Thank you for considering applying to the graduate program in Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) at Oklahoma State University on the Tulsa campus to work with our excellent faculty. Our graduate program prepares students in the “creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge that enhances the quality of life for individuals and families.” We offer our graduate program on both the Stillwater and Tulsa, OK campuses. Right now, students who live in Tulsa must take a few Ph.D. courses in Stillwater, but a large majority of the required courses are offered on the Tulsa campus. We have many opportunities for research and teaching assistantships in Tulsa. We have a strong history of fully funding our Ph.D. students through assistantships, and travel funding is offered each year for professional development. OSU HDFS faculty in Tulsa bring expertise in human development and family science, sociology, demography, health, and developmental psychology. Our combined perspectives provide students with a wealth of knowledge from various fields.

As your potential mentors, we will strive to provide you with numerous professional development opportunities, including opportunities to work on a variety of research projects. Within the past year, for example, our students have published in numerous journals and books, presented at state and national conferences, and received scholarship awards for their research. Our faculty have received teaching and research awards due in part to recognition of student mentorship and research engagement.

There are wonderful opportunities at OSU in Tulsa, and I encourage you to apply!

Karina Shreffler, Ph.D. Academic Programs Coordinator
HDFS Faculty in Tulsa

Dr. Amanda Sheffield Morris, Regents Professor and George Kaiser Family Foundation Endowed Chair in Child Development. Ph.D. from Temple University in Developmental Psychology

Research Overview

- At the broadest level, my research focuses on understanding contextual influences on children and adolescents’ social and emotional development. Specifically, I am interested in examining effective parenting, and children and adolescents’ emotion regulation and related behaviors.

Current Research Projects

- NIH funded studies of adolescent development and emotion regulation. ABCD study with Laureate Institute for Brain Research, and longitudinal study of adolescent girls.
- ACF funded studies evaluating dual-generational interventions for parents of Head Start children.
- Tulsa Children’s Project: Evaluation and implementation of parenting programs for Tulsa Educare and community families.

Dr. Michael Merten, Professor and Director of the Center for Family Resilience Ph.D. from Iowa State University in Human Development and Family Studies

Research Overview

- My research generally explores community and family factors impacting youth and young adult physical and mental health and development, family risk and resilience in disadvantaged contexts, and experiences of obesity and related health and psychosocial well-being.

Opportunities for Students

- I welcome the opportunity to collaborate with students on research projects that they are passionate about.
- Students will be provided a wide range of opportunities to engage with diverse populations. These opportunities include research and outreach projects through the Center for Family Resilience.

Dr. Karina Shreffler, Professor and Academic Programs Coordinator Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University in Sociology and Demography

Research Overview

- My research focuses on reproductive experiences and outcomes. In particular, I am interested in fertility barriers such as infertility and pregnancy loss; attitudes about parenthood and pregnancy intentions; and mental health and relationship consequences.

Awards, Recognition, and Publications with Students

I actively publish and present with my graduate students, and I nominate them for a variety of awards. Over the past 5 years, these include:

- 17 peer-reviewed publications; 24 papers or poster presentations with graduate student co-authors; 3 winners of the Oklahoma State University Women’s Faculty Council Research Awards (competitive) and 2 recipients of the College of Human Sciences Outstanding Master’s Student Award.

My students are actively engaged in my research projects, including a current NIH-funded study of the intergenerational transmission of maternal adverse childhood experiences.
HDFS Faculty in Tulsa

Dr. Mike Stout, Associate Professor and George Kaiser Family Foundation Endowed Chair in Family and Community Policy
Ph.D. from the Pennsylvania State University in Sociology

Research Overview:
My current research is focused on early childhood disparities in academic achievement, on health disparities and the social determinants of health, and on the use of deliberative dialogue for community problem-solving. I work with communities to understand and address issues in collaboration with local leaders and organizations from the public, private, nonprofit, educational, faith-based, and philanthropic sectors.

Current Projects
- Birth through Eight Strategy Tulsa (BEST) ConnectFirst Program Evaluation, funded by GKFF
- Directing the community engagement and impact core of the NIH-funded Center for Integrative Research on Childhood Adversity (CIRCA)
- St. Francis Hospital and Tulsa Health Department Health Disparities Study to examine barriers and areas of opportunity for improving access to care, chronic care management, and the social determinants of health.

Dr. Ronald Cox, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist; George Kaiser Family Foundation Endowed Chair in Child and Family Resilience and Associate Director of Community Engagement, Center for Family Resilience

Research Overview
As a prevention scientist and extension state specialist, my passion is working with communities to discover solutions for today’s families. Much of my work centers on the common antecedents across several high risk behaviors in Latino adolescents and how to translate this knowledge into interventions that are effective in real-life settings.

Current Projects
- NIH-funded study testing the Unidos Se Puede program that colleagues and I developed to enhance academic performance and reduce drop out and substance use among Latino youth.
- State-funded dissemination of the Co-Parenting for Resilience program designed to ameliorate the impacts of divorce or parental separation on children.
- Validating psychosocial measures for Latino immigrant youth and their parents.
The Center for Family Resilience is a community resource focused on equipping every family to support its members in achieving their fullest personal and social potential. The center translates scientific knowledge about families into strategies that build individual and family resilience. Strategies include individual and family programs administered by local human and social service agencies, and state and national policy recommendations to strengthen families.

**Center for Family Resilience (CFR) Opportunities**

- **Practicums**— Connect with local human service agencies to gain applied experience in the field and explore potential career options.
- **Research**— Participate in the research process. There are many exciting opportunities to design studies, collect and analyze data, and report and disseminate findings.
- **Education**— Attend research seminars or the annual Chautauqua conference and learn new insights from leaders in the field.
- **Outreach**— Get hands on experience working in the community by participating in events such as health and education fairs, continuing education workshops, or the family development credential.

**CFR Events and Projects**

- Annual Chautauqua conferences on Resilience
- Community engagement programs
- Biannual Hispanic Health Fair
- Springer book series on Resilience

**¡Unidos Se Puede! (United We Can!):**

This is a 5-year effectiveness study of a program implemented by community members and funded through a university-community partnership. Unidos develops resilience in Latino youth and their families by targeting parental involvement, academic achievement, life skills, peer affiliations, and family cohesion and communication.

**Good Behavior Game Project:**
The CFR supports Oklahoma Schools in implementing the PAXIS Good Behavior Game in classrooms. The Good Behavior Game teaches students self-regulation, self-control, and self-management to improve academic outcomes as well as decrease substance use, mental health challenges, and bulling behaviors.

**Latino Youth Development in an Agricultural Context:**
The goal of this study is to determine the developmental consequences of exposure to agricultural work for Latino adolescents between the ages of 13-17 in rural Oklahoma. In addition to survey data, various biomarker data has been collected to compare the feasibility of methods and assess the presence of pesticide metabolites in Latino adolescents.

**Tulsa Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy:**
The CFR is the primary evaluator for the organization’s activities aimed to reduce the teen birth rate in Tulsa County. Activities include sexual health education programs in schools and support for teen-friendly reproductive health services in community clinics.
About Tulsa

The Tulsa metropolitan area includes a diverse population of nearly 1 million people. Tulsa is known for its philanthropic endeavors, ranking #1 on the Foundation Center’s list of giving by community foundations ($4.2 billion). Much of the research conducted in the Tulsa area by HDFS faculty and students is in conjunction with community organizations and foundations, particularly through the Center for Family Resilience.

In addition to the rich research possibilities, Tulsa is also a beautiful place to live. It is in the portion of Oklahoma referred to as “Green Country” due to the heavily treed landscape of rolling hills. Tulsa is also known as the Mecca for arts in Oklahoma. Home to many performing arts groups, museums, and festivals, Tulsa’s rich cultural legacy greatly enhances quality of lives. Tulsa ranks #4 among metro areas for best quality of life (Business Facilities, 2010); #2 among U.S. cities for young people to find a job (Fiscal Times, 2012); Top 10 for best music scene (Livability.com, 2012); and #1 for affordable metropolitan cost of living (Council for Community and Economic Research, 2013).

Graduate study in HDFS at OSU: FAQ

1. What application materials do you require?

Applicants must submit an OSU graduate application, transcripts, departmental application form, resume, statement of goals, and 3 recommendation letters. GRE scores are required for the PhD. When you apply, you must select your preference for Tulsa or Stillwater campus.

2. What is the cut-off for GRE scores and GPA?

There is no cut-off; the application as a whole is considered.

3. Is an undergrad degree in HDFS necessary?

No. Many of our students have degrees from other fields, such as Psychology, Education, Sociology, etc.

4. I need financial aid. How does that work?

We have a strong history of fully funding our Ph.D. students with research or teaching assistantships, which include tuition waivers, monthly stipends, and health insurance. Many students also receive scholarships and loans.

5. How long does the program typically take?

Students entering with a bachelor’s degree can obtain a Ph.D. in 5 years. Students entering with a master’s degree typically take 4 years.

6. What kinds of jobs do people get with a Ph.D. in this program?

Most of our graduates work in academia, but others are researchers in non-profit or government agencies.

OSU in Tulsa Research Week © Michael Criss, OSU HDFS faculty member