



big IDEA's

family FINANCIAL PLANNING

NDSU

A publication of the North Dakota State University Great Plains IDEA *Family* FINANCIAL PLANNING Program

SUMMER 2010



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Development & Family
Science

Hello again everyone! I hope that this 2nd edition of the Great Plains IDEA Family Financial Planning Newsletter finds everyone happy and healthy in 2010. Welcome to the newest edition of our newsletter! In this issue, we will continue some popular features such as providing more about the faculty members and a focused article concerning graduate student issues; along with introducing new segments of speaking with recent gradu-

ates of the program to gain some valuable insight from those who are where we all hope to be one day.

As a refresher, "Big IDEA's" was conceived as a forum for information sharing between graduate students, program faculty, and practicing professionals. The goal is to provide you with knowledge to be an outstanding graduate student as well as to offer quality preparation materials and insight to become a successful professional. We will strive to give you the best information possible concerning important NDSU, Great Plains IDEA, Family Financial Planning program, and general financial planning industry news and trends. If you would like to see any specific type of features or type of information for future issues, please do not hesitate to let me know at jessejurgenson@hotmail.com

All the best!
Jesse B. Jurgenson, NDSU Graduate Assistant



Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance

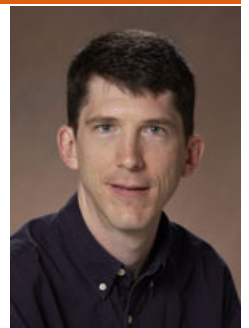
Great Plains IDEA FFP *Instructors*

Within the Great Plains IDEA FFP program, it may be more difficult to gain a personal connection with your Instructors given the online format. NDSU wants you to feel comfortable to contact your Instructors at anytime with questions, concerns, or comments. I have asked a few questions to the NDSU faculty who work with the FFP program in an effort to learn more about the people behind the titles.

Joel Hektner, Ph.D.

Dr. Hektner is the Graduate Coordinator for the NDSU department of Human Development and Family Science. Although he does not teach within the FFP program, his role is to collect and process graduate student applications for admission into all of the department's graduate programs- including the FFP program. He will be the main contact for any questions relating to applications and admission.

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What is the most wonderful thing that ever happened to you?

The birth of my children, who are now age 5 and 7.

Describe your first home as a young married couple.

We were both graduate students and didn't have a lot of money. We lived in a suburb bordering Chicago. The landlord had the heat on only during the season he was legally required to, Oct. 1 to April 15. If it got cold in late April, you were cold. We had our car stolen from the parking lot right outside our window. It was found by the police later but had been totaled.

What does real success in life mean to you?

Enjoyment of life and being engaged in something larger than yourself that makes a positive difference in the lives of others. Being happy.

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Greg Sanders, Ph.D.

Greg Sanders is a Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Science and the Associate Dean for the College of Human Development and Education. Greg has been active in the Great Plains IDEA since the early years of the group and serves as the NDSU representative to the Human Sciences Academic Board. He is currently the Chair of the Human Sciences Academic Board. As a board member, Greg has served as the board liaison to both the Family Financial Planning and Gerontology Great Plains IDEA programs. For a number of years, he also taught Family Systems for the FFP program.



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Describe how people dressed when you were a child?

Except for the school dress and hair code, we did our best to be hippies.

What was your favorite hiding place as a child?

Under the sink next to the heater.

What is your greatest joy?

Of course my two grandchildren. After them, I would have to say creating things—whether it is song writing, woodturning or blacksmithing.

What would you like to be remembered for?

That I helped people accomplish their life goals.

Jim Deal, Ph.D.

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How were children expected to behave?

Definitely “Be seen and not heard”!

What was your most embarrassing moment?

In 10th grade French class my teacher asked a question, in French, that I didn’t understand. My best friend whispered an answer that I foolishly used. The teacher had asked, What are you wearing? In my best French, I boldly said, “I am wearing a skirt.”

What would you like to be remembered for?

Making a difference—for my family, my department, our students, and our community.

Did you have a close relationship with any of your grandparents?

Very close. I lived with my dad’s parents from 3 to about 10. They were wonderful people who had a tremendous impact on me and on my life. I still miss them.

Describe a trip downtown as a youngster.

Toys and the smell of popcorn at the dime store; comic books, candy, and Coke at the drugstore. All of them air-conditioned against the southern heat!

Don't get left behind!- look at the FFP course schedule and graduate on time!

In order to better help you map out your graduate degree, Great Plains IDEA has created an online course schedule (*subject to change*) at: <http://www.gpidea.org/index.html?page=majorsDegreesCourses.html°reeID=3&anchor=programAnchor1>. (Below is a screen shot of the actual schedule). It lists what semester that each course is scheduled to be offered along with the instructor who will be leading the course.

This course list is also helpful as you are able to click on each course’s name to explore what you will be learning in that course along with clicking on the instructor’s name to learn more about the faculty.

As another course planning side note—the “Financial Planning Case Studies” course does require that all other FFP courses be completed prior to enrollment.

Family Financial Planning		Master's degree courses											
Course	Cr	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014			
		Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
Fundamentals of Family Financial Planning	3	Morrison	Maddux		TBD	Maddux		TBD	Maddux		TBD	Maddux	
Insurance Planning for Families	3		TBD	TBD									
Investing for the Family's Future	3		Swanson		Swanson								
Personal Income Taxation	3		Sharpe	Sharpe	Sharpe								
Retirement Planning, Employee Benefits and the Family	3	Cramer	TBD		TBD	TBD							
Estate Planning for Families	3		TBD	TBD									
Financial Counseling	3	Pankow		Fitzgerald	Pankow		Pankow	Pankow		Pankow	Pankow	Pankow	
Family Economics	3	TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD	
Family Systems	3		Fournier	Bjelde		Bjelde							
Housing and Real Estate	3	Swanson		Osleen	Swanson								
Professional Practices in Financial Planning	3			Maddux			Maddux		Maddux			Maddux	
Financial Planning Case Studies	3	Grable	Grable		Grable	Grable		Grable	Grable		Grable	Grable	

Great Plains IDEA FFP *Students*

The following is a new section of our newsletter in which we will focus on either students who have completed the Great Plains IDEA FFP program or are close to completion. The hope is that they will be able to offer guidance, words of wisdom, and tips to fellow graduate students as we navigate through our courses. *If there are specific questions you would like to ask our participants, please forward any questions to Jesse.*

Gayle Gette, M.S.

Why did you choose the Great Plains IDEA FFP program?

I had an interest in the topic, wanted to get an advanced degree and mostly because I could do it all at home!

Where do you hope that the degree will take you (professionally or personally)?

I've already benefited from the degree by taking on some leadership roles in the Family Financial area in our Extension Service.



What was the most challenging aspect of the FFP program?

How did you overcome it?

Finding time to study, complete class requirements, and take the online tests. I'm not sure I ever really overcame these challenges. I left ballgames during crucial moments because I had to zip home and take an online test, I quit some of my community volunteering, I didn't attend a family reunion weekend during one of my summer classes because I had to finish a major project.

What did you do for your thesis or practicum?

I developed a three-lesson curriculum for young couples, packaged on a CD, with the intention users could complete all lessons at home, on their own schedule, using their home computers.

How did you find the topic of your thesis or place you completed your practicum?

The idea was prompted through my Extension work, where I realized many many MANY young people do not know basic financial concepts, and serious relationships and marriages were disintegrating because of money issues. I also know how hard it is for anyone at any stage of life to attend a series of workshops, so I put everything on CD for home use.

Any helpful hints for students yet to do their thesis or practicum?

Find something relevant to your life and your needs. Don't choose a topic you aren't personally interested in, don't choose a project you personally do not need or would not use. Choose something that uses the skills you already possess.

Lisa Pribula, M.S.

Why did you choose the Great Plains IDEA FFP program?

I was finishing my undergraduate degree in Special Education, and looked into options to continue my education. I wanted something besides a teaching degree, and yet required similar skills. I came across the Great Plains IDEA FFP program. I liked that I could start the program and ultimately live anywhere. I also was interested in the different areas this degree covered and really liked the financial counseling idea.



Where do you hope that the degree will take you (professionally or personally)?

My desire was/is to help those who are struggling and in trouble. I am currently a Certified Credit Counselor for a faith-based non-profit organization and I am enjoying the financial counseling and education that I get to do with my job. Personally, the content of the FFP program has helped me make wiser financial decisions for me and my family.

What was the most challenging aspect of the FFP program?

How did you overcome it?

I felt as though I started way behind everyone, because of my limited knowledge in the area of finances. I overcame this challenge by asking a lot of questions and going back to the basics to understand those better so I could move forward.

Any helpful hints for juggling graduate school and a career?

I started out taking 3 classes in one semester (I was substitute teaching at the time) but soon realized, with a heavier work load and having a family, that one to two classes at a time was plenty. It took me longer to finish than I originally planned, but family time and my sanity were more important to me.

What did you do for your thesis or practicum?

I chose to do the practicum because I really like the hands-on real-life learning. I knew I wanted to work in a non-profit organization and I wanted to do something with financial counseling.

How did you find the topic of your thesis or place you completed your practicum?

My cousin told me about a faith-based non-profit organization called, Family Life Credit Services, which I was very excited about.

Any helpful hints for students yet to do their thesis or practicum?

When looking at completing a thesis or practicum, do what you are most comfortable with. For me it was the practicum. I would personally suggest the practicum because it was a great learning opportunity and also a good first step towards a possible job.

Student Loan

REPAYMENT OPTIONS

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STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT OPTIONS

1. Level Repayment Schedule

The monthly installment amount remains the same throughout repayment, although small changes in the monthly installment amount may occur for loans with a variable interest rate if the annual interest rate increases or decreases

If this installment amount does not fit into your budget, call your lenders or servicer to get estimates for the following repayment alternatives:

2. Graduated Repayment Schedule

Payments are initially lower and then increase later in the repayment schedule.

3. Income-based Repayment

This repayment schedule is designed for borrowers who may be experiencing financial hardship manage their monthly payments. It may extend the repayment period past the standard 10-years and offers loan forgiveness to borrowers who have made 300 qualifying payments on/after July 1, 2009.

To qualify for IBR, your initial monthly payment amount on all of your eligible loans calculated on a standard 10-year repayment plan must be more than 15% of the difference between your adjusted gross income and 150% of the poverty line for your family size. [Learn more at www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov).

4. Income Sensitive Repayment

This is the most flexible plan, but it can be the most expensive in the long run, and you must reapply annually. The monthly payment amount will be established based on your gross monthly income and student loan debt.

Provide your lender/servicer with information about your total gross monthly income. Income information cannot be more than 90 days old. If married, do not include your spouse's income.

If the student loan repayment options above do not fit into your budget, contact your lender to see if you qualify for the 25 Year Extended Repayment Plan.

DIRECT DEBIT

Once you've chosen the right repayment plan, sign up for Direct Debit. It's the easiest way to make student loan payments on time.

- For AES (American Education Services) loans: www.aessuccess.org/manage/payments/DirectDebit.shtml
- For FedLoan Servicing loans: www.myfedloan.org/make-a-payment/ways-to-pay/direct-debit.shtml
- For all other loans: Contact your servicer to learn about any automatic debit programs they may offer.

CHANGE YOUR DUE DATE

If you fall behind because your student loan is due the same week as the mortgage, etc., contact your lender or servicer to see if you can change the due date.

CONSIDER LOAN CONSOLIDATION

1. Lower your monthly payments

Consolidating can extend how long you have to pay off student loans, sometimes up to 30 years.

2. Combine all your student loans

One company takes over all your loans so that you only have to deal with them and not lots of lenders.

3. Do some homework:

Once you have consolidated your student loans, you can only consolidate again if you have an eligible student loan that was not included in your previous consolidation, or you received a new eligible loan that was disbursed after your loan consolidation.

4. You may qualify for a deferment or forbearance.

A deferment is when the lender/servicer grants a temporary suspension of monthly payments.

Qualifications for Deferment:

- Unemployed or working less than 30 hours a week
- Enrolled in school full-time or half-time
- Temporarily disabled
- Engaged in a graduate fellowship program
- In an internship/residency program
- Having an economic hardship (a deferment for borrowers who earn less than minimum wage.)
- In the military or providing a public service
- Teaching in a teacher-shortage area
- In a rehabilitation training program
- Pregnant or caring for a newborn

Forbearance is a temporary suspension of monthly payments that is granted under certain circumstances by your lender/servicer.

You'll still be responsible for paying the interest that's accrued, so it's always smarter to try and get a deferment first.

Qualifications for Forbearance:

- Qualified under the Student Loan Repayment Program administered by the U.S. Department of Defense
- A mobilized member of the National Guard or Reserves experiencing temporary and unexpected financial hardship
- Currently serves in a National and Community Service position (AmeriCorps)
- Internship or Residency
- Temporary Hardship

PAY IF YOU CAN

As soon as you stop going to school (or drop below half-time status) the next 6 months are your grace period (no payments). If you have a subsidized loan, making a payment in "grace" will benefit you BECAUSE, on a subsidized loan the government pays the interest during your grace period and any payments you make will be applied directly to your principal balance (which lowers the total interest). Unsubsidized loans continue to accrue interest during your grace period. If you make payments while in "grace" you reduce or eliminate interest capitalized (added to your principal), reducing the total amount of interest paid over the life of the loan.