

California State University, Los Angeles
Department of Child and Family Studies

Master of Arts Degree in Child Development
Policies and Procedures

Program Requirements

General Information

The Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) must be met during your first quarter in the Master of Arts Program. **You will be exempt for this requirement if you are a CSU graduate or have received a score of 41 on the writing portion of the CBEST.** To meet the GWAR, you must register for UNIV 400; details are provided in the schedule of classes published every quarter.

A student may add or delete a course if the request is submitted prior to the quarter when the course will be taken. To make a change in your program plan, seek approval of your Graduate Advisor prior to the completion of any course affected by the change. A substitution may not be made using course work already completed.

No credit will be granted in the Master of Arts Program for coursework completed more than 7 years prior to entrance into the program.

Advancement to Candidacy is a part of the continuing process of review of the student's progress and is not automatic. It is granted by the College of Health and Human Services Associate Dean upon completion of the requirements listed below and upon recommendation of the Department. Advancement to Candidacy is the University's pre-requisite to enrolling for the thesis/project (CHDV 599) or for enrolling in the comprehensive examination (CHDV 596). It is the student's responsibility to apply for Advancement to Candidacy after completing 16 units of approved coursework. Advancement to Candidacy requires:

- i. Classified Graduate Standing
- ii. An approved Master of Arts Program
- iii. Completion of a minimum of 16 quarter units in the program with an overall grade point of 3.0 or above
- iv. Completion of the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)
- v. Submission of an Application for Advancement to Candidacy (Form GS10) to the Graduate Advisor.

Prior to receiving your Master of Arts Degree in Child Development, you must successfully complete one of two options:

1. Comprehensive Examination **OR** Thesis/Project
2. Guidelines for these options are available on the CFS website

Comprehensive Examination

Students should expect to take the comprehensive examination in the quarter following the quarter in which they complete all coursework on their program. If students wish to take the comprehensive exam in the quarter in which they are completing coursework, they must make a formal request in writing to the Graduate Advisor. Students must register to take the comprehensive examination (CHDV 596) and pay the fee at the Cashier's Office.

The comprehensive examination consists of five questions taken from the material covered in the required coursework of the MA program. At least one question will have a research emphasis.

The comprehensive exam is offered during the Fall, Winter and Spring Quarters only. The comprehensive examination is administered in the 7th week of the quarter. A workshop is held once a quarter, usually in the second or third week, to orient students to the comprehensive exam. During the workshop, sample questions are discussed and the evaluation rubrics presented. Students are encouraged to arrange study groups with other students taking the examination.

Thesis or Project

Students desiring to begin the thesis/project option must have met the following criteria:

- Advancement to Candidacy
- Completion of CHDV 508A and B
- Consent of faculty members to act as Chair and reader

Students should only register for 1-2 units of CHDV 599 per quarter. If the thesis/project is completed prior to 6 units of CHDV 599 are actually completed, the student will need to add the number of units necessary to bring the total to 6 units. If a student has registered for 6 units of CHDV 599 and has not completed their thesis/project, they will be required to register for additional units (CHDV 900) in order to complete the thesis. **Please note that you must be registered for units in the quarter in which you file your thesis in the library.**

All thesis students will be required to present their work at the annual MA Symposium held in Spring Quarter.

Difference between theses and projects

A thesis is the outcome of research involving the gathering and analysis of data related to a specific research question in the area of Child Development. A thesis includes the following:

- statement of the problem
- review of the literature
- methods and procedures
- analysis of data
- results
- discussion and conclusions

A project is the development of a 'product' like a manual, a curriculum, a handbook, a storybook, etc, which is needed in the field of Child Development at an applied level. The project is then summarized in a report which included the following:

- statement of the problem
- review of the literature
- pilot-testing of product
- evaluation from two practicing professionals
- discussion of evaluations
- conclusions

Quality of the work accomplished is a major consideration in judging the acceptability of any thesis or project. The finished product must show evidence of originality, appropriate organization, clarity of purpose, critical analysis, and accuracy and completeness of documentation. Projects and theses of former students are available in the library.

Initial selection of the thesis/project option or the comprehensive examination option is made when the official program is developed. A change from one to the other must be made prior to the receipt of a grade. An "RP" Report in Progress is considered a grade in either CHDV 599 or CHDV 596.

Graduate Fieldwork

- A. CHDV 595, Graduate Fieldwork, may be taken after a student has completed CHDV 500, 506, 507, 508A&B. Arrangements for placement, requirements and supervision must be made with the Graduate Advisor. This must be done one quarter prior to registration for CHDV 595.
- B. A minimum of 12 hours per week is required for fieldwork placement for 4 units. Students may choose to take a CHDV 595 in 2 block units. For 2 units, 6 hours minimum per week are required at the field placement.
- C. Students must request appropriate forms for fieldwork from the Graduate Advisor.

- D. Students are required to develop a mutually beneficial of goals and objectives between themselves and their field site supervisor. These goals and objectives must be approved by the Graduate Advisor prior to commencing fieldwork.
- E. Students are required to keep an extensive journal of their fieldwork experiences which includes both reflections and related reading. Journals are to be submitted at mid-term and final period of the quarter.