Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences

This brief handbook specifies the Department of Family, Youth and Community Science’s internal requirements, standards, and procedures for obtaining an advanced degree. When helpful, it also reviews the general requirements of the Graduate School and the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. It is designed to help the graduate student avoid misunderstandings and unnecessary delays. However, it does not address or replace all the rules, regulations, and instructions contained in the UF Graduate School online catalog: http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/academics/graduate-catalog.

Graduate Program

The FYCS graduate program is an interdisciplinary applied social science program that prepares students for advanced social science degrees, including the department’s Ph.D. in Youth Development and Family Science, as well as careers in such areas as youth and family services, Extension and community-based education, community development and nonprofit management, program planning and evaluation, and social policy.

Students can prepare for advanced degrees by completing a thesis with graduate faculty mentors who have research specialties in:

- Youth Development and Prevention Science
- Interpersonal and Family Relationships
- Nonprofit Leadership
- Program Planning and Evaluation Research
- Personal and Family Financial Management
- Community Development
- Nutrition and Health Education
- Housing
- Food Safety and Quality

Or, students have the option to complete a non-thesis project, which can prepare them for careers in both the public and private sectors including:

- Child and Youth Development in areas such as juvenile justice, dropout prevention programs, recreational and camp programs, and youth ministry;
- Community Development Practice in local and regional government, private nonprofit organizations (such as chambers of commerce, local development corporations, and local, national and international foundations), and citizen's groups;
- Nonprofit Organizational Management, such as management of community based, nonprofit organizations;
- Family and Social Services, such as family preservation programs, assistance for abused and neglected children, and other public assistance programs; and
- Cooperative Extension Service in such areas as youth development, family and consumer sciences, and community development.
Select Your Degree Option

By the end of your first semester of study, you must select one of two degree options: the thesis option or the non-thesis project option. Both programs prepare students for advanced professional positions. If you plan to obtain a doctoral degree in a related social science field (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.), or pursue a career in applied research or program evaluation, you will want to select the thesis option. The Thesis Option prepares students to conduct independent research needed to develop science-based solutions to problems, issues and policies that affect families, youth and communities. Students develop expertise in a subject matter area directly relevant to the problem or need they want to address with the thesis research.

If you plan to pursue an applied career and do not plan to obtain a doctoral degree and/or pursue a career in research or evaluation, you may select the non-thesis project option. The Non-Thesis Project Option provides students with a broad base of knowledge and skills in the discipline. Projects vary in nature and may include directed research, program planning and evaluation, or other empirically-based projects.

Both the thesis and non-thesis option are available to our on-campus students. For our online students, the non-thesis option is preferred; however, under special circumstances, a supervisory committee may agree to oversee a research thesis. Please consult your supervisory committee.

**THESIS OPTION (30 credits required)**

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<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>FYC 6800</td>
<td>Scientific Reasoning and Research Design</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYC 6230</td>
<td>Theories of (select one): Theories of Family Development, Systems and Change</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYC 6234</td>
<td>Theoretical Approaches to Youth Development</td>
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<td>FYC 6330</td>
<td>Theories of Community Development</td>
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<td>FYC 6802</td>
<td>Advanced Research Methods</td>
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<td>FYC 6933</td>
<td>Seminar in FYCS</td>
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<tr>
<td>STA 6126</td>
<td>Statistical Methods in Social Research I OR other statistics course approved by committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYC 6971</td>
<td>Thesis Research</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>A minimum of six must be from FYCS</td>
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NON-THESIS OPTION (30 credit required)

Core Courses (13-16 credits)

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<td>Program Planning and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYC 6971</td>
<td>Non-Thesis Project</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>A minimum of six must be from FYCS</td>
<td>14-17</td>
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</table>

Select a Concentration (Not Required)

Selecting a concentration is not required; however, a concentration in Nonprofit Organizational Development is available for both thesis and non-thesis students. The concentration courses provide an in-depth understanding for developing and sustaining an efficient and effective nonprofit organization which includes competencies in governance, strategic planning, fund raising, risk management, financial planning and other tools. Please see Appendix I for more information.

Minors (for non-FYCS students)

A graduate minor in FYCS as well as in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits is also available for non-FYCS graduate students. Please see Appendix II for more information.

Online Graduate Certificates (for FYCS and non-FYCS students)

A graduate certificate is available to our online students in nonprofit leadership. Please see Appendix III for more information.

The Supervisory Committee

Your Supervisory Committee performs several functions. They must approve your program of study (major, minor, concentration, or elective courses), approve your thesis or non-thesis project, conduct the written final examination (non-thesis project only), and conduct the final examination of the thesis or non-thesis project for all students. Selecting the chair and other Committee members early is important. Delaying these decisions can affect your progress in the program.

The composition of the supervisory committee differs based on your degree option. For thesis students, the committee is composed of three members: two FYCS faculty and one member from outside the department. For non-thesis project students, the committee is composed of two faculty members from within the FYCS department.
Selecting a Committee Chair: Take the Time!

“Supervisory committees for graduate degree programs are nominated by the respective department chair, approved by the college dean, and appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School is an ex-officio member of all supervisory committees. Only regular members of graduate faculty, or special appointments, may serve as members of a supervisory committee” – UF Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Faculty.

Although the members of your supervisory committee are officially nominated by the department chair, the student is responsible for recruiting members to present to the department chair for consideration. The first step is to identify the chair of your committee. The best way to identify the right person to be chair of your supervisory committee is to meet and interact with faculty members to learn about their interests and areas of expertise and how they relate to your own professional goals.

Your Committee

You must nominate the two internal (FYCS) members of your supervisory committee (one chair, one member) by the end of the first semester in the program. Failure to establish the committee will result in a hold on your records. Nominations must be submitted to the FYCS graduate coordinator and the FYCS graduate academic coordinator in writing (e-mail or hard copy).

For thesis option students, the third or external member of the Committee should be from another department. If you are completing a minor, the third member must represent the minor. If you are not completing a minor, the third member should be someone whose expertise will help you successfully complete your program of study. In many cases, students elect an outside member to reflect a secondary area of interest. For example, you might decide to complement your departmental courses with supportive course work in aging. In this case, your outside member should represent this subject matter aspect of your graduate program. You may delay selection of the external member, but you must identify this person prior to starting your thesis proposal.

You can change the composition of your supervisory committee at any time prior to your final semester. This date varies with the academic calendar and you need to check the Graduate School’s list of critical dates for the semester in which you plan to graduate. If you decide to change one or more committee members, you will need to inform the Graduate Coordinator of the changes in writing (e-mail or hard copy).

Program of Study

As soon as you have established your supervisory committee, convene a meeting of the committee to develop your program of study. You are responsible for finding a suitable date, time and meeting place for this and all other committee meetings. Online students have the option of using standard, commonly available electronic technology for their meetings. The program of study lists the courses that you will take to not only meet the degree requirements for the Department, but meet your academic and career goals.

Your supervisory committee and Graduate Coordinator must approve the program of study. As soon as you and your supervisory committee decide what courses you will take, complete a Program of Study form (http://fyes.ifas.ufl.edu/graduate/current-students/; select <Important Forms for Current Students>). You must submit this form to the Graduate Coordinator for his/her approval by the end of the semester in
which you complete 9 hours of study. Do not enroll for additional courses until you have an approved program of study on file.

You must complete a minimum of 6 credit hours of elective courses in the department, but you can complete more than 6 hours of departmental electives. You may also select electives from other departments. In both cases, select these courses in consultation with your Supervisory Committee. The Committee must approve your selections. You may also elect to complete a minor in another discipline. Many departments offer minors, most requiring a minimum of six to nine hours of study for master’s level students (twelve hours of study for doctoral students). If you do decide to complete a minor, your Supervisory Committee should include a representative of the department offering the minor.

The Thesis

The Master’s Thesis should be of a publishable quality, demonstrating the student’s ability to perform original empirical research. The supervisory committee makes three decisions. The first is to approve your proposal for your thesis research. The second is to decide if the content of your thesis is of sufficient quality and effort to meet the academic standards of scholarship for the M.S. degree. The third is that the committee conducts your final oral examination (commonly called the Thesis Defense). This examination focuses on your general knowledge about the topical area covered in the thesis and specific knowledge of the research process.

The Proposal

You should work closely with your chair and supervisory committee as you develop the research proposal. Generally, the research proposal includes a statement of purpose, a review of literature, and a description of your research design and method. You cannot enroll in Thesis Research (FYC 6971) until you have an approved thesis proposal with appropriate documentation on file in the Academic Advising Office. You should present the proposal to a meeting of the full supervisory committee. Once approved by all committee members, complete the Thesis Proposal Approval form, available in the Academic Advising Office, and return the signed form to the office. If your research affects human subjects, you will need to complete a IRB-02 protocol for approval by a University-wide committee. This process is designed to ensure the safety and privacy of all people who take part in any kind of study. You cannot begin to collect data without official IRB approval.

Writing the Thesis

Once you have collected your data, you will begin writing the final two sections of your thesis (Results and Discussion). Some chairs prefer to work individually with the student so that the first draft of the thesis has already undergone extensive editing and revision. Other chairs prefer that the student submit various draft versions to the entire Committee. You should consult closely with your chair to determine the appropriate procedure for obtaining feedback on draft versions of the thesis.

The Thesis is submitted electronically through the Editorial Document Management (EDM) System. Consult the EDM system and follow all instructions for submission of the thesis (http://gradschool.ufl.edu/edmportal/gatorlink/EDM_portal.html).

The Final Examination (Thesis Defense)

You should defend your thesis early in the final semester of study. The date of the defense is driven primarily by the due date for submitting a copy of the thesis to the Editorial Board of the Graduate School. This date is usually about one month prior to the end of the semester. Given that the committee
may require extensive changes and that the Editorial Board may also require changes and has to review the revised electronic version, it is unwise to postpone the defense of the thesis past the middle of the last semester of study. It is also established procedure that you submit a copy of your thesis to your supervisory committee to review at least two weeks prior to your defense date. The version presented to the committee should be the final version.

The thesis defense is open to all faculty members and graduate students in the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences. It is expected that you post an announcement of the date, time and location of your defense and the title of your thesis in the Department at least one week prior to the defense. Likewise, you must appoint a student observer from the Department to be present at your defense. We ask that you do this to help ensure that you are treated in a completely fair and unbiased fashion during the defense. The individual you appoint is an observer and does not participate actively in the process. When you are asked to leave the room for committee deliberation, the observer should leave, too.

There are two forms that your Supervisory Committee Members must sign at the final examination, the Final Examination Form and the EDT Signature Page. Get the Final Examination Form from the Academic Advising Office. You cannot print it yourself. You can print the EDT signature page. Submit the signed Final Examination Form to the Academic Advising Office. The Academic Coordinator will submit electronic verification that you have passed the final examination.

**The Non-Thesis Project**

The non-thesis project must be completed in several steps, and generally takes about two to three semesters. Work closely with your supervisory committee to develop a work plan for your project to ensure that you complete your project on time.

**Step 1: The Non-Thesis Project Proposal**

Begin the development of your non-thesis project proposal sometime in your first year of graduate school. Follow the instructions on the Non-Thesis Project Proposal form on the FYCS website (see FORMS under Current Students). Work with your committee chair before submitting to your supervisory committee. When complete, your committee chair will request a joint meeting with you and your committee to approve your project proposal. The committee’s approval is needed before you begin your project.

Complete the Non-Thesis Proposal Approval form, available on the FYCS website, and return the signed form along with the Non-Thesis Project Proposal to the Academic Advising Office.

If your project involves research that affects human subjects, you will need to complete an IRB-02 form for approval by a University-wide committee. This process is designed to ensure the safety and privacy of all people who take part in any kind of research, including non-thesis projects. The Committee usually meets once a month so you need check the committee meeting dates and make sure that you submit the form in a timely fashion. Your committee will instruct you on how to complete this process.

*You cannot enroll in Non-Thesis Project (FYC 6912) until you have an approved Non-Thesis Project Proposal with appropriate documentation on file in the Academic Advising Office.*
Step 2: Written Exam

The written examination should be completed prior to the final project. The subject matter of the examination will be restricted to the material that you have covered in your coursework during your master's program. The objective is to assess your knowledge of the theoretical foundations of the discipline, your familiarity with the scholarly literature in your area of interest, and your ability to synthesize what you have learned in your courses. The members of your supervisory committee provide the questions for the written examination. The format of the written examination is open and is decided by your supervisory committee.

1. It may be an open or closed book examination.
2. The members may give you some choice about which of several questions to answer.
3. You may receive the entire examination at once, or it may be given to you in parts.
4. Your supervisory chair may request a separate oral examination to further evaluate your knowledge of the subject matter. If a separate oral examination is requested, it must occur within two weeks of the written examination.

Your committee chair will inform you about your success with the examination within two weeks of the time that you complete the exam. Once you have passed the exam, the Final Written Exam Confirmation Form must be signed by the student and all committee members and submitted to the Academic Advising Office.

Failure of Written Exam

A failed written final exam can be repeated. However, the student must submit a special petition to the FYCS Graduate Coordinator if a third exam is attempted. A student must pass the exam on the third attempt in order to remain in the program.

Step 3: The Non-Thesis Project

The non-thesis project takes many forms. The final project should be a scholarly piece of work that provides you with an opportunity to apply what you have learned during your program of study. For example, you might:

1. Develop empirically-based training materials for use by Extension or other professional organizations (including program evaluation procedures),
2. Develop learning applications for the web,
3. Assist a community-based organization with development and evaluation of programs or administrative procedures,
4. Assist a faculty member with a comprehensive literature review and data collection or analysis as supervised research.

Please note that the development of Extension fact sheets alone (i.e., EDIS publications) does not constitute a non-thesis project. In addition, a professional practicum will not satisfy the requirements. The objective of the professional practicum, which any student may elect to complete under FYC 6934, is for you to gain professional experience in the workplace under the supervision of other professionals. The objective of the non-thesis project is for you to produce a scholarly product that demonstrates your grasp of the knowledge, skills and expertise gained during your program of study.
The finalized written document is provided to your supervisory committee for review. The document may take many forms, depending on the nature of the project. For example, if you develop a curricula for Extension or other professional organizations, the written document could include a brief empirical analysis of the problem the program is designed to address and a facilitator’s and participant’s guide for implementation and evaluation of the program.

Submit your completed project to your supervisory committee for review at least one month before the Graduate School deadline for submission of final exam forms for non-thesis projects (see Graduate School Academic Calendar available at: http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/). This will allow time for your committee to review your project and recommend edits and changes. It is expected that you will work closely with your supervisory committee chair as you develop your project paper so that the project has been thoroughly reviewed prior to submission to your committee.

**Oral Presentation/Defense**

The oral presentation of your project to your committee, which is open to the UF community, is required. The presentation may occur in person (if you live close to the University), or through skype or other electronic platform. Following your presentation, the committee members will ask questions about your project and probe your knowledge in the subject matter covered by the project. It is recommended that you post an announcement of the date, time and location of your presentation and discussion in the Department at least seven days prior to the presentation.

**Step 4: Final Step**

Once you have received final approval for your project from your supervisory committee, you must submit a signed Final Examination Form to the Academic Advising Office. You cannot print this form and must request a copy from the Academic Coordinator. Submit the signed form to the Academic Advising Office and electronic verification that you have passed the final examination will be submitted for you.

**Note:** All of the steps for the non-thesis project must be completed no more than six months before the degree is awarded.

**Other Policies**

**Unsatisfactory Progress or Unsatisfactory Scholarship**

The Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences will abide by the following policy of the University of Florida Graduate School:

“Any graduate student may be denied further registration if progress toward completing the program becomes unsatisfactory to the academic unit, college, or Dean of the Graduate School. Unsatisfactory scholarship is defined as failure to maintain a B average (3.00) in all work attempted. Graduate students need an overall GPA of 3.00 truncated and a 3.00 truncated GPA in their major (and in the minor, if a minor is declared) at graduation. Students with less than a 3.00 GPA may not hold an assistantship or fellowship.”

In addition, the Department interprets the following policy as follows:

- Students who drop below a 3.0 GPA (B average) in a semester are not eligible for an assistantship or fellowship the following semester.
• Students who drop below a 3.0 GPA (B average) in a semester will have one additional semester to bring their overall GPA back above 3.0.

If a student is judged to be unsatisfactory based on semester ratings of progress, they may not be allowed to continue in the program.

**Grievance Policy and Conflict Resolution**

The Department of Family Youth and Community Sciences is committed to fostering a fair and productive environment. A grievance is defined as

“dissatisfaction occurring when a student believes that any decision, act or condition affecting him or her is illegal, unjust, or created unnecessary hardship. Such grievances may concern, but are not limited to, the following: academic problems (excluding grades, except when there is a allegation of illegal discrimination or when a grade penalty has been imposed without proper authority), mistreatment by any University employee, wrongful assessment of fees, records and registration errors, student employment, and violation of University of Florida regulation 1.006” (UF Regulation No. 4.012(a)).

In the event of a grievance, you are encouraged to first resolve the issue with all the parties involved. The informal discussion should be held as soon as possible following the act or condition that is the basis of the grievance. If the student is unsatisfied with the resolution, she or he may file a written grievance with the FYCS Graduate Coordinator, including all supporting documentation. The Graduate Coordinator will respond to the grievance in a timely fashion. If the Graduate Coordinator doesn’t resolve the issue to the student’s satisfaction, the student may proceed with the grievance procedure outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook (http://www.graduateschool.ufl.edu/student-life-and-support/student-handbook).

**Internships**

Students may, with their committee chair’s permission, participate in an internship experience for graduate credit. Students interested in pursuing an internship should identify a site and work with their committee chair to formulate concrete learning objectives for the experience. The Coordinator of Academic Programs can create a variable credit section (from 1-3 credits per semester) of FYC 6934 Professional Internship/Practicum in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences, for academic credit. A student should work 80 hours for each credit hour of FYC 6934. No more than three credits of FYC 6934 can be applied to a graduate degree.

**Graduation Day!**

Before you graduate, there are a few other steps that you will need to complete. Consult the Graduate School site for current students to find out about these steps.

http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/graduate-life/graduation/
Appendix I

Graduate Concentration in Nonprofit Organizational Development

The nonprofit organizational development concentration will prepare students to work with tax exempt nonprofit organizations and informal community based groups that serve a charitable purpose for the public good. The concentration includes the study of the historical development of nonprofits in the US that enable students to understand the unique aspects of nonprofits and their growing importance and impact on our society. It provides students with a knowledge base for aspiring nonprofit organizational leaders and proven competencies for practicing professionals in the nonprofit sector.

Courses

Concentration courses emphasize a continuum of learning starting with a basic understanding of the importance of the third sector and how it operates for the public good on a local, national, and international basis followed by an in-depth study of policy and current issues affecting the entire sector as well as fields within the sector. Courses such as nonprofit organizational development, fund raising, and risk management focus on areas of major importance to all fields within the sector.

Required

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<td>FYC 6932</td>
<td>Nonprofit Human Resource Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYC 6424</td>
<td>Fund Raising for Community Nonprofit Organizations</td>
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Select Two

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<td>FYC 6425</td>
<td>Risk Management in Nonprofit Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYC 6620</td>
<td>Program Planning and Evaluation for Human Services Delivery</td>
</tr>
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Appendix II

Minor in Family, Youth and Community Sciences

The Minor in Family, Youth and Community Sciences can be completed by students in any degree-accruing graduate program (professional, masters, doctoral) at the University of Florida, EXCEPT students enrolled in the MS program in FYCS. The minor is available to both traditional classroom and online students.

The Minor in Family, Youth and Community Sciences provides students with knowledge about the theories and body of research that explain how families, youth, and communities develop and interact. The program consists of nine hours of study for master’s students and twelve for doctoral students. All students must complete one of three foundation courses, Theories of Youth & Family Development (FYC 6230), Theories of Community Development (FYC 6330), or Theoretical Approaches to Youth Programming (FYC 6234). The master’s student selects two additional departmental electives to complete the minor, and doctoral students will select three additional courses—all additional courses are to be approved by the minor representative.

The Graduate School at the University of Florida requires that a representative from the program offering the minor serve on the student’s Graduate Supervisory Committee. The minor will not be recognized by the Graduate School if you do not have a minor representative on your Supervisory Committee. Contact the graduate coordinator or academics program coordinator in your home department to appoint the FYCS graduate faculty member that you want to serve on your committee. The representative will ensure that you complete the courses required for this minor.

Minor in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits

The minor in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits can be completed by students in any degree-accruing graduate program (professional, masters, doctoral) at the University of Florida, EXCEPT students enrolled in the MS program in FYCS. The minor is available to both traditional classroom and online students.

The Minor in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits provides students with an understanding of how to develop not-for-profit organizations to address problems facing families, youth and communities. The minor consists of 6 hours of study for master’s students and 12 credit hours for doctoral students. All students must complete two courses, Nonprofit Organizations (FYC 6421) and Case Studies in Nonprofits (FYC 6422). Additional courses needed to complete the minor are approved by the minor representative.

The Graduate School at the University of Florida requires that a representative from program offering the minor serve on the student’s Graduate Supervisory Committee. The minor will not be recognized by the Graduate School if you do not have a minor representative on your Supervisory Committee. Contact the graduate coordinator or academics program coordinator in your home department to appoint the FYCS graduate faculty member that you want to serve on your committee. The representative will ensure that you complete the courses required for this minor.
Appendix III

Graduate Certificates

Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership

The Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences offers a graduate level Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership designed for professionals that would like to go from working for a nonprofit to leading a nonprofit.

In order to complete the nonprofit leadership certificate program, students must complete four courses for a total of 12 credit hours. Each course is specifically designed to help students develop their skills in nonprofit management and become effective leaders in the public sector.

The required courses are:

FYC 6421 Leadership for Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits)
FYC 6932 Nonprofit Human Resource Management (3 credits)
FYC 6424 Fundraising for Community Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits)
FYC 6425 Risk Management for Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits)