Family Studies — M.A.

The M.A. degree in family studies meets the highest standards and quality in the field. This curriculum supports the standard curriculum of the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) and prepares graduates to become certified family life educators (CFLE). Earning the M.A. degree guarantees quick processing of the application for this credential. Earning the CFLE credential is desirable since many agencies and educational institutions require this certification when considering potential employees.

Career options

The M.A. degree in family studies is designed to prepare students to work in applied settings such as family services agencies, schools, churches, and other community-based programs. Also, it prepares students for private practice using family life education methodology as the means of intervention for effecting changes in family rules, roles, and relationships. Students will acquire greater knowledge of individual development and family dynamics, increase their skills as family life educators, and/or secure important knowledge and skill to augment their present career. The M.A. degree in family studies is often pursued by students who are seeking graduate-level preparation for doctoral studies in the family sciences.

Professional training

In addition to the courses of instruction required for the successful completion of the M.A. degree in family studies, there is also a service-learning component that is important in shaping the student’s knowledge and experience in the field. This component includes 100 hours of internship experience. This internship requires direct involvement in an organization for which the provision of services to families is at the forefront. The student is expected to engage in exercises such as program planning, service delivery, and/or evaluation of family life education programs. This experience is designed to create sensitivities to family needs, provide practical experience in family life programming, and enable students to have a competitive edge in the work world. Upon approval from the director of the program, this learning experience may be completed at two different sites.

Because of the commitment of the University to global missions, students are strongly encouraged to participate in study opportunities provided through the department and the School of Behavioral Health. (See also CFSG 584 Global Practice Experience. Enrollment requires department approval.)

Learning outcomes

1. Students will develop and maintain professional identity as graduate-level persons in family studies.
2. Students will demonstrate critical skills in evaluating the current and ongoing issues and theories in the field of human development and family studies.
3. Students will be proficient in family service practice skills using family life education methodologies.
4. Students will be conversant with legal and ethical issues as family scientists in the areas of teaching, research, and service.
5. Students will have skills in research, program evaluation, and program development.
6. Students will have critical thinking and writing skills appropriate to the field of family science.

Approval and certification

The M.A. degree in family studies has been reviewed by the National Council on Family Relations. It has been recognized as an NCFR CFLE-approved program offering course work covering the content required for the certified family life educator (CFLE) designation. Graduates of NCFR CFLE-approved programs qualify to apply for the CFLE designation via an abbreviated application process. Further information on securing the CFLE designation may be found on the website of the National Council on Family Relations at <http://www.ncfr.org/>.

Admissions

Applicants must meet Loma Linda University (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#admissionrequirementstext) and School of Behavioral Health (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/#generalregulationstext) admissions requirements. The applicant must submit a completed application, as well as show evidence of scholastic ability, professional comportment, and mature judgment. If accepted, the student will begin his/her program in the Fall Quarter, but she/he may petition to begin at another quarter of the academic year.

Below is a list of additional admission requirements:

- Minimum grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 scale) in the bachelor’s degree course work for at least the final 45 units prior to graduation.
- Three letters of recommendation from academic individuals
- Statement of intent.
- Interview with department faculty as scheduled (on-campus group interviews are scheduled for mid-March and mid-May; other on-campus and telephone interviews are scheduled individually).

Pre-entrance clearance (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#preentrancerequirementstext):

- A background check
- Health clearance

Program requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FMST 515</td>
<td>Professional Issues in Family Life Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FMST 524</td>
<td>Family Resource Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FMST 526</td>
<td>Marriage and the Family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FMST 528</td>
<td>Parenting</td>
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<td>FMST 529</td>
<td>Family Life Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFAM 515</td>
<td>Crisis Intervention and Client-Centered Advocacy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MFAM 528</td>
<td>Culture, Socioeconomic Status in Therapy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MFAM 547</td>
<td>Social Ecology of Individual and Family Development</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>MFAM 553</td>
<td>Family Systems Theory</td>
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<td>MFAM 568</td>
<td>Groups: Process, and Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFAM 604</td>
<td>Social Context in Clinical Practice: Gender, Class, and Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFAM 638</td>
<td>Family Therapy and Chemical Abuse</td>
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<td>MFAM 674</td>
<td>Human Sexual Behavior</td>
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Religion
RELR 564  Religion, Marriage, and the Family  3

Research
FMST 505  Social Research Methods: Quantitative  3
FMST 506  Advanced Social Research Methods  3
FMST 698  Project or Thesis  3

Electives 1
 Elective  4

Internship
FMST 695  Internship in Family Studies  2

Total Units  55

1 Units must be chosen from among various courses offered by the department, or from other departments, depending on professional interest or need

Normal time to complete the program
2 years (6 academic quarters) — based on full-time enrollment

Students have up to five years to complete the degree. The program is structured to accommodate part-time and nontraditional students.