



Department Of Consumer Science  
University Of Wisconsin

*PhD in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics*

The Ph.D. program in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics develops scholars able to apply social science theories to understanding household and consumer interactions within the marketplace and the public sector. Students undertake research on consumer decision-making affecting the social and economic well-being of individuals and families. This is a multi-disciplinary degree program. The goal of this program is to prepare students for the following types of job placements:

1. Tenure-track academic faculty positions, primarily in other schools of human ecology, consumer science or related units
2. Research administration positions in government, non-tenure academic units, nonprofit organizations, think tanks and related entities
3. Applied consumer research in the public and private sector, including market research, policy research and consulting.

This Ph.D. program emphasizes applied, quantitative methods, policy applications and a balance of teaching and research, including extensive work with undergraduate students. The goal is to prepare students who can be successful in teaching and research careers.

**What Makes This Program Unique?**

- In-depth skills and training for professional researchers, including:
  - Empirical methods, experimental methods and causal inference
  - Analysis of major public datasets as well as administrative data
  - Understanding of consumer and household well-being theories and applications
  - Understanding of decision-making theories and models
- An emphasis on applications and applied research for strategy and policymaking in the public and private sectors
- Access to the extensive courses, faculty, resources and expertise of disciplinary departments and centers across the UW-Madison campus
- The potential for an intensive, four-year time to degree
- The ability to develop disciplinary or field sub-specialties, certificates and minor

designations

- A focus on teaching, teaching experiences, outreach and presenting findings for the public
- An emphasis on publication and dissemination of research as a graduate student, including support to attend professional conferences
- Access to facilities including a behavioral decision making lab, high quality statistics servers and unique datasets
- Opportunities to conduct research with centers and institutes across campus
- Multi-year funding available, including tuition and stipends
- A small program with approximately 6 students admitted and 20 students total

*Program Milestones*

Working with the student, the advisor determines if and when the student is prepared to complete each of five program “milestones”:

1. Preliminary Exam
2. Field Paper
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Teaching Fellowship (teaching as a Lecturer SA)
5. Dissertation Defense

For more information, see the *Graduate Student Handbook*.