

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CHILD LIFE

Web Site: <https://twu.edu/human-development-family-studies-counseling/graduate-programs/child-life/>

The master's degree in Child Life covers child growth and development from infancy through adolescence, including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development with an emphasis on how health and hospitalization can impact development in all domains, as well as family dynamics and relationships. A master's degree in Child Life prepares graduates to work with children and families in healthcare and community settings. Completion of this degree, along with required Child Life Practicum and Internship, makes graduates eligible to pursue certification through the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP).

The M.S. in Child Life program is endorsed by the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP) (<https://www.childlife.org/certification/certification-resources/endorsed-program-directory/>). The program is 100% online.

Marketable Skills

Defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 60x30 Strategic Plan (<https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agency-publication/miscellaneous/theceb-60x30-strategic-plan/>) as, "Those skills valued by employers that can be applied in a variety of work settings, including interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skills areas. These skills can be either primary or complementary to a major and are acquired by students through education, including curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities."

1. Critically consume research literature.
2. Provide a safe, therapeutic, and healing environment for children and families.
3. Integrate clinical evidence and research into professional decision-making.
4. Critical thinking skills.
5. Written communication skills.

Admissions

All students must meet the University requirements as outlined in the Admission to the TWU Graduate School (<https://catalog.twu.edu/graduate/graduate-school/admission-graduate-school/>) section of the catalog.

The academic program may have additional admission criteria that must also be completed as outlined on the program's website.

Degree Requirements

Total Semester Credit Hours Required

37 semester credit hours (SCH).

Special Requirements

No grade below B is accepted towards any graduate degree in the Department of Human Development, Family Studies, and Counseling (HDFSC). If more than one grade below B is earned while enrolled in any HDFSC graduate program, the student will be dismissed from the

program and will be ineligible to re-enroll in any program within the department for a period of six years.

Final Examination

Students must complete a professional portfolio in their last semester. The portfolio is reviewed and evaluated by the student's advisory committee. The advisory committee should consist of three faculty members, all of whom must hold Graduate Faculty status, and at least two of whom must be faculty from the Child Life program.

| Code | Title | SCHs |
|---|--|-----------|
| Core Courses | | |
| HDFS 5113 | Theories of Child Development (ages 0-18) (*) | 3 |
| HDFS 5223 | Child Growth and Development in Early Childhood (ages 0-8) (*) | 3 |
| HDFS 5243 | Adolescent Development Within the Family (ages 9-21) (*) | 3 |
| HDFS 5503 | Family Systems in Child Development (*) | 3 |
| HDFS 5693 | Research Methods in Family Sciences (*) | 3 |
| Required Content/Professional Competencies | | |
| HDFS 5013 | Grief, Loss, and Bereavement (*) | 3 |
| HDFS 5063 | Developmental and Psychosocial Perspectives on Health, Illness, and Families | 3 |
| HDFS 5073 | Professional Practice and Ethics for Working With Children and Families | 3 |
| HDFS 5403 | Child Life (*) | 3 |
| HDFS 5593 | Play, Development, and the Young Learner (*) | 3 |
| Elective Content | | |
| Select two of the following | | 6 |
| HDFS 5573 | Family Crises | |
| HDFS 5613 | Child Guidance | |
| HDFS 5193 | Statistics for Family Sciences | |
| HDFS 5093 | Child Life Practicum (**) | |
| HDFS 5893 | Child Life Internship (**) | |
| HDFS 5903 | Special Topics | |
| Graduation Requirement | | |
| HDFS 5931 | Professional Portfolio (Final Examination - Must be taken in last semester) | 1 |
| Total SCHs | | 37 |

* Classes required for certification by the ACLP eligibility assessment. Further information about course alignment with ACLP assessment can be obtained from the student's advisor.

** Child Life clinical experiences (Child Life practicum and Child Life internship) are awarded through individual hospitals through an application and interview process. TWU does NOT place students in these experiences, but will work with students and hospitals to facilitate affiliations as needed, and students are eligible to receive course credits for clinical experiences upon approval from their major advisor. While these courses are not listed in the academic eligibility assessment, they are required for certification through the ACLP. Please note that almost all Child Life internships (and ALL ACLP endorsed clinical internships) require that students complete a Child Life practicum BEFORE applying to Child Life internship.