

BS in Human Development and Family Science with Emphasis in Early Childhood Education in a Mobile Society

Degree Program Description

This online Bachelor of Science degree equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to support young children's development and learning in diverse settings. The program emphasizes child development, learning, and growth from birth through age eight; curriculum design and evidence-based instructional frameworks; innovative teaching strategies that incorporate play-based learning and technology; and the role of family and community partnerships in supporting children's well-being. Students explore contemporary challenges facing families, including trauma, mental health, cultural diversity, and socioeconomic factors, while also gaining expertise in assessment, observation, and creating inclusive learning environments. A strong focus on professionalism and ethics prepares graduates for leadership roles in the field. Through hands-on learning, including two distinct practicum experiences, students develop practical skills that prepare them for a wide range of career opportunities. Graduates are qualified to work in early childhood education settings, including preschools, childcare centers, and Pre-K programs, as well as serve as family childcare providers, early intervention specialists, curriculum coordinators, instructional coaches, program administrators, and family educators. Additional career opportunities include roles in Head Start and Early Head Start programs, before- and after-school programs, nonprofit organizations, and professional development or training roles for early childhood educators. This program also provides a strong foundation for those interested in pursuing graduate studies in early childhood leadership, special education, child psychology, or related fields.

Major Program Requirements

The program is offered by Human Development and Family Science faculty in conjunction with other university partners as part of the IDEA Online Higher Education Alliance. Interested applicants will apply for admission to this program through the undergraduate admissions office at the University of Missouri and to the Department of Human Development and Family Science. Courses will be taught by University of Missouri faculty and by scholars from other IDEA institutions, including Iowa State University, Oklahoma State University, and University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Your degree will be awarded by the University of Missouri.

Students must complete all university requirements (<https://catalog.missouri.edu/academicdegree/requirements/universityrequirements/>), including general education (<https://catalog.missouri.edu/academicdegree/requirements/generaleducationrequirements/>), in addition to the degree requirements below.¹ All students must earn a grade of C- or higher, and a minimum 2.0 GPA overall in all HDFS courses taken to meet

the HDFS degree requirements.² A minimum of 120 credit hours is required to earn the degree.

Required Courses

H_D_FS 1600	Foundations of Family Science ³	3
H_D_FS 2200	Research Methods in Human Development and Family Science	3
H_D_FS 2300	Multicultural Study of Children and Families	3
H_D_FS 2400W	Principles of Human Development - Writing Intensive	3-4
or H_D_FS 2400	Principles of Human Development	
H_D_FS 3050	Child Development: Infancy and Toddlerhood	3
H_D_FS 3150	Child Development: Preschool to Pre-Adolescence	3
H_D_FS 3250	Introduction to Early Childhood Education in a Mobile Society	3
H_D_FS 3350	Child Guidance and Classroom Environments	3
H_D_FS 3450	Health, Safety and Nutrition	3
H_D_FS 3550	Technology and Young Children	3
H_D_FS 3650	Diversity in the Lives of Young Children and Families	3
H_D_FS 3750	Working with Families	3
H_D_FS 4150	Development of Curriculum for Children Ages Birth to 3	3
H_D_FS 4250	Development of Curriculum for Children 4-8	3
H_D_FS 4350	Assessing Young Children and their Environments	3
H_D_FS 4450	Understanding and Adapting for Developmental Differences	3
H_D_FS 4550	Practicum II: Curriculum Development and Implementation	3
H_D_FS 4650	Administration/Supervision in Early Childhood Settings	3
H_D_FS 4750	Practicum III: Capstone Experience	6
Electives		36

Students must choose a minimum of 39 elective course credits.⁴

Other Degree Requirements

Lower-Level (1000-2000) Writing Intensive Course - See HDFS advisor for list of approved courses

Upper-Level (3000+) Writing Intensive Course - See HDFS advisor for list of approved courses

¹ This program includes experiences and/or courses in which live observation, guidance, and instruction of young children in early childhood environments is required.

² Some courses may require a higher grade than C- to advance in the program.

³ H_D_FS 1600 should be taken before H_D_FS 2300 and any 3000/4000-level H_D_FS course.

⁴ Consult with an HDFS academic advisor to select appropriate elective courses.

Semester Plan

Below is a sample plan of study, semester by semester. A student's actual plan may vary based on course choices where options are available.

First Year					
Fall	CR	Spring	CR	Summer	CR
ENGLSH 1000		3 H_D_FS 2300		3 Gen Ed SOC/BEH Science	3
H_D_FS 1600		3 Gen ED Science	3		
H_D_FS 2400W		4 Humanities	3		
American History or Government		3 General Elective	3		
Gen Ed Math		3 General Elective	3		
	16		15		3
Second Year					
Fall	CR	Spring	CR	Summer	CR
H_D_FS 2200		3 H_D_FS 3150		3 H_D_FS 3450	3
H_D_FS 3050		3 H_D_FS 3650		3 H_D_FS 3750	3
H_D_FS 3250		3 Humanities	3		
H_D_FS 3550		3 Humanities	3		
Lower Level Writing Intensive		3 Gen Ed PHYS or MATH Science	3		
	15		15		6
Third Year					
Fall	CR	Spring	CR		
H_D_FS 4150		3 H_D_FS 3350	3		
H_D_FS 4350		3 H_D_FS 4250	3		
H_D_FS 4450		3 3000+ level Writing Intensive	3		
Gen Ed BIO or PHYS Science w/ lab		3 General Elective	3		
	12		12		
Fourth Year					
Fall	CR	Spring	CR		
H_D_FS 4550		3 H_D_FS 4650	3		
General Elective		3 H_D_FS 4750	6		
General Elective		3 General Elective	3		
General Elective		3 General Elective	3		
	12		15		
Total Credits: 121					