

GRADUATE HANDBOOK

***FAMILY AND CHILD STUDIES MASTER OF SCIENCE
DEGREE***

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY-SAN MARCOS
2004-2005**

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The purpose of this document is to give you information that is more specific to the Family and Child Studies master's degree program than the university graduate catalog can give you. It should be viewed as a supplement to the university graduate catalog, which gives you more information regarding the requirements for all SWT graduate students. It should be noted that this is a departmental document, and that all the policies of the Graduate College and Texas State must also be followed.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Master of Science (M.S.) degree with a major in Family and Child Studies (FCS) will provide graduate level study to those who currently work, or desire to work, in settings dealing directly with the needs of families and children. The M.S. in Family and Child Studies will provide advanced educational experiences in the areas of research methodology, theory related to families and children, current issues impacting families and children, and family and child program administration and evaluation.

A unique feature of the FCS graduate curriculum is the applied emphasis of the curriculum. Each student will complete at least one practicum course. Those who choose the non-thesis option will complete two practicum courses. Those who choose the thesis option will complete one practicum and at least six credit hours of thesis. The practicum coursework provides students the opportunity to participate in the functioning of a family and child organization. Students will be exposed to the realities of dealing with the opportunities/obstacles facing families and children, and programs that assist them.

Classes in the FCS program are offered in the evenings to make them accessible to individuals who are currently employed. One course, Research Methods in Family and Child Studies, has been offered via the internet. More courses will be offered via a distance-learning format in the future.

DEGREE INFORMATION

The FCS master's degree requires 36 hours of coursework. Eighteen of these hours constitute the core course requirements. These courses are as follows:

FCD 5350	Research Design and Methodology in Family and Child Studies
FCD 5351	Advanced Theory in Family and Child Studies
FCD 5352	Seminar: Issues in Family and Child Studies
FCD 5353	Program Evaluation in Family and Child Studies
FCD 5356	Advanced Program Administration
FCD 5302B	Advanced Child Development

Nine-12 hours will be taken as elective coursework, which should be selected to complement your career interests. The degree offers a thesis/nonthesis option and all students must enroll for at least three hours of practicum. Those who choose to pursue the nonthesis option will take six hours of practicum coursework. All students are required to take a written comprehensive exam as a condition of graduation. The comprehensive exam will cover the core courses. Students who pursue the thesis option will also be tested over the thesis work as a part of the comprehensive exam. Students whose undergraduate major is unrelated to Family and Child Studies are required to take two undergraduate leveling classes, FCD 2353 Principles of Guidance, and FCD 3355 Marriage and Family. We strongly suggest that you complete the leveling classes by the end of the first semester of enrollment as a degree-seeking student.

THESIS OPTION

If you choose the thesis option, you must take 3 hours of statistics prior to undertaking the thesis project. This is in addition to the core research methods course. It is recommended that you take a statistics course offered in the social sciences. Students who pursue the thesis option will be required to complete 9 hours of elective coursework in addition to the core requirements.

SWT THESIS REQUIREMENTS

If you elect to follow the thesis option for your degree, you will choose a thesis advisor and a thesis committee in cooperation with the graduate advisor. The thesis must demonstrate your capability for research and independent thought. It is recommended that students in our program use the APA guidelines because this is the required writing style for most professional journals in our field.

THESIS PROPOSAL

Students are responsible for developing a thesis proposal, with the guidance of the thesis advisor, which will be presented to the thesis committee for approval. Students must submit an official “proposed research” form in triplicate to the thesis committee. Blank copies of the thesis proposal form may be obtained from the Graduate College office or on the Web at http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/thesishandbook/table_appendix.html. After obtaining your committee members’ signatures and your Department Chair’s signature, you must submit three copies to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval before you proceed with research on your thesis. It is recommended this be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College by the end of your enrollment in 5399A. Before collecting any data for your thesis, you must complete the Human Subjects training that is offered through the Office of Sponsored Programs. This requirement applies to all students who will collect human subjects data. The web site for accessing the training is <http://www.txstate.edu/osp/Policies/hsp>.

THESIS ENROLLMENT AND CREDIT

Enrollment for the thesis will be recorded as course number 5399A for your initial thesis enrollment and 5399B for your subsequent thesis enrollments in the field in which the subject matter of the thesis falls. If you do not complete the thesis during the summer or in a regular semester in which you are enrolled for thesis, then you will receive a grade of “PR,” in progress. Students can change from a thesis to a nonthesis option through the completion of appropriate paperwork. This should be done in consultation with the graduate advisor. However, if you change from a thesis to a nonthesis option, any thesis hours you have completed will not count toward your degree.

THESIS DEADLINES & APPROVAL PROCESS

The completed thesis must be submitted to the chair of your thesis committee no later than 36 days before the date of commencement at which the degree will be conferred.

One (1) copy of the thesis in final form and two (2) signature pages (on the same bond paper as required for the thesis to be bound in the Alkek Library) bearing original signatures of the committee members must be submitted to the Graduate College office no later than 18 days before the date of commencement at which the degree will be conferred. After the Graduate Dean approves the thesis the process is as follows:

1. Pick up the thesis, signature pages, and a thesis card from the Graduate College office.
2. Take two (2) copies of the thesis, two (2) signature pages, and the thesis card to the circulation desk in the Alkek Library. Pay the binding fee and have the thesis card stamped. The Alkek Library will bind additional copies for a fee.
3. Return the thesis card to the Graduate College office no later than noon on the Monday preceding graduation.

REMEMBER, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET. Further information can be obtained from the Graduate Catalog and Graduate College and is available in the appendix of this document.

NON-THESIS OPTION

Students who choose to pursue the non-thesis option will complete two practicum courses, FCS 5858 and FCS 5859. Students who pursue the non-thesis option will be required to take 12 hours of electives in addition to the core courses. The practicum experience should be selected in relation to career interests. A good approach is to coordinate these two courses so that your practicum results in a significant accomplishment for you and the program(s) where you have participated. Students are responsible for making arrangements for the practicum experience. However, faculty and peers can give you feedback regarding possible organizations and individuals to approach. A packet is available to present to the site supervisor for the practicum.

A summary report will be written for both practicum courses. The summary report for FCS 5859, the culminating practicum experience, should be about 15 pages in length and written according to APA guidelines. This report, which will be *formally presented* to the graduate faculty two weeks before the end of the semester, will describe the project in detail and include a literature review related to the chosen project. The report will also include the purpose, goals, challenges, accomplishments and significant outcomes of the practicum. It is the student's responsibility to schedule this oral presentation with all appropriate faculty.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

A limited number of assistantships are available each semester. To be eligible for an assistantship, the student must be enrolled in nine credit hours (this can include undergraduate leveling coursework) and be in good standing with the university. Assistantships may 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 for further information regarding benefits. Assistantships may be classified as either a graduate assistantship or a teaching assistantship. A teaching assistant (TA) is assigned to teach an undergraduate class for which s/he is wholly responsible. These are awarded on an 'as needed' basis in the Family & Consumer Sciences department. The assistantship more often awarded is the graduate assistantship (GA). The student awarded this type of assistantship is assigned to work with a departmental faculty member. The type of work that will be expected includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Assisting with faculty research
- Assisting faculty with class preparation
- Grading papers
- Substitute teaching a class 'as needed'

A sample position description, application procedure, and the application form are included in the appendix under the heading, Graduate Assistantships. Students

desiring a GA position must apply each year. This includes students who've held a GA position the previous year. Applications for the assistantship must be turned in by June 15. Applicants will be notified July 15 of the decisions of the graduate faculty in awarding the assistantships. Graduate assistants are expected to work until the end of finals each semester.

All students enrolled in the FCS graduate program who meet eligibility requirements can apply for a position as a Graduate Assistant (GA). Graduate Assistants are graduate level students who work with faculty or assist faculty in various types of activities related to teaching and/or research. In June of each year, Graduate Assistant (GA) applications will be mailed to students who have expressed an interest in the positions. These students will be required to complete the application and return it to the graduate program coordinator by June 15. This includes students who have held a GA position in the previous academic year. Notification of awards will be given to applicants by July 15. Graduate assistant positions are funded for the fall and spring semesters.

Graduate Assistants can be appointed for one-quarter time (10 hours per week) or one-half time (20 hours per week). To be eligible to serve as a GA, the student must be enrolled in a minimum of 9 hours of course work. The 9 hours can include required undergraduate leveling courses. 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 year. Students with a half-time appointment are eligible for partial coverage through the university benefits program.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

The purpose of comprehensive exams is to test the student's knowledge of the field. All candidates for graduate degrees at Texas State must pass a comprehensive examination, either written, oral, or both. The comprehensive examinations for Family and Child Studies are written and are administered only twice per year, the first Friday in March and the first Friday in October. The exams pertain to the content of the core courses. Students with a double major must take a comprehensive examination for each major. The examination for a master's degree may not be taken until completing at least 18 hours of graduate degree credit and may not be taken before the final term or semester if you have a grade deficiency. Students may take the comprehensive exam without being enrolled in coursework. In addition to the comprehensive exam, an oral defense of the thesis is required if the thesis option is chosen.

Comprehensive exam questions are evaluated on both the quality and the content of writing. Two faculty members evaluate the response to each of four comprehensive exam questions. If there is disagreement regarding whether a response is acceptable, a third reader will then read the response and make a final evaluation

decision. The evaluation decision for each question is made independently of the other question responses and can be as follows:

- F=Fail (student must retake that portion of the exam the following spring or fall).
- CP=Conditional pass (Can be retaken later in the examination month or a paper or oral defense may required for that portion of the exam).
- P=Pass all components of the exam.

Arrangements for the examination should be made with the graduate program coordinator. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for completing the comprehensive exam. The results of the comprehensive examination must be filed in the Graduate College at least ten days before the commencement at which the degree is to be conferred. The department is responsible for submitting the report to the Graduate College. (This information can be obtained from the current Texas State Graduate Catalog).

SCHOLARSHIPS

There are a number of scholarships now available to graduate students at SWT. 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 number of scholarship grantors are listed below. If you plan to apply for a scholarship, you need to pay particular attention to the application deadlines. The Texas State scholarships have an early deadlines of March 1.

Benjamin A. Gilman (study abroad opportunities)—This program offers a competition for 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.

<http://www.iie.org/gilman>

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities—The scholarship programs administered by HACU are made possible due to generous contributions from corporate and federal organizations.

<http://www.hacu.net>

Roy F. and Joann Cole Mitte Foundation Scholarship---The Mitte scholarship is offered by Roy and Joann Mitte in an effort to give back to their alma mater. Recipients are selected on the strength of their applications, recommendations, school and community leadership, awards, work experience, grades, test scores, and general citizenship.

<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu>

Texas State Celebrity Classics Scholarship and the Texas State Graduate College Scholars Program—the Classics and Scholars scholarships are to encourage students with intellectual/creative promise and leadership to complete a master’s degree at Texas State.

<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu>

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.

<http://www.scholarshipsite.org>

Other new Texas State scholarship monies are also available. These are accessed through the Graduate College. Information is available on the FCD graduate bulletin board outside room 120 in the FCS building and/or from the Graduate College.

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**

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/>

**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>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the advantage of pursuing a graduate degree?

A graduate degree provides the opportunity to gain expertise in your chosen field. Career change or advancement, specialized training, and intellectual curiosity are a few of the reasons students choose to pursue a graduate degree.

2. Is the Family & Child Studies program flexible to professionals?

Yes. At this time, all of the core courses are offered during the evening. One course will be offered via the internet in each enrollment period, i.e., fall, spring, and summer. The courses offered via the internet will be rotated for student convenience.

3. What opportunities exist for completing the practicum experience?

There are many practicum opportunities. To name few, students have opportunities to do their practicum with Child Protective Services, Roxanne's House, Connections Resource Center, Christus Santa Rosa Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital of Austin and the parent program at San Marcos or Hays County High Schools. Other programs may be better suited to your career needs.

4. Are any courses offered via the internet?

Yes. The university as well as the FCS program offers courses that can be taken via the internet. As of the Spring 2003, Research Design and Methodology in Family and Child Studies was offered via the Internet.

5. How do I register for my classes?

Registration occurs by telephone through CATS (512-392-2287). Further registration instructions can be found by contacting the Office of the Registrar or using their web page at www.txstate.edu/registrar/index.htm.

6. Where can I buy textbooks?

The Texas State Bookstore and Colloquium II have graduate level textbooks available for purchase.

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Infant/Mother Attachment

SAMPLE CAREER OPTIONS

Following is a sampling of the variety of career options available to a Family and Child Studies graduate. While a graduate degree may not be required to enter a particular job field, it is generally considered an advantage in career advancement.

- 1. Medical Focus.** Child Life Specialist plans activities and programs and acts as an advocate for children hospitalized with a short-term, long-term, or terminal illness.
- 2. Early Care and Education Programs.** Administrative positions in early care and education programs in the private or public sectors, e.g., university lab schools, Head Start, corporate organizations, medical centers.
- 3. Social/Community Services.** Positions related to varied educational and/ or intervention programs including publicly and privately funded programs, e.g., children's programs affiliated with homeless shelters, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory services, Texas Department of Health and Human Services, Connections Resource Center in Austin, or the Texas Workforce Commission.
- 4. Education Including Higher Education.** Faculty member of a Community College, School-Age Parenting Program administrator, or Texas Cooperative Extension Service.
- 5. Military Early Care and Education Programs.** Civilian positions with both international and US based programs; opportunities for teaching, social service, and administration of programs. www.USAJOBS.opm.gov for information.
- 6. 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 or Texas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.
- 7. Early Childhood Intervention.** Programs focused on providing home-based care to high-risk infants and toddlers, e.g., Any Baby Can in San Antonio or Home Spun in the Hays County area.
- 8. International Programs.** Various positions in education, administration, or social services programs. www.USAJOBS.opm.gov; CYSjobs@ima-e.army.mil; <http://cysjobs.com>.

SAMPLE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM QUESTIONS

You will answer one question from each of the core courses in the major. Make sure that you answer each question thoroughly and that you relate the content of your answer to theorists/researchers and cite references when possible. Please note that these are SAMPLE questions only, and their purpose is only to show you the TYPE of questions that you will be asked. They are not meant to indicate that this is THE content that you should know for that course. You may also talk to the course instructor for each of the content areas in regard to their expectations, as this is the faculty member who will make up and grade your question.

THEORY

1. Choose one family or child theory, e.g., psychoanalytic, symbolic interactionist, attachment, etc.

Respond to the following questions:

- a. What are the basic beliefs of the theory?
 - b. What are the main strengths or weaknesses of the theory?
 - c. How can this theory be applied to the development of children or family relationships?
 - d. What are major criticisms of this theory?
2. You are asked to present a series of workshops on “Theories of Family and Child Studies.” Since 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.
 - d. Describe a current example of a research study that utilizes/discusses this theory.

ADMINISTRATION

3. Be able to identify, describe, and apply each aspect of the competing values framework. Apply it to the management process and the quality management movement.
4. Discuss the quality management movement, and particularly the work of Deming, e.g., the background, basic tenets, components, processes, etc. of his model.

EVALUATION

5. 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?
6. 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?

RESEARCH

7. Select a research-based article related to Family and Child Studies. Respond to the following:
 - a. Summarize in one sentence the main research question/hypothesis of the study.
 - b. Identify all independent, dependent, and control variables.
 - c. Specify the type of research design used in the study.
 - d. Identify the type of sampling technique used. Evaluate its appropriateness.
 - e. Identify all observations/measures used as well as any evidence supporting their reliability. Evaluate the reliability of each measure/observation.
 - f. Consider the control variables. Did the researcher adequately eliminate potential rival explanations in the study design?
 - g. How strong are the arguments/evidence used to support generalizability?
 - h. How much confidence do you place in the results of this study? Explain.
8. Sample questions not tied to a reading:
 - a. Define "exploratory studies" and define when they are appropriate.
 - b. Define the term "experimental design." Illustrate your definition with an imaginary study involving intervention/education for autistic children.
 - c. Discuss the pros and cons of pretesting in experimental designs.
 - d. Define the four levels of measurement and provide an example of each.
 - e. Define reliability. List three different methods used to establish reliability and explain when and how they are used.
 - f. Define validity. List three different methods used to establish validity and explain when and how they are used.
 - g. Define sampling. Describe the pros and cons of non-probability samples.
 - h. Compare and contrast questionnaire data collection with direct (face to face) interview data collection in terms of the pros and cons.

ISSUES

9. Issues related to families can be thought of through literary works, both classic and contemporary. Choose a novel and analyze a family issue in terms of theory and relevant research (citing references). Make sure you clearly describe the issue,

analyze the issue in terms of relevant theoretical perspective, and relate the issue to current research.

10. From your coursework and readings you have studied many significant individuals in individuals in the field of family and child studies. Identify at least four individuals whom you believe have had a significant impact on the understanding of families and children. Address the following:
 - a. Identify their area of research.
 - b. Discuss specific research studies and findings from their research.
 - c. Discuss how these have impacted the field of family and child studies?

SWW:1/16/04

INTERNATIONAL STUDY TOUR

A Family and Child Studies graduate study tour to London and Stockholm is planned for the 2004 mini-session. The determining factor as to whether the tour will take place is whether a minimum of 10 students register for the class. The tour is being planned in cooperation with the International Child Resource Institute of Berkley, CA. Planned activities include face-to-face meetings with government and non-government administrators regarding the goals, policies, regulation, and funding of an array of family and child related programs in these cities and around the world. Other types of activities will include planned visits to various children's programs, e.g., child life, early care and education, etc., as well as other types of family and child services programs. Time for sight seeing, visiting museums, shopping, etc. will be built into the schedule. The course credit earned for the study tour can be used toward degree elective requirements. For further information, contact Sue Williams at sw10@txstate.edu.