**FAMILY SCIENCE (FMSC)**

Graduate Degree Program  
College: Public Health

**Abstract**

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in Family Science provides an interdisciplinary, research-oriented approach to the discovery and application of knowledge about families. This exciting program examines both internal family processes and the dynamic interaction of families with the biological, psychological, social, political, and economic aspects of their environment. Graduates are prepared for a number of careers in the public, non-profit, and private sectors, including university teaching, research, family policy analysis, and administrative positions in human service programs.

The Ph.D. program adopts an ecological or systems approach to the study of families and the problems they face in today’s society. The program of study provides doctoral students with a broad knowledge of family theory, research methodology, family policy, family programs, ethnic families, and major issues confronting contemporary families. Students also learn to design, implement, and evaluate culturally-sensitive interventions addressing family needs and to analyze the consequences of public/private policies on family well-being.

Students applying to the PhD program in Family Science should have a Master’s degree in Family Science or a related behavioral or social science. It is possible for a limited number of students to be accepted into the Family Science Ph.D. program with only a Bachelor’s degree, but they must complete a Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Couple and Family Therapy or Family Science. MCH applicants must have a Master’s Degree in Public Health (MPH) or a Master’s in applied behavioral or biological science. MCH students must complete missing MPH core courses (biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health sciences, health services administration, and health behavior) within one academic year of program entry.

The Department of Family Science prepares students to describe, explain, and improve the quality of family life through applied research, education, therapy, human services, policy analysis, and advocacy. The approach is interdisciplinary, emphasizing individual, interpersonal, and social change. The program of study is based on a system or ecological paradigm, combining the perspectives of interrelated professional fields including family science, couple and family therapy, maternal and child health, family policy, behavioral science, and human services. Graduates are prepared for careers in the public, non-profit and private sectors, including university teaching, research, family policy analysis, and administrative positions in human service and public health programs.

**Financial Assistance**

Fellowships and Graduate Assistantships are available to students admitted into the Family Science Ph.D. program.

**Contact**

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Courses: EPIB (https://umd-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/courses/epib)  
FMSC (https://umd-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/courses/fmsc)  
SPHL (https://umd-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/courses/sphl)

Relationships: Epidemiology (EPID) (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/epidemiology-epid)  
Psychology (PSYC) (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/psychology-psyc)  
Sociology (SOCY) (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/sociology-socy)

**Admissions**

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Statement of Purpose  
- Transcript(s)  
- TOEFL/IELTS/PTE (international graduate students (https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements))

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

- Letters of Recommendation (3)  
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

For more admissions information or to apply to the program, please visit our Graduate School website (https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/application-process/step-step-guide-applying).

**Application Deadlines**

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<tr>
<th>Type of Applicant</th>
<th>Fall Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic Applicants</td>
<td>17 Dec</td>
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<td>US Citizens and Permanent Residents</td>
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<td>F (student) or J (exchange visitor) visas; A, E, G, H, I and L visas and immigrants</td>
<td>17 Dec</td>
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Other Deadlines: Please visit the program website at http://www.sph.umd.edu

**Requirements**

- Family Science, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/family-science-fmsc/family-science-phd)
- Family Science, Master of Science (M.S.) (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/family-science-fmsc/family-science-ms)

**Facilities and Special Resources**

The University’s close proximity to the nation’s capital, the state capital in Annapolis, federal executive departments, and headquarters of national professional and public interest associations provide research and
internship placements for studying family policy unmatched by any other graduate program in the discipline. The Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area offers rich opportunities for research on culturally and socioeconomically diverse families. The campus and department have excellent computer facilities. Students have ready access to the University's extensive library systems, as well as holdings from the Library of Congress, the National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine, National Archives, and many other library collections.

Center for Healthy Families: This Center is the training and research arm of the Couple and Family Therapy Program in the Department of Family Science. Departmental graduate students and faculty provide clinical and educational services to families from surrounding communities in this state-of-the-art facility. Master's and doctoral students use data collected at the Center for research projects.