

FAQs

Q: What is family and consumer sciences?

Family and consumer sciences is the comprehensive body of skills, research, and knowledge, with a dedicated focus on helping families and individuals make informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life. The field is unique as it represents multiple disciplines, including human development, personal and family finance, housing and interior design, food science, nutrition, and wellness, textiles and apparel, and consumer issues.

Q: What content areas does family and consumer sciences provide?

Family and consumer sciences utilizes a “socio-ecological framework”¹ through which it integrates multiple content areas. It provides a comprehensive offering of subjects vital to the creation, development, and preservation of healthy, functional families. General topics include human development, personal and family finance, housing and interior design, food science, nutrition and wellness, textiles and apparel, and consumer issues. Many programs offer courses focused specifically on today’s societal issues such as the obesity epidemic and bullying.

Q: What levels of education offer family and consumer sciences?

Family and consumer sciences is offered in early childhood education as well as elementary, secondary, and college and university levels. In higher education, family and consumer sciences courses may be classified under education, human sciences, human ecology, or consumer economics.

Q: Is family and consumer sciences the same as home economics?

Home economics has transformed into family and consumer sciences due to the complex social and economic issues that individuals, families, and communities face today. Like any other applied science, family and consumer sciences has evolved with society and technology. Our emphasis is on issues relevant to today’s individuals and families and skills critical to successfully living and working in the 21st century global society. Our classes cover topics like personal and family finance, nutrition, and responsible parenting.

Q: What is the reason for the name change?

In 1994, the field decided to change its name to family and consumer sciences from home economics to more accurately reflect the complexity of the profession. As times have changed, so have the issues and needs of daily living. The family and consumer sciences profession has evolved to meet the current challenges facing individuals, families, and communities and provides an even broader range of knowledge, research, and resources.

Q: What opportunities are available to join or get involved with family and consumer sciences?

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences is a multi-faceted organization that offers membership for students, teachers, educators, public agencies, and administrators within the field, and is active at both a national and international level.

Q: How does family and consumer sciences impact today’s society?

Family and consumer sciences strives to help create healthy and sustainable families. The knowledge, research, and resources provided by Family and consumer sciences further develop essential life skills, allowing individuals and families to overcome current societal challenges, resulting in enhanced quality of life and well-being.

Q: The name *family and consumer sciences* implies that the field focuses only on the family, is this true?

Family and consumer sciences believes the family is the cornerstone of society. Family can be defined many ways, for instance a biological family or friends as chosen family, in both cases the family is made up of individuals all functioning in a community. By aiming to create healthy and sustainable families, family and consumer sciences is empowering individuals and enabling communities to thrive in today’s society.

¹Socio-ecological framework - An integrative framework that recognized the relationship of an individual and the surrounding environment and takes into account multiple factors, in order to develop a more insightful understanding.