

Department of Human Development and Family Studies

Strategic Plan, 2020- 2025

Mission

The mission of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) at Penn State University is to promote the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through the integration of research, teaching and outreach. The Department is internationally renowned for its long history of engaged scholarship that has applied rigorous empirical methods to explore important developmental and social issues. HDFS faculty are at the forefront of their respective fields in lifespan developmental science, family science, prevention/intervention science, and quantitative developmental methods. HDFS have an outstanding graduate program that has been [ranked # 1](#) in a recent survey of HDFS graduate programs in North America, and an outstanding, highly-ranked in-undergraduate program (<https://www.universities.com/programs/human-development-and-family-studies-degrees>). In the past five years, HDFS has continued to develop and expand our quantitative developmental expertise in the analysis of change across both very brief (e.g., momentary, daily) and longer longitudinal timelines (e.g., years, decades) and how knowledge of micro-processes embedded in a larger longitudinal timeline informs our understanding of development over the long term. We have also continued to develop and expand our expertise in the study of daily stress, daily emotion, daily cognitions, daily experiences, and individual and family health by harnessing and developing new technology that provides real-time, “in-the-moment” information about events as experienced in real time. In addition, in the past five years HDFS has established and grown new areas of focus. These include (a) effects and treatment of child maltreatment, including the implications for developmental outcomes and strategies for treatment and prevention; (b) the science of compassion and human flourishing; (c) costs, benefits, and return on investment of social and health interventions; (d) antecedents, costs, and treatment of individuals and families experiencing substance abuse; and (e) the establishment of a dual-title graduate program in HDFS and Social and Behavioral Neuroscience. Our continuing mission is to serve as a leader in our field and to guide and strengthen the science and education in these areas.

Vision for Department, next 5 years.

Human Development and Family Studies as a discipline continues to evolve. Although our Department is recognized for its leadership and visibility, continued efforts are required to maintain this status in response to new developments in developmental and social science. In addition, we have witnessed and anticipate the departure of key faculty that have played instrumental roles in establishing and defining our Department (Zarit, Greenberg, Collins, Molenaar, Rovine, Emith, Coatsworth, Gest, Crouter, and Stifter). The departure of these pillars have created gaps in expertise and training that we are still filling. In the next five years, we wish to extend our growth in cross-cutting areas that we view as central to our Department’s identity going forward. These include (1) **Promoting Health and Well-Being**, by advancing the understanding of factors that promote or undermine mental health, physical health, and health-risking behaviors such as substance abuse, obesity, and risky sexual behavior; (2) **Diversity and Health Disparities**, reflecting our priorities in studying individuals and families from diverse, under-represented backgrounds (socioeconomic, geographic, cultural, racial, gender, and sexual orientation, including all family designs and parental/caretaker role structures); (3) **Innovative Methods/Design**, supporting the continued development, application, and dissemination of cutting-edge statistical methods and research design that support innovative study of change processes in individuals, couples, families, and communities, the dynamic interplay across levels of analysis, and the evaluation of preventive interventions; (4) **Translating Research into Sustainable Practice**, advancing

our tradition of translating developmental and family science into practice by building on knowledge in dissemination science, school-based intervention, clinical trials research, and capitalizing on our expertise in building community partnerships, consistent with the Penn State Land Grant mission; (5) **Providing Leading Education and Training in HDFS** by making use of College and University-sponsored research-to-practice and research-to-policy initiatives, collaborations with College research centers, such as the Methodology Center, the Center for Healthy Aging, the Center for Healthy Children, the Center for Child Obesity Research, and the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center, engaging in fruitful training opportunities (e.g., NIH T32 training programs) and revising our undergraduate program in HDFS to expand student participation in engaged learning experiences. We view these themes as cross-cutting and integral to all of the strategic research and training goals outlined in this plan.

Goal 1: Lifespan development: Micro-to long-term change. Maintain and build on existing Departmental strengths and expertise in lifespan development, longitudinal change, micro-time scale measurement, and innovative use of technology to invest in theory-informed study of individual and family health and development across the lifespan.

Goal 1.1. Make use of Departmental expertise in micro-process and longitudinal measurement and design to link in-the-moment bidirectional interactional processes with trajectories of developmental change in individuals and families change across macro-time.

Objective 1.1.1. Make use of Departmental expertise in the study of interconnections between levels of analysis (genetic/biological/psychological/family/social/community/cultural/historical/historical) to understand development and change that is adaptive to specific contexts.

Key Performance Indicator: Faculty focus the next 5 years on the study of context-specific development and change across levels of analysis

- a. Metric: Increase in research projects inclusive of this objective, and in # of presentations, publications, and grants across the next 5 years

Objective 1.1.2. Emphasize the study of family process and individual development (adult, child) from the point of family formation/transition onward, attending to the impacts of normative (e.g., first and later-time parenthood, transition to school, “empty nest”, anticipated bereavements, transition of adult roles as children and parents age, intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment) and non-normative events or transitions (e.g., unanticipated loss of a family member, natural disasters, and social and demographic changes), with the goal of contributing to a broader and comprehensive understanding of individual and family development.

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Faculty focus next 5 years on the study of family formation and the impact of normative and non-normative transitions on family and individual development
 - a. Metric: Increase in research projects devoted to these areas, and in # of presentations, publications, and/or grants, across next 5 years

Goal 1.2. Consistently aim to identify factors that are causal to (mal)adaptive development and malleable to intervention.

Objective 1.2.1. Identify risk and protective factors that may be unique to a given context,

event, and/or developmental period and transcendent risk and protective factors more universally applicable.

Key Performance Indicator:

1. Research next 5 years on the identification of risk and resilience factors that are specific to context and that are applicable across context.
 - a. Metric: Increase next 5 years in faculty research projects and research productivity (presentations, papers, grants) relevant to this objective.

Objective 1.2.2. Use this information to contribute to a broader and more comprehensive understanding of individual and family development within and across specific contexts, and to revisit how lifespan development is taught in our graduate and undergraduate curricula with both existing and new courses.

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Faculty-authored integrative papers, reviews, chapters, etc. addressing individual risk, resilience, and family adaptation that address this objective.
2. Generating faculty discussions, in the Department's Program Planning, Development, and Evaluation Committee and more broadly, dedicated to "best practices" in the training of individual and family development in HDFS's graduate and undergraduate degree programs.

Goal 1.3. Hire at least two new tenure-track faculty who can fill important Departmental research and training needs in lifespan development.

Objective 1.3.1. The Department is currently deficient in expertise in the early and middle childhood. Hiring a faculty member with expertise in early/middle childhood, and ideally with expertise that spans more than one developmental period in early/middle childhood, would help remedy this deficiency and be consistent with our Department's overall lifespan focus.

Objective 1.3.2. Adult development and aging training needs in the area of adult caregiving and dementia are conspicuously absent in the Department. Hiring at least one faculty member with a focus in this area would be an important contribution to our expertise and training in adult development and aging and, again, consistent with the Department's lifespan focus.

Objective 1.3.3. Hire a faculty member with expertise in philosophy of science/methods for causal inference, including mediation and mechanistic modeling. Such individual would play an important role in our graduate and undergraduate training programs.

Goal 2: Diversity, social disparities, and family science. Build capacity for elucidating the dynamic interplay of daily, social, and family contexts for understanding proximal risk and protective factors on health and well-being, as well as their cumulative effects across the life course. Socially disparate and diverse groups are broadly defined and can include disparities and resilience relating to social class, race/ethnicity, age, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and special needs.

Goal 2.1. Harness Departmental strengths in innovative intensive longitudinal design, real-time data collection, and access to administrative data sets to advance an understanding of how social and health disparities can specifically impact families and individuals, and to target specific processes for intervention.

Objective 2.1.1. Promote the systematic study of family processes in extremely high risk groups, such as families at risk for child maltreatment, along with identifying individual and family factors related to resiliency.

Key Performance Indicator: Faculty research projects dedicated to carrying out this objective.

Metric: Increases in research projects, papers, chapters, grants, etc., that address this Objective.

Objective 2.1.2 Increase research on the diversity of parental/caregiver roles and family creation, such as families created through foster care, adoption, blended families, sperm and/or egg donors, surrogacy, and reproductive technologies. These family forms are vastly under-represented in family research.

Key Performance indicator: Faculty research projects dedicated to addressing this objective.

Metric: Increases in faculty research projects and productivity pertinent to this objective.

Objective 2.1.3. Carry forward the Department's emphasis on intergenerational/aging issues by expanding efforts beyond the Center for Healthy Aging to collaborate and interject a family focus with the Prevention Research Center, the Social Science Research Institute, and the Child Maltreatment Solutions Network.

Key Performance Indicator: Faculty research that partner with the above centers/networks and seed projects funded by the SSRI.

Metric: Increases in faculty projects that meet this objective.

Goal 2. 2. Weigh in on NIH research priorities to advocate for increased focus on the family as the key contextual influence impacting child health and well-being. This is important in light of the American Psychological Association Division 43's (Couple and Family Psychology) recent critique that very few studies funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development since 2016 focus on family processes that lead to child and adolescent outcomes.

Objective 2.2.1. Incentivize faculty, via re-arrangement of Departmental service obligations and/or course releases, to reach out systematically to NIH branch and program directors and to work and serve with NIH strategic leadership and grant councils to promote expansion of research on family processes and family development.

Objective 2.2.2. Similarly incentivize faculty to partner with and serve in leadership positions in organizations whose mission includes family study (e.g., National Council on Family Relations, Society for Research in Child Development, Society for Research on Adolescence, American Psychological Association) to promote family research at the federal level.

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 2.2.1. and 2.2.2.: Establishment of ongoing meetings between faculty and NIH and between faculty and societies/institutes devoted to the study of families. Faculty with ongoing service assignments in this vein would be incentivized by reductions in Department service and/or a course release for their service.

Goal 2.3. Our Department is currently lacking a family scientist who studies family processes and development from a socio-demographic/cultural lens and in families from diverse backgrounds. Hiring faculty members with this focus would fill a long-standing dearth of expertise in family science and complement existing family science strengths in the Department. Faculty hires who might be considered for such a position include:

Objective 2.3.1. A family scientist who examines the manner in which adverse macro-level factors impact family processes in real time, and factors linked to risk and resilience.

Objective 2.3.2. (Priority: high) A family scientist with specific focus on family formation and family processes in non-SNAP (standard North American families).

Objective 2.3.3. A family scientist with specific focus on risk and resilience among immigrant families.

Goal 3: Maintain and build on existing strengths in prevention/intervention to develop innovative, cutting-edge prevention and intervention programs that target individuals, couples, families, schools, and communities, with emphasis on all stages across the life span, and develop expertise in the area of dissemination and implementation science.

Goal 3.1 Maintain and Expand Critical Content Expertise in Prevention Science with two faculty hires. We will partner with the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center and the Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Supports (EPIS) to pursue two key faculty hires: one in the area of school- or community-based interventions to address a critical gap in our Prevention Science expertise, and one in Dissemination and Implementation Science, to expand our expertise into this growing and critical area in the maturing field of Prevention Science. This goal is consistent with our cross-cutting themes *Translating Research into Sustainable Practice*, and *Promoting Health and Well-Being*. This goal also may create an opportunity to serve the theme around *Cultural Diversity and Health Disparities*.

Objective 3.1.1. We seek to make these hires in the next 2 years in light of the critical needs of our intervention core for expertise in these two areas.

Goal 3.2. Expand Innovative Methods of Surveillance, Intervention Evaluation and Delivery with a new faculty hire. This goal is consistent with our cross-cutting theme *Innovative Methods and Design*. We will focus on promoting expertise in innovative methods relevant to prevention science, such as adaptive “just-in-time” intervention, technology and mHealth, and/or sophisticated factorial designs (e.g., MOST, SMART) guiding intervention evaluations. We seek to hire one new faculty to provide leadership in these methods and to foster collaboration with current faculty projects.

Goal 3.3. Support the Translation of Developmental Theory to Evidence-Based Programs. Consistent with our cross-cutting theme *Translating Research into Sustainable Practice*, HDFS will invest in strengthening ties with the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center, the Center for Healthy Aging, the Center for Healthy Children, and the Center for Childhood Obesity to develop innovative, sustainable, and evidence-based preventive interventions, focusing on minimizing negative sequelae and promoting healthy adaptation among older adults, maltreated children and their families, and substance-abusing individuals and their families.

Objective 3.3.1. Increase faculty prevention/intervention, translational science projects that partner HDFS faculty with the above centers.

Goal 4: Integrate the study of social and behavioral neuroscience into its core areas of individual development, family science, prevention/intervention, and quantitative developmental methods.

Goal 4.1. Extend the study of brain structure and function to earlier (e.g., infancy/very early childhood) and later parts of the life span (older adults) with at least one new faculty hire. Such an expansion would build on HDFS’s existing strengths in the study of brain development and contribute to the burgeoning literature on the role of experience on brain organization in infancy and early childhood. At the older end of the life span, this expansion would reinforce HDFS’s adult development and aging faculty’s focus on “promoting brain health and dementia prevention.”

Objective 4.1.1. Hire a new faculty member who Integrates neuroscience into the study of individuals and families to promote an understanding of the impact of adaptive and maladaptive caregiving (e.g., harsh parenting, child maltreatment) and environmental conditions (e.g., chronic poverty, toxins) on the developing brain and on brain-behavior relationships.

Objective 4.1.2. Integrate neuroscience measurements, focusing on both brain functioning and brain structure, as both proximal and ultimate intervention outcomes and as indicators of social disparity.

Key Performance Indicator: Faculty projects that incorporate the techniques and measurements of neuroscience as a level of analysis in studies of intervention efficacy and of the effects of social disparities.

Metric: Increase in number of faculty research projects and productivity that address this objective.

Goal 5. Strengthen and expand HDFS methods program to become a leader in the emerging field of Behavioral Data Science, integrating cutting-edge computation and data analysis with an understanding of theory and causation to model, predict, and understand individuals/entities in context across timescales and levels of analysis. We aim to revolutionize our conceptions of how behavior and development can be promoted and optimized in real-time and in the context of the systems in which they are embedded.

Goal 5.1: Establish and maintain the identity of HDFS as a field leader in the emerging field of Behavioral Data Science. Goal 1 is precisely in line with existing and ongoing initiatives at the department, college, and university level to ensure that cutting-edge research can continue, both in the development of methods as new technologies for scientific work, and in the application of those technologies to other substantive objectives.

Objective 5.1.1. Develop interpretable machine learning and data analysis methods that can be applied to developmental and longitudinal data in the behavioral and health sciences.

Objective 5.1.2. Encourage the creation and application of computational tools for modeling and testing hypotheses about theoretical causal processes at play in development, family systems, education, and health.

Objective 5.1.3. Generate methods and models that take advantage of high performance computing to examine "big" data sets that span levels of analysis, including genetics/genomics, wearables, ecological self-report, and institutional/population level data,

Objective 5.1.4. Develop new methods that support research design and implementation, including novel paradigms of data collection, new methods of developing, testing, and optimizing interventions, and new approaches to translating the results of scientific analysis into policy and practice.

Objective 5.1.5. Disseminate and apply these new behavioral data science methods through conferences, workshops, and collaborations with researchers in other substantive domains.

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 5.1.1 to 5.1.5: Machine learning, computational, and methodological products that address these five objectives.

Metric: Number of these products developed and an assessment of how, where and to whom they are being distributed, next 5 years.

Goal 5.2: Consistent with the educational mission of the University, College, and Department, expand our graduate education sequence to ensure our students emerge with the skills to be Behavioral Data Scientists. Our department has a strong reputation for providing excellent methods training for graduate students. We will expand this reputation so that our students can be confident that they will leave our department with training as cutting edge Behavioral Data Scientists.

Objective 5.2.1. Seek resources to improve the number and variety of courses available to graduate students in the methods field.

Objective 5.2.2. Update and expand existing coursework to include data science perspectives, techniques, and approaches, including programming and literate computing approaches.

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 5.2.1 and 5.2.2. Relief from Departmental service and teaching obligations, and new/updated methods courses.

Metric: Number of new and or updated methods courses developed, next 5 years.

Goal 5.3. Promote and strengthen the identity of HDFS as a central “clearing house” for the latest innovations in computational systems to social and behavioral scientists outside of Penn State. As data sets become increasingly larger and more common, the ability to manage, track, and harmonize them becomes an issue of greater and greater importance. In addition to being an important concern for the entire field of behavioral and health sciences, this goal again has clear linkages to outside projects (e.g., the Administrative Data Accelerator, IST initiatives for a Virtual Data Collaboratory, and Rock Institute Initiatives on Scientific Ethics (e.g. data privacy)).

Objective 5.3.1. Collaborate to develop and expand resources and platforms that facilitate access to intensive longitudinal data sets and/or linkages with diverse data streams

Objective 5.3.2. Develop software and analysis tools that can process long (e.g. intensive longitudinal) and deep (e.g. administrative) data systems to facilitate the transfer, processing, and analysis of data to researchers and practitioners.

Objective 5.3.3. Develop new frameworks and tools to assist with data management, curation, provenance recording, and harmonization, including their impacts on participant privacy and the reproducibility of the resulting scientific findings.

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 5.3.1 to 5.3.3: Platforms, frameworks, analytic tools, etc. that are produced, next 5 years, and Departmental infrastructure for housing/storing these products as needed.

Objective 5.3.4. Host conferences and workshops to promote the use of our data holdings, encourage additional data sharing, and implement data management and analysis practices.

Objective 5.3.5. Build collaborations in data use and sharing among departments, institutions, and by governmental agencies, and private entities, and with existing data and methodological resources at Penn State (e.g., the Administrative Data Accelerator). In short, we want to be leaders in behavioral data science at the intersection of complex data integration and analysis.

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 5.3.4 and 5.3.5. Record of conferences, workshops, and collaborations established that make use of HDFS expertise in behavioral data science, next 5 years.

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Goal 5.4. To accomplish the vision outlined above, the following resources and hiring are needed:

Objective 5.4.1. Two tenure-track faculty positions for scientists who can lead the respective efforts to accomplish Goals 1, 2, and 3, and to strengthen and maintain HDFS's ongoing leadership in the field, next 12 months

Objective 5.4.2. One open rank faculty position, tenure-track or non-tenure-track, to lead and shape the Methodology Center, next 12 months.

Objective 5.4.3. At least one teaching professor position to assist with teaching to ensure that the methodological core classes and electives can be offered at least while hiring proceeds on other faculty positions, next 12 months.

Objective 5.4.4. One junior faculty position with research interests at the emerging boundary between traditional statistical analysis and computational and data science methodology, next 2 years.

STRATEGIC ISSUES IN HDFS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Goal 6. (Inclusive of in-residence and online HDFS major): to transform HDFS's undergraduate major to become Penn State's "engaged" social science major. HDFS transformation goals are well-aligned with One Penn State 2025 guiding principles 2, 3, and 4.

Goal 6.1. To infuse engaged learning into the curriculum within and outside the classroom. Engaged learning will be infused across major requirements and scaffold towards the capstone internship and include informational interviews, site visits, externships, service learning projects, community partnerships, etc. These experiences should facilitate student-learning, skill-development, and career exploration – and ultimately should better prepare students for transitioning to the workforce (or graduate programs).

Objective 6.1.1. Engage learners through thoughtful design of curriculum and experiences to introduce students to timely, topical, and important issues faced by individuals, families and communities – and build the skills to have a positive impact. Timing: Next 3 years

Key Performance Indicators

1. Re-designed curricula and student experiences that expose them to real-world issues.
Timing: Next 3 years.
2. Skills that contribute to our student's personal well being and professional development, next 3 years.
3. Develop learning outcomes informed by appropriate and relevant disciplinary communities.

Goal 6.2. Scaffold career exploration and development across major requirements. Students should be thinking about and exploring careers early; starting early will allow them greater opportunity to build skills and structure their courses & hands-on experiences to align with career goals. This will help with marketing by sending a strong message connecting HDFS to careers.

Objective 6.2.1. Encourage early meeting with advisors and faculty for this expressed purpose, effective immediately.

Key Performance Indicator: Number of meetings students have for this specific purpose, with staff and faculty advisors.

Goal 6.3. Develop clear career pathways. We will aim to develop guidelines/options to accommodate both generalist and specialized career interests

Objective 6.3.1. Provide clearly articulated and specialized pathways through HDFS and into careers, while maintaining flexible options for students still exploring.

Key Performance Indicators: Areas of emphasis we are exploring include

- Direct Service/Helping Careers (e.g., Social work, counseling)
- Community Services, Organizing & Education (e.g. Youth programs, training, adult ed, ECE, formal and informal educational settings, enrichment programs, etc.)
- Leadership, Management & Administration (e.g. includes HR, non-profit admin, government program admin & policy, fundraising – emphasis on indirect service)
- Health & wellness (e.g. prevention, OT, PT, child life)
- Research: Program evaluation, etc.

Goal 6.4. To accomplish these goals the following resources and hiring are needed:

Objective 6.4.1. Hire teaching track faculty with a focus on developing engaged instruction: The engaged-instruction position will include both classroom instruction with “engagement experiences”, developing and curating opportunities for engagement experiences relevant across the HDFS curriculum, as well as working with other faculty to embed these experiences in their courses. Next 3 years.

Objective 6.4.2. Hire 1-2 additional Teaching Track Faculty: To accommodate expanded offerings to allow for career specialization as well as a goal of expanding our general education portfolio. Instructors should be innovative educators who have generalist appeal, but also specialty niche areas to develop skill-based, career-relevant offerings. Instructional positions should be designed to accommodate both residential and online teaching priorities, development needs, etc. Next 3 years.

Objective 3. Hire teaching track faculty with MSW and PA license. This faculty will contribute to both the teaching of existing human service courses in HDFS, as well as teach social work courses, and develop an online-MSW program (See below). Next 12 months.

Goal 6.5. Replace existing (low value) certificates with more meaningful/valuable curricular packages. We are told that World Campus is interested in proposals for online "programs" that represent smaller ways of packaging curriculum that may appeal to different student audiences (such as people looking for prof development in specific areas, etc.). HDFS will think strategically about our role in this space and explore fitting ideas (Example ideas include child advocacy, gero, trauma-informed practice, and program evaluation, etc.).

WORLD CAMPUS MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Goal 7. As we explore a social work option with the HDFS BS, we also look ahead to launching a MSW program via WC (one that will harmonize/integrate with our HDFS BS to offer reduced time to licensure), but also draw in additional students and offer mass appeal via the online delivery. We look forward to partnering with the College of Health and Human Development and Penn State's University College to develop this online MSW program

GRADUATE PROGRAM

Goal 8. To maintain and promote the quality of our graduate program through outreach efforts, curricula review, and faculty support.

Goal 8.1. Conduct annual outreach to improve recruitment to the doctoral program in key targeted areas.

Objective 8.1.1. Conduct targeted outreach for areas that are emerging as strengths in the department (e.g., social and behavioral neuroscience, child maltreatment) or which are under enrolled (e.g., prevention/intervention). Beginning next admissions cycle.

Objective 8.1.2 Update our data base of undergraduate instructors who have recommended students to us who were accepted and maintain contact, with program updates, with these faculty and encourage them to refer their students to us. Beginning next admissions cycle.

Objective 8.1.3. Make use of existing relationships with faculty at other institutions, and reach out to new faculty, to strengthen our recruitment of qualified students from under-represented backgrounds. Beginning next admissions cycle

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 8.1.1 – 8.1.3. Number of student applicants who apply to affiliate with our dual-title in social and behavioral neuroscience, work with our child maltreatment faculty, and to work with our prevention/intervention faculty.

Metric: Increase number of qualified student applicants who wish to affiliate with these program areas.

Goal 8.2. Continue to review graduate training in our four program core areas and how well it prepares students for both academic and non-academic career paths.

Objective 8.2.1 Review and evaluate graduate course curricula, course content, and course

requirements and sequence in each of the four core areas of our graduate program: Individual development – lifespan, family development, prevention/intervention, and developmental methods. Effective immediately and conducted as needed..

Key Performance Indicators: Reports and recommendations from Program Planning Development and Evaluation Committee on graduate curricular and training issues, and faculty discussions and vote on how to move forward with any changes/improvements/updates.

Objective 8.2.2. Continue to review and evaluate the efficacy of review procedures for graduate students that are conducted annually, and revise as needed.

Key Performance Indicators: Evaluations of current review procedures against actual student performance and progress through the program, with recommendations for change as needed.

Objective 8.2.3. Maintain and extend efforts to collect data from our graduate alumni to assess program success and possible gaps in graduate training after graduation, and to redress gaps accordingly. Much of the data in our current data base is concentrated during the first five years post-graduation but less complete thereafter.

Key Performance Indicators: Frequency of contact and tracking progress of graduate program alumni across their full careers, and maintenance of records to this effect, by a Departmental staff member with dedicated time to this objective. Effective immediately and continued yearly.

Objective 8.2.4. Develop a comprehensive data base of individual graduate student productivity during their time in our program, including peer-reviewed papers, book chapters, and presentations, indicating both student-led and student-coauthored work. Compile these data annually and cumulatively.

Goal 8.3. Partner with the College to identify ways to support HDFS faculty with leadership roles in NIH T32 training programs, and to support the Department's loss of faculty expertise to T32 administration. Three of the College's four graduate student training grants are led by HDFS faculty, which places burdens on HDFS faculty in these leadership roles and moves these faculty away from the Department to service the T32s.

Objective 8.3.1. Obtain a CHHD administrative staff person to support PIs and Directors of T32 grants.

Key performance Indicators. This person would assist with tracking student progress, report writing, facilitate common professional development efforts across the programs to reduce redundancy, and support any other T32 related needs of the various programs.

Objective 8.3.2. Assist HDFS, through course buyouts provided by the College, in replacing faculty expertise missing as a result of T32 involvement that could be used to maintain graduate and undergraduate training.

Diversity Initiatives

Goal 9. Continue ongoing efforts to make diversity a central, rather than peripheral focus, in all activities in HDFS. HDFS honors Penn State's valuing of and commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity, and strives to create a Departmental climate that reflects these values. HDFS views these commitments seriously and seeks to have them reflected in faculty and student research and views them as critical for providing effective teaching and outreach to all people, from all walks of life. This goal is consistent with HDFS's cross-cutting theme, Diversity and Health Disparities.

Goal 9.1. Work with the Department's Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity to hold events (e.g., presentations, workshops) for faculty, students, and staff around issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity, at least one event per semester.

Goal 9.2. Encourage representation of diversity in course content with faculty, and "best practices" in communicating about and teaching course content that deal with topics in diversity.

Objective 9.2.1. During yearly faculty evaluations, check in with each faculty member about what s/he is doing to advance diversity in courses offered and in research.

Key Performance Indicators: Course content dedicated to topics around diversity and inclusion, studying diverse, under-served populations in research projects.

Goal 9.3. Meet regularly with the Department's CIDE to develop and recommend to faculty ways of incorporating and communicating HDFS's valuing of diversity, inclusion, and equity, as, for example, indicating acceptable pronouns in e-mail signature lines, etc.

Goal 9.4. Make diversity a central focus in all Departmental hiring practices, in keeping with Penn State's identification of diversity as a core value of its academic mission and as an indicator of academic excellence.

Objective 9.4.1. Requiring all faculty and staff search committee chairs to attend University-level workshops on hiring practices relating to diversity, inclusion, and equity before the search begins, and strongly encouraging search committee members to do the same.

Key Performance Indicators: Search committee chairs and members who attend these University-level workshops.

Objective 9.4.2. During faculty and staff searches, bringing promising diversity hires to the attention of the Department Head. In addition, doing the same if/when spontaneously

presented with an opportunity to hire a diverse faculty or staff member.

Key Performance Indicator: Faculty from diverse backgrounds who are hired and brought in as tenure-track faculty in our Department.

Goal 9.5. Make diversity a central focus in making offers of admission to prospective graduate students.

Objective 9.5.1. Reach out to faculty at institutions with diverse undergraduate student populations when advertising our program to encourage strong students with HDFS-relevant interests to apply to our program.

Objective 9.5.2. If necessary, and given recent data suggesting the limits of over-valuing GRE scores in predicting graduate student success (Petersen et al., 2018; Sealy et al., 2019), avoid giving GRE scores undue weight when evaluating students for admission to our graduate program. Indeed, more holistic, composite scores that give GREs equal weight along with GPA, research experience, advanced course work or degrees, and paper/publications, appear to be more efficacious in predicting success (Pacheco et al., 2015).

Key Performance Indicators for Objectives 9.5.1 and 9.5.2. Number of students from diverse, under-represented backgrounds who are admitted to our graduate program.