

# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES, A.S. (HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT)

**Begin Campus:** Altoona, Brandywine, DuBois, Fayette, Mont Alto, Schuylkill, Shenango, World Campus, Scranton, York

**End Campus:** Altoona, Brandywine, DuBois, Fayette, Mont Alto, Schuylkill, Scranton, Shenango, World Campus, York

## Program Description

This major integrates practical and academic experiences to provide the student with entry-level professional competence in the human service field. The objective of the major is to offer a general education background, a knowledge base in life span and family development, and a core of professional skills that may be applied in program planning and service delivery activities. The major is offered part-time, in the evening, and through independent learning.

### Adult Development and Aging Services Option

*Available at the following campuses: Altoona, Brandywine, DuBois, Fayette, Mont Alto, Schuylkill, Scranton, Shenango, World Campus, York*

This option is designed to prepare students for a wide variety of service roles in mental health facilities, nursing homes and other institutions for the aged, area agencies on aging, public welfare and family service agencies, women's resource centers, human relations programs, employee assistance programs and customer services and consumer relations programs in business and industry. An approved field experience in any of a wide variety of settings that serve adults, the aged, and their families, is required for this option.

### Children, Youth, and Family Services Option

*Available at the following campuses: Altoona, Brandywine, DuBois, Fayette, Mont Alto, Schuylkill, Scranton, Shenango, World Campus, York*

This option is designed to prepare students for service roles in preschools; day care centers; hospitals; institutional and community programs for emotionally disturbed, abused, or neglected children and adolescents; as well as a variety of public welfare and family service agencies. An approved field experience in a children, youth, or family services setting is required for this option.

### Early Childhood Care and Education Option

*Available at the following campuses: DuBois, Fayette, Shenango, York*

This option is designed to increase professional capabilities in child care training in regard to issues of quality, affordability, and accessibility of programming. The primary foci are on language, literacy, and science reasoning. In the coursework, there is a blending of theory and practice that requires experience in a group setting with young children. Courses concentrate on infants and toddlers as well as older preschoolers. Each course has a strong parent/family communications component and stresses observation techniques appropriate for assessing and evaluating the development of young children.

## What is Human Development and Family Studies?

Penn State's Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) program prepares students for careers across a wide range of human service, healthcare, and helping professions. The HDFS degree is grounded in research-based knowledge on the psychological, biological, social, cultural, and economic influences that impact the well-being of individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan. HDFS coursework guides students to develop skills for working with and caring for diverse individuals and groups through emphasizing mindfulness, compassion, diversity, equity, advocacy and inclusion. Students take courses on infancy, childhood, and adolescent development, transitioning and thriving in adulthood, and healthy aging. Classroom experiences are supplemented by a range of engaged learning opportunities, including internships, research participation, and community partnerships through which HDFS students acquire skills preparing them for impactful careers. The program's flexible curriculum allows academic pathways and engagement experiences to be customized to align with students' career goals.

### You Might Like This Program If...

- You are passionate about pursuing work focused on improving the lives and wellness of individuals, families, and communities.
- You are interested to learn about individual, family, community, and social factors influencing development as well as evidence-based practices that promote the cognitive, social, physical, and emotional well-being of children, adults, families, organizations, and communities.
- You are enthusiastic to use flexible degree requirements and integrated opportunities to pursue career exploration, experiential and engaged learning, and skill development specialized to your specific career goals.

## Entrance to Major

Students must have a minimum 2.0 GPA to change to this Associate degree after admission to the University.

## Degree Requirements

**For the Associate in Science degree in Human Development and Family Studies, a minimum of 60 credits is required:**

Requirement	Credits
General Education	21
Electives	0-3
Requirements for the Major	51-55

**15 of the 21 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 6 credits of GWS courses; 3 credits of GS courses; 3 credits of GN courses; and 3 credits of GQ courses.**

### Requirements for the Major

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

**Common Requirements for the Major (All Options)**

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
CAS 100	Effective Speech	3
ENGL 15	Rhetoric and Composition	3
HDFS 395	Internship	6
PSYCH 100	Introductory Psychology	3
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
HDFS 129	Introduction to Human Development and Family Studies	3
HDFS 301	Values and Ethics in Health and Human Development Professions	3
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
Select one of the following:		3
BIOL 141	Introduction to Human Physiology	
BIOL 155	Introduction to the Biology of Aging	
BISC 4	Human Body: Form and Function	
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
SOC 30	Sociology of the Family (SOC 30 does not require a grade of C or better)	3
or HDFS 315	Family Development	
Select one of the following:		3-4
EDPSY 101	Analysis and Interpretation of Statistical Data in Education	
STAT 100	Statistical Concepts and Reasoning	
STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	
<b>Requirements for the Option</b>		
Select an option		21-24

**Requirements for the Option****Adult Development and Aging Services Option (21 credits)**

*Available at the following campuses: Altoona, Brandywine, DuBois, Fayette, Mont Alto, Schuylkill, Scranton, Shenango, World Campus, York*

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
HDFS 249N	Adult Development and Aging	3
HDFS 311	Human Development and Family Studies Interventions	3
<b>Supporting Courses and Related Areas</b>		
Select 15 credits in consultation with the adviser from University-wide offerings that enhance competence in the option		15

**Children, Youth, and Family Services Option (24 credits)**

*Available at the following campuses: Altoona, Brandywine, DuBois, Fayette, Mont Alto, Schuylkill, Scranton, Shenango, World Campus, York*

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
HDFS 229	Infant and Child Development	3
HDFS 239	Adolescent Development	3
HDFS 311	Human Development and Family Studies Interventions	3
<b>Supporting Courses and Related Areas</b>		

Select 15 credits in consultation with the adviser from University-wide offerings that enhance competence in the option 15

**Early Childhood Care and Education Option (24 credits)**

*Available at the following campuses: DuBois, Fayette, Shenango, York*

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
HDFS 229	Infant and Child Development	3
HDFS 230	Overview of Curricular Practices in Early Childhood Care and Education	3
HDFS 231	Guidance in Early Childhood Care and Education	3
HDFS 232	Creativity and Play in Early Childhood Care and Education	3
HDFS 233	Emergent Language and Literacy: Development and Practice in Early Childhood Care and Education	3
HDFS 234		3
HDFS 311	Human Development and Family Studies Interventions	3
HDFS 330	Observation or Experience with Children, Youth, and Families	3

**General Education**

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all associate degree students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/associate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

**Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)**

- **Quantification (GQ):** 3 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 3 credits

**Knowledge Domains**

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

**Note:** Up to six credits of Inter-Domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course may be used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.

**Exploration**

- **Any General Education course (including GHW and Inter-Domain):** 3 credits

## University Degree Requirements

### Cultures Requirement

3 credits of United States (US) or International (IL) cultures coursework are required and may satisfy other requirements

### Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

### Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 60 degree credits must be earned for an associates degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 60 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

### Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

### Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## Program Learning Objectives

- **Application of HDFS Theory & Research:** Summarize and apply theory and research to practice and policy.
- **Application to Service and Policy:** Summarize and apply processes, policies, and contextual factors that affect the delivery of human services to individuals and families.
- **Diversity & Equity Practice:** Describe and apply research on inequality and diversity to inform and engage in practice that reduces inequality and promotes equity, inclusion, and well-being for all people.
- **Professional Conduct:** Demonstrate appropriate professional behaviors characterized by ethical and culturally sensitive standards of conduct.
- **Professional Skill:** Demonstrate competence in foundation skills for human service work.
- **Theories of Human Development and Family Science:** Summarize and apply theories and concepts to demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of individual and family development across the lifespan in diverse contexts and changing environments.

## Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

### University Park

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## Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2025-26 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

## Adult Development and Aging Option: Human Development and Family Studies, A.S. at World Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 <sup>‡</sup>	3 HDFS 249N <sup>*</sup>	3
HDFS 129 <sup>*†</sup>	3 HDFS 301 <sup>*</sup>	3
PSYCH 100 <sup>*†</sup>	3 CAS 100B or 100C <sup>‡</sup>	3
STAT 100, 200, or EDPSY 101 <sup>*†</sup>	3-4 General Education Course (GA)	3
Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3 Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>15-16</b>		<b>15</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
HDFS 315, 315Y, or SOC 30 <sup>*</sup>	3 BIOL 141, 155, or BISC 4 <sup>†</sup>	3
HDFS 395 (Pre-Internship Coursework) <sup>*</sup>	3 HDFS 395 (Internship Site Experience) <sup>*</sup>	3
HDFS 311 <sup>*</sup>	3 General Education Course (GH)	3

Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3 Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3
Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3 Elective	3
<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>

### Total Credits 60-61

- \* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
- ‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
- # Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
- † Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

### University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

### Academic Advising Notes:

Students selecting a GH course or supporting course are encouraged to schedule a course with the US or IL designation.

Students selecting a GQ course are encouraged to check with an academic adviser for appropriate MATH entrance requirements.

It is recommended that students fulfill the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement by taking HDFS 315Y via the World Campus. If HDFS 315Y is not taken, HDFS 312 or another writing intensive course will fulfill that requirement. Check with your adviser to ensure you are taking a course that fulfills the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

### Program Notes:

Many of the courses required for the Associate degree in HDFS may apply to the HDFS baccalaureate degree program.

<sup>1</sup> Students are encouraged to review the HDFS Supporting Courses list (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hdfs/undergraduate/courses/supporting-courses>) (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hdfs/undergraduate/courses/supporting-courses/>) for appropriate courses to fulfill the supporting course requirements.

## Children Youth and Family Studies Option: Human Development and Family Studies, A.S. at World Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 <sup>‡</sup>	3 HDFS 229 or 239 <sup>*</sup>	3
HDFS 129 <sup>*†</sup>	3 HDFS 301 <sup>*</sup>	3
PSYCH 100 <sup>*†</sup>	3 CAS 100B or 100C <sup>‡</sup>	3
STAT 100, 200, or EDPSY 101 <sup>*†</sup>	3-4 General Education Course (GA)	3
Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3 Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>15-16</b>		<b>15</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
HDFS 315, 315Y, or SOC 30 <sup>*</sup>	3 BIOL 141, 155, or BISC 4 <sup>†</sup>	3
HDFS 229 or 239 <sup>*</sup>	3 HDFS 395 (Internship Site Experience) <sup>*</sup>	3
HDFS 395 (Pre-Internship Coursework) <sup>*</sup>	3 General Education Course (GH)	3
HDFS 311 <sup>*</sup>	3 Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3
Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3 Supporting Course <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>

### Total Credits 60-61

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General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

### Academic Advising Notes:

Students selecting a GH course or supporting course are encouraged to schedule a course with the US or IL designation.

Students selecting a GQ course are encouraged to check with an academic adviser for appropriate MATH entrance requirements.

It is recommended that students fulfill the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement by taking HDFS 315Y via the World Campus. If HDFS 315Y

is not taken, HDFS 312 or another writing intensive course will fulfill that requirement. Check with your adviser to ensure you are taking a course that fulfills the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

### Program Notes:

Many of the courses required for the Associate degree in HDFS may apply to the HDFS baccalaureate degree program.

<sup>1</sup> Students are encouraged to review the HDFS Supporting Courses list (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hdfs/undergraduate/courses/supporting-courses>) for appropriate courses to fulfill the supporting course requirements.

## Career Paths

The Associate's Degree in HDFS provides students with a valuable foundation of skills and knowledge for pursuing entry level positions in careers focused on helping promote health and wellness across the lifespan. Many graduates of the A.S. in HDFS program also continue to pursue their B.S. in HDFS. Our A.S. degree is designed to allow for a smooth transition into the B.S. degree, after which graduates are positioned for career advancement or to work in additional areas described in the B.S. degree. HDFS Students are encouraged to customize their degree to align with their career interests.

### Careers

Students graduating with their A.S. degree in HDFS pursue a range of positions in areas that include:

- Health and Human Services (e.g. youth and family services, child advocacy, health education)
- Early Childhood Development (e.g. early childhood education, early intervention specialist)
- Child and Youth Services
- Foster Care and Adoption
- Services for Older Adults
- Services for Individuals with Disabilities

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES PROGRAM (<https://hhd.psu.edu/undergraduate/internships-and-career-opportunities/career-areas-major/careers-human-development-and/>)

### Opportunities for Graduate Studies

After completing their associate's degree, many HDFS students go on to complete their Bachelor of Science degree in HDFS. This degree opens up opportunities for students to attend graduate research or professional programs in several fields, including:

- Counseling (e.g., addiction counseling, marriage and family therapy, mental health counseling, counseling psychology, educational and vocational counseling)
- Social Work and Public Health
- Clinical Health Professions (e.g. psychiatry, pediatrics, adolescent medicine, family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, geriatrics, occupational therapy)
- Program Administration and Management
- Special Education
- Family Law



- Public Policy and Advocacy
- Research (e.g., on lifespan human development, psychology, sociology, prevention)

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hdfs/human-development-and-family-studies-graduate-program/>)

## Professional Resources

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in HDFS (<https://hhd.psu.edu/hdfs/about/diversityandequity/initiatives/>)

## Contact

### University Park

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES  
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<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-human-development-and-family-studies-associate-in-science-degree> (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-human-development-and-family-studies-associate-in-science-degree/>)

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<https://scranton.psu.edu/academics/degrees/associate/hdfs> (<https://scranton.psu.edu/academics/degrees/associate/hdfs/>)

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<https://shenango.psu.edu/academics/degrees/2-year-human-development-family-studies> (<https://shenango.psu.edu/academics/degrees/2-year-human-development-family-studies/>)

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<https://www.york.psu.edu/academics/associate/human-development-and-family-studies> (<https://www.york.psu.edu/academics/associate/human-development-and-family-studies/>)