

# **GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

### **THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The University of Akron's *Graduate Bulletin* is the official document which contains the policies and procedures for all graduate students. It is available at the Graduate School Office which is located in The Polsky Building, Rooms 467-469. All students should obtain and read this publication. The bulletin can also be found online at <http://www.uakron.edu/gradsch/pdf/Gradbulletin.pdf>

This *Graduate Student Handbook* is complementary to the graduate school's Bulletin. It is intended to be a helpful reference and to acquaint graduate students with the rules, regulations, and procedures of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Graduate students are responsible for being aware of and fulfilling all requirements of the Graduate School and the School of Family and Consumer Sciences.

#### **School Mission**

The mission of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences is to prepare undergraduate and graduate professionals to take leadership positions as generalists or specialists. Emphasis is given to career specialties that meet the needs of northeast Ohio as well as the nation. This School has an ecological perspective with special emphasis on the interactions of families and the settings in which they live. It stresses creative management of resources, both human and material, to strengthen the home and family.

The School takes advantage of its urban environment which provides opportunities for student internships, work experiences, and community service learning activities. The School faculty is committed to high quality teaching, service to the community, research and other creative contributions to the knowledge base of the profession. The programs are planned to meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students.

## **Accreditation**

The School of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Akron is accredited by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). Founded in 1908 as the American Home Economics Association, AAFCS is the professional organization that embraces all the subject-matter specialties.

The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences supports an integrative approach to the relationships among individuals, families, and communities and the environments in which they function.

## **Conceptual Framework**

Our School supports the "Conceptual Framework for the 21st Century" which was developed and adopted by AAFCS in 1993.

The profession of Family and Consumer Sciences is concerned with:

- \* the strength and vitality of families;
- \* the development and use of personal, social, and material resources to meet human needs;
- \* the physical, psychosocial, economic, and aesthetic well-being of individuals and families;
- \* the role of individuals and families as consumers of goods and services;
- \* the development of home and community environments that are supportive of individuals and families;
- \* the design, management, and use of environments;
- \* the design, use of, and access to current and emerging technologies;
- \* the critique, development, and implementation of policies that support individuals, families, and communities.

## **MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM**

The Master of Arts degree in Family and Consumer Sciences is awarded to those completing one of the three options offered:

1. Child and Family Development Option
2. Child Life Option
3. Clothing, Textiles, and Interiors Option

## **MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM**

The School also offers a Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics. Admissions to this program are currently on hold.

### **Objectives**

Both master's programs share the common objective of training professionals who will have the knowledge and the skills to strengthen families. Using an ecological framework, students integrate their area of specialization with knowledge about families and family lives.

### **Program Setting**

Both graduate programs in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences are arranged for part-time, mid-career, or returning professionals who are primarily interested in an evening program. All options concentrate upon the integrative nature of family and consumer sciences and the managerial aspects of family resources. They emphasize the urban setting and stress strong applied research and community involvement components.

## **Admission Requirements**

In addition to the general requirements for admission set forth in the *Graduate Bulletin*, the School of Family and Consumer Sciences requires the student to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). For full admission a student must have a minimum combined score of 900 on the verbal and quantitative sections with at least a 4.0 on analytical writing OR a minimum combined score of 800 on verbal and quantitative sections with at least a 4.5 on analytical writing. Official scores must be forwarded directly to the School. Scores will be accepted if taken within the last five years prior to admission.

The student must also submit a letter of career goals and two letters of reference. (See p. 59, *Graduate Bulletin*.)

International students must submit additional materials and complete The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) exam. (See p. 20, *Graduate Bulletin*.)

The graduate faculty of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences may require an interview with any applicant. Those who wish to enter the Child Life option must have an admission interview with the Coordinator of the Child Life program.

Note: Decision on admission will not be made until all the required materials have been received.

## **Time Limit**

All requirements must be completed within six (6) years from the initial semester in which the student began graduate-level course work at The University of Akron or elsewhere.

An extension of up to one year may be granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research if the student is started on the final thesis or master's project, but needs additional time to complete the manuscript. The student, with the approval of his/her academic adviser, must give a written request to the School's graduate director, and complete the appropriate paperwork. The extension request must be approved by the graduate faculty of the School and by the Dean of the Graduate School. The School will require the student to complete 7400:690 Thesis Research/Reading for 3 credits (or an appropriate equivalent for students doing a project) as part of the conditions for a time extension.

Extensions beyond one year are rarely given. If unusual circumstances warrant a second extension, the student will be required to update some of the course work.

## **Undergraduate/Graduate Credits**

No graduate credit may be received for courses taken by examination or for 500-level courses previously taken at the 400-course level as an undergraduate without advance approval from the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

## **Transfer Credit**

For the master's program, up to one-third of the total graduate credits required may be transferred from an accredited college or university. Two-thirds of the required forty (40) semester credits of required graduate credits must be completed at the University of Akron.

All transfer credit must be at the "A" or "B" level in graduate courses. The credit must be relevant to the student's program and be within the six-year time limit.

A University of Akron student must receive prior approval from the Graduate School for the transfer of courses taken elsewhere. Before transfer grades are recorded on the grade transcript, a student must complete twelve (12) graduate hours at the University of Akron.

## **Workshops**

In the School of Family and Consumer Sciences, graduate credit hours earned in workshops may **not** be applied to a master's degree. They can be considered as graduate credit but may not be used to fulfill the required forty hours of credit for the degree.

## **Seminars**

**A maximum of six (6) hours of graduate seminars may be applied toward the Master's degree.**

A student may elect to take additional seminar hours but they may not be used to fulfill the required credits for the degree.

## **Individual Investigation**

**No more than three (3) hours of Individual Investigation may be applied toward the forty semester credits required for completion of the degree.** To enroll in Individual Investigation the student must have the approval of both the instructor and the academic advisor. A closed-class form signed by the instructor and the School Director is necessary for enrollment.

## **Course Load**

A full load of course work at the graduate level is normally 9 to 12 semester credit hours including audits. Fifteen credit hours may be carried if circumstances warrant.

Graduate Assistants must take at least 9 credit hours each fall and spring semester.

## **Grades**

Grades are reviewed at the end of each semester by the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences and the Graduate School. A student admitted to graduate study under any status at the University is expected to maintain a minimum 3.00 average at all times. A grade point average of 3.00 or better is required for graduation.

Any student whose average falls below 3.00 is no longer in good standing in the Graduate School and is considered on probation. In computing cumulative averages, "D" grades are treated as "F" grades.

The Dean of the Graduate School, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, may dismiss anyone who fails to make satisfactory progress toward declared goals or who accumulates six semester credits of "C" or below. The accumulation of six semester credits of "F" will result in mandatory dismissal.

## **Incomplete Course Work**

The grade of "INC" (Incomplete) may be given when work required in a course cannot be completed within the semester and there is good reason for such failure. An "INC" must be completed during the next semester or it is converted to an "F" grade.

## **In Progress Course Work**

The grade of "IP" (In Progress) is given for the thesis, project, or internship, and for Independent Investigations where work is on a continuing basis. At the time work is completed, the "IP" is changed to a letter grade.

## **Permanent Incomplete**

An "IP" (In Progress) may, upon application by the student or instructor, be changed to a "PI" (Permanent Incomplete) when the instructor is satisfied that, for reasons beyond the student's control, the course cannot be completed.

## **"Double" Master's Degrees**

Any graduate student enrolled in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences may obtain two Master's Degrees in the School under the following conditions:

1. The University Graduate School requirements of time limitations and grade achievements must be met.
2. The graduate foundation courses required by the School may be used for both Master's Programs provided both programs are completed within the six-year time limit.
3. A total of fifteen graduate credits from one Master's program, including the graduate foundation courses if appropriate, may be included within the requirements for the second degree.
4. Comprehensive examinations must be completed for each program of study.
5. A master's thesis, internship, or project must be completed for each program of study, if it is required by the program. Beginning in fall 2004, students pursuing the Child Life master's degree have the option of an all-coursework degree, with no thesis or project requirement..

## **Continuing Graduate Admission Upon Graduate Degree Conferral**

The School of Family and Consumer Sciences participates in the practice of continuing graduate admission after conferral of the graduate degree. This automatic award of Special/Nondegree admission status allows the graduate degree recipient to continue graduate enrollment for special purposes such as licensure without the need to to through the reapplication for admission to Graduate School.

## **Graduate Bulletin Board**

The Graduate Director maintains a bulletin board for graduate students in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences. It is located in the hall outside the graduate assistant office suite. It is wise to check this board on a regular basis. Important information for graduate students and graduate assistants will be posted here.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### Courses of Study

Each student must comply with one of the three M.A. options or the M.S. option, each having a minimum of 40 credits (the child life non-thesis, non-project option requires a greater number of minimum credits). Each option requires successful completion of the following:

1. School foundation courses
2. Core courses in area of specialization
3. Electives in chosen option
4. Electives in cognate area
5. Comprehensive examination
6. Thesis, internship, or project (\*Child Life also offers a non-thesis, non-project option)
7. Oral defense of the thesis, internship, or project.

The academic program agreements for each option's course of study are included in Appendix D of this Handbook.

### Foundation Courses Required

All students in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences must take the three required foundation courses:

7400:604	Orientation to Graduate Studies in Family and Consumer Sciences Offered fall semester	1 cr
7400:680	Historical and Conceptual Bases in Family and Consumer Sciences Offered fall semester	3 cr
7400:685	Research Methods in Family and Consumer Sciences Offered spring semester	3 cr

A student should enroll in **7400:604: Orientation to Graduate Studies in Family and Consumer Sciences** in his/her first fall semester of graduate school. The content of this course will assist students in understanding program requirements and planning their academic program.

## **Required Option Core Courses**

Each of the programs requires a number of core courses in the subject-matter specialty. The student must complete each required option core course.

## **Option and Cognate Electives**

Each option allows for a number of option electives and cognate electives of the student's choice to complete the 40 hours of requirements (more for the child life non-thesis, non-project option). Students are expected to carefully choose electives in light of career or professional goals.

The **option electives** allow each student to select courses within the subject-matter specialty that will be of most interest or benefit to the particular student.

The courses selected for the **cognate elective** credits can be from one of the other options within the School of Family and Consumer Sciences or from a cognate area outside the School or from a combination of the above. Cognate electives should help strengthen the program by incorporating interdisciplinary perspectives.

All electives must be approved by the student's academic advisor and entered upon the Academic Agreement Form.

## **Role of the Academic Advisor**

When a student is admitted to the graduate program, the School's Director of Graduate Studies assigns an academic advisor. All students will be assigned an academic advisor familiar with their area of study.

The primary role of the academic advisor is to assist the student by meeting the following responsibilities:

1. Helping the student define career goals
2. Discussing and monitoring program requirements
  - a. required foundation courses
  - b. required core courses
  - c. option electives
  - d. cognate elective
3. Ascertaining whether prerequisites have been met
4. Completing an academic program agreement form (contract)
5. Assisting the student in the selection of the thesis

- or project director
6. Assisting the student with forms (ie. Advancement to Candidacy).

### **Academic Program Agreement**

The Academic Program Agreement form should be completed by the academic advisor and the student early in the student's graduate program (see Appendix D).

In the Academic Program Agreement the requirements for the program option are specified. Even if changes are subsequently made by the School, the student is bound only by the Agreement. A copy will be given to the student and the original copy will be kept in the School's files to be used at each advising session.

**A copy of the Academic Program Agreement should be forwarded to the Graduate School when the Advancement to Candidacy Form is submitted.**

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

To meet the School's requirements for graduation, each student must pass a written comprehensive examination over the major area of study. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the ability of the student to integrate knowledge learned in the graduate program.

This examination is not to be taken until at least 24 credits of graduate work have been completed. Successful completion of the examination is required before the credit hours for the thesis or master's project can officially begin.

### **Examination Schedule**

The examination is given three times a year. In the testing period the student answers two major questions prepared by the graduate faculty members in each specialty area. All student candidates in a particular option will answer the same questions during a particular semester.

The comprehensive examinations are generally scheduled for a Saturday in November, April, and August in Schrank Hall South. The examination period is four hours long and begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 1:30 p.m. There is a one-half hour break between questions.

## **Registering for Comprehensive Examination**

The student must notify the Director of Graduate Studies of his/her intent to take the comprehensive examination at least one month prior to the scheduled date by filling out the form available at the front desk, Schrank 215.

## **Preparation**

Each division can assist students by providing study guides, suggested reading lists or other materials. Students should check with their academic advisor for advice on preparing for the comprehensive exam.

## **Evaluations and Results**

The Director of Graduate Studies arranges for the questions to be submitted, administers the examination, and processes the evaluation of the answers.

The comprehensive examination is read and evaluated by the graduate faculty members in each area. They reach a consensus on whether or not the student has successfully passed each of the two examination questions. The results are reported as "pass" or "fail" for each question.

The process of evaluating the examination normally takes one month. The student will be notified of the results in writing.

**A comprehensive examination, if failed, may be retaken only once. Failure to pass the comprehensive examination on the second try will mean that the student will be dropped from the master's program.**

## THESIS

### Registration

Before registering for thesis credits, the student must:

- a. have passed the comprehensive examination
- b. have signed approval of thesis director
- c. have informed the graduate director

### Thesis Topic

The thesis topic is determined by the student and is then approved by the thesis director and committee. The study is expected to be within the student's declared area of emphasis. It should address a problem or question which, according to existing research literature, needs further study. The thesis research should hold some promise for making a contribution to the field of study. The student is strongly encouraged to copyright the thesis and to publish the results.

The normal procedure is for the student to prepare a **concept paper** to present to a selected faculty member who might be a potential thesis advisor. A **concept paper** is a one- or two-page paper which briefly describes the thesis idea, its possible contributions to the area of specialization, and proposed procedures. It is used when you inquire whether the faculty member might be interested in serving as director of your thesis.

The student is encouraged to consider several possible thesis ideas because some projects may be difficult to complete within a reasonable time frame or because of hard-to-access resources.

### Selection of The Thesis Director

The student should select a faculty member from the School of Family and Consumer Sciences who holds Graduate Category I or II status and whose area of specialization or overall training corresponds to the student's particular interest. The thesis director does not need to be the student's academic advisor. Appendix A contains a list of the graduate faculty members in the School, with their status and their areas of specialization and interest.

## **Role of The Thesis Director**

The thesis director's role includes the following:

1. Assisting the student in clearly defining the thesis topic.
2. Helping the student select a thesis committee.
3. Approving the thesis proposal/prospectus for submission to the committee.
4. Assisting in the preparation of forms for the University Committee, including the form for the Protection of Human Subjects (when applicable).
5. Directing the thesis to completion.
6. Chairing the oral defense committee.
7. Removing the "IP" after a successful defense.

## **Selection of The Thesis Committee**

The student **and** thesis director choose two additional graduate faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. The faculty members can be from within or outside the School but must possess graduate faculty status. Committee members should possess special research skills or knowledge pertinent to the research. The student has the responsibility for asking the faculty members to serve on the thesis committee.

## **Role of The Thesis Committee**

The **Role of the Faculty Members** on the Thesis Committee is as follows:

1. Meeting with the student to accept, revise, or reject the thesis proposal/prospectus.
2. Reading and making revisions on the thesis.
3. Participating on the examining committee for the oral defense.

The **Role of the Student** on the Thesis Committee is as follows:

1. Arranging the time and place for the proposal/prospectus meeting and the oral defense.
2. Delivering a completed thesis proposal/prospectus to each committee member two weeks before the committee meeting.
3. Delivering a completed thesis to each committee member two weeks prior to the oral

defense.

### **Standard Thesis Format**

The standard format suggested for the hypothesis-testing research most characteristic of the natural science and social science disciplines serves as a guideline for the majority of theses written in the School. It can be modified to fit the particular project.

The standard format is as follows:

### **PRELIMINARY PAGES, including the ABSTRACT**

#### **CHAPTER I. THE PROBLEM**

- Introduction
- Statement of the Problem
- Purpose of the Study
- Significance of the Study
- Hypothesis
- Summary

#### **CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

- Summary

#### **CHAPTER III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

- Sample Population
- Testing Instruments
- Limitation of the Study
- Summary

#### **CHAPTER IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

- Introduction
- Data Analysis
- Summary

#### **CHAPTER V. SUMMARY**

- Statement of the Problem
- Summary of Hypotheses
- Implications
- Possibilities for Future Research

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES**

### **APPENDICES, including Human Subjects Approval**

#### **Thesis Proposal**

The student who intends to do theory-testing or a theory-based study should follow the standard plan used by scientists and social scientists. After the thesis director agrees to chair the committee, the student begins work to expand on the concept paper and to prepare a **proposal** for the thesis committee. The **proposal** is the term given to the first three chapters of the standard research format followed by scientists and social scientists:

- Chapter I. The Problem
- Chapter II. The Review of Literature
- Chapter III. Research Design and Methods

When the **proposal**, or first three chapters, have been approved by the thesis director, they can be submitted to the thesis committee. They must be approved (or revised and approved) by the committee before data collection begins.

#### **Human Subjects Approval**

If the proposed research involves using human subjects, the proposal must be reviewed and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects before any data are collected. Since this approval may take some time, students must allow adequate time for this step. Projects that do not require any contact with live human subjects (i.e., secondary analysis) will only require approval by the student's committee.

#### **Additional Information**

For additional information on preparing the proposal and thesis, see Appendix B.

#### **Alternative Thesis Formats**

Not all research requires the testing of a hypothesis. Alternative approaches, however, have other conventions that must be followed if you choose to use them. For example, a historical

study should use the methods and be presented in the form traditionally used by historians.

A student who intends to do a theory-generating (humanistic) thesis will follow the University Format for manuscript organization, which allows the chapters of text material to be designed in a manner appropriate for the specific research project. This format is:

**Preliminary Pages, including Abstract**

**Chapters of Text Material**

Number and content of chapters is that deemed appropriate for the specific study.

**Summary/Conclusions**

**Bibliography/References**

**Appendices**

**Thesis Prospectus**

The student who intends to do a theory-generating study and who will determine the appropriate chapters as the thesis progresses will prepare a **prospectus** for the thesis committee, after the concept paper has been accepted and the thesis director has agreed to chair the study.

The thesis **prospectus** is a ten- to twelve-page paper. It should introduce the project or problem to be studied, discuss and explain the importance of the research, give preliminary plans for the research design and evaluation. It should also contain a working bibliography identifying key sources that will be used and the major secondary works that will provide needed background to start the study.

The student must develop the thesis prospectus in consultation with the thesis director. The prospectus must be approved by the thesis director before going to the committee. The committee must then approve the prospectus before the study proceeds.

**Thesis Writing Guidelines**

The thesis proposal/prospectus as well as the final draft of the thesis should follow the guidelines for format and content detailed in the *Guidelines for Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation* available at the Graduate School office. This is revised regularly and the student must be sure to have the current set of instructions.

It is imperative that all University guidelines be followed. Theses have been rejected and will be rejected if they do not conform to standards.

## **Style Manuals**

Academic disciplines require that theses be written in the style prescribed by a recognized style manual. Since this School's options cross discipline boundaries, the School will allow the use of any style manual appropriate for the type of research being conducted. Check with your thesis director.

The majority of students in the school follow the APA Style Manual:

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 5th ed.  
Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001.

Other acceptable style manuals include:

Kate L. Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed., rev. and exp. by Bonnie Birtwistle Honigsblum. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Council of Biology Editors. *Scientific Style and Formant: The CBE Style Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. 6th ed. Cambridge University Press, 1994

Guides to these style manuals are published on internet sites.

Copies of previous theses are on file at the library. They can be consulted and checked out to become acquainted with the form and style required for a thesis. Be aware, however, that style manuals may have instituted some stylistic changes since some of these were completed. You must cite in the style of the most current style manual.

## **Abstract**

The School of Family and Consumer Sciences requires an abstract to be included in the thesis. The heading ABSTRACT is centered without punctuation on the thirteenth typing line (two inch top margin).

The abstract is intended to give a succinct account of the thesis. It must not exceed 350 words in length. It should be double spaced. No diagrams should be included. Mathematical

formulas should also be omitted unless essential. The abstract must be prepared carefully; it is the first page that a reader sees.

## **Oral Defense**

Each student will be required to defend the ideas presented in his/her thesis. This is done with the approval of the thesis director after s/he is satisfied with the content and the format of the thesis.

The student arranges with the committee members for a two-hour block of time for the oral defense. At the time of the defense, the student will be expected to answer questions related to the development of the project, the methods used to carry out the project, and the results. The student is not expected to answer questions that range beyond the scope of the project.

The committee members will act as critical reviewers of the thesis and will submit suggestions for substantive and grammatical changes in the work.

## **Approval Route for a Thesis**

The thesis must meet the approval of the University at a number of key levels. Each person gives final approval on the signature page of the thesis. The order for approvals is:

1. The thesis director
2. The thesis committee members
3. The School director
4. The Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts
5. The Dean of the Graduate School.

A student can be asked to revise or make changes at each level of approval.

## **Preliminary Check**

The Graduate School, as a courtesy, will do a preliminary check of a photocopy of the thesis before it is run on bond paper. This is a check for correct format related to University requirements in style. This preliminary check does not address content; that is done through the approval route.

## **Timetable for the Thesis**

When beginning the thesis, the student should map out a tentative plan for completing the thesis. Allow time for each step necessary for the process.

Students very often underestimate the time needed to finish a thesis. Even if a student writes well, there will be a need for revisions and rewriting. This is a necessary part of all research work. Talk with your thesis director about a realistic time frame.

You must allow sufficient time for the finished thesis to pass through all official channels of approval: your academic adviser, your thesis committee, the School Director, and the Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts. Each level should be allowed two weeks to read and critique the product. Determine the announced deadline dates and then move backwards on the calendar allowing time for each step necessary to the process.

## **Standards for Final Copies of Thesis**

The copies of the finished thesis must conform to the guidelines established by the Graduate School. The student is responsible for carefully checking any typist's work. The Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts and the Dean of the Graduate School will reject the copies presented to them if the work deviates from the guidelines.

## **Number of Copies**

Three signed hardbound copies of the thesis must be submitted following the oral defense. Two hardbound copies will go to the Graduate School office for deposit in Bierce Library. One hardbound copy will be presented to the School of Family and Consumer Sciences. The School prefers the student's name and the year on the spine.

In addition, the student usually presents the thesis director with a copy and may want personal copies. Each of the committee members should be asked if they wish to have a copy or not. These copies do not have to be on bond paper.

The Graduate School will bind up to six copies. If you wish to have additional copies, they will need to be made elsewhere.

## **GRADUATE MASTER'S PROJECT**

Graduate students sometimes choose to complete a graduate project [called an internship prior to 1997] instead of a thesis. This decision must be reached with the advice and approval of the graduate faculty in each area.

A Master's project emphasizes the development, implementation, and evaluation of a community-based supervised project which makes a significant contribution to the field and to the community.

A project might focus on, for example, developing, implementing, and evaluating an original program. It could also take the form of reworking, implementing, and evaluating an existing program.

### **Project Topic**

The master's project topic is suggested by the student and then is approved by the project director and the committee. The topic must be relevant to the student's area of study.

The student prepares a concept paper and then asks a selected faculty member to serve as project director. The concept paper should briefly describe the project, the possible contribution to the proposed agency or community setting, and the proposed procedure.

The student is encouraged to prepare several possible ideas. The director and the student then select the idea with the most potential for success for the student and the community setting.

### **Selection Of The Project Director**

The student should choose a graduate faculty member from the School whose area of specialization or overall interest pertains to the student's topic. The project director does not need to be the student's academic advisor. Appendix A contains a list of the graduate faculty members in the School and their areas of specialization and interest.

## **Role Of The Project Director**

The role of the Project Director is as follows:

1. Assisting the student in deciding on a definite and workable project.
2. Assisting the student in selecting the project committee.
3. Approving the project prospectus or proposal for submission to the project committee.
4. Assisting in the filing of forms for the University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (if applicable).
5. Directing the project report to completion.
6. Chairing the oral defense committee.
7. Removing the "IP", after a successful defense.

## **Master's Project Prospectus or Proposal**

The project prospectus is to be developed by the student in consultation with his/her project director. The director will determine whether the student should follow the prospectus or proposal routes described under the thesis. These can both be modified to suit the particular project. Guidelines helpful in preparing a project prospectus or proposal are in Appendix C.

The prospectus/proposal must be approved by the student's project committee before the project can be started. If the study involves testing of human subjects, the methods for implementation must also be evaluated and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

## **Selection of the Project Committee**

The student and the project director select two additional faculty members to serve on the committee. The faculty members can be from within the School; one member can be a faculty member with a special interest in the project, from outside the School. In addition to the three faculty members on the committee, a community person may also serve on the committee as an ex-officio member with no voting privileges. This might be helpful to a student who is working with a community agency.

It is the student's responsibility to ask the faculty members to serve on the committee. When the committee is established, the student must notify the Director of Graduate Studies in order that the appropriate information may be recorded.

## **Role Of The Project Committee**

The role of Project Committee is as follows:

1. Meeting with the student to accept, revise, or reject the project prospectus/proposal.
2. Reading and making revisions on the project report.
3. Participating as the examining committee for the oral defense.

The role of Student on the Project Committee is as follows:

1. Arranging the time for the prospectus/proposal and oral defense meetings.
2. Delivering a completed prospectus/proposal to each committee member a minimum of two weeks prior to the committee meeting.
3. Delivering the completed project report to each committee member a minimum of two weeks prior to the oral defense.

## **Writing the Project Report**

For reference purposes, a project report outline is included. The report should follow the instructions for thesis writing issued by the Graduate School entitled *Guidelines for Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation* (available at the Graduate Office). The style manual selected by the specific area should also guide the student in writing the report.

Copies of project/internship reports are on file in the School. A student can check them out to become familiar with the form and style required for a report.

## **Oral Defense**

Each student will be required to defend the ideas and statements presented in the project report, following approval of the report by the project director. It is the student's responsibility to arrange a two-hour block of time for the oral defense with the committee.

At the time of defense, the student will be expected to answer questions related to the development of the project, to the methods used in the project, and to the results. The student is not expected to answer questions beyond the scope of the project. The committee members act as critical reviewers of the project and will submit suggestions for substantive and grammatical changes in the report.

## **Requirements For The Completed Project Report**

To meet the requirements for the degree, copies of the project report must be submitted. One signed and bound copy with student's name and the year permanently marked on the spine must be presented to the School for its project/internship file. (Do not use a spiral binding.) In addition, one copy must be presented to the project director and to any of the other committee members who desire one.

The project advisor will examine the finished report for conformity to the guidelines. Any report that violates a standard will be returned as unacceptable. The student will need to correct the problem.

## **GRADUATION**

### **Advancement To Candidacy**

A student should apply for Advancement to Candidacy after completion of one-half of the credits required for the Master of Arts degree but no later than September 15 for a May graduation or May 15 for a December graduation or February 15 for an August graduation. Advancement to Candidacy forms are available in the Graduate School office. Students must also complete the application for graduation form which is available at the Registrar's office.

### **Graduation Requirements**

To be cleared for graduation, a candidate must have completed all required course work with a minimum grade point average of 3.00, have been advanced to candidacy, filed an application for graduation with the Registrar, paid all applicable fees, and met any other applicable School and University requirements.

If a thesis is required, two copies, properly prepared, are due in the Graduate School office at least two weeks prior to commencement. These copies must be signed by the advisor, faculty reader/s, School Director, and College Dean prior to submission to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### **Commencement**

Commencement occurs three times a year, in December, May, and August. A student earning a graduate degree is encouraged to participate in the commencement exercises. The School is very proud of its graduates and wants them to be recognized at commencement.

A degree candidate who has legitimate reasons for graduating "In Absentia" should make a written request to the registrar within the established dates and pay the designated fee.

## **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

The University annually awards a number of assistantships to qualified students. The positions carry stipends and provide remission of tuition and fees.

### **Application**

The deadline for application is March 1st. Students interested in assistantships should submit their applications to the Director of Graduate Studies in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences. The application forms may be obtained from the School office and can also be found online at the Graduate School's page on the University website.

### **Criteria For Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate assistantships may be awarded to any full-time student with full admission. The awards are all provided on a competitive basis. Criteria used to determine awards include the following:

1. Grade point averages, both graduate and undergraduate
2. Applicant's letter of career and educational goals
2. Letters of recommendation
3. GRE scores
4. Number of courses in the appropriate field.

### **Diversity Recruitment Program**

The University of Akron also awards a number of additional assistantships through the Graduate Diversity Recruitment Program. They are given to qualified minority graduate students. For additional information, you can contact the Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

### **Length Of Graduate Assistantships**

The awards are usually for a nine-month period (2 semesters), up to a maximum of two years (4 semesters).

## **Graduate Assistantship Responsibilities**

A graduate assistant is required to work 20 hours per week for the sixteen weeks (15 plus final week) of each fall and spring semester. They can work 4 hours less for each official school holiday.

**Administrative Assistant:** These are contracts with the University to work 20 hours per week on administrative duties required by grants under the direction of the grant director.

**Research Assistant:** These are contracts with the University to work 20 hours per week on research projects under the direction of a faculty member.

**Teaching Assistant:** These are contracts with the University to work 20 hours per week assisting instructors with their classroom assignments. Duties might include being a discussion leader, preparing an occasional lecture, grading, library research or laboratory work.

While the School can award three distinct types of graduate assistantships, in actual practice the job of the graduate assistant may be quite varied and include responsibilities for teaching, research, and administration.

## **Graduate Assistant Credit Load**

Graduate assistants must be full-time students and are currently required to take a minimum of 9 graduate credit hours fall semester and 9 graduate credits spring semester. Summer credits are optional.

## **Special Graduate Assistant Benefits**

The assistantship will pay full tuition and fees for 9 to 15 graduate credit hours each spring and fall semester. Summer school tuition, up to a total of 9 graduate credit hours, is covered after the first year of the assistantship and for a second summer if the student has not graduated.

All graduate assistants in the School may also obtain partially-subsidized parking passes which allow parking in any university lot or parking deck designated for student parking. The form for obtaining the pass is found online at

<http://www.uakron.edu/facilities/parking/permits.php>

## **Part-Time Employment**

Graduate assistants must discuss and obtain the prior approval of the Director of Graduate Studies before accepting any additional part-time employment during the assistantship. Such part-time employment is limited by the University to 8 hours maximum per week while the University is in session. The employment must not interfere with the fulfillment of any duties or responsibilities incurred through acceptance of the graduate assistantship.

## **Reporting**

Graduate assistants complete a Work Log for each week of the semester, including final week. These detail the work done for the professors you are assigned to. These Work Logs should be placed in the mailbox of the Graduate Director each week, on Friday before the assistant leaves or on the following Monday at the latest. Some professors may also request a copy of the assistant's Work Log.

## **Meetings**

Faculty meetings are held monthly and graduate assistants are occasionally invited to attend. Graduate assistants' meetings may be held during the year. Announcements will be circulated before the meeting.

## **Training and Orientation**

Graduate assistants are required to attend the Orientation Sessions held by The University of Akron the week prior to the beginning of the Fall semester. This orientation includes the mandatory training about Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of Discrimination, which must be completed by all University employees.

Graduate assistants are also required to attend the short orientation held by The School of Family and Consumer Sciences, also scheduled during the week prior to the beginning of Fall semester.

## **School Awards**

Each year the School of Family and Consumer Sciences awards a number of small endowed scholarships to students. These awards are described on the School's website.

Applications are available in the School office or on the School's website early in the spring semester. Recipients are chosen by a faculty committee. Announcements of awards are made in April.

## **UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The following university and community facilities are available to all students:

### **Bierce Library**

There are over one million books, pamphlets, pictures, government documents, microforms, maps, records, audio tapes, films, filmstrips, slides and archival materials in the library. In addition, the library subscribes to over 4,800 periodicals. Through the university's membership in the Center for Research Libraries and Ohio LINK, interlibrary loan activities and reciprocal borrowing arrangements with other Ohio academic libraries, the student has access to a vast number of resources. The OhioLINK Central Catalog gives single-point access to over seven million titles and links the resources of over forty state and research schools.

An efficient way to become acquainted with the library is to take one of the individualized tours. These tours include information on general services, acquisition, location of materials, special collections, and special facilities.

The research librarian assigned to the School of Family and Consumer Sciences is **Joseph LaRose**. He is available for additional help in our program areas for any particular problem.

### **Computer Center and ZIPnet ID**

For a student interested in research, the facilities at the Computer Center are excellent. Most services are free and available to all students. Check at the Input/Output Window or call 972-6888 for current seminar offerings. (The School also maintains a 17-station computer lab for student and classroom use. It is located in room 213 of Schrank Hall South).

Zipnet (Zippy's Internet Protocol Network) is the campus-wide communications network at the University of Akron. It gives student access to Email, UseNet News, University Information, and the Internet from on campus or from home via a computer and modem.

Each graduate student should procure a **Zipnet ID**. This can be done at one of the Information Services' computer labs in the Computer Center, Bierce Library, Gallucci Hall, Olin Hall, or the Polsky Building.

### **Center For Family Studies**

The primary goal of the Center for Family Studies is to facilitate the growth and development of family strengths and to enhance the quality of family life. The objectives of the Center are to identify and study the critical issues related to the family and the community and to encourage and disseminate information on appropriate interventions or preventative mechanisms. The Center meets these objectives through three major avenues: (1) research, (2) education, and (3) public service. Representatives of different disciplines work in teams integrating their methodologies to study and analyze family-related issues.

The Center is housed in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences. **Dr. Helen Clemminshaw** is the director.

### **Program for Nutrition Intervention**

The Program for Nutrition Intervention enhances classroom instruction, research, and community service in the Division of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Science. Students are involved in community-based service and research projects within and outside the university.

The Program for Nutrition Intervention also offers nutrition services, programs, and activities to the University and the community. *Nutrition News* is published twice a semester to highlight current projects.

The Program director is **Evelyn Taylor, M.S., R.D., L.D.**

### **Counseling Services**

The center offers assistance in career counseling, personal emotional counseling, educational counseling and other concerns of both traditional and non-traditional students.

### **University Center for Child Development**

The University Center for Child Development serves over one hundred children from campus and community families. It is open to children of students or faculty members while they are in class or studying. Registration is handled on a per-semester basis for all parents and space is allotted hourly on a "first-come" basis.

The Center, administered jointly by the School of Family and Consumer Sciences and the College of Education, also serves as a laboratory for UA students. It is used for observation assignments and for controlled research. The Center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This accreditation recognizes its focus on the child's experience and its goals to help children grow and develop intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally.

### **Office Of Career Planning And Placement**

Career placement assistance is available to all students. For the graduating student, opportunities are provided for interviews with on-campus representatives of prominent businesses, industries and branches of government, including the military service and education at the primary, elementary and secondary levels. In addition, direct job referrals are made to registrants; credential files are maintained and mailed upon request; company literature is available; career planning is provided.

### **Office of Student Financial Aid and Employment**

This office provides assistance to people who, without financial aid, might not be able to attend the University. A student who has already received a bachelor's degree is eligible for National Direct Student Loans and/or College Work-Study Programs. Professional staff members are available to provide information on financial aid in Spicer Hall.

### **Community Resources**

The urban/suburban community surrounding the University of Akron is the home of numerous agencies and groups willing to utilize the skills of family and consumer sciences graduate students. These agencies and groups are useful resources for faculty members initiating and

carrying out research or educational programs and for students who wish to acquire educational experiences in non-academic settings.

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Graduate students are encouraged to participate in professional organizations appropriate to the student's intended career area. Many offer memberships at a reduced rate for graduate students. Some of the key organizations for graduate students in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences are:

- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (student chapter on campus)
- American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists
- American Council on Consumer Interests
- American Dietetic Association (student chapter on campus)
- American Quilt Study Group
- American Society of Interior Designers (student chapter on campus)
- Ars Textrina
- Association for the Care of Children's Health (student chapter on campus)
- Child Life Council
- Costume Society of America
- Institute of Food Technologists
- International Society for Infant Studies
- International Textile and Apparel Association
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (student chapter on campus)
- National Council on Family Relations
- Society for Research in Child Development
- Society for the Study of Social Problems

Many of these national organizations also have local, state, or regional affiliations. The student's academic advisor can provide membership information.

Attendance at professional meetings provides opportunities to keep current in the field. For students entering the job market, professional meetings are places to meet key professional people who may assist in obtaining employment.

**NOTE:** The University's Graduate Student Council and the College of Fine and Applied Arts sometimes have funds available to support students desiring to attend state and national meetings.

## APPENDIX A

### GRADUATE FACULTY

The graduate faculty of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences and their teaching/research specialties are:

**Buckland, Sandra**, Associate Professor  
(Category I)

B.A., M.A., University of Akron  
Ph.D., The Ohio State University  
Fashion Merchandising  
Apparel Design  
Costume and Culture

**Chebra, Janice**, Assistant Professor  
(Ad Hoc Temporary)

B.A., M.A. Kent State University  
Ph.D., The Ohio State University  
Courtship, Marriage and Family Development  
Consumer Issues of Adults and Children  
Adult Development and Aging  
Adult Sibling Relationships  
Work and Family  
Gender Roles

**Cinda Chima**, Assistant Professor  
(Ad Hoc Temporary)

B.A. University of Akron  
M.S. Case Western Reserve University  
R.D., L.D.  
Clinical Nutrition Management  
Diabetes  
Nutrition Outcomes Research  
Clinical Practice Issues

**Glotzer, Richard**, Associate Professor

School Director

(Category I)

B.A., M.S., Ph.D. University of Wisconsin-Madison

Family Studies

History of the Family

History of Education

African Studies

**Gunn, Virginia**, Professor

(Category II)

B.S., Kansas State University

M.S., Syracuse University

Ph.D., The University of Akron

History of Costume and Textiles

History of Interior Design and Decorative Arts

Textile Conservation

History of Family and Consumer Sciences/Home Economics

Material-Culture and Historical Methods

**Hudak, Sandra**, Assistant Professor

(Ad Hoc Temporary)

B.S., The Pennsylvania State University

M.S., The University of Akron

Food Systems Management

Consulting in Long Term Care

Nutrition and the Elderly

Food Science

**Jennings-Rentenaar, Teena**, Assistant Professor

(Ad Hoc Temporary)

B.S., Queen's University, Canada

M.S., University of Alberta, Canada

Textile Science

Quality Assurance

Textile History

Museology

Textile Technology

**Marino, Deborah**, Associate Professor

(Category I)

B.S., St. Mary's College

M.S., Drexel University

M.P.H., Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley

R.D., L.D.

Maternal and Child Nutrition

International Nutrition  
Community Nutrition

**Rasor-Greenhalgh, Sue A.**, Associate Professor  
(Category I)

B.S., Morehead State University, Kentucky  
M.S.S.M., University of Southern California  
R.D., L.D.

Food Systems Management  
Quantity Food Production in Health Care and Institutions  
Computer Applications in Food Service Operations  
School Nutrition Services

**Resler, Rose**, Visiting Instructor  
(Ad Hoc Temporary)

B.A., M.A., The University of Akron  
C.C.L.S., L.P.N.  
Child Life Specialist

**Schulze, Pam**, Associate Professor  
(Category I)

B.A., Southeastern Louisiana University  
M.A., Ph.D. University of Connecticut  
Parent-Child Relations  
Cross Cultural Parenting Practices  
Parents' Infant Feeding Practices  
Puerto Rican Culture  
Service Learning

**Vollmer, John**, Assistant Professor  
(Category I)

B.A. Drew University  
M.S. Pratt Institute  
Theory of Design  
Portfolio Review  
Specification for Interiors  
Senior Design Studios

**Werhan, Carol**, Assistant Professor  
(Ad Hoc Temporary)

B.S. Oklahoma State University

M.S. Indiana State University

Teacher Educator and Student Teacher Supervisor

Professional Orientation

History of Profession - Methods

**Wilburn, Victor**, Assistant Professor  
(Category I)

B.S. Tennessee State University

M.S., Ph.D. The University of Tennessee

Child Development -- Infancy through Adolescent Development

Social and Emotional Development

Suicidal Ideation

Socialization through Play and Support (Family and Peer)

**Witt, David D.**, Professor  
(Category I)

B.S., M.S., Ph.D., Texas Tech University

Family Theory, Research Methods

Institutional Interaction with the Family

Family Interaction

Career Contingencies - Singlehood, Divorce

Marital and Family Satisfaction

**Witt, Susan**, Associate Professor

Director of Graduate Studies

(Category I)

B.A., M.A., Ph.D., The University of Akron

Child Development - Early Childhood Education

Parent Education

Gender Role Socialization

Courtship, Marriage, and Family Relations

Parent Child Relations

School Community Relationships

## **APPENDIX B**

### **GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE THESIS**

#### **Statement Of The Problem**

A clear statement should be given regarding the problem to be studied. The problem selected for study should be one which, according to existing research literature, needs further study. The proposed study should hold some promise for making a contribution to the field of study. It is important to remember that the research problem is one for which the student conducting the study will seek empirical data. Analysis of the data should lead to increased insight into the selected problem as well as the need for further research.

#### **Purpose Of The Study**

The purpose statement should clearly detail why the proposed problem is worthy of being researched. Of what advantage would the study of the selected problem be to the field? Will the study be primarily a feasibility study to learn whether or not subsequent studies of similar design would be advisable? Will the study be a replication of previous studies? Will the study facilitate the development of instrumentation or suitable techniques for dealing with issues in the field?

Some studies might be conducted for the gathering of baseline data pertaining to a given research population while others will result in the gathering of data which can facilitate education programs in the schools and in the community. Thus, the purpose statement might list one or more of the above or others unique to a given design. Concise statements from the review of literature may help in underpinning the importance of the proposed study.

#### **Review Of The Literature**

A concise summation of the current literature pertaining to the selected study is an integral part of any well-designed research project. Only details which relate directly to the study being proposed should be included; extraneous details and information of a peripheral nature should be avoided. The primary function of the literature review is to place the study in the context of existing theoretical and empirical knowledge pertaining to the research project.

## **Hypothesis**

A hypothesis is simply a testable statement. More precisely, a hypothesis is a proposition set forth as an explanation for the occurrence of some specified phenomenon. Examples of testable hypotheses are the following:

---the attitudes of middlelescent mothers will correlate significantly with the attitudes of their adolescent daughters

---mothers who are employed full-time outside the home tend to be better adjusted than mothers who are full-time homemakers

---less evidence of child abuse will be found among mothers who participated in parent-education classes prior to the birth of their first child than among mothers who did not participate in parent-education classes before their first babies were born

These hypotheses are in rough form and would be even more finely detailed to relate to a specific research project. Be sure to avoid lumping two or more hypotheses together. This confounds the testing function and causes confusion in later design factors.

The number of stated hypotheses should relate to a given study. Usually three or four are adequate. Trying to test too many hypotheses in one study may make the data collection and analysis unwieldy and impossible within the confines of the projected timetable. Simply stated, it is wise to fully explore a limited number of hypotheses rather than lightly treat a greater number. The student should be certain to comply with the professional style accepted by the particular area of study for the development of hypotheses.

## **Assumptions**

Assumptions are statements indicating some factors which will be assumed (or taken for granted) within the study. The following are examples of research assumptions:

---that attitudes will tend to reveal adjustive acuity of the subjects

---that simulation games will provide the environment in which couples will tend to reveal their decision making patterns

---that a child's perception of the happiness or unhappiness of his parents' relationship will be useful in evaluating the total spousal relationship

The assumption differs from the hypothesis in that it is not testable within the given research design. It is moreover a pivotal factor upon which the total acceptability of the research design or the subsequent finding might be measured. In other words, if one fails to accept the research assumptions, s/he will likely fail to regard the total study as being of significant value.

## **Definitions**

All terms utilized in the study must be defined if they vary at all from the commonly accepted definitions. The term "mother" would not usually need to be defined since it is commonly used in most cultures. Middle-aged or middlelescent, on the other hand, should be defined since professionals disagree as to what years this period covers. In addition, the definition of this period may vary from culture to culture. The word family is rather common to most people. If the term family is to be used, however, it is a good idea to define the framework in which family is being utilized as a point of reference (i.e., mother, father and other biological children). This is also true of other terms which may be in a state of redefinition.

If a broadly defined concept or conceptual cluster is to be limited for the purpose of a specific study, this should be clearly stated. For example, when interpersonal interaction is to be studied within the confines of a structured laboratory setting this information should also be reflected in the definition of the conceptual term(s) being utilized (i.e., interpersonal interaction shall be defined as that interaction which takes place during five-minute laboratory test periods involving parents and their first born pre-school age children).

## **Plan For The Research Design**

This portion should include step-by-step procedures for the completion of the research study. This involves details pertaining to the following:

- A. Selection and/or design of research instrument or technique for collecting data.
- B. Plan for testing instrument for validity and reliability if co-efficients are not already sufficiently established.
- C. Selection and securing of sample.
- D. Clearing of project with human subjects committee.
- E. Plan for collection of data and its subsequent coding.
- F. Plan for statistical treatment of data.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE MASTER'S PROJECT**

#### **PROSPECTUS/PROPOSAL AND REPORT**

The master's project prospectus/proposal is a concise and well-conceived plan for the design, implementation and evaluation of the student's proposed project. Information from the prospectus/proposal will be reworked and supplemented in the final report. Information included should address each of the following areas:

##### **Overview Of Proposed Project**

This introductory section should include information pertaining to the proposed agency or community setting in which the project would take place. The primary objectives outlined for the experience should be clearly stated. Supporting evidence indicating how the experience will fit into the student's total master's degree program and his/her total education experience should be included. A discussion of what the total project experience is intended to contribute to the student's professional expertise should be indicated. It might also include the strengths or experiences the student brings to the project.

##### **Review Of The Literature**

The purpose of the review of literature is to enable the student to be well versed on topics important to the selected project. The student should review literature pertaining to similar programs already in existence or projects completed at other sites. Further, it should cover appropriate literature regarding the agency or agencies with which the student will be working. Any other topics central to the project should be reviewed also. The literature review must be documented in the appropriate format agreed upon by the student and the director.

##### **Project Design and Evaluation**

The prospectus/proposal should include a detailed step-by-step procedure for carrying out the project. It should also include precise details regarding the focus of the experience; the student's responsibilities in relation to the agency and/or to the families with whom he/she will be working; and the projects or programming to be undertaken. Plans should be included for each stage in the design of any particular programs or material for which the student will be responsible. Details should be given for the evaluation procedures, both for the program materials developed (if appropriate to the selected project) and the total project experience. This

material should be revised and appropriately discussed in the final report.

### **Timetable For Completion Of Master's Project**

Projected dates and amounts of time needed to conduct and evaluate each phase of the project experience and a brief description of work or objectives to be accomplished during each time period should be set forth. Remember to be both realistic and flexible. This should address each phase of the project (i.e., library research, material development, actual work in the agency, work with families or individuals served by the agency, time spent in evaluation of proposed materials, programs, and/or projects). This material may be revised to form part of an appendix in the final report.