The Family and Community Services Program focuses on the development and implementation of public, private, and voluntary support services for individuals, families, and localities, and prepares individuals to function in a variety of occupations promoting family life, and family/community development. The program includes instruction in family systems, human development, social services, community social and economic development, social policy, voluntary sector activities, outreach, and community education.

There are six Great Plains IDEA institutions participating in the Family and Community Services program. Degree titles vary by institution.

- Kansas State University – Master of Science in Family and Community Services
- Michigan State University – Master of Arts in Family and Community Services
- Oklahoma State University – Master of Science in Human Development and Family Science
- South Dakota State University – Master of Science in Human Sciences – Family & Community Services
- University of Missouri – Master of Arts in Human Development and Family Science with an emphasis in Family and Community Services
- University of Nebraska – Master of Science in Child, Youth, and Family Studies with a specialization in Family and Community Services

Course descriptions, a course planner, and contacts for participating universities can be found on the Family and Community Services webpage: [http://www.gpidea.org/program/family-community-services](http://www.gpidea.org/program/family-community-services)

**Program Requirements**

**Master of Arts or Master of Science in Family & Community Services (36 credits)**

Upon successful completion of the master’s degree program in Family and Community Services, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a research-based perspective to understand individual, family, interpersonal, and community dynamics across the lifespan.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and skills related to the design, implementation, and sustainability, of family and community service programs.
3. Demonstrate essential knowledge and skills for leadership and management of family and community service programs.
To accomplish these goals, students must successfully complete all of the following:

- Be admitted to the master’s degree program at a participating university, complete the necessary coursework, and meet the master’s degree requirements of their admitting/degree granting institution.
- **All students are required to complete 36 credit hours including the ten core courses (30 credits).** The 10 core courses are offered every fall and spring. Electives are offered in the summer.
  - It is critical that the Foundations and Principles course be taken in the first semester of the program.
- An additional 6 credits must be taken to meet the degree requirements. These credits may come in the form of pre-approved electives, thesis, capstone project, internship, research projects, or additional coursework depending on the degree requirements of the university you are enrolled in. Students should consult their academic adviser to identify appropriate courses for the remaining six credits of course work.

**Course Descriptions**


**Understanding Families in Community Context (18 credits—required)**

**Foundations and Principles of Family and Community Services (3 credits)**
An introduction to the field of family studies and related professions that involve working with families and communities.

**Family Resource Management (3 credits)**
Survey of current personal finance and family resource management literature to provide an overview of current consumer finance research from multiple perspectives.

**Family Dynamics (3 credits)**
An examination of theories of family function and dysfunction, techniques of assessment, and models of family intervention.

**Lifespan Development (3 credits)**
Human development from both lifespan and bio-ecological perspectives focusing on major theories of development and current research on micro-macro relationship.

**Interpersonal Relationships (3 credits)**
In-depth examination of interpersonal relationships, including theoretical perspectives, research methods, relationship forms, relationship processes, and how context affects relationships.

**Resilience in Families (3 credits)**
Exploration of resilience approaches to the study of families and human development across the life cycle.
Delivering Family Service Programs (6 credits–required)

Parenting Education (3 credits)
An examination of theories, models, research, and skills related to parenting and parent education.

Crises across the Lifespan (3 credits)
The purpose of this course is to provide students with resources related to managing stress and coping with crises across the lifespan that can be utilized in both their own lives and the lives of those families they serve. Students will be introduced to the bio psychosocial nature of stress; methods of coping with stress, anxiety, and conflict; models of effective family functioning in the presence of stress and crises; and the current literature on how families cope with a variety of life transitions and crises.

Manage Family and Community Service Programs (6 credits–required)

Program Administration and Management (3 credits)
This course is designed to introduce students to the development, administration, and management of youth, family, and community service organizations.

Program Design, Evaluation, and Implementation (3 credits)
This course is an overview of the program development process and outcome evaluation of community, children, and family programs. Modes of outcome scholarship and their implications for community-based programs are discussed. Students will develop knowledge through participating in a community-based project involving the practical application of program design and evaluation methods.

Who to Contact for Help

Academic Advisor
Your academic advisor is the faculty member/staff person there to help you as you make your academic decisions and as you progress through the program. You should consult your academic advisor for assistance with the following:
- Course planning and selection (including elective approval)
- Transfer credit questions
- Plan your internship/practicum work (if applicable)
- Help with research interests

Campus Coordinator
Campus Coordinators are available to help students navigate their home institution. Campus Coordinators are available at every institution to help with questions regarding courses taken from other teaching institutions. Coordinators serve as a first point of reference for general questions and the following information:
- Enrollment processes (contact your academic adviser for course selection)
- General policy information at your home institution
- General Great Plains IDEA information and policies
- Assistance with the Learning Management System
A list of campus coordinators can be found on the Family and Community Services webpage in the right sidebar titled “University Contacts.”

Anti-virus Software
Students are strongly encouraged to install and maintain anti-virus software on the devices used in this academic program.