NON-THESIS MASTERS (MS) DEGREE PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER SCIENCE

Introduction

The Department offers students opportunities to become expert social scientists in areas that interface psychology, communication, management, health economics, and financial planning. The dynamic and integrative discipline of consumer science studies consumer decision-making from a behavioral/attitudinal/ economic perspective. This discipline is at the core of understanding the underlying reasons for individuals, groups, or organizations to make daily choices and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society.¹ Through the learning process, we challenge and stimulate students in building their competencies including critically observing phenomenon, analytically discerning issues, and systematically formulating solutions that are theoretically grounded, evidence-based, and sustainable. The non-thesis option approaches the two concentrations of consumer behavior and family and consumer economics with a more practical and application-oriented curriculum design to prepare students to work successfully in leadership roles to empower consumers to make their own wellbeing a reality. Specifically, the non-thesis option aims to equip students with knowledge and skills applicable across many diverse career fields of business, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and education institutions.

Registration and Course Requirements

Students are required to attain proficiency in core areas in consumer behavior theories, statistical analysis, social science research methodologies, and working knowledge of business, management, and/or strategy. The non-thesis option will build on the current Master’s Program, which recruits students with a bachelor degree in the relevant fields of study, such as business, communication, psychology, education, and health sciences.

Entering students will register for at least six and up to nine hours of courses during the first two semesters. Students should enroll in any course required to demonstrate proficiency plus advanced courses selected for their areas of interest. A roster of such courses will be provided to the graduate advisors. For second year registration,

¹ Consumer Science of University of Wisconsin-Madison; Family and Consumer Sciences of Central Washington University; Family and Consumer Sciences of North Dakota State University; and Consumer Affairs of Texas State University
students should register for courses in their major areas of interest and are required to register CSR 69700 (Non-Thesis Final Paper Course) during their last semester of the program. They should consult with their respective academic advisors for course requirements and suggestions. Each student is required to complete at the minimum of thirty credit units to graduate.

The department will make recommendations to the graduate school for acceptance and/or rejection of the applicants, who meet the minimum admission requirement of the graduate school and CSR for the program, including:

- A baccalaureate degree from a recognized institution
- 3.0 GPA or equivalent for baccalaureate
- GRE or GMAT: subject and exam totals must meet the 50 percentile or higher (Note: It is possible that GRE/GMAT can be waived for applicants with significant leadership/professional experience or an exceptional level of service, i.e. national military service or in government. Cases will be handled on an individual basis in conjunction with the Graduate School).
- Acceptable TOEFL score:
  - Paper-based: 600;
  - Internet-based: 77 (Reading – 19; Listening – 16; Speaking – 22; Writing – 18)
- IELTS (Academic Module) An alternative to TOEFL: minimum score of 7.0
- Pearson Test of English (Academic Module), an alternative to TOEFL: minimum score of 58 or higher
- Transcripts from previous higher education institutions
- Resume
- Statement of Purpose
- Letters of Recommendation

Students will enroll in one of two tracks with the following curriculum:

**Consumer Behavior**
1. CSR 60000 Introduction to Research in Consumer Sciences and Retailing
2. CSR 63100 Consumer Behavior Theories
3. CSR 69500 Behavioral Research Methods
4. CSR 69700 Non-Thesis Final Paper
5. STAT 50100 Experimental Statistics I (or equivalent)
6. STAT 50200 Experimental Statistics II (or equivalent)

**OR**
4. STAT 51100 Statistical Methods
5. STAT 51200 Applied Regression Analysis
6. Electives

**Family and Consumer Economics**
1. CSR 60000 Introduction to Research in Consumer Science
2. CSR 63100 Consumer Behavior Theories
3. CSR 68100 Consumption Theory
4. CSR 68200 Analytical Tools for Consumer Economists
5. CSR 69500 Behavioral Research Methods
6. CSR 69700 Non-Thesis Final Paper
7. STAT 50100 Experimental Statistics I
8. STAT 50200 Experimental Statistics II

OR

6. STAT 51100 Statistical Methods
7. STAT 51200 Applied Regression Analysis
8. Electives

*CSR 69700 is required for all students to take during the last semester of their respective program. The other core courses are recommended and they can be replaced by other courses per the suggestion of the major advisor.

A sample plan of study for the MS in Consumer Behavior:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CSR 60000</td>
<td>Introduction to Research in Consumer Science</td>
<td>STAT 511000</td>
<td>Statistical Methods</td>
<td>CSR 63100</td>
<td>Consumer Behavior Theories</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CSR 69000</td>
<td>Strategy and business modeling</td>
<td>STAT 51200</td>
<td>Applied Regression Analysis</td>
<td>CSR 695000</td>
<td>Behavior Research Design</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>COM 59000</td>
<td>Branding Health Care</td>
<td>PSY 64300</td>
<td>Attitudes &amp; Attitude Change</td>
<td>PSY 68000</td>
<td>Survey of Ind/org Psychology</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>PSY 645000</td>
<td>Social Cognition</td>
<td>CSR 69700</td>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>MGMT 52500</td>
<td>Marketing Analytics</td>
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Total 33

A sample plan of study for the MS in Family and Consumer Economics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<th>Credits</th>
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<td>STAT 511000</td>
<td>Statistical Methods</td>
<td>CSR 63100</td>
<td>Consumer Behavior Theories</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CSR 69000</td>
<td>Analytical Tools for Finance</td>
<td>STAT 51200</td>
<td>Applied Regression Analysis</td>
<td>CSR 695000</td>
<td>Behavior Research Design</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ECON 56200</td>
<td>Econometrics I</td>
<td>CSR 68100</td>
<td>Consumption Theory</td>
<td>MGMT 57100</td>
<td>Data Mining</td>
<td>8</td>
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Program Rationale and Sustainability

The curriculum of consumer behavior and family and consumer economics has evolved in the past decades with the changing market trend to currently encompassing specializations for meeting the diverse and integrated needs of individual consumers, their families, and communities. The non-thesis option is called to respond to the increasing market demand for professionals who are able to solve practical issues in the field in addition to mere epistemological pursuits. The graduates from this option will work mainly in service careers and as volunteers to improve the lives of the people around them. The course work remains similar to what are offered currently but provide more flexibility for students to acquire transferable skills that benefit their career in business, industry, nonprofit organizations, or public services.

*Student demand (enrollment projections)* The anticipated demand is about 50 students per year. However, depending on the staffing and resources available, the actual enrollment will vary.

*Demand for students receiving this degree* Transformation of business environment and technology advancement in the United States and globally have increased the demand for a skilled and educated workforce. In addition, the paradigm of consumerism in all areas has especially created needs for professionals in the field of consumer science. This non-thesis option is designed to fill this gap.

*Learning outcomes* The non-thesis option aims to prepare students for the workforce in business, nonprofit organizations, and public services. The learning outcomes encompass professional skills, critical thinking, communication, problem solving, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, ethics, and technology.
Submitted To: Phillip E. Pope, Senior Associate Dean, Graduate School

Degree Program: Non-thesis Master’s Program in Consumer Science

Academic Unit: Consumer Science

College: Health and Human Sciences

Campus: West Lafayette

_________________________________________       ___________
Signature of Head                              Date
Department of Consumer Science

_________________________________________       ___________
Signature of Academic Dean                     Date
College of Health and Human Sciences