Faculty’s research interests cluster in five focal areas:

- Early childhood development, care, and education including social, emotional, and cognitive development in young children, child care, and early childhood education;
- Parent-child relationships;
- Adolescence;
- Close relationships, marriage, and divorce; and
- Human development and family diversity in sociocultural context.

Faculty use a variety of quantitative and qualitative approaches including tests of children’s social and cognitive development, micro-analytic analyses of peer and parent-child interactions, surveys, interviews, feminist methodologies such as photovoice and interpretive inquiry, and the design and evaluation of educational and intervention programs for children, family members, and educational personnel. Within these general areas of concentration and varied methods of inquiry, students focus upon more specific topics of study.

Graduate course work in human development and family studies focuses on individuals and families as they relate to friendship and kinship networks, the workplace, and economic, human service, health, and formal and informal educational systems. Graduate students have considerable flexibility in tailoring their studies to special interests and career goals. The department also offers several graduate programs jointly with the Department of Specialized Education Services: a M.Ed. in Birth-Kindergarten Interdisciplinary Studies in Education and Development; a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Birth-Kindergarten Initial Licensure; and a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Leadership in Infant and Toddler Learning. For information about these programs, see the Birth Through Kindergarten section under Interdisciplinary Programs at https://catalog.uncg.edu/interdisciplinary-programs/birth-kindergarten/.

*These interdisciplinary programs are jointly offered by the Department of Human Development and Family Studies and the Department of Specialized Education Services:
- Birth-Kindergarten Interdisciplinary Studies in Education and Development, M.Ed.
- Birth-Kindergarten Initial Licensure, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate
- Leadership in Infant and Toddler Learning, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate