A Tour of HDFS

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Welcome to the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. We are one of eight departments in the very highly regarded Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services. This college is consistently ranked as one of the very most productive colleges of education in the entire country. Our specific department goes back almost to the beginning of Utah State University as we were originally part of the Home Economics program. Currently we are one of the largest departments on campus with strong programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Due to the diverse programs operating out of the department we are located in five different buildings on campus. The Cooperative Extension faculty are located in FCHD West. With four faculty and 10 staff there are a variety of community outreach programs that are operated out of this building. The building next door (Family Life Center) houses a research lab and the Care About Children (CAC) program. The CAC is funded by the state and they provide an array of supports (training, education, and resources) to child day-care providers throughout the entire state. Both FCHD West and the Family Life Center are located just off campus.

On the south side of the historic quad is the Family Life building. This building was originally built as the student center and is listed on the National Historic Building registry. This building houses the department offices, child development lab, and office space for faculty and graduate students. On the North side of campus we have faculty and staff who operate the Dolores Doré Eccles Center for Early Care and Education. This is the campus day care and it also provides training opportunities for students and a place to perform cutting edge research.

In 2018 the College opened the Sorenson Center for Clinical Excellence. Our department was part of the conceptualization and planning for this building. All of the clinical services in the college are operated out of this state of the art training facility (https://scce.usu.edu/). The variety of programs operating in this building allow people to receive a broad array of services in one location. Specific to our department the Marriage and Family Therapy Program and the Family Financial Counseling program provide training opportunities for students while providing thousands of hours of care for individuals and families in the area.

While the buildings are an impressive part of the department, the real strength comes from the people. A review of the faculty and the projects they are involved in, reveal a very strong research and teaching group who are extremely productive by any measure. The faculty publish in the top journals in their respective fields and many hold (or have held) leadership positions in a variety of professional organizations representing human development, family relations, family therapy, family finance, and extension. The faculty are recognized on a regular basis for their ability to effectively mentor graduate and undergraduate students in a variety of endeavors.

The faculty are able to maintain their productivity because of the high quality students. To become a major, students
need to have a 3.0 grade point average that must be maintained through graduation. This is one of the highest gpa requirements for any department on campus. Students are required to do well both in the classroom and in their applied experiences. As students go through the program there are a variety of labs and other applied projects that help them prepare for a practicum. Students work in a variety of agencies in the area, throughout the state, and a few foreign placements. Altogether, our majors provide over 38,000 hours of community service per year. The students are evaluated and we have consistent feedback on the quality of their performance. This training leads to an excellent placement rate of over 85% of the graduates finding work in their field within a year of graduation.

The graduate students are an equally accomplished group. The masters students have the option of doing a research or applied focus and the training leads to a variety of jobs. The doctoral students are required to publish, teach, and present at national conferences. This training leads to a 100% placement rate upon graduation.

I hope the above information has provided a spark for you to check out our programs and faculty as you pursue your academic career.