

## DEGREE PROGRAMS IN

The College of  
**Agriculture and  
Life Sciences**

**F**amily life education is a science involving the study of family dynamics and theories related to the development of children, adults, families and communities. The program teaches the application of evidence-

based practices and educational processes used by professionals to support families and their well-being.

Do you enjoy teaching others and helping them make informed life choices? Are you interested in supporting individuals and families in their decisions about finances, work, caregiving and relationships? Do you want to study the interaction of people within their communities and environments? If so, then family life education may be a career you are interested in pursuing. The demand today for family life and parenting educators is ever increasing. Many of the issues that families and youth face today have their roots in the early developmental years and emerge throughout the life course in the interactions that are nurtured between family members, in school and care settings, and in communities. In addition, family life education involves the construction of policies that affect individuals and families, culture and the economy.

### Career Opportunities

Students who earn a degree in Family Life and Parent Education will be able to choose from a variety of careers. Family and parent education professionals generally possess the skills and knowledge needed to help families using a preventative approach, including education, referral and family support. Family life educators and parenting educators are well networked within the community and are able to make referrals and partner with other family-serving organizations to provide families with the help and support they need to deal with their unique situations.

Family Life Education occurs in a variety of settings, such as:

- Community education facilities such as shelters, literacy centers, family resources centers and senior centers;
- Religious facilities;

- Schools with special family programs;
- Colleges and universities where work is done on special projects;
- Human service agencies and health departments;
- Corporate settings or government agencies;
- Corrections facilities where parents are incarcerated;
- Retirement communities;
- Health care facilities where educational programs for family members are conducted;
- Preschools and child care resource and referral organizations;
- County Extension centers;
- Public policy arenas;
- Military family support units.

Please note that a Family Life and Parent Education degree is neither a

teaching nor a counseling credential. Family life and parenting educators work through prevention education to support families in achieving life goals.

### Coursework/Curriculum

The Masters of Science is a graduate degree in Human Development and Family Studies with a concentration in Family Life and Parent Education. This degree is a jointly administered program of the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University and the Department of Human Development and Families at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences at NC State University is part of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The Department of Human Development and Families at UNC-G is



part of the School of Human Environmental Sciences. The Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences does not offer an undergraduate degree.

This is a non-thesis program with a unique combination of core courses combining human development and family theory with specialization courses, applied research and professional development technical content.

Thirty-four hours are required for completion of the program. This program includes 28 hours of required courses, while 6-9 hours are taken as electives. The variation in the number of electives is dependent upon the student's prior experience and undergraduate education. All students take a core of courses from both NC State and UNC-G. Electives may be taken through either university. Electives include topics such as family environments, applied gerontology and family resource management.

### **Core Content**

- Applications of Theory and Research in Family Studies
- Applications of Theory and Research in Human Development
- Advanced Theories and Principles of Parenting
- Family Life Education
- Family and Community Partnerships
- Program Development and Evaluation
- Methods of Educational Research
- Contemporary Issues in Family Life Education Professional
- Supervised Professional Experience

This program is designed to make coursework accessible to students enrolled at either the University of North Carolina at Greensboro or North Carolina State University. Course delivery methods include on-campus seminar options at both institutions, live teleconference seminar classes, asynchronous Web-based classes, synchronous Internet classes and intensive summer courses.

### **Faculty**

Faculty in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences are generally North Carolina Cooperative Extension specialists supporting the Family and Consumer Sciences Extension program, which includes faculty extension agents located in every North Carolina county plus the Cherokee Reservation. Faculty members teach, conduct research, provide training for Extension agents, represent Extension on state boards and coalitions, manage grant-funded projects and hold the designation of Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE). Faculty members cover the disciplines of Human Development, Foods and Nutrition, Housing and Environmental Health, Leadership and Family Resource Management.

### **Research**

Faculty members in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences are exploring a variety of issues related to families and their well-being. Generally using applied research, faculty are investigating parenting professional practices, best practices in working with particular audiences (such as Latinos, fathers, couples), childhood overweight, energy and the environment, family caregiving for older adults, food safety, quality outdoor learning environments for children, successful aging and mid-life transitions.

### **Admission Process**

Students may apply to the program through either institution via the normal admissions procedures. A joint admissions committee will evaluate all applicants and be responsible for assigning the home institution.

### **Tuition**

Students will receive separate statements from NC State University and UNC-G for the tuition and fees that are associated with classes included in programs of study.

### **Registration and Enrollment**

Students will register for each course through the institution that offers that course. Registration instructions are available on the department Web sites.

### **Participation in Graduation**

Students will have the choice to participate in either or both graduation ceremonies, but the home institution will clear the student for graduation and award the diploma.

### **Career Services**

In addition to faculty advisers who are available to provide information about career and employment opportunities, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Career Services Office is available to assist students and alumni. The Career Services Office provides students with information about summer internships and co-op opportunities in their career fields and assists them in applying for such positions. The Career Services Office also helps students write resumes and polish interview skills. The office arranges on-campus interviews for prospective graduates and publicizes employment opportunities through e-mail and the Web. Alumni are also able to take advantage of these services and are informed about employment prospects through a web site.

### **For more information:**

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