interactions had on yourself, a student’s family, and the community as a whole. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5260 - Family Systems Social Justice (3 Credits)
Relying on ecological systems theories, this course will introduce students to families and family systems. Students will investigate how families experience (in)justice in the areas of access to education, community services, and employment. Cross-listed with HDFR 4260. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5300 - Families in Later Life (3 Credits)
Students will become familiar with the importance of families in later life. Through family systems and ecological systems theories, this course is designed to provide an understanding of the importance of family relationships and implications for practice, research, and policy. Cross-listed with HDFR 4300. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 5830 - Special Topics in Human Development and Family Relations (1-3 Credits)
Advanced study of special topics that examine community and educational settings in Human Development and Family Relations (HDFR) to be selected by the instructor. Repeatable. Max hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 6000 - Family Theories (3 Credits)
Students will examine the methods of inquiry and the basic foundations of contemporary family theory. Using a family systems perspective, students will utilize and analyze theory in the exploration of diverse and changing family dynamics in a societal context. Cross-listed with HDFR 7000. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
HDFR 6075 - Family Policy and Law (3 Credits)
Theoretical and practical exploration of the process of policy-making, with particular attention to the role of courts, that impact families and children to provide foundations for research and advocacy related to family policy and law. Cross-listed with HDFR 7075. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 7000 - Family Theories (3 Credits)
Students will examine the methods of inquiry and the basic foundations of contemporary family theory. Using a family systems perspective, students will utilize and analyze theory in the exploration of diverse and changing family dynamics in a societal context. Cross-listed with HDFR 6000. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 7010 - Proseminar I in Child, Youth, and Family Studies (1 Credit)
This course aims to introduce students in the Child, Youth, and Family Studies PhD pathway to doctoral studies and to faculty research. The course is also designed to support students in situating themselves in the discipline, enhancing their scholarly identity, and refining academic writing and presentation skills. Cross-listed with ECED 7011 and EDUC 7011. Max Hours: 1 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP

HDFR 7020 - Proseminar II in Child, Youth, and Family Studies (1 Credit)
This course is for 2nd year students in the Child, Youth, and Family Studies PhD pathway. The course is designed to support students in developing a research agenda, exploring ethics in research, enhancing scholarly identity, and preparing for comprehensive examinations. Prereq: HDFR 7010 or ECED 7011 or EDUC 7011. Cross-listed with EDUC 7020 and HDFR 7020. Max hours: 1 Credit.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Prereq: HDFR 7010 or ECED 7011 or EDUC 7011.

HDFR 7030 - Proseminar III in Child, Youth, and Family Studies (1 Credit)
This course aims to provide third year doctoral students in the Child, Youth, and Family Studies PhD pathway with an immersive writing opportunity and professional development experience to help prepare for comprehensive examinations, the dissertation, and post graduate school life. Prereq: ProSem I and ProSem II (HDFR 7010 or ECED 7011 or EDUC 7011 & HDFR 7020 or EDUC 7020 or ECED 7020). Cross-listed with EDUC 7030 and HDFR 7030. Max hours: 1 Credit.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Prereq: HDFR 7010 or ECED 7011 or EDUC 7011 AND HDFR 7020 or ECED 7020 or EDUC 7020.

HDFR 7040 - Advanced Studies in Applied Child Development (3 Credits)
Provides an intensive overview of the science of child development. A range of theoretical perspectives will be emphasized highlighting the role of context. Students will apply theory and research to programs that seek to advance equity in opportunities and outcomes. Restricted to EDHD-PhD and LDRE-EdD majors within the School of Education and Human Development. Cross-listed with ECED 7040. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Restriction: Restricted to EDHD-PhD and LDRE-EdD majors within the School of Education and Human Development. Typically Offered: Spring.

HDFR 7050 - Special Topics in Human Development and Family Relations (1-6 Credits)
Advanced study of special topics in human development in family, community and educational settings in HDFR, to be selected by the instructor. Repeatable. Max Hours: 9 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Repeatable. Max Credits: 9.

HDFR 7075 - Family Policy and Law (3 Credits)
Theoretical and practical exploration of the process of policy-making, with particular attention to the role of courts, that impact families and children to provide foundations for research and advocacy related to family policy and law. Cross-listed with HDFR 6075. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 7100 - Family Issues in Immigration and Migration (3 Credits)
Exploration of family issues related to immigration in the US context, including how policies shape emigration and immigration of families. Focus will be on social, cultural, political, and economic factors related to early childhood, parenting, adolescent identity, marriage and family formation, health and wellbeing and integration in the US. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 7120 - Latin@ Families in Schools and Communities (3 Credits)
This course will use ecological systems theory perspectives as a foundation for understanding diverse Latino family dynamics, the intersection between Latin@ families, schools and community systems, mental health systems, and other critical issues that Latin@ family systems face in the United States. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 7200 - Family Diversity and Social Justice (3 Credits)
Through this course, students will explore theory and research on the family, using interdisciplinary research and theory to inform their knowledge and generation of questions that recognize the challenges faced by diverse families in a shifting societal and national environment. Restriction: Graduate level students. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

HDFR 7260 - Family Policy and Law (1-6 Credits)
Advanced study of special topics in human development in family, community and educational settings in HDFR, to be selected by the instructor. Repeatable. Max Hours: 9 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Repeatable. Max Credits: 9.

HDFR 7300 - Human Development and Family Relations Independent Study (1-6 Credits)
Repeatable. Max Hours: 12 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Repeatable. Max Credits: 12.
Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences (LDFS) Courses

LDFS 5110 - Human Learning (3 Credits)
A review of the research on human learning, including related topics such as information processing and motivation. Various theories of learning are examined in-depth, and their applications to teaching and practices in schools (and in other educational settings) are considered. Repeatable. Max Hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 5240 - Cognition and Instruction (3 Credits)
Explores recent developments in cognition and their implications for instructional practices. Includes theory and research in cognitive psychology and resultant educational practices. Repeatable. Max Hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 5260 - Child Study and Observation (3 Credits)
Involves extensive, systematic observation of young children. Recorded observations are analyzed in terms of child development theories, children's background, setting variables, and are then presented in written and elaborated form. Repeatable. Max Hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 5840 - Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences Independent Study (1-6 Credits)
Repeatable. Max Hours: 12 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Repeatable. Max Credits: 12.

LDFS 5930 - Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences Internship (2-4 Credits)
Field-based experiences in settings (schools, businesses, governmental agencies, special projects) that are linked closely to the student's professional objectives. Requires a minimum of 150, 225 or 300 clock hours under supervision (two-four credit hours, respectively). Repeatable. Max Hours: 4 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Repeatable. Max Credits: 8.

LDFS 6100 - Advanced Child Growth and Development (3 Credits)
Systematic study of the major theories of child growth and development. Focuses on current research regarding infants and children and the implication of such research for education. Cross-listed with LDFS 7100. Repeatable. Max Hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6140 - Social Contexts of Adolescence and Schooling (3 Credits)
Systematic study of the major theories of adolescent growth in social contexts, emphasizing the social and cultural construction of the adolescent experience. Focuses on current research regarding adolescents and the implications of the research for education. Repeatable. Max hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6200 - Human Development Over the Life Span (3 Credits)
An inquiry into the experience and meaning of human development over the full span of life. Both analytical and reflective modes of exploration are utilized to approach the study of personhood and the courses and themes of life. Cross-listed with LDFS 7200. Repeatable. Max Hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6220 - Adult Development (3 Credits)
Surveys theories and principles of adult development through an ecological perspective with an emphasis on community and educational contexts. Cross-listed with LDFS 7220. Repeatable. Max hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6320 - Mind, Brain, and Education (3 Credits)
An introductory survey into contemporary theory and research in developmental cognitive neurosciences and their potential applications to education, aiming to explore how the brain learns, and what it means for learning and development. Max Hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6400 - Observation, Documentation and Assessment (3 Credits)
This course focuses on developing competencies in observation, documentation, and assessment to inform understandings about children and teaching. Students will draw from child development and ecological theories to observe children's assets, then interpret and analyze how children learn and develop. Max Hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6410 - Social Foundations of Family and Community (3 Credits)
In this course, students of early childhood education will learn to think and act reflectively, critically, and socially, informed by the roles of families and communities of young learners. Course readings, observation, documentation, and reflection provide foundations for the development of relational perspectives on social justice. Max Hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6420 - The Environment as the Third Teacher (3 Credits)
This course will provide students with an understanding of the relationship between the Learning Sciences and Reggio-Inspired practices, and how this relationship can be applied to the design of engaging and dynamic learning environments. Max Hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6600 - Motivation in Contexts (3 Credits)
Theories of human motivation are examined through social and cultural lenses directed at phenomena of engagement and disengagement in activities at different levels of scale. Applications are considered for both educators and learners in various social and cultural learning contexts. Cross-listed with LDFS 7600. Max hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 6750 - Designing Environment for Learning and Development (3 Credits)
Introduction to concepts, findings, and research methods relevant to theory and research in the Learning Sciences, with specific focus on how those concepts and findings apply to design learning across settings. Max Hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
LDFS 6840 - Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences Independent Study (1-6 Credits)
Repeatable. Max Hours: 12 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Repeatable. Max Credits: 12.

LDFS 6910 - Practicum Reflections on Learning (3 Credits)
This course focuses on the pursuit of praxis within the student teacher residency. Reflection on course resources, engagement in ongoing processes of documentation, and reflection within a small group meeting format drive social construction of knowledge about learning and development. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP

LDFS 6950 - Culminating Capstone Experience (3 Credits)
This course provides a learning environment for students to complete an applied project/thesis in education and human development contexts as part of their final capstone experience in the Master’s in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Additional Information: Report as Full Time.

LDFS 7100 - Advanced Child Growth and Development (3 Credits)
Systematic study of the major theories of child growth and development. Focuses on current research regarding infants and children and the implication of such research for education. Cross-listed with LDFS 6100. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 7120 - Family Dynamics (3 Credits)
Review and analysis of issues related to families with exceptional or at-risk young children. Topics include coping skills, family involvement, parent-child interaction, and sources of support. Special attention is given to current research and its application to early intervention. Repeatable. Max Hours: 6 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 7140 - Advanced Studies in Youth Development (3 Credits)
Systematic study of the current research and major theories of youth growth, emphasizing the social and cultural construction of the youth experience. Focuses on current theories and research regarding youth within contemporary social structures in multidisciplinary perspectives. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 7200 - Human Development Over the Life Span (3 Credits)
An inquiry into the experience and meaning of human development over the full span of life. Both analytical and reflective modes of exploration are utilized to approach the study of personhood and the courses and themes of life. Cross-listed with LDFS 6200. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 7220 - Adult Development (3 Credits)
Surveys theories and principles of adult development through an ecological perspective with an emphasis on community and educational contexts. Cross-listed with LDFS 6220. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 7600 - Motivation in Contexts (3 Credits)
Theories of human motivation are examined through social and cultural lens directed at phenomena of engagement and disengagement in activities at different levels of scale. Applications are considered for both educators and learners in various social and cultural learning contexts. Cross-listed with LDFS 6600. Max hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LDFS 7712 - Learning and Human Development (3 Credits)
Students apply major theories from learning and human development theories to problems of practice and research related to education and community contexts. Restriction: Restricted to EDHD-PhD, LDRE-EdD, and SPSY-PsyD majors within the School of Education and Human Development. Max Hours: 3 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Restriction: Restricted to EDHD-PhD, LDRE-EdD, and SPSY-PsyD majors within the School of Education and Human Development.
LDFS 7840 - Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences Independent Study (1-6 Credits)
Repeatable. Max Hours: 12 Credits.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Repeatable. Max Credits: 12.