MASTER OF ARTS IN
YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The MA in Youth and Community Development is an advanced course of professional development for leaders in informal learning environments and the out-of-school time sector. It is based on theoretical perspectives in childhood, adolescent, and family development and organizational change, and grounded in an ethic of community engagement and social action. It prepares change agents to transform communities through an intentional investment in youth with interdisciplinary coursework and community-based experiences.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
The MA in Youth and Community Development is a 33 credit hour program. Students will work closely with graduate faculty to develop a plan of study that fits with personal career and academic goals. Students with limited youth work experience will be advised to complete a practicum or internship.

CONTEXT
Engaging youth in prosocial activity has long been a priority, as schools and neighborhoods create overlapping systems of support to encourage healthy youth and communities. Youth-serving settings, including informal learning environments and out-of-school time programs, are of increasing interest as successful ways to build assets and to maximize youth potential. This program joins the larger movement to elevate and professionalize the field of youth development, and encourages thriving communities by building capacity and developing new leaders in youth-serving settings.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
The MA program in Youth and Community Development is situated at the intersection of developmental theory, social action and justice, and organizational leadership and change. This program is rooted in community psychology and the prevention sciences to provide a foundation for studying setting-level interventions and developmental needs. This program invites students to critically examine root causes and how individuals and organizations can address social inequalities. Students will study organizational change to develop understandings and competencies in transformational leadership to promote human flourishing.

ACCELERATED GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM (AGDP) IN MA IN YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Qualifying WMU undergraduate students can accumulate up to 12 credit hours toward the Master of Arts in Family and Consumer Sciences while enrolled as undergraduates in the Family Studies major, the Child and Family Development major, or the Youth and Community Development major. Designated 5000- and 6000-level courses are counted in both the bachelor’s degree and the master’s degree.
COURSEWORK
(all courses are 3 credit hours unless otherwise stated)

Youth Development: Theory and Foundations (6 hours)
- FCS 6410: Advances in Youth and Community Development
- Choose One:
  - ED 6040 Childhood Learning and Development: Theory to Practice
  - ED 6035 Risk and Resilience in Adolescent Development
  - FCS 6510 Child Development: Theories and Practice
  - FCS 5250 Adolescents in Development

Youth Development: Practice (9 hours)
- FCS 6420: Building Capacity and Quality in Youth and Community Development
- ED 5950 Experiential Education and Place-Based Learning
- Choose One:
  - FCS 6550 Adult-Child Relationships
  - ED 6700 Authority and Autonomy in Schooling
  - FCS 5350 Communication Skills

Organizational Leadership (6 hours)
- WFED 5150 Grant Writing
- Choose One:
  - OCL 6400 Foundations in Organizational Change Leadership
  - OCL 6410 Organizational Culture and Globalization
  - OCL 6430 Group Dynamics and Team Development in an Age of Globalization
  - OCL 6440 Large Scale Change and Organizational Design

Social Foundations (6 hours)
- ES 5850 Social Justice & Community Organizing
- Choose One:
  - ES 6340 Culture and Politics of Education Institutions
  - ES 6730 Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in Education
  - FCS 5680 Gender, Culture, & Families
  - ES 6420 Queer Theory

Core (6 credits)
- ED 6010 Introduction to Research in Educational Settings
  or FCS 6010 Basic Research Methods and Design
- Choose One:
  - ED 6790 Capstone Research Project
  - ED 7000 Master’s Thesis (6 credit hours)
  - FCS 7100 Independent Research (2-6 credit hours)
  - FCS 7000 Master’s Thesis (6 credit hours)
Optional: Choose One:
- ED 7120 Internship
- FCS 6220 Practicum/Internship (2-6 credit hours)