Welcome
to the Department of
Family Social Science!

Our mission is to enhance the well-being of diverse families in a changing world through teaching, research, and outreach.

An undergraduate, master’s, or doctoral degree in Family Social Science prepares students to use research to discover and apply knowledge, build communication skills, and develop as lifelong learners and effective leaders.

Our Department is focused on student success and preparing them for careers as researchers, trainers, and providers in such fields as family studies, family and community engagement, family therapy, and family financial studies.

Our faculty are mentors, renowned researchers, and committed teachers who provide students learning opportunities to discover and apply new knowledge through face-to-face, online, and blended courses. We also offer international learning opportunities, community-based internships, and opportunities to join on-going, family research projects headed by faculty.

Following graduation, many students pursue graduate degrees in such fields as couple and family therapy, family studies, multicultural studies, prevention science, social work, and public health.

Family Social Science alumni can be found globally in academic appointments, research institutions, and practice-oriented positions in a multitude of settings including family resource services, community-based social services, faith-based organizations, government agencies, and health care and family wellness settings.

Stacey Horn
Department Head
Professor

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Courses I Teach
FSOS 5701/PREV 8001: Prevention Science: Principles and Practices (face-to-face)

Teaching Philosophy
The primary goal of teaching is to provide learners with the foundation, motivation, and inspiration to seek out new knowledge by discovering solutions to existing and future problems that define their primary area of interest.

What Students Can Expect From Me
FSOS 5701/PREV 8001: Prevention science research addresses the complex neurobiological and psychosocial processes believed to influence the incidence, prevalence, and maintenance of human dysfunctions. This course will examine theoretical, empirical, and practical foundations of prevention science for designing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating strategic interventions to prevent mental, behavioral, and chemical health problems and promote healthy development.
Teaching Philosophy
To create a space in which we can bring academic knowledge, cultural knowledge, and experiential knowledge side-by-side, so that everyone in the classroom environment can work together to spark questions and surface teachings about how to support families from diverse cultural backgrounds and community experiences.

What Students Can Expect From Me
In each of my courses, I invite community teachers into the class to share their knowledge and grassroots perspectives about families and communities.

Community teachers may include cultural elders, youth workers, and staff from community programs. In the service learning courses, students have the opportunity to work with a community based organization, which allows them both to draw important learning from a hands-on experience, and build their professional network.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
While I do not typically have active research projects that graduate students can be a part of, I am happy to meet with students to discuss how community engaged research approaches could enhance their work.

Research interests
Community engagement  |  Interfacing of different cultural knowledge systems, particularly indigenous and traditional knowledge systems with modern western knowledge  |  Community health
Truth and reconciliation as a strategy for healing relationships between communities and institutions  |  European-American cultural identity decolonization

Courses I Teach
FSOS 2107: Preparation for Family and Community Engagement
FSOS 3426/5426: Alcohol and Drugs: Families and Culture
FSOS 4296: Field Experience

Sara Axtell
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Teaching Philosophy
Learning is a collaborative process between the instructor and students, with each bringing their own unique wisdom, experiences, and skills to create a meaningful environment in which everyone gains important new knowledge.

What Students Can Expect From Me
Students who work with me in a research experience can expect to be actively involved in all aspects of the research process. I have an applied research agenda that involves community members across the United States. Students can participate either in project research or the outreach component of the work.

In my teaching, students can expect to be actively engaged in the learning process with the expectation that they will become knowledgeable consumers of the research related to their topics of interest. Together we will explore new ideas and discuss the implications of topics both in today’s world and in their own lives.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
Students have the opportunity to work on a variety of research projects related to children, youth, and families. These projects include data collection and analysis, curriculum development, and development of other outreach materials.
Chalandra Bryant

Professor and Pauline Boss Faculty Fellow in Ambiguous Loss

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Research Interests
Family Processes | Ambiguous Loss | Marital Functioning | Stress | Minority Families | African American Couple Functioning | Health and Health Behaviors | Connections Between Marital Functioning, Health, and Racial Discrimination

Currently Funded Research Projects
• Build and Broaden: Collaborative Research: African American Family Relationship Research through Partnerships with HBCUs.
• RAPID: Economic and Social Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Low Income, Late Middle-Aged African Americans.

Courses I Teach
FSOS 2101-Preparation for Working with Families

Teaching Philosophy
My teaching philosophy is simple: Treat all students fairly. Be flexible. Listen. My mission, as a teacher, is to foster learning, to promote creativity, to inform, and to encourage, and by so doing teach students not necessarily what to think, but how to think and how to critically analyze. My goal is to train them to think for themselves so that when they leave my classroom, they are not simply able to regurgitate theories verbatim, but they are instead able to use those theories as a basis for drawing intelligent conclusions, and perhaps use them as a basis for the development of their own thought-provoking research questions in the future. I urge my students to consider the social context of family relationships, thereby enabling them to better understand factors that have shaped families. One cannot understand the dynamics of interpersonal relationships of families without an understanding of the context in which families are embedded.

What Students Can Expect From Me
I strive to create a safe open space, one in which students are encouraged to share their ideas even if those ideas differ from my own.

Graduate and Undergraduate Research Opportunities
Students working with me are engaged in analyzing data, developing conceptual models, and writing literature reviews.
What Students Can Expect From Me

Students can expect me to create a learning environment that models the methods I teach to promote adult learning and development. This includes facilitating open, respectful dialogue with peers where you can share and reflect on your own and each other’s personal and professional experiences to process course material in a meaningful way. I will also ask you to reflect individually on your own perspectives and experiences in light of this new information and rich dialogue.

Teaching Philosophy

Teaching in higher education is the promotion of adult learning and development, which requires me as the instructor to create a learning environment that is engaging, stimulating, challenging, and responsive so that learning becomes an opportunity for expanding and shifting one’s perspective and practice rather than simply unquestioned knowledge acquisition or reinforcement of prior beliefs and biases.

What Students Can Expect From Me

Students can expect me to create a learning environment that models the methods I teach to promote adult learning and development. This includes facilitating open, respectful dialogue with peers where you can share and reflect on your own and each other’s personal and professional experiences to process course material in a meaningful way. I will also ask you to reflect individually on your own perspectives and experiences in light of this new information and rich dialogue.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities

My research focuses on the design and implementation of parenting education that promotes parent development.
Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities

Currently my faculty appointment is part-time and the work I do with students is primarily with students whose interests overlap with my current research agenda. I can open up local and national opportunities for motivated undergraduates and graduate students.
What Students Can Expect From Me

Students can expect to be actively engaged in research, as a collaborator through all phases of the research process – literature review, IRB, data collection, data analysis, manuscript preparation, and conference presentations. Students interested in outreach and engagement have opportunities to do the work of translating research into practice both to develop resources for parents and research updates for professionals who work with youth and families.

Students meet with me weekly and have the opportunity to build relationships and collaborations with other graduate students. Students should expect to be independent, creative, and thinking critically about our work together.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities

My research and outreach focuses on risk-taking among adolescents and college students, promoting positive family relationships, parenting adolescents and college students, and the role of technology in family relationships.

Students interested in Extension work and translating research into practice have opportunities to develop resources for families and professionals working with families.
Courses I Teach
- FSOS 1201: Human Development in Families: Lifespan
- FSOS 5701/Prev 8001: Prevention Science: Principles and Practices
- FSOS 8550: Advanced Topics in Family Social Science

Teaching Philosophy
Family science should reflect the multiple contexts of influence within which families interact and children develop. Teaching (both inside and outside the classroom) allows me to frame my research in ways that make it relevant to broader communities. In turn, my research informs and enriches my teaching. I challenge students to broaden their understanding of the reciprocal influences of multiple contexts (individual, family, community) in development and adjustment.

What Students Can Expect From Me
Students join a busy but fun lab that conducts ‘team science’ in service of helping families thrive in the wake of stressful events. We have high expectations for commitment and responsibility and we welcome all students who share our curiosity about how families work, and how prevention programs can help strengthen parenting and children’s mental health.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
Undergraduates get a range of experiences in our lab - I am a prevention researcher and have a large team of graduate students, postdocs, and professional staff.

Undergrads get experiences (depending on desire and fit) in any or several of the following: data entry, management, coding of parent-child observations, cleaning of physiological data, assisting the assessment team in the field (providing child activities in families’ homes during assessments), assisting the intervention team (providing child activities while parents are participating in the parenting group), assisting with curriculum modifications and other intervention-related activities, becoming assessment technicians (a paid position), and assisting with literature searches, instrument research, etc.

Research Interests
- Prevention science  |  Prevention and intervention research
- Trauma  |  Resilience  |  Parenting  |  Children’s resilience

Currently Funded Research Projects
- After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools/ADAPT (includes several funded grants)
- Center for Resilient Families
- Ambit Network

Future Research Development
- Widespread Implementation of ADAPT for US military families (active duty and reserve component)
- Prevention research across contexts and cultures to serve families affected by war, political and other violence
What Students Can Expect From Me

Students can expect me to engage them in the questions that I find deeply meaningful, important, and interesting; particularly complex questions with direct implications for the social good and the well-being of individuals and families. With an emphasis on diversity, positive assets, and resilience, my courses require students to apply learning to their own lives or immediate social contexts.

Teaching Philosophy

I am committed to social justice and equity. This is who I am as a teacher, and who I am as a person. Better equipping students to contribute to our multicultural democracy as part of an informed citizenry, and become agents of social change who can think critically, engage in social analysis, and construct new knowledge is at the core of what I do as an educator.

I strive to engage students in a dynamic learning environment in which they can think critically, engage in authentic dialogue, and construct knowledge. Dynamic learning environments fueled by collaborative inquiry have always appealed to me, and these are the types of environments I try to create in the classroom. I consider students active partners in the process of teaching and learning.

To that end, I develop courses that provide opportunities for students to engage in deep, meaningful discussion with me and with each other. My best classes leave me thinking in ways that I have not considered before and asking new questions. By engaging in collaborative inquiry with my students, including and considering the diversity of their ideas, I create space for self-analysis, the exchange of ideas, and the exploration of important social issues in the classroom from diverse perspectives.

Research Interests

Diversity science | Prevention science

Current Research

As an engaged scholar, I want to contribute to the social good and improve the human condition. My areas of interest include Diversity Science and Prevention Science with a focus on African Americans, particularly in educational settings. I seek to promote cultural health and optimal development of those from groups that have been historically disadvantaged. The African American Student Network (AFAM) is the cornerstone of my research.

Courses I Teach

FSOS 2101: Preparation for Working with Families
FSOS 3429: Counseling Skills Practicum I
FSOS 3431: Counseling Skills Practicum II
FSOS 5150: Special Topics: The African American Family
FSOS 8013: Qualitative Family Research Methods
FSOS 8014: Qualitative Family Research Methods II

What Students Can Expect From Me

Students can expect me to engage them in the questions that I find deeply meaningful, important, and interesting; particularly complex questions with direct implications for the social good and the well-being of individuals and families. With an emphasis on diversity, positive assets, and resilience, my courses require students to apply learning to their own lives or immediate social contexts.
Teaching Philosophy
To engage students through active and thought provoking conversation and help them find answers, rooted in research and practice, to questions about family health and relational well being.

What Students Can Expect From Me
FSOS 4104 provides a life cycle view of family life and problems families can face in normative and non-normative transitions.

The focus of the course is directed to those who are about to embark on a career in human services.

FSOS 4110: Introduction to Family Therapy is a hands on course that presents theories that shape the field of marriage and family therapy.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
Most of the undergraduate research opportunities are not part of a class but part of projects that I’m involved in, including The National Divorce Decision Making Project and the Minnesota Couples on the Brink Project.

I am also serving a four year term as editor of the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy that could provide additional opportunities for undergraduate students.
Research interests
Issues of sexual prejudice and bias-motivated harassment among adolescents | Adolescents' reasoning about peer harassment | LGBT students' experiences in schools and communities

Current Research
I'm currently launching two research projects.
1. Parental attitudes about sexuality education and safe school practices related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
2. Teachers as perpetrators of bias-motivated bullying in schools (e.g. racist bullying, anti-gay bullying.)

Future Research
I am exploring research that would investigate school-family-community partnerships to address adolescent health and well-being.

Courses taught
FoS 8200 FSoS Orientation Seminar (Grad Students)
Teaching Philosophy
I believe that learning involves hard work and happens in a supportive, yet challenging environment.

What Students Can Expect From Me
Community: you will learn the names of all of your classmates, which is the first step in building community. Individual work is very important in all of my courses, but understanding the perspectives of your classmates and engaging with them is crucial to our classroom.

Commitment to your academic growth: I believe that learning involves hard work and happens in a supportive, yet challenging environment. Constructive feedback is crucial. I actively work with students to help them develop the necessary skills for our coursework, and for future studies.

This is my 15th year teaching at the University of Minnesota. It is an honor and a privilege to work with students. As a senior teaching specialist, the majority of my work involves teaching. Currently I teach FSOS 1211: An Interdisciplinary Look at Family in Multicultural America, and EDHD1525W: First Year Inquiry.

Both of the classes that I teach involve community engaged learning. In other words, learners work in the community at a variety of sites including schools, libraries, food shelves, shelters for families experiencing homelessness, and more. I am committed to helping learners engage with our community in a way that creates connections and curiosity for more learning and engagement.

I come to teaching from the field of Applied Linguistics. I have a MA in Teaching English as a Second Language—Applied Linguistics. My graduate research focused on the interaction between native and nonnative speakers of English and how miscommunication (due to issues of both language and cultural norms) was or was not repaired (fixed). I continue to be interested in communication and miscommunication between people.
Opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students

Students who are interested in learning more about opportunities in Parent and Family Education are welcome to contact me. Our professional programs will develop your skills to plan, coordinate, and teach in an instructional program that addresses the intellectual, emotional, cultural, social, and physical needs of both parents and children. We offer a certificate, license, and master’s degree.

Beth Magistad
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Teaching Philosophy
To engage learners in ways that build their knowledge and skills to enhance both their professional and personal lives. I use the UMN student development outcomes, the UMN student learning outcomes, and the seven writing abilities desired of students to graduate with a degree in FSOS when I design my syllabus.

What Students Can Expect From Me
My goal is to engage students in course topics so that the topics come alive and can be seen as real and relevant to their personal and professional lives. I strive to help students feel connected to CEHD and to envision the wide range of ways that they can use their college degree as they go out into the world.

Opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students
Students who are interested in learning more about opportunities in Parent and Family Education are welcome to contact me. Our professional programs will develop your skills to plan, coordinate, and teach in an instructional program that addresses the intellectual, emotional, cultural, social, and physical needs of both parents and children. We offer a certificate, license, and master’s degree.

Courses I Teach
FSOS 2103: Family Policy
FSOS 5937: Parent-Child Interaction
FSOS 5942: Diverse Family Experiences
Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
My research focuses on sex and gender minority (SGM) persons with a specific focus on family relationships, mental health, and resilience among transgender youth. Undergraduates can complete special projects or do a thesis, or work on an existing project doing data entry or analyses, data collection, surveys or literature reviews.

Graduate students working with me as research assistants or on thesis or dissertation research, or directed research have a variety of project opportunities. I have collected qualitative data from semi-structured interviews, as well as transcribed hotline phone calls. I also have survey data from a measures development project creating gender measures suitable across the spectrum of gender identity and transition. Finally, I work with the National Center for Gender Spectrum Health (NCGSH) and collaboratively collect data with persons seeking gender affirmative care in that context. Interested students can meet with me and we will discuss together the best learning opportunity for the student.

Illustrative Publications

What Students Can Expect From Me

I have a strong background in theater, and use this to make information come alive through charismatic lectures and storytelling, small- and large- group discussions, and use of technology and media. I encourage students to integrate newfound knowledge into real-life, and then bring their experiences back to the classroom and/or supervision for discussion. Finally, I encourage students to think beyond what I am saying, and to openly challenge me when something does not “fit” with their own experiences (or those with whom they work).

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities

I involve both undergraduates and graduate students in my community-based participatory research (CBPR) that targets diabetes prevention and education in the American Indian community. Students work with me in the collection of data (physiological, knowledge, behavioral, experiential) across both quantitative and qualitative methodologies; they also gain experience in independent and collaborative community presentations and writing (for grants, refereed publications, and lay community publications).
What Students Can Expect From Me
As a practicing Psychologist and Sex Therapist, in all of my classes students can expect opportunities to apply course information to real-life family situations. They can expect opportunities to learn about future career options and support as they move towards professional goals. I hope to serve as a role model and support to students who are interested in pursuing careers in social work, psychology, MFT, or sex therapy. I hope to create classroom experiences that are lively, personally relevant, and extremely interactive.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
I have provided undergraduate students opportunities to pursue individual research projects subsequent to the completion of FSOS 4101. Students have, for example, done academic research on issues related to cross-cultural issues in sexual relationships, technology and sex, sexual dysfunctions and relationships, and other sex-related topics.
Teaching Philosophy
To actively engage learners through the creation of an interactive environment and the stimulation of critical thinking.

Courses I Teach
FSOS 2105: Methods in Family Research
FSOS 4104: Family Psychology
FSOS 5014: Quantitative Family Research Methods I
FSOS 5702/PREV 8002: Prevention Science Research Methodology

What Students Can Expect From Me
Students can expect a dedicated and supportive mentor and teacher. As an instructor, I aim to create an engaging and interactive classroom. I strive to connect classroom content to “real world” applications and encourage critical thinking about each topic. As a graduate student mentor, I utilize a developmental model to help students develop competence in the research process and other areas of their professional development. Students have opportunities to be involved in all aspects of my research, from developing project ideas, engaging with community partners, collecting data from youth and families, to analyzing data and preparing manuscripts for publication.

Research Interests
Prevention science | Child and adolescent conduct problems and substance use | Family-focused prevention programming
Peer relationships and influence | Translational research | Quantitative methods

Currently Funded Research Projects
• The development of a preventive intervention to support mental and chemical health in gender-nonconforming adolescents
• The development of a new intervention for adolescents with co-occurring substance use disorders and mental illness

Future Research Development
• Mechanisms of youth conduct problem prevention
• Mindfulness training as a preventive intervention for youth conduct problems

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Research Interests
Prevention science | Child and adolescent conduct problems and substance use | Family-focused prevention programming
Peer relationships and influence | Translational research | Quantitative methods

Courses I Teach
FSOS 2105: Methods in Family Research
FSOS 4104: Family Psychology
FSOS 5014: Quantitative Family Research Methods I
FSOS 5702/PREV 8002: Prevention Science Research Methodology

Teaching Philosophy
To actively engage learners through the creation of an interactive environment and the stimulation of critical thinking.

What Students Can Expect From Me
Students can expect a dedicated and supportive mentor and teacher. As an instructor, I aim to create an engaging and interactive classroom. I strive to connect classroom content to “real world” applications and encourage critical thinking about each topic. As a graduate student mentor, I utilize a developmental model to help students develop competence in the research process and other areas of their professional development. Students have opportunities to be involved in all aspects of my research, from developing project ideas, engaging with community partners, collecting data from youth and families, to analyzing data and preparing manuscripts for publication.
Teaching Philosophy
I draw from my research on family processes and family economic well-being to present relevant content in simple and meaningful ways and to provide frequent opportunities for relevant demonstration and practice through mentoring, coaching, and self-reflection.

What Students Can Expect from Me
Because students possess diverse knowledge, skills, and experiences, I strive to be flexible and encourage open communication. I challenge students to think critically and defend their positions using material from textbooks, current research, and other sources. I try to make content relevant through activities that allow students to anchor new concepts to prior knowledge, lived experiences, and current events. I encourage students to solve problems creatively, providing a safe environment for exploring alternative approaches.

Research Interests
Financial lives of emerging adults | Managing financial stress | Financial identity and life success | Family financial socialization | Financial behavior and romantic relationships

Currently Funded Research Projects
• Young Adult Autonomy: Risk and Protective Factors from College to Career
• Financial capability among Native college students
• Emerging adults and upheaval due to COVID-19

Future Research Development
• Impact evaluation of after-school financial activity toolkit
• Multinational Study of COVID-19 impacts on emerging adults’ present lives and future dreams

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
As an Extension Specialist, much of my research occurs in diverse communities of learners including youth and families from low income, immigrant and American Indian populations. I actively engage undergraduate students in applied research projects, working with both high school and college students to raise awareness of their money values and to direct them to free resources available to help them manage their finances more effectively. These interactions provide opportunities for students to develop confidence in their own financial ability as they help other students.
Catherine Solheim

Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

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Research Interests
Immigrant and refugee family resettlement and adjustment  |  Families and culture  |  Transnational family systems  |  Ambiguous loss, human ecology, and social justice theories

Currently Funded Research Projects
- Karen refugee family well-being and adaptation
- Cultural adaptations in financial capability education
- Ambiguous loss in transnational families

Courses I Teach
FSOS 4158: Thailand: Global Change, Communities and Families
FSOS 8001: Family Conceptual Frameworks
FSOS 8002: Advanced Family Conceptual Frameworks

Teaching Philosophy
I strive to engage learners to recognize their own perspectives, to be curious about perspectives different than their own, to critically examine culture, ethnicity, race, gender, and social class in family and community contexts, and to embrace discomfort as opportunity for growth.

What Students Can Expect From Me
Students can expect me to challenge them to think for themselves and critically evaluate what they read, hear, observe, and experience. I work to create a learning environment that is intellectually stimulating and challenging, yet personally relevant. As a result, my courses are theoretical and abstract as well as pragmatic and concrete. My scholarly work is guided by my identity as a postmodern social constructivist feminist who seeks to understand the interdependence of individuals, families, and their environments. I am committed to a scholarly agenda that is relevant for families and has the potential to improve their lives, especially for those who are marginalized in societies around the world.

As an advisor, graduate students can expect a relationship that is grounded in mutual respect, collegiality, accountability, and reciprocity. I believe that advising involves more than developing research skills and giving instrumental/technical advice. My approach is to be a mentor who supports and guides students through the ups and downs of their program, to provide space to talk about personal as well as professional issues, and to challenge and hold students accountable.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
Testing a culturally and contextually relevant financial education program for Karen refugees.
Teaching Philosophy
I approach teaching as a collaborative and engaged learning process. I respect and emphasize different ways of “knowing,” and believe developing and refining critical thinking skills is essential.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
Undergraduates can gain research and outreach experience in a range of normative decision making issues affecting elders in the context of intergenerational families.

Graduate students have opportunities to learn and apply family theories, qualitative research skills, and prevention education strategies and translate findings into educational resources. Current projects are in the analyses and writing phases. Later life families are the fastest growing part of the population and having the skills and knowledge to strengthen elder and family well-being will be in demand.

Research Interests
Economic and social well-being of later life families | Elder family financial exploitation | Interpersonal social justice | Inheritance decisions | Long-term care risk management

Currently Funded Research Projects
• Elder Familial Financial Exploitation: Implications for Prevention Education

Ongoing Research-informed Extension Outreach
• Families and [Inheritance: The meaning and experience of “fairness”]
• Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate ™
• Advance Care Planning
• Role and meaning of fairness/justice motives
• North Central Region Aging Network
Susan Walker

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Courses I Teach
FSOS 3105: Families and Technology
FSOS 5937: Parent-Child Interactions
FSOS 5946: Assessment and Evaluation in Parent Education

Teaching Philosophy
To facilitate deeper understanding through learner-centered, critical practice, social engagement, and personal application.

What Students Can Expect From Me
FSOS 3105 uses critical perspectives on our individual use of technology, and influences on personal, intimate and family relationships. Applications for students’ futures as professionals included.

FSOS 5937 develops an understanding of the theory of parent-child relationships, impacts on child and adult development, and application to the delivery of parenting education.

FSOS 5946 prepares practitioners to plan and execute formative and summative evaluations of family education programs.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
With my technology integration research, I have opportunities for students to learn qualitative data coding and analysis and interpretation. In some cases regarding research on parent learning and technology, students have opportunities for observation of parenting education classes and parent-child interaction classes.

And for all projects, students have the opportunity to do literature searching, management, summaries and analysis. Oftentimes, students prepare short reports summarizing research that can be shared with family education practitioners and/or families.

Research Interests
Social context influences on parent learning | Technology integration in non-formal teaching and adult learning | Parenting education and the preparation of parenting and family educators | Family engagement in education

Currently Funded Research Projects
• Parentopia: Design-based implementation research on technology integration for parent learning in nonformal education programs
• Family education practitioners use of technology

Future Research Development
• Continued implementation, testing, and research on integrating technology in group-based programs, and effects on parent social learning, social support, social capital, and network structures as influences on parenting and family-school engagement.

Research Interests
Social context influences on parent learning | Technology integration in non-formal teaching and adult learning | Parenting education and the preparation of parenting and family educators | Family engagement in education

Currently Funded Research Projects
• Parentopia: Design-based implementation research on technology integration for parent learning in nonformal education programs
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Future Research Development
• Continued implementation, testing, and research on integrating technology in group-based programs, and effects on parent social learning, social support, social capital, and network structures as influences on parenting and family-school engagement.

Research Interests
Social context influences on parent learning | Technology integration in non-formal teaching and adult learning | Parenting education and the preparation of parenting and family educators | Family engagement in education

Currently Funded Research Projects
• Parentopia: Design-based implementation research on technology integration for parent learning in nonformal education programs
• Family education practitioners use of technology

Future Research Development
• Continued implementation, testing, and research on integrating technology in group-based programs, and effects on parent social learning, social support, social capital, and network structures as influences on parenting and family-school engagement.
Courses I Teach
- FSOS 4109W: Family Theories
- FSOS 8001: Conceptual Frameworks in the Family
- FSOS 8295: Couple and Family Therapy Practicum

Teaching Philosophy
By encouraging students to be collaborators in the learning process, I believe it not only facilitates a solid understanding of the topic, but also an ability to think critically about a variety of issues.

What Students Can Expect From Me
Students can expect to engage with material and discussion regarding relevant issues facing individuals and families. My courses are interactive and engaging. Students can expect to apply what they’re learning to topics they are passionate about. FSOS 4109W, and FSOS 8001 are professionally relevant for a wide range of majors (i.e. FSoS, Psychology, Nursing, Kinesiology, Public Health, Communications, Youth Studies, Pre-med and more).

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
I offer a wide variety of experiences in research, including data collection (via qualitative and quantitative methods) and data analysis. Students are exposed to Qualtrics, Dedoose, SPSS, and other software programs. Students are trained in their specific project protocol and review IRB and relevant literature.

Students may have specific opportunities such as the following: collaborating with community partners, transcribing qualitative interviews and focus groups, entering and analyzing data via statistical software, creating reports and scholarly posters/manuscripts, and presenting research.

Research Interests
- Prevention science
- Children/adolescent mental health
- Youth mentoring
- Social and community support
- Risk/resilience within the family

Currently Funded Research Projects
- Campus Connections: Therapeutic Mentoring for At-risk Youth
- Fostering Healthy Futures for Maltreated Children
- Autism Mentorship Program
- Caregiver-initiated mentoring

Future Research Development
- Mentoring-based interventions
- Impact of adverse childhood experiences

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Research interests
Improving outcomes for at-risk individuals and families with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) through interventions that include:
• sibling-sibling
• caregiver/parent-child
• teacher-parent-student formats

Currently funded research projects
• Adapting through community based participatory research, “We Can! Building Relationships and Resilience for Parents”
• Investigating the role of parent and sibling visitation on the mental health of youth in child welfare

Future research
• Ways to prevent and mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences on children and families
• Community based participatory process in intervention development

Courses taught
FSOS 4155: Parent Child Relationships

Teaching philosophy
I view teaching similarly to the way that I view therapy. I am there to create a safe environment to enable students to actively engage in their learning process. I provide the structure, and students will get out of the class and the learning activities what they put into the them. My goal is to encourage active involvement, critical thinking, a growth orientation, and self reflection.

What students can expect from me
In classes, students can expect that I want to set them up for success. Much of my planning is around what is most salient for students to get out of the class, what is the best structure to accomplish those goals, and how can the work students do be applied to real world situations they may face.

For graduate students, they can expect that I will meet them where they are at developmentally in their academic journey. Together we will identify their goals and work together to co-create a plan to help them reach their goals. As they work toward their goal, students can expect that I will have high expectations and provide high levels of support.

Graduate/undergraduate research opportunities
I welcome students to reach out if they are interested in the research that I am conducting. Research is a collaborative process and I expect students to be involved in each part.
Zha Blong Xiong

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Research Interests
Child adjustment in the family context in immigrant & refugee families | Community engagement & education | Program development and evaluation | Southeast Asian American families

Current Research Projects
• Teen pregnancy prevention & intervention in the Hmong community
• Social networks & child adjustment
• Hmong early childhood education

Future Research Development
• Social networks, education, and mentoring
• Family social networks and early childhood obesity

Courses I Teach
FSOS 3102: Family Systems and Diversity
FSOS 4108: Understanding and Working with Immigrants and Refugee Families

Teaching Philosophy
Students need to feel connected to the instructor and other students to be motivated to learn.

What Students Can Expect From Me
I believe in creating an environment that supports students personally and professionally.

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities
Undergraduate students can enroll in FSOS 4294: Research Internship, apply for UROP, or volunteer to be part of my research projects. I am currently working on the Hmong Children Longitudinal Study with 10 charter and public schools, examining the role of social networks on achievement gap, and women’s perceptions of divorce in the Hmong community. Students will be able to learn how to review the literature, fill out an IRB application, recruit participants for the various studies, conduct face-to-face interviews, build online surveys, administer surveys to students and parents, and/or use SPSS to enter and analyze data.
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**Research Interests**
- Family financial issues & counseling
- Families & culture
- College students & money management
- Social & human capital
- Economic well-being of the family
- Latino/a families
- Family businesses
- Family resource management

**Currently Funded Research Projects**
- Economic Well-being of Diverse Families Residing in the United States and specifically in Minnesota

**Future Research Development**
- Family financial issues and counseling
- College students and money management
- Economic well-being of the family
- COVID and Economic Adjustments/Financial Anxiety

**Courses I Teach**
- FSOS 2106: Family Resource Management
- FSOS 3101: Personal and Family Finance
- FSOS 4153: Family Financial Counseling

**Teaching Philosophy**
I see myself as a facilitator of knowledge rather than as disseminator of information, which requires a more personal approach to teaching, and places a greater emphasis on one-to-one interactions and small group gatherings inside and outside of the classroom.

**What Students Can Expect From Me**
I consider teaching and learning to be one of the most important aspects of my professional life. I believe that one learns best in a guided experience. Therefore, I believe it is my responsibility to help prepare future scholars by connecting and combining teaching in the classroom with research. My goal is to foster the growth of the students I work with as professionals and support them as they move from their role as a student to that of a professional.

After completing the following two courses FSOS 3101 and FSOS 4153, students can enroll and pay a fee to take the Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC) exam.
- FSOS 3101 focuses on personal and family finances, not corporate or government finances. It is designed to be applicable to the student’s personal life decisions and his/her professional role.
- FSOS 4153 emphasizes the development of professional skills for assisting individuals and families to cope with financial concerns in their day-to-day lives and is designed to increase awareness and knowledge of the characteristics of persons in serious financial difficulties.

**Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunities**
I welcome both undergraduate and graduate students who have an interest in research that focuses on the economic perspective of the family to join my research projects. Students who work with me will be engaged in a variety of activities depending on the research stage of the project. These activities may include literature reviews and searching of research of articles, filling out an IRB application, survey instrument development, survey development using Qualtrics, participant recruitment, participant interviewing, data management, data entry, data analyses, and writing of manuscripts for publications and/or presentations.
Department of Family Social Science
Programs and Degrees

Undergraduate Programs
Bachelor of Science (two concentrations)
  Family & Community Engagement
  Family Therapy
Undergraduate Minor (three concentrations)
  Family & Community Engagement
  Family Therapy
  Family Social Science

Master’s Programs
M.A. in Family Social Science
M.A. in Prevention Science
M.Ed. in Family Education
Graduate Minor in Family Social Science

Professional Programs
Parent Education Certificate
Parent and Family Education Certificate

Doctoral Programs
Ph.D. in Family Social Science (two specializations)
  Family Science
  Couple & Family Therapy
Ph.D. Minor in Prevention Science
Graduate Minor in Family Social Science

More information: z.umn.edu/FSoS

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