

FAMILY STUDIES

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(Social Work and Family Studies)

The well-being of individuals, couples, and families is a national and global concern. Family studies is an integrative field that synthesizes knowledge from many liberal arts disciplines, particularly economics, political science, psychology, social work, and sociology.

The Social Work and Family Studies Department offers a concentration in family studies.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Concentration

Recommendations for Graduate Study

The concentration in family studies is designed to enable students to learn about families in both theory and practice; it is a course of study that can enhance student learning in any major. This concentration prepares students entering careers with families including marriage and family therapy, education, and ministry, or to family practice in law, medicine, nursing, social work, or public policy. Students who intend to go directly to graduate school in family social science or related fields should also consider enrollment in a statistics course and a research methods course in social work, psychology, or sociology/anthropology.

Requirements

Requirements for the Concentration

Recommended preparation: introductory courses in social sciences, biology, and statistics

Code	Title	Credits
Required department courses ¹		
FAMST 132	Introduction to Family Studies	1.00
FAMST 242	Family Relationships	1.00
FAMST 391	Senior Seminar: Special Topics	1.00
Electives		
Select two of the following electives: ²		2.00
ENGL 203	Asian American Literature	
FAMST 230	Family, Faith and Values	
FAMST 253	Human Sexuality	
FAMST 260	Storytelling, Healing and Family in Aboriginal and Maori Cultures (stu	
HIST 272	Women in America	
NURS 312	Family Health	
PSYCH 223	Exploring India: Human Development in Cross-Cult Cont (study abroad)	
PSYCH 241	Developmental Psychology	

RACE 121	Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies (literature)
RACE 250	Topical Seminar (when taught as Race, Gender, and Sexuality)
SOAN 248	Sociology of Dying, Death, and Bereavement
SOAN 260	Families, Marriage, & Relationships
SPAN 250	Family and Gender Roles in Spain: 1900 to Present

Experiential component (see below)

Total Credits **5**

1

These required courses provide a core of knowledge that is essential to thinking systematically about families as social systems and family as a social institution and its interactions within the larger social context.

2

At least one elective must be outside the Department of Social Work and Family Studies. These courses allow students to tailor their further knowledge about families to fit a specific application area or to integrate with their chosen majors. Elective courses not on this list may be counted with prior approval of the program director.

Experiential component with families

This requirement is usually an academic, credit-bearing experience completed during the senior year (including the previous summer.) It is designed to ensure that concentrators participate in an experience that applies basic family knowledge (theories, frameworks, concepts) to real families in a setting beyond the classroom. It must be approved by a faculty member in the Department of Social Work and Family Studies **prior** to enrollment and entered into the Department GoogleDoc. The experience and concomitant learning is presented as a graded assignment for a public audience in the senior seminar FAMST 391. Through the experience, students demonstrate attainment of intended learning outcomes for family studies. Watch for an email each semester from the program director with a Google Form to fill in your plans for completion.

Guidelines for the experiential component:

Includes approximately 40 hours devoted to direct experience with families (more than one family);

1. A family interaction is considered having contact, even if it is at a pick-up or drop-off from an after-school program or camp, with more than one member of a family;
2. Can be domestic or international experience;
3. Can be a volunteer activity that is not graded;
4. If for credit, can be taken either graded or Pass/No Pass (P/N);
5. Can be in person, hybrid, or online;
6. Can be submitted for distinction in a major, if it meets that department's guidelines for distinction; and
7. Must be approved by a faculty member in the Department of Social Work and Family Studies prior to enrollment.

The experience *may* be:

- A project in a senior year course; or
- Work with families in a social work practicum or nursing clinical; or

- An independent research project with family interaction (FAMST 394); or
- An internship with a family serving agency (quarter-, half-, or full-credit FAMST 294); or
- A summer experience prior to senior year that involves direct experience with families.

Courses

FAMST 127: *Exploring Narratives of Black Families and Community*

This course invites students to draw on narratives of Black families in the U.S. Students explore multidisciplinary theoretical constructs that address power, privilege, and identity in Black families. The concept of family is considered beyond biological kinship and across sexual orientation and class. Students engage multiple forms of narrative including memoirs, fiction, poetry, art, and documentaries through a major assignment and small group exercises. Offered periodically in January Term. Also counts toward race and ethnic studies major and concentration.

FAMST 132: *Introduction to Family Studies*

Students examine American families through the life cycle in relation to personal and professional life, with the major emphasis on communication and commitment in interpersonal relationships. Students study courtship, marriage, adjustment to parenthood, and aging through engaging evidence-based research, case studies, and theoretical frameworks. They examine stressors that affect families such as family violence, divorce, grief and loss, and socioeconomic challenges. This course takes an interdisciplinary approach; students have opportunity for a broad range of individualized study. Offered each semester. Also counts toward business and management studies concentration.

FAMST 230: *Family, Faith and Values*

In this course students examine and connect faith beliefs & practices, family relationships and values that are lived out in community. Students study family rituals and values from several global religions. Students learn how rituals and values are modeled and taught in the family and examine how spiritual practices and religious beliefs can be both sources of support and stress to families. Students explore and articulate their own stories related to family, faith and values. Offered periodically in January Term.

FAMST 242: *Family Relationships*

Students explore how family relationships are influenced by social, historical, and political contexts. Drawing on a range of disciplinary contexts and research, this course underscores the ways family relationships are constructed, sustained and challenged in society, with emphasis on theories and practice of family communication. Students draw on the relational dynamics studied in the introductory family studies course to transition to elaborating on the complexities of family functioning in U.S. society and beyond. Offered each semester. Also counts toward gender and sexuality studies major and educational studies and gender and sexuality studies concentrations.

FAMST 253: *Human Sexuality*

This course explores the varied dimensions of human sexuality as they affect and are affected by past and present human relationships. Sexual problems and issues are examined for the development of a value framework and for the enrichment of family life. The course emphasizes critical thinking skills applied to current issues in human sexuality (e.g. gay marriage, race and gender issues, sexual violence). Students examine issues in contemporary research and ethics in sexuality. Also counts toward gender and sexuality studies major and concentration.

FAMST 260: *Storytelling, Healing and Family in Aboriginal and Maori Cultures (stu)*

This course immerses students in the narrative, storytelling culture of indigenous Australian and New Zealand peoples, the Aboriginal and Maori cultures. Students gain an understanding of the history of these peoples, their family culture, and storytelling as a healing and powerful force. Students study Narrative Family Therapy and learn to articulate the parallels between it and Aboriginal and Maori culture. Students also learn to apply this theory to their own lived experience.

Prerequisite: One of the following: FAMST 132, FAMST 242, SWRK 120, SWRK 122, SWRK 221, PSYCH 125, SOAN 121, SOAN 128, SOAN 260, SOAN 262, SOAN 264, RACE 121, RACE 252.

FAMST 294: *Academic Internship*

FAMST 298: *Independent Study*

FAMST 391: *Senior Seminar: Special Topics*

This required capstone seminar explores current research and the integration of key foundation disciplines in the study of families. Students explore special topics through readings assignments and lecture material.

Prerequisites: FAMST 132 and FAMST 242. Students can take FAMST 242 and FAMST 391 concurrently with permission of program director or FAMST 391 instructor.

FAMST 394: *Academic Internship*

FAMST 398: *Independent Research*

Faculty

Department Chair, 2024-2025

Erica Kanewischer

Associate Professor of Practice of Social Work and Family Studies

Gwendolyn (Wendy) Anderson

Associate Professor of Social Work and Family Studies

Grace E. Cho

Professor of Psychology
developmental psychology; child development; cultural psychology;
socioemotional development; parent-child processes

Kimberly Doran

Visiting Assistant Professor of Social Work and Family Studies

Dana L. Gross

Professor of Psychology
developmental psychology; study away and study abroad

Hillary Lamberty

Visiting Assistant Professor of Social Work and Family Studies

Susan E. Smalling

Professor of Social Work and Family Studies; Associate Dean for Social Sciences; Director of Faculty Inclusion and Belonging

anti-oppressive research and practice; indigenous populations; family and child welfare

Thomas A. Williamson (on sabbatical 2024-25)

Kenneth Bjork Distinguished Professor of Sociology/Anthropology
Southeast Asia; theory; globalization; medical anthropology