Mission Statement

The mission of the HDFS academic degree programs is to produce graduates who have appropriate information and skills for understanding and working with diverse individuals and families in today's environments, as well as provide a background in theory and research methodologies essential for pursuit of additional graduate education. Courses, practicum, and internship experiences provide students with knowledge and skills to:

1. work in positions that improve the lives of individuals, families, and their communities;
2. critically evaluate and contribute to the improvement of theory, research and practice in the field;
3. utilize an accurate understanding of the interaction of the bio-psycho-social elements of human development, to educate and promote growth and acceptance of individuals across the lifespan within the varied contexts of their lived experiences, and with in-depth expertise in at least one developmental stage; and
4. integrate information on the processes of diverse family systems with current issues and conditions affecting families.

The program emphasizes an understanding of the mutual influences of individuals, families, and their environments, as well as the application of ecological, systemic, and social constructionist approaches to dealing with problems or change. Students are expected to develop skills in recognizing strengths of all individuals and families, as well as an appreciation of diversity in age, race, and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, learning styles, and abilities. The program recognizes that the distinction between prevention and intervention is not always clear, and encourages students to develop skills that bridge these areas.

Student Learning Outcomes

Demonstrate professional-level competency in either human development or family studies, with in-depth knowledge in both areas of expertise

Student Performance Indicators
- Students are able to effectively use their expertise to serve the community, solve problems, consult, teach, and/or conduct research

Assessment Method
- Faculty evaluation of this specific competency as part of the grade for papers and/or projects completed in HDFS 720 or 730; 745; and 771.
- Thesis: Successful defense of the thesis or professional paper.

Demonstrate ability to find and use various sources of information available to professionals in order to stay current with new practices and knowledge in the field

Student Performance Indicators
- Students are able to find and use HDFS-related sources of information on current knowledge and practice.
- Students are able to use theory to:
  1. integrate, organize, and interpret information and knowledge;
  2. guide current practice in the

Assessment Method
- Students provide an annotated bibliography for papers completed in HDFS 720 or 730, 745, and 771.
- Faculty evaluation of student performance in written papers and oral presentations required in HDFS 720 or 730; 740; and 771.
Demonstrate extensive knowledge and application of research processes and related ethical issues, in both qualitative and quantitative research

**Student Performance Indicators**
- Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of qualitative and/or quantitative research designs
- Students demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate their scholarship to the scientific community
- Students demonstrate the ability to conduct rigorous and ethical research

**Assessment Method**
- Faculty evaluation of students' performance as research assistants and/or as students in HDFS 771.
- Thesis: Successful defense of thesis or professional paper
- Refereed publications and presentations of scholarship by students.

**Use of Results**
Teaching faculty and the assessment coordinators will use graduate student data from the Student Mid-Program Reviews, student records, and the Alumni Survey to make recommendations for improvement in the graduate program, as needs are identified. Assessment strategies and data analysis will be modified in an ongoing effort to improve their effectiveness.

**Implementation Plan**
The Program Coordinators will develop a protocol for the Student Mid-Program Reviews, and set up a process for tracking student progress in completing publications and presentations. Data collection will begin in Fall, 2003.