

*Handbook for the Masters in Family and Child
Science
Department of Family and Consumer Sciences
New Mexico State University*

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1 The Masters of Science Program in Family and Child Science

Congratulations! You are a graduate student in the Family and Child Science Department at NMSU. You have made it through a rigorous selection process and should be proud of yourself for this achievement. The goal of your graduate training program is to turn you into a first-rate practitioner, scholar, and systemic thinker.


The “graduate program” in FCS is a Masters of Science (MS) program. This is true for all graduate students in our program. Upon the completion of your required courses, qualifying exam, and other departmental requirements you will be awarded a diploma indicating that you have successfully completed the requirements and the faculty will confer upon you the degree of Master of Science in Family and Child Science.

2 Apply to one of the Masters of Science Programs

The Family and Child Science graduate program is divided in to two Tracks. They are:

- 1 **Marriage and Family Therapy-DEADLINE: February 1**. Students in this program will receive an academic background for meeting the educational requirements for clinical membership in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and for professional licensure in marriage and family therapy in New Mexico.
- 2 **Teaching Research and Administration-DEADLINES: March 1, June 1 & November 1**. This track is designed to prepare students to work in agencies and academic settings and to undertake research projects in these settings as well.

You will need to turn in several items to have a complete application packet. They are as follows: *click on any of the following to learn more.*

- 1 Undergraduate transcripts: if you graduated from **NMSU** [click here](#)
- 2 GRE Scores
 [What is the GRE](#)
- 1 Statement of Purpose
- 2 3 Letters of Recommendation
- 3 Curriculum Vita

In addition to these items you will need to apply for graduate status at the University level. [For information click here.](#)

3 Get accepted to our program

The rating of applications is an objective process. The following scoring system is used to rank applicants.

The range of scores is from 7 (worst) – 35 (best).

Score	GPA ¹	GRE ¹	Letter of Interest	Resume	References ²
5	3.8-4.00	601+	Truly Outstanding	Truly Outstanding	Truly Outstanding
4	3.6-3.79	501-600	Superior	Superior	Superior
3	3.3-3.49	401-500	Above average	Above average	Above average
2	3.0-3.29	351-400	Average	Average	Average
1	<2.99	301-350	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average

¹ GPA and GRE scores are weighted by 2. *Example if your GRE score is 505, then your score is $3*2 = 6$.* ² Reference letters are given an individual score and then the average scores is used to assign a final score.

Applicants with the top scores will be accepted to the program. All other applicants will be placed on a waiting list for that year only. If an individual who is admitted chooses not to attend, the next applicant on the waiting list will be given an opportunity to enroll.

4 Welcome to NMSU

Register for a personal PIN and computer account number. Click on the “ACTIVATE” button. This is important to be able to use the University Online system to register for classes, check about financial aid etc.

Get a parking permit. You will need a parking permit to park in various lots on campus.

Take care of Financial Aid. Make sure you have your financial aid information turned in to the financial aid office.

5 Meet with your advisor

When you are accepted to the program you are assigned an advisor. Your advisor, will give help you to choose courses to enroll in during your first year. Your Temporary Advisor may become your Advisor when you choose your Master's Committee, but this is not necessary. You will have many interactions with your graduate advisor as this person will engage in a mentoring relationship with you. A graduate advisor plays a large role in a graduate student's development. Make sure you meet with this person as soon as possible after you are accepted. He or she is one of the most valuable resources you have for information, guidance, and advice.

You should schedule a formal meeting with your advisor within a month of being accepted to the program. During this meeting, you should (1) discuss courses you should take in your first year, (2) talk about who will be on your guidance committee, and (3) begin to discuss career plans ideas.

6 Register for Courses

You and your advisor will determine the courses you need to enroll in the first semester of study at NMSU. Once you discuss this with your advisor you should register as soon as possible to ensure that classes do not close prior to your enrolling.

7 Develop your Advisory Committee

The Graduate Students (thesis or non thesis) will work with his/her Major Professor to compose an Advisory Committee prior to the completion of 12 credit hours of graduate work. The Advisory Committee will consist of a minimum of 3 graduate faculty members: ☞ Major Professor ☞ One other faculty member from within the Department of Family and Consumer

Sciences ☞ A third member, from outside the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, will

be designated by the Graduate School. A suggestion for this person may be proposed by the Graduate Student and Major Professor. ☞ Note: If a student has a designated minor, one faculty member must be from that subject matter area.

8 Develop a plan of study

A plan of study is simply a list of the classes you need to take and the anticipated times at which you will take them. MFT students need to keep two things in mind when developing your plan of study. 1. you need to be aware of New Mexico state **licensing requirements**. If you plan on moving to another state after graduation, please find the requirements for licensure in that state. You also need to keep in mind the requirements for the degree (NMSU requirements). The academic and licensing requirements will overlap.

On the next two pages are sample plans of study for students. Please be aware of whether you are starting your MA program during an odd or even numbered year. This will determine the schedule of courses you must take due to scheduling of courses.

9 Arrange a Candidacy Meeting

Prior to completion of 12 credit hours, the Major Professor and Graduate Student may call a Candidacy Meeting with the Advisory Committee. At this meeting the Graduate Student will give a brief overview of his/her Career Goals and Background (education, experiences, etc.). The graduate student will present to the Advisory Committee a proposed Program of Study for the degree. The program of Study will have been agreed upon by the Major Professor and the Graduate Student prior to the meeting. The information will be presented to the Advisory Committee on the Graduate Student Checklist form which will be as complete as possible.

The student will justify pursuing the Thesis or Non Thesis option for the degree in light of career goals.

10 Comprehensive Exams

You will need to take comprehensive exams in your last year of school. Comprehensive Exams (comps) are simply a set of essay questions that you are given to test your level of knowledge in the course content that you have taken in your plan of study. Typically students

11 Oral Exams

After you pass your comps you will be given an oral exam. The oral defense is an opportunity for your committee to ask you questions from the content areas of your written exams and the courses you have taken previously. Preparation for the oral exams begins when you take your first class and the written comps will also help to prepare you for this final step in your graduate program.