Reasons to choose our program...

Western Michigan University’s Department of Family and Consumer Sciences provides integrative educational programs and conducts research focused on reciprocal relationships among individuals, families and their near environments with the goal of improving the quality of life within a dynamic global community. Courses are primarily offered evenings, with some courses offered late afternoon, weekends or online. The Master of Arts in Family and Consumer Sciences (M.A.) offers several concentrations.

Designed for students interested in serving children and families in hospital and other health-related settings, the child life program focuses on child development, family systems, loss and bereavement, and interventions such as play, education, preparation, distraction, and emotional support. Graduates may seek child life specialist certification through the Association of Child Life Professionals.

The dietetics option is designed for current dietetic interns or registered dietitians desiring a master’s degree that complements existing professional skills.

The family life education concentration prepares professionals to provide prevention and intervention services for effective coping with life events and family transitions. Upon graduation, students may apply to NCFR for the Provisional Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) designation.

A flexible program for students seeking advanced competencies necessary for success in the fashion business or education environment is the textile and apparel studies concentration.

Additionally, the Master of Arts in Family and Consumer Sciences Accelerated (M.A.) is a unique program that allows qualifying WMU juniors and seniors majoring in family studies, child and family development, or youth and community development to accumulate credits toward completion of a master’s degree in the Child Life or Family Life Education option while still enrolled as an undergraduate. Up to 12 credit hours of designated coursework may be used to satisfy both the bachelor’s degree and master’s degree.

The department specifically designed the Graduate Certificate in Kinship Care for professionals from varied fields to enhance their professional knowledge and skills when working with adults or children living in kinship care families. The five kinship care courses are offered online to accommodate both U.S. and international students, and can be completed in as little as one calendar year.
Teaching, Research and Program Focus Areas
The faculty are recognized for scholarship in entrepreneurship and small business management, global aspects of the fashion industry, social media marketing, career and curriculum development, human nutrition, food access, sustainable food systems, parent-child attachment, identity development of young children, programs for separating parents, military families, and collaborative family-oriented health care.

Faculty serve on editorial boards of national and international academic journals and as leaders in professional organizations.

Industry Highlights
Child life specialists, with expertise in child development and family systems, serve children in hospitals, outpatient facilities, hospice and other settings.

Dietetics graduates find employment in hospitals, school districts, food marketing and teaching.

Graduates from the family life education concentration hold positions as program coordinators or directors in areas such as adoption and foster care, human services, abuse protection, child and youth development, juvenile justice and community health.

Textile and apparel studies graduates typically pursue doctoral studies in preparation for an academic career or management positions in organizations that design, produce and market apparel and related products.

Funding
The department hires two - three graduate assistants during the fall and spring semesters.

Admission
Dietetics, family life education, textile and apparel studies, kinship care:
Domestic
Applications accepted on an ongoing basis, allowing students to begin coursework in any semester: Spring 2018, Summer I or II 2018, Fall 2018, and Spring 2019. Please allow three weeks for the Admissions Committee to review a completed application.

FCS Child Life
Domestic
Students are welcome to choose one of the following deadlines and apply to begin coursework in any semester throughout the year. For graduate assistantship consideration apply by Jan. 15, 2018.

Spring 2018: Oct. 1, 2017
Summer I or II: Jan. 15, 2018
Fall 2018: Jan. 15, 2018
Fall 2018: March 26, 2018
Spring 2019: Oct. 1, 2018

International
Spring 2018: Aug. 1, 2017
Summer I 2018: Jan. 15, 2018
Fall 2018: April 1, 2018
Spring 2019: Aug. 1, 2018
Summer I 2019: Jan. 15, 2019

Family and Consumer Sciences
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