

**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**The Graduate Program**

**In**

**Human Development and Family Sciences**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**2009-2010**

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## INTRODUCTION

The University of Texas at Austin offers a PhD degree program in Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS). The program emphasizes the development of individuals within the context of family, peer group, community, and culture and is designed to prepare students for careers in research, teaching, public policy, and administration. This *Handbook* provides information about university and program requirements that should help you plan a graduate program that meets your needs. All graduate students are responsible for knowing the information in this *Handbook*. Information about university graduate requirements and programs can also be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/>. Information for current students and faculty is available on the Blackboard site “HDFS Graduate Program.”

### HOW THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HDFS IS ADMINISTERED

#### Graduate Studies Committee

The **Graduate Studies Committee** (GSC) is the formal body that oversees the graduate program in HDFS. It includes all members of the graduate faculty in Human Development and Family Science and selected faculty members from other departments. GSC members make admissions recommendations, serve on Master's thesis and Doctoral dissertation committees, read comprehensive papers, and review students' progress annually. Students' programs of study and thesis/dissertation work are subject to the GSC's approval.

In 2009-10, members of the GSC from HDFS are Edward Anderson, Ted Dix, Sue Greninger, Elizabeth Gershoff, Marci Gleason, Nancy Hazen-Swann, Aletha Huston, Ted Huston, Deborah Jacobvitz, Su-Yeong Kim, Karrol Kitt, Judith Langlois (also in Psychology), Tim Loving, Lisa Neff, and Catherine Surra. Members of the GSC from outside the department are Robert Crosnoe (Sociology), John Daly (Communication Studies), Norval Glenn (Sociology), and Anita Vangelisti (Communication Studies).

#### Graduate Advisors and Coordinator

The **Graduate Advisor** is the liaison between students and faculty, and between HDFS and the Office of Graduate Studies. With the assistance of the Graduate Coordinator, the Graduate Advisor is responsible for the day-to-day and long-term functions of the graduate program. In consultation with students and faculty, the Graduate Advisor approves programs of study, academic committees, travel awards, coordinates scholarships and fellowships, and makes exceptions to program rules. The Graduate Advisor also processes comprehensive exams; chairs, coordinates, or assists with the various committees that make funding decisions; consults with students who have academic or program problems; is the liaison between HDFS and other units in the university regarding graduate programs; and does academic advising with students early in their careers. Once a student chooses a Research Advisor, that person performs the role of academic advisor, although the Graduate Advisor may help out as needed.

The **Assistant Graduate Advisor** chairs the Admissions Committee and works with the Graduate Advisor in arranging support for incoming students. The **Graduate Recruitment Chair and Graduate Minority Liaison Officer** answers queries from potential applicants, coordinates efforts to recruit students; chairs, coordinates, or assists with committees that make funding decisions, and helps to match incoming students with a Research Advisor.

The Graduate Advisor, Assistant Graduate Advisor, and Graduate Recruitment Chair and Graduate Minority Liaison Officer form the Graduate Committee, which acts on matters affecting the graduate program.

The **Graduate Coordinator** is the staff member who handles the administrative components of the graduate program, including forms required by the Graduate School, adding and dropping courses, and maintaining the files of current students and applicants for the program. The Graduate Coordinator is often the first person students should ask about university rules and regulations, TA and RA appointments, and other administrative matters.

#### Research Advisor

The professor who is supervising a student's ongoing research and is chair of a student's thesis or dissertation committee is known as the **Research Advisor** or Major Professor. The Research Advisor is the student's principal mentor and must be a member of the GSC in HDFS. Students are free to change Research Advisors. When interested in doing so, should consult the faculty members involved. Instructions on how to change members of a dissertation committee can be found on the Graduate School website at <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/>.

## Non-GSC members

In addition to GSC members, other university faculty, lecturers, visiting faculty members, scholars who hold non-faculty positions and qualified scholars from other institutions can participate in the graduate program, teach graduate courses, and serve on master's thesis or doctoral dissertation committees. With the approval of the Vice President and Dean of Graduate Studies, they may co-chair doctoral dissertation committees. The GSC may invite such persons to attend its meetings, but they do not vote.

To have a scholar from another institution serve on a master's or doctoral committee, the student must list this scholar on the 'request for final order' form which is to be approved and signed by the Graduate Advisor and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. It is important to note that this scholar will participate via teleconference or, if in person, that there will be no cost to the university for his or her participation. Benefits of including an outside scholar include maintaining or increasing connections with other leading experts in the field while negatives may include difficulty getting adequate and timely feedback from a distance.

## ON BEING A GRADUATE STUDENT

Much of what students need to learn is not taught in the classroom. Course work focuses on the acquisition of some substantive knowledge and data analytic skills, but you will need to expand your knowledge through your own reading and to learn how to apply what you learn to your own research and teaching. Students need to take initiative to develop their writing skills, sophistication in preparing research proposals, statistical expertise, computer competency, and skill at presenting research. The following sourcebooks are worth absorbing early in your program:

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication Manual (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*, Washington, D.C.: author. All papers should be written to conform to the APA style manual.

Darley, J. M., Zanna, M. P., & Roediger, H. L. III. (2003). *The compleat academic: A career guide*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Silvia, P. J. (2007). *How to write a lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Becker, Howard. (1985). *Writing for Social Scientists*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Strunk, W. & White, E.B. (1972). *The Elements of Style*. New York: Macmillan.

Trimble, John (1975). *Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

## THE PROGRAM OF STUDY

### Research Involvement

Because research training is a central focus of the program, students are involved in research throughout their graduate programs. Major research involvement is expected each semester until the Ph.D. is granted. **Students must register for HDF 192/292/392/692 or for thesis or dissertation credits each semester they are in the program with the exception that people taking the teaching course 398T during their first semester are not required to enroll in**

**research credits.** They should, however, become involved in a faculty research lab even when they are not enrolled for credit. During the first year students may explore a variety of faculty research programs. By the end of the first semester, a student, in consultation with the faculty, should select the faculty member who will supervise the second-year project or Master's thesis. After completion of the project, a student may continue the Ph.D. dissertation work with the same faculty member or switch to another faculty member. In addition to the Master's thesis and dissertation, students should be continuously involved in research activities, including submission of papers to conferences and articles for publication.

Students are free to choose the labs in which they work so long as the faculty members supervising the labs agree to accept them. Working in one lab should not be construed by faculty or students to require a long-term or exclusive commitment to that lab. Although students typically work primarily in one research lab, they are encouraged to attend other lab meetings. Students are also strongly encouraged to spend at least one semester (or longer if needed to complete projects of interest) working in a lab other than their primary lab, participating in the ongoing activities that may include research design, data collection, data analysis, and writing scientific papers. It is a courtesy to inform the principal research advisor about work in other labs to assure that the advisor is aware of all of the student's time commitments. When students change research advisors, insofar as possible, they should arrange the change of lab with both faculty members to ensure that work commitments are completed.

## **Degree Requirements**

The graduate program in HDFS is devoted to the study of individual development within the context of the family, the community, the economy, and the larger culture, emphasizing the investigation of how families and other contexts contribute to development of individuals and how successful family and other close relationships are formed and maintained over time. Expertise in methods and statistics for studying developmental change is strongly represented in the program.

Students who complete graduate degrees in HDFS take a variety of career paths, including becoming professors in colleges and universities; researchers in other public and private corporations and institutions; administrators in early childhood programs or service agencies; or program planners, evaluators, and administrators in public and private settings. A list of positions held by recent graduates can be obtained from the Graduate Advisor.

The HDFS Ph.D. program at the University of Texas at Austin typically requires five years. Students are usually not admitted for a terminal Master's degree, but a Master's degree may be awarded as part of the regular PhD program. Students can enter the program with a Master's degree, a B.A., or B.S. Students who enter with a B.A. or B.S. degree complete a Master's degree or the equivalent of a Master's degree on the way to the Ph.D. For students entering with a Master's degree that included an *empirical* Master's thesis, the Graduate Advisor can waive the requirement after evaluating the thesis to determine whether it is comparable to the HDFS requirement. Students for whom the requirement is waived are still required to complete a second-year research project.

**Master's degree.** Completion of the Master's degree requires 36 credit hours: (a) three core content courses in HDFS (9 credits), (b) 2 introductory courses in research methods and statistics (7-8 credits), (c) 3 electives that complement the student's program of study (9 credits), (d) independent research (3-6 credits) and (e) the Master's thesis (6 credits).

Students are required to complete a Master's thesis under the supervision of three members of the graduate faculty. The student's research supervisor must be from the Graduate Studies Committee of HDFS. Other faculty members can co-chair with a member of the GSC in HDFS. Typically, but not necessarily, the Master's thesis relates to the thesis advisor's ongoing research program and can be completed within nine months.

**Ph.D.** Work leading to the Ph.D. includes eight principal components: (a) three core content courses in HDFS (9 credits), (b) four electives that complement the student's program of study (12 credits), (c) 4 courses in research methods and statistics (12-14 credits), (d) regular enrollment in independent research, (e) a course in university teaching (398T) (3 credits), (f) the second-year project or Master's thesis, (g) the comprehensive major area paper for admission to Ph.D. candidacy, and (h) the dissertation (see appendix for summary table of requirements) Students are expected to work

closely with faculty members on research projects throughout the course of their graduate study. Opportunities for teaching experience are also available. All doctoral students are expected to pursue graduate work full-time, typically enrolling for 10 credits per semester until they achieve candidacy. Summer enrollment is required only for students receiving TA or RA support during the summer.

## **Curriculum --Courses**

The curriculum consists of three primary sets of courses: a substantive core, electives, and a methods and statistics core, as well as independent research, university teaching, and thesis/dissertation. The selection of the specific course sequence is planned in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and the student's Research Advisor. The requirements for the Master's and Ph.D. degrees are summarized in Degree Requirements at a Glance (p. 14-15)

**Substantive Core.** The substantive core consists of a thematically cohesive sequence of courses.

The first course, taken in the first semester is HDF 395.4, "Theories and Research in Human Development and Family Science" aims to deepen students' understanding of the distinction between individual, relationship, family, and contextual levels of analyses. It provides an overview of key theories of individual and family development and explores the concepts of development including how to conceptualize and measure development and relationships over time. In the process, students will examine the connection between theoretical approaches and methodological approaches to research and sharpen students' critical evaluation skills so that research on human development and family relationships can be read thoughtfully.

The other two courses may be taken in any order. HDF 395.5, "Contextual Influences on Individual and Family Development," builds on the student's understanding of some of the major theories, issues, and empirical literature in the field of human development and family sciences by considering a range of contexts for development as well as the interplay among contexts. The topics are organized around levels of analysis drawn from Bronfenbrenner's model: the person (including biological factors); the micro system of the family; systems outside the family that affect children and family functioning; and macro systems of culture, public policy, and economic conditions.

HDF 395.6, "Contemporary Theory and Research on Close Relationships," develops an ecological framework for examining why people enter relationships, why relationships come to be structured in particular ways, and what makes some relationships more "successful" than others. Topical issues pertinent to the study of close, intimate relationships will be studied

**Electives.** In addition to the three core courses, students are required to take 4 substantive courses. Although any course that is relevant to a student's program of study can qualify as an elective, all electives should be chosen in consultation with and should be approved by the student's research advisor. Students are strongly encouraged to include courses offered by members of the GSC. Topical seminars under the course number, HDF 394, are offered each semester, and relevant courses are often offered in other departments. Students are encouraged to take additional courses beyond minimal requirements when needed and may be required to do so by the faculty under some circumstances. In general, courses that are primarily statistics or methods courses cannot be used to satisfy this requirement. If students are in doubt about whether the course is appropriate, they should consult the Graduate Advisor.

**Methods and Statistics Core.** The methods core consists of the following requirements: (a) 3 hours in EDP 380E or SOC 384L or a comparable course (that must be approved by the Graduate Advisor) in basic graduate statistics, (b) HDF 480K.1 (basic research methods), (c) An advanced statistics course, which must (a) have introductory graduate statistics as a prerequisite, OR (b) be on a list of acceptable courses decided by the Methodology Core Committee, OR (c) be specifically approved by the Methodology Core Committee, and (d) Either HDF 480K.0 or HDF 480K.2 (advanced research methods course) or a comparable course approved by the Graduate Advisor. These courses represent the minimum requirements for the PhD; students are strongly encouraged to take more courses in this area, and may be required to do so. The Division of Statistics at UT publishes a partial list of statistics and methods courses offered each semester.

**Independent Research.** All students are expected to be continuously involved in research during their graduate careers. They should participate in the meetings and activities of at least one faculty lab from the outset. Over the five years, students gradually progress from working on projects directed by others to taking independent responsibility for

planning, conducting, and writing about the research in the laboratory. Students must register for HDF 192/292/392/692 or for thesis or dissertation credits each semester they are in the program with the exception of the first semester if they take the teaching course 398T.

**University Teaching.** The program often provides opportunities for students to teach at the university level. Students interested in university teaching initially serve as Teaching Assistants. Later, under the supervision of a faculty member they may have responsibility for their own course. There are three principal ways that this can happen: (a) as an Assistant Instructor at UT, (b) as an Instructor at another college in the area, and (c) as a co-instructor working with UT faculty supervisors. In all of these instances a faculty member will be assigned as a supervisor and mentor. Although exceptions can be made in some instances, students are generally required to TA a course prior to teaching it on their own. the Center for Teaching Effectiveness (<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/>) has workshops and written materials for new instructors. In addition to TA and Instructor positions, informal opportunities are available for observing classes and presenting guest lectures.

*HDF 398T.* All students who are assigned to a teaching assistantship (TA) must have completed or currently be enrolled in HDF 398T. First year students must enroll during their first semester. The university requires completion of 398T before a student can serve as an Assistant Instructor. The OGS 390T course from Graduate School is useful, but does not count or substitute for 398T.

## Thesis and Dissertation

The Master's thesis (or second-year project) and Ph.D. dissertation are designed to give students experience in independent research. Students get hands-on guidance from faculty for their Master's thesis. The dissertation is based on the student's own independent program of research.

During the second year, students complete either a second-year project or Master's thesis. *The only differences between the two are that the Master's Thesis must be completed according to the regulations of the Graduate School, must be approved by the Graduate School, and leads to a formal M.S. degree.* Students who do a second-year project in lieu of a Master's thesis go on to get the Ph.D. without receiving a M.S. degree. In order to receive a Master's degree, the student must apply to the Graduate School in advance. Go to <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/> for further directions.

Typically, but not necessarily, the second-year project or Master's thesis is related to a faculty supervisor's ongoing project. It should be completed by the end of the student's second year. Supervision of the project resides with a three-member committee that includes at least one HDFS faculty member. The committee is chosen by the student in consultation with the student's research advisor.

There are two steps in the second year project or Master's thesis. The first step is a proposal that should normally be completed by October 15 of the second year. It consists of an introduction presenting the problem to be investigated and a review of the literature, a methods section, and a data analysis plan. Proposals are reviewed in a preliminary oral defense, and must be approved by the students' second-year project or Master's committee. The second step is the final manuscript. It should be written as a standard research paper in APA style, and should be completed by the end of spring semester of the second year. An oral examination, conducted by the supervisory committee, is held upon completion of the project.

The Dissertation is an independent research project that represents an original contribution to the field. The dissertation is supervised by the student's Research Advisor and a Dissertation Committee, consisting of at least 5 members including the Research Advisor. Three of the members must be from the GSC in HDFS, and at least one member must be outside HDFS, but can be a member of the GSC. The dissertation represents the student's own independent contribution to the literature, and as such, is an important marker of the student's professional competence. As with the Master's thesis, there is a proposal meeting and a final oral examination. The final oral examination is a public event, and the student must apply for a final defense date. Further details on this process can be found on the website for the Office of Graduate Studies.

**Defense Meetings.** The proposal or thesis manuscript should be submitted to the committee two weeks in advance of the meeting. The committee's goal at the proposal stage is to provide feedback and guidance that will help a student complete the project effectively. Students may be asked to revise the proposal and meet again for additional planning. At the end of the meetings there is an understood contract between the committee and the student: if the student completes the project as it was agreed upon by the committee, the student will not be asked to redesign the project or do additional data collection at the defense stage.

The following outlines a typical meeting for the proposal/defense of the master's thesis or dissertation: Without the student or observers present, faculty members discuss any questions they have or clarifications they may need with the student's Research Advisor. The student and any observers then enter the room and, if requested, the student presents the work for about 10-15 minutes. For the proposal, this includes an introduction, method, and planned analysis. For the defense, this includes an introduction to the research question, method, results and conclusion. After the presentation is complete, the committee asks questions of the student and discusses the project. The student and any observers are then asked to leave the room as the faculty members discuss the project. In the case of a defense, the committee votes to determine if the student passes, passes with revisions, or needs to resubmit the work. The student then reenters the room, the decision is announced, and suggestions for revision are recorded by the student or the advisor.

### **Comprehensive Paper**

By the end of the third year students are expected to write a comprehensive paper reviewing the literature on an important topic or question. A specific topic should be worked out in consultation with the student's Research Advisor. Before writing the paper, the student submits a 1-2-page proposal for the topic, outlining the background and major issue to be addressed along with a sample of approximately 10 references to the Graduate Advisor, who must approve the topic. The proposal for the paper should be approved prior to the semester in which it is to be submitted. The form for submitting the proposal is the "Comprehensive Exam Topic Approval Form," available from the Graduate Coordinator or on the Blackboard site for the HDFS Graduate Program.

The final paper must be approved by the Research Advisor and two readers who are members of the Graduate Studies Committee who are chosen in advance by the student. The paper should be a major integrative review that analyzes comprehensively the state of the field with respect to an important area or issue. Good models appear in *Psychological Bulletin*, *Child Development*, or *Journal of Marriage and Family*. Samples of successful papers are available on the Blackboard HDFS Graduate Program site. Students are strongly encouraged to examine published review articles and models of earlier successful comprehensive papers prior to embarking on their own papers. When the paper is finished, the student should be among the most knowledgeable scholars nationally in their chosen area. Students are expected to complete their comprehensive exams during the spring or summer of their third year. Detailed guidelines for the comprehensive exam and its evaluation are available in a separate document, "Guidelines and competencies for Comprehensive Exam," available from the Graduate Coordinator or on the Blackboard site for the HDFS Graduate Program.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

Once students have passed all required courses and the comprehensive paper, they submit a program of work that is evaluated by the Graduate Advisor. Admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. (i.e., admission to dissertation status) is based on the recommendation of the Graduate Advisor and the approval of the Vice-President and Dean of the Graduate School. Admission to candidacy takes place upon completion of (a) all course work and all additional requirements for the Ph.D. (other than the dissertation) that have been negotiated with the faculty, including the comprehensive paper; (b) agreement by a faculty member to supervise the dissertation, (c) formation of a 5-person dissertation committee, and (d) a brief abstract of the proposed dissertation. All of these items must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Advisor. The dissertation committee consists of five members and must be chaired or co-chaired by a member of the GSC in Human Development & Family Sciences. The committee must have at least one member whose primary appointment is in a department other than HDFS (but who may be a member of the GSC), and at least three members should be members of the GSC in HDFS. One member may be chosen from faculty in another university; the student should submit a rationale for choosing the person along with a CV. If all of the requirements except the dissertation have been finished, the student can complete the paperwork for Admission to Candidacy. Go to <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/> for further directions.

**Please note:** Students are responsible for finding out administrative details required by the Office of Graduate Studies regarding such things as deadlines, forms needed, and specific formatting for the dissertation. Students need to familiarize themselves with Graduate Studies requirements. Please see <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/> for further details.

## GENERAL GRADUATE SCHOOL REGULATIONS

### Residency Requirement for Graduate Degrees

Each M.A. degree candidate must spend a minimum of two long semesters or the equivalent in residency at The University of Texas at Austin. Ph.D. students must spend a minimum of three long semesters or the equivalent in residency. Doctoral students must be registered continuously following admission to candidacy.

### Re-Entry after an Inactive Period

If a continuing student is not enrolled for one long semester (e.g., fall or spring), she or he must apply to the Graduate School for permission to re-enter. The application must be submitted by the following dates: March 1 for summer and fall, and October 1 for spring. Although a student may be given permission to re-enter by the Graduate School, this decision is not official or complete without the approval of the Chair of Graduate Admissions in HDFS (see Interruptions in enrollment below).

If a new student registers and withdraws before the 12<sup>th</sup> class day of the first semester, she or he must reapply for admission to the Graduate School or have his/her original admission extended by petition from the Graduate Advisor to the Dean of the Graduate School. Such students must talk with the Office of Graduate Studies before registering again.

### Degree Programs/Courses

**Course Grades.** No major course with a grade lower than "C" may be included on a degree program. An incomplete is not permitted in graduate courses except under unusual circumstances. A student must have an average of at least 3.00 to graduate.

**Deadlines for Dropping/Adding Courses.** Procedures for dropping and adding courses are outlined in the Course Schedule. **YOU MAY NOT DROP A COURSE AFTER THE FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD HAS BEGUN.**

**Credit/No Credit Courses.** Required core courses, methods core courses, 398T, and electives required to meet degree requirements may not be taken for credit/no credit. Other electives may be taken credit/no credit. At the discretion of the student's committee, independent study courses (HDF 392) and internship courses may be taken for credit/no credit. No more than 20% of the total courses in a program of work may be taken on a credit/no credit basis.

**Course levels.** All HDFS courses in either the master's or doctoral program must be at the graduate level (second digit in course number is 8 or 9).

**Transfer of Credit.** A maximum of 6 graduate hours may be transferred for the M.A. degree. A student must have a special reason for requesting transfer of graduate credit and must submit a written petition to the Graduate Advisor. Attached to this written petition should be a copy of the transcript showing the grade obtained in the course being petitioned, a copy of the syllabus, and, if available, textbooks for the course.

**Auditing Graduate Courses.** Auditing can be done only with the consent of the instructor of the course. Students may not count audited courses to meet course requirements.

**College Teaching Methods and Practices (398T).** University regulations state that Assistant Instructors shall have satisfactorily completed one semester of a course in teaching methods (398T) and shall have had at least one semester of service as a Teaching Assistant prior to being appointed as an Assistant Instructor.

If a student can establish that he or she has met the objectives of 398T, either at an education institution or through experience in recent full-time teaching, she or he may petition to have the requirement waived, using the following procedure:

(a) The student believes that she or he has met the objectives of 398T in a similar course, she or he submits to the Graduate Advisor the syllabus for that course OR (b) If the student believes that she or he has met the objectives of 398T through experience in recent full-time teaching she or he describes that experience in a written statement and submits it

to the Graduate Advisor. The description should include: (1) courses taught, (2) duration of appointment, (3) peer and student evaluation of teaching, and (4) any other information thought to be relevant in establishing teacher competence. (c)The Graduate Advisor and the Graduate Committee consider each request. The Graduate Advisor notifies the student in writing of the committee's decision. If the decision is to deny the request, the notification contains the reason for the denial.

### **Time Limits and Interruptions in Enrollment**

**Master's Degree.** All requirements must be completed within one six-year period. Work over six years old can be reinstated only by special permission of the Graduate Dean, upon recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee.

**Doctoral Degree.** No official time limit has been imposed on acquiring the doctoral degree. However, all completed course work that is included in a student's degree program at the time of admission to candidacy must have been taken within the previous six years (exclusive of a maximum of three years of military service). In addition, all work is subject to review by the Dean of Graduate Studies. One year after a student's admission to candidacy the student should have completed and defended a proposal for the dissertation. Students who have not completed the dissertation within 3 years will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee to determine whether additional time should be granted. If the dissertation is not completed by 3 years after admission to candidacy, the Office of Graduate Studies reviews such cases on an annual basis.

**The 99 Hour Rule.** The 99-hour rule applies to students admitted during the fall semester of 1999 or after. Students who exceed 99-hours of *doctoral* study may be required to pay out-of-state tuition for every subsequent semester. For students entering without a Master's degree, the count toward 99 hours begins the first semester following the semester in which the count of hours first exceeds 30. For students entering with a Master's degree, the count toward 99 hours begins upon entry into the program. The OGS however states: "A student will be able to study at UT Austin full-time for seven complete academic years, including summers, before being affected by the 99-hour rule. For students staying beyond seven years, in a number of cases there is still the possibility of a programmatic or individual exemption from the rule." For further information go to: <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/publications/policies/99in99.html>.

**Incompletes.** Students who receive an incomplete or a grade of (X) have until the end of the next long term semester to complete the work. If the grade change form changing the X to a grade is not processed by the Registrar's Office prior to the end of the grade reporting deadline for the next semester, the grade becomes a permanent incomplete (I). Since it takes some time to process a grade change form before it goes to the Registrar's Office, students are encouraged to have the faculty member submit the form well before the end of the semester.

**Doctoral students entering UT.** General and specific requirements for degrees in the Graduate School are sometimes altered in successive catalogs. **You are bound by the requirements of the catalog in force at the time of your first registration. You may choose, however, to fulfill the requirements of a subsequent catalog.** If you do not fulfill your requirements within six years of your first enrollment in the Graduate School, you are then bound by the requirements of a subsequent catalog. You may choose the catalog in effect in any year in which you are enrolled in the Graduate School, within the six-year limit.

**In Absentia Registration.** In absentia registration (e.g., registration for no course work) is a type of registration used by candidates who have finished their last requirements, including submission of report, thesis, or dissertation, too late for the semester deadline but before the first registration day of the following semester. Such a candidate may, for a nominal fee, register for the next semester or summer session for the sole purpose of receiving her/his degree that semester or summer session.

**Interruptions in enrollment.** Students are required to be continuously enrolled during all of the long semesters until they complete their terminal degree. There are two circumstances in which a student would not meet this requirement: (a) The student requests a Leave of Absence. The student must apply to the Graduate School for a Leave of Absence *prior to the semester* in which the leave is taken (see [www.utexas.edu/ogs](http://www.utexas.edu/ogs) website for necessary forms). (b) The student leaves the program without finishing the Ph.D. and without requesting a Leave of Absence.

In both cases, when the student wishes to return to Graduate School, the student must reapply for admission. The application must be approved by the Graduate School and by the Graduate Admissions Committee of HDFS. A student who has not been granted a Leave of Absence may be required to pay a fee for re-enrollment. The decision to readmit the student will be based on the student's progress, prior performance, competitiveness with current applicants, and available program resources.

### EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

*Grades.* Graduate courses are graded on a plus/minus grading system. The following table shows decimal grade equivalents: A grade of at least C (2.00) is required for a course to be included in the student's Program of Work.

A	4.00		C+	2.33
A-	3.67		C	2.00
B+	3.33		C-	1.67
B	3.00		D+	1.33
B-	2.67		D	1.00
			D-	0.67
			F	0.00

*Annual Evaluations.* The Graduate Studies Committee annually reviews the progress of each student in the program. Before the student evaluation meeting, students submit to the Graduate Coordinator copies of a curriculum vita, a completed **Program of Work** form (available from Graduate Coordinator or Blackboard site), showing program requirements and professional activities they have completed and a summary of their plans for the coming year. The criteria used in the evaluation are: (a) timely completion of program requirements, (b) publication with attention to journal quality and order of authorship, (c) presentations with attention to conference quality and order of authorship, (d) grades in graduate courses, (e) faculty recommendations and evaluations, and (f) other indices of professional participation and competence (e.g., workshop participation, involvement in organizations, etc.) (g) performance in teaching and research assistantships.

Students receive a written report of their evaluation and are encouraged to discuss it with their Research Advisors. Students often get valuable feedback and suggestions for improving their course of study from these yearly evaluations. If a student is not progressing satisfactorily, the faculty can decide to place them on probation or terminate them from the program. The types of recommendations made are: (1) continuation, (2) termination, or (3) probationary status. The procedure for being removed from probation is set forth in the evaluation.

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Graduate Advisor works with each student to secure financial assistance. Our goal is to support all students enrolled in the program for a period of time sufficient for them to complete their degree(s). In recent years, all fulltime students in their first 5 years in the program who have requested support have received full support in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships.

The criteria for funding decisions are similar to those used for evaluation of student progress (a) timely completion of program requirements, (b) publication with attention to journal quality and order of authorship, (c) presentations with attention to conference quality and order of authorship, (d) grades in graduate courses, (e) faculty recommendations and evaluations, and (f) other indices of professional participation and competence (e.g., workshop participation, involvement in organizations) (g) performance in prior teaching and research assistantships. Students must be enrolled fulltime to receive funding. In general, decisions are made based upon merit, and, in some cases, need.

If full funding is not available for all students who are making satisfactory progress, aid is awarded according to the following priorities: (a) First priority is given to students in their first four years of study; (b) Second priority is given to students in their fifth year; (c) Last priority is given to students beyond their fifth year.

The specific forms of financial assistance are described below.

**University Recruitment Fellowships or Pre-Emptive Fellowships.** Applicants to the graduate program are eligible to be nominated by the Graduate Advisor in consultation with the faculty for this award if they are ranked in the top ten percent of the national applicant pool in HDFS. The ten percent criterion is determined by the student's GRE scores. Recruitment Fellowships are offered only to students who have not yet enrolled in the program.

**University Continuing Fellowships.** These awards are given to students already enrolled at UT and are based on performance in the graduate program. They are typically awarded to advanced students with some priority given to those who have achieved candidacy. Nominees are chosen by the faculty; the Graduate School selects successful candidates from the list of nominees from all departments.

**Research Excellence and Professional Development Awards.** The Office of Graduate Studies provides scholarships that can be used to support travel to professional meetings. These awards are typically reserved for students who have been admitted to candidacy and nearing completion of their dissertation. Additional Research Excellence Awards are made (contingent on available funds) when students have had papers accepted for presentation at national or international meetings. These awards are in recognition for their excellence in research and can be used for travel to meetings of professional societies. To receive these awards, students must submit an application to the Graduate Advisor when the paper is accepted for presentation (the application form is in the appendix). Research Excellence Awards can also be awarded in the form of small grants for research-related expenses. Students should submit an application to the Graduate Advisor, along with a rationale for the research and a budget outlining research expenses

**Departmental Scholarships.** Departmental scholarships include the Mary Ellen Durrett Scholarship in Child Development, the Mrs. Estelle Boughton Sharp Scholarship in Home Economics, the Isadora and Thomas Cooke Scholarship, the Martha Ann Goss McGonigle Fellowship in Child Development, the Martha Dunlap Thompson Endowed Presidential Graduate Fellowship in Child Development, and the Leonard and Abby Zeifman Graduate Fellowship in Child Development. These are awarded by the Graduate Committee. Consult the Graduate Coordinator for more information.

**University, College, and Departmental Fellowships and Awards.** Occasionally, other awards become available in the form of scholarships or fellowships. Each award has its own restrictions, and awards are made on the basis of merit and meeting the requirements of each award.

**Off-campus fellowship support.** The Office of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Advisor work actively with graduate students to pursue sources of support available off-campus, such as the National Science Foundation, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship program, the Spencer Foundation, and the like. An extensive list of these fellowships is available on the Graduate School website, [www.utexas.edu/ogs/funding](http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/funding).

**Research Assistantships.** Research assistantships are available through faculty members' funded research projects. Appointments are made by the faculty member(s) conducting the research.

**Assistant Instructor positions.** Several positions are usually available within the program each semester for teaching lower-division undergraduate courses. Appointments are made by the Teaching Coordinator, in consultation with the faculty.

**Teaching Assistantships.** The program typically funds a large number of graduate students as teaching assistants each semester to assist with undergraduate and graduate courses. Appointments are made by the Graduate Admissions Committee and the faculty. The following explanation, taken from a Graduate School memorandum, describes regulations and procedures for Teaching Assistants and Assistant Instructors:

Both Teaching Assistants and Assistant Instructors "must be certified by the Graduate School to be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward an advanced degree, and have no more than one incomplete grade from the previous semester." During their graduate careers, students are eligible for teaching and research support

for only 14 semesters (7 years), excluding summers. Satisfactory progress is interpreted by the Graduate School to mean having a grade point average of "B" or better, and having a record of completed course work. For appointments beginning in the fall, students with acceptable averages will be considered to be making satisfactory progress if they do not have more than one Incomplete "X" from the previous semester or summer term of registration. At the start of the spring semester, TA's and AI's shall, at the start of the summer session, not have more than one incomplete for the preceding term. The university student evaluations are conducted for TAs as well as for instructors. In addition, the department collects evaluations of TAs from the faculty members whom the TA assists. The form for these evaluations appears in the appendix.

Candidates for appointment as Assistant Instructors must (1) be enrolled as a full-time graduate student and (2) hold a master's degree or have completed 30 graduate hours of coursework. In addition AI's shall have satisfactorily completed one semester of a course in teaching methods (398T) and shall have had at least one semester of service as a Teaching Assistant, or have had at least one year of teaching experience in an accredited college or school. This equivalence is interpreted by the Graduate School to mean 30 hours of course work beyond the Baccalaureate degree, with no more than 9 of those hours in upper division undergraduate work." The Department of HDFs has further stipulated that AI's who have not yet completed the M.A. must have completed all requirements except the thesis. An AI will be assigned a faculty mentor from the department who will confer with the AI regularly, observe at least one or two classes, and review the syllabus.

Persons who have had at least one year of classroom teaching in an accredited college or secondary school and/or have taken one semester or a comparable teaching methods course may petition to waive the 398T requirement.

**Waiving of Out-of State Tuition and Other Tuition Waivers.** A 20-hour appointment as a TA, AI, or Graduate Research Assistant qualifies nonresident students to have the out-of -state portion of tuition waived as long as their appointment is current. Under this provision, the tuition is the same as for a Texas resident. In addition, all or part of the in-state tuition for TAs is waived; tuition payments for RAs depend on the specific funding source. Nonresident students who are awarded a scholarship of \$1,000 or more (by a scholarship committee officially recognized by the administration of the University) in competition with Texas residents are eligible to pay the same tuition as Texas residents. In some cases, waivers of Out-of-State Tuition are available for students enrolled during the summer.

**All But Dissertation (ABD) Academic Rate.** Assistant Instructors and / or students who have been admitted to candidacy are paid at a higher academic rate than Teaching Assistants. In order to qualify for this rate, you must have met all requirements for admission to candidacy before September 1<sup>st</sup> and have completed the HDF 398T course.

# Degree Requirements at a Glance 2008-2009

## Masters Program

### General Requirements:

**Master of Arts.** The master's degree requires completion of at least 36 semester hours of coursework: a core course sequence of 9 semester hours; 6-8 hours of methods and statistics; 8-11 hours in research and thesis; and 9 hours of electives. Further information is available from the Graduate Advisor.

### Required Courses for the Masters program:

#### **Core Courses**

- (1) HDF 395. Topic 1: Theories and Research in Human Development and Family Science
- (2) HDF 395. Topic 2: Contextual Influences on Individual and Family Development
- (3) HDF 395. Topic 3: Contemporary Theory and Research on Close Relationships

#### **Methods Courses**

- (4) Fundamental Statistics (EDP 380E or equivalent)
- (5) Research Methods (HDF 480K.1)

#### **Electives**

- (6) Elective
- (7) Elective
- (8) Elective

#### **Other**

- (9) Individual Research courses (192, 292, 392, 692, 398, 698,) – 4 semesters
- (10) HDF 398T – Only for students with TA assignments
- (11) Thesis 698A and B

Note: Students must take HDF 398T either before or concurrently with their first TA assignment. The Office of Graduate Studies course GRS 390T is useful, but will not satisfy the 398T requirement.

## PhD Program

**Doctor of Philosophy.** Work leading to the Doctor of Philosophy includes (a) the substantive major, which consists of a cohesive sequence of courses in human development and family sciences and related disciplines; (b) coursework in research design and statistics; (c) the supporting program, which consists of work complementary to the substantive major; and (d) ongoing supervised research experience; (e) a predoctoral research project (the equivalent of a master's thesis); (f) comprehensive paper that reviews the student's area of specialization; and (g) the dissertation.

### Required Courses:

#### *Core Content (3 courses)*

- (1) HDF 395. Topic 1: Theories and Research in Human Development and Family Science
- (2) HDF 395. Topic 2: Contextual Influences on Individual and Family Development
- (3) HDF 395. Topic 3: Contemporary Theory and Research on Close Relationships

#### *Methods (4 courses)*

- (4) Fundamental Statistics: EDP 380E or equivalent
- (5) Research Methods: HDF 480K.1
- (6) Either HDF 480K.2 or HDF 480K.0
- (7) Advanced Statistics elective

#### *Electives (4)*

- (8) Elective
- (9) Elective
- (10) Elective
- (11) Elective

#### *Other*

- (12) HDF 398T – Only for students with TA assignments
- (13) Individual Research (192,292,392,692,399,698, 699,999) – to be taken each semester
- (14) Dissertation 399R/W, 699 R/W, 999 R/W

“R” section is taken only during the first semester after the student is accepted into candidacy. Thereafter, the “W” section is taken each additional semester until the student graduates.

Note: Students must take HDF 398T either before or concurrently with their first TA assignment. The Office of Graduate Studies course GRS 390T is useful, but will not satisfy the 398T requirement.