

## UNIVERSITY WITHOUT WALLS SAMPLE INDIVIDUALIZED CONCENTRATIONS 2008-2009

UWW advisors will work with students to develop individualized degrees in the following areas, by drawing on the students' earlier courses, experiential learning, training, and new courses to be taken after matriculation in UWW. Unless the concentration is marked by an asterisk, sufficient upper division courses related to the field are reliably offered through UMass Amherst Continuing & Professional Education at times or in a format convenient to working adults.

---

**Early Care and Education** – The study of the developmental stages – including the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical domains - that children proceed through from birth to age five, and of the best approaches to teaching and caring for these children. The early care and education curriculum needs to address, at a minimum, the following skills in a developmentally appropriate way: self-help, social, literacy and numeracy. In addition, educators must have a background in individual and classroom behavior management strategies, multicultural education and differentiated instruction.

**Out of School Time Education** – The study of how to determine learning needs, design and facilitate learning activities, develop educational materials, assess learning outcomes, and manage the process of educating children and youth in before-school, after-school, and vacation programs. To accomplish these goals, one must draw on knowledge and experience in education (e.g. methods and materials, classroom management) and in other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology.

**Arts Education\*** – The study of how to determine learning needs, design and facilitate learning activities, develop relevant materials to support this process, assess learning outcomes, and manage the process of fostering creativity and providing opportunities for artistic expression through both school and community-based programming. A particular focus of this field is often on encouraging schools to include the arts in their curriculum through working in partnership with non-profit organizations in their communities. This concentration usually requires a background in the arts and knowledge in education and other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology.

**Environmental Education\*** – The study of how to determine learning needs, design and facilitate learning activities, develop relevant materials to support this process, assess learning outcomes, and manage the process of promoting awareness of environmental issues that affect the air, water, earth, and biosphere. The emphasis is on investigating global processes and cycles with the aim of preventing or rectifying environmental problems that threaten the planet. To accomplish these goals, one draws on the fields of environmental studies and education and may include studies in psychology, sociology or other disciplines.

**Adult and Higher Education\*** – The study of how adults develop and learn in higher education and other formal, informal and non-formal contexts. These contexts might be the workplace, community groups, and social and political movements. This concentration usually includes the areas of adult development, psychology, and sociology. Other relevant areas of study may include experiential learning, incidental learning, action learning, transformative learning, and critical thinking in adulthood.

**Alternative/Non-formal Education\*** – Alternative/Non-formal Education is the study of forms of education that take place outside of formal settings, such as schools or workplaces. Alternative or non-formal education is not compulsory, does not lead to formal certification, and is learner-centered/controlled. This concentration usually includes the study of the learning process, experiential and other forms of out-of-classroom learning, and the relationship between these forms of learning and formal education.

**Studies in Human Services**—Human services is the set of occupations that provide personal and social support to individuals and families who need temporary or long-term support due to disability, temporary social circumstances such as homelessness, or stage of life, such as old age. Studies in Human Services may focus on academic coursework in areas such as psychology, sociology, education and management. Learning in this area is concerned with the causes and interventions for human service needs, the social context within which supports are provided, and management of the non-profit agencies that typically provide human services.

**Human Services Administration**—The study of the theoretical and practical aspects of management of an organization that provides human services supports. Areas of learning include the management of finance, human resources, operations, as well as facility management. Study in these areas takes into account the nonprofit, state-funded, and highly regulated environment within which human services organizations typically operate. Coursework relevant to this area may draw from areas such as management, organizational dynamics, public policy, and leadership studies.

**Developmental Disabilities**--The study of the psychological and social causes of developmental disabilities, and of the various ways in which individuals with developmental disabilities are educated, rehabilitated, and supported in our society. This study may consider the social and political context within which developmentally disabled persons are supported, as well as policy or management issues related to the funding for and delivery of supports. Components of study may include psychology, sociology, education, management, and public policy.

**Mental Health Studies**—The study of the causes, prevention, and treatment of the various forms of mental illness. Learning in this area explores the issues involved in creating integrated systems to provide the needed services, supports and safeguards to individuals with psychiatric disabilities, their families, and the broader community. Theoretical learning may be developed in course work in psychology and sociology, to complement practical experience in providing a knowledge base for professional work in this field.

**Counseling in the Human Services**--The study of the theory and practice of counseling as a therapeutic intervention to address the needs of the various populations who receive support in the human services. Learning in this area may include knowledge specific to child counseling, family counseling, as well as counseling for mental illness, substance abuse, and various disabilities. Course work in fields such as psychology and sociology provides knowledge of the social and personal causes and context of individual and family distress and disability, as well as the specialized methodologies that guide counseling as an intervention and as a profession.

**Criminal Justice**--The study of the legal and judicial system, and how it operates through the fields of law enforcement, the courts, and the corrections system. Studies in this area focus on the social and legal context within which crimes are committed, criminals are adjudicated, and incarceration and prisoner rehabilitation occur. Learning in the theoretical and practical aspects of this area is achieved through coursework in areas such as legal studies, sociology, and psychology, with specializations in forensics and the uses of technology in the criminal justice field.

**Family Supports**—The study of theoretical and practical knowledge about the social and psychological dynamics of families and about how dysfunctional families may be supported through professional intervention. Formal coursework in areas such as sociology, psychology, and legal studies provides theoretical knowledge in areas such as family counseling, social stresses on the family, parenting education, domestic violence, child custody, and the impact of substance abuse, illness and disability on the family.

**Child and Youth Services**—The study of the theoretical and practical aspects of social supports provided to children and adolescents with social-emotional and behavioral dysfunctionality. Social supports and interventions in this area may occur through the schools, the criminal justice system, medical providers, or through family and community supports, and often through a combination of these. Formal studies in areas such as sociology, education, psychology, and legal studies provides knowledge relevant to this field.

**Elder Care**—The study of the broad range of medical, social and spiritual needs of persons in old age, and how individual and social supports can address these needs. This area will be comprised by studies in human development, the sociology of aging, family and community dynamics, and public policy in the areas of funding for elder supports, retirement security, and health insurance. Coursework in areas such as sociology, human development, psychology and public policy provides theoretical and practical knowledge in this area of concentration.

**Public Policy Issues in Human Services**—The study of the broad range of public policy that impacts on the provision of human services. Public Policy includes the statutory and regulatory context within which public funding and supports are provided to such human services recipients as persons with disabilities, substance abuse survivors, the homeless, youth offenders, as well as child and elder care. Knowledge relevant to this area is gained from the study of policy formed at all levels of government, whether through legislative or judicial actions, and is achieved through coursework in areas such as sociology, political science, and public policy.

**Substance Abuse**—The study of the personal, social and biological causes of substance abuse and addiction, its impact on the lives of individuals and their community, and the various treatments and interventions that can be provided. Learning in areas such as psychology, sociology, biology, and legal studies provides knowledge relevant to the forces that cause and shape substance abuse, and to the treatment of substance abuse through medical, social, and legal interventions.

**Human Services Advocacy**—The study of the theory and practice of providing advice and counseling to the various populations that are the recipients of human services, to insure that they are aware of, and enabled to receive, those social benefits that they are entitled to. Advocacy effort may take the form of working directly with individuals or working within the political and social community on behalf of large groups. Human service advocacy requires knowledge about the social and personal causes that create the need for social supports, knowledge about organizational dynamics and effective communication, political systems, and the regulatory context of human services. Knowledge in this area is provided through coursework in areas such as sociology, communication, media studies, psychology, and public policy.

**Health Advocacy**—The study of the principles and frameworks that inform an individual or community advocacy strategy to improve health. Academic components can include coursework in political science, health, communication, sociology, psychology, intercultural studies and public policy.

**Health Administration**—The application of management and administrative skills in healthcare organizations and communities. Academic components can include coursework in management, business, health, legal studies and public policy.

**Health Policy**—The study of the bureaucratic and administrative processes supporting the research, implementation, advocacy and reform of government policy surrounding health issues. Academic components can include coursework in management, business, public policy, research methods, legal studies and health.

**Health Communication**—The study of interpersonal and/or media strategies for improving health practices among communities and/or individuals. Academic components can include coursework in media studies, communication, psychology, sociology, intercultural studies, anthropology and health.

**Health Education and Promotion**—The study of behavioral and/or communication strategies that will promote new health behaviors among individuals and/or communities. Academic components can include coursework in media studies, communication, psychology, sociology, intercultural studies, anthropology health, education, advertising and management.

**Health Care Research**—The study of the effectiveness of various health care treatments and the procedures and ethics involved in clinical research trials. Depending on the focus, this concentration may include related knowledge in the areas of public health or nursing, statistics, ethics, sociology, and information systems.

**Alternative/Complementary/Holistic Health**—The study of cultural and societal health practices other than the Western, biomedical model of healthcare. Academic components can include coursework in psychology, sociology, intercultural studies, anthropology, health, education, history and biology. Students in this field often bring outside education and training in various alternative health care modalities into this concentration.

**Journalism Studies**—The study of the theory and practice of various kinds of journalism—including writing, reporting, photo journalism, and multi-media journalism such as blogs—and the impact of journalism on public opinion and public policy. This concentration generally includes courses in journalism and writing, but may also include study in a wide range of areas such as history, sociology, communication, etc.

**Public Relations**—The study of how to communicate with various sectors of the public (e.g. customers, potential customers, prospects, voters, fans, etc.) in order to influence their attitudes and opinions in the interest of promoting a person, product, organization, or idea. This concentration may include courses in journalism, psychology, marketing, sociology, communication and media studies.

**Business Studies**—The study of the generic processes that support for profit and non-profit organizations in the attempt to move products, resources and services to the marketplace. The understanding of basic management, leadership, economic, organizational, administrative, customer, employee, ethics and technological elements are of concern. This concentration includes a variety of components in psychology, business, economics and human resources.

**Organizational Studies**—The exploration of the structures, behaviors, and interactions that exist within and between organizations—profit, non-profit, governmental, and volunteer. This is a broad area of investigation that includes the study of how to utilize an organization's material and human resources, how to evaluate both an organization's performance and its potential opportunities, how to communicate information about an organization and its products to customers and potential customers, and how to develop organizations and change them in response to changing environments and conditions.

**Marketing and Sales**—The study of communicating information about an organization, its products, and its services to customers, potential customers the public at large. This area of study can include marketing research, customer service and sales techniques, advertising, and media.

**Organizational Leadership Studies**—The study of organizing and deploying the resources of an organization effectively and efficiently. This concentration can include the study of management and leadership theory, the similarities and differences between management and leadership, issues of authority and power, organizational and interpersonal communications, and organizational behavior.

**Non-Profit Administration**—The study of the special conditions that characterize management and leadership in non-profit organizations. This concentration adds to a broad overview of management and leadership theory an investigation of the public policy, human resources, legal, and community relations issues that are commonly encountered in non-profit organizations.

**Labor and Employee Relations**—The study of the relationships between management and employees in both unionized and non-unionized organizations. The areas of collective bargaining, employee empowerment, conflict resolution, and organizational communication are usually included in this concentration.

**Human Resource Development**—The study of how to utilize the human resources of an organization effectively and efficiently. Within this concentration are the traditional HR areas (e.g. compensation administration, personnel management) and emerging fields, such as employee assistance and counseling, career counseling, and workforce education and training, may also be included.

**Information Systems Administration**—The study of the role of information technology in an organization and the development and administration of information systems. This concentration usually includes the study of information technology, the fundamental principles of management and leadership, and issues of employee training and organizational change that often accompany the introduction of new technology in an organization.

**Business Operations**—Often referred to as Supply Chain Management today, this concentration is the study of designing new and improving existing production processes to utilize both material and human resources efficiently. This concentration usually includes an understanding of production and inventory control, material requirement planning, and the fundamental principles of management and leadership.

**Arts Administration**—The study of how the principles of management and leadership may be applied to arts organizations and arts programming and events. In addition to the study of these principles, this concentration usually requires an understanding of the creative process, program development in the arts, fundraising, financial management, and arts education.

**Team and Project Development**—The study of organizing and managing projects within an organization. Because projects in large organizations today often cut across several departments and organizational cultures, this concentration often includes an understanding of organizational communication, organizational cultures, diversity in the workplace, and conflict resolution, in addition to the fundamental principles of management and leadership. This concentration may also have an Information Technology component.

**Hospitality Administration**—The study of the application of management and leadership principles to the special environments and conditions of the hospitality field. In addition to an understanding of basic management and leadership principles, this concentration requires exposure to and experience in specific areas of hospitality (e.g. travel and tourism, food service, hotel administration).

**Accounting and Finance**—The study of the financial and accounting systems employed by both large organizations and small businesses and the relationship of those systems to organizational structures and managerial decision making processes. Information technology, accounting, and finance are usually important components of this concentration, and the concentration also includes an overview of management and leadership theory.

**Writing for the Media**—The study of the theory and practices of writing for various print, broadcast, and electronic media. This concentration would have a strong focus in developing writing skills and achieving an understanding of the demands of the different media, such as the web, television, film, theater.

\*Most courses relevant to these Concentrations are offered only in the day division at UMass Amherst. Many are graduate level courses which UWW students may take with the instructor's permission.