

Careers in Human Development



Metropolitan State University of Denver

4th Edition

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Careers in Human Development

The Human Development major is an interdisciplinary major that focuses on the development of individuals across the lifespan. The major prepares students to work with individuals in a broad range of settings, depending upon the track within the major that they choose. However, there are skills that all Human Development majors acquire no matter which concentration they select. These are skills that students can use to build a resume or vitae and that students can discuss in interviews with potential employers. These skills are applicable to jobs in Human Development and related fields, but would also apply to jobs in the legal or business realms.

Skills/Knowledge Acquired as a Human Development Major

1. Theory and Research
2. Communication Skills
3. Observation and Assessment; Problem-Solving
4. Human Relationships
5. Diversity
6. Team Building



1. **Theory and Research:** Students demonstrate understanding of life span changes and major theoretical perspectives in the human development field. Students gain an understanding of the major developmental theories that help to explain changes in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. In addition, students understand how to conduct and evaluate human development research.



2. **Communication:** The human development major requires students to complete both term papers and oral presentations. As a result, students gain excellent communication skills, both oral and written. Communication skills are the most important and sought after quality that employers look for in job candidates.



3. **Observation and Assessment; Problem Solving:** Students understand how to observe human behavior systematically, including skills for identifying and solving problems. Students can assess a situation, determine what kinds of observations need to be made, and then design a plan to conduct those observations. These skills can be used to design programs or interventions for children, adults, or families, to evaluate the effectiveness of such programs. Planning and organizing are skills that emerge from learning about research methods, but they are skills that are beneficial in any job. Someone working in a business setting might use these skills to determine, for example, why sales have gone down or why production is declining in a company.



4. **Knowledge of human relationships:** Students learn about stages and processes of development, but in that context they also learn to understand more about interactions between people. This is a skill that students can use to understand the causes of people's behavior, but also to be able to create change in people's lives. Knowledge of parenting and family relationships, for example, means that students can develop a course for parents that talks about topics such as attachment and parenting styles to help them interact with their children in more effective ways. Or, students might use their knowledge about the struggles and challenges of older people as they retire, experience illness or declining health, or adjust to society's expectations of the aged in working with individuals who are depressed, or in designing interventions or activity programs. In business, these are skills that students can use to manage others in the workplace, or perhaps to improve employee morale.



5. **Knowledge of diversity:** An awareness of how people from different cultures and backgrounds develop is a skill that can be applied to many different kinds of working environments. Whether students are in counseling, social work, or business, the ability to work with people from different backgrounds is essential. It allows students to think about the wider context of human development and to bring that perspective to the task or problem they are faced with in the workplace.



6. **Team Building:** Together, all of the above-mentioned skills help students to work as part of a team—another essential skill no matter where they are employed. Team building and the ability to motivate others are highly desired by most employers.

Human Development Career Options

This list provides students with career ideas but is not all encompassing. The process of deciding on a career is complex and requires time and dedication. Follow your passions and the career decision-making steps listed below for the best career fit. The Office of Career Services at MSU and the Human Development faculty can guide you in your process of determining a career direction.

- **Contact the MSU Office of Career Services** at www.msudenver.edu/career/ or 303-556-3664.
- **The Human Development faculty** contact information and advising hours can be found on the Psychology Department website at www.msudenver.edu/psychology/advising/humandevelopmentadvisinghours/ or by calling 303-556-3205.

Career Decision-Making Steps

1. **Develop Self-Awareness and Understanding** – Investigate your beliefs, interests, values, feelings, abilities, needs, ambitions, successes, life style, etc. Practicum and internship experiences as well as other volunteer and work activities can provide insight into your interests, values, and skills.
2. **Acquire Knowledge of Fields of Study and Careers** - Research different job titles through tools found on the internet and/or at the MSU Office of Career Services and then conduct informational interviews and job shadowing with those in the field. Gaining a closer view of careers can also be accomplished through meetings with Career Counselors or Human Development faculty, career fairs, and participating in practicums, internships, volunteerism and work.
3. **Synthesize Information and Make Choices**: Counselors at the Office of Career Services can assist you in synthesizing information regarding one’s self and the world of work to determine good options.
4. **Develop an Effective Plan for Achieving One’s Goals** - This step involves the development of a plan or strategy for achieving desired career goals and an awareness of options. Work with a career counselor, faculty advisors and professional mentors for guidance.

Career Options By Population

** denotes that this career typically requires a Graduate Degree*

Children:

- **Teaching:**
 - o Teacher Licensure in Early Childhood Education: teaching Preschool- 3rd grade.
 - o Teacher Licensure in Elementary Education: teaching K-6th grade
 - o *Master's Degree in Educational Leadership, Renewal, and Change - Early-Childhood Education endorsement at Colorado State University: 12-month program
- **Child Life Specialist**- Attending to the emotional needs of children and families in hospitals when the child is the patient by providing play therapy and grief counseling. The Child Life Council (CLC) offers certification opportunities.
- **Human Service Organizations** that serve children:
 - o Therapeutic: providing animal, dance, or swim therapy (graduate degree sometimes required)
 - o Enriching: providing educational or fun activities that introduce children to nature, animals, or art and culture: Museums of discovery, farms, parks and recreation, gardens, environmental centers, humane societies, art and cultural organizations, 4-H, etc.
 - o Resourceful: providing helpful resources to children from families who have low-incomes or homeless
 - o International: orphanages, mission organizations, etc.
 - o Residential: adoption agencies, foster-parenting organizations, safe houses, etc.

Youth

- **Human Service Organizations** that serve/mentor youth:
 - o Enriching: providing educational or fun activities for youth to be involved with the community through art, nature, animals, music, etc.
 - o Mentoring/Therapeutic: mentoring for at-risk youth, those who have been sexually-abused, foster youth, teen parents, etc.
 - o Resourceful: providing helpful resources to homeless youth or youth from families with low-incomes
 - o Educational/Training: training youth to enter the workforce, earn their GED, or to gain a skill/craft
- **Law Enforcement and Corrections** -working with juvenile offenders

High School/ College Students:

- ***School and Career Counseling** (graduate degree required)
- **Access programs** such as Upward Bound and other Trio programs that work in partnership with local high schools to encourage high school students at-risk to attend college
- **Student Affairs**- *Working with college students in a variety of areas including Academic Advising, Career Counseling, Admissions, Registrar's Office, Student Financial Services, Advocacy Offices, Housing and Dining Services, and Student Activities (graduate degree typically required)

Adults:

- **Human Services Organizations** that serve adults:
 - o Resourceful: Provide services, activities, housing, food, or other goods to: adults who are homeless, have low incomes, or are in need of housing assistance, disabled, unemployed, widowed, abused, substance abusers, seeking to adopt or foster children, etc.
 - o Educational/Training: training new parents, assisting job seekers, helping prisoners to reintegrate into society

Families

- *Marriage and Family Therapy (graduate degree required)
- Adoption agencies
- Human Services organizations that serve families
 - o Enriching: providing activities and programs that engage the whole family and encourage family interaction; community centers
 - o Resourceful/Training: helping new parents, parents with low-incomes, etc.

Older Adults/Gerontology:

- Providing services and programming for older adults in long-term living facilities, hospitals, and hospice
- **Human Service Organizations** that serve older adults:
 - o Health: providing health/wellness programs, health/personal care, nutritional/personal counseling
 - o Enriching: providing educational or fun activities for older adults
 - o Resourceful: legal guidance, advocacy, providing goods and resources

Special Needs:

- ***Special Education** (graduate degree typically required)
- ***Occupational Therapy**- develop, recover, or maintain the daily living and work skills of patients with a physical, mental or developmental condition
- **Human Service Organizations** that serve individuals with disabilities:
 - o Therapeutic: providing animal, dance, or swim therapy
 - o Enriching: providing educational or fun activities for individuals with disabilities
 - o Resourceful: employing individuals with disabilities, providing goods and resources

Career Options By Interest

Teaching/Training

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education- requires post-bachelor licensure
- *Special Education- requires a graduate degree and/or alternative endorsement
- Teaching English abroad
- Teaching or training adults in the workplace- Student Affairs, Human Resources, Human Service Agencies

Health-Related Professions:

- *Nursing, *Physician Assistant, *Occupational Therapist
- *Speech Pathologist (CSU does not offer the specific prerequisites required for graduate programs)
- Health and Wellness Programs
 - o Organizations that serve those with illnesses: Alzheimer's Association, Breast Cancer Awareness, Leukemia Society, etc.
 - o Organizations involved with the promotion of sexual health

Counseling: the following are typical graduate areas of Human Development alumni

- *Marriage and Family Therapy
- *School and Career Counseling
- Counseling within non-profit organizations for special populations (may require a graduate degree)

Program and Event Planning/Coordinating/ Administration

- Working in Human Service Organizations, medical, religious, or educational institutions- *see careers by population*

Business Related Professions:

- **Public Relations professional**- working with the public and the media to represent an organization and to gain support for certain goals and policies
- **Human Resource professional**- serving as a liaison between employees and managers and often managing the hiring processes
- Owning or managing your own childcare center, non-profit organization, or counseling center

Social Work/ Social Service Agencies: government agencies that provide services around Head Start, adoption, foster care, financial needs, victims of crimes, general welfare, etc. (some agencies require a master's degree or licensure in Social Work)

- ***Caseworker**- aiding people on issues such as domestic violence, food stamps, housing, Medicare, etc.
- ***Counselor**- counseling clients or participants about personal or relationship issues

Law Enforcement and Corrections:

- Probation officers- monitoring and working with offenders to prevent new crimes
- Parole officers- working with people who have been released from prison to reintegrate positively into society
- Community corrections- Counseling offenders and creating rehabilitation plans for offenders to follow when they are no longer in prison

Research:

- Managing patients for clinical trials, performing questionnaires, and writing research studies in medical, educational, or clinical settings

Career Options by Concentration



1. Applied Concentration (HDV 1)

This concentration is designed for students who want to earn a terminal bachelor's degree and work with children/families immediately following graduation. The kinds of jobs that are available for students in this concentration are typically jobs with nonprofit or social service agencies. Some examples are: Girl & Boy Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, residential treatment facilities or group homes, shelters, before and after school programs, programs offered through the United Way, etc. Americorps also has a number of jobs that would be a good fit with this concentration, however, you may need to commit to spending a certain amount of time in the position. Some possible jobs with these types of agencies would be: caseworker, parent educator, working with family assistance programs, recreation programmer for children or adults, working for youth agencies or intervention programs

Although many positions are entry level, with some organizations there is the opportunity to move up within the organization. You may also decide to apply for graduate school, and a position such as those mentioned above can be excellent preparation. Many social service agencies require an MSW (Masters in Social Work) for higher level positions, and many MSW programs require you to have work experience before you apply.

Possible Minors

African American Studies

Art

Chicano Studies

Criminal Justice

Family Support in Social Work

Human Performance & Sport

Human Services

Music

Nonprofit Administration (Certificate program)

Nutrition

Parent Education

Public Administration

Spanish

Theatre

Women's Studies

Websites

Colorado Association of Nonprofit Organizations: <http://www.canpo.org>

Regis University Nonprofit Job Bank:

<http://www.regis.edu/regis.asp?sctn=apg&p1=gp&p2=mn&p3=npjb>

Americorps: <http://www.americorps.gov/>



2. Graduate School Concentration (HDV 2)

In this concentration, the coursework is designed to prepare students to enter a graduate program in psychology, counseling, social work, human development, etc. Most graduate programs are looking for students with a strong foundation in statistics and research methods, so this concentration includes additional coursework in these areas.

We have a booklet in the psychology department that lists graduate schools in Colorado. Most are psychology programs, but there are some listings for counseling and social work programs as well. Most master's programs in psychology and counseling don't require the bachelor's degree to be in psychology. However, there may be certain courses they are looking for, such as abnormal psychology or history and systems, that are not part of the HDV degree. Students might consider a psychology minor in that case.

To search for graduate programs online, consult Peterson's Guide and GradSchools.com (see below). On these sites, you can search for graduate programs based on your area of interest.

Graduate programs in Human Development are seeking students with related coursework at the undergraduate level. These are primarily programs for students who want to conduct research and teach human development courses at the college level. However, some of them include programs in marriage and family therapy and further training in gerontology.

For students interested in graduate programs in social work, the most common degree that students obtain is the MSW (Master's in Social Work). MSW programs typically require a bachelor's degree and work experience that's related to social work. Students interested in an MSW program might consider a minor in Family Support in Social Work, Human Services, or Psychology.

If you plan to apply to graduate school, it is very important that you obtain not only practical or clinical experience, but also additional research experience. Find professors who are conducting research and volunteer to help them with their projects. You can earn course credit (PSY 397x) for serving as a research assistant. Initiate your own research and ask a professor in a related area if he/she would be willing to supervise your project. Look for volunteer or paid positions at other institutions or in the community that involve research. It is also important to seek teaching experience for some graduate programs. PSY 4970, Teaching of Psychology, is a course that provides experience as a teaching assistant for selected students. Contact one of the Human Development advisors for more information.

Possible Minors

Biology
Criminal Justice
Family Support in Social Work
Human Services
Parent Education
Psychology
Sociology
Women's Studies

Websites/Resources

- Human Development, Psychology, or Social Work:
 - Peterson's Graduate Bound: www.petersons.com/graduate_home.asp?path=gr.home
 - GradSchools.com: <http://www.gradschools.com>
- Child/Human Development:
 - Graduate program at Colorado State University: <http://www.hdfs.caahs.colostate.edu/grad/>
 - American Psychological Association, Division 7: <http://apadivisions.org/division-7>
 - Society for Research in Child Development: <http://www.srcd.org/>
 - National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/>
- Psychology and Social Work:
 - Graduate Schools in Colorado (Booklet available in the MSU Denver Psychology Department)
 - American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org/students>
 - Psych Grad: <http://www.psychgrad.org>
 - Council on Social Work Education: <http://www.cswe.org/>
 - National Association of Social Workers: www.socialworkers.org
- Online/Distance graduate programs: <http://distance.gradschools.com/>



3. Gerontology Concentration (HDV 3)

People with a background in gerontology work with older people in a variety of capacities, such as:

Administration—Students would be involved in administering a program or organization that works with older people. This may include managing the day to day operations of the organization, supervising employees, planning and supervising activities, seeking funding opportunities, etc.

Health care/Mental Health care—Students may need additional training in nursing, social work, or counseling if they are interested in providing these services. Some students complete the Hospice volunteer training program, which does not require an additional degree but does require training through a Hospice organization.

Leisure/Recreation—Students may wish to become an activities director at a nursing home or adult day care and be involved in developing and/or supervising activity programs for older adults.

Legal/Policy—Students may be interested in working for various committees and advisory boards that set policies on aging. Graduates may be involved in advocating with or on behalf of older persons before legislative bodies or in institutional settings. Some students become volunteer ombudsmen, and advocate for the rights of older residents in assisted living or nursing homes. If students are interested in pursuing a law degree, there are professionals who provide legal services to the aging.

Research and Teaching—Students may wish to pursue a graduate degree in gerontology and engage in research and teaching involving older persons.

Possible Minors

Art
Biology
Family Support in Social Work
Health Care Management
Holistic Health & Wellness Education
Human Performance & Sport
Human Services
Language & Linguistics
Leisure Services
Music
Nonprofit Administration (Certificate program)
Nutrition
Public Administration
Spanish
Theatre
Women's Studies

Websites

The Gerontological Society of America: <http://www.geron.org>
Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE): <http://www.aghe.org>
Careers in Aging: <http://www.careersinaging.com>
Age Work Career Center: <http://www.agework.com>
American Society on Aging: <http://www.asaging.org>
National Council on Aging: <http://www.ncoa.org>
National Institute on Aging: <http://www.nia.nih.gov>



4. **Early Childhood Education Concentration & Elementary Education Concentration (HDV 4 & HDV 5)**

Students who are pursuing licensure will be involved in job searching through the teacher education department during their student teaching semester. The teacher education department conducts workshops on interviewing and resume writing, and also conducts mock interviews. These are activities that are geared specifically to interviewing with the schools.

Greater Denver Teacher's Fair—This is a two day teaching fair held in the spring each year. Approximately 90 districts and 250 schools are represented. Students sign up for the fair, prepare their resumes, and determine ahead of time what districts they want to talk with. At the fair, students sign up for interview times with the districts they are hoping to work for.

Many students also search for jobs through the Colorado Department of Education website (see below). Individual School Districts and schools also publish job vacancies on their websites, so students can search those as well. Students are also encouraged to make contacts in their field experiences and student teaching that may provide job leads.

There are more applicants for the primary grades (K-3) than for the higher grade levels in elementary school, so students who want to teach at those grades are facing more competition.

For ECE students, there is an added endorsement that you can obtain for your licensure through teacher education. It involves 14 hours of additional coursework plus an additional 105 hours of field experience in the upper elementary grades. If you complete the requirements, you can be licensed for both ECE and Elem. Ed. See the Teacher Education Department for more information.

Possible Minors

Early Childhood Education (Necessary to complete a degree with the HDV 4 concentration in 8 semesters)

Elementary Education (Necessary to complete a degree with the HDV 5 concentration in 8 semesters)

Health & Safety

Human Performance & Sport

Instructional Technology

Language & Linguistics

Nutrition

Parent Education

Reading

Spanish

Special Education

Websites/Resources

Links to many websites regarding careers in early childhood and elementary education can be found on the MSU Denver Career Services webpage for career opportunities under the Teacher Education Program. This website also has information on various types of careers within the education field, such as: Special Education Teacher, Assistant Principal, Librarian, School Counselor, Superintendent, etc.

Colorado Department of Education:

Job opportunities/Job fair announcements: <http://www.TeachinColorado.org>

K-12 Licensure information: http://www.cde.state.co.us/index_license.htm

Greater Denver Teacher's Fair:

<https://m360.co-case.org/ViewEvent.aspx?id=61076&instance=0>

National Association for the Education of Young Children: www.naeyc.org

National Education Association: www.nea.org

Potential Careers with a degree in Human Development

The following are descriptions of possible careers that may be pursued with a degree in Human Development. They are organized by type of degree earned – bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, and doctoral degree. Helpful experience/academic background in various areas is listed in parentheses under each career. (Information adapted from <http://www.uwgb.edu/humdev/careers>).

BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Admissions Officer or Counselor

Assist students and families with the admission process; may conduct interviews, visit high schools, review application materials--Bachelor's Degree and relevant experience may be sufficient for some entry level positions

For more information refer to: <http://www.nacacnet.org/>

Child Life Specialist

Assist hospitalized children and their families

For more information refer to:

<http://www.childlife.org/>

Children's Publishing

Edit, sale, advertise, create art and writing for children's literature. (Business, Education, Literature)

Crisis Center Specialist

Counsel at entry level. ((Certification (on-site training); teen runaways, suicide hotlines).

Early Childhood/ Preschool Teacher

Teach pre-kindergarten education. (Early Childhood Education and experience with preschoolers)

Employment Interviewer/Recruiter

Employee screening & Interviewing. (Psychology, Social Work, Management)

Health Educator

Plan and organize programs. (Health field, Education or Science)

Human Services Worker

Provide supportive, case management, advocacy, or other paraprofessional services in shelters, community agencies, halfway houses, group homes, and similar settings

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos059.htm>

Infant Caregiver

Provide care and education for infants & toddlers. (See Colorado or other state requirements).

Parent Educator

Assist parents of newborns & develop parenting skills. (Nursing).

Parole Officer

Supervise probations and paroles. (Criminal Justice).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos265.htm>

Psychiatric Aide

implement treatment plans. (Counseling, Human Services).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos165.htm>

Research Assistant

Research, compile, and analyze data.

Teacher

State Certification (Elementary, Middle, Secondary) Required

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos069.htm>

Youth Services Worker

Provide services for children or adolescents in residential treatment facilities, group homes, activity centers, or other settings.

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos059.htm>

MASTER'S DEGREE**Administrator**

Manage a business, department or government agency. (Psychology, Human Services, Business, Management)

Admissions Administrator

Coordinate student admission process and programs. Typically requires a Master's degree and college student personnel or higher education and experience.

For more information refer to:

<http://www.naspa.org/>

Adoption Agency Official

Coordinate services for adoptive parents. (Social Work).

Career Consultant

Consult, assess & evaluate student career choices. (Counseling, college student personnel/development or higher education experience in administration, management & program skills).

Case Manager/Social Work/ Child Protective Services

Provide support services. (Counseling, Human Services, Social Work, Vocational Rehabilitation, Management).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos060.htm>

Child Librarian

Organize library programs. (Library Science, Education).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos068.htm>

Children's Public TV

Develop goals and curricula, production and research. (Psychology, Education, Communication).

Coordinator of Special Services/Director of campus activities/ commuter, minority programs/learning skills/orientation/Residence Life/Registrar

Counsel, administrate college student personnel

Correction Counselor/ Probation Officer

Evaluate and coordinate inmate and probation programs (Criminal Justice, Psychology, counseling).

Early Childhood Center/Director

Supervise Day Care programs & staff plan curricula. (Early Childhood Education).

Employee Assistance Program Administrator/Counselor

Coordinate & implement employee support services. (Counseling, Social Work , Psychology).

Gerontology Careers

Includes a wide range of career options from counseling to nursing home administration to health care occupations. (Education and experience requirements vary by occupation).

For more information refer to:

<http://explorehealthcareers.org/en/Field/28/Gerontology>

Human Resources/ Personnel Manager

Oversee employee policies and programs (may include hiring/firing, employee training, benefits, outplacement counseling, etc.). (Business, Management, I/O Psychology, Human Resources).

For more information refer to:

<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos021.htm>

Marriage and Family Therapist

Counsel families, couples, and individuals. (Marriage and Family Therapy degree and license required).

For more information refer to:

http://www.aamft.org/faqs/index_nm.asp

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos067.htm>

Music/Art/Dance Therapist

Develop and implement art-focused treatment programs. (Counseling, Music, Fine Arts, Dance Training &/or Certification).

Occupational Therapist

Assess, develop and implement rehabilitation programs. For more information refer to:

<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos078.htm>

School or Guidance Counselor

Counsel and consult in school setting. (School Counseling degree and certification required).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos067.htm>

School Psychologist

Assess, consult and counsel, (School Psychology degree and state certification required).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos056.htm>

School Social Worker

Coordinate programs between family and school. (Social Work).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos060.htm>

DOCTORAL DEGREE**College/Univ. Administrator**

Coordinate and develop programs. (Student personnel & development or higher education)

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos007.htm>

College/Univ. Professor

Teach and conduct research in addition to service at the college level. (Psychology, Education and Family Studies).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos066.htm>

Counseling Psychologist

Assess, administer psychotherapy, consult, teach, and/or conduct research. (Ph.D. or Psy.D. and license required for clinical practice).

For more information refer to:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos056.htm>

Consultant

Consult and develop programs. (Education, Psychology, Human Services, Management, Business).

Director of Career Planning

Evaluate, test, consult, coordinate programs in career choices. (College Student Personnel/Dev. or Higher Ed. Administration, Management).



Campus Resources:

MSU Denver Office of Career Services

Tivoli Student Union 215, (303) 556-3664

Main website: www.msudenver.edu/career/

MSU Denver Internship Center

1045 Ninth Street Park, (303) 556-3290

<http://www.msudenver.edu/internship/>



Websites of Interest:

Career Information: www.collegegrad.com/careers; www.monster.com/

Occupational Outlook Handbook: www.bls.gov/oco; <http://stats.bls.gov/>

O*NET Dictionary of Occupational Titles: <http://online.onetcenter.org>