Developmental Science

Department Information

- **Department Head:**
  Joel Hektner, Ph.D.

- **Interim Graduate Coordinator:**
  Melissa O'Connor, Ph.D.

- **Email:**
  melissa.oconnor@ndsu.edu

- **Department Location:**
  Evelyn Morrow Lebedeff Hall

- **Department Phone:**
  (701) 231-8268

- **Department Web Site:**
  [www.ndsu.edu/hdfs/graduate_studies/ds/](http://www.ndsu.edu/hdfs/graduate_studies/ds/)

- **Application Deadline:**
  February 1

- **Credential Offered:**
  Ph.D.

- **English Proficiency Requirements:**
  TOEFL ibT 100 (subscores of at least 24 for speaking and 21 for writing); IELTS 7; Duolinger 125

Core Faculty

**Sean Brotherson, Ph.D.**
Oregon State University, 2000
Research Interests: Parenting and Fatherhood; Healthy Marriages; Family Stress; Rural Families; Grief and Bereavement; Family Life Education; Family Policy

**James E. Deal, Ph.D.**
University of Georgia, 1987
Research Interests: Personality Development in Children; Relationship Between Individual Development and Family Relationships

**Heather Fuller, Ph.D.**
University of Michigan, 2009
Research Interests: Social Relationships Across the Lifespan (e.g. Intergenerational Relationships); Successful Aging and Health Promotion; Aging in Rural and Cross-cultural Contexts; Aging Families and Caregiving; Aging-in-Place, Survey Research and Program Evaluation

**Joel Hektner, Ph.D.**
University of Chicago, 1996
Research Interests: Prevention Programs For Children with Adjustment Problems; Peer Affiliation Patterns and Peer Influences on Children’s Behaviors; Family and School Conditions That Facilitate Optimal Experiences (Flow) and Optimal Development; Social Emotional Learning; Program Evaluation; The Experience Sampling Method

**Melissa Lunsman O'Connor, Ph.D.**
University of South Florida, 2010
Research Interests: Cognitive and Functional Aging in Healthy and Clinical Populations; Older Drivers; Research Methods; Attitudes toward Dementia

**Leanna McWood, PhD.**
Auburn University, 2020
Research Interests: Extracurricular Involvement; Social Relationships; Contextual Influences; Sleep; Adolescent Development

**Wen Wang, Ph.D.**
Michigan State University, 2018
Research Interests: How culture and ethnicity shape parenting; Socialization of children’s mastery motivation in at-risk families
Affiliated Faculty within HDFS

Carrie Johnson, Ph.D.
Iowa State University, 2012
Research Interests: Personal Finance for Low-Income and Under-served Populations; Financial Education Impact; Student Loan Debt; Program Delivery Methods and Evaluation; Behavioral Finance across the Lifespan

Christi McGeorge, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota, 2005
Research Interests: Heterosexism and Homophobia; Single Parenting; Women's History; Gender Socialization From a Feminist Perspective

Meagan Scott Hoffman, Ph.D.
Oklahoma State University, 2016
Research Interests: Understanding How Changing Trends in Society Influence Youth; Afterschool Training; Positive Youth Development; Professional Development Methods to Better Meet the Needs of 4-H Staff

Affiliated Faculty outside of HDFS

Ben Balas, Ph.D.,
Psychology

Sarah Boonstoppel, Ph.D.,
Political Science

Erin Conwell, Ph.D.,
Psychology

Britt Heidinger, Ph.D.,
Biological Sciences

Brent Hill, Ph.D.,
Education

Andrea Huseth-Zosel, Ph.D.,
Public Health

Linda Langley, Ph.D.,
Psychology

Carrie Ann Platt, Ph.D.,
Communication

Susan Ray-Degges, Ph.D.,
Apparel, Design and Hospitality Management

Kevin Thompson, Ph.D.,
Criminal Justice and Political Science

Rachelle Vettern, Ph.D.,
Center for 4-H Youth Development