



FYCS Master's Program Handbook 2021-2022

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This brief handbook reviews the Department of Family, Youth and Community Science's internal requirements, standards, and procedures for obtaining a master's degree. It is designed to help the graduate student avoid misunderstandings and unnecessary delays. However, it does not replace the rules, regulations, and instructions contained in the UF Graduate School online catalog: <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/academics/graduate-catalog>.

Master's Degree Program Overview

The FYCS graduate program is an interdisciplinary, applied, social science program that prepares students to pursue either advanced social science degrees (including the department's Ph.D. in Youth Development and Family Sciences) or careers in such areas as youth and family services, extension and community-based education, community development and nonprofit management, program planning and evaluation, or social policy.

FYCS Graduate Program Hubs

The FYCS Graduate Program Hubs (The Hub) are program-specific online platforms based in Canvas that are designed to track advising milestones and facilitate communication throughout your time as a student. All program forms and documents are kept on The Hub.

Degree Options

By the end of your first semester of study, you must select one of the two degree options: the thesis option or the capstone project option. Both the thesis and capstone option are available to our *on-campus students* (please consult your supervisory committee for guidance). For our *online students*, only the capstone option is available.



Thesis Option

The thesis option prepares students to conduct independent research on issues related to families, youth, and communities. Students develop expertise in a subject directly relevant to the issue or need they want to address with the thesis research. 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 is not available in the online MS program.

Program Requirements: Thesis Option

	Course Number	Course Title	Hours
Core Courses (16-19 credits)	FYC 6800	Scientific Reasoning and Research Design	3
	<u>Select one:</u> FYC 6230 FYC 6234 FYC 6330	Theories of Family Development, Systems & Change Theoretical Approaches to Youth Development Theories of Community Development	3
	FYC 6802	Advanced Research Methods	3
	FYC 6933	Seminar in FYCS	1
	STA 6126	Statistical Methods in Social Research I OR another statistics course approved by committee*	3
	FYC 6971	Thesis Research	3-6
	Electives (11-14 credits)	FYC	A minimum of six credits
		Other	Can be FYC or other graduate level courses
Total		Minimum Required Credits	30

***Note:** It is strongly recommended that thesis students take at least 6 credits of statistics/analysis courses, including either quantitative or qualitative analysis courses that are appropriate for their thesis research. The appropriate courses are to be determined by the supervisory committee.

Capstone Option

The following information is subject to minor changes as the capstone course goes into use. Completion of a community-based project that addresses an identified issue within the field of Family, Youth, and Community Sciences. Projects will vary based on student interests but will comply with expected professional and ethical standards. Students will also develop a professional portfolio that demonstrates both academic and professional accomplishments, prepare and deliver a professional presentation, and understand the importance of ongoing professional development. This course meets the graduate school requirement of the final comprehensive examination for a master's degree without thesis.

Program Requirements: Capstone Option

	Course Number	Course Title	Hours
Core Courses (13 credits)	FYC 6800	Scientific Reasoning and Research Design	3
	Select one:		3
	FYC 6230	Theories of Family Development, Systems and Change	
	FYC 6234	Theoretical Approaches to Youth Development	
	FYC 6330	Theories of Community Development	
	FYC 6620	Program Planning and Evaluation	3
Electives (17 credits)	FYC 6933	Seminar in FYCS	1
	FYC 6920	Capstone (taken in final or penultimate semester)	3
	FYC	A minimum of six credits	6
Total	Other	Can be FYC or other graduate level courses	11
		Minimum Required Credits	30

Note: See Appendix for concentration-specific requirements

Concentrations

Selecting a concentration is not required; however, two concentrations are available for both thesis and Capstone students.

- The concentration in **Nonprofit Organizational Development** provides an in-depth understanding for developing and sustaining an efficient and effective nonprofit organization which includes competencies in governance, strategic planning, fundraising, risk management, and financial planning. See Appendix I for more information.
- The concentration in **Family and Youth Development** prepares students to work with youth and families through community-based programs. The concentration combines the study of theories of family and youth development with courses that help students develop the skills needed to offer programs and give leadership to public and private sector organizations serving youth and families. See Appendix II for more information.

Thesis Option

The Thesis

The master's thesis should be of 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 to conduct your final oral examination (commonly called the Thesis Defense). This examination focuses on your knowledge about the topical area and the thesis research process.

Thesis Supervisory Committee

Your Supervisory Committee performs several functions. They must approve your plan of study (major, minor, concentration, or elective courses); approve your thesis; and conduct the final examination of the thesis project for all students.



Committee Chair

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.

Committee Members

Your committee is composed of a minimum of three members: one committee chair, one internal member from FYCS, and one member from outside the department (external member). You must select the chair and internal members of your supervisory committee by the end of your first semester in the program and the external member by the end of your second semester. The external member should be someone whose expertise will help you successfully complete your degree. If you are completing a minor, an additional committee member who represents the minor is required. You must submit your committee selections via the Hub.

Changing Committee Members

You can change the composition of your supervisory committee at any time prior to your final semester. If you decide to change one or more committee members, you will need to email Gregg Henderschiedt.

Plan of Study

The plan of study lists the courses that you will take to not only meet the degree requirements for the department, but to meet your academic and career goals. The student and the committee chair must meet to complete a preliminary plan of study during the first semester. This preliminary plan must be uploaded to the Hub. The plan of study should be reviewed by the supervisory committee on an ongoing basis to ensure the approval of all members. As soon as you have established your supervisory committee, convene a meeting of the committee to discuss your plan of study and make any changes necessary. You are responsible for finding a suitable date, time, and meeting place for this and all other committee meetings. Your supervisory committee must approve the plan of study.



Recommended Timeline for Thesis

The following table presents a recommended timeline for the major tasks to be achieved during the thesis project. Your own timeline will vary depending on how quickly you are able to move through the process.

Semester	Key Tasks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Select your committee chair and internal member▪ Discuss initial ideas for thesis topics
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Conduct background research on topic
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Start the Thesis Module in the Hub▪ Enroll in the summer Thesis Proposal Writing course▪ Schedule and defend thesis proposal to entire committee▪ Upload the required thesis Approval Form via the Hub
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Enroll in FYC 6971▪ Seek IRB approval if appropriate▪ Collect and analyze data
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Enroll in FYC 6971▪ Defend your thesis▪ Submit the required forms via the Hub

The Thesis Proposal

It is imperative that you 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. If your research involves human subjects, you will need to complete an IRB protocol. 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. You must present the proposal to a meeting of the full supervisory committee. Once approved by all committee members, complete the Thesis Proposal Approval form, and submit via the Hub. You cannot enroll in Thesis Research (FYC 6971) until you have submitted the Thesis Approval form.

Thesis Writing

Once you have collected your data, you will begin writing the final two sections of your thesis (Results and Discussion). 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 by the midpoint of your final semester. 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 5-6 weeks 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.

It is also established procedure that you submit a complete version of your thesis to your supervisory committee to review at least two weeks prior to your defense date. The thesis defense is open to anybody who wants to attend, including all faculty members, graduate students, and undergraduate students in the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences. Students and faculty are encouraged to attend defenses to help foster a sense of shared learning and community.

At the beginning of your final term, you will be assigned the Final Semester Module in the Hub, and it will walk you through the steps required to set up and complete your thesis defense. On-campus students may choose to appoint a student observer from the department to be present at the 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.

Prior to the defense, the supervisory committee must determine if the student is ready to defend the thesis.



The sequence of events for the thesis defense is as follows:

1. The student delivers a presentation to the full audience, which includes the supervisory committee, the student observer (if chosen), and any other outside observers.
2. The student then entertains questions from outside observers.
3. All members except the student, the supervisory committee, and the student observer are asked to leave the room. The student then entertains questions from the supervisory committee.
4. The student and the student observer are asked to leave the room while the committee discusses its decision about whether the student has passed the exam.
5. The student and the student observer are asked to rejoin the committee and the decision of the committee is announced to the student.
6. After successful completion of the final examination (i.e., the defense), the supervisory committee signs three forms: the Final Examination Form, the ETD Signature Page, and the FYCS Final Assessment and you upload the signed forms to the Hub.

The coordinator of academic programs will provide you with the necessary forms. You are responsible for uploading the completed forms to the Hub.



The Capstone Option

The capstone course will be 3 credits taken in the student's final semester or, in certain cases, the semester prior to graduation.

Capstone Components

Capstone project

The capstone project is the student's opportunity to demonstrate and apply the theories and knowledge they've learned to address real-world issues. The project must have a practical application and must be designed in collaboration with the student's current employer, a human services or nonprofit organization, or other community-based initiative. Prior to registering for the capstone course each student will meet individually with the faculty member teaching the course to format a project proposal.

E-portfolio

Students will create an e-portfolio demonstrating the breadth and depth of the knowledge they have gained in the FYCS MS program. The e-portfolio is a way for students to consider their professional development in an active and engaged manner culminating in a useable product applicable to their career goals. Students are expected to demonstrate what they have done in the FYCS program including products from previous course.

Professional presentation

The capstone course provides students with an understanding of the importance of professional development and effective presentation techniques. Students will be asked to turn their capstone project into a professional presentation.

Faculty Academic Advisor

Students following the capstone option will not have a full academic committee, but will have a faculty advisor (formerly committee chair). The role of the faculty advisor will involve the following components:

- Provide general program guidance,
- Meet with student at least once per semester, more as desired,



- Approve plan of study,
- Conduct annual chair's academic assessment,
- Approve Individual Development Plan (IDP) (on campus only),
- Provide content specific guidance if needed during the development of the proposal for capstone course.

Plan of Study

The plan of study lists the courses that you will take to not only meet the degree requirements for the department, but to meet your academic and career goals. Plan of study forms are located in the FYCS Graduate Program Hub. The student and the faculty advisor must meet to complete a plan of study during the first semester. You are responsible for finding a suitable date, time, and meeting place for this and all other committee meetings. This plan must be uploaded to the Hub. The plan of study should be reviewed by the student and faculty advisor on an ongoing basis to ensure it remains current.

Capstone Project Approval

Prior to enrolling in the Capstone (FYC 6920) students are required to complete the FYC Capstone Pre-Registration Form (located in the Graduate Program Hub), email the completed form to the professor indicated on the form and schedule a meeting with that professor. The Pre-Registration Form must be completed by the deadline listed on the form.

NOTE: Students **CANNOT** be registered for FYC 6920 until the faculty teaching the course has approved the student's capstone project.



Other Policies

Professional Internship/Practicum in FYCS

Students may, with their committee chair's permission, participate in an internship experience for graduate credit. Once the internship/practicum idea is approved by your committee you will let Gregg Henderschiedt or Nicole Sloan and they will assign the module in the Hub. Students will 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 is required to 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.

When preparing for a practicum, there are a few things students should consider:

- It is possible that the site you select does not provide insurance coverage for the student. In this case, the student assumes all liabilities and risks in completing this requirement at this location.
- It is the student's responsibility to identify who his or her supervisor will be for the practicum.
- Students must maintain an open and consistent line of communication with both the site supervisor and the committee chair.
- The student must keep track of completed hours for this experience.
- Previous students have found it helpful to keep a journal of events. This can provide students with an idea of what they are encountering on a daily basis. This will also be helpful in tracking progress toward meeting goals



Variable Credit Courses

Course Number	Course Name	Credits Per Semester	Maximum Credits Per Semester	Maximum Credits Toward Degree
FYC 6901	Problems in FYCS	1-3	3	6
FYC 6912	Non-thesis Project in FYCS	1-3	3	6
FYC 6971	Research for Master's Thesis	1-6	6	6
FYC 6934	Professional Internship/Practicum in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences	1-3	3	3

Graduation Day!

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

<http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/graduate-life/graduation/>

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 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.
- In addition, students who receive unsatisfactory assessments related to their graduate assistant and teaching assistant duties may be relieved of their duties and may lose their funding.

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 creates unnecessary hardship. Such grievances may concern, but are not limited to, the following: academic problems (excluding grades, except when there is an 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 Rule 6C1-1006, F.A.C.” (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 for 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 does not resolve the issue to the student's satisfaction, the student may proceed with the grievance procedure outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/media/graduate-school/pdf-files/handbook.pdf>).



Appendix I: Concentration in Nonprofit Organizational Development

The nonprofit organizational development concentration prepares students to lead tax-exempt nonprofit organizations and community-based groups that serve the public good. The concentration introduces students to evidence-based nonprofit management and leadership practices as well as current trends in the sector. Through applied projects, students develop the proven managerial competencies and leadership skills necessary to be an effective nonprofit sector professional.

Concentration courses emphasize a continuum of learning starting with the fundamentals of nonprofit management and, then, build on core competencies including program planning and evaluation, fundraising, risk management, and human resource management. The skills developed in this concentration are applicable to all nonprofit organizations regardless of their mission. The required courses are:

- FYC 6421, Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits);
- FYC 6932, Nonprofit Human Resource Management (3 credits);
- FYC 6424, Fund Raising for Community Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits);
- FYC 6425, Risk Management in Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits); and
- FYC 6620, Program Planning and Evaluation for Human Services Delivery (3 credits).



Appendix II: Concentration in Family and Youth Development

The family and youth development concentration will prepare students to work with youth and families through community-based programs. The concentration combines the study of theories of family and youth development with courses that help students develop the skills needed to offer programs and give leadership to public and private sector organizations serving youth and families. The concentration provides students with an in-depth understanding of youth development, as well as family interaction and functioning across the lifespan, and knowledge and skills needed to work with youth and families in community-based programs.

Concentration courses emphasize an understanding of the development of applied skills in prevention, intervention, research and evaluation, as well as the formation of policies leading to the promotion of positive development, well-being, and resilience.

Required:

- FYC 6230, Theories of Family Development, Systems and Change (3 credits)
- FYC 6234, Theoretical Approaches to Youth Development (3 credits)
- FYC 6620, Program Planning & Evaluation (3 credits)

Electives (select two):

- FYC 6207, Adolescent Problematic Behavior (3 credits)
- FYC 6223, Promoting Positive Youth Development (3 credits)
- FYC 6932, Youth and Family Relationships (3 credits)



Appendix III: Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership

The Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences offers a graduate-level certificate in nonprofit leadership designed for professionals who 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); and
- FYC 6425, Risk Management for Nonprofit Organizations (3 credits).



Appendix IV: Graduate Minors in FYCS

Minor in Family, Youth and Community Sciences

The Minor in Family, Youth and Community Sciences can be completed by students in an approved 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 9 hours of study for master's students and 12 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). Master's students will select 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 on the supervisory committee.

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 FYCS coordinator of academic programs to declare the minor and to discuss the FYCS graduate faculty member you want to serve on your committee.

Minor in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits

The minor in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits can be completed by students in an approved 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 Fundraising for Nonprofits (FYC 6424). 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 FYCS coordinator of academic programs to declare the minor and to discuss the FYCS graduate faculty member you want to serve on your committee.

