

GRADUATE HANDBOOK

2026-2027

MASTER OF SCIENCE

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Human Development and Family Sciences Homepage:

https://www.fcs.txstate.edu/graduate-programs/ms_hdfs.html

Graduate College Homepage: <http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/>

Graduate Catalog: <https://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/catalog.html>

Steps to Apply: <http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/programs.html>

**NOTE: APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSION SHOULD COMPLETE THE
ONLINE APPLICATION VIA THE GRADUATE COLLEGE (SEE STEPS
TO APPLY ABOVE)**

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The purpose of this document is to provide information that is specific to the Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS) master's program. It should be viewed as a supplement to the university graduate catalog, which provides more information regarding the requirements for all Texas State University graduate students. It should be noted that this is a school document; therefore, all the policies of the Graduate College and Texas State also must be followed. Expectations of the HDFS graduate faculty for graduate students can be found in Appendix A.

You are strongly advised to use the Graduate College catalog and website (www.gradcollege.txstate.edu) for information related to university policies and procedures for students (e.g., graduation requirements). The Graduate College office is located in room 280 in the J.C. Kellam building. You can also reach the Graduate College by calling 512-245-2581 or e-mailing gradcollege@txstate.edu.

I. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION*

The Master of Science (MS) degree in HDFS will provide graduate level study that prepares students for applied, research, and academic careers that address the needs of diverse families and individuals across the lifespan. There is a general major in HDFS and one specialized concentration within the HDFS graduate program, child life studies. Both the HDFS major students and the child life students have two options, the thesis option or non-thesis option. The program will provide advanced educational experiences in the content areas of research methodology, program administration and evaluation, theories related to families and children, child development, and current issues impacting families and children. The child life concentration, an ACLP-endorsed academic program, also will provide the knowledge and expertise to become a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS). The thesis option will prepare students with the research skills and knowledge needed for success in a doctoral program and/or research careers in HDFS.

A unique feature of our program is an emphasis on the application of theory and knowledge through a required practicum or internship experience. Course requirements for the HDFS major and child life concentration are listed in Section II. Students who choose the **non-thesis option** will be advised to complete multiple practicum courses and/or a child life internship. Those who choose the **thesis option** will complete at least six hours of thesis credit and may complete one practicum or a child life internship (if in the child life concentration) and at least six credit hours of thesis. Depending on their option for thesis, we also require students to complete 6-12 hours of elective coursework which they can select based on their professional interests and goals.

The Human Development and Family Sciences Program is committed to providing an atmosphere that cultivates the discovery and sharing of scientific knowledge and practices through intellectually authentic and engaging discourse among students, faculty, and staff.

In pursuit of that ideal, the Human Development and Family Sciences Program is dedicated to equality of opportunity and treatment for all members, regardless of **gender identity, gender expression, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, age, marital status,**

sexual orientation, ability status, veteran status, or any other reason not related to intellectual merit.

* In order to avoid beginning a program that students cannot complete, each student should be aware that the curriculum requires laboratory participation at the Texas State Child Development Center (CDC). Therefore, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, all students must undergo a criminal background check. If the background check reveals certain offenses, the student will be prohibited from participating in these labs (and will be unable to complete the program). For example, an alcohol or drug offense committed within the past ten years will preclude any student from being present at the CDC, thus disqualifying the student from completing the curriculum.

II. CORE COURSES AND RECOMMENDED ELECTIVES

The HDFS master's degree requires a minimum of 36 hours of coursework.

Please see [Appendix B](#) for Suggested Course Rotations. **Please note that course rotations for any individual student may vary based upon course availability.**

The required core courses for all students are as follows:

HDFS 5341	Advanced Child Development
HDFS 5350	Research Methods in HDFS
HDFS 5342	Advanced Theory in Human Development and Family Sciences

In addition, all students will be required to take the following:

HDFS 5352	Issues in Human Development and Family Sciences
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In addition, **non-thesis students** are required to complete at least one practicum course and 12-15 hours of elective coursework which they can select based on their professional interests and goals.

The required course for students pursuing the thesis option also include:

*FCS 5311	Statistics and Data Analysis for Family and Consumer Sciences
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*In consultation with the graduate advisor and thesis chair, students may take a qualitative statistics course in place of this quantitative course.

Thesis students are required to take at least six credit hours of thesis and 12 hours of elective coursework with the option to complete a practicum.

The core course for student pursuing the **child life concentration** also includes:

HDFS 5343	Child Life Specialist
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In addition, all students in the **child life concentration** will be required to take:

HDFS 5659	Child Life Internship
HDFS 5305	Foundations of Play*

*Child life students may request from the graduate advisor to take another course in place of this Play course if they had a play course at the undergraduate level.

We also require child life non-thesis students to complete 12 hours of elective coursework which they can select based on their professional interests and goals. HDFS 5347: Grief and Bereavement, HDFS 5348 Pain and Anxiety Management for Children, and HDFS 5358: Practicum I are available as elective options.

Those who choose the **child life - thesis option** are required to take six credit hours of thesis and a statistics course (FCS 5311 Statistics and Data Analysis for Family and Consumer Sciences). Child life thesis students may take one elective in addition to their thesis hours and statistics course. Child life thesis students may want to consider an independent study under the supervision of their thesis advisor prior to beginning their thesis coursework.

Recommended electives will vary depending on student's career goals. Please refer to your degree audit for a list of recommended electives. *Note: Electives can differ from those listed on your degree audit; however, prior approval must be obtained from your graduate advisor.* Lists of recommended electives and their descriptions can be found at:

<http://mycatalog.txstate.edu/graduate/applied-arts/family-consumer-sciences/>

III. THESIS/NON-THESIS OPTION

THESIS OPTION

The thesis option represents an appropriate path for certain students. The thesis option can be beneficial to students for the following reasons or under certain circumstances:

1. Students will gain research experience and knowledge.
2. Students will become an “expert” in an area of study.
3. Students will be provided the opportunity to work closely with a faculty mentor.
4. Students will be prepared for the pursuit of a doctoral degree in the future.

If you choose the thesis option, you should take the core research methods course (HDFS 5350 Research Methods in Human Development and Family Sciences) as soon as possible in your program. It also is strongly recommended that you take three hours of statistics (FCS 5311 Statistics and Data Analysis for Family and Consumer Sciences) or a qualitative research course (depending on your proposed research method) as an elective, and an independent study course (HDFS 5355) with your thesis advisor prior to undertaking the thesis project. These research-related courses should be taken within your first year of enrollment if possible.

A research focused thesis may seem like a more natural fit for students in the HDFS program; however, the field of child life is also in need of research on the efficacy of child life interventions to both validate and provide opportunities for advocacy and growth in the field. By completing a thesis you can support the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP’s) strategic plan to promote, encourage, and educate child life specialists regarding all aspects of research, evidence based practice and scholarly publication.

THESIS ADVISOR AND PROCEDURES

If you elect to follow the thesis option for your degree, you will choose a thesis advisor and, subsequently, a thesis committee in consultation with your thesis advisor. The faculty member whom you invite to be your thesis advisor should be knowledgeable in the content area you are interested in studying. It is recommended that the thesis advisor already be engaged in research in the content area. The thesis advisor also should be a faculty member with whom you will be comfortable working closely over a period of time.

Graduate students in the HDFS program are required to use the APA style manual guidelines because this is the required writing style for most professional journals in our field. The thesis can serve as the basis for writing a professional article for submission to a refereed journal for review and eventual publication. Students who choose to submit an article for professional review may need faculty assistance with this type of writing. Students who have access to faculty member’s data should abide by the faculty’s authorship guidelines. In the event that the thesis advisor and thesis committee members assist in this writing process, the accepted professional practice is for the faculty member(s) to be listed as a co-author.

As indicated above, publication ethics require that all people who make significant intellectual contributions to a scientific investigation and accept responsibility for its content be listed as authors. In addition, where there are agreed-upon differing degrees of contribution, principal

authorship should accurately reflect the relative creative, scientific, or professional contributions of the individuals involved.

Good ethical practice is expected of all faculty members, staff, or student researchers involved in the dissemination of scholarly work. It is expected that all persons listed as authors have made substantial creative and productive contributions to the work. This expectation about qualification for authorship reflects a view held broadly across many disciplines.

THESIS PROPOSAL

Students are responsible for developing a thesis proposal with the guidance of the thesis advisor. The thesis proposal should consist of the student's first three chapters (Introduction, Literature Review, and Method). It is often possible and advisable for a master's level student to complete the thesis through working with a faculty member on an aspect of the professor's ongoing research. The thesis proposal will be presented to the student's thesis committee for approval (the student is responsible for setting up the thesis committee).

CREATING YOUR COMMITTEE

A thesis student first obtains the consent of a Graduate Faculty member in the major school to serve as your research advisor (Committee Chair). Co-chairs are allowable.

Next, in consultation with your thesis Committee Chair, you will establish a thesis committee. All committee members must be approved by the Graduate College as Graduate Faculty (see graduate college website). A thesis committee requires a minimum of two other members of the Graduate Faculty to serve as committee members.

The thesis committee composition is as follows:

- If you do not have a minor, the other two committee members are chosen from Graduate Faculty in the major school, from another Texas State department or school, or external to the university.
- If you have a minor, one of the two other committee members must be from the student's minor department or school.

These three faculty – thesis committee chair, two other committee members -- comprise the thesis committee. The thesis committee, however, may include additional Graduate Faculty members and be comprised of more than three members.

The thesis committee is officially formed by:

- Submitting one copy of the Proposed Thesis Research form (<https://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/forms.html>) and thesis proposal to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval.

It is recommended this be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College *before enrolling* in 5399B.

Before collecting any data for your thesis, you must complete the Human Subjects training that is offered through the Office of Research and Federal Relations

<http://www.txstate.edu/research/orc/IRB-Resources/Training.html> and submit a proposal for your proposed research to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This requirement applies to all students who will collect data on human subjects. It is recommended that the IRB proposal be submitted the semester prior to the semester in which data collection is to begin. It is currently taking a number of weeks for IRB proposals to be approved. To obtain more information regarding the IRB process, please visit the following web site <http://www.txstate.edu/research/orc/IRB-Resources.html> for additional information.

THESIS ENROLLMENT AND CREDIT

All thesis students are required to enroll in Thesis 5399A. Students are also required to continuously enroll in thesis any semester they are receiving supervision. As long as Thesis B hours total at least three hours of credit, they may be taken in one semester or multiple semesters. Examples include:

HDFS 5399A + HDFS 5399B = 6 hours of credit

HDFS 5399A + HDFS 5199B + HDFS 5299B = 6 hours of credit

HDFS 5399A + HDFS 5199B + HDFS 5199B + HDFS 5199B = 6 hours of credit

Regardless of the number of thesis hours taken, the student may only receive six hours of degree credit for a thesis.

If you do not complete the thesis during the summer or in a regular semester in which you are enrolled for HDFS 5399B, then you will receive a grade of “PR,” in progress. You can repeat enrollment in the thesis courses. Students can change from the thesis to a non-thesis option or vice versa through the completion of appropriate paperwork. This change should be done in consultation with the graduate advisor. **However, if you change from a thesis to a non-thesis option, any thesis hours you have completed will NOT count toward your degree.**

THESIS DEADLINES AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The completed thesis must be submitted to the chair of your thesis committee by the posted deadlines <http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/deadlines.html>. The student must submit the final thesis, approved by the committee, to the graduate college for review by the posted deadline <https://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/deadlines.html>. Theses are submitted through Vireo, the electronic thesis and dissertation deposit platform. The student is responsible for submitting the signature page to the Graduate College.

Students are strongly encouraged to read the entire thesis guide found at <http://mycatalog.txstate.edu/graduate/degree-information/thesis-requirements-masters/>.

Regardless of which submission options the student used, the student will be notified of any required revisions. Once the student makes the required revisions and the committee approves of

the revised thesis, the Graduate College will verify the revisions have been made. If the thesis was submitted on-line, the Graduate College will forward the revised thesis to the Alkek Library. If the thesis was submitted in the hard-copy format, the student is responsible for submitting the revised thesis directly to the Alkek Library.

REMEMBER, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET. For additional information, including up-to-date due dates, please visit: <https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/students/graduation-commencement.html>

NON-THESIS OPTION

Students who choose to pursue the non-thesis option will complete one to two practicum courses (HDFS 5358 and HDFS 5359) if they are HDFS majors or the child life internship (HDFS 5659) if they are in the child life concentration. It is also recommended that students in the child life concentration complete a practicum (HDFS 5358) at a hospital-based child life program as an elective in order to be more competitive when applying for internships.

The practicum experience should be selected in relation to career interests/goals. A good approach is to coordinate these two courses so your practicum courses result in a significant accomplishment for you and the program(s) where you have completed your practicum experiences. **Students are responsible for making all arrangements for the practicum experience in conjunction with the practicum faculty supervisor the semester prior to completing practicum.** Each practicum student must identify a site supervisor for each practicum experience.

Practicum II (HDFS 5359) or internship (HDFS 5659) represents a culminating experience for the graduate student and, as such, it is expected that a major project will be completed for these courses. A project report will be written (using APA style manual guidelines) for HDFS 5359. A project report or expanded case study will be written for HDFS 5659. Directions for the expanded case study will be provided in the syllabus for HDFS 5659.

The report describing the rationale, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the major project for HDFS 5359 or HDFS 5659 should be about 20 pages in length. This report will describe the project in detail and include a literature review related to the chosen project. In addition, students enrolled in HDFS 5359 will formally present their project report to the graduate faculty at the end of the semester. However, because some child life students complete their internships out-of-state, students enrolled in HDFS 5659 will formally present their report to the child life staff at their internship site.

In certain instances, the project report might also be appropriate for submission to a professional journal for publication. In these instances, the same rules apply as for the thesis situation. That is, if a faculty member has substantial input in preparing the paper for submission to a journal for review, the faculty member should be listed as a co-author.

IV. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

A limited number of graduate assistantships (GAs), including graduate instructional assistantships (GIAs) and graduate research assistantships (GRAs) are available each year. To be eligible for an assistantship, the student must be enrolled in nine credit hours and be in good standing with the university. Students who have been conditionally admitted (until the condition is removed), on academic probation, or academic suspension are not eligible for an assistantship, per university policy. Assistantships can be awarded for either 50% time (20 hours per week) or 25% time (10 hours per week). Those who receive a half-time assistantship might be eligible to receive university benefits. Contact the Human Resources website (<http://www.hr.txstate.edu/>) for further information regarding benefits.

GAs must maintain a 3.0 GPA in coursework to retain their eligibility. Students are eligible to remain in a GA position for two full academic years. Students must reapply for a GA position each academic semester. Supervising faculty members will evaluate GAs at the end of each semester and provide feedback structured to enhance the quality of their work.

All graduate instructional assistants are required by the university to take a teaching-related course (i.e., FCS 5301) in the Fall of their first semester as a GIA or the following Fall semester at no additional cost to the student.

This will be offered through either the school or our HDFS graduate program. The purpose is to strengthen the quality of instruction provided directly/indirectly by the GIA. This course will not count towards your overall degree requirements.

Please see [Appendix C](#) for additional information about graduate assistantships.

V. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge of the field. All candidates for graduate degrees at Texas State University are required to pass a comprehensive examination, either written, oral, or a combination of the two. **Students in the thesis option will write and defend their thesis in lieu of the comprehensive exam.**

Students pursuing the **non-thesis option** will be required to complete a written exam consisting of objective and essay questions that cover three core content areas applicable to all students. In addition, child life students must complete a fourth section of the exam related to their knowledge from the Child Life Specialist course (HDFS 5343) required for their particular concentration. As a result, the comprehensive exam should be taken after the student has completed 18 hours of graduate degree credit AND his/her core coursework over which the student will be examined (with a GPA of at least 3.0 and earn a B or better in the core coursework.) **Students must sit for all three (HDFS major students) or four exams (i.e., child life students) on their first attempt.** Students must pass at least two exams on the first round, or they will need to take all exams again. Assuming two of the three or four exams were passed, students will only be required to sit for the exams for which they have not passed.

Students in the child life concentration are strongly encouraged to take their comprehensive exam the semester prior to completing their internship. *Note: Students may **not** take the comprehensive exam without being enrolled in coursework and should communicate closely with their graduate advisor to determine the timing of their exam. Students are encouraged to avoid taking the comprehensive exam during their child life internship.*

The comprehensive exam will be held on the first Friday of March and September on campus at a time and location to be determined. Students planning to take the exam must sign up online through the Qualtrics link located on the Current Students page. Students will be given one hour to complete each section. There are a total of three or four sections, depending on the student's program.

HDFS Major	Child Life Concentration
1. Child Development	1. Child Development
2. Theory	2. Theory
3. Research	3. Research
4. n/a	4. Child Life Specialist

Comprehensive exam questions are evaluated on both the quality and content of the response. Two faculty members evaluate the student's response to each comprehensive exam question. If there is disagreement regarding whether a response is acceptable, a third reader will read the response and make a final evaluation decision. The evaluation decision for each section is made independently of the other sections and can be as follows:

- P=Pass all components of the exam.

- CP=Conditional pass (At the discretion of the graduate faculty, the student must write a paper related to the content area that received a CP and/or orally defend his/her response; faculty determine whether the student writes a paper or orally defends his/her response).
- F=Fail (student who fails two or more sections of the exam if HDFS major or three or more sections of the exam if in the child life concentration **must retake all sections of the exam** the following semester). *Students can “retake” the exam only twice for a total of three attempts. If the student does not pass one or more sections on the third attempt, the student must re-take relevant coursework and pass with a B or better. The student must then petition the HDFS graduate faculty and request to take an oral exam for the final attempt. It is at the discretion of the HDFS graduate faculty whether the petition will be granted. If the petition is granted, the oral exam will take place with a format as well as at a time and place to be determined. The student can only pass or fail the oral comprehensive exam. Students will not graduate from the HDFS graduate program without passing all sections of the comprehensive exam.*

Students must complete the comprehensive exam within five years of beginning the HDFS graduate program.

The results of the comprehensive examination must be filed in the Graduate College at least ten days before the commencement at which the graduating student's degree is to be conferred. The school is responsible for submitting the report to the Graduate College.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDYING FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

All members of the Human Development and Family Sciences Graduate Faculty want HDFS graduate students to successfully complete their comprehensive examination. To that end, the following suggestions for studying for the exams, compiled from the feedback provided by other graduate students, are offered:

1. Organize course material at the completion of each course e.g., use tabs in texts to indicate material that was emphasized in the course. Maintain a copy of all completed assignments, including questions and the responses submitted on Canvas. Keep a copy of any class notes and exam reviews.
2. Review material from completed courses throughout the semester prior to taking the exams.
3. Remember that the questions a peer responded to in the previous semester will not be the same questions as the ones you will respond to in subsequent semesters. Students are responsible for all the material covered in the aforementioned courses. Students are strongly encouraged to focus on all course material.
4. Find a “study buddy” or create a study group so that you can pose questions to each other as well as discuss the course material.
5. Be familiar with the work of the key individuals who made contributions to the field of study (e.g., names and contributions of theorists)
6. Be able to cite references to defend your response to a question.
7. Be able to apply course material to examples. Be able to generate pertinent examples.

8. Select a peer-reviewed empirical article pertinent to the HDFS field and identify research and evaluation constructs/concepts present in the article such as type of sample, sampling method used, types of validity and reliability discussed, etc.
9. Schedule specific times to study for the comprehensive exam.

Faculty members will provide the following assistance to students preparing for the comprehensive exam:

- **Prior to the administration of the exams**, faculty members may provide students with general tips about studying course content for the exams. Individual faculty may also offer to address specific questions students have related to course material. The amount of detail provided by faculty will vary. It is expected that by the time students are ready to take the comprehensive exam, they will have developed graduate-level study habits.
- **After administration of the exams**, faculty will provide written feedback about why students made a conditional pass or failed an exam question. Students who made a conditional pass will receive written instructions about the follow up to the conditional pass. Students who failed an exam section may request guidance from individual faculty regarding how to study for the exam retake. This guidance may or may not include feedback about individual questions students missed on the exam. In most cases, students will be encouraged to restudy course content because questions vary from exam to exam.

Please see [Appendix D](#) for examples of comprehensive exam questions.

VI. SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

There are a number of scholarships available to graduate students at Texas State University. In particular, students who have a high GPA and/or can demonstrate need are in a good position to pursue scholarship opportunities. There are also scholarships available according to specific criteria, e.g., for study abroad programs (Benjamin A. Gillman) or for Hispanic students (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities). A sample of scholarship grantors are listed below. If you plan to apply for a scholarship, you need to pay particular attention to the application deadlines. **Most Texas State scholarships have a deadline of February 1st or February 15th.**

Texas State Celebrity Classics Scholarship and the Texas State Graduate College Scholars Program – Celebrity Classic Scholarships - The Graduate College provides these scholarships to encourage students with intellectual, creative, and leadership promise to complete a master's or doctoral degree at Texas State University. These scholarships are available for newly admitted and continuing students. Awards range from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per semester and are given for up to three academic years, provided that a 3.5 cumulative GPA has been maintained on all graduate coursework leading to their current degree and that enrollment requirements have been satisfied.

Graduate College Thesis Research Support Fellowship - The Graduate College provides Thesis Research Support Fellowships to support graduate student research at the master's level. Each award of up to \$2,000 is to be used to cover expenses directly related to conducting thesis research. Applications are due April 15 for the fall semester or September 15 for the spring semester. For more information, visit:

<https://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/scholarships/thesis-research.html>

College of Applied Arts Research Fellowship - The purpose of the research fellowship program is to allow students the opportunity to learn more about conducting research by assisting faculty with various research projects (i.e., books, research articles, or grant proposals). The student will work with a professor for a maximum of 20 hours per week. The positions are awarded for a 9-month duration (September 1 through May 31).

Benjamin A. Gilman (study abroad opportunities) – This program offers awards for study abroad, for U.S. citizen students who are receiving federal Pell Grant funding at a 2-year or 4-year college or university. <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/program/gilman-mccain-scholarships/>

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities – The scholarship programs administered by HACU are made possible due to generous contributions from corporate and federal organizations. <https://www.hacu.net/hacu/Scholarships.asp>

The Winch Fund – The Winch Fund offers scholarships based on achievement, need, purpose, and recommendations of college/university personnel. The Winch Fund offers scholarships to students who have sophomore, junior, and senior and graduate standing at their respective

college or university. The intent of the Winch Fund is to supplement the increasing expenses of higher education. <https://uwlax.academicworks.com/opportunities/1290>

Please visit the following web sites for information regarding additional scholarship monies:
<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/scholarships.html>

A listing of state scholarship programs can be obtained from:

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
P.O. Box 12788 Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711
1-800-242-3062
<https://www.highered.texas.gov>

Texas State Financial Aid Office:
J.C. Kellam Building
Room 240 (Second Floor)
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX
78666 512-245-
2315
<http://www.finaid.txstate.edu>

Travel Funds – Limited travel funds are available for graduate students to make presentations at professional meetings. Also, the Graduate College will partially fund student conference travel requests. They will partially fund two trips per academic year. The Graduate College award will be made after considering department/school and college contributions, as well as funds available. Additional information can be found at <http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/travel.html>. The form noted in this link must be completed and signed by the HDFS graduate advisor no later than 3 weeks prior to the travel dates to request HDFS *and* graduate college funds.

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the advantages of obtaining a graduate degree?

A graduate degree provides the opportunity to gain expertise in your chosen field. Career change or career advancement, specialized training, and intellectual curiosity are a few of the reasons students choose to pursue a graduate degree. Some companies and organizations support the pursuit of graduate degrees by their employees with tuition reimbursement and/or provide salary increases after degree attainment.

2. Is the Human Development and Family Sciences program flexible for students who are currently working?

At this time, some courses are offered during the evening, as a hybrid course, or via the internet.

3. What opportunities exist for completing the practicum experience?

There are many practicum opportunities. For example, students have opportunities to do their practicum with Child Protective Services, Roxanne's House, Children's Hospital of San Antonio, and early childhood intervention programs to name a few. Faculty members can give students additional ideas regarding an appropriate practicum. You may select any appropriate professional program suited to your career goals and consistent with the content of your major. Please see Appendix E for additional information about practicum opportunities.

4. Do I need to submit individual course verification forms for ACLP certification?

No. Because the Child Life concentration is ACLP-endorsed, students will upload the official endorsement letter provided by the program.

5. Are any courses offered via the internet?

Yes. The HDFS graduate program offers some courses via the internet. You also can take some of your elective coursework via the internet.

6. How do I register for my classes?

Registration occurs online. Further registration instructions can be found by contacting the Office of the Registrar at <http://www.registrar.txstate.edu/> or <https://gato-docs.its.txstate.edu/jcr:4ab35965-b379-4ad9-aed3-7b9b21d346ea/Bobcat%20Schedule%20Builder%20Video.mp4>

7. Where can I buy textbooks?

The Texas State Bookstore and Colloquium have graduate level textbooks available for purchase or rent. Some texts are available in an electronic format. In some instances, commercial venues such as [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [allbookstores.com](https://www.allbookstores.com) might be appropriate for use.

VIII. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES GRADUATE FACULTY DIRECTORY

Edna Alfaro, Ph.D.

Family & Consumer Sciences 112; 512-245-2412; ea21@txstate.edu

Biography: Dr. Edna C. Alfaro is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences at Texas State University. She received her doctorate in Family and Human Development from Arizona State University, obtained a Master's in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and completed her undergraduate studies in Psychology at St. Mary's University-San Antonio. Dr. Alfaro was awarded a Faculty Fellowship through the Greater Texas Foundation, which supported her work related to Mexican-origin students' postsecondary success. Dr. Alfaro teaches Lifespan Development, Family Relationships, Latino Youth and Families, Research Procedures in Family and Consumer Sciences, Research Design and Methodology, Advanced Theory, and Seminar Issues in Family and Child Development.

Research Interests and Activities: Dr. Alfaro utilizes the ecological and academic resilience frameworks to better understand the processes by which environmental, cultural, and familial factors interact with one another and impact the academic outcomes of Latino high school and college students. Additionally, her work has focused on understanding how the processes associated with Latino students' academic success differ based on the gender. Her long-term research plan includes further investigating how school and family resources buffer the negative effects of poverty and discrimination on academic success both at the high school and undergraduate levels.

Andrew Behnke, Ph.D., CFLE

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Biography: Dr. Andrew Behnke is a Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences. Dr. Behnke grew up in Plano, Texas and received his doctorate in Child Development and Family Studies from Purdue University; obtained a Master's in Family and Human Development from the Utah State University; and completed his undergraduate studies in Speech Pathology at Brigham Young University. Dr. Behnke was awarded the highest award presented at NC State University the University Faculty Scholar Award. Dr. Behnke and Cintia Aguilar developed the Juntos Program which has helped thousands of Latino youth from across the country get to college and achieve their dreams. Dr. Behnke is an advisor to non-profit agencies in the areas of program development, evaluation, and grant writing. His life's mission is helping youth and their families thrive in all aspects of their lives. Dr. Behnke has taught Program Evaluation in HDFS and Program Administration.

Research Interests and Activities: Dr. Behnke's research agenda includes studying ethnic minority fathers, evidence-based programs to support immigrant youth and families, college access and college success programming, and domestic violence prevention. He enjoys writing grants that have a long-term, real-world impact on those with limited resources and that create sustainable evidence-based programs. Since 2007, Dr. Behnke has published in numerous journals and has been awarded 17.6 million dollars from various federal and state agencies as well as numerous foundations.

Elizabeth M. Blunk, Ph.D.

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Biography: Elizabeth Blunk is an Associate Professor in Human Development and Family Sciences at Texas State University. She completed her doctoral work in Early Childhood Education at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Blunk has taught over 30 different courses at Texas State and currently teaches Child Development, Lifespan Development, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, and Family Theory.

Research Interests: Dr. Blunk's research interests are in teacher-child interactions and attachment in relation to optimism and cynicism in cohabitation or marital relationships.

Shannon Dier, Ph.D., CCLS

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Biography: Shannon Dier is an Assistant Professor in Human Development and Family Sciences at Texas State University. She is also a Certified Child Life Specialist with over 10 years of clinical experience in pediatric healthcare settings.

Research Interests: Dr. Dier's research focuses broadly on coping and resilience in healthcare contexts, including an emphasis on child life practice and training. More specifically, Dr. Dier's research explores the intersections of child development, family dynamics, and pediatric healthcare experiences. Her work focuses on medical play, parent-child communication, and the psychosocial well-being of children with chronic health conditions, emphasizing the role of play, narrative, and emotional regulation in promoting resilience. With a background as a Certified Child Life Specialist, Dr. Dier brings a unique applied perspective to her research, which aims to strengthen the evidence base for the child life profession.

Cindy Fitchpatrick, CCLS

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Biography: Cindy Fitchpatrick has been a Certified Bilingual Child Life Specialist (CCLS) for 28 years. Currently, works at Wonders and Worries, a community-based Child Life Program as a CCLS and a RWWP Consultant, working with children and adolescents impacted by illness. She is also Adjunct Faculty at UT Austin, teaching the "Intro the Child Life" course. Also, has taught the online "Death & Dying" course at LSU. In 2020, completed a "Higher Education Teaching Certificate" online program from Harvard. And Cindy completed 2 Child Life Internships at Johns Hopkins Children's Center and the Children's Hospital of Austin. Cindy also worked at the Children's Blood & Cancer at Dell Children's Medical Center for 26 years as the Psychosocial Program Supervisor; created and oversaw all the psychosocial patient and family programs and school services. Cindy volunteers globally with Operation Smile as a Child Life Specialist volunteer and trainer (provided child life education and services in hospitals in the Philippines, China, Peru, Morocco, and the Madagascar). Locally, Cindy volunteers on the Board of Directors of Big Love Cancer Care and the Advisory Council of Superhero Kids Cancer Foundation. Cindy is also in the process of establishing her own non-profit "Child Life Beacon" to provide clinical volunteer experiences to child life students. Currently, Cindy teaches the graduate courses Child Life Specialist, Pain, and is the Practicum & Internship Supervisor. Cindy also teaches the undergraduate courses Introduction to Child Life and Grief & Bereavement.

Priscilla Goble, Ph.D.

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Biography: Dr. Goble holds the rank of Associate Professor and is the graduate advisor and program coordinator for the M.S. program in Human Development and Family Sciences in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences at Texas State University. Dr. Goble earned her

doctorate in Family and Human Development from Arizona State University and completed her postdoctoral work in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. She also holds a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and Special Needs from Purdue University and completed her Child Life internship at University Hospital in San Antonio.

Research Interests and Activities: Her research and teaching center on strengthening the work of educators, child life specialists, and other professionals serving children and families, with a particular focus on fostering the well-being of both these professionals and the children and families they support.

Christine Gray, Ph.D.

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Biography: Dr. Christine Gray is an Associate Professor of Instruction in Human Development and Family Sciences at Texas State University. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Pennsylvania State University and her Master's and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. Currently, Dr. Gray teaches two undergraduate courses, Contemporary Families and Introduction to Family Relationships and has taught three graduate courses, Advanced Theories, Advanced Child Development, and Issues in HDFS.

Research Interests: Her interests focus on the development of relationships over time. More specifically, the individual and dyadic factors associated with the development of trust in dating couples. In addition, her research interests are centered on exploring the role of relationship beliefs in the experience of cohabitation and marriage.

Eunjin “Jin” Seo, Ph.D.

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Biography: Dr. Seo is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences at Texas State University. Prior to joining Texas State University, she was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Texas Behavioral Science & Policy Institute and a teacher at Austin Korean School. Dr. Seo completed her B.A. in Education from Seoul National University, South Korea, where she proudly stood as a first-generation college student. She earned her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin as a Fulbright scholar.

Research Interests and Activities: Dr. Seo's research centers around the dynamic interplay between motivation, achievement, and well-being during adolescence and emerging adulthood, with the aim of enhancing adolescents' trajectories on the path to adulthood. Her research particularly emphasizes how developmental contexts can foster the psychological resources of students who face structural disadvantages and marginalization.

Yishan Shen, Ph.D.

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Biography: Dr. Yishan Shen is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences at Texas State University. She received her Ph.D. and M.A. in Human Development and Family Sciences from the University of Texas at Austin with a portfolio in applied statistical modeling, and a B.S. in Space Physics and another B.S. in Psychology from Peking University, China. She teaches both undergraduate (adolescent development, advanced adolescent development, cultural diversity of families) and graduate (research methods) courses.

Research Interests and Activities: Dr. Shen's research focuses on the development of immigrant and minority youth. One line of her inquiry examines the developmental

implications of linguistic minority adolescents' experiences of language brokering, the translation and interpretation support provided by bilingual children and adolescents for their English-limited immigrant parents. A second line of research explores how cultural and racial/ethnic processes (e.g., acculturation, racial/ethnic socialization, culture-specific parenting practices, discrimination) interact with family socioeconomic status in influencing adolescent development.

Amy A. Weimer, Ph.D.

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Biography: Dr. Amy Weimer is the Director of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences and a Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences at Texas State University. She received a B.S. in Psychology from Northern Arizona University, a M.S. in Experimental Psychology from Idaho State University, and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Arizona State University. She teaches lifespan development and advanced child development, in addition to supervising undergraduate and graduate research projects.

Research Interests and Activities: Dr. Weimer's research focuses on identifying links among socioemotional, cultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic variables to promote positive developmental outcomes among diverse learners. Though her projects include a broad range of participants, most include a focus on bilingual (English and Spanish-speaking) children of Mexican American heritage and/or explore aspects of social cognitive (especially theory of mind development) and academic development.

APPENDIX A:

EXPECTATIONS OF GRADUATE FACULTY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Our purpose in providing this list of expectations is to facilitate your success in graduate school. **Research has demonstrated that graduate students who are oriented to the realities of graduate school early on in their graduate education are more likely to do well in their studies and to complete their degree** (Davis, Bissler, & Leiter, 2001). We want graduate school to be an experience that fosters your personal and professional growth. We want you to excel in this graduate program. We view you as future colleagues and want you to be prepared to have a successful career in whichever field you choose. Ultimately, we want you to graduate and be successful in your chosen profession, in applying to a doctoral program, or in using what you learned in your private life.

We recognize that graduate school is one of the most difficult challenges you will ever meet. In fact, even the transition into graduate school can be daunting.

“The first year in any graduate program can be difficult both personally and professionally. Often in this situation, the student has moved away from family, friends, and significant others and is cast into an uncertain environment. Fellow graduate students and professors are strangers and the first few weeks can be intimidating. Besides the personal tumult, the academic component can be even more unnerving. Graduate work is different from undergraduate studies—expectations are higher, the workload is greater, and the pressure can be enormous...One of the challenges students face in the first stage of a graduate program is the increased workload. There is a sharp difference between undergraduate and graduate studies—courses are tougher and students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate” (Cohen, 2002, p. 585).

We echo the sentiments expressed by Cohen (2002). Graduate school is strikingly different from the undergraduate experience, and so expectations of faculty are different for undergraduate and graduate students. We expect you to take the initiative in your education by seeking out answers to questions you may have about course readings, assignments, or graduate school in general. A good place to begin when you have questions about the graduate school process is the graduate handbook. Please read it thoroughly.

In contrast to the undergraduate experience where faculty shepherd students through the learning process, graduate faculty are facilitators of student learning. We expect you to take responsibility for your learning. This includes keeping track of your progress in class and seeking guidance from faculty early on in the semester if you are concerned about your course performance. This also includes making a list of relevant dates such as when to take an independent study if you are planning to write a thesis (at least one semester before enrolling in thesis hours), when to schedule the comprehensive exams (at the completion of all the core courses) and so on.

“One of the most difficult transitions into graduate school is adjusting to heavier workloads and increased expectations. Even students who have completed degrees in

rigorous undergraduate programs sometimes have difficulty with **time management**...Further, succeeding within the structure of graduate school may require as much directed individual instruction, self-discipline, and professional orientation as it does ability and intellect” (Ault as cited in Davis, Bissler, & Leiter, 2001, p. 455).

In addition, we expect you to come to class prepared, having read and thought about the assigned readings.

The first year is also crucial because it is then that a graduate student fashions his or her reputation...It is up to the student to make sure that faculty and other graduate students see him or her in a positive light. The surest way to do this is for the student to be prepared for class and willing to participate. Nothing deflates a professor’s opinion of a graduate student quicker than a student who appears unprepared and not serious about his or her studies. Another way to accomplish this is to be punctual ...in submitting assignments...” (Cohen, 2002, p. 585).

Descutner and Thelen (1989) asked the graduate students and faculty of a clinical psychology department to indicate on a survey the top qualities of a “successful clinical graduate student.” The students top five choices were: working hard, clinical/counseling skills, getting along with people, handling stress, and discipline. The faculty chose working hard, clinical/counseling skills, getting along with people, writing ability, and doing research. With the exception of the clinical/counseling skills, the graduate faculty in HDFS agree that the other qualities are similar to expectations we have for the graduate students in this program.

We cannot emphasize too highly the importance of using good interpersonal skills in interactions with each other and with the graduate faculty. This includes treating each other and the faculty with respect. Respectful behavior includes discussing feedback on assignments in a constructive manner rather than making rude or sarcastic remarks. It is fine to express frustration and disappointment; however, do bear in mind, disrespectful remarks or behavior can color faculty perceptions of a student. Similarly, we, the graduate faculty, will treat you with respect at all times.

We expect graduate students to have good writing abilities and have mastered the basics of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and other components of good writing. However, if faculty indicates that a student needs some help with his or her writing skills, then it is incumbent upon the graduate student to seek help in this area from SLAC. Additionally, students are expected to comply with APA guidelines, including those for making citations and formatting reference lists, in writing any paper. Needless to say, good writing includes citing all sources and not engaging in plagiarism. **All students are encouraged to purchase a copy of the APA manual 7th edition and know these guidelines prior to beginning the program.** Graduate students’ papers should reflect higher order thinking skills, including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Students are strongly encouraged to seek out opportunities to participate in faculty research. Faculty members welcome graduate students’ interest in their work, and generally are in need of help with some aspect of the research process, including gathering, coding, transcribing, or

analyzing data. Students are also strongly encouraged to attend professional meetings and participate, if appropriate, in making presentations. Additionally, participating in professional meetings enables you to take advantage of networking opportunities.

Students are also strongly encouraged to attend social events sponsored by the HDFS program and/or School of Family and Consumer Sciences as well as other university events. These events provide students with the opportunity to get to know faculty and each other in an informal setting. These events offer opportunities for networking with each other. Students frequently stay in touch with each other long after graduation.

We hope that this discussion of faculty expectations for graduate students will be helpful to you in getting the most out of your graduate education experience. Please try to keep in mind at all times that **we want you to succeed and graduate**. We are here to facilitate the attainment of your master's degree.

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APPENDIX B
SUGGESTED COURSE ROTATION

	Child Life – Thesis	Child Life – Non-Thesis
Fall #1	HDFS 5341 Advanced Child Development HDFS 5343 Hospitalized Child HDFS 5342 Advanced Theory	HDFS 5341 Advanced Child Development HDFS 5343 Hospitalized Child HDFS 5342 Advanced Theory
Spring #1	HDFS 5350 Research Methods in HDFS HDFS 5305 Foundations of Play (or recommended elective) HDFS 5347 Grief & Bereavement (recommended elective) OR HDFS 5355 Advanced Ind Study OR HDFS 5354 Admin & Eval of Family & Child Service Programs	HDFS 5350 Research Methods in HDFS HDFS 5305 Foundations of Play (or recommended elective) HDFS 5347 Grief & Bereavement (recommended elective) OR HDFS 5302C Admin & Eval of Family & Child Service Programs
Summer #1	HDFS 5399A Thesis A and/or HDFS 5358 Practicum I (recommended elective) and/or HDFS 5394 Advanced Adolescent Dev OR HDFS 5357 Comparative Studies in Child Development	HDFS 5358 Practicum I (recommended elective) and/or HDFS 5394 Advanced Adolescent Dev OR HDFS 5357 Comparative Studies in Child Development
Fall #2*	FCS 5311 Stats for FCS HDFS 5352 Issues in HDFS OR HDFS 5348 Pain and Anxiety Management for Children OR (recommended elective) HDFS 5399B Thesis B	HDFS 5352 Issues in HDFS (recommended elective) HDFS 5348 Pain and Anxiety Management for Children (recommended elective)
Spring #2	HDFS 5659 Internship in Child Life (6-credit hours)	HDFS 5659 Internship in Child Life (6-credit hours)
	HDFS – Thesis	HDFS – Non-Thesis
Fall #1	FCS 5311 Stats for FCS HDFS 5341 Advanced Child Development HDFS 5342 Advanced Theory	FCS 5311 Stats for FCS (or recommended elective) HDFS 5341 Advanced Child Development HDFS 5342 Advanced Theory
Spring #1	HDFS 5350 Research Methods in HDFS HDFS 5354 Admin & Eval of Family & Child Service Programs (recommended elective) HDSF Elective OR Pre-approved Outside Elective	HDFS 5350 Research Methods in HDFS HDFS 5354 Admin & Eval of Family & Child Service Programs (recommended elective) HDFS Elective OR Pre-approved Outside Elective
Summer #1	HDFS 5355 Advanced Ind Study (recommended elective) and/or HDFS 5357 Comparative Studies in Child Development (recommended elective) OR HDFS 5394 Advanced Adolescent Dev (recommended elective)	HDFS 5358 Practicum I and/or HDFS 5357 Comparative Studies in Child Development (recommended elective) OR HDFS 5394 Advanced Adolescent Dev (recommended elective)

Fall #2*	HDFS 5352 Issues in HDFS HDFS 5399A Thesis A	HDFS 5352 Issues in HDFS HDFS 5358 Practicum I or HDFS 5359 Practicum II
Spring #2	HDFS 5358 Practicum I HDFS 5399B Thesis B	HDFS 5359 Practicum II (recommended elective) OR HDFS 5660 Adv. Practicum (6-credit hours)

*Suggested semester to initially sit for the comprehensive exam for non-thesis option students.

***Note:** Talk to your academic advisor regarding course registration for the summer. Students only need 36-credit hours for the program and this proposed schedule offers several alternatives for students to customize their coursework and schedule to fit their needs and career interests.*

APPENDIX C

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

GRADUATE ASSISTANT GUIDELINES

To be selected as a graduate assistant (GA) is generally regarded as an honor. Graduate assistantships are awarded to those students who demonstrate qualities indicating their potential for future professional growth and contribution to a field of study. An assistantship provides opportunities for graduate students to work closely with graduate faculty. This working relationship provides the GA with additional growth experiences related to teaching, research, and professional networking.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All students enrolled in the Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS) graduate program who meet eligibility requirements can apply for a HDFS Graduate Assistantship. Applications will be available to all current and accepted students each year online via Qualtrics. Students who are interested in a GA position will be required to complete the application on survey monkey by the stated deadline.

HDFS graduate faculty will then review applications and select GAs for the upcoming academic year. Students who are not selected for a GA position with the Human Development and Family Sciences program area will be considered for a GA position in one of the other program areas (e.g., Fashion Merchandising, Interior Design).

ELIGIBILITY OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

To be eligible to serve as a GA, the student must be unconditionally admitted to the graduate college and must maintain a 3.0 GPA. In addition, GAs must be enrolled in a minimum of nine hours of course work during each full (Fall, Spring) semester of employment. There are two exceptions to the nine-hour rule. In the last semester of taking coursework prior to graduation, GAs do not have to take nine hours if, for example, they only lack six hours in order to graduate or if they only lack 6 hours in the semester prior to doing a child life internship. In these cases, they would be eligible for an assistantship while enrolled in only six hours of coursework. However, this request has to be made to the Graduate College by the Graduate Advisor, and approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

GAs are appointed for the Fall-Spring academic year. Summer appointments will be based upon availability of funds; however, there are typically no university funded positions available in the summer. Should summer GA funds become available, GAs employed during the regular academic year will be offered summer GA positions first. If no currently employed GAs are interested in summer employment, then an application will be e-mailed to all graduate students.

At the end of each regular semester, the graduate faculty will meet to assess the performance of each GA for the preceding semester. The graduate faculty can vote to reappoint a GA unconditionally, reappoint conditionally if there are performance problems, or terminate. A

conditional reappointment will be based on performance issues and the GA will be evaluated monthly by the graduate faculty. If a GA is terminated, another GA will be selected. Students are eligible to remain in a GA position for two full academic years, exclusive of summer employment. Each academic year the student must reapply for a GA position. The awarding of a GA position for one year does not automatically entitle the student to a second year's appointment. Also, the level of appointment for an individual student (1/2 vs. 1/4 time) may change from semester to semester.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The general responsibilities described below apply to GAs hired to work with HDFS faculty.

1. GAs will work 20 hours per week on a half-time GA appointment, 10 hours per week on a quarter-time appointment.
2. GAs will be assigned to work primarily with one or two specific faculty member(s).
3. Students may also be assigned tasks from other faculty members on an "as needed" basis.
4. The assigned faculty member's schedule is paramount in determining the GA's schedule.
5. GAs are generally expected to complete their work during regular business hours (Monday – Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.); however, some positions require evening and weekend hours.
6. GA's work schedules are dictated by university policy, not the semester calendar. Therefore, students should contact their faculty supervisor for specific information regarding work schedules.

PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

The qualities described here will constitute the basis for your annual evaluation by Human Development and Family Sciences graduate faculty.

1. Adaptable: Accepts suggestions and constructive suggestions, accepts change, handles simultaneous assignments.
2. Dependable: Industrious, fulfills assigned responsibilities, produces high quality work, in work place at scheduled time.
3. Ethical: Handles confidential information sensitively.
4. Professional: Supports program, good representative of program, tactful, takes advantage of professional opportunities.
5. Communicative: Responds to verbal and written communication, maintains open communication with faculty/students.
6. Cooperative: Flexible in regard to assignments, works well with faculty, other graduate students, and undergraduate students.
7. Uses good judgment: Evaluates situation and makes sound decisions.
8. Takes initiative: Works on own, resourceful in completing assignments, seeks additional work when primary tasks are completed.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Graduate assistants may assist faculty with both teaching and research activities as needed. Responsibilities of GA may include the following:

1. Assist faculty members with teaching. These activities may include:
 - a. Grading student assignments and recording grades.
 - b. Proctoring exams.
 - c. Preparing teaching materials.
 - d. Assisting with teaching classes.
2. Assist faculty members with research. These activities may include:
 - a. Contributing to research proposals.
 - b. Conducting literature searches.
 - c. Writing literature reviews.
 - d. Collecting research data.
 - e. Collating and analyzing data. This includes conducting appropriate statistical tests, interpreting data, and assisting in other analysis procedures.
 - f. Writing results. This includes preparing drafts of research reports (including proofreading) and preparation of manuscripts.

NOTE: The assignment of GA co-authorship will be judged by the faculty based on the relative contributions of the GA.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Assistants are paid in accordance with the following University Pay Plan salary schedule which can be viewed at

<https://www.hr.txstate.edu/compensation/universitypayplan/studentemployees.html>.

Information regarding health benefits is available from Human Resources at 512-245-2557 or at <http://www.hr.txstate.edu/benefits.html>.

Additional information on assistantships may be found on the graduate college website:

<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/funding/assistantships.html>.

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM QUESTIONS

Please note that these are EXAMPLE questions only. THIS IS NOT A STUDY GUIDE. Their purpose is to show you the TYPES of questions you will be asked. They are not meant to indicate that this is the content you should know for that course. Students are responsible for ALL the content covered in the course.

Please note: when responding to comprehensive exam questions, be sure you answer all parts of each question thoroughly, cite references where appropriate, include an introduction and conclusion as well as demonstrate mastery of writing mechanics and APA.

THEORY

Please note: The theory comprehensive exam includes essay questions.

You are asked to present a series of workshops on “Theories of Human Development and Family Sciences.” Because you are very knowledgeable about many of these, you decide to choose one theory to discuss for each workshop. Describe one of the workshops you would conduct and include the following:

- a. Identify and describe the target audience.
- b. State the specific goals of your program.
- c. Create an outline of the proposed workshop, including specific details and information about the theory as well as the content.
- d. Describe a current example of a research study that utilizes/discusses this theory.

RESEARCH

Sample questions not tied to a reading:

- a. Define the term “experimental design.” Illustrate your definition with an imaginary study involving intervention/education for children.
- b. Define the four levels of measurement and provide an example of each.
- c. Define validity. List three different methods used to establish validity and explain when and how they are used.
- d. Define reliability. List three different methods used to establish reliability and explain when and how they are used.
- e. Identify and define at least two types of random sampling and two types of non-random sampling. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Using an empirical article related to Human Development and Family Sciences, respond to the following:

- a. Summarize in one sentence the main research question/hypothesis of the study.
- b. Identify all independent and dependent variables.
- c. Specify the type of research design used in the study.
- d. Identify the type of sampling technique used. Evaluate its strengths and weaknesses.
- e. Evaluate the validity and reliability of each instrument used in the study.
- f. How much confidence do you place in the results of this study? Explain.

Compare and contrast program evaluation designs. What are the advantages and disadvantages of various designs? What program factors are taken into consideration when deciding upon an evaluation design for a program?

When proposing an evaluation design for a program offering services to children and families, what are questions that must be asked to appropriately match the design to the program? How do you begin the process of determining the most appropriate strategy for measuring a program's outcomes and effectiveness?

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Discuss the impact and interaction of nature and nurture on social-emotional development.

Please discuss practices caregivers/parents should follow to foster children's language development. That is, what needs to happen in children's environments in order for typical language development to occur?

CHILD LIFE

(Please note that the comprehensive Child Life questions are objective e.g., multiple choice)

Given a list of possible responses, be able to choose the key fear of hospitalized children under 5 years of age.

Given a list of possible responses be able to choose an example of "soft" language a CLS could use when preparing a thirteen-year-old for surgery.

Given a list of possible responses, be able to match one of the 6 Key Goals around which child life specialists organize their clinical practice with an action that would enable child life specialists to achieve that goal.

APPENDIX E

PRACTICUM OPPORTUNITIES

As previously stated, students who choose the thesis option will have the opportunity to complete one practicum (HDFS 5358), however, they should speak with the graduate advisor because if they are planning to pursue a Ph.D., HDFS thesis students may benefit more from an independent study, another substantive course, or advanced statistical training. Students who choose to pursue the non-thesis option will be advised to complete two practicum courses (HDFS 5358 and HDFS 5359/HDFS 5660) or the child life internship (HDFS 5659) if they are in the child life concentration. It is also highly recommended that students on the child life concentration complete a practicum (HDFS 5358) at a hospital-based child life program as an elective in order to be more competitive when applying for internships.

Students are responsible for applying to and making all arrangements for the practicum experience in conjunction with the practicum faculty supervisor the semester prior to completing practicum. Each practicum student must identify a site supervisor for each practicum experience. For child life students, practicums are typically completed in the summer between their first and second year. Child Life students who are unable to secure a practicum experience in a timely manner (a) are less-competitive applicants for internships, and (b) might have a delayed path to graduation. Thus, every effort should be made to secure this experience.

IDENTIFYING OBJECTIVES

The practicum provides an opportunity to apply material learned in class and to develop professionalism. With that statement in mind, students are encouraged to search for a practicum that will allow the student to:

- Apply classroom knowledge in a real-world setting
- Experience the nature of work in his/her specialized area of training
- Carry out a project useful to an organization or group
- Develop and refine professional skills
- Gain confidence, competence, and satisfaction in completing projects
- Develop insights into personal skills and attributes
- Learn additional skills and gain additional knowledge
- Meet regularly with a qualified field supervisor (must have at least a bachelor's degree) who can both guide the student's experience in a specific area of interest and serve as a role model and/or mentor
- Attend meetings to learn about the work of other relevant organizational/project personnel
- Obtain job reference from professionals who can speak to the student's abilities in an applied context
- Obtain a position with the same or similar organization or group when relevant openings are available upon graduation

PREPARING FOR PRACTICUM

Many factors influence a student's final practicum selection. Although it is helpful to have specific interests already in mind, the practicum also affords a great opportunity to explore areas of potential interest. Some students use this time to learn more about areas they may be considering for a career.

As students are balancing their area of interest, family commitments, geographic and financial constraints, it may help to consider some of the following:

- How geographically mobile am I? Do I want to do a local, state, national, or international search?
- What do I envision myself doing after graduation?
- Do I want to use my practicum as a possible future job placement and, if so, in what job or agency do I envision myself working after graduation?
- What skills would I like to practice in my practicum? What would I like to learn?
- Do I have career goals that include further academic pursuits, such as obtaining a PhD, a certification, or other advanced degree?
- Do I want to do a thesis as an extension of my practicum?

LOCATING A PRACTICUM SITE

There are a number of ways to locate an organization or agency that serves children and families. Here are just a few:

- Ask other graduate students as well as faculty
- Consult the Graduate Handbook for brief listing of potential sites
- Search for organizations that serve children and families at these two sites:
 - <http://www.unitedwayaustin.org/navigation-center/>
- Search for Early Childhood Intervention sites in Texas at this site:
 - <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services/career-opportunities-eci>
- Search for early care and education program at these two sites:
 - https://www.dfps.texas.gov/child_care/
 - https://dfps.texas.gov/Community/Internships/How_to_Apply.asp
 - <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/value-naeyc-accredited-program>
 - When searching for an early care and education program, please verify that it is either NAEYC accredited or a 4 Star Rising Star; this will increase the likelihood of observing developmentally appropriate practices and positive guidance.
- Attend the Job Fairs hosted by Career Services
 - <https://www.careerservices.txstate.edu/events-fairs.html>

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Preparation is the key to a successful interview. Below are a few basic suggestions for preparing for an interview:

- Review the agency or organization's website for the history, mission, services, sources of funding, and other background information
- Develop questions you will ask interviewers based upon this review
- Role-play answering anticipated questions
- Write out responses to anticipated questions
- Be prepared to state what skills, abilities, knowledge, experiences you bring to the practicum
- Dress as you would for a job interview i.e., business or business casual
- Bring updated resume
- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early to the interview

INTERVIEWING FOR A PRACTICUM

Although some interviews are by phone, most are in-person interviews. Regardless of the format, there is usually an opportunity ask questions about a potential practicum site:

- What is the scope of the practicum? What are the practicum activities and responsibilities? (Document on Statement of Intent for HDFS 5358 or on Practicum Proposal for HDFS 5359).
- Is there any special training that needs to be completed prior to the practicum? (Training hours only count toward 150 required hours if occur during the semester.)
- What would a typical day look like for a practicum student?
- How often does the practicum student meet with the field supervisor to chart development and progress? (Preference is for once a week.)
- Will the practicum student work independently or collaboratively?
- What meetings/trainings/seminars and so on are available to the practicum student through the practicum?
- To whom should the practicum student report if the field supervisor is not available?
- Who will complete and sign the mid-term and final evaluation?
- How should hours and work be documented?
- What is the work schedule? (Develop in consultation with field supervisor.)
- How long has the practicum program been in operation?

DURING THE PRACTICUM

Although concerns arise most practicum go smoothly with only a few minor problems. Some problems can be avoided by:

- Dressing and acting the part
- Being a good ambassador for the Human Development and Family Sciences graduate program
- Complying with time commitments (Attendance and promptness are expected.)
- Working toward practicum goals and objectives
- Documenting activities etc. whether the practicum site requires it or not
- Maintaining clear, positive and professional lines of communication
- Communicating with field supervisor at least once a week

- Performing responsibilities to the satisfaction of the field supervisor
- Addressing any problems early in their appearance
- Learning and following the chain of command
- Maintaining professionalism when there are differences of opinion
- Brainstorming solutions to problems with faculty supervisor
- Respecting confidentiality
- Respecting the support staff
- Thanking the people who are helping you on a regular basis

This handout includes information from the Mailman School of Public Health, Muhlenberg College, and Texas State University

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICUM OPPORTUNITIES

These are meant to serve only as examples of possible practicum opportunities. You are encouraged to pursue practicum opportunities related to your career goals.

Campfire: Drawing on a 100-year legacy, Camp Fire is inclusive, providing children and their families with experiences that connect them to the natural world and their communities. Camp Fire Nature Tikes is a new program that introduces toddlers, preschoolers, and their parents to the natural world. The Intern will work directly with the Programs Director to improve and develop new developmentally appropriate activities for the program curriculum, develop a training manual for the staff and volunteer adult Guides who facilitate the activities. There is also an opportunity to assist or lead the Camp Fire Nature Tikes activities. Hours are flexible. Camp Fire's Promise is: "Camp Fire believes that young people want to shape the world. Camp Fire provides young people the opportunity to find their spark, lift their voice, and discover who they are. In Camp Fire it begins now." Contact: Rebecca Benz, Executive Director, rbenz@campfireusabalcones.org

Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc.: The mission of Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. (CACTX) is to restore the lives of abused children by supporting children's advocacy centers (CACs) in partnership with local communities and agencies investigating and prosecuting child abuse. Children's Advocacy Centers™ of Texas, Inc. (CACTX) is the statewide membership association representing all local children's advocacy centers in the Lone Star state. Founded in 1994 with a membership of 13 local centers, today the CACTX membership roster includes 65 developing and established centers in large urban cities as well as in small rural communities. Membership reflects the vast diversity of Texas, all with their own unique approaches to fulfilling our shared mission of protecting and providing for children. CACTX offices are located in the Beth C. Swalm Center in Austin, Texas, adjacent to the CACTX Conference Center where specialized CAC trainings are offered throughout each year. <http://www.cactx.org/>

Children's Hospital of San Antonio: A Child Life Specialist (CLS) specializes in helping children adjust to healthcare settings. The CLS uses strategies appropriate to the child's developmental level and medical needs to assist them in coping with their unique situation within a hospital setting. The CLS also strives to educate the entire family in regard to the child's hospital experience. The CLS practicum requires 150 hours, the internship requires a minimum of 480 hours; both are very competitive. Prior to applying for an internship, the CLS student

needs to have prior experience working in a hospital setting as a student, volunteer or employee. <https://www.christushealth.org/locations/childrens-hospital/child-life-services/practicum>

Homespun Early Child Intervention (ECI): ECI is a statewide program for families with children, birth to three, with disabilities and developmental delays. ECI supports families to help their children reach their potential through developmental services. ECI goes to families and focuses on working with the child and family in their natural environment, such as at home or a child care center. <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services-eci>

Girls Inc.: Girls Incorporated of San Antonio is an affiliate of Girls Inc. National, an organization that inspires girls to be Strong, Smart, and Bold. The program includes curriculum that addresses social issues facing girls from ages 6-18 years. Programs include Girls Inc., Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy, Girls Inc. Project BOLD, Girls Inc. Operation Smart, and Girls Inc. Economic Literacy. Duties include: training on specific programs, implementation, conduct evaluations and written program reports on programs implemented, communication and cooperation with agency partners, staff, and clients, consistency, reliability, punctuality, and attendance. www.girlsincsa.com

Hays-Caldwell Women's Center (HCWC): The purpose of the HCWC is to create an environment where violence and abuse are not tolerated in the communities we serve. The center provides education, violence prevention services, and crisis intervention to victims of family violence, sexual assault and child abuse. In addition, **Roxanne's House** is the child advocacy center of the HCWC. This children's advocacy center is a child-friendly facility where abused children come to heal. Through play therapy, counseling, and support groups, Roxanne's House provides opportunities that allow children to grow to a responsible adulthood, free of threats to their dignity, physical safety and emotional well-being. They are looking for practicum students for Roxanne's House year-round. <http://www.hcwc.org/>

Operation Homefront of Texas: Located in San Antonio, Operation Homefront is a non-profit organization that provides emergency financial and other assistance to the families of service members and wounded warriors. <https://operationhomefront.org>

Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting (PEP) Program: The goal of the PEP program is to reduce the number of students who drop-out of school due to pregnancy and/or parenthood and to recover young parents to the educational system. The program should include: (a) individual counseling, peer counseling, and self-help programs; (b) career counseling and job-readiness training; (c) on-campus child care for the students' children; (d) instruction related to knowledge and skills in child development, parenting, and home and family living; and (e) assistance to students in the program in obtaining available services from government or community service agencies, including prenatal and postnatal health and nutrition. Internships include: working with the children in the child care program, working with the adolescent parents, or administration. <https://www.katyisd.org/Page/4475>

Success by Six: Success By 6 works to make sure every child is ready for kindergarten by improving the complex networks of childcare services, parent education, public and private funding and public policy in the Central Texas community. United Way of Austin invests in the

youngest members of our community to prevent the academic and social issues that arise later on in life. This program is based on a proven formula that considers family supports, quality systems and an engaged community. As this equation suggests, the success and future of our community's children depend on a strong system of adult supports during the earliest years of a child's life. No part of the equation can stand alone – nor can we succeed if one element of the equation is missing. <http://www.unitedwayaustin.org/strategic-programs/success-by-6/>

Texas Association for the Education of Young Children: Texas Association for the Education of Young Children is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Texas AEYC's mission is to provide opportunities for professional growth and to broaden public awareness on early care and education issues affecting the lives of children and families. Texas AEYC is also home to the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® TEXAS Scholarship Project which provides scholarship opportunity for those working in the Early Education industry in Texas. Texas AEYC is operated by one full time Director and one part-time T.E.A.C.H. Counselor. Practicum students choosing Texas AEYC as their practicum site will have the opportunity to work directly with the Program Director on a variety of projects, including, but not limited to: assisting with evaluation of the T.E.A.C.H. Project; grant writing opportunities; conference planning; legislative and public policy work during legislative sessions; assisting T.E.A.C.H. counselor with advising T.E.A.C.H. recipients; and various research and data projects related to T.E.A.C.H. Interested parties should contact Texas AEYC at 800-341-2392 or email at taeyc@texasaeyc.org. For more information visit the homepage www.texasaeyc.org

Texans Care for Children: The Research/Policy Intern is responsible for the research and production of articles, fact sheets, and action alerts on policy topics related to child well-being in at least two of the following areas: child poverty and family economic security, children's mental health, early care and education, child abuse and neglect, or juvenile justice. <http://www.texanscareforchildren.org/>

Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services: This state agency is comprised of Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Child Care Licensing, and Adoption and Foster Care. There are both direct service and administrative internships available. The CPS contact for the Family and Child Studies Graduate program is Rolanda Whitney. She asks that the student call her first before filling out any application paperwork so that verify the availability of a placement. Her number is 254/750-9308.

YMCA After School Program: The YMCA of Austin offers afterschool care for children in grades K - 5 at fifteen licensed sites in three Austin area school districts. The Afterschool Care Program provides on-site care for your child, beginning when school is dismissed and continuing until 6:30 p.m. Participating children learn valuable social and scholastic skills in a safe, fun, and supervised environment. <http://www.austinyymca.org/programs/afterschool-care> McKenzie Crowell is FCS contact person at YMCA; please call her for information about a practicum: 512/236-9622 ext. 333.

EXAMPLES OF OTHER PRACTICUM SITES

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Austin Child Care Group, Austin
Circle C Child Development Center, Austin
Child Development Center of Texas State University, San Marcos
GENaustin, Austin
Helping Hand Home for Children, Austin
John Knox Ranch, Fischer Texas
Strong Start, Austin
Washington Head Start Center, San Marcos Wonders and Worries, Austin

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICUM PROJECTS

Austin Community College: Developed and evaluated a mentoring program for incoming CDA students.

Center for Child Protection in Austin: Developed and implemented an activity curriculum for the Sibling Care Group. The activities were prosocial and therapeutic; there were activities that promoted self-esteem and self-confidence as well as self-responsibility. The children were in care while a sibling was interviewed by the CCP team.

Child Protective Services: Developed and implemented a curriculum for abusive parents.

Children's Hospital of San Antonio: Designed a benchmark time study for the Child Life department.

Hays-Caldwell Women's Center: Developed a bullying curriculum for elementary school students, parents, and school administrators.

Make-A-Wish Foundation: Compiled extensive training manual for use as a teaching tool for new staff members, interns, and wish granters. Also compiled a training manual for new wish-granting staff.

Operation Homefront of Texas: Created and implemented the Adopt-a-Family program whereby 200 military families in need were paired with sponsors who provided gifts and a holiday meal for the family.

Roxanne's House: Developed a program for caregivers whose child had been sexually abused.

Texas Early Care and Education Career Development System: Conducted a research project to examine the level of education and training child care workers in Travis County received. Subsequently developed and implemented a program to provide additional training.

San Antonio Bright Horizons Family Solutions Child Care Centers: Created and implemented a pilot Child Development Associates (CDA) Credential Program for the Bright Horizons Family Solutions early childhood teachers who were seeking to further their education and training.

Success by Six: Collected and compiled indicators of child well being on the city, state, and national levels. Based upon this information, created the annual child well being report card for the city of Austin.

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Following is a variety of career options available to HDFS graduates. Although a graduate degree might not be required to enter a particular job field, it is generally considered an advantage in career advancement and particularly in administrative positions.

1. Medical Focus. Child Life Specialists plan activities and programs and act as advocates for children hospitalized with a short-term, long-term, or terminal illness.
2. Early Childhood Care and Education Programs. Administrative or teaching positions in early care and education programs in the private or public sectors (e.g., university lab schools, Head Start, corporate organizations, medical centers, etc.).
3. Early Childhood Intervention. Programs focused on providing home-based care to high-risk infants and toddlers, e.g., Any Baby Can, Easter Seals, or Home Spun.
4. Social/Community Services. Varied positions, including program administration, related to educational and/or intervention programs (e.g., children's programs affiliated with homeless shelters, Child Protective Services, the Texas Workforce Commission, etc.).
5. Educational Programs in Higher Education. Includes administration of high school programs (e.g., School-Age Parenting program), teaching in a Community College setting, or Cooperative Extension Services.
6. Military Early Childhood Care and Education Programs. Civilian positions with both international and U.S. based programs; includes opportunities for teaching, social service, and administration of programs.
7. International Programs. Various positions in education, administration, or social services programs
8. Child Advocacy. Work as an advocate for children and families at the state or National level with organizations such as the Children's Defense Fund.

EXAMPLES OF FORMER STUDENTS' EMPLOYMENT

- Administrator of early childhood education program with a U.S. military base in Europe
- Bill Analyst for the Texas Senate
- Case Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, Montana
- Child life specialists in various children's hospitals or in community-based ECI programs
- Executive Director for Hope of South Texas (sexual assault/children's advocacy center)
- Extension Agent with the Texas Cooperative Extension Service
- Faculty Member at local community colleges
- Program Evaluator for Shore Research
- Grant Specialist for Safe Communities and Schools
- Director, Lead Teacher or Curriculum Coordinator, ECCE programs
- Project & Research Coordinator, Texas Department of State Health Services

APPENDIX G

INTERNATIONAL STUDY OPPORTUNITY

STUDY ABROAD IN STOCKHOLM SWEDEN

Have you ever thought about how wonderful it would be to study abroad and have the opportunity to travel and experience other cultures at the same time? Well, now you can do this right here at Texas State with your Human Development and Family Sciences major. You have the opportunity to participate in an exchange program between Texas State University and The Stockholm Institute of Education during the spring semester! This is an international program in which students from all over the world participate. So, not only are you taking courses in another country and experiencing the Swedish and western European cultures, you may also meet students from Asia, Africa, or Europe. Because of the international nature of the program, the courses are taught in English!

Now, for some of the important fundamentals: The program runs through the first week in June (late spring and summer in Stockholm are wonderful) and you will earn nine credit hours. The cost, while it may be a bit more than on campus here, is quite comparable to local costs. Students who have good grades and can demonstrate financial need are eligible to receive a generous scholarship. Financial aid packages can be used for this experience as well. Contact the graduate advisor for more information.

PROCEDURAL STEPS FOR COMPLETING THE STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY/TX STATE SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES STUDENT EXCHANGE

The interested student:

1. Decides to pursue the opportunity to study at Stockholm University.
2. Discusses plan of study and appropriate courses to pursue as part of study abroad with academic advisors.

For graduate students, only six graduate hours can be transferred from other institutions to TX State degree programs for credit. Graduate advisors can, however, petition the Graduate College to allow nine hours to be transferred.

Suggested Courses:

*HDFS 5358 Practicum I or HDFS 5359 Practicum II;
HDFS 5357 Comparative Studies in Child Development; and
HDFS 5355 Advanced Independent Study or HDFS 5352: Issues in HDFS*

3. Applies to TX State Study Abroad Office according to published deadlines.
4. Begins preparations that will allow her/him to apply to Stockholm University following TX State application approval.

5. Applies to Stockholm University.

This is an involved step that includes the sequential steps of applying to the Child and Youth Studies Program at SU and applying for a study visa, both of which have inherent approval timelines.

6. Registers for placeholder courses at TX state for which credits from Stockholm University will be substituted (these courses are registered under ISEP status).

Currently, all students pay for 12 hours of undergraduate coursework. The Study Abroad Office will explore implementing an option for graduate students to pay for nine hours of graduate coursework.

7. Completes coursework in Sweden in June.

At this point:

8. **Student** requests that **official** SU transcript be sent to TX State university.

An official transcript is sent by SU to the Study Abroad Office, from which it is also distributed to the graduate college and/or the undergraduate admissions office.

9. Student's TX State transcript reflects academic work completed in Stockholm, Sweden.

Note: Usual procedures are followed by TX State faculty for submitting grades to the Registrar's Office for TX State internship or practicum coursework.

APPENDIX H

CHILD LIFE CONCENTRATION VOLUNTEER, PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP POSITIONS

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer hours, a minimum of 150, at a child life hospital-based program are strongly encouraged prior to applying for a practicum (150 hours) or the internship (480-600 hours). It is extremely important to have a consistent track record of working with or volunteering with hospitalized children as well as working/volunteering with typically developing children prior to applying for an internship. Internships and practicums are highly competitive with some applicants having well over 300 hours of volunteer work with hospitalized and/or special needs children. This track record would be even more important for individuals with a background outside of child and family development or similar fields.

Students are encouraged to begin volunteering during their first year in the HDFS graduate program. Some hospitals require a 6-month to one-year commitment from volunteers. Additionally, students may be required to volunteer in other areas of the hospital before volunteering in the child life department. Students are encouraged to accumulate at least 50 volunteer hours prior to applying for practicums.

QUALITIES AND SKILLS HOSPITALS LOOK FOR IN APPLICANTS

Qualities and behaviors of a strong practicum or internship student

Professionalism; commitment; responsible; passion for hospital environment/work; desire to grow and develop; confidence, typed applications; does not copy and paste from CLS site; won't make the experiences about them or their own hospital experience; good fit to the department or organization. *The list of aforementioned qualities and behaviors was brainstormed by child life practicum and internship coordinators.*

Skills and experiences of a strong practicum or internship student:

Self-care skills; have worked with well and hospitalized children; have volunteered with a child life hospital program or group; able to apply education and theory to practice; able to identify what child life-pertinent knowledge and skills were gained in previous work or volunteer settings; good understanding of CL profession; specific child development course work, i.e., infant, adolescent; knowledge about stressors in the hospital. *The list of aforementioned skills and experiences was brainstormed by child life practicum and internship coordinators.*

TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR PRACTICUMS/INTERNSHIPS (Compiled by former child life students and Think Tank Participants)

Choosing a Child Life Practicum

The following are skills and competencies which are important to obtain in a practicum experience:

- Develop and enhance rapport building skills
- Observe and discuss importance of all types of play in the hospital (i.e., medical play, expressive and therapeutic play, normalization)
- Implement group and individual playroom and bedside activities (i.e., therapeutic play and normalization activities)
- Complete informal developmental assessments of patients and apply developmental theories to children in health care settings
- Observe (only) procedural preparation and support
- Observe CLS role on unit (e.g., attending rounds, gathering census, prioritizing patients)
- Role play introduction of services

It is the students' responsibility to learn for themselves how each program accomplishes these educational outcomes.

Preparing Applications

- Fill out the common internship application
- Get as much healthcare volunteer/work experience as possible (especially in a child life department)
- Use the Association of Child Life Professionals website (<http://www.childlife.org/>) to find opportunities; become a member of the ACLP
- Ask for recommendation letters early; ask for letters from a diverse group e.g., a professor, a Child Life or work supervisor, and advisor
- Check application requirements early on as some hospitals require different items
- Document volunteer and practicum hours (at the end of an experience be sure to ask for signed copies of an official record of hours written on letterhead)
- Volunteer/work with both well and hospitalized children/children with special needs; accumulate as least 150 hours of work with children of various ages (infants, preschoolers, tweens, and teens) and diverse backgrounds
- Order updated transcripts as early as you can (many hospitals require official copies)
- Have an up-to-date resume prepared
- Write one essay and then tailor it to fit each application.
- Choose out-of-town practicum/internship sites located close to family or friends so can have free room and board
- Texas State University can enter into a student affiliation agreement with many hospitals; however, there are exceptions. For example, Texas State can't enter into an agreement with Children's Hospital of Colorado located in Aurora, Colorado because the hospital requires students to be covered by worker's compensation. Texas State does not provide worker's compensation for students. If you have any questions about whether Texas State can enter into a contract with a hospital, please check with the graduate advisor.

- Study early for comprehensive exams because there is overlap between comprehensive exams, preparing and sending out applications and being interviewed for internships
- Request an Eligibility Assessment by the ACLP early as some hospitals require it in conjunction with the application for the internship

<https://www.childlife.org/certification/become-certified/eligibility-assessment>

Note: As an ACLP-endorsed academic program, students meet ACLP coursework requirements through the approved curriculum and will submit the official endorsement letter provided by the program when applying for certification.

- Practicums and internships are very competitive so send out multiple applications

Preparing for Interview

- Prepare for practicum/internship by answering sample interview questions <https://www.childlife.org/docs/default-source/certification/internships/sample-interview-questions-for-internship-students.pdf>. Generally, interviewers ask child development-related questions of practicum applicants and situational and behavioral questions (e.g., What would you do if...) of internship applicants
- Anticipate interview format may vary e.g., telephone interviews, interviews via skype, in-person interviews with panel of interviewers. Most practicum interviews are done in person
- Phone interviews may go long so schedule plenty of time between interviews
- Create note cards for information you plan to provide during a phone interview
- Have an anecdote, pertinent to child life, prepared about each age group you have volunteered/worked with
- Prepare to ask questions of interviewers e.g., How will I be supervised? Challenges previous interns have had?
- Keep your schedule with you at all times so you can schedule meetings with hospitals

After Interviews

- Timelines for letting students know if they have practicum/internship varies among hospitals
- Don't discount being chosen as an alternate; means they want to work with you
- Some hospitals call at last minute
- Talk over choices with family and friends if have multiple options
- Try again if you are not awarded an internship. Ask interviewers how you could strengthen your application and interview. Take their advice!

POTENTIAL CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM AND/OR INTERNSHIP SITES

Please note: The information was accurate when the list was composed. **Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of this information.** Students may find information regarding practicum and accredited internship sites on the [Association of Child Life Professionals](#) and [Texas Association of Child Life Professionals](#).

Austin

Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas

4900 Mueller Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78723

Wonders & Worries

9101 Burnet Rd #107
Austin, TX 78758

Corpus Christi

Driscoll Children's Hospital

3533 S. Alameda Street
Corpus Christi, Texas 78411

Dallas

Children's Medical Center Dallas

1935 Motor Street,
Dallas, TX 75235

Our Children's House at Baylor

3301 Swiss Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75204

Texas Scottish Rite Children's Hospital

2222 Welborn Street
Dallas, TX 75219

Fort Worth

Cook Children's Medical Center

801 7th Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76104

Houston**Texas Children's Hospital**

6621 Fannin
Houston, Texas 77030

MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital

1515 Holcombe Boulevard
Houston, TX

Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital

6411 Fannin St.
Houston, TX 77030

San Antonio**Children's Hospital of San Antonio**

333 N. Santa Rosa Street
San Antonio, TX 78207

Children's Health/University Health Systems University Hospital

4502 Medical Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78229

Methodist Children's Hospital

7700 Floyd Curl Dr. Entrance
San Antonio, TX 78229

Temple**McLane Children's Scott and White**

1901 Southwest H K Dodgen Loop
Temple, TX 76502

CHILD LIFE STUDENT AFFILIATION AGREEMENTS

A hospital enters into a student affiliation agreement with Texas State University establishing a contractual agreement between the two entities. Every effort will be made for Texas State to enter into an affiliation agreement with a hospital for a student to complete either a practicum or internship experience, however, this affiliation agreement is not guaranteed. As soon as students are offered a practicum or internship, they should reach out to the graduate advisor to begin the process of Texas State establishing an affiliation agreement with the hospital.

Hospitals require that Texas State have on file copies of information pertinent to working in a hospital environment with vulnerable children for each internship applicant. Therefore, once your internship applications are submitted, please do the following:

- Have on file a copy of your up-to-date immunization records. Make sure your immunization records are up to date. Most hospitals require students to be up to date on the following immunizations: COVID-19, Hepatitis B, MMR, Meningitis, and Tetanus. Hospitals also require that you have had a recent, negative TB skin test (ppd). The Student Health Center <http://www.healthcenter.txstate.edu/> provides immunizations and TB skin tests.
- Have on file a statement from a physician that you have had a recent physical examination and are in good health and free of any infectious diseases. The Student Health Center can provide you with such a statement. Please check with your internship or practicum site as all hospitals do not require this.
- Have on file results of drug screening test. Some hospitals require a blood test and some require a urine test.
- Have on file a certificate for having completed Infant/Child CPR training (usually within the past two years) American Red Cross CPR and First Aid Training is available at Texas State <https://www.campusrecreation.txst.edu/things-to-do/trainings-certifications.html>. If requested, Child CPR/AED classes can be arranged for groups of child life students.
- Have proof of health insurance on file.
- Obtain copy of professional liability insurance certificate from graduate advisor. The School of HDFS provides professional liability insurance at no cost to child life practicum or internship students. However, please verify that the amount of coverage provided by the School coincides with the amount of coverage required in the contract for child life practicums or internships.
- Some hospitals require that students complete blood-borne pathogen and TB prevention training prior to starting the internship, and others provide this training during the orientation. Please verify your internship sites preference. Blood-borne pathogen training is available on TRACS. Please let the graduate advisor know when you are ready to take the course and your name will be added to the TRACS site.
- Have on file the results of a criminal history background check.
 - How much does it cost for a background check?
 - There is a fee of \$2 per person to DFPS for the background check. In addition to that fee, a fingerprint background check costs

\$44.20 that must be paid in person when an individual submits his or her fingerprints for the check.

- Where can I go for a background check?
 - Austin - Westlake Austin, TX. (1515 S. Capital Of Texas Highway, Ste 114) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - Austin - Northeast Austin, TX. (7901 Cameron Rd, Building 2, Suite 215) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - Round Rock, TX. (555 Round Rock West Drive, Building E, Suite 224) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - Schertz, TX. (17323 I-35, Ste 107) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - San Antonio - Tesoro Drive San Antonio, TX. (8750 Tesoro Drive Rm# 119) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - San Antonio - Northwest San Antonio, TX. (6800 Park Ten Blvd, Ste 108, North Bldg) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - San Antonio - East San Antonio, TX. (1314 Hines Avenue) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]
 - San Antonio San Antonio, TX. (11314 Sir Winston) [[Map \(opens new browser\)](#)]

Please provide the graduate advisor a copy of all the aforementioned documents during the first week of the internship.

It is possible that a hospital will have additional requirements for child life interns. The graduate advisor will let you know of any additional requirements once s/he has a copy of the affiliation agreement.

As soon as you are accepted into a practicum or internship, please provide the graduate advisor with the name and contact information of a contact person at the internship site. The graduate advisor needs to contact the hospital quickly in order to get started on the student affiliation agreement between the hospital and Texas State University. **The agreement must be signed before the hospital will let you begin your internship.** It takes between 1 and 3 months to negotiate the agreement and gather all the appropriate permissions and signatures, so help the graduate advisor help you by providing the aforementioned information in a timely manner.

Child Life Practicum and Internship Information

Please complete the online Qualtrics survey provided to you by the graduate advisor.

The following information may be requested in the Qualtrics survey.

<u>Your Name</u>	
<u>The Email Address Where You Can Be Reached During Your Internship</u>	
<u>The Phone Number(s) Where You Can Be Reached During Your Internship</u>	
<u>Your Site Supervisor's Name</u>	
<u>His/Her Email Address</u>	
<u>His/Her Phone Number</u>	
<u>The Name of the Hospital</u>	
<u>The Mailing Address of the Hospital</u>	
<u>Start and End Date of Your Internship</u>	

Any Additional Information You Feel I Should Know:

APPENDIX I

GRADUATION AND HOODING CEREMONY

GRADUATION

Candidates for graduation are responsible for registering with the graduate college by the deadline posted on the Graduate College website:

<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/deadlines.html>

The deadline usually takes place during the first part of the semester so be sure and check the graduate college website early during the semester you plan to graduate. Candidates for graduation should refer to the Graduate College website throughout the semester because information pertinent to graduation will be posted on a regular basis.

Candidates are also responsible for verifying the accuracy of their degree audit available via CatsWeb that is accessible from the Texas State University home page. Candidates should inform the graduate advisor of any inaccuracies on the course audit. (The graduate advisor will also be checking for inaccuracies.) If one is found, the graduate advisor will petition the Graduate College to correct the inaccuracy. Please check your degree audit early during the semester you plan to graduate as the Graduate College processes hundreds of petitions. However, first priority is given to Candidates for Graduation.

HOODING CEREMONY

Candidates for graduation (i.e., all course work completed and all comprehensive exams passed) are invited to participate in the Hooding Ceremony of the College of Applied Arts which usually takes place the Thursday evening before graduation. Candidates for a master's degree are formally acknowledged for their accomplishments. Candidates will receive an email from the College of Applied Arts requesting required information (e.g., 50-word synopsis) to be provided by a stated deadline. Candidates from the HDFS program usually include mention of their practicum or internship site, and the project they completed.

Candidates are also encouraged to mention any honors they received, including a graduate assistantship or research fellowship. Presentations at conferences and authorship of an article should also be included in the synopsis. Students who opt for the thesis option should include the title of their thesis. The three photos can be of the Candidate "in action" at his/her practicum or internship site.

Candidates are encouraged to invite family and friends to the hooding ceremony which usually takes 60 to 90 minutes, depending upon the number of candidates for graduation in the College of Applied Arts. A photographer takes photos during and after the ceremony; these photos are sent to the candidates within about a month. Family and friends are also welcome to take photos. A brief reception follows the hooding ceremony.

The robe, hat, and hood can be rented on-line from the University Bookstore

<https://www.bkstr.com/texasstatestore/home>

APPENDIX J

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS

★ [Graduate Catalog](#)

The graduate catalog is available online, and provides general information about the graduate college, as well as specific department and major course requirements and descriptions.

★ [Financial Aid and Scholarships](#)

J. C. Kellam, Suite 240

The financial aid office provides information on what types of aid and scholarships are available, how to apply, receive, and maintain eligibility, and offers counseling on how to manage and repay aid. Forms and information can be found on the financial aid website as well.

★ [Housing and Residential Life](#)

J.C. Kellam, Suite 320/380

The housing and residential life department offers information and assistance with on-campus housing options and rates, contracts, and change requests. While on-campus housing is limited for graduate students, the housing and residential life staff can show students what options are available.

★ [Off-Campus \(Commuter\) Student Services](#)

LBJ Student Center 4 - 11.1

For those students who plan to commute to campus, the off-campus student services office offers assistance finding and securing off-campus housing, understanding leases and lease obligations, figuring out parking and transportation options, and understanding available commuter meal plans. Much of this information can also be found on the website.

★ [ID Services](#)

LBJ Student Center, Room 2 - 9.1

Students can get a student ID made or replace a lost or stolen card in the ID Services office. Online, students can access ManageMyID, which they can then use to track and access Bobcat Buck\$, Dining Dollars, and meal plan accounts, deposit funds or have others deposit funds in real time and report a lost or stolen card.

★ **Parking Services**

Matthews Street Garage

The parking services office provides several types of parking permits for purchase, depending on students' needs, and is where parking tickets can be paid or appealed. The parking services website also offers parking maps, information about carpooling and garages, and has online forms for ordering permits and paying or appealing parking tickets.

★ **Bobcat Shuttle**

228 Commons Hall

All bobcat shuttles are free for students. Services are available from perimeter parking on and near campus and from densely student-populated areas of San Marcos. The shuttles run all class days and during finals, and can be tracked in real time with a mobile app. The website lists routes and stops, and has maps of the routes available as well.

★ **The Bike Cave**

Colorado building, Room 100

For those using bicycles for transportation on campus, the Bike Cave offers free tech assistance with bicycle self-repair, low-cost parts and low-cost used bikes.

★ **University Police**

Nueces building

The Texas State University Police provide law enforcement and crime prevention, safety and self-defense training, campus safety escort services, locksmith and electronic door access services, victim services, and information on lost and found property. The website includes safety training videos, safety apps, crime and fire logs, and a sex offenders database.

★ **Registrar**

J.C. Kellam, Room 111

The registrar assists with registration for classes, holds, final grades and transcripts, diplomas and certificates, address and personal information changes, verification of enrollment, and dropping a class or withdrawal from classes. Course catalogs, academic calendars, commencement information, schedules of classes, and a list of walking times between classroom buildings are all available on the website.

★ **Student Business Services**

J.C. Kellam, Room 188

Student Business Services assists with tuition payments, payment plans, short-term and emergency loans, repayment of loans, and direct deposit sign-up. Many of these tasks can also be done online.

★ **International Office**

Thornton International House, Second floor

The international office is responsible for advising, planning for, and assisting International students.

★ **Bookstore**

LBJ Student Center, 2nd floor

At the University Bookstore, students can buy or rent textbooks, buy or rent graduation regalia, and purchase Texas State University and Texas State Athletics merchandise. Office, medical, engineering, art and technology supplies are also available for purchase. The bookstore has online shopping options as well.

★ **Library Services**

Alkek Library

In addition to normal library services, the Alkek library offers graduate students research consultations, extended borrowing, reserved study rooms, and thesis/dissertation binding. Online services include Ask a Librarian live chatting, a Graduate Article Delivery Service, an online catalog, research databases, tutorials, and reference management software.

★ **Student Learning Assistance Center**

Alkek Library, 4th floor

The SLAC offers walk-in tutoring, individual, group, and online tutoring, supplemental instruction, online resources, writing assistance, learning and study skills workshops, and learning specialist consultations, all free of charge. The website also includes an abundance of resources, including an online writing lab, subject-specific help, and information on study skills and standardized tests.

★ **The Writing Center**

Ground floor of Academic Services Building – North

The writing center offers in-person or webcam tutoring, thesis, dissertation, and graduate writing assistance, and writing workshops and mini-courses, including a multitude of online resources.

★ **Computer Labs**

Family and Consumer Sciences Building, Room 179, Multiple other locations on campus

There are many computer labs across campus that offer free use of computers and software to students for training, Internet research, and general use. Students are also given a certain amount of free printing in these labs per semester. Locations and hours can be found on the website.

★ **Information Technology Assistance Center**

Math and Computer Science Building, Room 262

The ITAC offers assistance with telephone, computing, and Internet access (including mobile and wireless access), technical support and training, free or discounted software, hardware discounts and repair services to all students.

★ **Print and Mail Services/ Copy Cats**

1727 Old RR 12 / Nueces building

Two locations provide low-cost copying, faxing, finishing, packaging, mailing, shipping, and notary services, office supplies, and digital poster and banner printing.

★ **Career Services**

LBJ Student Center, 5th floor

The career center offers career counseling, planning, and exploration services, information on campus jobs, and career events and fairs. Online resources include a career search, advice on searching, applying, and interviewing for jobs, salary information, and online publications of handouts and Career Trends magazine.

★ **Counseling Center**

LBJ Student Center, Suite 5 - 4.1

The counseling center offers free and confidential mental health screenings, individual and group counseling services for a variety of issues, and referrals. The counseling center is also available for crisis response services following traumatic events. The website includes numerous self-help resources and mobile applications, as well as emergency and suicide prevention information.

★ **Health Services**

Student Health Center

The Student Health Center provides low-cost primary, women's, urgent care and psychiatric healthcare services, medical, laboratory, digital radiography and pharmacy services, health counseling and education services, a smoking cessation program, STI and anonymous HIV

testing, and information on student health insurance. Patients can make and cancel appointments, view lab results, and send and receive messages to and from their healthcare provider online. A 24-hour Ask-a-Nurse advice line is also available to all students free of charge. There is also self-help and health information available on the website.

★ [Campus Recreation](#)

Student Recreation Center, 2nd floor

Many recreation opportunities are available, including fitness classes, wellness classes, personal training, intramural sports, and outdoor recreation activities. The student recreation center features eight basketball/volleyball courts, four multipurpose studios, a weight room, six racquetball courts, a cardio area, an indoor track, a rock-climbing wall, a natatorium, and equipment check out services.

★ [Dean of Students Office](#)

LBJ Student Center, Suite 5 - 9.1

The Dean of Students Office provides alcohol and drug compliance services, student government information, legal services for students, ombuds services, student emergency services, and notary services. Online resources include a student handbook, online tobacco policy violation reporting, and online forms.

★ [Disability Services](#)

LBJ Student Center, Suite 5 - 5.1

Disability services offer academic testing accommodations, assistive technology, counseling, referrals, and liaison and advocacy services for students with disabilities (including temporary disabilities). Information regarding these services can also be found online.

★ [Office of Veteran's Affairs](#)

J.C. Kellam, Room 111

The Office of Veteran's Affairs offers assistance to veterans regarding educational benefits, enrollments, degree plans and academic progress. Some information can be found online.

★ [Student Organization Development and Administration](#)

LBJ Student Center, Fourth floor

The Student Organizations Council provides information on starting, joining, and maintaining a student organization. The website includes online resources, event updates, and a student organization search.

★ **KTSW 89.9**

Old Main building, Room 106

KTSW is the official radio station of Texas State University, and offers specialty shows, news programs, syndicated shows, talk shows, and is the official station for Bobcat Athletics and Rattler Football broadcasts. The station can also be streamed online, and the website includes programming information and event updates.

★ **The University Star**

Trinity Building

The University Star is the independent student newspaper of Texas State University, and includes news, opinions, trends, and sports. The website also offers videos, podcasts, and blogs.