

**Human Development and Family Science
John & Doris Norton School of Human Ecology
College of Agriculture, Life & Environmental Sciences
University of Arizona**

**HDFS Graduate Minor Handbook
Updated July, 2025**

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The following handbook is intended for graduate students in disciplines outside of Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) who are interested in pursuing a Minor in HDFS.

Program Overview:

The interdisciplinary field of Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) focuses on interpersonal processes and outcomes that influence and are influenced by human development within the family context. Relevant methods, concepts, and theory draw from the fields of HDFS and from psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, biology, health, and education. The HDFS (in the John and Doris Norton School of Human Ecology at the University of Arizona) Minor program supplements other graduate training to prepare social and behavioral scientists for research, teaching, and other professional careers in academic, government, and private-sector settings. The program description outlined in this handbook pertains to the Minor in HDFS, which is supplemental to Doctoral training in another, primary, discipline.

Research, teaching and outreach within HDFS are focused in four core areas:

- Resilience and health of marginalized populations
- Early childhood and adolescent populations
- Romantic and family relationships across the lifespan
- Innovative methods and models for studying families and development

There are two options for an HDFS minor. The first focuses on content (the first 3 core areas above) and the second focuses on quantitative methods (the last of the core areas above).

Advising:

Students interested in the HDFS Minor should select a faculty advisor to guide their study before taking their Minor classes. That is, the Minor Plan of Study should then be worked out in consultation with that advisor. Students who have taken 1 graduate course in HDFS may request from their minor faculty advisor that this course be applied toward their minor requirements. Students are strongly encouraged to identify a faculty advisor as early as possible if considering the HDFS Minor.

Minor Plan of Study:

The Minor Plan of Study form (p. 5, below) should be completed before taking Minor classes.

Requirements for the HDFS Minor:

The HDFS Minor program curriculum includes basic and applied interests in the fields of Human Development and Family Science, and provides exposure to relevant theories, research and methods within the four core areas listed above. The Minor program of study should be tailored to meet the individual needs of students in close consultation with the student's HDFS faculty advisor.

Students must take at least 3 courses (9 units) to meet their Minor course requirements. A minimum grade of 'B' in any given course is required for credit toward the Minor. For some courses, a lab session is included in addition to regular classroom time for the course. See course syllabi for information regarding associated lab hours.

HDFS Minor Focused on Content

Theory (minimum of 1 course; both courses may be counted toward Minor requirements)

- HDFS 546 – Foundations of Family and Interpersonal Theory
- HDFS 567 – Theories of Human Development

Content (maximum of 3 courses toward Minor requirements)

- HDFS 601-605, 607 – Special topics in HDFS

Please note that HDFS 601-605, 607 are seminar courses in which the focus varies across offerings. The number of HDFS 601-605, 607 seminars to be offered each academic year also varies over time. Because the topics of these courses are often not known well in advance, students should check on the exact topic each semester and allow flexibility in their plan of study to account for courses that may be offered.

Independent study (maximum of 1 course toward Minor requirements)

- HDFS 699 – Independent Study. One course (3 units) can be applied toward meeting the requirements of the Minor. Additional independent study courses can be taken, but will not count toward the credit requirements for the Minor.

HDFS Minor Focused on Quantitative Analysis (e.g., Statistics)

Statistics (minimum of 2 courses towards Minor requirements)

- HDFS 536 – Introductory Graduate Statistics
- HDFS 537 A/L – Introduction to Applied Statistics
- HDFS 537 B – Intermediate Statistics
- HDFS 617 A – Structural Equation Modeling
- HDFS 617 C – Multilevel Modeling

Independent study (maximum of 1 course toward Minor requirements)

- HDFS 699 – Independent Study. One course (3 units) can be applied toward meeting the requirements of the Minor. Additional independent study courses can be taken, but will not count toward the credit requirements for the Minor.

The Minor Comprehensive Examination:

The comprehensive examination includes written and oral examinations in the minor area of study. The minor comprehensive examination is intended to test the student's comprehensive knowledge of the minor subject area of study, both in breadth and depth.

The full Comprehensive Examination Committee (including members of the major field of study, with input from the minor advisor from HDFS) should review the student's professional goals, plan of study, and progress in the minor to date to determine whether the student is ready to take the written portion of the minor examination.

The Written Portion of the Minor Comprehensive Examination

When the student and minor faculty advisor conclude that the student is ready to proceed to the written minor examination, the student and minor advisor should consult on the following:

1. the format of that examination (sit-down, take-home, critical review paper, etc);
2. selection of questions, topics, or tasks; and
3. procedures for administration of the examination.

The minor faculty advisor evaluates the written product to determine whether the student will proceed to the oral examination, retake all or part of the written examination, or fail the examination.

In the case of a grade of rewrite, only one rewrite will be allowed. The minor faculty advisor will determine a time limit on the rewrite, and will present the student with formal written feedback summarizing deficiencies of the written examination.

The minor faculty advisor is encouraged to provide the student with advice for preparation for the oral examination, particularly if there was a rewrite of the written examination.

The Oral Portion of the Minor Comprehensive Examination

After the student passes the written examinations in the major and minor areas, the full Committee conducts a comprehensive oral examination. The oral comprehensive examination will follow the guidelines set forth by the Graduate College and the major program area.

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Minor Plan of Study for Human Development and Family Science (HDFS)

Please complete this form and obtain signatures of approval BEFORE taking minor courses. The student and Minor faculty advisor should retain copies of this form. In addition, please select Human Development and Family Science as the minor area of study in GradPath.

Student Name _____ **Student ID #** _____

Student Phone # _____ **Student E-mail** _____

HDFS Minor Faculty Advisor _____

Briefly describe the goals of your Minor course of study (i.e., what are you trying to achieve with your Minor?)

Minor courses (planned, based on course offering availability):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

SIGNATURES:

Required:

STUDENT _____ **DATE** _____

MINOR ADVISOR _____ **DATE** _____

Suggested:

MAJOR ADVISOR _____ **DATE** _____