

# LEARNING, DEVELOPMENTAL AND FAMILY SCIENCES, MA

## Introduction

The MA program in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences (LDFS) prepares students to facilitate the teaching/learning process and to lead and work in community-based environments. Thus, many students pursue the degree to enhance their skills as professional classroom teachers or lead in the community. The degree also provides skills necessary for a variety of roles in educational and teaching settings or community environments where knowledge of learning, development, understanding family and community systems, motivation, and research is essential such as teaching at the community college and teaching-based colleges and universities levels, teaching adults, consulting, developing assessments, community-based leadership, and conducting program development and evaluation. Other students seek the MA as preparation for advanced study in educational psychology, psychology, learning sciences, family science and human development, research, or related fields.

## Areas of Study

Two major areas of concentration are available: Learning and human development and family relations:

- Regardless of the concentration area selected, all students must demonstrate competence in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences by successfully completing 30 semester hours of relevant course work;
- Students complete a capstone experience, either an applied project or a master's thesis in consultation with their faculty advisor based on the students' professional and academic goals. Please see culminating capstone experience section for more details.

## Program Requirements

### Learning

The concentration is committed to the systematic study of psychological, social, and cultural processes of learning and development, and design of environments that support optimal learning and development, drawing upon multidisciplinary nature of work. The concentration examines learning in various formal and informal contexts (e.g., learning in classrooms, schools, centers, communities, homes) from multiple perspectives (e.g., psychological, sociocultural, critical, design-based, neuroscience). Within the networks of professional and academic communities, students will engage in designing adaptive learning environments that facilitate optimal learning and developmental opportunities for participants in diverse educational and community contexts, including our unique urban context.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Required Courses</b>		
LDFS 5110	Human Learning	3
<b>Select one of the following:</b>		
LDFS 6100	Advanced Child Growth and Development	3
LDFS 6750	Designing Environment for Learning and Development	3
or LDFS 6140	Social Contexts of Adolescence and Schooling	
or LDFS 6200	Human Development Over the Life Span	

RSEM 5100	Basic Statistics	3
RSEM 5120	Introduction to Research Methods	3
LDFS 6950	Culminating Capstone Experience	3
Personalized Professional Master's (PPMA) Inventory		12
<a href="https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories">https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories</a> ( <a href="https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories/">https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories/</a> )		

**Total Hours** 30

## Human Development and Family Relations (HDFR)

Students will engage in developing their skills to work in and lead community-based organizations including, but not limited to secular, faith-based, for profit, nonprofit, school-based, and local, state, federal and international organizations. The importance of family diversity and social justice is stressed throughout the HDFR curriculum through its courses and experiences. Students can also develop their knowledge in family relations in preparation for doctorate studies in family science and human development or related areas.

The LDFS program does provide a pathway for MA students (HDFR and Learning areas) to pursue their PhD in Education and Human Development with a Family Science and Human Development concentration. For more information, please visit our School of Education and Human Development.

The HDFR area also provides classes to all School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) graduate programs, offering courses in family theories, family dynamics, and diverse family systems, Latino family, school and community systems, family resource management, leadership and organizations, grant writing and fundraising, program development and other family relations based courses.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Required Courses</b>		
HDFR 6000	Family Theories	3
<b>Select one of the following:</b>		
LDFS 6100	Advanced Child Growth and Development	3
or LDFS 6140	Social Contexts of Adolescence and Schooling	
or LDFS 6200	Human Development Over the Life Span	
LDFS 5110	Human Learning	3
RSEM 5100	Basic Statistics	3
RSEM 5120	Introduction to Research Methods	3
LDFS 6950	Culminating Capstone Experience	3
Personalized Professional Master's (PPMA) Inventory		12
<a href="https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories">https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories</a> ( <a href="https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories/">https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/thematic-course-categories/</a> )		
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>30</b>

## Culminating Capstone Experience

All students must complete a culminating capstone experience in the MA in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences, Human Development and Family Relations and Learning tracks. Students can choose between an applied project or thesis. Students should consult with their faculty advisor as they weigh their options for the capstone to choose the option which best matches their academic and professional goals.

### **Option 1: Applied Project**

An applied project may take the form of an action research project, an applied development project, or an applied evaluation project. The applied project allows for considerable flexibility in the type of project undertaken.

### **Option 2: Thesis**

The thesis provides experience in conducting an empirical investigation, but provides a great deal of flexibility based on students' interests. The investigation may be qualitative (involving interviews and observation) or quantitative (involving measured variables) or mixed-methods and should address a question of practical importance to the student and the field in general.

Students are expected to attend one of the required LDFS MA Capstone Orientation provide by the LDFS faculty during each academic year. For more specific details concerning the Capstone please contact your faculty advisor.

### **Registration for Capstone**

All students are required to register for LDFS 6950 Culminating Capstone Experience as part of their degree requirements. LDFS 6950 Culminating Capstone Experience is offered in fall semester only and should be taken in students' final fall in the program.

Students who do not complete their applied project or defend their thesis in the fall semester they are registered for LDFS 6950 Culminating Capstone Experience are able to continue working on their applied project or thesis beyond the fall semester with faculty permission.