

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WSU Department of Child and Family Studies
Self-Study Document, Fall 2013

Author's Contact Information:

Paul Schvaneveldt
pschvaneveldt@weber.edu
801-626-6597

The following is a summary of the self-study document, highlighting important points. For complete information, please refer to the full, self-study document itself.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Department of Child and Family Studies is to utilize contemporary educational practices to prepare students to become Early Childhood and Family Life Educators who respect diversity, use culturally competent practices, and apply their knowledge to create environments that enhance the lives and healthy development of adults, children, and families over the lifespan.

The Department of Child and Family Studies is part of the Jerry and Vickie Moyes College of Education. The Department offers three majors: Family Studies (FS), Early Childhood Education (ECE), and Early Childhood (EC). The Early Childhood major prepares professionals who work with prekindergarten children and their families. The Early Childhood Education major prepares professionals to work with and teach Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd grade and to be eligible for state licensure as a teacher. The Family Studies major is designed to prepare its graduates to be Provisionally Certified Family Life Educators, which is a certification administered by the National Council on Family Relations.

Curriculum:

The department offers majors in three areas: Early Childhood, Early Childhood Education, and Family Studies. The department also supports a degree with Departmental Honors and a Bachelor of Integrated Studies area in Child and Family Studies. Minors include Child Development and Family Studies. The department also offers an Associate of Applied Science in Early Childhood. The department developed two new courses since the last departmental review: CHF 4300 Latino Child and Family Development and CHF 4711 Advanced Guidance and Planning for Teacher Education. The CHF 1500 Human Development course and CHF 2400 Family Relations course are offered as concurrent enrollment courses at area high schools. Faculty supervise these courses and the high school teachers who serve as adjunct faculty in the department. CHF 1500 is designated as a Social Science General Education course and participates in the university wide assessment protocols.

The Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education Program outcomes are based on the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Utah Effective Teaching Standards. The learning outcomes include: 1) Create and maintain a positive classroom environment; 2) Plan curriculum and design instruction to enhance children's learning; 3) Engage and support all children in learning; 4) Assess and evaluate children's learning; 5) Demonstrate professionalism to support children's learning. Within the Teaching and Learning outcome, subcategories include Connecting with children and families, Using developmentally effective approaches, Understanding content knowledge in early education, Building meaningful curriculum, and Becoming a Professional.

The Family Studies Program Outcomes are based on the ten outcomes standards of the National Council of Family Relations and one additional department standard. These outcomes standards require a knowledge base and related skills that address the following areas: 1) Families in Society, 2) Internal Dynamics of Families, 3) Human Growth and Development Over the Life Span, 4) Human Sexuality, 5) Interpersonal Relationships, 6) Family Resource Management, 7) Parent Education and Guidance, 8)

Family Law and Public Policy, 9) Ethics, 10) Family Life Education Methodology, and one additional department standard, 11) Professional Development.

Student learning outcomes have been designed to meet NAEYC and Utah Effective Pre-service Teaching Standards for Early Childhood Education Standards and the NCFR Standards.

Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education Outcomes and Assessment

Assessment in the Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education programs have changed frequently over the past five years in response to changes in national and state standards and outcomes. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) changed their core standards and assessment criteria in 2009. Additionally, the Utah State Office of Education has also changed standards and assessments. Subsequently, assessment and outcomes for courses in this program have been updated to reflect the changes that have occurred at national and state levels. The current assessment plan going forward reflects the current assessment activities in the Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education programs. Currently, the following outcomes and measures are used to assess student learning in the Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education programs. The Student Teacher Evaluation Rating Scale is administered by the professional supervising mentor teacher in the Melba S. Lehner Children's School. The scale assesses the student teacher's performance at the end of the semester in the areas of Guidance, Planning, Family, Teamwork, and Personal. Students are also required to complete a written capstone essay exam consisting of six essay questions. This comprehensive essay examination is given at the end of the term to the students registered in the Seminar in Child Development (CHF 4990A), which is a capstone course for Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education majors. The questions assess the students' ability to describe, in written form, their understanding of pertinent early childhood principles and practices. These include the goals, theories, and strategies of guidance; guidelines for constructing developmentally appropriate curriculum that includes an anti-bias strand relative to elements of diversity; using components of various developmental and learning theories for planning and evaluating instruction; describing the purpose of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and its major principles; describing an effective family involvement program in the school using the Epstein model; and explaining the purposes of two federal laws, IDEA and Section 504.

The Pre-Post Teacher Beliefs and Practices Survey is administered with students in lower division courses and the post-test occurring in upper-division courses. This survey measures the students' awareness of developmentally appropriate (DAP) versus developmentally inappropriate practices (DIP). The results from this survey demonstrated that students DAP scores increased and their DIP scores decreased between the pre and post-tests. Finally, the Follow-up Evaluation for ECE/EC Graduates is completed by recent graduates to better understand their experiences in developing the skills they need to be educators of children and their parents. Overall, assessments show that students meet competency standards.

Family Studies Outcomes and Assessment

Students in Family Studies are assessed on their competency and proficiency in 11 substance areas of Certified Family Life Education. Students in the Senior Seminar course (4990B) are required to create a portfolio of all their projects, papers, and other artifacts to demonstrate their competence in each of the 11 substance areas. These portfolios are reviewed by faculty members in Family Studies and assessed on meeting competencies in 11 areas. The portfolios include student work samples, original research papers, community education activities, literature reviews, and other artifacts demonstrating competencies. In addition to the portfolio, students in Family Studies take a capstone exam in their last semester to evaluate their knowledge and mastery of the 11 content areas for Family Life Education. Outcomes show that the vast majority of students demonstrate competency in these areas.

Finally, an exit interview questionnaire is administered to all graduating seniors to better understand their experiences in developing skills and competencies necessary for family life education professionals. This exit interview questionnaire was revised in the fall of 2013 to better reflect community engaged learning experiences, undergraduate research activities, and other experiences in developing competency based skills for Certified Family Life Educators.

Academic Advising

The Department of Child and Family Studies employs an academic advisor who assists students with planning their academic coursework. The purpose is to assist students in the department in selecting courses and majors that best fit their personal and professional goals. Individual advising sessions are conducted and individual referrals are made as appropriate to other campus resources. Advising is viewed as an ongoing process aimed at helping students utilize the University's resources to succeed in reaching their academic goals. Some of the specific services offered through the academic advisor include individual appointments, information sessions, campus orientations, dissemination of data, advising brochures, review of graduation requirements, involvement at university events (i.e., Major Fest, Scholarship Day, Multi-cultural Fairs, etc.), updating of the department website, and maintaining student files and records.

Faculty

Faculty in the Department of Child and Family studies are actively engaged in quality teaching, scholarship, and professional service. Over the past five years, faculty have been finalist for the Crystal Crest Master Teacher award, mentored students who have won national research awards, and mentored dozens of student research projects presented at regional and national conferences. The faculty have published 25 peer reviewed research articles over the past five years while affiliated with Weber State University. Graduates of the Family Studies program who have pursued graduate studies have experienced over 95% placement into accredited programs. Similarly, over 90% of Early Childhood graduates who have sought employment secured employment in the field. Faculty have served in national and international leadership positions in professional organizations.

Program Support

The department has expanded course offerings and individual mentoring opportunities for students. The Family Studies degree is now being offered in Davis County in the evening. These increases in individual mentoring and course offerings are done without an increase in faculty or staffing. Additionally, the Melba Lehner Children's School has opened a satellite classroom in the WSU Community Education Center serving primarily lower income and ethnically diverse families. Dozens of undergraduate research projects, cooperative workplace experiences, and other projects have been mentored without additional support from the university. Base salaries are well below national averages. Department funds for travel are minimal and we must rely funding from outside the department. Most faculty teach overload courses which detract from their time to work with students, engage in community outreach, grant writing, and scholarly activities. A higher base salary or compensation for significant scholarship or service activities would reduce the need for overload activities to increase pay. This additional financial support would allow faculty to mentor more students on projects, to pursue external funding and grants, and to engage in more scholarly publications.

Relations with External Community:

The department enjoys active participation and collaboration with external community organizations: Melba S. Lehner Children's School, Care About Childcare (CAC) office at Weber State University, WSU Charter Academy, Weber State University Family Literacy Program, Ogden-Weber Community Action Partnership (Head Start), The Elizabeth Stewart Treehouse Museum, Families Alive Conference, Department of Child and Family Studies Community Advisory Board, Utah Marriage Commission, Utah Council on Family Relations (UTCFR), The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), The Family Science Association, Utah Department of Workforce Services Intergenerational Poverty Task Force, Orphanage Support Services Organization (OSSO), The Utah Association for the Education of Young Children (UAEYC), Hill Air Force Base Airman Family Readiness Unit, Prevent Child Abuse Utah, Your Community Connection, McKay Dee Hospital Child Life Specialist Unit, and the Boyd K. and Donna S. Packer Center for Family and Community Education.

Student, Faculty, Contract/Adjunct Faculty and Staff Statistics:

Child & Family Studies	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Student Credit Hours Total ¹	8,397	9,558	10,168	12,152	12,772
Student FTE Total ²	279.90	318.60	338.93	405.07	425.73
Student Majors ³	337	310	301	278	303
Program Graduates ⁴					
Associate Degree	10	1	1	3	0
Bachelor Degree	69	53	59	58	44
Student Demographic Profile ⁵					
Female	321	297	282	256	284
Male	16	13	19	22	19
Faculty FTE Total ⁶	15.52	14.9	15.76	16.64	NA
Adjunct FTE	6.96	5.79	7.35	7.53	NA
Contract FTE	8.56	9.11	8.41	9.11	NA
Student/Faculty Ratio ⁷	18.03	21.38	21.51	24.34	NA

Note: Data provided by University Institutional Research

Appendix B: Financial Analysis Summary

Child & Family Studies					
Cost	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Direct Instructional Expenditure	1,217,812	1,151,588	1,029,108	1,091,664	1,291,157
Cost Per Student FTE	4,351	3,615	3,036	2,695	3,033
Funding	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Appropriated Fund	994,618	970,362	860,571	912,548	1,035,562
Other:					
Special Legislative Appropriation					
Grants of Contracts					
Special Fees/Differential Tuition	223,194	181,225	168,537	179,117	255,595
Total	1,217,812	1,151,588	1,029,108	1,091,664	1,291,157

Note: Data provided by University Institutional Research

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
instfte	1.13	0.69	0.75	1.39	NA
DavisCnt	0.63	0.58	0.85	0.6	
208XXX	5.2	4.52	5.75	5.54	
	6.96	5.79	7.35	7.53	

Note: Data provided by University Institutional Research

Results of Previous Program Reviews

Problems Identified in Previous Program Review (2008)	Action that has been taken
A concern was noted that many seasoned and experience faculty were nearing retirement and will be leaving the department.	The department has hired six new tenure track faculty members, all of whom hold Ph.D. degrees in their content area.
A suggestion was noted that the Department should revisit their mission statement to better reflect the notion of “application of knowledge”	In September of 2011, the department adopted a revised mission statement reflecting the importance of using culturally competent practices, and applying knowledge to create environments that enhance the lives and healthy development of adults, children, and families over the lifespan
A concern over curriculum standards was noted in that students were not given adequate exposure to community or agency settings earlier in their academic programs.	Students in Family Studies are now required to complete 20 hours of community engaged learning experiences in the CHF 2990b course, which occurs at the beginning of their major coursework. Additionally, students in CHF 4500 are required to perform service learning hours in local junior and high schools to gain exposure to schools and youth services. Students in Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education are required to do experiential learning assignments in lower-division courses in the Melba Lehner Children’s School and the WSU Charter Academy.
A concern was noted in assisting students with career advising and employment.	Response to this issue has been complicated by the economic downturn which started in the fall of 2008 and still continues to impact job opportunities for students in Child and Family Studies. The department has expanded our community advisory board to include directors and managers of programs which historically employ our graduates. This has facilitated students to make connections through practicum experiences and a network for students in the job search process. We continue to work with Career Services to support students in securing employment.
A concern in faculty standards was noted in replacing retiring faculty and mentoring new faculty.	In response, newer faculty are mentored by retiring and more experienced faculty which include regular meetings, sharing of teaching materials, training opportunities, providing opportunities for professional development, and faculty observations, and feedback on teaching and scholarly activities. Other mentoring and professional development opportunities are provided at the department, college, and university levels.

Information Regarding Current Review Team Members:

Louise Moulding, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Teacher Education
Mail Code 1304
Weber State University
Ogden, UT 84408
801-626-7665
lmoulding@weber.edu

Brent Horn, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Criminal Justice
Mail Code 1206
Weber State University
Ogden, UT 84408
801-626-8843
brenthorn@weber.edu

Nate Cottle, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Family Studies
Utah Valley University
800 West University Parkway
Mail Code 115
Orem, UT 84058
Utah Valley University
801-863-5105
ncottle@uvu.edu

Raeann R. Hamon, Ph.D., CFLE, Chair,
Department of Human, Development and Family Science
Distinguished Professor of Family Science and Gerontology
Messiah College
One College Avenue, Suite 3047
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717-766-2511 x 2850
rhamon@messiah.edu