

# Marriage and Family Therapy

Program Handbook

2022 – 2023

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Oklahoma Baptist University  
Master of Science Degree

Professional Competence with Christian Compassion



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## **Introduction Letter by Dr. J. Oscar Jeske, Program Founder**

Welcome to graduate studies in marriage and family therapy. You have chosen to study and train for the practice of one of the most exciting, challenging and needed professions in our society. Hopefully, it will also prove to be the most rewarding profession for you.

As you will see, marriage and family therapy is a unique profession with its own body of literature, its own research and its own theory and methodology. Paradoxically, however, it has a great deal in common with other mental health professions. Your preparation for the profession, therefore, will not focus on marriage and family therapy alone but include familiarity with some aspects of psychology, psychiatry, sociology, cultural anthropology, family science, ethics, psychotherapy and even theology.

You have been carefully selected to be admitted to graduate studies on the basis of your past academic, professional and personal record. You may have distinguished yourself in your undergraduate studies and even possess a graduate degree. But because of the uniqueness of the field and the advanced level of the program, you may at first feel a bit confused and even bewildered and unable to apply with equal success the study strategies that worked so well for you up to this point. Since family therapy uses a different epistemological paradigm than the one used in the natural sciences, the paradigm shift that you will be required to make may create some initial difficulty for you.

Learning family therapy is somewhat different than learning another profession. It "...ideally embodies the mastery of a knowledge base that constitutes the foundation for an ongoing and interactive learning process in which substantive materials and theory are continually refined by clinical experience and research and fed back into the clinical practice in a relatively open-systems fashion." It, therefore, is not synonymous with training, which implies the acquisition of a skill or the expert use of a technique. It goes beyond that to a thorough grounding in the substantive knowledge and theoretical foundations on which skill and technique are based. As a student of family therapy, thus, you are expected to become a person who investigates and analyzes human behavior as you also acquire skills and techniques that you will effectively apply in the treatment of persons and dysfunctional family systems.

While there will be times when specific content and particular techniques will be taught, the focus of the program will be primarily on encouraging you to apply your knowledge and skills (gained to a great extent through your own investigations, readings of the literature and observations of therapy sessions) to the treatment of marital and family dysfunction in the most appropriate ways possible, given your idiosyncratic personality factors and personal style. Furthermore, learning family therapy, consistent with the systemic paradigm, will entail drawing on your life experiences within your family of creation, your family of origin and other social systems as well as on your current involvement in individual and family life cycles.

The educational/training process is based on several presuppositions. Clinical involvement with families should be preceded by significant exposure to family therapy theory and knowledge regarding normal and abnormal family development and functioning. Since cooperation promotes learning more effectively than competition, the program is not intended to serve as an obstacle course for you or foster competition leading to unnecessary distress. It encourages, however, a healthy amount of eustress that enhances the learning process.

The educational/training process is most effective in a hierarchical structure with regard to authority. In such a structure the professor or supervisor is a senior professional, an expert in the field in which he is teaching/supervising and you, the student are not a peer in that field of expertise. Faculty and supervisors are not only responsible for providing you with guidance in your professional development but also for your evaluation and grading. Every effort is made to furnish you with supervised clinical experience that will approximate the clinical experience you are likely to encounter in your professional practice. The program is not designed, however, to serve your therapeutic needs. While you as a student may benefit from psychotherapy or family therapy, you will need to pursue it apart from the program.

The basic mission of the program is to equip students with adequate knowledge and skills to do marriage and family therapy and to develop in them competence in acquiring additional learning and skills which will refine and enhance the current ones. The fulfillment of the mission requires that you learn not only from class lectures, discussions and demonstrations but also from clinical observation and experience, and from the reading of relevant research and professional literature. Of supreme importance is that you think critically, examine carefully and dispassionately the new information, and reach logical conclusions. You need to be able to find, evaluate and interpret relevant research studies on the basis of the general body of knowledge of the field and make your own informed decisions without needing to rely on the authority of others.

The mission of the program incorporates several major objectives. You are expected to be able to:

1. Acquire substantive knowledge of theory and technique for effective assessment and clinical intervention with families.
2. Think and intervene systemically without losing sight of the individuals who comprise the system.
3. Attend adequately to the dynamics of the family system when conducting therapy.
4. Assess adequately the strengths and the weaknesses of the family system and describe adequately the structure and the process of the system.
5. Implement treatment plans consistent with the initial and ongoing assessment.
6. Change strategies flexibly when there are indications that attempted strategies are ineffective.
7. Treat issues of gender, ethnicity and faith with sensitivity and understanding.
8. Behave professionally and ethically in all clinical and professional contexts.

Consistent with the systemic concept of equifinality, the program recognizes that client problems may be adequately dealt with utilizing many different approaches. As a student in the program you will, therefore, be introduced to all the major approaches to family therapy and given freedom to use the approach you feel most comfortable with.

You will be given feedback on both the academic and clinical parts of the program. You will not be judged against another student but against the levels of ability that the faculty considers appropriate in the particular area. While the course of study is not easy, every effort will be made to facilitate the process of study, to accommodate you in regard to your particular life setting, and to treat you fairly.

The faculty offers you a mixture of diversity and commonality. While each faculty member is different in regard to his or her personal and professional background, teaching style and use of therapeutic technique, he or she also holds a great deal in common with other faculty members in regard to theoretical preferences, values, attitudes, and goals.

It goes without saying that as a graduate student you are expected to be a superior student. But besides intellectual brightness, the faculty assumes that you are capable of ethical judgment and are ethical in your behaviors and relationships, that you have a fair amount of ego strength and are able to accept evaluative feedback in a positive way, that you manifest tolerance, kindness and sensitivity in dealing with others, and that you demonstrate that you are committed and able to work hard and to behave responsibly toward people and obligations. While a high level of motivation on your part is desirable, in order to succeed in the program you will need to combine it with a high level of personal maturity, cognitive development, and ego strength. If your conceptual development is limited, you will have difficulty grasping the complex interactions of persons within the various systems and subsystems within which they function. Likewise, if you have not effectively differentiated yourself from your family of origin you will have difficulty helping a client move toward autonomous functioning.

Research shows that graduate students in counseling/therapy programs generally go through three stages in their development as clinicians. As an entry level student/trainee you can expect to be highly motivated, highly anxious, highly dependent on your supervisors, have a limited awareness of yourself and others, desire training in specific skills which you could apply according to a well structured format, have difficulties learning and using such skills as confrontation because you may tend to see clients as fragile and vulnerable, use assessment procedures in a rigid way, and follow a particular approach to therapy with

disciple-like fervor. Your anxiety may lead you to seek structure, support and positive feedback from your supervisors. However, as Stoltenberg and Delworth observe,

It is critical that a degree of ambiguity or conflict be introduced in order to create a sufficient but (not disabling) amount of disequilibria in the trainees. Growth is not encouraged if supervision or the experience of counseling becomes too comfortable. Assuming too much responsibility for the trainees' cases can limit their growth by removing too much of the uncertainty or conflict necessary for them to move to higher levels.

As an intermediate student/trainee you may tend to fluctuate in motivation, strive for independence, be more self-assertive and less imitative. Rather than being dependent on the supervisor you now may experience a dependency-autonomy conflict. As you go through this stage, you will tend to encounter many "trials and tribulations". By now you have gained a significant amount of knowledge and some practical experience and want to perform as an independently functioning professional, especially when you have enjoyed a measure of success in therapy. At other times, however, you will be likely to desire plenty of advice and specific direction from your supervisor. But if you do not accept direction uncritically, you may at times create conflict with your supervisor. Exposure to more difficult clients and more complex theories and interventions may also shake your self-confidence and cause you to seriously doubt that you will ever become a therapist. Remember that the key characteristics of this stage are disruption, ambivalence and instability.

As an advanced student you are likely to experience a "calm after the storm." You have now entered a critical stage in your professional development characterized by increased stability at the structural level, and rapid professional growth. The doubts of the earlier stages may not have completely dissipated but they are not disabling and your daily motivation is rather consistent. At this stage you may believe in your own autonomy and carry out your clinical activities in an autonomous manner. You may also find yourself being much more tolerant of colleagues and supervisors who hold different theoretical positions or use different techniques. You may also more aware of your strengths and weaknesses and possess more cognitive and affective energy to deal with the weaknesses and accept setbacks. But remember again that research shows that the "integrated" advanced level which allows the therapist to move freely between the various domains of clinical functioning, using competencies gained in one domain to enhance the other, is not reached until much later. The modal time required for it appears to be five to six years of professional experience.

Hopefully, being aware that learning how to do marriage and family therapy involves passing through a sometimes rather painful developmental process, may help you view yourself less critically and ease some of the frustration and anxiety involved in it.

# **SECTION I: General Information**



## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The graduate program in Marriage and Family Therapy at Oklahoma Baptist University is designed to meet the needs of college graduates who desire training in marriage and family therapy that will prepare them to apply for professional certification or licensure and clinical membership in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT).

The program approaches the practice of marriage and family therapy from the Christian perspective and emphasizes Christian values. It focuses on both academic course work and supervised clinical experience with individuals, couples and families under a variety of clinical conditions. It endeavors to establish a professional role identity for the family therapist as a clinician who can work both in private and public domains, and in institutional as well as outpatient settings. Students receive intensive specialized training, which gives them a firm base for becoming competent therapists who understand and are able to treat individuals and families from a systems vantage point and know how to deal with the societal and cultural forces that influence family relationships. They are exposed to a variety of theoretical paradigms used in family therapy and assisted in critically examining each of them with the purpose of developing a proficiency as marriage and family therapists based on the integration of their personal qualities with their knowledge of individual, marital and family dynamics, resources, and possibilities for change.

The Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy requires that students satisfactorily complete 45 hours of course work and pass a comprehensive evaluation. Included in the 45 hours of course work is a practicum of 500 supervised hours of therapy for which the student receives 9 hours of credit. All therapy supervision is performed by licensed marriage and family therapists or AAMFT approved supervisors or supervisors-in-training.

The faculty in the program consists of graduate faculty and members of the Department of Psychology of Oklahoma Baptist University along with MFT practitioners from the regional area. Courses are held on the OBU campus. During the second year of full-time study in the program students will provide clinical services in the Kemp MFT Clinic in Shawnee and other possible locations in the state.

The program is designed to be completed in two calendar years of full-time study with an academic course load of no more than 12 credit hours per semester, three calendar years of part-time study with an academic course load of no more than 9 credit hours per semester or four calendar years of part-time study with an academic course load of no more than 6 credit hours per semester. The practicum must be taken over a minimum 12 consecutive months even if the student is taking courses on a part-time basis.

Classes are offered between 4:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays and meet once a week to accommodate students with full-time employment. There are occasional meetings outside of these times once the student begins the process towards becoming clinically active but advance notice of these meetings are provided.

### **Career Opportunities**

A Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy (and licensure or certification, where required) may lead to employment in a variety of settings, such as community mental health agencies, children and family services agencies, churches, counseling clinics, and private practice. Further study at the doctoral level may prepare students for faculty positions at professional schools or universities.

# MISSION STATEMENTS

## **University Mission Statement**

As a Christian liberal arts university, OBU transforms lives by equipping students to pursue academic excellence, integrate faith with all areas of knowledge, engage a diverse world, and live worthy of the high calling of God in Christ.

## **College of Graduate and Professional Studies Mission Statement**

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Oklahoma Baptist University enhances the mission of the university by providing opportunities for advanced studies that equip graduates to follow Christ's example in vocational pursuits.

## **Program Mission Statement**

Our mission is to train students in a relational and systemic approach in order to equip marriage and family therapists for the compassionate, ethical practice of therapy with a diverse, multi-cultural and global society.

# ACCREDITATION

## **The Higher Learning Commission: A Commission of the North Central Association**

OBU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association. This regional accreditation allows graduates of the MFT Program to pursue licensure as a marriage and family therapist in a number of states and jurisdictions.

## **Commission on the Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education**

The MFT Program is studying options for pursuing a professional level of accreditation with the Commission on the Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). COAMFTE establishes standards for training MFTs to the highest level of competency and is a hallmark of excellent programs. The MFT Program is designed and facilitated in order to meet COAMFTE standards in the future.

## **PROGRAM GOALS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)**

**Program Goal #1:** The OBU MFT program will provide a practical education in systems concepts, MFT theories, and current techniques that are foundational to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

**SLO #1:** Students will demonstrate understanding of systems concepts, theories, and techniques that are foundational to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

**Program Goal #2:** The OBU MFT program will equip students to practice with a wide variety of systems and identified problems while displaying empathy and compassion.

**SLO #2:** Students will demonstrate their competency to practice marriage and family therapy with a wide variety of systemic configurations and identified problems.

**Program Goal #3:** The OBU MFT program will prepare students for competent practice by understanding and engaging a diverse clinical population through a multicultural and global lens.

**SLO #3:** Students will demonstrate competence in understanding and working from a multicultural and global lens.

**Program Goal #4:** The OBU MFT program will equip students to adhere to the highest standard of ethical practices in the field of MFT.

**SLO #4:** Students will demonstrate competence in ethical decision making related to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

**Program Goal #5:** The OBU MFT program will maintain a high-quality training clinic to provide all students with clinical experience in a Christian context.

**SLO #5:** Students will demonstrate competence in providing clinical services in a Christian context.

## **CYCLE OF ASSESSMENT**

The MFT program follows a cycle of assessment that allows for regular input and data collection on student and program achievements. The MFT program gathers data, analyzes and interprets the data, develops action plans and measures the success of the implemented action plans. MFT faculty and students actively participate in the cycle of assessment to ensure continuous improvement of the program. The program hosts an annual summer meeting where a comprehensive data analysis occurs. The MFT Faculty meet weekly to consider and address program goals and student learning outcomes.

## CORE FACULTY/SUPERVISORS

Core faculty are those who have a full-time faculty contract and are appointed as graduate faculty assigned to the MFT program. Core faculty may teach graduate and undergraduate courses but retain specific primary responsibilities for the instruction, supervision and advising of the MFT graduate students. Core faculty have received doctoral training in marriage and family therapy or a closely related degree and have a primary identity as Marriage and Family Therapists. Core faculty are AAMFT Clinical Fellows and are AAMFT Approved Supervisors or AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidates.

The Core faculty and MFT Clinic Director serve as the primary clinical supervisors for practicum students. The program also utilizes qualified AAMFT Approved Supervisors/Candidates to provide year-round supervision to all MFT students. The supervisors are designated in the following list with an asterisk.

**\*Canaan Crane, Ph.D.**, *MFT Program Director, Professor of Psychology. LMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor, LMFT Representative Member (Board of Behavioral Health Licensure), Past OKAMFT Chair. Scholarly Interests: therapist training, supervision mentoring, wilderness experiential modalities, and Native American tribal contexts*

**\*Camille Lafleur, Ph.D.**, *Associate Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy, LMFT (OK), LCMFT (KS), AAMFT Approved Supervisor, Past MFT Advisory Board (Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board), Past KSAMFT Board Member. Past OKAMFT Vice Chair, Scholarly Interests: clinical supervision, cultural experiences and therapy, violent neighborhoods and high-risk youth and mentoring*

## MFT CLINIC DIRECTOR

**LaShane Hill, MA**, *Kemp MFT Clinic Director, LMFT (OK and CA), AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate*

## ADJUNCT FACULTY

**Jessica Colls, PhD**, *LMFT Adjunct Faculty Supervisor. OBU Alumni*

**Chelsea Keel, MS**, *LMFT Adjunct Professor of Family Therapy*

**Grace Pratt, Ph.D.** *LMFT, Adjunct Professor of Family Therapy. Scholarly interests: Medical Family Therapy, pregnancy, infertility, childbearing decision making, trauma.*

**Julie Reising, MS**, *LMFT Adjunct Faculty Supervisor. OBU Alumni*

# **SECTION II: Admission and Program Requirements**

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Academics.** The applicant must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. Although no specific undergraduate major is essential for admission to the MFT program, applicants are encouraged to have majors in the human services field or have accumulated undergraduate credit in human development, family relations, psychology, sociology or theology.
- 2. Transcript.** An official transcript of all undergraduate or graduate academic work.
- 3. Personal and Work Experience.** Consideration is given to those applicants whose personal and work experience demonstrate commitment to the field of marriage and family therapy. Applicants with at least two years of gainful employment in the Human Services field will receive special consideration.
- 4. Recommendations.** A minimum of three (3) recommendations from persons who are familiar with the applicant's academic, employment and religious experience is required.
- 5. Graduate Record Examination.** A qualification index based upon the following weighting: GPA at 40%, GRE at 60% (Verbal at 30%, Quantitative at 10%, Analytical Writing at 20%). Please see the graduate program's website or an MFT qualification index calculator. Applicants who score below the qualification index, but have relevant work experience since receiving the bachelor's degree and who are otherwise judged qualified may be admitted conditionally. The conditional status will be dropped, if after the completion of 9 credit hours the student will have maintained a GPA of at least a 3.0, with no earned C grades. The GRE requirement may be waived for, 1. applicants who have an undergraduate GPA of 3.3 or higher, or, 2. are in the MFT Integrated Program, or if, 3. an applicant has already completed a Master's or Doctoral degree.
- 6. Resume or Vitae.**
- 7. Statement of Purpose.** The OBU Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Program is requesting that each applicant submit answers to the following questions. Your essay should be 4-5 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font. Use headers. Please include your current address, email, and telephone number at the beginning or end of your essay. Use your best writing skills to convey your thoughts. Make sure you proofread and have other people read it.

The OBU MFT Program is a training program that equips students to practice as marriage and family therapists. Our students learn MFT theories, skills and practice from a relational mindset regardless if they are working with individuals, couples, families or other groups. Our program emphasizes the role of the MFT professional as an agent of change across a variety of systemic levels. Our students work actively to display social justice ideals by working with clients in respectful, compassionate and ethically competent ways. This emphasis on social justice equips our students to understand how important culture is for our clients and empowers good therapeutic work which both understands the power of culture and seeks to address systems of racism and oppression in therapy. Along with this emphasis, the OBU MFT Program works with students to examine and understand the signature themes from their own lives that play a role in shaping who, and how, they are as therapists. This emphasis on "Person of the Therapist" helps equip students to find appropriate and professional ways to integrate their own experiences and beliefs into their development as Marriage and Family Therapists.

- Tell us about your journey to choosing MFT as a profession. Of all the possibilities, why did you choose MFT?

- Talk about the experiences that you have (personal and professional) that you feel have prepared you to pursue a graduate degree in MFT. Highlight the personal skills and attributes that you will bring to our program. In doing this, make sure to address how you plan to cope with the rigors of a graduate degree in MFT, including how you have overcome specific challenges in the past.
- What experiences have you had in your life which have stretched you outside of your comfort zones? What interactions and encounters have you had with people and cultures that are different from your own? Please write about an aspect of your identity that may have been marginalized and how you manage that.
- What do you most want to get out of an MFT graduate program? In addition, what are your professional goals? How do you see yourself using your MFT training in 5-10 years. (You don't have to have it all figured out, but we want to understand more about your direction).

Your essay should contain all of the information above, but feel free to use your own creativity and writing ability to decide how to organize your essay. Keep in mind that the MFT essay is an important part of your application and is a very effective way for us to gain insight into who you are as a person.

**8. Interview.** Upon qualifying in regard to all the above admission requirements the applicant may be required to have an on-campus interview with the MFT Graduate Studies Committee.

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURE**

**Deadline.** Admission to the program is conducted once a year. Newly admitted students may start full time study during the fall semester. Students may enroll in part time or full time study. Applications must be completed by the established deadline, typically April 1st. Applicants are responsible to ensure that all the above materials are in the possession of the MFT Admissions Committee by this date. Late applications will receive consideration only if space is still available.

**Submission of Materials.** Application should be submitted online through the OBU graduate school website.

**Admissions Committee.** The MFT Admissions Committee is chaired by the Program Director and is made up of MFT graduate faculty. The purpose of the committee is to review applications, make decisions about admission into the program, and make recommendations of conditional admission.

**Screening and Notification of Acceptance.** The screening of applications is completed in a timely fashion following the receipt of application materials. Notification of the status of the application, the results of the screening, and if applicable, of the time of the interview with the MFT Graduate Admissions Committee is given to the applicant as soon as possible. Once the Interviews are complete, the MFT program strives to notify the accepted applicants within a one week time frame.

**Conditional Admissions Policy.** The MFT Admissions committee may admit applicants conditionally. Students with conditional admission are limited to enrolling in no more than 9 credit hours per semester. Conditional admit status will be reviewed after the first year and will be removed if the student maintains a 3.0 GPA, with no earned C's. Failure to maintain this GPA may result in dismissal from the program.

## DEGREE PLAN

The degree plan follows the curriculum model of the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the AAMFT and, therefore, exceeds the practicum requirements of the Marital and Family Therapist Licensure Act of the State of Oklahoma. Students are required to take courses in a sequence specified in the Plan of Study. A maximum of six credit hours or two courses from an accredited graduate school will be considered for transfer credit. The 2, 3, and 4 year plans of study can be found on the website.

### Theoretical Foundations of Marital and Family Therapy:

5003	Foundations of Family Therapy	3 hours
5223	Marital Therapy	3 hours
5403	Intro to Medical Family Therapy	3 hours

### Assessment and Treatment in Marital and Family Therapy:

5123	Basic Therapy Skills	3 hours
5243	Child & Adolescent Treatment	3 hours
5323	Family and Individual Assessment	3 hours
5413	Advanced MFT Practice	3 hours

### Human Development:

5143	Developmental Contexts: Gender, Ethnicity, & Religion	3 hours
5133	Psychopathology	3 hours
5213	Human Sexuality and Treatment	3 hours

### Ethics and Professional Studies:

5233	Professional Issues, Ethics and the Law	3 hours
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### Research:

5313	Research Design and Statistics	3 hours
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### Supervised Clinical Practice:

5803	Practicum	9 hours
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### Capstone

5803	MFT Capstone	1 hour
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Thesis (Optional) (6 hours)

Total 46 (52) hours

## MASTER'S THESIS OPTION

Students planning to continue their graduate education in marriage and family therapy on the doctoral level elsewhere may choose the thesis option for their M.S. degree. Completion of the thesis demonstrates that the student has acquired the necessary investigative skills to be able to carry out independent research in the field of marriage and family therapy and appropriately report his or her findings.



A thesis committee, composed of a chairperson serving as the student's thesis advisor and two other faculty members teaching in the MFT program, will be responsible for the reading and evaluating of the final copy of the thesis, and the administering and evaluating of the oral defense. The thesis will be graded on the pass/fail basis and must receive at least a 2:1 pass vote to be accepted as adequate.

Each student will be responsible for enlisting an MFT faculty member as his or her thesis committee chairperson. The MFT Graduate Program Director will appoint the other two faculty members.

A student who chooses the thesis option must meet with the Program Director and submit an official request to begin the thesis process before enrolling in the first semester of thesis hours. The student's thesis committee will determine deadlines for drafts, proposal defense and thesis defense. The proposal guidelines are included in the Appendix B of this handbook. They are also available in the office of the Director.

Thesis work may be continued beyond the end of the final year of course work. However, the completion of the degree with the thesis option may not exceed six years. Students choosing the thesis option will enroll in MFT 5999 for at least two semesters and six hours of course credit. Non-completion of the thesis within this time will require that the student maintain enrollment in the course each semester until the work is completed. The student's passing grade for the thesis shall not be recorded on his transcript until the revised final copy is submitted and the thesis-binding fee paid. See appendix B for more information.

## **THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

### **Order of Events**

1. In consultation with your intended thesis advisor, formulate your research goals and procedures.
2. If the intended thesis advisor believes your general research idea to be promising, and is willing to supervise your thesis, then indicate to the MFT Program Director that you plan on enrolling in the Thesis course and give him the name of the professor who agreed to supervise your thesis. The Director will then appoint two other faculty members to your thesis committee.
3. Following the guidelines contained in this document, and under close supervision of your advisor, complete the thesis proposal and submit it to your advisor prior to the beginning of the student's final two semesters of study.
4. As soon as possible the advisor will arrange for a committee meeting during which you will make a short, oral presentation of the proposal. At this meeting, the committee members will have the opportunity to clarify issues regarding your proposal and will vote to approve or deny the proposed research.
5. If the research is approved, enroll in MFT 5999 with your thesis advisor.

### **General Guidelines**

**Content:** The thesis proposal will contain three sections: Introduction, Literature Review, and Methods. Within these sections, you will provide the background and rationale for your research, indicate your research goals and hypotheses, and specify the proposed methods for accomplishing your research goals. Because the proposal is written before the research is conducted, there will be no analysis of data or discussion of results in the proposal. Nor is it necessary to have in hand all resources or instruments that will be used in the completed thesis. However, the proposal should provide the reader with an adequate background for the proposed research and a clear understanding of how the proposed research will be conducted.

**Format:** The general format of the proposal will follow APA format. Refer to the APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition for questions regarding the citation of sources, quotations, numbering, etc. Any exceptions to the APA Manual guidelines are listed in this document. The general format of the proposal is as follows:

- one-inch margins on all pages

- double-space all text (except within references)
- number all pages (except the title page) in the upper right corner
- do not include page headers
- write the methods section in future tense

Additional information on theses may be obtained from the MFT Program Director.

## **INTEGRATED OBU BACHELOR'S /MFT DEGREE PROGRAM**

Through an integrated program, OBU provides the opportunity for students from all disciplines to begin work toward a Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy degree while completing an undergraduate degree at OBU. Through the program, students from any academic discipline can pursue completion of both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree within approximately six years.

To participate in the program, the student must complete the MFT degree program admission process by submitting an application, resume, professional recommendations, a statement of purpose and current transcript. A student will typically apply during the junior year of undergraduate course work. At least 96 hours of undergraduate course work must be completed prior to beginning master's-level courses. Additionally, an interview with MFT program faculty is required. The student is provisionally admitted into the MFT program until the bachelor's degree is completed. Students who demonstrate success in the graduate courses may have the GRE requirement waived for admission into the graduate program.

Integrated students may begin MFT graduate classes in August of their senior year. Undergraduates may take up to twelve hours of graduate work. The remaining MFT degree requirements may be completed following completion of the bachelor's degree. Upon successful completion of a graduate course, Integrated students may meet the degree requirements for certain undergraduate degrees. Integrated students should consult with their academic advisor and with the MFT Program Director to determine which courses may qualify.

The following 15 hours of undergraduate Psychology/Family courses are recommended for student success with the MFT degree program:

PSYC 1223 - General Psychology

PSYC 2623 - Research Methods or PSYC 2223 - Statistics for Behavioral and Social Sciences

PSYC 2043 - Child and Adolescent Development

PSYC 3763 - Basic Counseling Skills

FMLY 3513 - Marriage

## **AAMFT MEMBERSHIP**

In order to facilitate professional development, the MFT Program requires that all students join and maintain student membership with the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT). AAMFT membership affords students with a connection to professional training, conferences and advocacy as well as providing professional liability insurance for clinically active students. Students are also strongly encouraged to also join the Oklahoma Association of Marriage and Family Therapists Geographic Interest Network, if possible.

## PROGRAM COMPLETION

**Requirements for Grade Point Average.** A cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above is required in order to earn the graduate degree. If the cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 after the completion of nine credit hours, the student will be placed on academic probation. The student is not allowed to attempt any new courses until the GPA is raised.

Failure to reach the above minimum will result in the suspension of the graduate student from the University. Notification will come from the Chief Academic Officer. Graduate students under academic suspension normally may apply to the Chief Academic Officer for reinstatement. Reinstatement of the graduate student is not automatic, but depends on the quality of evidence submitted to the Chief Academic Officer, in consultation with the appropriate Academic Dean/Program Director, to justify belief that normal progress may be made toward satisfaction of degree requirements. Reinstated graduate students must pass all courses attempted for each succeeding semester with a course grade no lower than B or a second suspension will result.

A student will be expelled from the program if he or she receives a "D", "F". If a second grade of "C" is earned the student will not be allowed to take any additional classes until they retake the specific class as determined by the MFT program and make a B or higher. If a student is expelled from the program, they may apply for readmission.

**Practicum Requirement.** The practicum of 500 client contact hours should be completed in 12 consecutive months. Non-completion of the practicum within this time will require continued enrollment in MFT 5803, Practicum until the full 500 hours are accumulated.

All participants will be required to acquire professional liability insurance. Most professional counseling centers, particularly those whose mission includes providing counseling in a Christian context, require that professional counselors make some kind of formal commitment to honor the value system of the center. Each practicum student will be expected to comply with the employment requirements of his/her practicum site.

In addition to completion of course work and 500 hours of clinical work, students are required to demonstrate pre-professional competence in the following areas before final approval for graduation: personal maturity and integrity, conceptual understanding of personal and interpersonal behavior, familiarity with marriage and family theory and therapy literature, assessment of families in regard to their functionality, coherent therapeutic methodology, sound professional and ethical judgment, and critical evaluation of family therapy research and practice. Their competence is assessed on the basis of their performance on examinations and evaluation reports by professors and clinical supervisors. The maximum length of time for the completion of the degree is five years.

**Capstone Presentation.** During the last semester of practicum, students will complete a capstone project that consists of a thorough case conceptualization and presentation, with video/audio/transcript support. Through the capstone project, students will demonstrate their competency in the areas of systems theory, use of specific MFT models of treatment, cultural competency, self-of-the-therapist, and knowledge and planning for their future growth as a professional in the field. Students will submit an accompanying paper that illustrates their coherent theory of therapy and case analysis. The capstone presentations will be presented to current students and faculty in the MFT program.

# **SECTION III: General Policies**

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

**Writing Style.** Throughout the course of your study, you will be required to write a number of term papers. Even though you are preparing for a career as a clinician, you may at some point be called on to do some scholarly writing. The assigned papers will assist you in refining your technical writing skills and provide an opportunity for you to become familiar with the primary sources in the field of marriage and family therapy. As a professional in the field you are expected to stay current with the professional literature. It is hoped that once you become familiar with the literature, you will develop the habit of regularly reading it and subscribe to two to four of the most relevant professional journals.

All papers must be written according to APA style. You should familiarize yourself with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Ed., Washington: American Psychological Association, 2019 and refer to it as necessary. It is recommended that you obtain a copy of the manual for your reference while a student and later as a contributing professional. The writing that you are expected to do in your courses is scholarly writing. As you know, scholarly writing is precise in nature, not necessarily "exciting" or emotionally stirring. Although it may deal with abstract issues--and especially when it does--it must carefully define these issues and adequately explain them.

**Documentation.** All writing must be carefully documented. Appropriate credit must be given not only when direct citations are made but also when ideas or concepts are borrowed from outside sources. As a scholar, especially a Christian scholar, you are expected to subscribe to the highest standards of ethical conduct and exercise respect for intellectual property.

**Plagiarism.** Papers which show evidence of plagiarism will receive a grade of "F". It is up to the discretion of the professor to allow resubmission of a paper that has received a failing grade due to plagiarism. The University utilizes Turnitin.com as a means of verifying the authenticity of student work.

## THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

**Classroom Department.** Students and faculty hold each other to the highest professional standards. The classroom environment is a model for the therapy room and as such all interactions should be collaborative and supportive as well as professional. As the faculty member is responsible for maintaining an orderly environment conducive to learning in the classroom, it is the professor's right to dismiss from class any student whose dress or behavior is seriously interfering with the instruction of the course.

**Recording and Transmission Devices during Class.** The use of recording and transmission devices (including cell phones) in the classroom by students without authorization from the instructor is prohibited. The participation of individual students in class should not be recorded without their permission. Any authorization for the use of recording devices in the classroom by students carries with it the following limitations:

- recordings shall be used only for the student's private study;
- information from the tapes shall not be made available to other persons not enrolled in the course; and
- all recordings shall be destroyed at the end of the semester

**Cell phone usage.** In order to maintain an optimal environment for learning, cellular phones should be turned off or set to vibrate during class. In the rare event that a student feels it will be necessary to take a phone call

during class time, notice should be given to the professor in advance, as a courtesy. If a student receives a call, it is appropriate to leave the room and close the door before answering a call.

## SCHOLASTIC STANDARDS

**Absence from Class.** Due to the accelerated nature of course scheduling and the importance of team building among cohort peers in the OBU College of Graduate and Professional Studies programs, it is essential that students attend class regularly. When extenuating circumstances arise forcing a student to miss class, notice should be given as soon as possible to the faculty member as well as the College of Graduate and Professional Studies office. Responsibility for fulfilling all course requirements lies with the student. Faculty members have the option of granting make-up assignments or exams for missed class periods. Students with attendance issues may petition via the Incomplete Grade Contract to receive an incomplete in the course rather than withdraw from the course.

**Examinations.** Examinations in courses must be taken at the regularly scheduled times. With the permission of the professor, the student who misses a course examination may be allowed to take a make-up examination. No student will be excused from final examinations. When a student is unavoidably prevented from taking the final examination at the regularly scheduled time, he or she may take the examination after the scheduled date with the professor's permission.

**Arranged Courses.** Any courses taken by arrangement (i.e., at a time or in a manner differing from the scheduled offering) must be approved by the MFT Program Director. (This rule does not apply to courses indicated as arranged courses on the class schedule.) A fee of \$40.00 will be assessed for taking a course by arrangement.

**Change of Course.** Students who desire to withdraw from a course or add a course must secure an "Application for Add, Drop or Change of Class or Schedule" card from the Academic Center or the MFT Program Director and have the change approved by the MFT Program Director. No course may be added to a schedule after the second week of class during spring and fall semesters or after the first week of the summer session or January term. The effective date of a course change, enrollment or withdrawal is the date the procedure is completed in the Academic Center. The grade of "W" is given for withdrawals after the second week and before the tenth week of the semester. Withdrawals are normally not allowed beyond the ninth week.

**Grades.** All grades are filed in the Academic Center as part of the permanent record of the student. Successful completion of any course depends on fulfilling the specific requirements of the course as indicated by the professor at the level of competency which he or she requires. Maintenance of acceptable standards of ethical conduct is also required for successful course completion. The grades and quality points given are in descending order of excellence:

- A – (4.00)
- B – (3.00)
- C – (2.00)
- D – (1.00)
- F – (0.0)      Failing
- FX – (0.0)      Failing because of excessive absences.

I – (0.0) Incomplete. A neutral mark, the I is given at the discretion of an instructor when, for a legitimate reason, a student is not able to complete course requirements within a given semester because of illness or inability to complete a term project because of extenuating circumstances. A contract signed by the professor and the student must accompany this grade to indicate the nature of the work to be completed. An I may not be used as an alternative grade of F. An incomplete grade must be made up before the seventh week of the next fall or spring semester; otherwise the grade will be changed to a failing grade (F) on the transcript.

Audit No credit and no grade will be recorded. The course may not be repeated later for credit. The professor may require the student to complete all class assignments. Application to audit a course must be made at the time of enrollment. Tuition for an audited course is the same as enrollment for credit.

W Neutral grade given for withdrawals after the second week and before the tenth week of the semester. Comparable periods apply for January and summer terms.

S Satisfactory.

U Unsatisfactory.

**Grade Reports.** Grades are issued within 10 days of the close of a course. All grade reports are issued online.

**Leave of Absence.** Should a graduate student find it necessary to temporarily leave the program, he/she can request a leave of absence from the program. Students returning to the program in less than 24 months will not have to be reconsidered for admission. If more than 24 months elapse, a student must apply for readmission to the program.

**Withdrawal from the University.** If it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from the Graduate Program in MFT, he or she must complete an exit interview with the Program Director. After completion of the exit interview, the student must notify the Academic Center and the Business Office, where proper refunds may be made. Students who leave the University without following proper withdrawal procedure will receive grades of F in all courses and be responsible for all charges incurred.

## **AUTHENTICITY OF STUDENT WORK**

The University maintains a strict policy concerning academic dishonesty, which includes cheating, plagiarism, giving assistance on an examination or paper when expressly forbidden by the instructor, and any other practices which demonstrate a lack of academic integrity. Cheating occurs any time a student uses deception in order to avoid fulfilling the specific requirements of an assignment or course and/or in order to receive a higher grade than he/ she might otherwise receive. Plagiarism occurs when a student appropriates passages or ideas from someone else's writing into his/her own without providing proper documentation and/or without using quotation marks to indicate when he/she is directly quoting from a source. The responsibility lies with the student to know and adhere to principles of academic honesty. The University uses Turnitin.com as a means of verifying the authenticity of student work along with actively investigating any suspicion of academic dishonesty.

**Procedure.** If an instructor determines that the student is guilty of academic dishonesty, the instructor must discuss the matter with the student. In the event the instructor cannot reach the student in a timely manner, such as when the student has gone home at the end of a semester, the instructor may assign a grade of "I" (Incomplete) until the student can be contacted and the matter of academic dishonesty discussed. The instructor then completes the "Academic Violation Form," which should include evidence and other necessary documentation. The instructor will determine the appropriate remedy: either a grade of zero on the assignment in question or a grade of "F" in the course. The student will designate whether he/she accepts the

remedy for the violation of the dishonesty policy or wishes to appeal the instructor's decision. If a student elects to appeal, the "appeal due date" line must be completed on the Academic Violation Form. (See the Appeals section for more information regarding the appeals process.)

Upon completion, the instructor forwards the Academic Violation Form to the Registrar's Office for placement in the student's permanent record. The Registrar will forward copies of the Academic Violation Form to the student, Director of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies, appropriate academic dean or director, and Chief Academic Officer. Not appealing when the form is first completed or by the appeal due date will be taken as an admission of guilt, except under compelling circumstances to be determined at the sole discretion of the Chief Academic Officer.

If upon receipt of the Academic Violation Form the Registrar determines that the student is guilty of a second offense, and after all appeals are exhausted, then a grade of FD (Failure Due to Academic Dishonesty) will be assigned by the Registrar for the course regardless of the remedy specified on the Academic Violation Form. The student is then permanently disbarred from membership in any honorary society, is permanently ineligible for any OBU honor list, and permanently expelled from the University. The Registrar will notify all parties in writing. A copy of the final report with the two offenses will become a part of the student's permanent record. The university reserves the right to expel the student after a first offense, depending on the circumstances and at the sole discretion of the Chief Academic Officer. If the student is enrolled in one or more other courses at the time the FD is issued, he/she will be academically withdrawn from the other course(s). In the case of academic withdrawal due to an academic violation, no refund will be provided.

**Appeals.** The student who wishes to appeal an academic violation charge should submit his/her appeal in writing to the appropriate Academic Dean or Program Director (hereafter referred to as Dean) by the appeal due date indicated on the Academic Violation Form, which is normally within ten regularly scheduled business days after the completion date of the Academic Violation Form. This statement should contain the reasons for which the student is appealing the instructor's decision. The burden of proof lies with the student in such a case to show that an ethical violation has not occurred. Within ten regularly scheduled business days of receiving the written appeal, the Dean will notify, in writing, both the instructor and the student of the decision. Copies of the decision are to be forwarded to the Registrar and the Chief Academic Officer by the Dean. If the Dean is also the instructor who files the Academic Violation Form, then the student may appeal to the Chief Academic Officer.

When, in the opinion of the Dean, the student fails to show reasonable cause for further investigation, the Dean may deny the appeal without taking further action. When, in the opinion of the Dean, a student's appeal raises reasonable doubt as to whether an ethical violation occurred, the Dean will meet with the faculty member and with the student and render a decision within ten regularly scheduled business days of the receipt of the appeal. If the decision favors granting the student's appeal, the Dean may request that the Registrar remove the Academic Violation Form from the student's record. The Dean will notify both the student and the instructor of this action. Copies of the decision are to be forwarded to the Registrar and the Chief Academic Officer by the Dean.

Any student who has exhausted the remedies open under the procedures outlined above may appeal the entire matter to the Chief Academic Officer in writing within ten regularly scheduled business days of receiving the response from the Dean. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Chief Academic Officer will review the matter and issue a decision within fifteen (15) regularly scheduled business days. The Chief Academic Officer has the authority to deny the appeal, reduce the penalties in the event of extenuating circumstances, or direct the registrar to remove the record of the Academic Violation Form from the student's permanent record. The



results of the Chief Academic Officer's decision are final. The Chief Academic Officer will notify the student and the Dean. Copies of the decision are to be forwarded to the Registrar and the instructor by the Chief Academic Officer.

Note: During the appeals process, the student may continue to attend the class in which the violation occurred

## **GRADE APPEALS**

In the case of a grade appeal, the student shall be considered to have an authentic grievance when he/ she can demonstrate his/her grade for a course has been adversely affected because a faculty member has:

1. made an error in the calculation of the grade or has made an error in reporting the grade to the Registrar;
2. made an arbitrary, prejudiced or capricious evaluation of the student;
3. created and enforced course policy that is arbitrary, prejudiced or capricious;
4. failed to notify (or to make a reasonable attempt to notify) the student of course requirements, policies, and/or penalties;
5. failed to notify (or make a reasonable attempt to notify) the student in a timely manner of failure to achieve educational objectives;
6. infringed upon the contractual rights of the student as delineated in the course syllabus, the Catalog, or other University policy documents;
7. violated the civil or human rights of the student as defined by law.

Grade appeals should begin by the student contacting the faculty member to attempt resolution. The first contact must be made within 10 working days of the date that final grades are posted. If the faculty member is unavailable, the student should contact the Academic Dean to petition for an extension. If the initial consultation does not result in a satisfactory outcome, the student may request a conciliatory conference with the Dean of the Graduate and Professional Studies program, the Academic Dean and the faculty member. Such a request must be made in writing within five working days after the initial consultation with the faculty member. Should the conciliation conference not yield a satisfactory result, the student may request a formal hearing. A written request for a formal hearing must be submitted by the student within 10 working days after the conciliation conference. The written request must be submitted to the Chief Academic Officer. The petition must include detailed factual data and other information that the petitioner deems pertinent to his/her case, including an account of the informal procedures and why the attempted resolution was unsatisfactory.

Within five working days after receiving the student's petition, an ad hoc hearing committee shall be formed. The Chief Academic Officer shall select two graduate faculty members. The Dean of the Graduate and Professional Studies program shall select two graduate students. The ad hoc hearing committee will select an additional faculty member to be a non-voting chairman. No person with a conflict of interest shall be selected. The hearing shall be within 10 working days of the selection of the ad hoc hearing committee at a time and place determined by the Chief Academic Officer and communicated to all parties through his/her office. The hearing will be conducted in private, and the parties will make no public statements about the case. The ad hoc hearing committee will not be bound by strict rules of legal evidence. Serious efforts will be made to obtain the most reliable evidence. The decision will take the form of finding of fact, conclusions, and a recommended disposition of the appeal. The findings of fact, conclusions, and recommended disposition must be based solely on the hearing records and pertinent University policies and procedures. The findings, conclusions and recommendations shall not be inconsistent with applicable provisions of local, state, and federal law.

### **General Rules of Procedure for Grade Appeals**

The following rules and procedures will apply to all grade appeals:

1. Time limits may be extended by the Chief Academic Officer when he/she considers the reasons for an extension to be warranted. However, a grade appeal should be resolved within six months of the time the grade is received.
2. The committee shall be provided copies of all written correspondence that have been exchanged relative to the appeal. These materials shall be collected by the Chief Academic Officer and given to the Chairman of the committee.
3. All proceedings shall be closed to anyone except the participants and the committee. The committee will review written documentation and hear oral statements from the two parties. At the discretion of the Chair, other students or faculty members may be invited for a portion of the hearing to provide relevant information.
4. All proceedings and records of proceedings shall be confidential.
5. A tape recording or video recording of the formal hearing will be made by the University. A transcript shall be provided at the expense of the party or parties requesting it.
6. All formal hearing documents shall be kept in the confidential files in the office of the Chief Academic Officer. The ad hoc hearing committee will present its decision in writing within five working days to all parties and to the Chief Academic Officer. Should the student initiate court action, the University reserves the right to discontinue internal procedures or to continue same to complete a record as the case warrants. The ad hoc hearing committee may decide:
  - a. to uphold the grade assigned by the faculty member;
  - b. to suggest that the faculty member or the Chief Academic Officer change the student's grade; or
  - c. to negotiate a mutually acceptable compromise between the student and the faculty member.At least three of the four voting members of the committee must concur that the grade should be changed before a decision is made to change a grade.

## **DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

The MFT program utilizes a comprehensive recruitment strategy that aligns with the University's mission and goals. The program believes that a diverse student body, faculty and supervisors contribute to a robust learning experience and more accurately reflect and, thusly, equip our students to engage a diverse world (see OBU mission statement). Our comprehensive recruitment strategy utilizes local and regional marketing, social media, alumni events, church relations, faculty speaking engagements and local conferences.

In an effort to retain diverse students, faculty and supervisors, the MFT program desires to foster healthy dialogue in the classroom, clinical and social environments that acknowledges diversity and the damaging effects of discrimination and oppression of minorities. Students, faculty and supervisors are expected to identify oppressive systems and to advocate for all people as worthy of our care and God's love. As Ephesians 2 challenges us to be unified through Christ, we seek peace amongst ourselves, our neighbors and the entire world. Students, faculty and supervisors are encouraged to gather together and support fellow colleagues and peers who belong to societal groups with a history of oppression in order to be change agents within our spheres of influence. The MFT Program is active in soliciting feedback from students, faculty and supervisors on diversity issues. We believe that by acknowledging the voices of the oppressed then we are following Jesus' call to "Love one another (John 15)". The MFT Program asserts that those who are in positions of privilege must initiate, reach out and advocate for our brothers and sisters whose voices are marginalized.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Oklahoma Baptist University strives to maintain high standards of professional ethics in an atmosphere in which individuals do not abuse their personal authority or power in interpersonal relationships.

The OBU College of Graduate and Professional Studies is committed to maintaining a humane atmosphere in which the race, color, gender, age, national origin, marital status, and cognitive or physical disability are not disparaged. The University will not tolerate language or behavior directed against particular persons or groups the intent of which is to degrade, humiliate, embarrass, frighten, or otherwise dehumanize.

## **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

Oklahoma Baptist University is founded, owned and operated by the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. OBU endeavors to ensure that our Christian identity is maintained, and that we remain faithful to our Baptist heritage of academic excellence. OBU strives to provide a rigorous education across a variety of fields, from religion, to science, to the arts. Our programs are undergirded with a Christian worldview. As a Baptist institution we emphasize religious perspectives which align with our Baptist tradition. We acknowledge and respect others whose moral views diverge from ours, but the University retains the right to make institutional decisions in light of our religious affiliation.

As faculty representing our respective disciplines (Marriage and Family Therapy, Medical Family Therapy, Psychology and Family Science) we endeavor to prepare our students to actualize the mission statement of the University. Our students are prepared to integrate Christian faith and their respective discipline by receiving rigorous training as an MFT but by also being equipped to employ a Christian critique of our discipline.

In accordance with both OBU's and the program's respective mission statements, we also prepare our students to engage a diverse world by helping our students critically examine their respective fields through a biblical framework. Our prayer is that our students will encounter the light of God's truth throughout their studies at OBU. We also pray that God helps us equip students to care for a broken and hurting world with compassion and respect for others.

Of current particular interest to our fields is how we teach and counsel regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. OBU's Human Sexuality policy articulates a traditional Christian perspective regarding sexuality and identity. We prepare our students to understand this biblical perspective and we encourage accountability for all OBU students and clients as members of the OBU community. We believe that OBU community members should be active in their adherence to the code of conduct established by University policy.

## **OBU HUMAN SEXUALITY POLICY**

Oklahoma Baptist University's policy regarding sex, sexuality and gender identity is grounded in our longstanding institutional religious identity. This identity, in turn, is grounded in the teachings of the Bible as understood through the University's mission statement, founding documents, our Baptist heritage, and through our accountability as an entity of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. This policy addresses transsexualism, transgenderism, homosexuality, and related gender identity issues. The University affirms that God's original and ongoing intent and action is the creation of humanity manifested as two distinct sexes,

male and female. The University also recognizes that due to sin and human brokenness, human experiential perception of sex and gender is not always that which God the Creator originally designed and yet the University affirms God's capacity to heal and to transform our brokenness in keeping with His purposes and will. With this foundational understanding of creation, fall, and redemption, the University does not support nor affirm the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's experiential perception of same sex attraction or of gender by the adoption of psychological identity discordant with one's birth sex. Similarly, the University does not support nor affirm attempts to change one's given biological birth sex via medical intervention in favor of the identity of the opposite sex or of an indeterminate identity. Although as a Christian residential institution of higher learning, the University will respect those whose moral views diverge from ours, the University will make institutional decisions in light of this policy regarding housing, student admission and retention, employment hiring and retention, and other matters.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

**Alcoholic Beverages/Drugs.** The University prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and illicit drugs by students, employees, and others, on University-controlled premises or in connection with any University activity.

**Breach of Peace.** Breach of peace is defined as an action which disrupts the peace or endangers the safety, health, rights, or life of any person, and an activity which incites others to such actions. Students who engage in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action. Disruption of the functional processes of the University by individuals and/or organizations will not be permitted. The use of obscene language is prohibited at any time.

**Social Media.** In addition to being therapists, students are ambassadors for the program, OBU, and the field of Marriage & Family Therapy. As such, certain guidelines for social media use are necessary to protect the integrity and reputation of clients, students, the program and the profession. These policies apply to any social networking site (e.g., facebook, twitter, linked-in, etc.)

Students should be professional and respectful in online interactions. In order to maintain confidentiality and ethical responsibility toward clients, students must not post any information about clients on social media sites, even with identifying information obscured. Students should not post anything that defames other students, the MFT program, Oklahoma Baptist University, or the profession. Should postings be found that violate these policies, MFT faculty will meet with the student and a remediation plan may be enacted.

**Firearm Free Zone.** Consistent with state law, the OBU College of Graduate and Professional Studies campus is designated as a firearms free zone. The only persons who may carry a firearm on campus are security and law enforcement personnel when acting in an official capacity.

**Inclement Weather.** In the rare event that OBU College of Graduate and Professional Studies should be forced to close the program office and meeting rooms due to inclement weather, a phone message will be posted by 4:00p.m. and students will be contacted by email. Even if events are ongoing, participants should never endanger their personal safety by traveling to the College of Graduate and Professional Studies. Instructors will make special provisions, including rescheduling of cancelled class meeting times, as appropriate.

**Care of Unsupervised Children.** Due to insurance requirements, children under the age of 18 are not allowed in the facilities unless special arrangements are made. No guests are allowed in course meetings except by permission of the instructor.

**Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a reasonable individual would believe that his/her response to the conduct will affect his/her employment or academic status; or
- the conduct creates an intimidating or hostile environment for work or learning.

Sexual harassment can be verbal, visual, physical, or communicated in writing or electronically. Although sexual harassment may violate state or federal law, the University may consider conduct to be sexual harassment whether or not it rises to the level of illegal sex discrimination.

**Discriminatory Harassment.** Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts, that relate to race, color, gender, national origin, age, or disability; and
- written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, gender, national origin, age, or disability and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on campus or circulated on campus.

Such harassment is contrary to the Christian standards of conduct expected of all members of the graduate University community, students, staff, and faculty. Any student who engages in harassment will be subject to disciplinary action ranging from a warning to expulsion, if appropriate. Persons who believe they have been objects of sexual harassment or gender discrimination should so advise the Director of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies, the Academic Dean/Program Director, or their supervisor.

**Personal Therapy.** While OBU does not mandate that students receive personal therapy, we highly encourage all students to actively engage in treatment as needed. We recognize that a clinical training program contains many stressors and that therapists would do well to heed the admonition to “Be healthy in order to help others be healthy”.

## DISABILITY SERVICES

OBU’s College of Graduate and Professional Studies provides support services to students with disabilities. The College of Graduate and Professional Studies is committed to the goal of achieving equal educational opportunity and full participation for students with disabilities. If you have a need for services due to disabilities, please contact the Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies at 405.585.4601.

## TUITION AND FEES

The tuition for all graduate courses is \$550.00 per credit hour. There is also a graduation fee of \$100 to help defer the expenses related to graduation.

## FINANCIAL AID

Some financial aid may be available to graduate students in the form of scholarships, long-term loans, grants, part-time employment, and loan repayment. For details contact the Office of Financial Aid. Telephone: (405) 585-5020

## **PARKING**

Students will need to register their vehicles at the University Police Department to receive a parking permit and are expected to follow posted signs and all parking policies. Students and faculty should refer to the OBU Student Handbook for detailed information on the University's parking policies to avoid fines.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

For additional information regarding the program contact Dr. Canaan Crane, MFT Program Director.  
Telephone: (405) 585-4177. E-mail: [canaan.crane@okbu.edu](mailto:canaan.crane@okbu.edu).

For latest program changes visit the program's home page on OBU's web site at  
<https://www.okbu.edu/graduate/therapy/mft/index.html>.

# **SECTION IV: Program Policies and Procedures**

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The MFT Program follows the traditional Summer, Fall, Spring academic calendar with some minor modifications. The Academic Calendar can be found online at [www.okbu.edu](http://www.okbu.edu). Practicum Supervision carries over between academic semesters in order to ensure supervision coverage. The supervision coverage schedule can be found at [www.okbu.edu/mft](http://www.okbu.edu/mft).

## **FACULTY ADVISING**

MFT students are assigned a specific faculty advisor who is available to meet to discuss academic progress, degree planning and other related concerns. Students should expect to meet at least once a semester with their faculty advisor but may schedule additional meetings as needed. The advisor may encourage the student to seek personal therapy if necessary and the MFT program encourages students to work actively to maintain a positive academic, family and work life balance. Faculty advisors will also serve as the Capstone Advisor.

## **PROGRESS CHECKS**

Periodically, the MFT graduate faculty will review the student's progress and hold a check-in meeting to discuss the student's strengths and growth areas. If the faculty finds it necessary, students will be required to follow certain recommendations for growth in the program. Among the options are additional course work, time-out from the program for personal growth experiences, reconsideration of vocational plans, and temporary or permanent withdrawal from the program. Students will also have time at this meeting to provide feedback on their experience of the program.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The Student Learning Outcomes guide the program in determining student progress. By the end of the program, all students should be able to:

SLO #1: Students will demonstrate understanding of systems concepts, theories, and techniques that are foundational to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

SLO #2: Students will demonstrate their competency to practice marriage and family therapy with a wide variety of systemic configurations and identified problems.

SLO #3: Students will demonstrate competence in understanding and working from a multicultural and global lens.

SLO #4: Students will demonstrate competence in ethical decision making related to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

SLO #5: Students will demonstrate competence in providing clinical services in a Christian context.

## **RETENTION**

The OBU MFT program desires to promote and encourage success for all students as a fulfillment of our commitment to transforming students' lives (see OBU mission statement). The MFT program utilizes faculty-



student advising relationships, regular progress checks, student mentoring, student support services, and training faculty in best practices for advising. Students who are identified as needing specific support for success in the program are provided additional support and accountability through the progress check procedures.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

Students are encouraged to utilize the informal process for submitting complaints to either the MFT Program Director or the MFT Clinic Director, depending on circumstances. Students can schedule an informal meeting during which concerns may be discussed in a supportive environment. The MFT Program Director and MFT Clinic Director will ensure that the concerns are relayed to the MFT Faculty and that needed changes are considered and implemented if appropriate.

University policies provide the opportunity for students to file formal grievances concerning academic matters and/or complaints about administrative/staff personnel. Information regarding procedures may be obtained from the Academic Center and/or the Office of Student Development.

## **FORMAL GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT POLICY**

OBU's Graduate and Professional Studies students and faculty are expected to support and promote the values of ethics, academic integrity, individual freedom, dignity, respect, and concern for others. Graduate and Professional Studies students have the right to appeal decisions. Those decisions not related to grade issues follow the sequence:

- faculty member
- MFT Program Director
- Division Chair or Academic Dean
- ad hoc committee (Academic Dean, faculty member)
- Provost/Chief Academic Officer

The grade appeals process is outlined in the Academic Policies section to follow.

### **Complaint Policy**

The Student Complaint and Grievance Policy does not supersede specific policies involving special cases such as academic integrity and grade appeals, Title IX, sexual harassment, and due process within discipline procedures/hearings. Those special cases have specific policies and procedures that are outlined separately. A student who is unsure of which policies or procedures should be followed may discuss the matter with the GPS office, Director of Human Resources, or the Title IX coordinator.

University policies provide the opportunity for students to file informal concerns or complaints, or formal grievances concerning any member of the University community while acting in an official capacity (e.g. faculty member, administrator, staff member). Information regarding procedures may be obtained from the Academic Center and/or the Office of Student Development.

Following the investigation, evaluation, and resolution of the formal grievance, the student and the University department/college will receive a written report of the outcome of the dispute. If the student's concern is not resolved at the formal grievance level, then the student is able to submit a final formal written grievance to the President by following the procedures outlined below.

The policy and form may be accessed in the Student Handbook at [www.okbu.edu/student-life/student-grievance-policy.html](http://www.okbu.edu/student-life/student-grievance-policy.html)

## **STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

In an effort to gather regular feedback from students about the program, student representatives will attend faculty meetings to update faculty on student opinions and experiences. This position will default to the Graduate Assistants if no other student is able to attend the meetings.

Additionally, once a semester the College of Graduate Schools and Professionals will host a combined student advisory council of all of the students in OBU's graduate programs to gather feedback from the students about the program. All students are invited to be a part of this process. Professors will announce at the beginning of the semester when these meetings are held.

## **PROGRAM PROBATION AND DISMISSAL**

The MFT program maintains regular oversight over student's academic progress and fitness for clinical work. At times, this may necessitate action by the program to assist the student in remediating concerns or addressing any academic or personal issues which negatively impact the learning environment. The MFT program may choose to require a student to follow the program probation process. The MFT Program Director, in consultation with the MFT Faculty, will outline the expected goals, establish a timeline and expected behaviors from the student in order to satisfactorily improve the addressed concerns. The student is expected to actively participate in the process and may, at the MFT Program Director's discretion, add in additional feedback to refine the plan to best fit the student's professional goals. The MFT Program Director will make the final decision on the established plan.

If a student successfully implements the program probation plan within the established timelines, the MFT Faculty will remove the probationary status. Students who do not satisfactorily complete the probation plan will be dismissed from the program. Students who have completed the probationary plan but have subsequent academic or personal issues which negatively impact the learning environment may be dismissed from the program.

Students who violate the Code of Conduct, Academic Policies, Requirements for GPA, AAMFT Code of Ethics, or other legal/ethical violations including, but not limited to, non-disclosure of felony convictions, legal charges pending at the time of enrollment or misdemeanors related to the practice of MFT, may be dismissed from the program.

Any appeals must follow the process outlined in the Academic Catalog.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Students in the OBU MFT program are required to have consistent access to a computer with sufficient capabilities for word processing, producing presentations and University email. Students should have regular and consistent internet access. Students are expected to manage confidential client information in a manner that adheres to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and HIPAA rules. All personal electronic devices, which may access confidential information, must be password protected and only accessible to the student.

Training for specific technologies will be provided on a regular basis in the MFT Clinic and resources for library use can be found on the OBU MLC website. The OBU Helpdesk website maintains a listing of detailed “how-to” guides on a variety of technical training issues. MFT Faculty and Supervisors will stay current on appropriate uses of technology and will encourage students to develop competent and secure practices.

# SECTION V: Practicum

# PRACTICUM

The Practicum is a required experience for students seeking a Master of Science in Marital and Family Therapy at Oklahoma Baptist University. Those students who are allowed to progress to the second year of the program and enter the practicum have completed first year course-work, and have been assessed in the classroom and laboratory practice and were found ready for their first supervised clinical experience.

The objective of this year-long experience is to train students to perform the various duties of the professional marital and family therapist. The practicum experience is considered a key ingredient in this professional training.

Practicum students are required to provide marital and family therapy services. These services can include marital therapy, family therapy, psychoeducational services to couples, families and individuals, group therapy, and individual counseling or psychotherapy. Since marital and family therapy is their academic discipline, it is desired that the majority of client contact hours will be spent with more than one family member.

Practicum students are expected to learn and perform various duties. These duties hopefully will include:

- learning and following the policies and procedures of the site,
- observing the conduct of various forms of therapy.
- co-therapy with other therapists.
- doing intake assessments,
- providing crisis intervention,
- conducting individual and family assessments,
- formulating treatment plans,
- providing therapy from intake to successful termination,
- managing an increasingly complex clinical caseload including a variety of types of clients,
- completing all administrative functions required by the site,
- properly documenting all contacts with clients,

In addition to these duties, students are required by the University to:

- keep a log of all activities,
- make reports about practicum experiences,
- make audio and/or video tapes of sessions with clients for discussion in supervision,
- obtain proper permission from the Site Supervisor and a signed Consent to Audio/Video recording from clients for off site supervision,
- complete supplemental readings assigned by the supervisor,
- evaluate their training experience each semester,

The site agrees to provide the following experiences:

- accept this student for a minimum of three academic terms (one calendar year,)
- provide the student with a variety of clinical experiences conducting marital and family therapy
- provide a minimum of five hundred (500) hours of face-to-face contact with clients over the three terms (approximately 10 clients per week,)
- provide an on-site supervisor (an AAMFT Clinical Fellow or Licensed Marital and Family Therapist) who will provide administrative support and guidance as needed,
- provide ongoing feedback to the trainee and conduct a written evaluation of each trainee each term.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

A student is eligible to be admitted to the practicum after he has completed all the foundational courses with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and no more than one 'C' grade. Determination of admittance will be made by the MFT Graduate Faculty based on academic performance, progress check-ins, and professional readiness.

To facilitate this eligibility assessment students are required to participate in a Pre-Practicum process. The pre-practicum process allows students to obtain clinical experience in the MFT Clinic before they begin in a specific site.

## **PRE-PRACTICUM PROCESS**

Students will have an opportunity, during select courses, to observe therapy in the Kemp MFT Clinic. They will also staff cases with the active therapists in order to introduce them to the processes involved in becoming clinically active. Students will complete an orientation training for the procedures and electronic record and video systems used in the Kemp MFT Clinic during the semester preceding the start of practicum. The first step is to complete your background check along with securing your malpractice insurance. You will receive instructions for completing these items and submitting to the Program Director. After these items are complete then the Program Director will approve you to move forward with approved pre-practicum sites to discuss scheduling/availability and site policies.

As you demonstrate competency and complete all pre-practicum requirements, the faculty will then revisit to consider your transition to practicum. Upon receiving faculty approval, you may begin the transition into the practicum process.

## **DURATION**

The practicum may begin in either the spring or summer semester, depending on the student's degree plan, and lasts at least one calendar year. During the practicum, a student will acquire 500 client contact hours with a minimum of 200 relational hours.

## **PRACTICUM LEAVE**

Students who are clinically active will have access to 14 days of leave that can be taken during a fiscal year. Leave requests should be submitted to the Kemp MFT Clinic Director at least 2 weeks before the day(s) needed off. Once approval is granted then notification will be sent to faculty supervisors to be placed in student practicum folder.

## **SITE SELECTION**

The Kemp MFT Clinic in Shawnee provides an excellent experience as a training site and many students choose to complete the majority of their hours at the MFT Clinic. Other sites may be available depending on the student's location and training goals. Students who wish to be considered for an external site should work with their Practicum Supervisor and/or their Advisor to discuss practicum sites that will meet their needs, be they of a clinical, physical, or financial nature. A practicum site must offer marriage and family therapy services and must have a site supervisor who is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist or Clinical Fellow of

the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and preferably a State Approved Supervisor or an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate. Before you begin, your practicum site must be approved by the MFT Faculty.

## SUPERVISION

You will receive your primary clinical supervision from a designated faculty supervisor each semester. You may also receive guidance from your on-site supervisor. It is your responsibility to keep a careful record of all therapy and supervision sessions through the use of the designated OBU forms (Weekly Report Form and MFT Monthly Hours Log).

- **Group and Dyad/Individual:** Students are required to receive 100 hours of supervision during practicum. The faculty supervisor will arrange both a group meeting and dyad/individual session amongst the assigned groups. Alternative supervision arrangements are extremely unusual and supervision provided by non-faculty supervisors is subject to stringent guidelines. Students are expected to be flexible in scheduling these weekly meetings.
- **Observable Data:** It is required that a majority of the supervision (at least 50 hours) be conducted utilizing observable data, defined as: including audio and video recordings, as well as live (behind the mirror, in the room co-therapy, reflecting teams, etc.) observations.
- **Professionalism in Supervision:** You will be required to attend, arrive on time, and stay through the duration of all supervision sessions. As a professional representing the field, it is expected that you will be on time and well prepared for your clients and for supervision. It is expected that you will review audio/video from your sessions each week prior to supervision and that you will come to supervision with specific examples that you would like to show/discuss in supervision. In addition, participation includes actively observing other therapists' sessions and providing honest and respectful feedback.
- **Weekly Readings:** You may be assigned readings throughout the semester and you will be required to complete all reading assignments by the designated group supervision session.
- **Problems:** Should you experience any difficulties or serious problems at the practicum site, you are expected to communicate them immediately to your Faculty Supervisor.

## PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

It is imperative that before you begin your practicum you secure professional liability insurance. If you become a Student Member of the AAMFT, free professional liability insurance is included with your membership fee, from CPH and associates, AAMFT's insurance carrier. Insurance will need to be kept up to date throughout the entirety of practicum and new documentation will need to be given to the Program Director when renewed. There are other available options for purchase of professional liability insurance: see Program Director for more information.

## ALTERNATIVE HOURS

Teaming and Larger Systems are classified as alternative hours. No more than 100 Alternate Hours may count toward degree completion.

**Teaming.** Practicum students can "team" with another practicum student on a case. Teaming involves active participation in both the planning and analysis of the session. In order for a student to earn a "teaming" hour they must observe (audio or video recording or live) the entire session. The session then counts for the "team" therapist as it would for the actual therapist (e.g. I see a couple for an hour, my team gets a "relational" hour

vs. an "individual" hour for seeing an individual). The planning and analysis can also count towards "teaming". For example, if I'm "teaming" with a colleague, then the 15 minutes we discuss the case direction before and after can combine for a total of 30 minutes. This 30 minutes, plus the hour of session that I view, would combine for a total of 1.5 hrs of "relational" teaming. The therapist who actually saw the client would count the session as 1 hour relational and then 30 minutes of relational teaming.

**Larger Systems.** Practicum students are encouraged to interact with multiple parts of their clients' systems. To that end a practicum student can count case consultation with other professionals who are directly involved in the lives of your clients/families. Examples of "Larger Systems" would include: participating in case staffings with other directly involved professionals at your placement site (nurse, tech, educator, shelter worker), contacting a physician, talking with a student's teacher, etc. Students should be documenting "Larger Systems" hours with notes in the clients' case files or in a general psychotherapy notes document that the student keeps separately. All references to clients in documents outside of case files must be coded to protect confidentiality. The clinical organization's rules hold precedence for this documentation if requirements are different than specified in this definition.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

During the practicum you are expected to abide by the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Violation of the Code may lead to the withdrawal from the practicum and/or the MFT Graduate Program.

## **TERMINATION OF SITE**

The MFT program makes every effort to work with sites to ensure continuity of services. Faculty supervisors, on-site supervisors and students are expected to be in regular contact and openly collaborating to ensure that the provided services are of the highest quality and that the student's learning experience is positive. In the unlikely event that the practicum site is no longer able to provide these experiences, or the student is found to be functioning in an unacceptable manner, the on-site supervisor will notify the Faculty Supervisor.



# **SECTION VI: Graduation Policies**

## GRADUATION POLICIES

**Degree Check.** Graduate and Professional Studies students submit a degree check from the Director of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies at least six months prior to the anticipated graduation date to certify completion of courses toward the degree, as well as anticipated completion of all remaining requirements. This may include certification by the Registrar of official transcripts from other accredited post-secondary institutions, if transfer credit is being applied to the degree (maximum of six credit hours). The degree check must be signed by the student and the Academic Dean/Program Director.

### **Graduation Requirements.**

1. Completion of the required coursework:
  - a. Successful completion of the program's 45 credit hours
  - b. Successful completion of the clinical practicum (minimum 500 face-to-face therapy hours)
  - c. And completion of the formal Capstone project
2. Cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in all OBU College of Graduate and Professional Studies coursework.
3. Fulfillment of all financial obligations to the University.
4. Payment of graduation fee
5. Approval by the Graduate and Professional Studies Council minus student membership.

**Graduation Application.** The Application for Graduation form should be completed by the first day of the month preceding the month of graduation. Commencement ceremonies, held on the OBU main campus, offer an opportunity to celebrate achievements with family and friends. Graduate degree candidates are strongly encouraged to participate in commencement ceremonies.

## POST-DEGREE LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

The M.S. degree in Marriage and Family Therapy fulfills the academic requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapy practitioner in Oklahoma. It is expected that graduates will pursue licensure in whatever jurisdiction they intend to practice. Although the licensing laws vary from state to state, they generally require a licensing examination and two years of supervised work experience in marriage and family therapy, following the receipt of the degree. Researching the requirements for licensure in other states is strongly recommended.

## PORTABILITY OF DEGREE

While the OBU MFT program meets the academic requirements as specified by the Oklahoma State Board of Behavioral Health for the MFT license, students who are planning to pursue licensure in a different State or jurisdiction should be aware that each State or jurisdiction may have specific or unique requirements for licensure or certification. Applicants are encouraged to be aware of these differences and to consult with the MFT Program Director about ways to address these concerns. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all requirements are met for licensure in the jurisdiction of choice.

# **SECTION VII: Appendices**

## APPENDIX A

### COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

#### Foundations of Family Therapy - MFT 5003

An overview of the field of family therapy with an analysis of the contrasts between family therapy theories and linear psychotherapy theories and an exploration of family therapy from the vantage point of general systems theory, cybernetics, and theories of living open systems. Course will focus on theoretical foundations of marital and family systems, clinical applications, common treatment planning strategies, and an analysis of theories from a Christian perspective. Videotapes of the pioneers in family therapy will be studied and students will participate in and discuss live treatment sessions.

#### Basic Therapy Skills - MFT 5123

An applied course offering students experience in basic interview, assessment, and intervention skills used in individual, marital and family therapy. Students will participate in experiential exercises in counseling lab to simulate real counseling scenarios.

#### Psychopathology - MFT 5133

A study of the normal/abnormal or healthy/unhealthy development of personality and interpersonal relationships. Students are provided with specific tools for understanding and diagnosing more accurately individual and relational problems, and thus providing the most appropriate therapeutic interventions.

#### Developmental Contexts: Gender, Ethnicity, and Religion - MFT 5143

A study of the role of gender, religion and culture as developmental contexts and subsequent considerations for family and individual development and the therapeutic process. Students will be prepared to assess important contexts and devise treatment strategies in consideration of the influences of gender, religion and culture on individual and family life. Students will discuss the influence of Christian perspectives on human development.

#### Family Systems Theory – MFT 5203

This course focuses on Family Systems Theory as the foundation for Marriage & Family Therapy. Through reading and discussing classic and current writing in the field, students will gain theoretical understanding of General Systems Theory, Family Systems Theory, Communication Theory, and classic MFT theories that have grown out of these traditions. On Demand

#### Human Sexuality and Treatment - MFT 5213

An examination of human sexual development, the development of sexual attitudes within the context of the family, and sexual adjustment and dysfunction with an emphasis on the diagnosis and treatment of sexual dysfunctions, psychosexual disorders, and sex addictions in the relationship context. Christian perspectives of human sexuality will be addressed.

#### Marital Therapy - MFT 5223

A study of a variety of systemic approaches and theories of marital dynamics and therapy with particular emphasis on communication and redundant interaction patterns that produce pathological symptoms and dysfunction. Assessment of marital relationships, contracting with couples for treatment, common couple issues and treatment planning are examined, as well as a consideration of Christian perspectives on marriage. Actual cases and videotapes of commonly seen dysfunctions are studied and treatment interventions discussed.

### Professional Issues, Ethics, and the Law - MFT 5233

A seminar which focuses on the development of a professional attitude, identity and socialization of the marriage and family therapist. It examines the AAMFT code of ethics and the codes of ethics of other mental health professional associations. Special attention is given to ethical dilemmas unique to the treatment of families utilizing ethical decision-making models, relevant laws regulating the practice of family therapy, the role of the family therapist in court proceedings, and malpractice risks, malpractice insurance coverage, and risk reduction practices.

### Child and Adolescent Treatment in MFT - MFT 5243

A course designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the application of MFT theory to the treatment of children and adolescents. Course will also include practical approaches to the assessment and treatment of children and adolescents. Students will develop clinical skills in the areas of observation, assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment planning, and referral to community resources. Students will learn specific therapy techniques used in assessing and treating children.

### Research Design and Statistics - MFT 5313

Foundations of research design and statistical analysis with emphasis on interpretation and critical evaluation of marriage and family therapy research for application to clinical practice. Consideration is given to both quantitative and qualitative research relevant to marriage and family therapy.

### Family and Individual Assessment - MFT 5323

An examination of the major family therapy assessment methods and instruments. Students gain experience in diagnosis and treatment of both dysfunctional relationship patterns and nervous and mental disorders utilizing the major mental health assessment tools within a systemic context.

### Wilderness as Therapy - MFT 5333

An overview of the use of experiential and wilderness modalities to achieve meaningful relational, personal, and spiritual change in families, groups, and individuals. The course will explore theoretical foundations and will include experiential exercises as both participants and eventually as guides. Participation in outdoor activities is required and will enable student to apply techniques in wilderness setting. Course will also include an overview of special considerations such as legal liability, training/competencies, safety and management of crisis situations.

### Advanced Practice in MFT - MFT 5413

A study of family therapy theoretical foundations and an examination of the latest developments in family therapy with emphasis on current research of successful family treatment methods. Common presenting problems such as depression, marital dysfunction, parent child problems, and the addictions are studied. Class will also discuss and implement licensure exam preparation.

### Practicum - MFT 5809

The clinical experience consists of 500 contact hours in therapy with a variety of clients. At the beginning, students observe ongoing therapy conducted by senior therapists and supervisors and discuss the rationale, treatment goals, and strategies used by them. Gradually, they are given a case load of clients with different treatment needs, initially as co-therapists, and later as independent therapists under live and videotaped supervision. As they gain experience and assume increased responsibility for conducting therapy, they integrate theory and practice. In its final stages, the clinical experience prepares students to function independently in supervised practice. Students assess, diagnose and implement treatment plans with the

consent of their supervisors. Live observation and videotaped sessions demonstrate students' progression toward functioning as autonomous practitioners. Prerequisites: First year courses and approval of application to clinical experience practicum. May be repeated until Supervised Clinical Practice requirements are completed.

#### Introduction to Medical Family Therapy – MFT 5403

An overview of theory, fundamentals, and practical applications of medical family therapy. Students will be able to identify medical specializations, terminology, assessments, collaborative models and case note formats common to medical settings. A collaborative approach to interdisciplinary healthcare practice and research will be discussed, applied, and reinforced throughout the course. This course is offered as an 8 week intensive online course.

#### Advanced Medical Family Therapy – MFT 5603

An in depth extension of MedFT principles including provision of culturally competent healthcare services as well as the course and treatment of illness and disability across the lifespan. Students will gain an appreciation for diversity in families and the strengths various cultural groups, explore and work toward minimizing his or her own prejudices, and feel comfortable to work with diverse populations in an ethical and competent manner. In addition, students will gain a more in depth understanding of the illness and disease process including some of the more common illnesses and disabilities, family systems interventions, challenges, and collaborative opportunities for working with these populations. This class is offered as an 8 week intensive online course.

#### Medical Family Therapy Practicum – MFT 5703

The clinical experience consists of 40 client contact hours in therapy with clients and 80 clock hours. A practical application of the principles taught in Intro to Medical Family Therapy and Advanced Medical Family Therapy. Students will attend this practicum while working at a medical site and providing MedFT services. Emphasis will be placed on brief interventions (including solutions-focused therapy and motivational interviewing), working collaboratively within a multidisciplinary healthcare setting, and the application of course material from the two prerequisite courses.

#### Program Development and Evaluation - MFT 5423 (On Demand)

This course examines program development concepts and practice in community-based youth and family development contexts. Topics include program planning; design and implementation; impact evaluation; and accountability.

#### Missionary Member Care - MFT 5433 (On Demand)

An overview of cross-cultural considerations for the care of missionaries in the field. Unique considerations for work, family life, security, and issues related to furlough will be examined. Common problems along with practical treatment strategies will be discussed, along with use of technology and unique treatment protocols to address care limitations. This course would be offered as a week to two week long international trip. Most likely to be held over a Christmas/Early January time frame.

#### Premarital Counseling - MFT 5503 (On Demand)

An exploration of the techniques of assessment, testing, teaching, counseling, and enrichment and the various successful models of premarital preparation and counseling. Lectures and reading assignments focus on the traits of a healthy marriage from both a biblical and psychological perspective. The course is designed to equip students to guide dating and engaged couples to a healthy marriage and thus reduce the chance of later

marital difficulties and divorce. Successful completion of this course will lead to competence in using the PREPARE test.

#### Family Studies - MFT 5513 (On Demand)

A review of the recent and the historical developments in the field of family studies and family social science. Theoretical and research articles published in the National Council for Family Relations journals, and presentations made at recent NCFR Conferences will serve as the basis for this course.

#### Marriage and Family Therapy Supervision - MFT 5523 (On Demand)

An AAMFT required course for those seeking the Approved Supervisor designation, which includes both didactic and interactional components and covers major models of marriage and family therapy, models of supervision, the therapist-supervisor relationship, problem solving in supervision, supervisory interventions, ethical and legal issues in supervision, and AAMFT policy.

#### Theological Foundations - MFT 5913 (On Demand)

A seminar introducing Christian systematic theology and highlighting theological issues relevant to marriage and family therapy. Required of students who have not had at least one survey course in Bible, Religion, or Christian Doctrines.

#### MFT Capstone – MFT 5929

During the last semester of practicum, students will complete a capstone project that consists of a thorough case conceptualization and presentation, with video/audio/transcript support. Through the capstone project, students will demonstrate their competency in the areas of systems theory, use of specific MFT models of treatment, cultural competency, self-of-the-therapist issues and the capacity for presenting their work in a professional setting. The Capstone will be made up of two distinct products: a paper containing all the required elements and a professional presentation. Students will submit a paper that illustrates a coherent theory of therapy and a thorough case analysis. The capstone presentation will be presented to current students and faculty in the MFT program in a forum hosted at the end of the semester. Each student will work closely with an assigned Capstone Advisor to establish expectations for deadlines, drafts and required materials.

#### Thesis - MFT 5999