

2021-2022

HDFS

Graduate Student Handbook



WWW.HDFS.TTU.EDU

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List of Terms

- ♦ ADIA: Academic Department Instructional Assessment
- ♦ APA style: American Psychological Association style
- ♦ CRN: Course Registration Number
- ♦ CV: Curriculum Vitae
- ♦ ePAF: electronic Personal Action Form
- ♦ ELS: English Language Services
- ♦ FTE: Full Time Equivalent
- ♦ GPTI: Grad Part Time Instructor
- ♦ ID: Identification Card
- ♦ TA: Teaching Assistant
- ♦ RA: Research Assistant

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HDFS

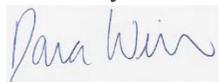
Greetings from the HDFS Chairperson

Dear Graduate Students,

On behalf of the HDFS faculty, we are thrilled to have you as a member of our department. This handbook is your go-to resource when you have any questions about policies and procedures. The handbook is a living document that will be a vital tool for you throughout your graduate program. I encourage you to read the handbook closely and consult it regularly throughout your graduate career.

We look forward to working with you and nurturing your development as a student, a teacher, and a researcher. In HDFS, we highly covet engaged scholarship and innovative research that studies and supports individuals, couples, families, and communities. We value diversity, equity, and inclusion and through our research, teaching, and service are committed to identifying, critiquing, and changing unjust and inequitable systems. I hope you will utilize all the resources our department, the Graduate School, and the university offers to fulfill these goals. You are encouraged to get involved in research early, to make connections, friendships, and collaborations, and to capitalize on our various training opportunities so that you are prepared to launch your career when you graduate. We deeply share our college's mission to do work that improves and enhances the human condition, and we are excited to support you on this journey.

Sincerely,



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HDFS

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Program Objectives

The objective of the Human Development and Family Sciences graduate programs is to provide substantive knowledge in the development of individual, family, and interpersonal processes, and their applications across the lifespan. Core courses introduce students to theory and research in the field. Our goal is to foster intellectual development, stimulate meaningful research, and develop skills that will facilitate the pursuit of the student's professional goals. Both the Master's degree and the Ph.D. require study in theories, research methodologies, statistics, and a thesis or dissertation to meet the academic requirements in Human Development and Family Sciences.

Opportunities exist within the department for students to gain a variety of applied experiences dealing with individuals and families across the lifespan. Facilities and programs within the department include the Christine DeVitt and Helen DeVitt Jones Child Development Research Center, Texas Tech Center for Early Head Start, Center for Adolescent Resiliency, The Iva Lee Barton Research Suite, and the Institute for Developmental Sciences. These Centers and Institutes, in addition to resources within the university and community, offer opportunities for training in program design, implementation, and evaluation for interested students. Graduate students are encouraged to discuss these opportunities with their faculty advisor.

Emphasis is placed on research, which is a vital component of graduate education. Through various programs funded by federal and state grants, the HDFS department makes opportunities available for graduate students to be involved in research conducted by graduate faculty. It is the department's goal to help support students' graduate work by providing assistantships. These assistantships allow for research on a variety of topics and pressing issues in human development and family sciences. The department and the faculty are dedicated to actively mentoring students through:

- Extensive coursework in both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and statistics
- Involvement in research with faculty throughout the student's program
- Active and extensive guidance from and involvement by the faculty advisor as a student progresses throughout the program

The Department is committed to the principle that in no aspect of its programs shall there be any discrimination based on race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, age, gender, or disability, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all individuals.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

1. Graduate students are responsible for making themselves familiar with all information in this handbook, including deadlines, forms, processes, the information provided in the department's [webpage](#) and the information provided by the TTU Graduate School about deadlines and requirements to complete their degree.
2. Graduate students should follow and respect the chain of command for addressing questions, asking for guidance, and resolving issues: your faculty advisor first, then the Graduate Coordinator, and then the Graduate Program Director. Direct intervention from the Department Chair may be sought only after the departmental chain of command has been followed and an issue continues unresolved. If needed, intervention from the Dean's office might be requested. Graduate students should not contact other offices (e.g., Graduate School, Human Resources, Office of International Affairs) or administrators (e.g., Office of the Provost, Office of the President) outside the HDFS department before following the chain of command established to resolve issues pertaining to the HDFS department.
3. Graduate Students are responsible for knowing and meeting all deadlines and program requirements (including but not limited to scholarship applications, work-study applications, enrolling in courses, etc.) set by the department, college, and university. A calendar with most department and Graduate School deadlines and due dates will be sent at the beginning of each academic year.
4. If you have an assistantship, you are responsible for all duties assigned by your faculty supervisor and completing all assigned tasks by the deadlines provided. Assistantships are not guaranteed for all students or for all semesters of enrollment. Graduate students must be enrolled in the required number of credit hours to be eligible to receive an assistantship within a given semester. Given that assistantships are not guaranteed, graduate students are responsible for funding their own education. Students with a TA and/or RA are required to fill out the [Teaching Assistant](#) and/or [Research Assistant Contracts](#) with the faculty they are working with at the beginning of each semester and returning it via email to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Director by the 5th day of class. In addition, all students holding assistantships are required to submit a Mid-Term Report via email to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Director by the given deadline. Students who do not complete their assistantship duties to a satisfactory standard (as determined in the Annual Review process) may not have their assistantship renewed for the following academic year. Graduate students should not exceed the 20 hours of work per week stipulated in the Assistantship contract. Graduate students in Teaching Assistantships should not grade more than 70% of exams and assignments as a matter of departmental policy. If a graduate student receives a workload that exceeds 20 hours or these expectations, please inform the Graduate Program Director to resolve this issue. It is our goal to protect your time and ensure that your assistantships are also a positive learning opportunity.
5. Graduate students are required to meet weekly in person with their faculty advisor and their assistantship supervisor to report progress, ask questions, and inform faculty of any issues they have encountered.

6. Graduate Students are responsible for attending professional development events, including those offered by the department, college, and university, as well as attending professional conferences. These activities are reported as part of the Annual Review process. These professional development activities will be opportunities for students to learn about publishing, the job market, cutting-edge research, and funding as well as network with potential collaborators and future employers. Take advantage of these opportunities.
7. Graduate Students are responsible for completing requested **Annual Review** materials prior to the deadline provided each spring. Failure to meet this deadline will be included in your annual review report and will affect the overall rating you receive for your review. Each spring, the Annual Review committee will compile ratings and feedback for each student. Graduate Faculty will then meet and discuss each graduate student's progress in the program. The graduate student will then meet with their faculty advisor to go over this feedback. Both the graduate student and faculty advisor will sign the annual review report and return to the Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and the Chair of the Annual Graduate Review Committee. The annual review process is intended to give students feedback, support, and help to ensure their timely progress and professional development.
8. Graduate Students are responsible for making timely progress through their graduate program. Failure to do so may result in loss of assistantship opportunities, loss of a desk in the graduate lab, and in extreme cases, termination from the program. Doctoral students who enter the program with a Master's degree may receive funding and desk space for up to 4 years. Master's students who enter the program to earn a terminal Master's may receive funding and desk space for up to 2 ½ years. Doctoral students who earn a Master's in our program (Post-Bac program) and then proceed to the doctoral program may receive funding and desk space for up to 6 years.
9. With assistance from your Faculty Advisor and doctoral committee, it is the responsibility of the Graduate Student to find employment upon completion of the program. Please discuss employment goals and trajectories early. Whether a student wishes to go into academia or applied settings, a record of research productivity, independent work, and successful teaching is valued. Starting from your first year, you are accumulating a work record that will set you on your career path. Due to the timeline of faculty position announcements, you will need to start looking at available options in the summer before your last year (the year in which you will defend your dissertation and graduate). Students who wish to pursue a post-doctoral fellowship should plan to start this process more than one year before they plan to graduate. Many post-doctoral fellowships involve identifying a mentor at another university and writing a grant together.
10. Please note that the HDFS department does not hire its own graduate students as tenure-track faculty within the department, except in extremely rare cases. You should plan on continuing employment outside of HDFS at TTU upon earning your degree.
11. The university offers a wide array of support services to our graduate students. Please visit the Dean of Students' [website](#) and the Graduate School [website](#) to view the various services offered through the university. These university resources include the Student Counseling Center, Student Disability Services, Student Health Services, the Graduate Center, the Graduate Writing Center, support for Title IX complaints, the Raider Red Food Pantry, etc. International students can work with the **International Affairs office**. Please do not hesitate to seek help; all these resources are for graduate students, and it is highly recommended that students utilize any and all university resources that can provide support.

12. If you have any financial concerns, please contact [Financial Aid](#) and/or [Student Business Services](#). The Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Program Director can answer questions about assistantships and scholarship funds offered through the department. Otherwise, questions related to tuition and fees should be directed to Financial Aid and/or [Student Business Services](#).

What to Do and Whom to Contact When You Have Questions?

One of the skills necessary for success in graduate school is to be able to be proactive in your own education. The first step to doing so is taking responsibility for seeking the information you need for each step of the program. When you have questions about what is required of you to complete your degree, please seek answers to your questions in the following order:

1. Consult the Graduate Student Handbook
2. Consult the Graduate School [website](#)
3. Your faculty advisor
4. The Graduate Program Coordinator
5. The Graduate Program Director

Leave of Absence

Please note that a leave of absence from the Graduate Program is only for students who experience extenuating circumstances (e.g., serious illness, hospitalization, extreme family situation). If you wish to pursue a leave, you will need to provide appropriate documentation, notify and receive approval from your Faculty Advisor and then the Graduate Program Director. You may notify the Graduate Program Director via email and/or request a meeting. The Graduate Program Director will then approve/disapprove of your leave request based on information provided and in consultation with the Faculty Advisor. If your request is approved, the Graduate Program Coordinator will send a Leave of Absence request to the Graduate School. At the same time, the graduate student will need to provide supporting documentation to the Dean of Students' office in order for a leave to be approved by the Graduate School. Please note that not all leave requests are granted by the department or by the Graduate School. A leave is not to be requested due to simply not making timely progress in the program, being on academic probation or suspension, or deciding you need a break from your studies.

Faculty Responsibilities

1. Faculty are responsible for meeting with advisees and assistantship graduate students in person each week during the long semesters and with graduate students who have RA positions over the summer months. Faculty are responsible for outlining clear expectations and providing deadlines and requirements for work assigned. Faculty are expected to work with their students to support productivity and a timely graduation from the program.
2. Faculty are responsible for understanding the information in this handbook, including deadlines, forms, processes, etc., as well as the information provided in the [department's webpage](#) and the information provided by the TTU Graduate School. Faculty should be knowledgeable enough to provide this information to advisees, graduate assistants, and students in general and keep them "on track" in terms of meeting requirements and deadlines. Faculty must retain a copy of all forms turned into the department and/or Graduate School.
3. Faculty are responsible for meeting with their advisees and RAs/TAs at least 1 hour per week to discuss students' progress and clarify any questions or concerns.
4. Faculty are responsible for completing the [Teaching Assistant](#) and/or [Research Assistant Contracts](#) with graduate students at the beginning of each semester, meeting with the student to discuss and sign the contract, and returning it via email to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Director by the established deadline. Most assistantships are 20 hours a week; however, there may be more demanding times during the semester where students work more than 20 hours in a particular week; this should be balanced so students work fewer hours other weeks to average to a 20 hour a week over the semester. Students should never work more than 30 hours a week. Faculty and students should coordinate their schedules when preparing the TA/RA contracts to account for these busy and slower times, but also to coordinate with student's course work and plans. Students and faculty should reference their assistantship letters for start and end dates and note that hours do not carry over from one semester to another. Assistantships are a learning opportunity and faculty should ensure that graduate students learn and develop through the assistantship. Any trainings that faculty require graduate students to complete for their assistantship should count toward hours for the assistantship. Faculty should not assign more than 70% of grading responsibilities to Teaching Assistants. If workload issues arise, the Graduate Program Director will work with the Department Chairperson to resolve the issue.
5. Faculty are responsible for completing the [Annual Graduate Student Review](#) for each advisee and student they work with, meeting with each advisee,, and after obtaining the student signature, returning it to the Chair of the Annual Graduate Review Committee, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Graduate Program Director by the established deadline.
6. Faculty are responsible for completing the [Master's Candidacy Student Evaluation Form](#) and the [Doctoral Preliminary Exam Student Evaluation Form](#) when requested by the Graduate Program Coordinator to fulfill students' evaluations. Faculty should also complete and return all pertinent forms to the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Program Director as their students' progress through the graduate program.
7. Faculty are responsible for assisting their graduate advisees in finding employment upon graduation. This may include but not limited to: discussing job options, the faculty application/search process with your doctoral students, provide feedback on a CV (Curriculum Vita) and cover letter, provide feedback on a job talk, and prepare your student for a job interview. You can also assist your student by forwarding job announcements, writing letters of reference, and answering questions posed by your student.

Faculty Advisors

During the application process, graduate students are asked to identify faculty members that match their academic interests and areas of developing expertise. Incoming students will be assigned to one of these faculty members to serve in the role of advisor based on student and faculty preference. Your advisor is responsible for assisting with your plan of study and all documents and steps related to completion of your doctoral program. Your advisor is also who should be consulted about course enrollment each semester. If at some point during your program you wish to change advisors, you must talk with your current advisor, seek another faculty member to serve in this role, and notify the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Director of the change in writing. Students may have two faculty Co-Chair their Masters' Thesis and/or Doctoral Dissertations but they must have a Primary Advisor who will be responsible for working with the student.

English Proficiency

All Graduate Students (domestic and international) are required to have English proficiency both orally and in written work. English proficiency is required for successful performance and progress in the HDFS program. International students are required to attend the ELS (English Language Services) Educational Services Language Training in the summer prior to matriculation in the fall semester. If you do not pass the proficiency exam, you will not be awarded an assistantship and you will need to take active and immediate steps to achieve proficiency. Please see information provided by the [TTU Graduate School](#) for more information and about options of services available to assist.

Professional Development Workshops and Colloquia

An important part of your graduate training involves not only your coursework and research activities, but also participating in the life of the department. Our department offers a number of Professional Development Workshops and Colloquium Series designed specifically for students (both Master's and Ph.D.) These are opportunities for you to hear about research from experts in multiple fields, make professional contacts, and have an opportunity to discuss many issues related to being a professional in Human Development and Family Sciences. Participation in these events is highly recommended and should be noted on your CV and will be included for consideration in your annual review.

Graduate students also are expected to attend professional conferences, submit and present research at conferences, develop and submit manuscripts for publication, and participate in grant applications. These accomplishments will comprise the majority of a student's CV and will be instrumental in finding employment upon graduation. Professional conferences are also an excellent resource for networking with potential collaborators and future employers.

Annual Review

The purpose of the annual review process is to provide constructive feedback to graduate students on an annual basis so that every student can be successful. The goal is for students to use this feedback for self-improvement and ensure a timely graduation.

Early each spring, all graduate students continuing in the program the next academic year will be asked to complete their annual review materials for the current academic year (AY), which begins in September each year. These materials include an updated curriculum vitae (CV) and a completed Graduate Student Annual Report form (all needed forms are listed on the HDFS website and Students will receive an updated version of this form at the time of the review.) Students completing their dissertation or thesis (if the Master's Program is the terminal degree) during the same semester as the annual reviews do not participate in the annual reviews but should send their CV to the Chair of the Annual Graduate Review Committee, the Graduate Program Director, and the Graduate Program Coordinator for our records.

The following information should be included in students' CV. Students may work with their faculty advisor on optimal formatting of this information. The following items are not required to be presented in the order below, but all must be included.

- Name
Date
Phone number and email address
- Academic Preparation [Previous University(ies) attended, Degree Earned, Major, Date]
Honors and Awards
- Professional Experience (Position, Organization, Date Professional Organizations) Research Interests
- Publications (in preparation, submitted, in press, and published)
- Research funding (in preparation, submitted, funded, not funded)
- Professional Presentations (submitted and presented)
- Teaching experience (if applicable)
- Service and Outreach Activities (related to your area of interest in HDFS)
References (list three professional references and contact information)

On the Graduate Student Annual Report form, students will be asked to list:

- Departmental milestones (e.g., when did the student have the candidacy exam meeting?)
Courses taken and grades earned
- Financial support received
- Assistantship responsibilities carried out
- Research activities engaged in (including funding applied for and/or obtained, status of manuscripts, presentations given)
- Professional development presentations attended
Involvement in citizenship/service activities
Honors/awards received

In addition, students will be asked to reflect on their accomplishments in the past year, their strengths and weaknesses, future goals, performance on assistantships, etc.

Deadlines for the annual review process will be emailed to students in early February of each year.

An important part of students' professional development includes meeting required deadlines. Not meeting required deadlines can, and likely will, be noted in the annual review and may result in negative evaluations. Therefore, students are urged to meet required deadlines.

Each faculty member will be asked to evaluate all students they have had interactions with (they have had the student in a course, had a student as a TA or RA, advised or supervised the student, etc.) in the current academic year, using the **Faculty Evaluation form**. Faculty members are asked to evaluate each student with regard to:

- Coursework and program progress (e.g., courses, Master's/qualifying exams/dissertation progress), Research activities (e.g., research assistantships, conference presentations, publications),
- Professional development (e.g., attending workshops or conferences, internal or external service, coursework beyond requirements, other),
- Teaching activities (e.g., teaching assistantships, solo teaching, guest lectures, attendance at instructional training), and
- Overall development (average across all of these 4 areas).

Evaluation takes place on a scale from 1 = Major concerns, 2 = Minor concerns, 3 = Progress at appropriate level, and 4 = Excels in area.

In addition, each faculty member indicates for each area (i.e., coursework/program progress; research activities; etc.) the basis of their evaluation (i.e., 1 = Faculty members has only information from students' submitted materials; 2 = Faculty member has had small amount of contact with the student; and 3 = Faculty member had considerable amount of contact with the student).

Finally, faculty members are also asked to indicate whether the student engaged in a minor or major violation of either academic misconduct or campus civility this AY. Students who have engaged in either academic misconduct may lose certain privileges afforded to graduate students or be terminated from the program. (Please see section regarding consequences of engaging in academic misconduct, unprofessional behaviors and/or campus civility.)

The chair of the Annual Graduate Student Review Committee will then assign lead evaluators for each student from among the committee members. The lead evaluator combines the feedback received from each faculty member the student had contact with in the current AY on the summary evaluation form and creates weighted average scores, which take the basis of evaluation into account. In other words, the feedback a faculty member who has had considerable contact with the student will carry more weight than that of a faculty member who has had less contact. The Graduate Program Director or the Chair of The Annual Graduate Student Review Committee will make every effort to ensure that the lead evaluator has had no or little contact with the student to be evaluated this academic year.

The full departmental faculty meets toward the end of the spring semester to discuss each of the evaluated students. Any additional comments that surface during this meeting will be included on the summary evaluation form and scores may be adjusted based on additional information provided by faculty. The final summary evaluation form will be sent/given to the advisor of the student, who then meets with the student, discusses the evaluation as necessary and, together with the student, signs the form. The signed form is then returned to the Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and the chair of the Annual Graduate Student Review Committee.

Students are not ranked or compared to each other in the evaluation process. Further, the comments on the summary evaluation form represent the collective feedback and consensus from all faculty.

If a student's "**overall development**" rating falls below 3, the student is asked to arrange a meeting with the Graduate Program Director to discuss progress and suggestions for improvement in addition to their meeting with their advisor. The HDFs Annual Graduate Review Committee may also recommend a remedial plan for a student whose "overall development" rating falls below 3, if agreed upon between the Graduate Program Director, the student's Faculty Advisor, and the Chair of the Annual Graduate Review Committee.

If a student receives an "**overall development**" rating lower than 2 on their annual evaluation, the HDFs Annual Graduate Student Review Committee will specify in writing a remedial plan the student must accomplish by a specified date. The remedial plan may include several tasks with specific deadlines to be accomplished by an overall specified date. If the student fails to meet the expectations by said date, there will be a vote by the faculty on whether to terminate the student from the HDFs graduate program. Termination must be approved by a majority of voting-eligible, tenure-track, and continuing faculty. (Note: When deciding on what remedial steps the student must take, the Annual Graduate Student Review Committee will get specific input from the student's Faculty Advisor and the Graduate Program Director. In taking the vote, the HDFs faculty will be able to take into consideration extenuating circumstances.)

Course Enrollment

Following admission to the program, students are assigned to Faculty Advisors in their specialization areas. Students are responsible for contacting their advisors prior to the beginning of the first semester and during pre-registration periods each semester thereafter for advice on classes in which to enroll and necessary permissions to register.

Students must register for courses during the assigned registration period. The Graduate Program Coordinator will notify students of the specific dates each semester and deadlines are included in the calendar provided to graduate students. Typically, the dates fall:

Fall semester: by mid-April

Spring semester: by mid-November

Summer semesters 1 and 2: by mid-April

Timely enrollment in courses is required so that if a student receives financial aid or an assistantship, all required paperwork can be completed by HDFS staff prior to university mandated deadlines. **If students are not enrolled prior to these deadlines and HDFS staff are therefore unable to complete required paperwork prior to university deadlines, the student will be responsible for all outstanding financial balances.**

Students should be registered for the number of hours that reflects the extent of their involvement in the graduate program. This applies to research and thesis courses as well as formally structured classes. The minimum enrollment for full-time graduate status is 9 credit hours in the regular semester. Full-time enrollment in a summer term is from 3 to 6 hours. Students holding assistantships or scholarships must be enrolled for the appropriate number of hours each semester including summer sessions.

All students must take HDFS 5110 (Introduction to Graduate Studies in Human Development & Family Sciences) in the fall semester of their first year in the program. HDFS 5110 is a one credit hour course. This results in the many students enrolling in a total of 10 credit hours for their first semester.

It is the student's responsibility to check the HDFS course schedule on [Raiderlink](#) to determine course availability for any given semester. Students should also check their schedules on the [Raiderlink](#) website just before classes begin to confirm class meeting times and locations.

If you are registering for HDFS 5311, 6000, 7000, or 8000, please send an email to the Graduate Coordinator detailing the required course, CRN (course registration number), and faculty member. The Graduate Coordinator will confirm permission of enrollment with the faculty member and then register you for these courses. Please note that students enrolled in HDFS 6000 and HDFS 8000 must meet the university's requirement for continuous enrollment and need to be enrolled even during the summer (at least one credit in either Summer I or Summer II).

Students who earn a grade of C, D, or F in any required core course must retake that course. After a second failure to pass the course, this is grounds for dismissal from the program pending faculty discussion and consideration of extenuating circumstances. Exceptions (e.g. compassion waiver) might apply for students with justifiable extenuating circumstances, in which case, the students must inform their advisor and the graduate program director in advance. Faculty will then vote whether the student may remain in the program and an appropriate remediation plan.

Students placed on academic probation or suspension by the Graduate School must follow the Graduate School requirements to proceed in the doctoral program. It is the student's responsibility to provide all required documentation requested by the Graduate School. Being on academic probation may result in the termination of your assistantship. Being suspended will result in the termination of your assistantship.

Travel Funding

The department is pleased to be able to support travel to conferences and training/workshops (annual budget permitting) to present your research. Funds are also available from the **Graduate School** for presenting authors.

Funds approved for academic year 2021-2022 are as follows: Doctoral students (including Post-bac PhD students) may apply to 2 conferences (presenting and/or only attending; max \$2000 each) and 1 virtual training/workshop (max. \$2,500). Master's students (including ABM students) may apply to one conference (max \$2000). Conferences and trainings/workshops must be identified in consultation with the student's advisor. Conferences should be academic/research based and/or focused on human development and family sciences and related to the student's research interests. The department will pay for new membership fees (not renewal) for students attending virtual conferences (does not apply to in person conferences). If for any reason you do not attend the conference after receiving funding, you must notify the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Coordinator immediately. This is necessary to stop payment on awarded funds and any costs that are not refundable may become the responsibility of the student. All travel funding is on a first come, first serve basis and applications are reviewed in the order in which they are received.

The procedures for applying for funding for conferences and trainings are as follows:

1. Student meets with their advisor to discuss potential conferences in their area of research and receives approval from their advisor to apply for travel funds.
2. At least 45 days prior to the conference, the student submits their **completed department travel application** via email to the Graduate Program Director and copies the Graduate Program Coordinator. Only emailed forms will be accepted.
3. The Graduate Program Director or Coordinator will notify the student that their application has been approved after departmental review/approval. Student may begin booking airfare and lodging at this time, if they have not done so already.
4. Once approved, the student checks out the p-card from Graduate Program Coordinator for registration, registers for the conference, returns p-card and receipt of registration to the Graduate Program Coordinator. *Please do not register using your own credit card.*

5. Once registered, student emails receipt of registration to Graduate Program Coordinator.
6. Travel application is submitted in Travel system by Graduate Program Coordinator.
7. If attending a conference in state, a tax-exempt form will need to be completed by the hotel at time of check out to turn in with receipts. Please see Program Coordinator prior to departure when needing a tax-exempt form.

Upon Return:

7. Student submits ALL individual itemized travel receipts (original and electronic scanned-receipts) to Graduate Program Coordinator within one week of return. If travel occurred in state, a tax-exempt form also needs to be submitted. See note below regarding receipts.
8. Graduate Program Coordinator will submit to the Travel System at which point the student will receive a link to electronically sign their voucher.
9. Once the student signs the voucher, Graduate Program Director electronically signs voucher for approval and voucher is routed to the Travel office for processing.
10. Student is reimbursed for travel generally 7-10 business days after the Travel office receives the voucher, unless further documentation is needed by the Travel office.

Receipts and Documentation

In order to be reimbursed, all itemized receipts must be turned in. Meal receipts should always be itemized and turned in for each traveler separately and not turned in as a group receipt with a breakdown of those expenses. If receipts are not turned in, then it is the traveler's responsibility to obtain the receipt, or they will forfeit that expense. When sharing a room, the lodging receipt should be submitted as two separate receipts denoting the charge for each student. When staying at a conference hotel that exceeds the per diem lodging rate, the traveler must provide documentation that the hotel was in fact a conference hotel. This is typically done by providing the conference program or by printing out that information from the conference website denoting where the conference will be held. Failure to submit this information can cause delays and non-reimbursement for the overage. If a conference hotel is sold out, documentation will be needed stating that it was full and what hotel(s) are taking the overflow of guests. Refer to the conference website to check and see if multiple hotels will be considered conference hotels due to the size of the conference. If attending a conference in state, a tax-exempt form will need to be completed by the hotel at time of check out. Please see Program Coordinator prior to departure when needing a tax-exempt form.

Advances

An advance can be requested by the students for confirmed pre-paid expenses (i.e. airfare) which will be reimbursed to the student within 2-3 business days with supporting documentation submitted of the purchase.

All other non-prepaid expenses (i.e. lodging, fuel, meals) can be advanced and will be disbursed within 5 days of the travel taking place. Non-prepaid expenses are reimbursed at a cap of 90%, but if the amount advanced should be less than what was actually spent by the traveler, then the traveler will be required to pay this overage back to the university.

Assistantships

To be eligible for assistantships, the minimum enrollment is 9 hours in each regular semester and at least 3 hours during the summer term. If a student is involved full time in dissertation research, the semester schedule should reflect at least 9 hours of research or dissertation enrollment.

Assistantships will not take effect until a Benefits packet and electronic Personal Action Form is completed and on file in the Personnel office. New students who have an assistantship must provide a copy of approved supportive documents to the department in order to receive their monthly check from payroll. All students who are offered an assistantship must also apply for College Work Study as this financial aid helps support their assistantship.

Students will be notified of their assistantship placement prior to the start of each semester. If you are awarded an assistantship, you are required to be present on campus and working on your assigned duty for the duration of the semester. Please note that TA assistantships are awarded for fall and spring semesters only. Some graduate students working on research projects with faculty may have a summer RA position awarded. In general, please plan accordingly and be prepared to support your educational costs during the summer terms. Graduate students may contact faculty to see if they have available summer funding.

Assistantship assignments may be a combination of TA and RA or GPTI and TA/RA responsibilities. These responsibilities are described in the TA and RA contract that must be signed by each graduate student. It is a violation of university policy to do any work other than what has been assigned in your contract. No TA may spend some hours as an RA and vice versa; any violation of this policy will be grounds for revoking your assistantship.

The department makes every effort to support its Master's and Ph.D. students with assistantships; however, students are not guaranteed assistantships for the duration of their program. This support is dependent upon the availability of assistantship funds, the student's progress and conduct in the graduate program (including earning a grade of B or above in all classes, or permission of the advisor and Graduate Program Director), and the performance of the student in the assistantship role as stated in the TA/RA contracts.

An assistantship is a privilege and not a right of admission or enrollment in the program. The assistantship is a staff position and students are required to complete 10 hours of work a week for a .25 time appointment or 20 hours of work a week for a half time .50 appointment. **Students not completing their assigned weekly TA hours/responsibilities may have their assistantship appointment reduced from 20hrs to 10hrs or lose their assistantships position altogether.** Students receiving departmental assistantships are on duty at the same time faculty are on duty during the semester/summer dates as per the university calendar.

Since assistantships are half-time, **students do not accrue any vacation time.**

Students will not be awarded an assistantship after 6 years of enrollment in the program for PostBac Ph.D. students (5 years for Ph.D. students entering with a Master's Degree, or more than 2 1/2 years for Master's students).

Priority for assistantships (Research-Teaching Assistant) is given to Ph.D. students. If a Master's student is awarded an assistantship in the fall and spring semesters, it will be for no more than 2 ½ years. Any assistantship award made to a Master's student is dependent upon the availability of assistantship funds, the student's progress in the graduate program (including earning a B or above in all classes, or permission of the advisor and Graduate Program Director), and the performance of the student in the assistantship role. Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's students may be eligible to receive an assistantship following completion of their undergraduate degree and promotion to full-time graduate student, although will depend on student's progress in the graduate program and available funds.

Summer assistantships are offered for GPTIs teaching online courses on an as-needed basis. To be eligible to teach an online course during summer sessions, students must follow these steps:

- Complete Teaching Practicum (all requirements)
- Consult with their Advisor and Graduate Program Director during the fall semester
- Upon approval by the Advisor and Graduate Program Director, students must complete an online teaching training offered by the university (e.g., eLearning, TLPDC) recommended by the Graduate Program Director by **December 1** and submit the appropriate documentation to certify completion of the course.
- Please note that completing all these steps does not guarantee that students will be assigned a GPTI appointment in summer as it is based on departmental needs that vary every summer.

The dates of assistantship appointments will be listed in your notification of assistantship placement and you are required to be present and working with your assigned faculty member for that entire period. Failure to do so may result in loss of pay or termination of current or future assistantships. If you receive an assistantship and are unable to fulfill the responsibilities outlined and/or work for the dates provided, you are to immediately notify the Graduate Program Director and you will be relieved of your assistantship. This information is provided prior to each semester so that you can plan accordingly.

In the event of a serious illness, hospitalization, or other extreme unforeseen event, you are to notify your faculty advisor, assistantship supervisor, and Graduate Program Director immediately. At that time, determination will be made whether to terminate or amend your assistantship duties. Failure to notify the faculty listed may result in immediate termination of your assistantship.

Being awarded an assistantship makes you an employee of Texas Tech University. Therefore, you may be asked to complete various trainings, refresher courses, or provide additional information periodically requested by a department on campus. Failure to comply with these requests will result in the termination of your assistantship.

If any issues arise regarding your assistantship, please notify the Graduate Program Director.

Office Hour Policy for GPTIs and TAs

It is the goal of the department of Human Development and Family Sciences to provide students with regular and direct access to all instructors. To achieve this goal, GPTIs and TAs are expected to be available to students during designated office hours as well as hours by appointment. GPTIs and TAs will include office hours and state 'by appointment' hours on each syllabus.

For GPTIs, the minimum number of office hours is three hours per week, and hours must be spread across two separate days of the week to cover both class cycles for T/R and M/W/F courses. For TAs, the minimum number of office hours is one hour per week. The posted office hours must be conducted during normal hours of operation and be scheduled no earlier than 8:00am and no later than 5pm, Monday through Friday. The minimum period for any scheduled office hour must be at least one hour. GPTIs teaching online courses are expected to hold virtual office hours during business hours. If it is not possible for a GPTIs or TA should notify students via email and Blackboard (if used for the course). A notice may also be posted outside the meeting room.

GPTIs and TAs need to hold meetings with undergraduate/graduate students in one of the available HDFS conference rooms. Scheduling meetings for both rooms should be made through the appropriate staff member. Please note that no undergraduate or graduate meetings should occur in the HDFS Grad Lab as it violates confidentiality and university policies.

Insurance

Graduate Part-Time Instructors, Teaching Assistants, and Research Assistants who are appointed half time (50%) or more, for 4.5 months or more, are eligible to enroll in the group insurance programs. Graduate student employees are not automatically enrolled in the health plan. Prior to enrollment, each student must attend a benefits orientation meeting or complete an online benefits training in which information on policies, cost and procedures are provided. If you do not enroll during your first 30 days of employment, you must meet evidence of insurability requirements by submitting acceptable medical information to Blue Cross Blue Shield for future enrollment. Approval is not guaranteed. Your insurance is not in effect the first 90 days of employment.

Additional information about benefits may be obtained from the Personnel Department, Benefits Section, or visit the [HR website](#).

Tuition and Fee Waivers

A graduate student attending Texas Tech must pay tuition and fees every semester until the degree is completed, unless the student applies for and is granted leave by the graduate faculty and Graduate School. The cost varies depending on the number of hours for which the student is enrolled and the course fees for the specific courses. You can find information on fees waived at Student Business Services [website](#).

Eligibility

A graduate student must be employed in the fall or spring semester at least half time/20 hours per week/ .50 FTE (full time equivalent) with a job start date on or before the 12th class day (fall/spring) and the 4th class day (summer), or according to payroll guidelines. The graduate student's electronic Personnel Action Form (ePAF) should have a date of or before the 20th class day (fall/spring) and the 15th class day (summer) as a Teaching Assistant, Graduate Part-Time Instructor, or Research Assistant. The department submits all ePAF. Appointed TA, GPTI, and RA students must be enrolled full-time for each term. **These forms can only be completed by the department if a student is enrolled full time in courses and has paid all outstanding fees/fines/bills. Failure of the student to complete these tasks may result in the staff not being able to meet university deadlines. If this is the case, students will be responsible for all fees/bills/fines that result.**

Exemptions

Graduate students meeting the eligibility requirements above are exempted from most tuition and fees for the fall, spring, and summer terms as set forth below.

All Qualifying Graduate Students

Non-resident tuition rates will be waived for all qualifying graduate students without expense.

Additionally, the following tuition and fees will be exempted:

- Designated Tuition
- Instructional Technology Fee
- Library Fee
- Student Services Fee
- Student Union Fee
- ADIA (Academic Department Instructional Assessment) Fees (excluding special instruction, field trip or off-campus travel fees)
- Medical Services Fee (can elect to pay)
- Athletics Fee (can elect to pay)
- Recreation Center Fee (can elect to pay)

Tuition Waivers and exemptions are posted once the student's ePAF is approved. In addition to the exempted fees in the section above, these students will also be exempted from the following:

- Advising and Retention Fee
- Cultural Activities Fee
- Energy Fee
- ID (Identification Card) Fee
- Records Fee
- Transportation Fee

Academic Misconduct

Graduate students in the Department of Human Development & Family Sciences are expected to maintain a high level of academic achievement in their graduate studies and demonstrate campus-wide civility. As stated by TTU Ethical Principles: “Texas Tech University is committed to an open and diverse society. Each member of the Texas Tech community has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. This right imposes a duty not to infringe upon the rights or personal values of others” see the [catalog](#) for complete TTU Statement of Ethical Principles). Thus, all students are expected to hold themselves to high standards of ethical conduct in all phases of their academic work, including assistantships, as well as professional, civil and ethical behavior in general.

Academic Misconduct

Students should understand that actions such as plagiarism or cheating, attempts to do so, or any other violation of academic integrity are unethical and will not be tolerated at TTU. Students may not submit the same paper to fulfill requirements for more than one course. To do so constitutes academic misconduct. This is not meant to deter students from further development of a research or topical area through extension of previous work. Students should consult with the course instructor to be clear on the acceptability of papers that are based on prior coursework or other projects. Students should expect each assignment to reflect their original and independent work. Please note that self-plagiarism is plagiarism and is considered academic misconduct. Students should adhere to all assignment guidelines and rules established by the faculty member.

Academic misconduct may result in a course grade of F for coursework or, in some circumstances, dismissal from the program and suspension or dismissal from the University. Violations of academic integrity may also result in termination of an assistantship. Please review TTU OP 34.12 for TTU complete information on [Academic Integrity Procedures](#).

Campus Civility and Professional Behaviors

Campus civility encompasses behaving with respect to others and in a way that promotes a positive social and academic environment. It is expected that HDFS graduate students will adhere to the following:

1. Behave respectfully towards faculty, staff, students, guests, and HDFS property including but not limited to Graduate Lab, Barton Suite, Coding Lab, Faculty Labs, etc.
2. Follow TTU University ethical and behavior policies, rules, and regulations.
3. Exercise tolerance, integrity, dignity, and respect when exchanging their opinions and/or communicating with others (e.g., faculty, staff, students, visitors, etc.) face-to-face in campus premises and across communication platforms (e.g., written, electronic, non-verbal).
4. Refraining from behaviors that might intimidate, bully, or degrade individuals, or create a hostile environment on campus and take responsibility for the consequences of such behaviors.

Graduate students are expected to behave professionally on TTU campus premises, Lubbock community as well as during their attendance to conferences, seminars, training, and similar professional activities. Graduate students are also expected to exercise good ethical judgement, exhibit appropriate emotional self-regulation, and follow confidentiality federal requirements (e.g., Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA], Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act [HIPAA]). In addition, graduate students must understand and conform to the regulations set by the Department of Human Development & Family Sciences, the College of Human Sciences, and Texas Tech University as well as local, state, and Federal authorities.

Graduate students who do not maintain acceptable progress, are found to be responsible for academic misconduct, or violate our campus civility and professional behaviors policy may lose graduate student privileges including access to graduate lab and coding lab spaces, assistantships, and/or being terminated from the HDFS degree program. This policy shall be applicable for students at any stage of the HDFS Master's or doctoral program, including students who have advanced to candidacy as stated in the Graduate Student Handbook (see annual review policy).

HDFS

General Procedures for the Master's Degree

Students in the Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) Master's program take two theories courses (Theories of Human Development and Family Theories), research methods, two statistics courses, and an Introduction to Graduate Studies in HDFS. All students are required to complete a research-based thesis and at least 6 hours of thesis research. Beyond these requirements, about half of the credit hours in the program (15 of 37) are electives, so students may tailor the program to their own needs and interests.

The departmental and graduate school forms for the Master's degree can be found on the following websites:

[HDFS](#)

[TTU Graduate School](#)

The [HDFS website](#) contains the Required Steps for completing the Master's Degree, as well as links to information about required deadlines for all activities.

Students are responsible for meeting all departmental and TTU Graduate School Deadlines. Please review the information on this website thoroughly and discuss with your advisor for further guidance.

Please note that you, as well as your faculty advisor, need to retain copies of all forms submitted to the HDFS office or the Graduate School.

The major milestones of the Master's program are:

1. Master's degree credit hours
2. Candidacy Meeting - by the end of the second semester (spring)
3. Master's Thesis Proposal Meeting
4. Master's Thesis Defense

HDFS

General Procedures for the Master's Degree

37 total credit hours

Required Courses – 22 credit hours

HDFS	Semester
5110 Introduction to Graduate Studies in HDFS (1 credit)	_____
5310 Theories of Human Development	_____
5321 Family Theory	_____
5349 Quantitative Methods I	_____
5351 Research Methods	_____
6352 Quantitative Methods II	_____
6000 Thesis	_____
6000 Thesis	_____

Electives – 15 hours (3 departmental electives / 5 courses total)

HDFS	Semester
5302 Introduction to Gerontology	_____
5311 Problems in HDFS (Individual Study)	_____
5313 Psychosocial Development	_____
5314 Infant Development	_____
5317 Adolescent Development	_____
5319 Development in Adulthood	_____
5320 Interpersonal and Family Dynamics	_____
5341 Socialization Processes and Addiction	_____
5352 Sex-Gender Development	_____
5353 Issues and Research in HDFS	_____
5361 Parent-Child and Peer Relationships	_____
5380 Relationship Development	_____

HDFS	Semester
6320 Seminar in Risk Taking	_____
6330 Family Problems	_____
6363 Advanced Topics in Human Development	_____
6371 Practicum in Human Development and Family Sciences	_____
6373 Advanced Topics in Family Sciences	_____
6390 Program Development and Evaluation	_____
Outside Electives (6 credits max.)	_____

Students interested in working on a minor, (e.g. Women’s and Gender Studies, Cross-Cultural Studies) may substitute elective hours to fulfill the requirement of the program. Master’s students may also take courses required for the Doctoral degree as electives (e.g., Qualitative Methods, Quantitative Methods III).

HDFS

Candidacy Exam Meeting

By the end of the second semester (spring) of the Master's program, students must complete their candidacy exam meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to convene your advisor and the additional two members of your thesis committee to assess your progress in the program, your plan of study, the alignment of your goals with the training offered in our program, and to address any questions you or faculty have about your progress in the program. PostBac PhD students will complete the Candidacy Exam during their first year as they will be completing the Master's degree along with their Ph.D. Please note that PostBac PhDs students should submit a **doctoral degree plan** for this meeting. Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's students will also complete the Candidacy exam by the end of the second semester in their first year as an ABM student.

Your candidacy committee is composed of your academic advisor (Chairperson) and two other faculty members from HDFS. Your committee should be formed in consultation with your advisor and taking into account overlapping research interests with you and the committee members.

In preparation for the Candidacy Exam, students should submit the **Consent for Student Evaluation for Candidacy** containing the list of evaluating faculty (i.e., course instructors, advisor, assistantship supervisor) to the Graduate Program Coordinator by **March 15** so that evaluating faculty can be provided with the evaluations forms in a timely manner. Faculty evaluations will be provided to your advisor by the Graduate Program Coordinator for the Candidacy Exam meeting.

Once your candidacy meeting is scheduled, please notify the Graduate Coordinator via email with the date, time, and place of your meeting.

Each of the following items is required for your candidacy exam:

- **Degree Plan**
- **Semester-by-Semester Course Sequence Chart**
- **Candidacy Exam Report Form**
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
- **Professional Goals (1 page):** Using a single-spaced format, answer the following questions regarding your professional goals:
 - What is your career goal?
 - How will completing your Masters in HDFS help you reach this goal?
 - What is your proposed timeline for completing your degree?
- **Philosophy of Education (1 page):** Using a single-spaced format, answer the following questions regarding your professional goals:
 - What do you expect from your educational experience at the graduate level?
 - What do you see as your role in your Masters education?

Please consult with your academic advisor on the completion of each of these items. All the required fillable PDF forms and samples can be found at [here](#).

Scheduling of Candidacy Exam Meeting

Once your academic advisor has received all the faculty evaluations and approved all of the materials required, you will need to contact your committee members to schedule a meeting. You need to allow your committee at least 2 weeks before your meeting to review your materials.

Candidacy meetings should be completed by **May 1**.

Please make sure that the committee members sign the **Candidacy Exam Report Form** at the **scheduled Candidacy meeting** and that you submit a copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator for the departmental records. It is recommended that both you and your advisor retain a copy of the Candidacy Exam form for your own records.

HDFS

Master's Thesis Proposal and Defense

Required Forms

[HDFS departmental forms](#)

[TTU Graduate School forms](#)

Procedure for your developing a Thesis Proposal

In preparation for developing a thesis, students need to identify potential members for the Thesis committee during their second semester (Year 1). Students are encouraged to select faculty members whose research interest and work overlap with the student's own research interests. Faculty serving on the Candidacy Exam may also serve as committee members for the thesis.

Guided by the faculty advisor/Chair of the Thesis Committee, students should start making progress in their thesis proposal by the end of the first year and the faculty advisor should provide continued feedback until the thesis proposal is no longer in "draft" form and ready to be reviewed by the thesis committee.

Your proposal should include the following sections following [TTU Graduate School Formatting Handbook](#) and guidelines:

1. Introduction (e.g., statement of the problem, significance of the study, definition of terms, organization of the thesis)
2. Literature review (e.g., comprehensive literature review theoretical assumptions, recent and relevant scholarship to support the study)
3. Research questions or hypotheses
4. Methods (e.g., target population, recruitment procedures, data collection procedures, description of measuring instruments)
5. Proposed plan of analyses

Notification of Thesis Proposal Meeting

The Graduate Program Director and Graduate Coordinator should both be notified via email of the date, time, and location of your thesis defense at least 2 weeks before your proposal meeting.

Proposal Meeting

At the meeting, your faculty advisor will introduce you and you will provide a brief (30 minutes maximum) PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of the research proposal. Following your presentation, committee members are invited by your faculty advisor to ask questions. Once the questioning session is completed, you will then be excused from the room while the committee decides whether or not your proposal meeting was successful and they will complete the [Thesis Proposal Checklist](#) and the [Approval of Thesis Proposal form](#).

Both forms contain the departmental expectations for your proposal, presentation, and knowledge to complete the proposed study. You will then be invited to return to the room and the results will be discussed with your committee.

Following your proposal meeting, your advisor must submit the approval/disapproval of your thesis proposal to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Director. You and your advisor should retain a copy of the forms for your own records.

HDFS MASTERS THESIS CREDIT DISTRIBUTION

In the spirit of treating faculty equitably regarding their involvement in dissertations, the following policy governs the distribution of HDFS 6000 credit among committee members. At a minimum, graduate students will adhere to a policy of awarding credit to all committee members during:

- 1. The semester in which they first begin working on their thesis proposal (i.e., when they first begin making use of their committee for proposal ideas and feedback);**
- 2. The semester in which they have their formal thesis proposal meeting with their committee, which is nearly always a different semester from (1) above; and**
- 3. The semester in which they have their thesis defense**

The committee chairperson should receive a minimum of 3 credits per semester of thesis work (not just the three semesters mentioned above for committee members). Students enrolling for thesis credits simply to maintain continuous enrollment must be enrolled in at least 1 credit with their committee chairperson. Students should consult their chairperson regarding the number of credits to be taken. Per Graduate School policy, students must be enrolled in at least 3 credits of thesis hours the semester they defend their thesis. It is also the expectation of the Graduate School that students will not propose their thesis in the same semester they defend their thesis.

Students who violate this policy run the risk of asking their committee to read a document (proposal or final draft), or render other advice or assistance, only to have the committee member refuse on the basis of receiving no credit for the current semester (i.e., one or more committee members are not officially working with the student during the time the student needs their attention). Finally, students are strongly encouraged to remain in Lubbock until the completion of their thesis.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval for Research with Human Subjects

Per university policies all types of research conducted with human subjects require IRB approval. Students are responsible for developing the IRB proposal for the thesis with guidance provided by their advisor. IRB proposals are electronically submitted to the Office of Research & Innovation-[Human Subjects Protection Program](#) via Cayuse Software.

Students should request access to the Cayuse IRB prior to submitting a **proposal** at Only full-time or tenured TTU faculty members or full-time employees with a terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D.; Ed.D., J.D.) are allowed to serve as Principal Investigators (PI). Thus, the student's advisor should serve as the PI and certify and approve the submission of the IRB proposal. For detailed information about IRB procedures including sample materials please visit [this site](#).

Students should work with their advisors to address all feedback provided by the IRB and must wait until an approval letter is provided by the IRB to start recruiting participants and collection data for thesis. Students are responsible for conducting research according to the procedures approved by the IRB. In case of modifications, incidents, and other potential issues, students must discuss with their advisor and proceed accordingly to the **Human Research Protection Program** guidelines.

Thesis Format and Thesis Defense Meeting

Your proposal should include the following sections following **TTU Graduate School Formatting Handbook and guidelines**:

1. Introduction (e.g., statement of the problem, significance of the study, definition of terms, organization of the thesis)
2. Extended literature review (e.g., theoretical assumptions, recent and relevant scholarship to support the study)
3. Research questions or hypotheses
4. Methods (e.g., target population, recruitment procedures, data collection procedures, description of measuring instruments)
5. Proposed plan of analyses
6. Results (e.g., quantitative or qualitative analyses results; tables, figures)
7. Discussion
8. Conclusions
9. References
10. Appendixes (optional)

A completed thesis (with all above mentioned parts, including those required by the Graduate School) must be completed prior to your thesis defense. When your faculty advisor has approved your completed thesis, you may schedule your defense with your committee. You need to plan your meeting such that faculty on your committee have at least 2 weeks to review your thesis prior to your meeting. Please keep this timeline in mind as you prepare your thesis.

Notice of Thesis Defense Meeting

Students need to fill out the **Defense Notification form** at least 4-6 weeks prior to your proposal meeting and submit it to the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Coordinator via email along with information of the date, time, and location of your thesis defense. This information will be shared with all graduate students and faculty, and all are welcome to attend the public defense.

Procedure for Master's Thesis Defense

Your faculty advisor will introduce you and you will provide a brief PowerPoint (30 minute maximum) presentation to provide an overview of your work. This presentation should be reviewed and approved by your advisor prior to the thesis defense meeting. Following your presentation, audience members not on your committee (e.g., other graduate students, friends, family members and other faculty members) and your committee are invited by your faculty advisor to ask questions. Once that is complete, the faculty advisor will thank and excuse audience members. Your committee may then ask additional questions if necessary. You will then be excused from the room while the committee decides whether or not your defense was successful. Upon successful completion of your thesis defense, the committee members will complete the Thesis Defense Checklist, the Oral Exam and Thesis-Dissertation Approval form and the forms required by the TTU Graduate School. You will then be invited to return to the room and the results will be discussed with your committee. Following your defense, your advisor must submit all required forms about your Thesis Defense to the Graduate Coordinator.

Preparing for Graduation

After completing the Master's Thesis defense, students are responsible for addressing all feedback provided by the committee under their advisors guidance, finalizing the thesis according to the Graduate School guidelines, and submitting it before the required deadline.

Please review the following website for deadlines and [forms required for graduation](#).

HDFS

Doctoral Degree in Human Development and Family Sciences

Total Hours Required: 72 credit hours

Graduate students may be considered for up to 30 transfer hours to be applied toward any program requirements on a course-by-course substitution basis upon approval of the student's committee and the Graduate School. Forty-five (45) hours correspond to specific required courses (R). Of these 45 hours, 24 are content courses, 18 are research hours, and 3 are non- courses. Students also enroll in 27 hours of electives (at least 18 hours of which are in the student's area of specialization). Students typically are enrolled for at least summer session as continuous enrollment is required once students begin taking 8000 hours.

Substituting Coursework for your Degree Plan

Courses from previous degree programs for which the student earned a grade of "B" or higher may apply to the current degree plan and a maximum of 30 hours may be transferred. For example, for Ph.D. students, up to 30 hours from their Master's degree may transfer into the Ph.D. degree plan. If the student has not earned a Master's degree but did complete graduate level coursework at another institution, up to 12 credit hours from the graduate coursework completed may be transferred. Students are eligible to apply any of their TTU Master's coursework towards the Doctoral degree with the exception of 6000 thesis credit hours; any graduate coursework completed at TTU is not considered transferred hours. Courses taken more than six years prior to admission will not be accepted.

Please see information on the TTU Graduate School [website](#) for additional information about courses substitution/transferring.

Requests for substituting coursework are evaluated and granted based on the equivalence of the course content, depth and substance (electives, core areas). Students may start the process to request substituting coursework as soon as they are admitted in the doctoral program and the process should be completed before the end of the second semester (spring) of the first year in the program. The process to request prior coursework to be applied to your doctoral degree is as follows:

1. In consultation with the advisor, the student will collect the course(s) syllabi and course(s) description(s) from the institution(s) where the course(s) was/were completed and will provide the materials to the Graduate Program Director.
2. The Graduate Program Director will convene a meeting with the student, advisor, and current and/or recent previous instructors to evaluate and discuss the course(s) content equivalence, depth, and substance.
3. A recommendation will be made based on majority vote of all members of the meeting minus the student.
4. After the meeting, the Graduate Program Director will bring the recommendation to the HDFS Executive Committee for their review and approval.

5. Students will be informed of the Executive Committee's decision within two weeks from when the Graduate Program Director made their recommendation.

General Procedures for the HDFS Doctoral Degree

After being admitted to the Ph.D. program in Human Development and Family Sciences, the following procedures are required for completion of the degree.

- Students in the Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS) program also complete the Master's program requirements. Up to 30 transfer hours from an already completed Master's program may be applied toward doctoral program requirements upon approval of the student's committee and the Graduate School. If the student does not have an earned Master's but did complete graduate level coursework at another institution, up to 12 credit hours from the graduate coursework completed may be transferred.
- Post-Bac Ph.D. students are registered in the TTU System as doctoral students and thus, to be able to complete their Master's degree they will need to re-apply to the Master's program during the fall semester during their second year to be eligible to graduate in Spring/Summer of their second year. Students will need to contact the Graduate Program Director to complete the process. Post-Bac Ph.D. students complete all requirements and expectations for Master's students first (the one caveat is that students complete a doctoral degree plan during their Candidacy Exam meeting). All coursework from the Master's degree, except the 6000 hours, will be applied to the Doctoral degree. Upon completion of the Master's degree, students will complete the remainder of the doctoral coursework, the 7000 project, the Teaching Practicum, the Qualifying Exams, and dissertation.
- Doctoral students receive teaching preparation through a Teaching Practicum that is completed over 2 semesters. During the first semester, students work under the supervision of a HDFS faculty or instructor in preparation for teaching independently as a Graduate Program Teaching Instructor (GPTI) during the second semester of their teaching practicum. This is a unique aspect of our doctoral program that prepares graduate students for teaching in an academic institution. Each semester of Teaching Practicum students will register for one credit of HDFS 5101. In order to serve as a GPTI, graduate students will need to have completed 18 hours of HDFS graduate coursework and have completed their Master's degree.
- Nearly half of the required credit hours in the doctoral program (27 of 72 hours) are electives. This allows students to define their own area of specialization. At least nine courses must be related to their specialization, and up to five courses may be taken outside of the HDFS department. Many HDFS students take courses at the TTU Health Sciences Center, College of Education, Psychological Sciences, Women's and Gender Studies,, Sociology, and other related fields.
- The HDFS program has a rigorous methodological sequence including quantitative and qualitative course offerings and electives.
- Graduate students are actively involved in research projects throughout their program and work in HDFS faculty research labs and may include research collaborations in the Child Development Research Center, the Center for Adolescent Resiliency, the Early Head Start Program and the Institute for Developmental Science. Other potential research collaborations are available across campus including the TTU Health Sciences Center, Women's and Gender Studies, and the Burkhart Center for Autism Research.

The departmental and graduate school forms for the Doctoral degree can be found on the following websites:

HDFS

TTU Graduate School

The HDFS [website](#) contains the required steps for completing the Doctoral Degree, as well as links to information about required deadlines for all activities.

Students are responsible for meeting all departmental and TTU Graduate School Deadlines. Please review the information on this website thoroughly and discuss with your advisor for further guidance. In addition, please refer the HDFS calendar with specific deadlines and due dates updated each academic year. These due dates are re-mailed and provided in hard copy format to all graduate students.

Please note that you, as well as your faculty advisor, need to retain copies of all forms submitted to the HDFS office or the Graduate School.

The major milestones of the Doctoral Program are:

- Doctoral degree credit hours
- Preliminary Exam Meeting - by the end of the second semester (spring)
- HDFS 7000 Project
- Teaching Practicum
- Qualifying Exams (Theories, Methods, Specialization)
- Dissertation Proposal Meeting
- Dissertation Defense

First Year

Students are **REQUIRED (R)** (*or demonstrated competence) to enroll in these Core Courses during the first year in the doctoral program. These courses serve as pre-requisites for all other courses in the program.

Fall

HDFS 5110	Introduction to Graduate Studies in HDFS (1 hour) R
HDFS 5310	Theories of Human Development* (3) R
HDFS 5349	Quantitative Methods I (Intro to Statistics)* (3) R
HDFS 5311	Independent Study with Advisor (3)

Spring

Complete Preliminary Exam (by May 1st)

HDFS 5321	Family Theory* (3) R
HDFS 5351	Research Methods* (3) R
HDFS 6352	Quantitative Methods II (ANOVA, Regression, Multivariate) (3) R

Summer

Potentially begin HDFS 7000

Second Year**Fall**

HDFS 6364 Quantitative Methods III (SEM) (3) **R**
 HDFS 7000 Research (3-6) **R**
 Elective Elective course

Spring

HDFS 6370 Quantitative Methods IV (Longitudinal) (3) **R**
 HDFS 7000 Research (3-6) **R**
 Elective Elective course

Third Year**Fall**

HDFS 6366 Qualitative Methods (3) **R**
 HDFS 5101 Approved University Teaching (Teaching Practicum) (1) **R**
 Elective Elective course

Spring

Qualifying Exams (Theory and Methods in January, followed by Specialization)

HDFS 5101 Approved University Teaching (GPTI) (1) **R**
 Elective Elective course
 Elective Elective course

Fourth Year**Fall**

HDFS 8000 Dissertation (3 or 6) **R** (if not re-taking Qualifying Exam until Spring of the next year, enroll in HDFS 5311, 3 or 6)
 Elective Elective course (3 or 6)

Spring

HDFS 8000 Dissertation (3 or 6) **R**
 Elective Elective course (3 or 6)

Students interested in working on a minor or certificate, (e.g. Women's and Gender Studies, Cross-Cultural Studies) may substitute elective hours to fulfill the requirement of the program.

HDFS

Doctoral Degree Plan of Study

Up to 30 transfer hours may be applied toward any program requirements on a course-by- course substitution basis upon approval of the student’s committee and the Graduate School.

Core Requirements (45 hours)

**Or demonstrated competence. All are 3 credit hours, unless otherwise noted*

HDFS	Semester
5101 Introduction to HDFS (1 credit)	_____
5310 Theories of Human Development	_____
5321 Family Theory	_____
5349 Quantitative Methods I	_____
5351 Research Methods	_____
6352 Quantitative Methods II	_____
6365 Quantitative Methods III	_____
6370 Quantitative Methods IV	_____
6366 Qualitative Methods	_____
7000 Research (6 hours required)	_____
5101 Approved University Teaching (1 credit)	_____
5101 Approved University Teaching (1 credit)	_____
8000 Dissertation (12 hours required)	_____

Specialization / Elective Requirements (27 hours)

Nine elective courses are required, at least 8 of which must be related to your area of specialization, for a total of 27 credit hours of electives. Up to 5 classes may be from outside the HDFS department (for example, psychological sciences, education, communications, etc.) if you and your advisor agree that these fit well in your program of study. You are not required, however, to take any classes from outside HDFS.

HDFS	Semester
5302 Introduction to Gerontology	_____
5311 Problems in HDFS	_____
5313 Psychosocial Development	_____
5314 Infant Development	_____
5317 Adolescent Development	_____
5319 Development in Adulthood	_____
5320 Interpersonal and Family Dynamics	_____
5341 Socialization Processes and Addiction	_____
5352 Sex and Gender Roles	_____
5353 Issues and Research in HDFS*A	_____
5361 Parent-Child and Peer Relationships	_____
5380 Relationship Development	_____
6320 Seminar in Risk Taking	_____
6330 Family Problems	_____
6363 Advanced Topics in Human Development*B	_____
6373 Advanced Topics in Family Sciences*C	_____
6371 Practicum in HDFS	_____
6390 Program Development and Evaluation	_____
7000 Research (may be repeated)	_____
Outside Electives	_____

*A includes Grant Writing; Writing for Publication; The Art of Teaching; and other topics as needed.

*B includes Language Development; Development and the Brain; Gender Role Development; Cognitive Development in Childhood; Cultural Issues in Child Development; Race, Poverty, and Ethnicity in Human Development; and other topics as needed.

*C includes Family Strengths and Diversity; Family Life Education & Ethics; Family Law and Public Policy; Biosocial Issues in the Family; and other topics as needed.

HDFS 5353, 6363, and 6373 may be repeated for credit under various topics. Students may also retake HDFS 5311 and 7000 (even after completing the 7000 project; please see below for more detailed information about the 7000 project). Students interested in working on a minor or certificate, (e.g. Women's and Gender Studies, Cross-Cultural Studies) may substitute specialization/elective hours to fulfill the requirement of the program

Residency Requirement: A total of at least 18 semester hours of graduate course work in two consecutive terms plus the summer.

Preliminary Exam Meeting

By the end of the second semester (spring) of your doctoral program, you must complete your preliminary exam meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to convene with your advisor and the additional members of your dissertation committee to assess your academic performance in the program, your plan of study, the alignment of your goals with the training offered in our program, and to address any questions you or faculty have about your progress in the program.

Your preliminary exam committee is composed of your academic advisor (Chair of Committee) and two other faculty members from HDFS. Your committee should be formed in consultation with your advisor and by taking into consideration overlapping research interests with you and the committee members.

In preparation for the Preliminary Exam, students should submit the Consent for Student Evaluation for Preliminary Exam containing the list of evaluating faculty (i.e., course instructors, advisor, assistantship supervisor) to the Graduate Program Coordinator by **March 15** so that evaluating faculty will be provided with the evaluations forms on a timely manner. Faculty evaluations will be provided to your advisor by the Graduate Program Coordinator for the Preliminary Exam meeting.

Once your candidacy meeting is scheduled, please notify the Graduate Coordinator via email with the date, time, and place of your meeting.

Each of the following items is required for your candidacy exam:

- **Degree Plan**
- **Semester-by-Semester Course Sequence Chart**
- **Preliminary Exam Report Form**
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
- **Professional Goals (1 page):** Using a single-spaced format, answer the following questions regarding your professional goals:
 - What is your career goal?
 - How will completing your Ph.D. in HDFS help you reach this goal?
 - What is your proposed timeline for completing your degree?
- **Philosophy of Education (1 page):** Using a single-spaced format, answer the following questions regarding your professional goals:
 - What do you expect from your educational experience at the graduate level?
 - What do you see as your role in your doctoral education?

Scheduling of Preliminary Exam Meeting

Please consult with your academic advisor on the completion of each of these items. All the required fillable PDF forms and samples can be found [here](#).

Once your academic advisor has received all the faculty evaluations and approved all of the materials required, you will need to contact your committee members to schedule a meeting. You need to allow your committee at least 2 weeks before the meeting to review your materials.

Preliminary exam meetings should be completed by **May 1**. Please make sure that the committee members sign the Preliminary Exam Report Form and that you submit the hard copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator for filing it. It is recommended that you and your advisor retain a copy of the Preliminary Exam form for your own records.

HDFS Doctoral Degree 7000 Project

HDFS 7000 is intended to be an intensive research project, conducted under the supervision of the student's advisor. The research may involve collection of data or analysis of an existing data set. The end product must be a manuscript or presentation based on the research project that is presented at a regional or national conference with the prior approval of the advisor. The presentation may be either a poster or a talk, but the student must be the presenter.

It is recommended the 7000 project be completed in two (2) semesters (6 credits) although this may vary depending on the nature of the study. At the beginning of each semester during the completion of the 7000 project, the student must meet with the advisor and fill out the **7000 Project Contract** and submit it to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

The faculty/dissertation advisor will notify the Program Director that the HDFS 7000 project has been completed by submitting the Approval of 7000 form found [here](#) along with a copy of the submitted manuscript or presentation. Submission of the 7000 project to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal is highly recommended.

The specific nature and scope of the 7000 project must be discussed and determined between the student and the advisor. Ultimately, the advisor must use their discretion to make decisions about what constitutes an acceptable HDFS 7000 project. It is expected that the student will be the first author on the manuscript and/or presentation, reflecting that the student made the primary contributions to the specific research being reported and the preparation of the manuscript. Usually, the advisor will be co-author of the manuscript, reflecting the advisor's contribution to the research and to the write-up. It may be appropriate to include additional co-authors for the manuscript and/or presentation.

Authorship is not "automatic" and must be based on actual contribution. Authorship must follow the "Ethical Standards for Reporting and Publishing of Scientific Information" published by the American Psychological Association (APA).

The scope, nature, timeline, and authorship of the 7000 project should be formalized in a contract between the advisor and student prior to beginning the 7000 project.

In the event that a student has a conference presentation submitted and accepted, but the timing of the conference is such that presentation is not possible before the most optimal time for the student to take qualifying exams, then the student may present the same work in the same way that it will be presented at the regional or national conference at a colloquium to be held in the department. The student is responsible for arranging and announcing the presentation in consultation with the HDFS Graduate Program Director.

Teaching Practicum (I and II)

The Teaching Practicum aims to provide doctoral students with a set of skills and tools for teaching independently. Doctoral students **must complete a Teaching Practicum (HDFS 5101 Approved University Teaching-1 course credit each) over two (2) consecutive semesters to fulfill the teaching requirement for the doctoral degree.** Students will register for one credit of HDFS 5101 for Teaching Practicum I and Teaching Practicum II, typically in their third year of the program. The student must have completed their Master's degree and 18 hours of HDFS coursework in order to serve as GPTI as required by Teaching Practicum II.

Below are the steps graduate students should follow at least 1 semester in advance of Teaching Practicum I:

- 1. Students must consult with their advisors before initiating the process of identifying a potential faculty/instructor supervisor and registering for the teaching practicum.** The teaching practicum can be conducted under the students' dissertation advisor supervision. The student may do Teaching Practicum I with a faculty member who is not their advisor.
- 2. The students should inform the Graduate Program Director about their intentions to conduct their Teaching Practicum I one semester prior** to starting the practicum to be approved to register for the course. Students need to send a request via email with the following information: name and number of the course they will be conducting the practicum for, semester, and the potential faculty/instructor supervisor for the practicum (cc email to advisor and faculty/instructor supervisor). This allows proper planning and scheduling for courses so the graduate student can serve as a GPTI for Teaching Practicum II.

During the first semester of the Teaching Practicum I, students will be supervised by a HDFFS faculty or instructor in preparation for teaching independently as a Graduate Program Teaching Instructor (GPTI-Practicum II). Students will complete the following required activities:

- Attend course lectures regularly (time, classroom space permitting)
- Meet weekly with the supervising faculty/instructor
- Develop and deliver four (4) guest lectures
- Develop a complete syllabus of the course that will be taught in the second semester
- Develop one-two sample assignment
- Develop one (1) sample exam
- Write a brief reflection report of skills learned during the practicum

Subsequent GPTIs assignments will be contingent upon successful completion of the Teaching Practicum I and positive recommendation by the supervising faculty/instructor. If students are not recommended to teach independently as a GPTI, the student must repeat the Teaching Practicum I to fulfill their teaching requirement. In the case of students who have significant previous teaching experience, the Teaching Practicum I and/or II could be waived based on appropriate documentation (e.g., syllabus, teaching evaluation scores, etc.) presented by the student to the Graduate Program Director and in consultation with their advisor.

Upon completion of the first semester of the Teaching Practicum I, **students must complete the Teaching Practicum I Report Form with the faculty/instructor supervisor and submit the form to the Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and the Advisor.**

During the second semester after successfully completing Teaching Practicum I, the students will teach independently as GPTIs (Practicum II) preferably in the same course of the practicum (availability permitting). GPTIs will be supervised by the same faculty with whom they completed Teaching Practicum I. Upon completion of the second semester of the Teaching Practicum II, students must complete the Teaching Practicum II Report Form with the faculty/instructor supervisor and submit the form to the Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and their Advisor.

GPTIs will complete the following required activities:

- Meet bi-weekly with the supervising faculty/instructor to discuss progress
- Receive three (3) teaching observations by the supervising faculty using the HDFFS Department GPTI Teaching Evaluation Worksheet
- Submit the finalized course syllabus at the beginning of the semester to **Digital Measures** as required by the university Review course exams with the supervising faculty/instructor
- Review course assignments with the supervising faculty/instructor
- Seek advice from supervising faculty/instructor and course coordinator when needed

PLEASE NOTE: Students completing their Teaching Practicum should not complete activities that are expected for TAs (e.g., grading exams/assignments, proctoring exams, keeping class records) but will focus solely on preparing for teaching independently. Students without TA experience may want mentorship for grading, and it would be appropriate to give them a small percentage of exams/assignments to grade (less than 20%). The supervisor should be mindful that they are providing feedback and creating a positive learning experience for the graduate student.

HDFS Doctoral Qualifying Exam Procedures

The doctoral Qualifying Examination is taken during the third year, usually in Spring, after the completion of required course work (HDFS 5110, 5310, 5321, 5351, 5349, 6352, 6365, 6366, and 6370) and fulfilling the requirement for the 7000 project, but not including the Teaching Practicum (two credits of HDFS 5101). Students who receive accommodations through Student Disability Services will receive these accommodations during the Qualifying Exam process.

Presentation of the 7000 project and all required coursework covered by the Qualifying Exam must be completed with a grade of at least B- before taking the Qualifying Exam. Students must attempt their qualifying examination within six months of completing the necessary coursework. Failure to do so may be cause for dismissal from the program. The theoretical foundations and research methods portions of the exam will be completed before the specialization portion. The chairs of the Theories and Research Methods committees will generate a memorandum containing the exam questions for each exam including specific formatting guidelines. The memorandum will also include the dates of the oral exams. Oral exams are scheduled within 3 - 4 weeks of the start of the semester and the candidate will know the specific week of the oral exam when the qualifying exam dates are set. While completing all their qualifying exams, students should register for 8000 dissertation hours. If students do not successfully pass the Theories and Methods Qualifying Exams the first time, they should work with the Graduate Program Coordinator to change their registration from 8000 to 5311 hours.

Students must Declare Intention of taking the qualifying examination by **May 1** if they plan to take the exams in fall and by **November 15th** if they plan to take the exams in spring. The Theories and Research Methods qualifying exams will be offered in August and January of each year.

The Qualifying Exam will consist of a take-home written exam followed by oral portions in each of the major areas of the degree plan: (1) Theoretical Foundations, (2) Research Methods, (3) and Specialization. The exam questions will be prepared and graded by the respective committees. One Graduate Faculty member outside HDFS may serve on/substitute for a specialization qualifying exam committee, subject to approval of the student's advisor. These committees will also serve as the examining committees for the oral portion of the exams.

The examination reflects the philosophy that students should have a common expertise as well as a unique expertise in the specialization. It permits the student to integrate materials from a variety of different courses and to identify specific strengths and weaknesses prior to beginning the dissertation. Students are required, however, to be engaged in research throughout their program (i.e., via their HDFS 7000 research, at a minimum). Initial work on the dissertation proposal or studies related to the dissertation research in terms of a literature review and development of research questions are often in progress prior to the qualifying examination.

A period of at least four months must elapse between the dates of the qualifying examinations and the dissertation defense.

The results of the written and oral exams must be provided by the Theories and Methods committees to the HDFS Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Coordinator within 24 hours after the oral exam is completed via email so that the student's advisor is informed about their student's performance and the committees' recommendations.

Final recommendations of the Theory and Research Methods portion of the qualifying exams will be discussed at the following faculty meeting for approval and then, the official results will be provided to the student with copy to the Graduate Program Director and the student's advisor.

After all portions of the qualifying exams and all required coursework are completed (including Teaching Practicum I and II), the Advisor will submit the **Doctoral Program Qualifying Exam Report** to the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Coordinator. The Qualifying Exam Report cannot be filed and the student cannot be advanced to candidacy until all required coursework (including the Teaching Practicum) and qualifying exams are successfully completed per Graduate School policy.

Theory and Methods Qualifying Exams Written and Oral Portions

The Theoretical and the Research Methods qualifying exams are given prior to the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Students will have a full week to complete the written portion of the exam. Students will need to review the provided calendar to know dates for the written and oral exams in a given year. The students will receive the exam questions from the Graduate Program Coordinator via email on Monday at 8am and should submit their exam by the following Monday by 5pm to the Graduate Program Coordinator via email. The Graduate Program Coordinator then will distribute answers to the theories and research methods committee members for their evaluation. Committee members who wish to have a paper copy of answers may request one from the Graduate Program Coordinator; otherwise, the written portions will be distributed electronically.

The purpose of the oral exam is for students to defend and discuss their own areas of specialization, ideas, and knowledge. It allows students an opportunity to clarify their written work and constitutes an important professional skill.

Because the Qualifying Exam represents the student's own written and oral work, there should be no consultation about the content of the exam between the student and other students, faculty, advisor, tutors, and/or any parties between the time the Qualifying Exam questions are distributed, and all the oral exams are completed. Students may consult the chair of the relevant Qualifying Examination committee for clarification on the written question. If any personal or technological difficulties arise during the course of the Qualifying Exam, immediately alert the chairs of the relevant committees, the Graduate Program Director, and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

In the preparation of questions, committee members shall attempt to avoid duplication of material covered in any single course. Questions should require integration of material that may have been covered in a variety of courses and other experiences.

Specialization Qualifying Exam Written and Oral Portions

After the students have passed the theories and research methods exams, they will be eligible to complete the specialization exam. For the specialization exam, students will meet with their specialization committee (advisor and 2 additional faculty) to discuss the organizational structure for a comprehensive literature review (25-30 pages) in the student's area of expertise before writing the paper. The paper may be viewed as Chapter 2 of a dissertation.

The specialization committee will discuss and decide on the deadlines for submitting the written portion of the exam, the oral portion of the exam, and the specific formatting guidelines. The specialization oral portion will be scheduled within 3-4 weeks after the written portion is submitted.

Final results of the Specialization portion of the Qualifying Exams will be discussed at the following faculty meeting or an electronic vote will be requested from the faculty during the summer for approval. The official results will be provided to the student with copy to the Graduate Program Director and the student's advisor.

COMPETENCIES FOR QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Listed below are expected competencies for doctoral students at the completion of their course work. These are not just expectations for the Qualifying Examination but are the minimum theoretical and methodological skills for dissertation-level work. The Qualifying Exam is an evaluation checkpoint to determine if students are adequately prepared to proceed to their dissertation research. At the point of dissertation, students should be capable of designing and conducting research deemed by others as having the potential of making a substantial contribution to the literature. Students should expect their advisors and other dissertation committee members to play no more than an advisory role.

Research Methods

In the Research Methods Qualifying Exam, students are expected to show a level of expertise which convincingly demonstrates to the faculty their ability to understand fundamental methodological and statistical concepts and apply them in design of research within the purview of HDFS.

Through course work, independent research, and familiarity with published research (including methodologically-focused articles), **an exam response will be given a grade of PASS if the student can demonstrate:**

- **A solid foundation in basic research methods fundamentals as covered in the core course (Research Methods in HDFS) and additionally from the student's own research experiences (e.g., thesis, 7000 research).**
- **An understanding of qualitative and quantitative analysis procedures as covered in the core courses (Quantitative Methods I–IV in HDFS, and Qualitative Methods in HDFS).**
- **The ability to design research that adequately addresses research questions or hypotheses.**
- **A general understanding of the major methodological issues and controversies in family sciences and human development.**
- **Within the student's specialization area, a sophisticated understanding of methodological problems and the ability to discuss (with reference to specific articles in the literature) various solutions that have been offered to handle these problems, along with the strengths and weaknesses of each.**
- **Application of the above to critiques of the existing literature and to the development of an original proposal.**
- **The ability to write an exam paper that specifically addresses the exam question and that is well-organized.**

Theoretical Foundations

In the Theories Qualifying Exam, students are expected to show a level of expertise which convincingly demonstrates to the faculty of their ability to understand fundamental theories in Human Development and Family Sciences and to apply them in design of research within the purview of HDFS.

Through course work, independent research, and familiarity with published research (including theoretically-focused articles), **an exam response will be given a grade of PASS if the student can:**

- ♦ **Demonstrate critical thinking about theories and theoretical issues/constructs.**
- ♦ **Demonstrate understanding of (basic) theoretical issues at an abstract level (i.e., beyond the superficial description of concepts).**
- ♦ **Identify, explain, compare, contrast, assess, apply, and/or integrate multiple theoretical perspectives both within and across Human Development and Family Sciences theories.**
- ♦ **Support theoretical arguments and constructs with specific examples and evidence from scholarly literature.**

Specialization

The specialization exam is conducted by a committee of three departmental graduate faculty members who are selected by the student, with the chair of this exam being the graduate student's faculty advisor. One Graduate Faculty member outside HDFS may serve on a specialization qualifying exam committee, subject to approval of the student's Advisor. The specialization question will consist of a comprehensive review of the student's identified specialization area; a paper of 25-30 pages, that would constitute a significant portion of the review of literature expected in chapter 2 of a dissertation.

An exam response will be given a grade of PASS if:

1. The exam response synthesizes and evaluates pertinent information in addition to reviewing and analyzing material. (The student should meet with their advisor and dissertation committee prior to the specialization qualifying exam to develop guidelines for pertinent knowledge that may be required on the specialization exam.)

Note: Synthesis is defined as the combining of often varied and diverse ideas, forces, or factors into one coherent or consistent complex; or composition or combination of parts so as to form a whole. Evaluate is defined as judgments concerning the worth, quality, significance, amount, degree of, condition of.

2. The central ideas or arguments in the response are (a) thoroughly explored, (b) supported with appropriate references, and (c) presented clearly and logically.
3. The exam response includes discussion of relevant theoretical frameworks and research findings that are appropriately referenced.
4. The exam response is well organized.
5. The most current APA Publication Manual guidelines are consistently followed in preparation of the typed copy of the exam response.

An exam response will be given a grade of FAIL if:

The first criterion for a pass has not been met, regardless of whether criteria 2 through 5 have been met.

QUALIFYING EXAM WRITTEN AND ORAL PORTIONS

A. WRITTEN EXAM

The written exam should be concise, clear, non-redundant, accurate, consistent with instructions, and grounded in the scholarly literature. Additionally, students are expected to cite original sources unless a secondary source makes a unique contribution. Students are expected to follow APA (American Psychological Association) style and any specific formatting guidelines provided by each committee.

The written exam must include a Cover Sheet specifying the portion of the exam (i.e., Specialization Qualifying Exam, Theoretical Foundations Qualifying Exam, etc.), the date, and the student's unique university-assigned ID number. **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT PUT THEIR NAMES ON THESE RESPONSES.**

Style:

- APA Publication Manual (the most recent edition) guidelines should consistently be followed in preparation of the typed copy.
- Each copy should be bound such that there are no loose papers (one heavy duty staple in the top left corner is sufficient).

Submitting the Exam:

- An electronic version (theoretical foundations and research methods) response should be turned in to the Graduate Coordinator by the deadline specified.
- Failing to submit the exams by the deadline will result in an automatic fail.

B. ORAL EXAM

The purpose of the oral exam is for students to defend and discuss theoretical and methodological knowledge relevant to the written exam. In preparing for orals, students should focus on the clarity of their written work so that they can adequately respond to questions about the paper's content. Students should not focus on minor or superficial details in the written paper (e.g., errors in APA formatting). The oral exam may be used to amplify, reconsider, correct, or adjust the arguments/substantive issues raised by the written paper. In the oral, students may be asked to identify, describe and/or apply additional constructs of the theories and methodologies they chose to use in the written paper.

Grading Criteria for the Qualifying Exams

The HDFS Qualifying Exams – Theories and Methods – are taken during the same semester and graduate students should review the competencies expected for each exam.

On their first testing occasion, students must take these two qualifying examinations during the same semester. Students will receive a grade of pass or fail on each portion of the exam, although a committee may recommend a deferred decision to the graduate faculty as a prelude to receiving a pass or fail. A deferred decision is one whereby the faculty on the examination committee do not assign a grade of either pass or fail. The student will meet with the chair of the committee (or committee designate) within three working days of notification of the Qualifying Exam result (e.g., if notified on Thursday, the student makes an appointment for Friday, Monday, or Tuesday) in order to determine the concerns of the committee.

Following the meeting with the committee chair, the student will have 14 calendar days to address the concerns and the feedback provided by the committee. Upon receiving the revised responses to the qualified exam, the committee will evaluate and provide the student with a final grade within two weeks.

Procedure When the Examination is Satisfactory

The Qualifying Exam Committee Chairs bring the committee recommendations to the faculty for a vote and at that time presents the faculty advisor and department chair with a letter that summarizes their recommendation. When all Qualifying Exams and required coursework is completed, the student's Advisor will fill out the Doctoral Program Qualifying Exam Report and will submit it to the the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will submit the form to the Graduate School. Once the student has successfully completed coursework and all Qualifying Exams, the Qualifying Exam Report should be submitted as soon as possible to the Graduate School so that the student can be officially admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree. Upon admission to candidacy, the student has a maximum of four years in which to complete the dissertation, according to the Graduate School catalog. Please note that this four-year limit may exceed the number of years of funding a student may receive from the department.

Procedure When the Examination is Not Satisfactory

A student who does not pass the Qualifying Examination may be permitted to repeat it once, after a lapse of at least four months, and not more than twelve months from the date of the unsatisfactory examination. All failed sections of the Qualifying Exam can be taken either together or separately; however, each one must be retaken and passed within the two testing occasions that they are offered after the original fail.

Failure to pass any portion the Qualifying Examination within the specified time may result in dismissal from the program irrespective of performance in other portions of the Qualifying Exam or aspects of doctoral study. Students who decide to take the doctoral Qualifying Examination certify by virtue of such decision that they are prepared to do so, and thus cannot at a later date (i.e., following the grading of the examination) claim prior disability or other hardship as:

- (a) a reason for their unsatisfactory examination performance; and therefore as
- (b) grounds for an appeal to overturn the decision of the graduate faculty.

If a student fails a qualifying exam, the student will have 4 days during the second attempt (next exam period) to complete the exam (i.e., Monday at 8am – Thursday at 5pm).

If a student fails any one of the qualifying exams twice, the student's Advisor will fill out the **Doctoral Program Qualifying Exam Report** and will submit it to the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Program Coordinator. The Graduate Program Coordinator will submit the form to the Graduate School and the student will be dismissed from the HDFS department and the TTU Graduate School.

Qualifying Exams Grading Faculty Approval

Results from the Theory, Methods, and Specialization Qualifying Exams will be presented to the faculty by the committee chairs and the committee recommendation will be approved with a majority of votes- 2/3 favorable votes. When approval is needed for the Specialization Exam during the summer, faculty will have 10 days to respond with their votes via email. If no approval is received by the established deadline, it will be assumed that the vote is positive.

HDFS

Dissertation Proposal and Defense

Required Forms

[HDFS departmental forms](#)

[TTU Graduate School forms](#)

Procedure for Developing a Dissertation Proposal

In preparation for developing your dissertation proposal, students need to identify potential members for the dissertation committee (minimum 3 faculty including the advisor who will serve as chair; faculty outside the department can be also included). Students are encouraged to select faculty members whose research interest and work overlap with the student's own interests. Faculty serving on the Preliminary Exam could also serve as committee members for the dissertation.

Guided by the Faculty Advisor/Chair of the Dissertation Committee, students should start making progress in their dissertation proposal after they have completed and passed all Qualifying Exams. The faculty advisor should provide continued feedback until the dissertation proposal is no longer in "draft" form and ready to be reviewed by the committee.

1. Your proposal should include the following sections following [TTU Graduate School Formatting Manual](#) and guidelines:
2. Introduction (e.g., statement of the problem, significance of the study, definition of terms, organization of the thesis)
3. Extended literature review (e.g., theoretical assumptions, recent and relevant scholarship to support the study)
4. Research questions or hypotheses
5. Methods (e.g., target population, recruitment procedures, data collection procedures, description of measuring instruments)
6. Proposed plan of analyses

Students may choose to write their dissertation using the 2-4 journal articles format; see [TTU Graduate School Formatting Manual](#) for details. Approval for this format should be provided by the Advisor and the dissertation committee.

Once your faculty advisor has approved your proposal, you should schedule a meeting with your committee. You need to plan your meeting such that faculty on your committee have at least 2 weeks to review your proposal prior to your meeting. Please keep this timeline in mind as you prepare your proposal.

Notification of Dissertation Proposal Meeting

The Graduate Program Director and Graduate Coordinator should both be notified via email of the date, time, and location of your dissertation defense at least 4-6 weeks prior to your proposal meeting.

Proposal Meeting

At the meeting, your faculty advisor will introduce you and you will provide a PowerPoint presentation that is approximately 30 minutes in length to provide an overview of the research you propose to conduct. Following your presentation, your committee members are invited by your faculty advisor to ask questions. Once the questioning session is completed, you will then be excused from the room while the committee decides whether or not your proposal meeting was successful and they will complete the Dissertation Proposal Checklist and the Approval of Dissertation Proposal form.

Both forms contain the departmental expectations for your proposal, presentation, and knowledge to complete the proposed study. You will then be invited to return to the room and the results will be discussed with your committee.

Following your proposal meeting, your advisor must submit the approval/disapproval of your dissertation proposal to the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Program Director. It is recommended that you and your advisor retain a copy of the forms for your own records.

HDFS DOCTORAL DEGREE DISSERTATION CREDIT DISTRIBUTION

In the spirit of treating faculty equitably regarding their involvement in dissertations, it has become necessary to develop a policy governing the distribution of HDFS 8000 credit among committee members. At a minimum, graduate students will adhere to a policy of awarding credit to all of their committee members during:

1. **The semester in which they first begin working on their dissertation proposal (i.e., when they first begin making use of their committee for proposal ideas and feedback);**
2. **The semester in which they have their formal dissertation proposal meeting with their committee, which is nearly always a different semester from (1) above; and**
3. **The semester in which they have their dissertation defense**

The committee chairperson should receive a minimum of 3 credits per semester of dissertation work (not just the three semesters mentioned above for committee members). Students enrolling for dissertation credits simply to maintain continuous enrollment must be enrolled in at least 1 credit with their committee chairperson. Students should consult their chairperson regarding the number of credits to be taken.

Students who violate this policy run the risk of asking their committee to read a document (proposal or final draft), or render other advice or assistance, only to have the committee refuse on the basis of receiving no credit for the current semester (i.e., one or more committee members are not officially working with the student during the time the student needs their attention). Finally, students are strongly encouraged to remain in Lubbock until the completion of their dissertation.

Institutional Review Board Approval for Research with Human Subjects

Per university policies all types of research conducted with human subjects require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Students are responsible for developing the IRB proposal for the thesis with guidance provided by their advisor. IRB proposals are electronically submitted to the Office of Research & Innovation- [Human Subjects Protection Program](#) via Cayuse Software.

Students should request access to the Cayuse IRB prior to submitting a proposal [here](#). Only full-time or tenured TTU faculty members or full-time employees with a terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D.; Ed.D., J.D.) are allowed to serve as Principal Investigators (PI). Thus, the student's advisor should serve as the PI and certify and approve the submission of the IRB proposal. For detailed information about IRB procedures including sample materials please see [this page](#).

Students should work with their advisors to address all feedback provided by the IRB and must wait until an approval letter is provided by the IRB to start recruiting participants and collection data for thesis. Students are responsible for conducting research according to the procedures approved by the IRB. In case of modifications, incidents, and other potential issues, students must discuss with their advisor and proceed accordingly to the Human Research Protection Program guidelines.

Dissertation Format and Dissertation Defense Meeting

Your proposal should include the following sections following [TTU Graduate School Formatting Manual](#) and guidelines:

1. Introduction (e.g., statement of the problem, significance of the study, definition of terms, organization of the thesis)
2. Extended literature review (e.g., theoretical assumptions, recent and relevant scholarship to support the study)
3. Research questions or hypotheses
4. Methods (e.g., target population, recruitment procedures, data collection procedures, description of measuring instruments)
5. Proposed plan of analyses
6. Results (e.g., quantitative or qualitative analyses results; tables, figures)
7. Discussion
8. Conclusions
9. References
10. Appendixes (optional)

A completed dissertation (with all abovementioned parts, including those required by the Graduate School) must be done prior to your dissertation defense. When your faculty advisor has approved your complete dissertation, you may schedule your defense with your committee. You need to plan your meeting such that faculty on your committee have at least 2 weeks to review your dissertation prior to your meeting. Please keep this timeline in mind as you prepare your dissertation.

Notice of Defense Meeting

Students need to fill out the Defense Notification form at least 4-6 weeks prior to your proposal meeting and submit it to the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Coordinator via email along with information of the date, time, and location of your thesis defense. This information will be shared with all graduate students and faculty and all are welcome to attend the public defense.

Following your presentation, audience members not on your committee (e.g., other graduate students, friends, family members and other faculty members) and your committee are invited by your faculty advisor to ask questions. Once that is complete, the faculty advisor will thank and excuse audience members.

It is the responsibility of the student and the Advisor to select a Graduate School Representative to be present at the dissertation defense. The Representative must be a graduate faculty member of an outside department. The representative will need to be sent the dissertation at least one week in advance of the defense.

Procedure for Dissertation Defense

Your faculty advisor will introduce you and you will provide a PowerPoint presentation that is approximately 30 minutes in length to provide an overview of your work. The PowerPoint should be reviewed and approved by your faculty advisor in advance of the dissertation defense.

Once the public portion of your defense is completed, your committee will ask additional questions about your dissertation. Once the questioning is complete, you will then be excused from the room while the committee decides whether or not your defense was successful and they will complete the [Dissertation Defense Checklist](#), the [Oral Exam and Thesis-Dissertation Approval form](#) and any forms required by the TTU Graduate School. You will then be invited to return to the room and the results will be discussed with your committee. Following your dissertation meeting, your advisor must submit all required forms about your Dissertation Defense to the Graduate Coordinator.

Preparing for Graduation

After completing the dissertation defense, students are responsible for addressing all feedback provided by the committee under their advisors guidance, finalize the dissertation according to the Graduate School guidelines and submit it before the required deadline.

Please review [this website](#) for deadlines and forms required for graduation.

Appendixes

Graduate School Forms: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/FormsResources.php>

HDFS Departmental Forms: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/hdfs/graduate/manuals.php>



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