

REVIEW OF THE M.A., M.S., IN FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) Code: 19.0101
Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences, General

OVERVIEW

The **M.A., M.S., in Family and Consumer Sciences** program at Illinois State University is housed in the Department Family and Consumer Sciences within the College of Applied Science and Technology. The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences houses seven degree programs: a B.A., B.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences, a B.A., B.S. in Fashion Design and Merchandising, B.A., B.S. in Food, Nutrition, and Dietetics, a B.A., B.S. in Human Development and Family Science, a B.A., B.S. in Interior Design, a M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Science, and a M.S. in Nutrition. In addition, the department offers a minor in Family and Consumer Sciences and a Dietetic Internship Graduate certificate. The last review of the M.A., M.S., in Family and Consumer Sciences program occurred in 2012-2013.

The M.A., M.S., in Family and Consumer Sciences program offers curricula specializing in the fields of apparel merchandising, apparel design and product development, nutrition and dietetics, human development, family relationships, consumer services, child life, interior and environmental design, and family and consumer sciences teacher education. Each of these discipline areas is characterized by an understanding of the complex interrelationships between individuals, families, and communities, and the various environments that surround and impinge on their functioning. Family and consumer science professionals understand that the perennial practical problems of daily life most often require integrative approaches and action, using the best available scientific knowledge and information to address the existing human needs or problems under consideration. Beginning in 2021, students enrolling in the M.A., M.S., in Family and Consumer Sciences select from four sequences: Child Life sequence, Fashion Design and Merchandising sequence, Human Development and Family Science sequence, and Interior Design sequence. The Dietetic Internship sequence was moved to the new M.S. in Nutrition program in 2021.

Enrollment by Plan of Study, Fall Census Day, 2014-2021

M.A., M.S., in Family and Consumer Sciences, Illinois State University

First Majors Only

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Child Life sequence								2
Dietetic Internship sequence	19	20	20	20	20	19	19	
Fashion Design and Merchandising sequence								1
Human Development and Family Science sequence								3
Interior Design sequence								
No subplan	19	22	20	24	26	32	37	22
Total	38	42	40	44	46	51	56	30
Dietetic Internship Graduate Certificate						11	19	37

Table notes: New sequences began in 2021. Child Life sequence, Fashion Design and Merchandising sequence, Human Development and Family Science sequence, and Interior Design sequence

Degrees Conferred by Plan of Study, 2014-2021

M.A., M.S., in Family and Consumer Sciences, Illinois State University

First Majors Only

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Dietetic Internship sequence	11		10	10	10	7	10	9
Default sequence	11		12	8	8	11	9	22
Total	22	18	22	18	18	18	19	31

Table notes: Graduating Fiscal Year consists of summer, fall, and spring terms, in that order. For example, Graduating Fiscal Year 2018 consists of the following terms: summer 2017, fall 2017, and spring 2018. Sequence level data for 2015 were unavailable for this report. New sequences began in 2021. Child Life sequence, Fashion Design and Merchandising sequence, Human Development and Family Science sequence, and Interior Design sequence

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY REPORT**

Program goals

- 1) The development of an effective learning community in which all individuals appreciate and add to the store of human knowledge through research.
- 2) The development of leaders who will have the knowledge and skills to provide contributions to society.
- 3) The effective utilization of resources and innovative methods which enable students to anticipate and to cope with the demands of a changing society.

Student learning outcomes

- Integrate the research process into a final research paper
- Select and utilize appropriate statistical approaches to test a hypothesis and answer a research question
- Work effectively with colleagues, community organizations, and decision-makers.

Program curriculum (2021-2022)

Graduation requirements:

M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences (Child Life Sequence) requires 30 credit hours. requires 30 credit hours. This includes 6 credit hours of core courses, 18 credit hours of Child Life content courses. The thesis option requires the completion of a thesis (for 6 credit hours). The non-thesis option requires a further 3 credit hours of independent study capstone project and 3 additional credit hours or elective coursework.

M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences (Interior Design Sequence) requires 30 credit hours. requires 30 credit hours. This includes 9 credit hours of core courses, 10 credit hours of Interior Design elective courses. The thesis option requires a further 5-7 credit hours of coursework and the completion of a thesis (for 4-6 credit hours). The non-thesis option requires a further 8 credit hours of coursework and the completion of an internship or independent study (for 3 credit hours).

M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences (Fashion Design and Merchandising Sequence) requires 30 credit hours. This includes 6 credit hours of core courses, 12 credit hours of elective courses. The thesis option requires the completion of a thesis (for 6 credit hours). The non-thesis option requires a further 3 credit hours of independent study coursework and 3 additional credit hours or elective coursework.

Program review conducted 2021-2022. Report submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Fall 2022

M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences (Human Development and Family Science Sequence) requires 30 credit hours. This includes 9 credit hours of core courses, 6 credit hours of elective courses. The thesis option requires a further 9 credit hours of coursework and the completion of a thesis (for 6 credit hours). The non-thesis option requires a further 12 credit hours of coursework and the completion of an internship (for 3 credit hours).

Program delivery

The program is offered on the Normal campus.

The program is delivered primarily through face-to-face or blended face-to-face/online instruction. The Distance Dietetic Internship certificate program was established in Fall 2019. All courses offered for that certificate program are offered online and enroll students from many different states.

Department faculty (Fall 2021)

18 tenure track faculty members (5 Professors, 4 Associate Professors, and 9 Assistant Professors)

15 non-tenure track faculty members (7 full-time, 8 part-time, totaling 10.5 FTE)

Specialized accreditation

The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). The department received full re-accreditation in 2021. The next scheduled departmental accreditation review will be in 2031. The dietetics programs (undergraduate Didactic Program in Dietetics and graduate Dietetic Internship) are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). The last accreditation site visit was April 2018. The undergraduate and graduate programs received full accreditation status, and the next scheduled review will be in spring 2026.

Changes in the academic discipline, field, societal need, and program demand

Since the last program review, the graduate program has changed significantly. Program faculty identified the desire from students and employers to have sequences rather than a general Family and Consumer Sciences sequence and worked to implement this change. This reflects student and employer's preference to see more targeted degrees with a clear focus. This will also result in an increase in graduate level courses more tailored to each sequence. Future employers of Family and Consumer Sciences graduates are looking for practical experience and experiential learning. Faculty are incorporating technology and opportunity for application into the curriculum.

A significant change in dietetics, starting in 2024, is that graduates will need a master's degree to take the required Registered Dietitian Nutritionist exam. This will impact current undergraduate students and has spurred many to go to graduate school among recent classes who otherwise may not have made that choice. Consequently, we expect to see a rise in the number of applications and admitted students for the M.S. in Nutrition.

Responses to previous program review recommendations

The Family and Consumer Sciences graduate program had the following recommendations listed in the program review in 2012.

1. Continue working with University Assessment Services to further develop student learning outcomes for all sequences and to integrate ongoing program assessment with assessment processes required by accreditors. Graduate program sequences begin in the 2021-2022 catalog. This reorganization resulted in a significant revision to the program assessment matrix.

2. Continue efforts to recruit students and faculty from underrepresented groups. This continues to be a departmental level initiative and part of our strategic plan. We do have more international faculty and substantially more male faculty than in previous years.

3. *Continue efforts to integrate disciplinary alumni tracking information into a single alumni database.* This is a work in progress as the majority of graduate students in the program are part of the dietetic internship, which does its own alumni tracking. Now that we have two separate Master's programs with multiple sequences in each, we plan to create alumni surveys that will be sent to all graduates each year.

4. *Monitor development of curricular and accreditation standards by the Child Life Council, modify the Child Life program accordingly, and determine whether the program should seek accreditation from the council should it become available.* A Child Life accreditation does not exist. There is an endorsement of academic programs, which is relatively new. The endorsement requires the Child Life to be a separate sequence, which will be the case starting in the 2021-2022 catalog. The endorsement is not currently accepting new applications and is under review. This will continue to be monitored. We will apply when new applications are accepted again.

Major findings

A major finding from this review is that we are competitive among comparable state institutions and we have healthy student enrollment. We have just completed significant curriculum revisions that should make us more attractive to students. A priority for upcoming years is to continue to assess our course offerings and increase options for incoming graduate students in new sequences. Updating our website and providing clear timelines for graduate assistantship selection should enhance recruitment.

The upcoming requirement for a master's degree for all entry-level dietitians will likely increase our enrollment, as well as the 50 students in the distance dietetic internship certificate program who are already earning 10 graduate credit hours towards our 30-hour master's degree. This is anticipated to increase our enrollment particularly in the Master of Science in Nutrition program. Additional sections of courses and/or offering different modalities will likely become necessary. It is possible this will result in a need for another faculty member.

The creation of sequences in the graduate program is also expected to modestly increase enrollment. While these changes are in effect at the writing of this report, they were just implemented during fall 2021 semester. The continued development of these sequences, including but not limited to course creation, will be necessary to meet the needs of future students.

The program also has the opportunity to become more intentional in program assessment and alumni tracking.

Initiatives and plans

Over the next review cycle, we intend to do the following:

1. Add graduate level courses, particularly to human development and family science, fashion design and merchandising, and interior design sequences.
2. Continue efforts to recruit students and faculty from underrepresented groups.
3. Initiate an alumni survey to assist in program assessment.
4. Update website including information about faculty and student research.
5. Establish priority deadlines to assist in competitive graduate assistantship selection.
6. Apply for Child Life endorsement when it becomes available.

PROGRAM REVIEW OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Review Outcome: The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences program in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee recognizes that many of the efforts and activities that led to the development of the self-report were accomplished during the time period coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee

thanks the program for a comprehensive and critical self-study report that included input from multiple stakeholders including advisory boards.

The committee commends faculty efforts to grow the program's enrollment during the period covering the program review cycle that has resulted in steady program growth (from 38 students in 2014 to a high of 56 in 2020). We note that with the development of the new stand-alone Master of Science in Nutrition program that enrollment trends will be distributed over both graduate programs. Within the current program faculty see an opportunity for controlled growth of the program (the self-study indicates an ideal target of 116). The committee commends the Department faculty for efforts to increase the gender and racial/ethnic diversity among its students. The percentage of students identifying as men has increased from 9.0 percent in fall 2017 to 16.6 percent in fall 2020. The percentage of undergraduate students from groups traditionally underrepresented in the discipline has also shown a small increase (climbing from 13.6 percent in 2017 to 16.1 percent in 2020) during the period of review.

The committee commends the program faculty for their efforts to support the success of their students. We commend the program on its ability to continue to limit enrollments in many of its courses, which is in keeping with the University's commitment to fostering a small-college atmosphere with large-university opportunities. The committee notes that the program provides its graduate students the opportunity to participate in the same activities afforded to undergraduate (allow them to learn from experts in the field, network with potential employers, and compete in regional and national student competitions). These include the Fashion Design and Merchandising Association, the National Retail Federation Student Association, International Interior Design Association, Fix-It Friday, Fashion Show, Food, Nutrition, and Dietetics Club, Fresh FAVS, ISU-Council of Family Relations, and the Child Life Club. The self-study report provides examples of some of the opportunities for student participation in research opportunities, including co-authored conference presentations and manuscripts. These varied opportunities help the program prepare students for employment and build a strong student community in the program.

The committee commend the faculty for their substantial work to revise the curriculum during the period of review based on feedback from multiple stakeholders. This work included the development of new sequences within the program, the development of a stand-alone Nutrition program, the creation of undergraduate accelerated sequences that are designed to facilitate student admission into the Family and Consumer Sciences graduate degree programs, and the creation of new 400-level courses (graduate) corresponding to existing 300-level courses (undergraduate). The goal for this work was to provide creative and varied curricular options to better allow students to meet their educational and career goals. Furthermore, the program faculty are commended for their work to infuse issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the program curriculum.

The committee notes that the program faculty continue to revise and implement their plan for the assessment of student learning outcomes. During the current review cycle, faculty have used the evidence gathered through the student learning outcomes assessment plan to inform program changes, and this includes the incorporation of rubrics as tools for assessing student coursework regarding the program's learning outcomes. The committee acknowledges the use of such rubrics as one method to provide consistent reviews of student learning that can provide potential areas for improvement. The information gathered through these measures has been used to make program changes, and several examples of these changes were specified.

The committee recognizes the faculty members of the program for their scholarly contributions to the M.A., M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences. Faculty members are active researchers who publish peer-reviewed journals articles, and present at national and international professional conferences. Additionally, we recognize that every faculty in the program has been actively involved in advising and supporting professional student organizations demonstrating their commitment to facilitate learning and educational experiences of our students outside the classroom. The committee also applauds the practice of asking faculty to submit a diversity statement as part of their annual productivity review.

The committee appreciates the in-depth analysis of comparator and aspirational programs. As part of this analysis, the program faculty identified multiple institutions with similar programs that excel in ways that our program may aspire to. The committee also recognizes that faculty developed specific action plans to implement similar initiatives as those to improve the program at Illinois State.

The committee commends the program faculty for being accredited by the Council for Accreditation of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). Furthermore, we also commend the program faculty for maintaining program standards that allow graduates of the dietetic internship to sit for the national registration examination for dietitians and graduates of the Child Life Specialist program to sit for the national Child Life Certification exam.

Recommendations.

The Academic Planning Committee thanks faculty members of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences for the opportunity to provide input regarding the Family and Consumer Sciences program at Illinois State University through consideration of the self-study report submitted by faculty. The following committee recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle are provided in a spirit of collaboration with department faculty members. In the next program review self-study report, tentatively due October 1, 2030, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

Develop a plan for controlled enrollment growth. The committee notes that demand for the program has been strong, resulting in steady growth in enrollments. The committee acknowledges the work faculty have completed regarding their recruitment efforts, including the development of accelerated sequences within the undergraduate programs that may feed the graduate programs. We recommend that the program faculty revisit and adapt their recruiting and enrollment plans in light of the substantial revisions of the program structure (i.e., the newly developed sequences and the separate Nutrition graduate program) so that controlled growth is matched with appropriate resources needed for supporting student, faculty, and staff success.

Continue to focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion. While the committee recognizes the efforts to increase the gender and ethnic diversity of faculty and students within the program, the committee encourages the program to continue to pursue its goals related to further developing an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment that effectively supports students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds. We encourage the program to continue refining and implementing their plans for recruiting students from groups who are traditionally underrepresented in the program and discipline. We note that many of the recruitment strategies are described at the department level, and we recommend that the program faculty explore the use of program-specific recruitment strategies (e.g., program-specific scholarships). Furthermore, we encourage the program faculty to continue to examine ways to infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curriculum.

Continue to focus on student success and retention. The committee recommends that the program faculty develop a plan for student success. The plan should be used to increase transparency and communication around “student success” by defining the program’s goals for, assessment of, and actions towards supporting students enrolled in the program. The plan may provide an overarching structure for other plans (e.g., retention, curriculum, alumni engagement). The committee recommends continued periodic review of the program to maintain program retention and graduation rates. The committee encourages the program to continue developing graduate student focused co-curricular opportunities.

Continue to review and revise the curriculum. The committee recognizes substantial work by faculty members to review and update the program and its curriculum. In light of the substantial revisions of the curriculum, the committee strongly recommends continued periodic review of the impact of these changes (e.g., new sequences, reduction of required hours) and ensure that the content remains current with changes in the field. The committee encourages the program to continue developing opportunities for student research and creative activities. We strongly recommend that the program faculty continue to explore avenues for the diffusion of equity, diversity, and inclusion issues into the program’s curriculum.

Continue to develop training and mentoring opportunities for Graduate Assistants who support teaching in the undergraduate family and consumer sciences programs. The committee commends the policy that graduate

assistants complete the course prior to becoming a teaching assistant for it. While the committee acknowledges that all graduate students are encouraged to participate in the professional development opportunities offered by the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) on campus and through professional/disciplinary conferences, we recommend that the program faculty consider ways to expand the training and mentoring of their graduate teaching assistants. This may include creating additional assessments mechanisms like observations of teaching and mid-semester feedback and evaluation.

Continue implementing and refining the student learning outcomes assessment plan. The committee encourages faculty to continue its implementation of the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program during the next program review cycle, to continue to utilize information gathered through plan implementation to make program revisions as necessary, and to document how that has been done. Of particular focus should be examining the impact of the new curricular structures that have been recently developed are now in operation. The committee encourages faculty to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in assessing student learning to identify any modifications to the plan faculty may deem necessary.

Continue the collaborative work with Milner Library. The committee recommends that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to examine and evaluate the library's journals and monograph collection related to family and consumer sciences to aid in both the selection and deselection process of these sources. Given recent journal cancellations and expected increases in distance and hybrid courses, we encourage the Department and the Library to further collaborate to increase awareness of alternative access to resources, such as Interlibrary Loan and I-Share lending, among faculty and students. We also recommend that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to develop a tiered approach for information fluency learning outcomes for the Department, align those outcomes to the curricula, and integrate those outcomes into the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program.

Continue to refine a plan for alumni tracking and engagement. The committee encourages the faculty to continue to refine their plan for tracking program alumni (not only department-wide, but also specifically at the graduate program level) and use this system to enhance alumni networking and engagement. These activities may become even more important in the years ahead as the program's alumni become more diverse. The program could benefit from increased involvement of its alumni, employers, and other external stakeholders in providing input regarding the program and in mentoring students and providing employment opportunities for program graduates.