Program Review
Planning and Review Committee 2007-08

I. Degree: B.S. Human Development and Family Studies

Program Director: Robin Muza

PRC Consultant(s): Charlie Baird and Heidi Rabeneck

Purpose of the Review: To assess the quality of the BS in Human Development and Family Studies program as part of the seven-year cycle required of all degree programs at UW-Stout.

Committee Findings: The committee recommends continuation of the program for the ongoing seven-year cycle, and that recommendations made by the committee are implemented.

II. Abstract:
The B.S. in Human Development and Family Studies is recognized as a strong contributor to the human services component of UW-Stout’s mission and was recommended for continuation. The review examined the degree and its concentrations; placement, graduate and employer follow-up data; and current student surveys. Since the last program review, the HDFS program received program recognition for the Wisconsin social work equivalency (WI Social Work Training Certificate) and from the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) for the Provisional Certified Family Life Educator Certificate, with both faculty and program committee support. In addition, since the last review, a minor in Human Development Family Studies has been designed and implemented, as well as the master’s program in Home Economics (now Family Studies and Human Development) has also been redesigned to have a specific focus on families and human development. This has been a viable option to inform students about when interested in graduate school.

The HDFS program was found to develop students’ communication skills, public speaking abilities, family advocacy, and prepares students to become competent family study professionals. With strong practicum experiences and quality internships offered, along with a 99% employment rate, the program is well respected by the community. Recommendations from earlier reviews to further identify and communicate specific career options and advocate for broader professional options for graduates has been addressed in a several of the program courses with project work and supplemental materials. The program director is always looking for ways to improve the program and open to suggestions. This role has been at the forefront of the continuing development of this successful program.

Recommendations for further enhancement were supportive of further efforts to reduce what students perceive as unnecessary repetition of overlap of content, look into the expansion of online course offerings to meet some of the distance education demand, and the continued need for additional laboratory space. The need for a review process has also been addressed. After discussion with faculty and the HDFS program committee, a mid-program assessment plan has been approved and is currently in the process of implementation.
III. Process Followed for Current Review:

Following standard PRC procedure, information about the program was gathered from the program director, key instructors, students in the program, advisory committee members, and placement data. The consultants met with the program director to discuss the report’s progress. The program director presented the HDFS report to the full PRC at its February 15, 2008 meeting, and the consultants’ response was provided subsequently.

IV. Previous Review:

Recommendation for the Program Director, Department Chair, and Dean: Further identify, refine and communicate the repertoire of specific career options.

Response: “…Continue and enhance efforts to discuss career options in the Introduction to HDFS (101) and Professional Issues (490) required courses…Emphasize professional opportunities through the UW-Stout student association of the Council on Family Relations…The program director is currently assessing the feasibility of developing an e-card promotion for the program to be distributed to prospective students and professionals…Web-site updates are planned to expand the section related to career options and jobs currently held by graduates…Application will be submitted spring, 2002, for HDFS to be an approved major for the Social Work equivalency process in Wisconsin…Nine of ten courses necessary for designation as a Certified Family Life Educator are currently offered on a regular basis. The tenth course, Family Life Education Programs, will again be offered.”

Consultant’s Summation: To help address this issue in the HDFS 101 class Introduction to HDFS students now receive two publications that list a wide variety of careers and skills needed to attain. In addition through this course students have on D2L a number of career links made available to them. Advisors have also been counseled as to resources available to help with career exploration. In addition the program guide sheet provides links to what have been popular career paths. These would include the WI Social Work Training Certificate and the Provisional Certified Family Life Educator Certificate (program approval for both programs has been established since the last review). In HDFS 490 (senior level) career options are further discussed with now a focus on refining skills and talents for the job search.

Recommendation for the Program Director, Department Chair, and Dean: Enhance opportunities for continuing education and professional development outreach to the community and profession to help maximize career advancement for this constituency.

Response: “…we are discussing development of additional on-line courses (currently two) that could be used for continuing education…continue to promote graduate school following HDFS graduation.”

Consultant’s Summation: Many of the HDFS students will continue their education in graduate school. As part of the advisement process as well as career exploration graduate school is discussed and explored with students. The program director and faculty are discussing the development of additional on-line courses offered in other departments that may fit their continuing educational needs.
Recommendation for the Program Director, Department Chair, and Dean: Advocate for broader, professional options for graduates.

Response: “...Student in Family Impact seminar will continue to learn about advocacy and are socialized to see that as part of their professional role. This is reinforced by having students participate in advocacy behaviors (attend public meetings, write a letter to a public official, etc.)... Faculty do serve as role models to students in their own advocacy work through national professional associate, Wisconsin Family Impact Seminars (educational seminars for Wisconsin legislators and agency personnel on family policy issues), and early brain development education and advocacy... Continue to promote the Women’s Study minor as a viable option with the HDFS program.”

Consultant’s Summation: Students in HDFS 450 Family Policy continue to learn about advocacy and are socialized to see that as a part of their professional role. This is reinforced by having students participate in advocacy roles (attend public meetings; write a letter to a public official, etc.). This experience is further carried over in HDFS 456 Abuse and the Family with the required social action project. Faculty do serve as role models to students as well through their own advocacy work through national and state professional associations as well as community outreach programs. Finally as students may elect either a minor or the concentration, advisors continue to promote the Women’s Study minor.

V. Program Review:

A. Program Strengths:

1. The faculty of the program is knowledgeable, enjoys teaching, are excellent faculty advisers, have good communication skills and have lots of practical field experience to offer in the classroom. (Student Survey, Program Key Instructor Survey, Program Advisory Committee Survey)
2. Great compliments were given for the Program Director, Robin Muza. (Student Survey, Program Key Instructor Survey, Program Advisory Committee Survey)
3. The Program develops student’s communications skills, public speaking abilities, family advocate, and prepares students to become competent family study professionals. (Student Survey, Program Key Instructor Survey)
4. Strong practicum experiences and good on-site supervisors. Quality internships are offered. (Program Key Instructor Survey, Program Advisory Committee Survey)
5. The program is well respected by the community. (Program Advisory Committee Survey)
6. The Placement Summary published by UW-Stout indicated a 99% employment rate for 2005-2006 graduates. (Program Director)
7. Since the last program review, the HDFS program did receive program recognition for the Wisconsin social work equivalency (WI Social Work Training Certificate) and from the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) for the Provisional Certified Family Life Educator Certificate, with both faculty and program committee support. (Program Director)
B. Areas of Concern:

1. Some of the students feel the program has some unnecessary repetition or overlap of content. There were also some areas of content a few students felt were missing. (Student Survey)
2. There is a need to develop a process/policy to review, support, and advise students in their sophomore year regarding their successful continuation in the program. (Student Survey, Program Key Instructor Survey, Program Advisory Committee Survey, Program Director)
3. There are currently no distance educational opportunities being provided. (Program Director)
4. There is a need for additional laboratory space. Laboratory space (Lifespan Center/Intergenerational Development Lab) is needed to provide services and do research related to family education and support, work in the community and services to an aging population. (Program Director)

C. Recommendations for the Program Director

1. The program is currently undergoing a program revision. This includes dropping one course, adding one course, and revising at least two other courses. It is recommended that the Program Director, Program Faculty, Department Chair, and Dean continue to pursue this revision until it is completed. It is also recommended that there be a continual review of courses for possible unnecessary overlap or repetition.
2. The HDFS Mid-Program Review policy is already completed. It is planned to be in use in the spring of 2008. It is recommended that the Program Director ensure that this Mid-Program Review will be implemented in the spring of 2008. It is also recommended that the Program Director review and evaluate the results of this Mid-Program Review in order to see that it is accomplishing what it was designed to do.
3. It is recommended the Program Director working with the Program Faculty, Program Chair, and Dean develop a plan to offer some of the Program’s core courses on an on-line format

D. Recommendations for the Human Development and Family Studies Department and Dean

1. It is recommended that the Dean continue to pursue funding as part of the University of Wisconsin—Stout Campus Physical Development Plan 2007-13 to support the laboratory space needed by this Program.