MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.)
MAJOR IN FAMILY AND
CHILD STUDIES (CHILD LIFE
SPECIALIST CONCENTRATION
THESIS OPTION)

Program Overview
The graduate program provides students with the knowledge and expertise to attain professional positions and advancement opportunities in programs serving families and children.

Application Requirements
The items listed below are required for admission consideration for applicable semesters of entry during the current academic year. Submission instructions, additional details, and changes to admission requirements for semesters other than the current academic year can be found on The Graduate College’s website (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu). International students should review the International Admission Documents webpage (http://mycatalog.txstate.edu/graduate/admission-documents/international/) for additional requirements.

- completed online application
- $55 nonrefundable application fee
- or
- $90 nonrefundable application fee for applications with international credentials
- baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university
- official transcripts from each institution where course credit was granted
- minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses)
- background course work
- official GRE (general test only) with competitive scores in the verbal reasoning and quantitative reasoning sections
- resume/CV
- statement of purpose (approximately 500 words)
- three letters of recommendation

TOEFL or IELTS Scores
Non-native English speakers who do not qualify for an English proficiency waiver:
- official TOEFL iBT scores required with a 78 overall
- official IELTS (academic) scores required with a 6.5 overall and
  - minimum individual module scores of 6.0

This program does not offer admission if the scores above are not met.

Degree Requirements
The Master of Science (M.S.) degree with a major in Human Development and Family Sciences concentration in Child Life Specialist requires 37 semester credit hours, including a thesis. Students who do not have the appropriate background course work may be required to complete leveling courses.

Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FCS 5310</td>
<td>Research Methods in FCS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5100</td>
<td>Introduction to Human Development and Family Sciences</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5341</td>
<td>Advanced Child Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5351</td>
<td>Advanced Theory in Human Development and Family Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5352</td>
<td>Issues in Human Development and Family Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5343</td>
<td>Child Life Specialist</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5659</td>
<td>Internship in Child Life</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5305</td>
<td>Foundations of Play</td>
<td>3</td>
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Prescribed Electives
Choose 6 hours from the following:

- COUN 5316 Counseling Diverse Populations
- COUN 5340 Loss and Grief Recovery Counseling
- COUN 5368 Developmental Issues in Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Adults
- COUN 5369 Child and Adolescent Counseling Methods
- HA 5300 Healthcare Organization and Delivery
- HDFS 5347 Grief and Bereavement in Children, Adolescents, and Parents
- HDFS 5353 Program Evaluation in Human Development and Family Sciences
- HDFS 5356 Advanced Program Administration
- HDFS 5358 Practicum in Human Development and Family Sciences I
- SOCI 5363 Seminar in Medical Sociology
- SOCI 5370 Seminar in Sociology of Racial and Ethnic Relations
- SOWK 5308 Human Behavior in Individual and Family Social Environments
- SOWK 5315 Social Work Intervention in Child Abuse & Neglect

Thesis

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>HDFS 5399A</td>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Choose a minimum of 3 hours from the following:

- HDFS 5199B Thesis
- HDFS 5299B Thesis
- HDFS 5399B Thesis
- HDFS 5599B Thesis
- HDFS 5999B Thesis

Total Hours 37
The child life internship is a full-time, non-paid internship required by the Child Life Council. It should be completed in the final year of the master’s program. Child life internships are extremely competitive in nature and interns are selected by the individual hospitals. Therefore, internships are not guaranteed. Also, due to the competitive nature of internships, it might be necessary to apply to hospitals outside of the Central Texas area.

Comprehensive Examination Requirement

Students pursuing the thesis option will write and defend their thesis. Students who do not successfully defend their thesis will have two additional opportunities to defend.

Students who do not successfully complete the requirements for the degree within the timelines specified will be dismissed from the program.

If a student elects to follow the thesis option for the degree, a committee to direct the written thesis will be established. The thesis must demonstrate the student’s capability for research and independent thought. Preparation of the thesis must be in conformity with the Graduate College Guide to Preparing and Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation.


The student must submit an official Thesis Proposal Form (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/forms.html) and proposal to his or her thesis committee. Thesis proposals vary by department and discipline. Please see your department for proposal guidelines and requirements. After signing the form and obtaining committee members’ signatures, the graduate advisor’s signature if required by the program and the department chair’s signature, the student must submit the Thesis Proposal Form with one copy of the proposal attached to the dean of The Graduate College for approval before proceeding with research on the thesis. If the thesis research involves human subjects, the student must obtain exemption or approval from the Texas State Institutional Review Board prior to submitting the proposal form to The Graduate College. The IRB approval letter should be included with the proposal form. If the thesis research involves vertebrate animals, the proposal form must include the Texas State IACUC approval code. It is recommended that the thesis proposal form be submitted to the dean of The Graduate College by the end of the student’s enrollment in 5399A. Failure to submit the thesis proposal in a timely fashion may result in delayed graduation.

Thesis Committee

The thesis committee must be composed of a minimum of three approved graduate faculty members.

Thesis Enrollment and Credit

The completion of a minimum of six hours of thesis enrollment is required. For a student’s initial thesis course enrollment, the student will need to register for thesis course number 5399A. After that, the student will enroll in thesis B courses, in each subsequent semester until the thesis is defended with the department and approved by The Graduate College. Preliminary discussions regarding the selection of a topic and assignment to a research supervisor will not require enrollment for the thesis course.

Students must be enrolled in thesis credits if they are receiving supervision and/or are using university resources related to their thesis work. The number of thesis credit hours students enroll in must reflect the amount of work being done on the thesis that semester. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to ensure that students are making adequate progress toward their degree throughout the thesis process. Failure to register for the thesis course during a term in which supervision is received may result in postponement of graduation. After initial enrollment in 5399A, the student will continue to enroll in a thesis B course as long as it takes to complete the thesis. Thesis projects are by definition original and individualized projects. As such, depending on the topic, methodology, and other factors, some projects may take longer than others to complete. If the thesis requires work beyond the minimum number of thesis credits needed for the degree, the student may enroll in additional thesis credits at the committee chair’s discretion. In the rare case when a student has not previously enrolled in thesis and plans to work on and complete the thesis in one term, the student will enroll in both 5399A and 5399B.

The only grades assigned for thesis courses are PR (progress), CR (credit), W (withdrawn), and F (failing). If acceptable progress is not being made in a thesis course, the instructor may issue a grade of F. If the student is making acceptable progress, a grade of PR is assigned until the thesis is completed. The minimum number of hours of thesis credit (“CR”) will be awarded only after the thesis has been both approved by The Graduate College and released to Alkek Library.

A student who has selected the thesis option must be registered for the thesis course during the term or Summer 1 (during the summer, the thesis course runs ten weeks for both sessions) in which the degree will be conferred.

Thesis Deadlines and Approval Process

Thesis deadlines are posted on The Graduate College (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/) website under ‘Current Students.’ The completed thesis must be submitted to the chair of the thesis committee on or before the deadlines listed on The Graduate College website.

The following must be submitted to The Graduate College by the thesis deadline listed on The Graduate College website:

1. The Thesis Submission Approval Form bearing original (wet) and/or electronic signatures of the student and all committee members.
2. One (1) PDF of the thesis in final form, approved by all committee members, uploaded in the online Vireo submission system.

After the dean of The Graduate College approves the thesis, Alkek Library will harvest the document from the Vireo submission system for publishing in the Digital Collections database (according to the student’s embargo selection). NOTE: MFA Creative Writing theses will have a permanent embargo and will never be published to Digital Collections.

While original (wet) signatures are preferred, there may be situations as determined by the chair of the committee in which obtaining original signatures is inefficient or has the potential to delay the student’s progress. In those situations, the following methods of signing are acceptable:

- signing and faxing the form
- signing, scanning, and emailing the form
• notifying the department in an email from their university's or institution's email account that the committee chair can sign the form on their behalf
• electronically signing the form using the university's licensed signature platform.

If this process results in more than one document with signatures, all documents need to be submitted to The Graduate College together.

No copies are required to be submitted to Alkek Library. However, the library will bind copies submitted that the student wants bound for personal use. Personal copies are not required to be printed on archival quality paper. The student will take the personal copies to Alkek Library and pay the binding fee for personal copies.

Master's level courses in Family and Child Studies: FCD

Courses Offered
Family and Child Development (FCD)