



M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences Non-thesis Project Timeline

The master's project option is designed for students who seek more practical experiences and advanced knowledge in their area of interest and have flexibility in their career options, and are not completing a thesis. M.S. students completing the non-thesis project should follow the additional guidance and procedures in the [HDFS Graduate Student Handbook](#).

Jump to timeline

[Fall 2025](#) | [Winter 2026](#) | [Spring 2026](#) | [Summer 2026](#)

Please note:

- Students completing a project should register for HDFS 868 Research for a total of 6 credits. This can be divided into two different semesters/terms.
- To meet the University's [continuous registration requirement](#), students must be enrolled in at least one course or in sustaining status in each fall and spring semester until the degree is conferred.
- [Graduating students are required to be registered in their graduation semester or term](#). Students graduating in winter or summer should also note that they must be registered in at least one course or in sustaining status.
- [Sustaining status](#) maintains a student's matriculation when the student has completed registration in all required courses needed for the degree. Students in sustaining status are considered full-time. Students whose work extends beyond the semester(s) of HDFS868 registration should register in **UNIV 895 Master's Sustaining: Non-Thesis**.
- Not meeting the deadlines can result in a student's graduation term being delayed, which can cost more in sustaining status fees or course tuition.
- The fee for sustaining status is \$866 for master's students per semester (2025-26 rates).
- See the University's timeline for diplomas and degrees appearing on transcripts: <https://www.udel.edu/academics/registrar/students/degrees-graduation/>.



**M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences
Non-thesis Project Timeline**

**Fall 2025 Graduation
(December 2025 Degree Conferral)**

| Date | Item | Notes |
|--------|---|--|
| Sep 1 | Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair signature | All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellic record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form. |
| Oct 1 | Deadline to submit the project to the committee | This timeline gives the committee two weeks to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point. |
| Oct 15 | Defense should be held by this date | Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee. |
| Oct 31 | Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair | <p>Before submitting to the department chair, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense and submit the updated copy to the department chair. No further signatures beyond the HDFS chair are needed for the non-thesis project.</p> <p>After department chair approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for HDFS 868.</p> |



**M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences
Non-thesis Project Timeline**

**Winter 2026
(February 2026 Degree Conferral)**

| | | |
|--------|--|--|
| Dec 1 | Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/director signature | All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellar record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form. |
| Dec 1 | Deadline to submit the project to the committee | This timeline gives the committee two weeks to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point. |
| Dec 15 | Defense should be held by this date | Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee. |
| Jan 5 | Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair | <p>Before submitting to the department chair, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense and submit the updated copy to the department chair. No further signatures beyond the HDFS chair are needed for the non-thesis project.</p> <p>After department chair approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for HDFS 868.</p> |



**M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences
Non-thesis Project Timeline**

**Spring 2026
(May 2026 Degree Conferral)**

| Date | Item | Notes |
|--------|--|--|
| Feb 1 | Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/director signature | All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellar record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form. |
| Feb 28 | Deadline to submit the project to the committee | This timeline gives the committee two weeks to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point. |
| Mar 15 | Defense should be held by this date | Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee. |
| Apr 1 | Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair | Before submitting to the department chair, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense and submit the updated copy to the department chair. No further signatures beyond the HDFS chair are needed for the non-thesis project. After department chair approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for HDFS 868. |



M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences
Non-thesis Project Timeline

Summer 2026
(August 2026 degree conferral)

| Date | Item | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| Feb 20 This date is earlier than other terms to prepare for Commencement and Hooding ceremonies, get on the email announcement and ticketing lists, etc. | Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/ director signature | All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellar record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form. |
| May 1 | Deadline to submit the project to the committee | This timeline gives the committee two weeks to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point. |
| May 15 | Defense should be held by this date | Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee. |
| Jun 15 | Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair | Before submitting to the department chair, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense and submit the updated copy to the department chair. No further signatures beyond the HDFS chair are needed for the non-thesis project. After department chair approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for HDFS 868. |