

School of Undergraduate Studies

Human Development Area of Study Guidelines

Why study human development?

Students of human development gain an understanding of changes across the lifespan and how the social environments we inhabit influence those changes. The study of Human Development enables students to better understand themselves and others, enhances their ability to work with people in various capacities, and prepares them for more advanced study in fields including, but not limited to, the mental health and health-care professions, law, business, education, and nonprofit agencies.

What forms can a degree in human development take?

Developmental change can take a variety of forms such as growth, maturation, loss, impairment, resilience, adaptation and the enrichment of human potential, identity and meaning. Thus, a concentration in human development examines types of change including psychological, social, cognitive, cultural, behavioral, and biological changes, as well as how our social environments influence these changes. Concentrations in human development may focus on the following:

- a particular age group (e.g., early childhood, adolescence, aging),
- a particular population (e.g., women, men, LGBTQ),
- human conditions (e.g., grieving and loss, incarceration, disability, cultural group),
- important themes related to changes (e.g., health, families, cultural differences, spirituality),
- or across the breadth and depth of human ecology (social systems of persons, including family, school, work, community, society, and even nature).

Degrees in Human Development include the following six foundations:

1. Lifespan Development
2. Biological Bases of Development
3. Cognitive Bases of Development
4. Social & Emotional Bases of Development
5. Cultural Diversity
6. Methodology & Ethics

These foundations may be met through transcript credit; college-level knowledge demonstrated through individual prior learning assessment (iPLA), professional learning evaluations (PLE), or credit by examination; or individual courses, a series of courses, or components within individual courses with Empire State College. The student's Degree Plan Rationale Essay should clearly explain how the degree plan meets each of the foundations in the concentration, what will be learned, and how the student will build on these foundations to meet personal, academic, or career goals.

Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS)

For an associate degree, students must address the lifespan development foundation plus three of the remaining foundations.

Associate Degree in Human Development Concentration – Psychology: Students who are interested in psychology may earn an Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree in Human Development with a concentration in Psychology. For this concentration, Introduction to Psychology is a required course, in addition to the required lifespan development foundation. Students would still choose three more of the remaining foundations.

Students should consult the B.A. in Psychology Program to make informed choices about courses in the associate degree in case they continue for the bachelor's degree in psychology.

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science

Students must meet all six of the foundations for a bachelor's degree in Human Development.

Foundation # 1: Lifespan Development

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to describe development (e.g., physical, biological/neural, cognitive, emotional, and social) across the lifespan in relation to theories of human development.

- HUDV 1015: Human Development: Introductory
- HUDV 3025: Human Development: Advanced

Students may learn about lifespan development through a series of developmental courses that cover the whole lifespan (i.e., childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and later life) rather than in one lifespan human development course. This would need to be fully explained in the Degree Program Rationale Essay. Students should consult with their primary mentors.

To cover child development the student may take (pick one):

- HUDV 1005 Child Development: Introductory
- HUDV 3015 Child Development: Advanced
- HUDV 1010 Child and Adolescent Development: Introductory
- HUDV 3020 Child and Adolescent Development: Advanced

To cover adolescent development, students who have not covered it in one of the combined child and adolescent development courses mentioned above may take (pick one):

- HUDV 2005 Adolescent Development: Introductory
- HUDV 3080 Adolescent Development: Advanced

To cover adult development the student may take (pick one):

- HUDV 2015 Adult Development: Introductory
- HUDV 3005 Adult Development: Advanced
- HUDV 2020 Adult Development and Aging: Introductory
- HUDV 3010 Adult Development and Aging: Advanced

To cover the aging years, students who have not covered it in one of the combined adult development and aging courses listed above may take one of the following (pick one):

- HUDV 2010 Gerontology

- PSYC 3115 Psychology of Aging

Foundation # 2: Biological Bases of Development

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to analyze biological influences on emotional, cognitive, and behavioral change over time.

- HUDV 3055: Developmental Neurobiology
- PSYC 2005: Brain & Behavior
- PSYC 3040: Biological Psychology
- BIOL 1002: Human Biology

Students may use a combination of courses to learn about biological processes and how they change over time by learning about development through the major age phases of childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and aging. A series of courses that together cover the whole lifespan would be chosen from the courses listed under Foundation #1 – Lifespan Development. This would need to be fully explained in the Degree Program Rationale Essay. Students should consult with their primary mentors.

Foundation # 3: Cognitive Bases of Development

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to apply primary theories of cognitive development across the lifespan.

- HUDV 3057 Cognitive Development
- PSYC 2025: Educational Psychology: Introductory
- PSYC 3015: Educational Psychology: Advanced
- EDST 4005: Adults as Learners: Theories & Strategies
- EDST 4010: Human Learning: A Developmental Approach

Students may use a combination of courses to learn about cognitive bases of development and how they change over time by learning about development through the major age phases of childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and aging. A series of courses that together cover the whole lifespan would be chosen from the courses listed under Foundation #1 – Lifespan Development. This would need to be fully explained in the Degree Program Rationale Essay. Students should consult with their primary mentors.

Foundation # 4: Social and Emotional Bases of Development

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to analyze intrapersonal and interpersonal processes of normative and non-normative human behavior and development.

- HUDV 2035: Attachment in Early Childhood
- HUDV 3065: Human Exceptionalities
- HUDV 3066: Developmental Psychopathology
- HUDV 3085: Attachment Across the Lifespan
- ECET 4015: Development & Meaning of Play

Students may use a combination of courses to learn about social and emotional bases of development and how they change over time by learning about development through the major age phases of

childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and aging. A series of courses that together cover the whole lifespan would be chosen from the courses listed under Foundation #1 – Lifespan Development. This would need to be fully explained in the Degree Program Rationale Essay. Students should consult with their primary mentors.

Foundation # 5: Cultural Diversity

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to analyze human diversity, including the impact of power, privilege, and oppression on individuals who differ in race, ethnicity, gender, class, socioeconomic status, age, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, and/or ability.

- HUDV 3065: Human Exceptionalities
- HUDV 3075: Western Civilization & Human Development
- HUDV 4010: Development of Gender Identity
- PSYC 3055: Cultural Psychology
- PSYC 4030: Media Psychology
- PSYC 4035: Multicultural Counseling
- ANTH 1010: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- GSST 1005: Introduction to Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies
- GSST 2005: Introduction to LGBTQ+ Studies
- SOCI 2010: Introduction to Race, Class & Gender
- ANTH 3010: Diversity & Cultural Competency
- ANTH 3020: Families in Global Perspective
- ANTH 3030: Immigration Today: Gender & Family
- CHFS 3060: Multicultural Study of Children & Families
- GSST 3030: Sex and Gender in Global Perspective

Foundation # 6: Methodology and Ethics

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to develop ethical research skills for gathering, interpreting, analyzing, and drawing evidence-based conclusions about human development and behavior.

- HUDV 3085 Research Methods for Lifespan Development (formerly HUDV 4020 Research Perspectives on Human Development)
- SOSC 3025: Social Science Research Methods

*Note: Students interested in attending graduate school are strongly encouraged to add a course in Statistics (such as SOSC 2010: Statistics for the Social Sciences), which is usually required for admission to master-level programs in the behavioral sciences (e.g., MSW, MMH).

Students interested in studying psychology at the baccalaureate degree level should consult the B.A. in Psychology Program ([link here](#)). The psychology bachelor's degree is separate from the Human Development Area of Study for students matriculated as of January 1, 2020.