

FAMILY SCIENCE

School of Public Health

1142 School of Public Health, Bldg. 255

Phone: 301-405-3672

fmsc@umd.edu

<http://sph.umd.edu/fmsc/>

The major in Family Science focuses on the study of families and the problems they face in contemporary society. The major offers excellent training in scientific methods to understand family development, behavior, and strengths, and to solve family problems. Students learn to describe, explain, and improve the quality of family life through education, applied research, policy analysis, and human services program management. For additional information on the field of family science, please visit the National Council on Family Relations website: family.science (<http://family.science/>).

PROGRAMS

Major

- Family Science Major (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/public-health/family-science/family-science-major/>)

ADVISING

The Family Science Department provides a multi-tier advising system that will help students design and carry out a program of study best suited to their interests and needs. Several advisors are available, depending on student need: the Family Science Undergraduate Program Manager, Kendyl Oliver; Faculty advisors; and SPH advisors at the School of Public Health Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA).

For general questions, consultation about degree requirements, careers in Family Science and research opportunities, the Family Science Undergraduate Program Manager, Kendyl Oliver, is available in the main office (1142MM School of Public Health) as a first point of contact. The Undergraduate Program Manager, also conducts change of major workshops and orientations for students in the major.

For more information, or to schedule an appointment with the Undergraduate Program Director visit <http://sph.umd.edu/fmsc/>.

OPPORTUNITIES

Undergraduate Research Experiences

The department has an active Undergraduate Research Assistant Program, which enables students to learn from and work with world-class scholars on family issues. Family Science undergraduates volunteer to assist Department faculty with their ongoing research projects on topics including:

- African American Families
- Couple Relationships
- Ethnicity & Families
- Family and Community Violence
- Family Financial Education
- Family Law
- Family Policy

- Fathering
- Latino Families
- LGBTQ Families
- Maternal and Child Health
- Mental Health/Addiction/Family Therapy
- Minority Populations
- Health
- Parenting
- Poverty
- Reproductive Health
- Vaccine Behavior

Undergraduate students who participate in Family Science research may also participate in the Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research and serve as research assistants. These research opportunities particularly benefit students who are applying to graduate school.

The department also participates in several other undergraduate research programs, such as the Senior Summer Scholars Program and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Students may also set an appointment with Undergraduate Program Director to answer questions and learn about current undergraduate research projects in Family Science.

Internships

All Family Science majors are required to complete an internship experience as part of the major. The internship program is a capstone project designed to integrate department and other coursework with a real-time work experience that focuses on healthy families. In addition to a 120-hour semester-long field placement, students are required to attend a capstone seminar (FMSC477). Students in the seminar integrate classroom theory with their field placement and share work-related activities, broadening their exposure to work in the discipline of Family Science and their knowledge of specific career opportunities. In addition, the seminar focuses on students' cultural competence in the workplace. Each approved internship must have a significant focus on the family unit, incorporating the needs and concerns of the family in addition to those of the individual. Interns will be expected to utilize Family Science theories and concepts throughout the accompanying seminar to evaluate their internship experience. Therefore, it is essential that the internship responsibilities relate directly to family.

Students who need help deciding on an internship have access to the **FMSC Internship Database**, which contains listings of organizations that have requested our students along with those where Family Science students have completed internships.

The internship course is open to all FMSC majors who have completed FMSC330 and FMSC383 plus a minimum of six additional credits of FMSC coursework. The internship contract forms and supervisor's letter are available online (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/departments-units/department-family-science/student-resources-family-science/undergraduate-student-resources-family-science/>). Students may also pick up the documents in the main FMSC office, 1142 School of Public Health Building.

There are strict deadlines for turning in completed contracts to the FMSC office:

- Spring Internship contract: Due the first Monday in December
- Summer internship contract: Due the first Monday in May
- Fall internship contract: Due the first Monday in August

Honors Program

The FMSC Honors Program is designed to provide academically talented students with a more advanced and enriching educational experience in Family Science. The Honors Program gives students an opportunity to participate in scholarly independent study, interact with FMSC faculty, and examine a range of intellectual topics in greater depth than is possible in the traditional Family Science program. Students enroll in special Honors courses, Honors option work in regular courses, and independent research. The program culminates with the preparation and possible presentation of a Senior Honors Thesis.

FMSC majors who are interested in this additional challenging educational experience and meet the following criteria, may apply to the FMSC Honors Program:

- A UMD GPA of 3.3 with at least 45 credits completed
- A FMSC GPA of 3.5 and
- Completed FMSC290 with a grade of "B" or better and an additional three credits in FMSC

Or

- ECON200 and an additional six credits in FMSC

Students meeting the criteria and wishing to participate in the Honors Program must apply three semesters (not including summer) prior to graduation. More information and application forms are available on the FMSC website or from the FMSC Honors Program Coordinator, Dr. Mia Smith Bynum at msbynum@umd.edu.

Student Societies and Professional Organizations

Maryland Council on Family Relations (MCFR) is a student chapter of the National Council on Family Relations, a professional organization for family researchers, educators, and practitioners. The organization provides an opportunity for students to explore family issues, meet fellow students, and prepare for careers in teaching, research, policy analysis, or direct service to families. MCFR is open to all undergraduate and graduate Family Science students. For more information, please contact FMSC at <http://sph.umd.edu/fmsc/>.

Phi Upsilon Omicron is a nationally recognized honor society focused toward observing academic excellence, enhancing qualities of leadership by providing opportunities for service, and encouraging lifelong learning and commitment in order to advance family and consumer sciences and related areas. Members participate in community service activities on campus and in the surrounding Metropolitan DC areas. They also collaborate with MCFR to conduct informative workshops for members and other Family Science students on academic skills development, stress management, graduate school, and potential career paths with a Family Science degree. The Gamma Lambda Chapter has a local alumni chapter to provide our members with networking and other resources. Other membership benefits include additional networking opportunities through regional and national meetings, scholarship and fellowship awards, honor cords at graduation, and leadership opportunities at

the chapter, regional, and national levels. For more information please contact the FMSC Undergraduate Academic Advisor, Kendyl Oliver.

Scholarships and Financial Assistance

The Department of Family Science has several endowed scholarships that enable us to provide some assistance to meritorious students in our Family Science Program. Early in the spring semester the department announces the availability of the awards and begins the application process. Recipients are announced by May of each year.

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) administers all types of federal, state and institutional financial assistance programs and, in cooperation with other university offices, participates in the awarding of scholarships to deserving students. For information, visit: <http://financialaid.umd.edu>.

Awards and Recognition

FMSC nominates meritorious students for recognition at the annual SPH Convocation for many prestigious awards including Dean's Scholars awards, the Jerry Wrenn Scholarship awards and the Lester M. Fraley award. For more information on FMSC department Scholarships and Awards, please see the FMSC website (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/advising-resources/undergraduate-center-academic-success-and-achievement/casa-scholarships/>).

Academic Programs and Departmental Facilities

The Family Science program is located in the UMD School of Public Health, which supports our faculty and students' public health-focused programs and encourages cross-collaborations with other SPH departments. FMSC's main office, room 1142, is open year-round (except university holidays), Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Students are encouraged to drop by for advising or information about undergraduate programs; department courses and internships; faculty meetings and mentoring; and ways to get involved in departmental research and student activities.