Prevention and Intervention Science, Graduate/Professional Certificate

The doctoral minor and graduate/professional certificate program has three special features:

1. Training emphasizes programmatic efforts that seek to prevent the development of problematic outcomes and to promote optimal functioning in individuals or groups across the life course.
2. Preventive interventions are implemented and evaluated in family, school, and community contexts—their outcome is investigated in interaction within these contexts.
3. Training emphasizes methodological and statistical training and their applications in prevention research. Particular attention is given to the concentrations of interventions in social services, health, and education; family and community studies; social policy; and methodology.

This multidisciplinary program addresses contemporary health and social issues facing at-risk and vulnerable groups across the life course. Participating units are Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education; Educational Psychology; Human Development and Family Studies; Nursing; Population Health Sciences; and Social Work. Training leads to a doctoral minor (Option A) or a graduate/professional certificate in prevention and intervention science.

Requirements

Training Options

Students may earn a doctoral minor OR graduate/professional certificate.

Doctoral students may earn the doctoral minor in prevention and intervention science. The doctoral minor (Option A) in prevention science requires 10 credits in approved courses. It is a named minor that is listed on student transcripts.

Graduate students may earn a graduate/professional certificate in prevention science by completing a total of 16 credits in approved courses. One course must be in methodology. Students can also use a research practicum of 3 credits toward the certificate requirement.

Areas of Concentration

Four areas of concentration are available. Students must select one as a major emphasis.

Interventions in Social Services, Health, and Education

The design, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of a variety of programs in education, health, and social welfare are of high societal priority and are reflected in training. School-based programs are increasingly viewed as key strategies of educational reform. Social service and health delivery to children, families, and adults continue to undergo substantial innovation. The promotion of health and development of individuals and groups with and without special health-care needs also is a focal point of interventions.

Social Policy

This area concerns how social policies and issues affect human and family behavior across the life course. Substantive areas include, among others, child care, poverty, welfare reform, school reform, and health-care reform. An emphasis is given to large-scale policies and programs as well as dissemination and use.

Family and Community Studies

How family and community contexts and processes affect individuals is a key issue for the development and analysis of preventive interventions, and for basic research on families and communities. Family and community-based programs are central to addressing myriad social problems and issues. The relationship between family development and other major social contexts such as neighborhoods, communities, and service systems also are important.

Methodology

An ever-expanding number of quantitative and qualitative methods are available for conducting prevention research. Basic and advanced statistical and methodological training are essential to high-quality graduate training. Gaining understanding and experience in conducting research in field settings is key to developing methodological skills. Some topics to be covered in training include structural equation modeling, hierarchical linear modeling, growth curve modeling, and ethnography.

Courses

Two courses in prevention science, a practicum, and approved elective courses are required of students seeking the doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate. It is recommended that the two courses in prevention science be taken in the second year of a student’s graduate program after introductory courses in theory and a substantive area have been taken in the student’s home department.

- Prevention Science (ED PSYCH/HDFS/NURSING/SOC WORK 880, 3 cr)
  This course provides an interdisciplinary overview to prevention theory, research, and practice. A common core of concepts, methods, and terminology is presented. Among the topics covered are evidence based prevention science, theories and concepts, intervention development and testing, communities as partners, response to intervention, cost benefit analyses, and registries of prevention programs. A risk and protective factors framework is prominent and applied to individuals, families, and groups. This course is typically offered during the fall semester.
- Capstone Seminar in Prevention Science (ED PSYCH/HDFS/NURSING/SOC WORK 881, 1 cr)
  Participating and interested faculty, scholars, and professionals discuss their work as well as emerging issues in the field. This biweekly two-hour brown bag introduces students to faculty in other departments and professionals in the community. This course, typically offered each spring, should be taken after completing 880, the prevention science course, and at or near the end of the minor program.
- Practicum
  Students must participate in a prevention-related research project (practicum) with university faculty as part of the training program.
The practicum will result in the completion of a product (e.g., evaluation or intervention report, program or training manual) associated with one of the four concentration areas. This project provides opportunities to apply prevention concepts, methods, and approaches to important educational, health, or social issues and problems. The practicum can be used to supplement the student’s educational program without course credit or can be taken for 1–3 research credits that count toward satisfying the requirements of the minor or certificate program.

On-campus institutes that are likely to provide training experiences for the practicum and for student research include the Institute on Aging, Waisman Center on Mental Retardation and Human Development, Institute for Research on Poverty, and Wisconsin Center for Educational Research.

• Elective Courses

Students should select two to four additional courses in one of the areas of concentration. Examples of courses that meet the requirements of the minor and certificate program are listed below. Courses required for a student’s major area of study may be counted toward the certificate program but not the doctoral minor. Other courses can be recommended by students or faculty and are subject to approval of the program faculty.

ADMISSIONS

Application information for the doctoral minor and graduate/professional certificate are available online (see Web site). Completed applications must be signed by faculty advisors and submitted to Carol Aspinwall, Coordinator of Doctoral Student Academic Services, School of Nursing, CSC K6/133, 600 Highland Ave, Madison, WI 53792; caaspinwall@wisc.edu.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Carter (Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education), Albers (Educational Psychology), Magnuson (Social Work), Riesch (Nursing), Sparks (Human Development and Family Studies)