

Graduate Studies in Family and Consumer Sciences



**Program Information
Departmental Selection Criteria and Procedures
Student Procedures**

Areas of Emphasis

Marriage and Family Therapy

Food Science and Technology

Human Nutrition and Dietetic Science/Dietetic Internship

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Admission and Program Information for Master's Degree in Family and Consumer Sciences With an Emphasis in a Designated Program Area

A Master of Science degree in Family and Consumer Sciences (FCSC) indicates that the recipient is prepared to function at a professional level in one of the areas of emphasis available in this Department. Program areas available to graduate students include:

- **Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT)**
(46-52 credit hrs) – Thesis or Non-Thesis

The training provided is designed for persons who are interested in working with mental health and wellness in schools, hospitals, rehabilitation, centers, human service facilities, residential programs, or private practice. The option to write a thesis is available.

The MFT option is designed to provide the academic background for meeting the educational requirements for clinical membership in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and for professional licensure in marriage and family therapy in New Mexico. Entering graduate students receive a list of specific academic and/or practicum requirements as part of their graduate advising.

- **Food Science and Technology**
(30 credit hrs Thesis or 33 credit hrs Non-Thesis)

The master's degree with emphasis in Food Science and Technology prepares students to develop in-depth understanding in food chemistry, food microbiology, food engineering, food manufacturing and food processing. It also develops them professionally, enhances their problem solving skills and provides them with leadership tools to advance in their careers. The following competencies and collaborative multidisciplinary research areas are emphasized:

- ▶ Microbial food safety
- ▶ Sustainable food systems, processes and food choices,
- ▶ Food-based solutions for enhanced health,
- ▶ Improved food quality, availability and affordability,
- ▶ Food fermentations
- ▶ Cultural competency to enhance cultural global employability skills.

- **Human Nutrition and Dietetic Sciences**
(42 credit hrs Thesis, 39 credit hrs Non-Thesis)

Our program combines the dietetic internship with a graduate program leading to a Master of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences. Upon successful completion of the combined master's degree + dietetic internship, the student is eligible to take the national exam to become a registered dietitian/nutritionist (RD/RDN). Per the Commission on Dietetic Registration, "Beginning January 1, 2024, a graduate degree will be the minimum degree requirement for those seeking to become eligible for the registration examination for dietitians."

Admission Requirements

New Mexico State University Graduate School

Students must apply for admission to the New Mexico State University Graduate School. The Graduate School will inform an applicant in writing regarding admission results. However, admission to the Graduate School does not imply admission to candidacy for an advanced degree in the Family and Consumer Sciences Masters Program. The program faculty must be satisfied as to a student's undergraduate preparation and ability to pursue studies at the graduate level. Graduate School application deadlines are established by the Graduate School (see <https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/>)

International students must submit an official TOEFL score taken within the last two years. Each international student, who was required to submit a TOEFL score, must also take the NMSU Language Proficiency Examination administered by the Department of Communication Studies.

Based on the recommendation of the department of Communication Studies, the Graduate School may require the student to successfully complete one or more English as a foreign language course. If completion of the one or more of the classes is required, the student should enroll in the first such course during his/her first semester at NMSU. In all cases, satisfactory completion of the first course must be done by the end of the second semester of enrollment at NMSU. International students can seek help from Center for International Programs at <https://isss.nmsu.edu/> or by writing to Center for International Programs, Box 30001/MSC 3567, NMSU, Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001.

Family and Consumer Sciences Department Admissions

As described in the "Selection Guidelines," admission to the graduate program in Family and Consumer Sciences is based on evaluation of a portfolio of materials submitted by the prospective student to the Graduate Faculty in the area of emphasis noted previously. These materials shall include:

- One-page letter of interest, written in English, in which the candidate cites relevant experiences and personal motives for seeking a Master's in the area of emphasis desired.
- Resume (consisting of relevant educational and work experiences)
- Undergraduate GPA (usually shown on academic transcripts) – International students must submit a transcript that is translated to English and credit evaluated by a recognized transcript evaluation agency. The transcript must also be accompanied by an explanatory page about how the number of credit hours and grades were derived.
- Scores on an Entrance Exam: Graduate Record Examination (GRE) (verbal, analytical and quantitative sections).
- Three letters of reference – Translated to English if written in another language
- DICAS Portfolio (Dietetic Internship Applicants ONLY)

Deadlines

Deadlines for receipt of applications for admission into the Family and Consumer Sciences Masters Program and ALL required support materials and credentials are as follows:

MFT Tract.....	February 1
Dietetic Internship.....	February 15
Summer and Fall	March 1
Fall	June 1
Spring.....	November 1

*If a deadline falls on a weekend, the next Monday will be the deadline.

A letter regarding acceptance/rejection of your application, or detailing next steps, will be sent to you as soon as possible after the application deadline.

Note: The March 1, June 1 and November 1 deadlines are NOT available to students interested in the MFT or Dietetic Internship areas. All students wanting the MFT area must have their portfolios submitted by the February 1 deadline only. All students wanting the Dietetic Internship must have their applications submitted by the February 15 deadline only.

- Please be aware that these are the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences deadlines. This means that all paperwork to be processed and approved by the NMSU Graduate School should be in to the Graduate School at least six weeks prior to the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences deadlines in order that completed files are available to the Family and Consumer Sciences Graduate Faculty. Files received from the NMSU Graduate School after the deadline dates cannot be considered for admission as a Regular Graduate Student until the next admittance deadline. Applicants have the responsibility to check with the NMSU Graduate School (575-646-2736) and the Family and Consumer Sciences Department (575-646-3936) to ascertain the status of their file.

Admission Decisions

Faculty Voting: Admission to the graduate program in Family & Consumer Sciences is based on evaluation of a portfolio of materials submitted by the prospective student to the FCSC Graduate Faculty in the area of emphasis. When in the event that the selected emphasis area has fewer than 3 graduate faculty members, the reviewing committee will be composed as follows:

If there are 2 graduate faculty members, the remaining member will:

1. Be a graduate faculty member from a closely aligned field within FCSC selected by the other 2 members. (See below.)

If there is 1 graduate faculty member, the other members will include:

1. A graduate faculty member in a closely aligned field within FCSC selected by the emphasis area graduate faculty member. (See below.)
2. The Department Head.

FSTE > HNDS
HDFS > HNDS
HNDS > FSTE

Non-Degree Status

A student can apply to the Graduate School as a Non-Degree Graduate Student and take graduate course work. Only 9 credits taken as a Non-Degree Graduate Student can apply to the Graduate program once students are admitted to the Graduate School and Family and Consumer Sciences Master's Program. However, students need to be aware that successfully taking graduate course work does not guarantee that they will be admitted to the Family and Consumer Sciences Master's Program.

Financial Assistance

Two types of Graduate Assistantships (GAs) are available in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department. These include: Teaching Assistantships (TAs) and Research Assistantships (RAs) Students who apply for GAs will be considered for an award if they meet the eligibility criteria of: (a) acceptance by or registration in the Graduate School and the Family and Consumer Sciences Program, (b) classification as a "regular" graduate student and (c) a continuing 3.0 GPA or higher in all graduate work. TA awards follow strict deadlines and other criteria set forth by the NMSU Graduate School. RAs awards are based on the availability of funds with a given faculty member.

Applications procedures for Graduate Assistantships can be discussed with the program area faculty. Letters of reference submitted as a part of the application package may be used for the required three references needed to be considered for an assistantship.

Other financial aid may be available in the form of scholarships, grants and work study. Students should check with the Office of Financial Aid (<https://fa.nmsu.edu/>).

Competencies and Performance Policies

Each student's academic and practicum performance (if applicable) is reviewed each semester. Failure to meet the established competency criteria, noted below, will lead to provisional status or dismissal from the Family and Consumer Sciences Master's Program. The criteria include:

- Satisfactory performance in attaining mastery of academic concepts and/or clinical practice skills;
- An overall 3.0 GPA;
- Within the Family and Consumer Sciences Department, only those courses in which a grade of "B- "or higher will apply toward fulfilling academic requirements. Program courses in which students receive a "C" or below must be repeated or replaced by an approved substitute course before graduation can occur.
- Successful performance at the supervised practice site (If applicable). Graduation will not be approved until the required number of clock hours has been completed at a satisfactory level.
- Students without an undergraduate degree in Family and Consumer Sciences or a closely related field may be required to take leveling courses. Leveling courses are those classes

which are needed to successfully complete a graduate level class. In most cases, they are classes that the student would have taken had he or she gotten an undergraduate degree in Family and Consumer Sciences. Leveling courses required will be specified by the Graduate Faculty in the area of emphasis being requested.

- Each applicant is assessed in five areas using the following scales:

Score	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5
	GPA*	GRE	Letter of Interest	Resume	References
5	3.8-4.0	600+	Truly Outstanding	Truly	Truly
4	3.6-	571-599	Superior	Outstanding	Outstanding
3	3.79	500-570	Above Average	Superior	Superior
2	3.3-	450-499	Average	Above Average	Above Average
1	3.49	<450	Below Average	Average	Average
	3.0-			Below Average	Below Average
	3.29				
	<2.99				

The scores assigned to the GPA* and Graduate Record Exam are multiplied by a factor of 2. They are weighted more heavily than the Letters of Reference*** which are an average of the three scores. The available openings, in each of the areas of emphasis, will be awarded to those applicants with the best scores in a hierarchical fashion. All other qualified applicants will be placed on a waiting list for that year only. If an individual who is admitted chooses not to attend, the next applicant in the waiting list will be given an opportunity to enroll. Applicants who are not selected for the program for a given year must write a letter to the FCSC Department requesting that the application remain active if they wish to be considered for the following year.

Note: Applicants chosen for the Marriage and Family Therapy Track must be able to begin classes the summer immediately following acceptance. In addition, seven classes (21 credit hours) must be completed during the first twelve months of enrollment. Applicants chosen for the Dietetic Internship must be able to begin classes in the fall semester immediately following acceptance.

Students who have a minimum of 9 hours of graduate work in related courses will have both the undergraduate and graduate GPAs considered in Area 1. This is done by assigning a score, as noted above, to the undergraduate GPA and to the graduate GPA. Then the two scores are averaged.

- Applicants who are placed on a waiting list or not accepted to the Program are encouraged to contact Family and Consumer Sciences Graduate Faculty in the desired area of emphasis to discuss other options. Detailed information for the student not meeting deadlines and/ or accepted to a given subject matter area on the first try is available.
- Applicants may be asked to meet with the Family and Consumer Sciences Graduate Faculty in the area of desired emphasis for interviews. The interviews will solicit information, on professional goals, previous course work, experience, and background preparation for the Masters degree.

Alternatives for Graduate Students Not Meeting Deadlines or Not Accepted

If you have applied to the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and have not been accepted or if you want to start your graduate program but cannot meet the deadlines set forth by the Graduate School and/or the department, you can still take graduate classes if you have an Undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher. The procedure is as follows:

- Complete an application for the Graduate School at New Mexico State University seeking admission as a non-degree student;
- After consultation with departmental faculty, enroll in desired graduate classes keeping in mind that only 9 graduate credits (total of 3 classes) with a GPA of 3.0 or higher can be applied towards a graduate degree. The student should be aware that:
 - ▶ Some courses cannot be taken if they are restricted to persons who have been accepted into the program
 - ▶ Other than from the University of New Mexico, NMSU cannot accept credits earned in a non-degree status at any other university.
 - ▶ Completion of course work does not guarantee that he or she will be admitted to the Department of Family and Consumer graduate program
- Complete the full application package detailed in the Admission and Program Information handout meeting the next set of deadlines for both the Graduate School and the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Graduate Student Procedures Family and Consumer Sciences Master's Program

These procedures are intended as a supplement to all university regulations governing graduate students as set forth in *The Graduate Bulletin*. Graduate students are responsible for following all New Mexico State University Graduate School guidelines.

Advisory Committee

The Graduate Student (Thesis or Non-Thesis) will work with his/her Major Professor to compose an Advisory Committee prior to the completion of 12 credit hours of graduate work. The Advisory Committee will consist of a minimum of 3 graduate faculty members:

- Major Professor
- One other faculty member from within the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.
- A third member, from outside the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, will be designated by the Graduate School. A suggestion for this person may be proposed by the Graduate Student and Major Professor.
- Note: If a student has a designated minor, one faculty member must be from that subject matter area.

Candidacy Meeting

- Prior to completion of 12 credit hours, the Major Professor and Graduate Student may call a Candidacy Meeting with the Advisory Committee. At this meeting, the Graduate Student will give a brief overview of his/her career goals and background (education, experience, etc.). The Graduate Student will present to the Advisory Committee a proposed Program of Study for the degree. The Program of Study will have been agreed upon by the major Professor and the Graduate Student prior to the meeting. The

information will be presented to the Advisory Committee on the Graduate Student Checklist form (see Appendices) which will be as complete as possible.

- The student will justify pursuing the Thesis or Non-Thesis option for the degree in light of career goals.

If the Thesis option is to be undertaken, the student will present possible topic areas for investigation or a research proposal. Persons presenting a research proposal must have the proposal to the committee members at least one week prior to the meeting so that faculty member can review the materials.

- Advisory Committee members will provide input on the Program of Study and potential research topics or the research proposal.
- At the conclusion of the Candidacy Meeting, all Advisory Committee members will sign the Report of Candidacy Meeting form indicating agreement on the Program of Study for the degree. If the Candidacy Meeting is combined with a Proposal Meeting, discussed below, and a research proposal has been presented, the Advisory Committee will sign the cover page on the proposal indicating agreement with the research being proposed.

Filing of Forms/Substitutions

After the Candidacy Meeting, the Graduate Student Checklist and the Report of Candidacy Meeting will be filed by the major Professor in the Graduate Student's departmental file.

The Graduate Student's agreed upon course work will be filed with the Graduate School immediately after the completion of 12 credit hours on the appropriate form.

All substitutions in the student's degree plan must be approved by Advisory Committee members prior to submission to the Graduate School. A memo to the Graduate School requesting change(s) in the degree plan will be submitted by the Major Professor. This memo must be signed by the Graduate Student, the Major Professor, the Department Head and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. Justifications for substitutions will be included in the memo. Copies of Advisory Committee approvals and memos to the Graduate School will be placed in the Graduate Student's departmental file.

Written Exams for Non-Thesis Candidates (*Not Applicable for Marriage and Family Therapy students)

- When the non-thesis Graduate Student is ready for the exam, each Family and Consumer Sciences faculty member who has had the student for a class will be given the option of writing questions. In addition, outside committee members will be given the option of submitting questions.
- In the case when a faculty member is no longer employed at New Mexico State University, the following options will be employed in the order given:

- ▶ Solicit question from former faculty member and handle questions and answers by mail.
 - ▶ Solicit question from person currently teaching the comparable course.
- The written exam time will take a minimum of 5 hours and a maximum of 8 hours of writing time. The time block will be divided by the Major Professor among the number of faculty members writing questions. Each faculty member will then be asked to submit questions fitting an appropriate response time frame designated by the major Professor. The Major Professor has the option of screening questions submitted for appropriateness for the time frame. Questions on appropriateness of questions for the time frame will be resolved by the Department Head, writer of the questions and the Major Professor. The student will respond to all questions submitted.
- The Graduate Student will let the Major Professor know how he/she plans to allocate blocks of time to be spent writing and he/she will then be given all questions to be accomplished without interruption within each block of time.
- Upon completion of the exam, the Major Professor will make at least one copy of the total exam. The Major Professor will then distribute the original answers to each faculty member for grading. A response memo will be attached to advise of satisfactory or unsatisfactory response.
- All graded responses will be shared with the Graduate Student before the rewriting of unsatisfactory responses and/or the oral exam. The student will be given the opportunity to review the responses under the supervision of the Major Professor. No copying will be allowed by the Student.
- All unsatisfactory responses will be rewritten at least once before the student's orals.
- If an answer is still unsatisfactory upon rewriting, a decision as to whether to proceed to the oral exam will be made by joint consultation among the Major Professor, writer of the questions and the Department Head.
- At least 75% of the candidate's responses must be satisfactory before the Graduate Student can proceed to the oral examination stage.
- A complete set of the questions, original answers and response forms will be placed in the Graduate Student's departmental file. A second set will be kept by the Student's Major Professor.
- An oral examination of each candidate for graduation will be completed during the student's final semester in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department for Non-Thesis option.

Case Study Examination for Marriage and Family Therapy Students

Students will select a case they have worked on in their internship to conduct a case conceptualization on. Further details will be provided during a student's final semester in the program.

Proposal Meeting for Thesis Candidates

The purposes of the Proposal Meeting are to:

- Allow the Graduate Student to review the intended focus of the thesis with the Advisory Committee members.
- Allow the Advisory Committee members an opportunity to provide input on the thesis proposal.

- Arrive at agreement on the steps to be undertaken in the thesis project.
- The Proposal Meeting is appropriately called when the following contents of the proposal have been formulated in writing.
- Reviewed and approved by the Major Professor:
 - ◆ Introduction
 - ◆ Statement of the problem
 - ◆ Review of Literature to Date
 - ◆ Procedures and Instrumentation
 - ◆ Evidence of consultation with a statistician, if appropriate

Copies of the typed proposal will be distributed to the Advisory Committee. A cover sheet will be signed by all committee members indicating agreement. A copy of the Proposal and signed Cover Sheet will be placed in the graduate Student's departmental file. The Major Professor will also keep a copy.

Following the Proposal Meeting and prior to the Thesis Defense, additional meetings of the Advisory Committee may be called by the Major Professor and/or Graduate Students throughout the research process for input and consultation.

When Advisory Committee members are asked to react to any written material related to the thesis, they should receive the material one week in advance of when a response is expected.

Thesis Defense for Thesis Candidates

The thesis defense consists of the Graduate Student sharing and discussing the thesis research with the Advisory Committee members.

The thesis defense will be scheduled when the Major Professor and Graduate Student agree the individual is ready to defend the written thesis.

One week prior to the scheduled defense, a complete copy of the thesis including all appendix materials will be submitted to members of the Advisory Committee.

Master's Oral Examination for Thesis and Non-Thesis Candidates

An oral examination of each candidate for graduation will be completed during the student's final semester in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department for both the Thesis and Non-Thesis options. The student must be enrolled in at least 1 credit of FCSC 599 at the time of the orals for thesis candidates or 1 graduate credit for non-thesis candidates.

NMSU Graduate Student Collective Bargaining Agreement

The Family and Consumer Sciences Department follows the collective bargaining agreement that has been established. For a current copy of the agreement, go here:

<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-and-union/collective-bargaining-agreement.html>

GRADUATE STUDENT CHECKLIST

NAME _____

MAJOR PROFESSOR _____

CATALOG _____ SEMESTER COURSE WORK STARTED _____

EMPHASIS _____

GRE COMPLETED _____

PROGRAM OF STUDY (SUBMITTED WITHIN 12 HOURS OR LESS)

GRADUATE COMMITTEE (BY END OF FIRST SEMESTER)

Advisor/Chairperson

2nd Dept. Member

Outside Member

THESIS TITLE -

PROPOSAL COMPLETED (date) -

THESIS SUBMITTED TO GRADUATE SCHOOL (date) -

Proposal Meeting (date) -

EXAMS

Written (Nonthesis) (date) -

Oral Defense (Thesis and Nonthesis) (date) -