

HUMAN ECOLOGY: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES, PHD

This is a named option within the Human Ecology, PhD. (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/human-ecology-school-wide/human-ecology-phd/>)

Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of families and individuals across the lifespan with an emphasis on research and its application to practice, programs, and policy.

Students enrolled in one of the Human Ecology PhD program named options have the opportunity to earn the Human Ecology MS: Human Ecology Research (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/human-ecology-school-wide/human-ecology-ms/human-ecology-human-ecology-research-ms/>) degree along the way to the PhD upon successful completion of coursework and research.

The HDFS graduate program option is served by 11 full-time faculty members plus affiliated faculty members. Faculty members are professionally active with strong records of national and international scholarship. The faculty bring the perspectives of many different disciplines to their work, including psychology, human development and family studies, sociology, education, and psychiatry. Faculty members conduct basic research to understand families and their members and applied research and outreach to promote positive outcomes in human development and family life.

Faculty and graduate students in HDFS collaborate on research and outreach-engagement projects in a wide variety of substantive areas focusing on the well-being of individuals, couples, and families. Current areas of scholarly activity focus on early childhood, couple relationships, contemplative practices, mind-body well-being, parenting, family caregiving, and vulnerable populations (e.g., incarcerated parents, children with autism, and historically under-represented groups).

Reflecting the multidisciplinary orientation of the program, faculty and students employ a wide array of methods in their work. Faculty possess expertise in areas as diverse as multilevel, longitudinal, nonlinear, and dyadic modeling; physiological measurement; program evaluation; observational methods; experimental methods; survey methodology; and community-based research. The program explicitly values both qualitative and quantitative approaches to inquiry.

Central to the mission of the program is the creation, dissemination, and application of scientific knowledge to address real-world problems and issues. Applied work of current faculty and students includes public policy education, community building, outreach education, and prevention programs. This applied work is conducted throughout the state.

There is a demand for professionals trained in research, teaching, and outreach in the areas of human development and family studies in higher education, government, and human and family service programs. Regardless of whether HDFS graduates pursue careers in academic or applied settings, they are prepared for a life of scholarship and service.