



# Graduate Student Handbook: 2020-2021

## Table of Contents

**General Regulations..... 1**

- Application Timeline..... 1
- Admissions Qualifications..... 1
- Financial Support..... 1
- Temporary Advisor..... 2
- Academic Load..... 2
- Transfer of Credit..... 2
- Student Absence..... 2
- Grade Point Average (GPA)..... 2
- Assessment of Progress..... 2
- Termination Policy..... 2
- Application for Degree..... 3

**Master’s Program..... 3**

- Program Philosophy..... 3
- Curriculum Requirements..... 3
- Master’s Advisory Committee..... 3
- Changing Emphasis Areas..... 3
- Final Project Requirements..... 4
- Final Examination..... 4
- Master’s Degree Time Limit..... 5
- Deadlines..... 5
- Forms..... 5

**Doctoral Program..... 5**

- Program Overview..... 5
- Curriculum Requirements..... 5
- Doctoral Advisory Committee..... 6
- Portfolio..... 7
- Qualifying Examination..... 7
- Dissertation Plan..... 8
- Dissertation Proposal..... 9
- Dissertation..... 9
- Doctoral Degree Time Limit..... 10
- Deadlines..... 11
- Forms..... 11

This handbook identifies Graduate School and Department of Family Sciences requirements and procedures for receiving a Family Sciences master’s or doctoral degree at the University of Kentucky.

## General Regulations

Students are expected to know all regulations and procedures required by the program of study being pursued; ignorance of departmental or university regulations and procedures is not a valid excuse. Therefore, students should become familiar with the *Graduate School Bulletin* (see <http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>) and this *Department of Family Science Graduate Student Handbook*. In the case of a contradiction, the *Graduate School Bulletin* supersedes this departmental handbook.

## Application Timeline

The application deadline for admission to the Family Sciences master’s or doctoral program is January 15 to begin fall semester of the same calendar year; admissions are for fall semester enrollment only. Applicants are generally notified of admissions decisions by mid- to late-March.

## Admissions Qualifications

A variety of academic backgrounds can qualify one for admission into the Family Sciences master's or doctoral program. For example, a previous degree in any social science (e.g., family science, psychology, sociology, communications, gender studies) is viewed favorably in the admissions process. Those from more distant disciplines such as education or health sciences are also considered, but some additional preliminary coursework may be required. Relevant professional work experience is taken into consideration too. Students must have a bachelor's degree prior to admission into the master's program. A master's degree is generally expected prior to admission into the doctoral program; however, particularly outstanding applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree but not a master's degree may be considered for admission into the doctoral program, upon request. Applicants admitted to the doctoral program without a master's degree must earn a master's degree while in the doctoral program.

## Financial Support

The Department of Family Sciences offers both half-time (10 working hours per week) and full-time (20 working hours per week) graduate teaching assistantships, which usually include half- or full-time tuition scholarships, respectively. Doctoral students are given priority for assistantships over master’s students, and Plan A (thesis) track master’s students are given priority over those on the Plan B (scholarly project) track. Faculty

members who have received funding may also offer research assistantships. Additionally, the School of Human Environmental Sciences (HES) awards scholarships each year; applications are available in the HES Office of Student Services, located in Erikson Hall. Other types of financial assistance are available from the University. The *Graduate School Bulletin* and the Graduate School's website have additional information about financial support.

## Temporary Advisor

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or designee advises all new students for the first semester. Students then choose a major professor and advisory committee, as outlined below.

## Academic Load

During fall and spring semesters, full-time enrollment is 9 credit hours per semester and the maximum is 15 credit hours. The maximum summer course load is 4 credit hours for the 4-week intersession and 9 credit hours for the 8-week summer term, or 12 hours for a combination of both summer terms. The Credit Overload Form (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms>) should be used to request permission to exceed these loads.

## Transfer of Credit

Transfer of courses is not permitted at the doctoral level. However, competencies attained through prior coursework will be considered by the student's advisory committee when designing a program of study.

Master's students who desire to transfer graduate work completed under post-baccalaureate status at the University of Kentucky or credits received from another institution must submit the "Transfer of Credit" form (see <https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms>) to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who will then submit the request to the Graduate School. Transfer of credit forms should be submitted during the first semester after being admitted to the program or the first semester after returning to UK after taking course(s) elsewhere. Transfer of credits will be considered (up to 9 credits and excluding FAM 777 and FAM 790) in the areas of Research Methods, Statistics, and Professional Development, with the approval of the doctoral advisory committee and Director of Graduate Studies. Failure to initiate the credit transfer request at least one semester prior to graduation may delay one's graduation.

Waiver of credit from previous coursework will only be considered for courses in the foundational area with the approval of the doctoral advisory committee and Director of Graduate Studies. Evaluation of foundational courses will be coordinated by the DGS in consultation with the course instructor(s) to determine equivalency.

## Student Absence

Enrolled graduate students who sit out for one or more semesters will need to complete a new application (both Graduate School and Department of Family Sciences) and pay the application fee in order to be considered for readmission. Upon readmission, program rules in place at the time of the readmission will apply. In many instances this requirement can be avoided by requesting a "leave of absence." In addition to avoiding the

application process, this status will allow the student to priority register upon returning to UK.

Procedurally, students contact the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) to seek approval for the leave prior to the beginning of the semester in question. If approved, the DGS will contact a Graduate School admissions officer who will modify the record accordingly. No more than two consecutive and four total semesters in leave of absence status may be requested. Doctoral candidates (i.e., post-qualifying exam) are not permitted to take a leave of absence; doctoral candidates must remain continuously enrolled in 2 credit hours of FAM 767 until successful completion of the final exam (i.e., dissertation defense). International students are strongly encouraged to discuss leave of absence plans with UK's Office of International Affairs and the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) prior to making a formal request.

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

An overall GPA of 3.0 on all graduate coursework in the program must be attained before a master's or doctoral degree may be awarded. Note that graduate courses may not be taken pass/fail and D grades are not awarded to graduate students.

When students have completed 12 or more credit hours of graduate course work with a cumulative GPA less than 3.0, they will be placed on scholastic probation. Students will have one full-time semester or the equivalent (9 credit hours) to remove the scholastic probation by attaining a 3.0 cumulative grade point average. If probation is not removed, students will be dismissed from the program.

A student may repeat a graduate course and count only the second grade as part of the graduate GPA. This action must be initiated by petition of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) to the Dean of the Graduate School, and may be used only once in a particular degree program.

## Assessment of Progress

Each student's progress in the program will be reviewed annually, at the end of the spring semester. The major professor, in consultation with the advisory committee, will coordinate the review and will formally report the results of the review to the student via e-mail by May 15, with the e-mail copied to the DGS and advisory committee members.

## Termination Policy

The Graduate Faculty (or a designated committee) will regularly evaluate the academic performance of graduate students in the Department.

### Warnings

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will send warning of unsatisfactory progress for any of the following:

- Semester GPA below 3.0
- 6 or more credit hours of incomplete work
- 4 or more credit hours of C grades
- 1 or more credit hours of E grades

### Termination

The Graduate Faculty may terminate a student for any of the following:

- GPA below 3.0 in each of two semesters of work

- 6 credit hours of incomplete grades not been completed after one year
- 7 or more credit hours of grades below a B (even if the cumulative GPA is over 3.0)
- Absences from the program (i.e., not taking at least one course per semester)
- For doctoral students, failure to demonstrate satisfactory competence on a second attempt of the Qualifying Examination (following a failed first attempt, the exam may be retaken no less than 4 months and no more than 12 months after the first exam date)
- Failure to demonstrate satisfactory competence on a second attempt of the final examination (if a master's student fails a first attempt at the final examination, the exam may be retaken no less than 1 month after the first exam date; doctoral students must wait a minimum of 4 months)
- A student who is terminated will receive written notice of the decision stating the grounds for termination, and will be afforded an opportunity to meet with the Graduate Faculty and appeal the dismissal. After meeting with the student and considering the student's grounds for appeal, the Graduate Faculty can reconsider the termination decision.

## Application for Degree

Students must file an application for receipt of their degree within the first 30 days after the beginning of the semester in which they will complete their degree. Go to [myUK.uky.edu](https://myUK.uky.edu) and click on student services > myRecords > graduate degree application. The student is responsible for consulting the latest edition of the *Graduate School Bulletin* (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>) for changes in requirements and procedures and to ensure that all deadlines are met.

## Master's Program

### Program Philosophy

The family sciences master's program uses an integrative approach to learning about and improving individual, family, and community well-being through the generation and application of knowledge about human development, family systems, and family finances. Students can tailor their programs to prepare for employment in their chosen field, or to establish a foundation for the Family Sciences doctoral program (or for doctoral work elsewhere).

### Curriculum Requirements

Areas of emphasis within the master's program are: (a) adolescent development, (b) aging, (c) couple and family therapy, (d) family finance and economics, and (e) family processes. The curriculum for each emphasis area except couple and family therapy requires a minimum of 30 credit hours, comprised of:

- 15 credit hours of core family sciences courses (FAM 601, 652, 654, 668, and 690),
- 1 credit hour of a professional development seminar (FAM 775-001) that must be taken the first semester,
- 3 credit hours of a data analysis or program evaluation course that must be taken no later than the semester prior to graduation,

- 5 credit hours of electives, and
- 6 credit hours for the thesis (Plan A) or scholarly project (Plan B).

The couple and family therapy emphasis area is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) and requires a prescribed curriculum totaling 53 credit hours (2 years, including one summer), comprised of:

- 15 credit hours of core family sciences courses (FAM 601, 652, 654, 668, and 690),
- 18 hours of core couple and family therapy courses,
- 1 credit hour of a professional development seminar (FAM 775-001) that must be taken the first semester,
- 10 hours of supervised practicum,
- 3 credit hours of a data analysis or program evaluation course that must be taken no later than the semester prior to graduation, and
- 6 credit hours for the thesis (Plan A) or scholarly project (Plan B).

Regardless of emphasis area, by Graduate School rules, at least two-thirds of the minimum credit hour requirements must be in regular courses (i.e., those that meet at regularly-scheduled times and locations each week, as identified in the course catalogue), and at least three-quarters of the minimum credit hour requirements must be in courses numbered at the 600 or 700 levels.

### Master's Advisory Committee

During the second semester in the program, each master's student must identify a full or associate member of the family sciences graduate faculty with whom they share similar academic interests, and ask that faculty member to serve as Major Professor (a.k.a., Advisory Committee Chair). Then, in consultation with the major professor, two additional faculty members must be selected to serve as Advisory Committee Members. At least half (two of the three) of a Master's committee needs to include faculty with tenure line appointments in Family Sciences.

The Master's Advisory Committee must be reported when (and therefore must be formed prior to) submitting annual review materials, which are usually due the fourth Friday in April. Any subsequent changes in committee membership must also be submitted in writing to the DGS, but only following consultation with the major professor and advisory committee members.

In consultation with the master's advisory committee, a program of study must be established during the student's second semester in the program. The plan of study must then be filed with the DGS using the M-1: Plan of Study form (see [fam.uky.edu/forms](https://fam.uky.edu/forms)). Changes in the plan of study may occur thereafter, but the committee must approve any changes.

The master's advisory committee will mentor students through the final project (see below). Committee membership cannot be changed after the beginning of the student's last semester unless a member of the committee is unavailable that semester. In such an instance, the DGS must approve the substitution.

### Changing Emphasis Areas

Students can change from any emphasis area to any emphasis area except couple and family therapy by informing the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). If a student has been accepted into

the master's program but not the couple and family therapy (CFT) emphasis area, and later wishes to change to the CFT emphasis area, a formal application must be submitted according to the deadline dates for application to the Department of Family Sciences graduate program.

## Final Project Requirements

Candidates for the master's degree in family sciences are required to complete a thesis (Plan A) or scholarly project (Plan B). The specific nature of the thesis or scholarly project is the responsibility of the student and the master's advisory committee. A scholarly project may result in a journal publication, series of Cooperative Extension publications, policy paper, publishable literature review, or another appropriate piece of scholarly work approved by the committee that does not involve original research but has both breadth and depth of scholarship comparable to a thesis. The following steps are required for both Plan A and Plan B:

- 1) Prior to completing 21 credit hours, enroll in FAM 768 (residence credit) to develop a thesis or scholarly project proposal in consultation with the major professor.
- 2) Committee approval is required no later than the end of the first semester enrolled in FAM 768. Failure to have a proposal approved by the end of the semester will result in an 'I' (incomplete) grade and preclude enrollment in subsequent FAM 768 credit hours until formal committee approval of the thesis proposal is obtained.
- 3) Upon committee approval of the proposal, submit the M-3: Thesis or Scholarly Project Proposal form (see [fam.uky.edu/forms](https://fam.uky.edu/forms)) to the DGS.
- 4) Within the first 30 days of the intended graduation semester (or, the first 15 days if the graduation is intended for the Summer II term), the student must notify the Graduate School of intent to graduate, via the myUK portal.
- 5) Complete the thesis or scholarly project in close collaboration with the major professor.
- 6) Once the major professor is satisfied with the written product, the major professor will submit the thesis or scholarly project to all members of the committee via e-mail for review (note that the final exam cannot take place fewer than four weeks after this e-mail is sent, and more time will be required if revisions are necessary). In addition, the student will provide a printed copy to committee members, upon request. The committee will have two weeks to review the document and indicate to the major professor via e-mail whether the student may schedule the final exam with the Graduate School.
- 7) Once a majority of committee members indicate via e-mail to the major professor that the thesis or project is suitable for defense, the major professor will inform the DGS (with documentation of that approval attached) and student in separate e-mails.
- 8) After receiving committee approval to proceed, the student must confer with the committee to determine the day, time, and location of the final exam, then schedule the final exam through the Graduate School website a minimum of two weeks in advance of the final exam date (see [https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/S\\_election\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/S_election_Screen.cfm)).

At this time, the committee must be provided with a complete and final copy of the thesis or project if any changes were necessary based on the advisory committee's review in step 5 above (if no changes were made then the previously supplied copy will suffice).

## Final Examination

As required by the Graduate School, students must complete a final exam on or before the last day to sit for a graduate final examination, as specified in the graduate school calendar (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>) for the semester that the student wishes to graduate.

Note that revisions to the thesis or scholarly project are commonly stipulated by the master's advisory committee, and time will be needed to make the changes and obtain final approval before graduation. Committee members are under no obligation to review and approve changes without adequate time. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to schedule the final exam early in the semester to allow ample time for revisions. Special arrangements may need to be made during the summer period (May 15 through August 15) because some faculty members have 9-month appointments and may not be available during this period.

Procedures for the final exam are as follows:

- 1) Upon Graduate School approval of the final exam date, the DGS will send an announcement and invitation for the open portion of the final exam to all Family Sciences faculty members and graduate students via e-mail.
- 2) The 2-hour final exam begins with an approximately 30-minute presentation of the research described in the thesis or scholarly project, followed by a question and answer session in which questions and concerns may be raised by attendees. Discussion will primarily be focused on the thesis or scholarly project; however, questions may also encompass any coursework or master's-level competencies that faculty in attendance wish to pursue.
- 3) The student and any guests will then be asked to exit the room so the committee can discuss any concerns with regard to the thesis or project and deliberate on appropriate questions to ask the student.
- 4) The student (but not any guests) will then be invited to return to the room and committee members will raise questions and concerns, as well as make observations and suggestions, related to the content and contribution of the thesis or scholarly project. Once again, this discussion may also extend beyond the thesis or scholarly project to encompass any master's-level competencies that the committee wishes to pursue. Questioning will continue until each committee member has enough information to make a pass/fail determination.
- 5) At the conclusion of questioning and discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room so the committee can deliberate privately concerning the outcome of the oral defense and the nature of needed revisions or enhancements to the thesis or scholarly project. At the conclusion of these deliberations the student will be invited to return and will be informed of the outcome of the examination. (Majority opinion of the advisory committee prevails; if the Committee is evenly divided, the student fails.)

Following a successful defense, the student must submit the complete thesis, with all required revisions, to the Graduate School within 60 days of the successful defense or no later than the last day to do so for a desired term of graduation (whichever comes first). Failure to do so will prevent the student from graduating. The major professor must also be given a copy of the student's completed thesis or project. Students are encouraged to provide copies to other members of the advisory committee as well.

### Failed Final Examination

If the student does not demonstrate satisfactory competency on the first final exam attempt, the master's advisory committee will recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School conditions under which the student may be re-examined, if re-examination is deemed appropriate. When conditions set by the Dean of the Graduate School have been met, the student may be re-examined. The minimum time between examinations is one month. (Note that this may prevent a student from graduating in the desired semester.) Students are permitted no more than two opportunities to pass the final exam; if the student fails both attempts, the student will be dismissed from the program.

### Master's Degree Time Limit

Students enrolled in the master's program have six years from initial enrollment to complete all requirements for the degree, but may request extensions up to an additional four years, for a total of 10 years.

### Deadlines

During second semester in program

- Select major professor and master's advisory committee members; submit M-1 to the DGS

At least one semester prior to graduation semester:

- Take a data analysis course (either quantitative or qualitative) or a program evaluation course, approved by master's advisory committee

Before completion of 21 credit hours

- Enroll in FAM 768

Mid-term of first semester enrolled in FAM 768

- Have a proposal meeting with advisory committee; submit signed M-3 to the DGS

First 30 days of graduation semester

- Submit application for degree to the Graduate School

At least 4 weeks prior to final examination

- Major professor e-mails complete thesis or project to master's advisory committee for approval to proceed to final exam

At least 2 weeks prior to final examination

- Schedule final examination with the Graduate School

Six years from initial enrollment

- Thesis or scholarly project must be completed and the final examination passed, unless an extension has been granted

### Forms

Graduate School (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms>)

- Petition for Post Mid-Term Withdrawal from Class
- Request for Transfer of Credits

- Thesis Approval Form
- Final Examination Recommendation

Department of Family Sciences ([fam.uky.edu/forms](http://fam.uky.edu/forms))

- M-1: Plan of Study (No M-2 form in Master's program)
- M-3: Project Proposal

## Doctoral Program

### Program Overview

The family sciences doctoral program is designed to prepare students for careers in research, higher education teaching, and community education and services. Four emphasis areas are available: (a) adolescent development, (b) aging, (c) family finance and economics, and (d) family processes.

### Curriculum Requirements

The family sciences doctoral program is competency based, but minimal coursework requirements prior to the qualifying examination include 2 years of residency and 36 credit hours, comprised of:

- 19 credit hours of foundational courses (if equivalents not taken in master's program),
- 9 credit hours of research methods and theory,
- 9 credit hours of statistics,
- 8 credit hours of professional development, and
- 15 credit hours in a specialization area.

The complete doctoral program curriculum requirements are as follows:

#### Foundational

Required unless approved from master's degree

FAM 601: Family Processes

FAM 652: Readings in Family Theory and Research

FAM 654: The Lifecourse Perspective on Families or EDP 600:  
Lifespan Human Development & Behavior

FAM 690: Research Methods in Family Sciences

FAM 668: Allocation of Family Resources

FAM 775-001: Professional Development Seminar I  
Basic Master's-level Statistics Course (e.g., STA 570,  
EDP/EPE 557, or EDP/EPE 558)

#### Research Methods & Theory

Minimum 9 credit hours; FAM 790 required

FAM 790: Advanced Research Methods in Family Sciences

#### Qualitative Methods

Select one of the following options (minimum 3 credit hours required)

CJT 664: Qualitative Methods in Communication Research

EPE 663: Field Studies in Educational Institutions

EPE 763: Advanced Field Studies

NUR 791: Qualitative Methods in Nursing

SOC 682: Special Topics in SOC (topic: any qual. methods)

\_\_\_\_\_: Other qualitative course approved by advisory committee

#### Quantitative Methods

Select one of the following options (minimum 3 credit hours required)

EPE 619: Survey Research Methods in Education

EDP/EPE 620: Topics and Methods of Evaluation  
EDP/EPE 621: Advanced Topics and Methods of Evaluation  
EPE 679: Multiple Measures in Education and Evaluation

\_\_\_\_\_: Other quantitative course approved by advisory committee

### **Statistics**

Minimum 9 credit hours; FAM 777 required

FAM 777: Applied Statistics in Family Science

#### *Additional Statistical Courses*

Select two of the following options (minimum 6 credit hours required)

CJT 765: Advanced Seminar in CJT (approved topic)

EDP 707: Multivariate Analysis in Educational Research

EDP 778: Seminar in Educ. Psychology (approved topic)

EPE 773: Seminar in EPE (Structural Equation Modeling)

PSY 610: Psychometrics (ANOVA)

PSY 611: Psychological Research (Regression & Correlation)

\_\_\_\_\_: Other statistics course approved by advisory committee

\_\_\_\_\_: Other statistics course approved by advisory committee

### **Professional Development**

Minimum 8 credit hours required

FAM 775-002: Professional Development Seminar II

FAM 785: Teaching Apprenticeship in Family Sciences (prerequisite for Teaching Practicum)

- Students must complete all FAM 785 Teaching Apprenticeship requirements (1 credit hour required, 3 credit hours recommended) and earn a minimum grade of B to be eligible to teach independently (Teaching Practicum, FAM 786, 3 credit hours). The minimum requirements include (consult with supervising faculty for final requirements): Attend all classes, complete two guest lectures, assist with course grading as assigned, and complete all course exams to demonstrate content knowledge, with a score of 80% or better. The Teaching Apprenticeship is developed and determined in consultation with the major professor (Apprenticeship might be with major professor or another faculty member).

FAM 786: Teaching Practicum in Family Sciences (supervised teaching)

- All non-native-English speakers are required to pass the category I level of International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Language Screening at the University of Kentucky to enroll in FAM786.

FAM 784: Research Practicum in Family Sciences (qualifying exam)

### **Area of Specialization**

Minimum 15 credit hours

Flexible coursework forming a cohesive specialization area in one of the following emphasis areas:

- Adolescent Development
- Aging
- Family Finance and Economics
- Family Processes

### **Dissertation Research**

After coursework, take 2 credit hours per semester until graduated

FAM 767: Dissertation Residency Credit

With approval of advisory committee and DGS, course work (including teaching practicum) may be substituted with other coursework. Admissions committee will identify deficiencies in required foundational courses, but decision for coursework rests with the Advisory Committee.

## **Doctoral Advisory Committee**

During the second semester in the program, each doctoral student must identify a full member of the family sciences graduate faculty with whom they share similar academic interests, and ask that faculty member to serve as Major Professor (a.k.a., Advisory Committee Chair). (Note that associate members of the graduate faculty can co-chair the doctoral advisory committee with a full member of the graduate faculty.) Then, in consultation with the major professor, a minimum of three additional faculty members must be selected to serve as advisory committee members. The committee must be comprised of at least three full members of the graduate faculty, and at least half of a doctoral committee needs to include primary faculty whose full-time appointment resides in Family Sciences. All committee members are typically available for consultation, but the major professor serves as the primary supervisor and mentor throughout the program of study.

### **Co-Chair of Doctoral Advisory Committee**

In consultation with the major professor, another faculty member may be asked to serve as a co-chair of the advisory committee. A co-chair can be desirable when a junior faculty member has subject-matter or methodology expertise but cannot serve as major professor. The co-chair and chair share responsibility for the student's program of study and progress. Co-chairs assist with the student's program of study more than committee members, but the chair serves as the primary supervisor and mentor throughout the program of study. Students with a co-chair must schedule a meeting with the chair and co-chair to identify roles and responsibilities. A list of faculty members eligible to serve as chair, co-chair, and internal members on the advisory committee is on the department website at <http://fam.uky.edu/phd>.

The Graduate School must be notified of the student's doctoral advisory committee members once the committee is formed (see [https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gq/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screening.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gq/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screening.cfm)). Any subsequent changes in committee membership also must be promptly submitted to the Graduate School, but only following consultation with the major professor.

The doctoral advisory committee will assist the student in developing a customized program of study that meets the requirements of the program and helps the student develop sufficient competency for the student's qualifying examination, dissertation, and professional goals. Upon completion of coursework, students also work with their committees during the qualifying exam and dissertation processes.

The plan of study must be filed with the DGS using the D-1: Plan of Study form (see [fam.uky.edu/forms](http://fam.uky.edu/forms)) prior to completing nine credit hours or two semesters of classes (whichever comes last). Changes in the plan of study may occur thereafter, but the committee must approve any changes, and any changes that

deviate from the doctoral program curriculum requirements require Graduate Faculty approval.

### Changing Major Professor

A graduate student may want to change major professor in some situations, such as when the student's research interest changes, interpersonal conflicts or differences about the research direction arise between the major professor and the student, or when the major professor is unavailable because of being on a sabbatical or leaving for a new position at another university.

Students are always encouraged to first candidly discuss any conflicts or challenges with their current major professor in an attempt to resolve any issues prior to changing the advisor. However, if the issue cannot be resolved, the student should contact the DGS (or the department chair if the major professor is the DGS) to discuss the situation and explore options, but also to fully understand the practical consequences of making such a change. Potential consequences include, but are not limited to, a delay in the degree completion, discontinuation of ongoing work that was started with and mentored by the current major professor, authorship issues on publications or reports, concerns regarding intellectual property rights such as conceptualization, and loss of or changes in student funding. Practically speaking, it is possible that such a change would mean starting over with a new data collection, for instance, or loss of access to a national data set that the major professor might have through contracted access agreements. Thus, such a decision should be carefully weighed.

After meeting with the DGS, to prevent rash decisions and to encourage careful evaluation of one's options, a minimum of two weeks must pass before changing the major professor or requesting other remedies for the issue(s) at hand. If a change is still desired after two weeks, the DGS will arrange a group meeting with the student, the current major professor, and the desired new major professor (if known) to discuss and resolve any relevant and consequential issues.

## Portfolio

Doctoral students are required to build a portfolio that documents an array of developmental experiences within the program that extend beyond the required coursework and are consistent with doctoral-level competencies. The minimum portfolio requirements are as follows (note that these are minimum requirements; exceeding these requirements is highly encouraged for job marketability upon completion of the program):

### Publications

- Submit qualifying exam manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal following successful oral defense

*Select one of the following:*

- Submit a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal prior to oral qualifying exam
- Coauthor a peer-reviewed and accepted extension publication

### Presentations

- Research presentation at department, school, college, or university research meeting
- Two research presentations at national or international scientific conferences
  - must be sole or first author on at least one presentation
  - paper or poster presentations only

- both presentations must be based on studies that involve data analysis

*Select one of the following:*

- Online presentation
- Guest lecture in a faculty member's class
- Extension in-service or county extension presentation with faculty mentorship

### Teaching

- Full responsibility for teaching a 3-credit-hour class with faculty mentorship
- Teaching portfolio

### Leadership and Citizenship

- Maintain membership in a professional organization beginning the first year in doctoral program

*Select two of the following:*

- Review conference presentation proposals
- Review manuscript submitted for publication to peer-reviewed journal
- Coordinate a departmental (or broader) research symposium
- Serve on a department, university, regional, or national committee
- Serve as a moderator or discussant at a state, regional, national, or international conference
- Hold a leadership role in a graduate student organization
- Committee-approved alternative: \_\_\_\_\_

All portfolio items must be approved by the student's advisory committee and must be completed prior to scheduling oral component of the final exam (a.k.a., the dissertation defense).

## Qualifying Examination

The purpose of the qualifying exam is to demonstrate knowledge and skills integrated across the core curriculum and area of specialization. Upon passing both the written and oral component of the qualifying examination, the student becomes a doctoral candidate and proceeds to the dissertation stage.

All doctoral students are required to complete a qualifying exam comprised of written and oral components. Students with a documented disability that requires academic accommodations for the qualifying exam should consult with the DGS as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations for the qualifying exam, the student must provide the DGS with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Suite 407 Multidisciplinary Science Building, 859-257-2754, drc@uky.edu).

Prior to taking the qualifying exam, all required courses must be completed with passing grades and all I (incomplete), S (satisfactory), and U (unsatisfactory) grades must be removed. A qualifying exam may be scheduled after completion of 36 credit hours and completion or current enrolment in all required courses. Students admitted to the doctoral program without a master's degree are required to complete a Plan A master's degree prior to scheduling the qualifying exam.

Students must take the qualifying exam within five years of entry into the program. Extensions up to an additional three years may be requested. Extensions up to 12 months may be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School upon request from the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Requests for extensions longer than 12 months must be considered by Graduate Council and will require the positive recommendation of the DGS, the

student's major professor, and a majority vote of Family Sciences Graduate Faculty. If the qualifying exam has not been passed at the end of five years, or at the end of all approved time extensions, the student will be dismissed from the program.

### Written Component

Students are required to complete a student-led data-based manuscript, in collaboration with their major professor, which is suitable to be submitted for peer review and subsequent publication following a successful oral exam. Most students will require two semesters to complete this study and manuscript. Students must complete at least 3 credits of FAM 784. The process must be discussed with major professor.

### Oral Component

Note that the oral component of the qualifying exam cannot be scheduled until a separate (co)authored manuscript is submitted to a peer-reviewed journal, in accordance with the doctoral portfolio requirements.

Procedures for scheduling the oral component of the qualifying exam are as follows:

- 1) Once the major professor is satisfied with the written manuscript, the major professor will submit the document to all members of the doctoral advisory committee via e-mail for review (note that the oral qualifying exam cannot take place fewer than four weeks after this e-mail is sent, and more time will be required if revisions are necessary). In addition, the student will provide a printed copy of the manuscript to committee members, upon request. The committee members will have two weeks to review the manuscript and indicate to the major professor via e-mail whether the student may schedule the oral qualifying exam with the Graduate School.
- 2) Once a majority of the committee members indicate via e-mail to the major professor that the manuscript is suitable for defense, the major professor will inform the DGS (with documentation of that approval attached) and student in separate e-mails.
- 3) After receiving committee approval to proceed, the student must confer with the committee to determine the day, time, and location of the oral exam, then schedule the oral exam through the Graduate School website a minimum of two weeks in advance of the oral exam date (see <https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/SelectionScreen.cfm>).

At this time, the committee must be provided with a complete and final copy of the manuscript if any changes were necessary based on the committee's review in Step 1 above (if no changes were made then the previously supplied copy will suffice).

Procedures for the oral component of the qualifying exam are as follows:

- 1) Upon Graduate School approval of the oral exam date, the DGS will send an announcement and invitation for the open portion of the oral exam to all Family Sciences faculty members and graduate students via e-mail.
- 2) The 2-hour final exam begins with an approximately 30- to 40-minute presentation of the research described in the manuscript, followed by a question and answer session in which questions and concerns may be raised by attendees. Discussion will primarily be focused on the study described in the manuscript and presentation; however, questions

may also encompass any coursework or doctoral-level competencies that faculty in attendance wish to pursue.

- 3) The student and any guests will then be asked to exit the room so the committee can discuss any concerns with regard to the manuscript and deliberate on appropriate questions to ask the student.
- 4) The student (but not any guests) will then be invited to return to the room and committee members will raise questions and concerns, as well as make observations and suggestions, related to the content and contribution of the study described in the manuscript. Once again, this discussion may also extend beyond the study to encompass any doctoral-level competencies that the committee wishes to pursue. Questioning will continue until each advisory committee member has enough information to make a pass/fail determination.
- 5) At the conclusion of questioning and discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room so the committee can deliberate privately concerning the outcome of the oral exam and the nature of needed revisions or enhancements to the manuscript. At the conclusion of these deliberations the student will be invited to return and will be informed of the outcome of the examination. (Majority opinion of the advisory committee prevails; if the Committee is evenly divided, the student fails.)

### Failed Qualifying Examination

If a student fails the qualifying exam on the first attempt, the student's doctoral advisory committee will require the student to complete additional work to prepare for taking the qualifying exam again (e.g., additional courses, directed readings, or further development of the research study and corresponding manuscript). Upon completion of these additional requirements to the committee's satisfaction, the student can make a second attempt at passing the qualifying examination.

Scheduling requirements for the second exam are the same as scheduling requirements for the first exam. In addition, the student will not be permitted to take a second exam until 4 months have passed since the first exam but must retake the exam before 12 months have elapsed. Students are permitted two opportunities to pass the qualifying exam; if the student fails both attempts, the student will be dismissed from the program.

### Course Enrollment and Residency Post-Qualifying Exam

Students are required to remain continuously enrolled (every fall and spring semester) in FAM 767: Dissertation Residency Credit for 2 credit hours every semester after completing the qualifying examination until the dissertation has been successfully defended. These 2 credit hours will constitute full-time enrollment, as registered in student information systems, and will be charged at in-state tuition rates. Students needing continuing enrollment beyond the semester of the final examination will enroll in FAM 749 for 0 credit hours.

Students are required to complete at least two semesters of FAM 767 before they can graduate. If registered for FAM 767, residency credit will be applied for a qualifying exam taken at any time during the first semester of enrollment. However, the request to schedule the qualifying exam must be submitted and approved within the first six weeks of the semester.

### Dissertation Plan



The doctoral advisory committee mentors students through the dissertation process. Upon successful completion of the qualifying exam, students are encouraged to reevaluate the fit of their major professor and advisory committee for the intended direction they wish to pursue in their dissertation work. Any desired committee changes should be discussed in advance with the major professor and the committee member(s) involved in any potential change.

Within 60 days after passing the oral component of the qualifying exam, the student must submit a completed D-2: Dissertation Plan form (see [fam.uky.edu/forms](http://fam.uky.edu/forms)) to the DGS. The D-2 covers three key issues:

- The dissertation research topic.
- The format of the dissertation (e.g., the traditional five chapter format, three manuscript chapters plus introduction and integrative conclusion chapters).
- Identification of data (e.g., existing data, collection of new data) and research methodology (e.g., quantitative, mixed-methods, qualitative) that will be employed.

In addition, an authorship agreement between the student and major professor must be spelled out in the D-2: Dissertation Plan form. The major professor has the right to publish off the dissertation as first author after one year if the student has not yet done so, or if the student fails to submit invited revisions in accordance with the stated timeline in a revise and resubmit letter, unless an alternative agreement is described on the D-2 form.

After the D-2 form has been signed and submitted to the DGS, any desired doctoral advisory committee changes must be discussed in advance with the major professor, the committee member(s) involved in any potential change, and the DGS. If the DGS is the major professor or the committee member involved in a change, the Department Chair will take the DGS's role in these discussions.

## Dissertation Proposal

A dissertation proposal should be developed in consultation with the major professor, and should include a review of the relevant literature and a statement of the research problem, its theoretical importance, and the proposed research design, methods, and procedures. Upon completion and approval of the major professor, a dissertation proposal meeting must be scheduled with the doctoral advisory committee to discuss the proposal and obtain the committee's approval; the completed proposal must be distributed to the committee members for their review at least two weeks prior to the dissertation proposal meeting.

Once the dissertation proposal is accepted by the doctoral advisory committee, each committee member must signify approval of the proposal by signing the D-3: Dissertation Proposal form. The D-3, with all necessary signatures, must then be submitted to the DGS.

A dissertation proposal may only be approved after a student has successfully completed all required courses and completed the qualifying exam.

## Dissertation

The dissertation is a well-reasoned research project that makes an original contribution to knowledge in the family sciences

and provides evidence of high scholarly achievement. The student's major professor will provide the primary guidance in planning and preparing the dissertation; however, other members of the doctoral advisory committee should be consulted as well. Note that committee membership cannot be changed after the beginning of the student's last semester unless a member of the committee is unavailable that semester. In such an instance, the DGS must approve the substitution.

Students are expected to know and follow the administrative procedures associated with all elements of dissertation completion, degree application, final defense, and graduation as specified by the Graduate School in the *Graduate School Bulletin* (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>)

### Written Component

The content and general organization of the dissertation is left to the discretion of each student, in consultation with the major professor and with the approval of the advisory committee. Procedures for undertaking and writing the dissertation are outlined on the Graduate School's website (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-dissertation-preparation>). Referencing format and style should follow the most recent edition of the *American Psychological Association's Publication Manual*, unless otherwise approved by the student's committee.

### Oral Component

Note that the oral dissertation defense (a.k.a., final examination) cannot be scheduled until the doctoral advisory committee has confirmed that all doctoral portfolio requirements have been met.

Oral defense of the dissertation must be conducted in full accordance with the Graduate School's guidelines and must take place on or before the last day to sit for a final examination, as specified in the graduate school calendar (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>), for the semester that the student wishes to graduate. Special arrangements may need to be made during the summer period (May 15 through August 15) because some faculty members have 9-month appointments and may not be available during this period.

Procedures for scheduling the oral dissertation defense are as follows:

- 1) Within the first 30 days of the intended graduation semester (or, the first 15 days if the graduation is intended for the Summer II term), the student must notify the Graduate School of intent to graduate (see [https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)).
- 2) Once the major professor agrees that the dissertation is sufficiently developed to allow the student to notify the Graduate School of the intent to defend the dissertation, the major professor will inform the DGS and student via e-mail.
- 3) After receiving approval of the major professor to proceed, the student must notify the Graduate School of the intent to defend the dissertation at least 8 weeks prior to the oral defense date (see [https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)). Parenthetically, the primary purpose of notifying the Graduate School of the intent to defend two months in advance is so that the Graduate School has sufficient time to identify and appoint an outside examiner (a full graduate faculty member from another department on campus who is not already on the student's

committee) as a core member of the doctoral advisory committee for the final examination. The role of the outside examiner on the committee includes: (a) assurance that only qualified candidates receive degrees and (b) assurance that the examination is administered in a fair, impartial, and professional manner.

- 4) Once the major professor is satisfied with the completed dissertation, the major professor will submit the dissertation to all members of the advisory committee via e-mail for review (note that the final exam cannot take place fewer than four weeks after this e-mail is sent, and more time will be required if revisions are necessary). In addition, the student will provide a printed copy to committee members, upon request. The committee will have two weeks to review the document and indicate to the major professor via e-mail whether the student may schedule the oral dissertation defense with the Graduate School.
- 5) Once a majority of the advisory committee members indicate via e-mail to the major professor that the dissertation is suitable for defense, the major professor will inform the DGS (with documentation of that approval attached) and student in separate e-mails.
- 6) After receiving committee approval to proceed, the student must confer with the committee and outside examiner to determine the day, time, and location of the oral dissertation defense, then schedule the oral dissertation defense (final exam) through the Graduate School website a minimum of two weeks in advance of the final exam date (see [https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)).

At this time, the committee, including the outside examiner, must be provided with a complete and final copy of the dissertation if any changes were necessary based on the committee's review in Step 4 above; if no changes were made then the previously supplied copy will suffice (but a copy must still be provided to the outside examiner at this point).

Procedures for the oral dissertation defense are as follows:

- 1) Upon Graduate School approval of the oral dissertation defense date, the DGS will send an announcement and invitation for the open portion of the oral defense to all Family Sciences faculty members and graduate students via e-mail.
- 2) The 2-hour final exam begins with an approximately 40-minute presentation of the research described in the manuscript, followed by a question and answer session in which questions and concerns may be raised by attendees. Discussion will primarily be focused on the study described in the dissertation and presentation; however, questions may also encompass any coursework or doctoral-level competencies that faculty in attendance wish to pursue.
- 3) The student and any guests will then be asked to exit the room so the committee can discuss any concerns with regard to the dissertation and deliberate on appropriate questions to ask the student.
- 4) The student (but not any guests) will then be invited to return to the room and committee members will raise questions and concerns, as well as make observations and suggestions, related to the content and contribution of the

dissertation. Once again, this discussion may also extend beyond the study to encompass any doctoral-level competencies that the committee wishes to pursue. Questioning will continue until each committee member has enough information to make a pass/fail determination.

- 5) At the conclusion of questioning and discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room so the committee can deliberate privately concerning the outcome of the oral defense and the nature of needed revisions or enhancements to the dissertation. At the conclusion of these deliberations the student will be invited to return and will be informed of the outcome of the defense. (Majority opinion of the doctoral advisory committee prevails; if the committee is evenly divided, the student fails.)

Following a successful defense, the student must submit the complete dissertation, with all required revisions, to the Graduate School within 60 days of the successful defense or no later than the last day to do so for a desired term of graduation (whichever comes first). Failure to do so will prevent the student from graduating.

Note that, if on the basis of the oral defense, revisions to the dissertation are stipulated by the doctoral advisory committee or outside examiner, time will be needed to make the changes before graduation. Committee members are under no obligation to review and approve changes without adequate time. It is therefore highly recommended that the oral defense be scheduled earlier in the desired graduation semester so ample time for revisions is available.

Following a successful defense and upon completion of any necessary revisions, the major professor must be given a copy of the dissertation. Students are encouraged to provide copies to their doctoral advisory committee members as well.

### **Failed Final Examination**

In the event of failure, the doctoral advisory committee recommends to the Dean of the Graduate School conditions under which the candidate may be re-examined, if re-examination is deemed appropriate. When conditions set by the Dean of the Graduate School have been met, the candidate may be re-examined. The minimum time between examinations is four months. A second exam must be taken within one year after the first exam. The Dean of the Graduate School will appoint replacements if any vacancies occur on the committee between the two exams. Students are permitted two opportunities to pass the oral defense; if the student fails both attempts, the student will be dismissed from the program.

### **Doctoral Degree Time Limit**

All degree requirements for the doctorate must be completed within five years following the semester or summer session in which the candidate successfully completes the qualifying exam, but extensions up to an additional 5 years may be requested for a total of 10 years.

Extensions up to 1 year may be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Requests for extensions longer than 1 year must be considered by Graduate Council. All requests should be initiated by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). If approved, extensions longer than one year may require that the qualifying exam process be completed again, with only one opportunity to pass; a second attempt is not permitted in this circumstance. Failure to complete all degree requirements within 10 years of

initially taking the qualifying examination will also result in the termination of degree candidacy. All pre- and post-qualifying residency requirements must again be met if the student subsequently seeks readmission to the doctoral program.

## Deadlines

During second semester in program:

- Select major professor and doctoral advisory committee members and submit on the Graduate School's website
- Have a plan of study meeting with doctoral advisory committee and submit an approved D-1: Plan of Study form to DGS

One semester prior to final semester of coursework:

- Enroll in FAM 784 and begin written portion of qualifying exam

At least 4 weeks prior to desired qualifying exam date:

- Major professor submits complete qualifying exam manuscript to doctoral advisory committee for review

At least 2 weeks prior to qualifying exam:

- Schedule qualifying exam on the Graduate School's website, with doctoral advisory committee approval

2-5 years after entering program:

- Pass qualifying exam (obtain candidate status), unless an extension has been granted

No more than 60 days after obtaining candidate status:

- Submit D-3: Dissertation Plan form to DGS

At least 2 months prior to final exam (oral defense):

- Notify Graduate School of intent to defend the dissertation, with major professor's approval and in consultation with doctoral advisory committee

At least 2 weeks prior to final exam (oral defense):

- Schedule final exam on Graduate School's website
- Submit final dissertation to doctoral advisory committee

1-5 years after attaining candidate status:

- Completed dissertation and pass the final exam (oral defense), unless an extension has been granted

## Forms

Graduate School (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms>)

- Formation of an Advisory Committee
- Qualifying Exam
- Notification of Intent to Schedule Final Examination
- Request for Final Doctoral Examination

Department of Family Sciences ([fam.uky.edu/forms](http://fam.uky.edu/forms))

- D-1: Plan of Study
- D-2: Dissertation Plan
- D-3: Dissertation Proposal