

MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY (MFT)

MFT 502 History and Foundations of Therapeutic Practices

In this course, students will explore the history of therapeutic practices and the conceptual foundation of systems therapy. Through a critical lens, students will examine the stages of therapy and the basic skills required of therapists. In addition, they will demonstrate the acquired knowledge of applying clinical decisions to clinical situations. 3 credits.

MFT 506 Ethical & Professional Issues

This course examines ethical, legal, and professional issues governing the practice of therapy. Depending upon the student's state of residence, ethical and legal responsibilities and liabilities will vary. Students will learn to apply ethical decision-making skills to resolving conflicts, practicing appropriate boundaries, and assuring that confidentiality is maintained. Students will learn how to apply the AAMFT Code of Ethics in the development of their clinical Identity. The course is designed to facilitate the development of ethical competencies for clinical practice including applying the AAMFT Code of Ethics, understanding legal responsibilities, and considering how therapist vulnerabilities may lead to compromises in ethical decision making. 3 credits.

MFT 510 Psychopathology & Diagnosis

This course is designed to provide students with an advanced understanding of current practices and methods of psychopathology and diagnosis. Students will take an evidence-based approach to understanding the etiology, diagnostic features, diagnosis, differential diagnosis, and treatment implications of clinical syndromes. Students will examine psychopathology from a biopsychosocial, theoretical, and ethnocultural perspective in addition to becoming educated on issues of ethical practice related to diagnosis and treatment of clinical syndromes. 3 credits.

MFT 512 Family Therapy Theories and Techniques: A Modern Emphasis

This advanced graduate marriage and family therapy course is designed to study the major systemic theoretical approaches linked to marriage and family therapy. Cybernetics family systems theory and therapy is emphasized. In addition, students will study several clinical models including Structural, Strategic, and Experiential Family Therapy and focus toward integration of these approaches in the conduct of therapy as a marriage and family therapist. 3 credits.

MFT 514 Couples Therapy

Students in this course will explore the constitution of marriage and the family. They will examine clinical models of marital or couples therapy along with the therapeutic process and specific theoretical interventions. Students will evaluate important contemporary issues such as relational interaction patterns, conflict, rupture of the relationship and domestic violence. They will develop an understanding of how societal factors influence the establishment of marriage and family. In addition, students will analyze and critique theories used in clinical settings to work with couples and families. 3 credits.

MFT 516 Assessment and Treatment of Substance Abuse

An overview of current theoretical and clinical approaches to the etiology, diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse and other addictive disorders. Students review current research and program design from a clinical perspective with the goal of increasing clinical skills in assessing and treating addictive disorders with individuals and/or families. Students address their own internal biases when working with this population group. Students also address ethical and cultural considerations when working with this population. 3 credits.

MFT 518 Child/Adolescent Psychopathology and Child Abuse Reporting

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of the theories, techniques, and practical applications involved in assessing, diagnosing and treatment of childhood and adolescent disorders as well as clinical needs. Students learn and apply therapeutic interventions for children and adolescents with a developmentally sensitive lens. Throughout the course, students will critically analyze various theoretical frameworks including play therapy, psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, family systems, and humanistic approaches, considering their relevance and applicability to therapeutic work with young clients and their families. Further, students will learn about child abuse and mandating reporting laws. 3 credits.

MFT 520 Advanced Individual Therapy I

In this course, students will learn evidence-based treatment approaches and demonstrate their understanding of working with individuals from a systemic/relational perspective. They will demonstrate their ability to conduct case conceptualizations, treatment planning and managing crises that can arise in therapy. Students will also show their ability to examine peer reviewed research and articulate how this research can inform assessment and clinical interventions. 3 credits.

MFT 522 Individual and Family Development

This course explores the developing individual within the context of the family system and the change that occurs in family systems over time. Students will examine theories and research pertaining to how individuals and families change throughout the lifespan. The course analyzes the relationship between basic needs and the biological, emotional, mental, cultural and social well-being of individuals and families within systems. 3 credits.

MFT 524 Clinical Issues in Human Diversity

An advanced therapy course with the study of multicultural counseling, emphasizing respect for the diversity of human beings, particularly in matters of race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, disability, and more. This course analyzes the cultural constructions of mental health along with barriers to systemic/relational counseling services by non-majority groups. It seeks to deconstruct the sociohistorical implications of power, privilege, and oppression. Students will be challenged to consider their unique social location identity with the deliberate exploration of intersectionality aimed at increasing student competence in anti-racist practices. 3 credits.

MFT 526 Family Therapy Theories and Techniques: A Postmodern Emphasis

Prerequisite: MFT 512.

This course provides an advanced exploration of family systems theories. Students will explore theories and techniques of family therapy from a postmodern perspective. Topics include in-depth study of major postmodern models such as Collaborative Language System, Narrative Therapy, and Solution-Focused Therapy, as well as the contemporary model Emotionally Focused Family Therapy. Additionally, students will demonstrate understanding by applying the concepts to clinical vignettes and treatment plans. 3 credits.

MFT 528 Research and Bibliographic Methods

This course provides an overview of research methods and techniques that are used in explaining human behavior. The class will focus on understanding, interpreting, and evaluating research, applying evidence-based practice research to therapy, and practicing research skills that are applicable in a therapeutic setting. 3 credits.

MFT 530 Theory and Practice of Group Therapy

This course applies varying pedagogical methodologies (didactic and experiential) to introduce students to intricate and dynamic therapeutic practices utilized in group therapy. With a deliberate focus on group development, students will learn how to create and maintain a supportive therapeutic environment that fosters the clinical growth of clients. Students will learn how multiculturalism, the roles and behaviors of group members, and group leadership styles and approaches influence the group process. In addition, students will demonstrate their ability to identify and account for legal and ethical issues while applying theory-specific interventions. 3 credits.

MFT 534 Clinical Assessment

Prerequisite: MFT 510.

This course addresses the theory, development, and application of assessment in a multicultural society. Utilizing a relational/systemic philosophy, students will explore fundamentals of psychological assessment for individuals, couples, and families. Topics include test construction as well as selection, interviewing, and interpretation of instruments commonly used in the assessment of therapy. Students will become familiar with a wide variety of assessment instruments and procedures including those used to assess personality, behavior, relationships, psychopathology, and risk as an evaluative component of clinical practice in marriage and family therapy. This course also examines ethical and cultural considerations in assessment. 3 credits.

MFT 536 Psychopharmacology

Prerequisite: MFT 510.

This course examines the role of the nervous system, metabolic processes, and mechanisms of drug action. Students will explore fundamental concepts of pharmacology, major pharmacological categories of psychotropic drugs, adverse effects, treatment implications, and ethical considerations for mental health professionals. They will also examine the scope and role of clinical practice. 3 credits.

MFT 538 Gender, Intimacy, and Sexuality

This course prepares students to examine sexual dysfunctions, sexual disorders, and paraphilic disorders. Through the framework of systemic models, they will learn to assess and treat a range of sexual functioning and behavior, from optimal to problematic. Students will explore their own psychosexual development, implicit biases and values when working with diversities in sexual expression and lifestyles. The intersectionality of sexual issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity, health/medical factors that may influence sexuality intimacy skills, interpersonal relationships, and family dynamics will also be examined. 3 credits.

MFT 542 Community and Environmental Mental Health

The primary focus of this course is on the accessibility of mental health services by underserved populations and disenfranchised communities. Students will be exposed to community mental health agencies' general framework and the services provided, such as multidisciplinary care, case management, therapeutic services, and inpatient and outpatient care. Students will explore challenges specifically related to mental health disorders within diverse populations. In addition, environmental stressors and their negative impacts on mental health will be reviewed. Students will be introduced to interventions that model best practices, such as the recovery paradigm of treatment, which is relevant across the domain of community mental health. 3 credits.

MFT 660 MFT Practicum I: A Systemic Lens of the Developing Therapist

Prerequisites: Successful completion of MFT 502, 506, 510, 512, 514, 516, 518, and 520; completion of advancement to candidacy; and permission of Psychology Field Director or Assistant Field Director.

MFT Practicum I is an experiential course for the developing therapist-trainee. Students will review the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy code of ethics and apply it in the clinical setting. As part of the development process of the novice therapist, the focus will be on acquiring and practicing basic therapeutic skills from the systemic lens. Students will provide recordings (audio or video) of their live clinical cases in order to demonstrate the application of clinical skills in the beginning stages of therapy. In addition, students will engage in the exploration of self-of-the-therapist. Practicum courses are to be taken consecutively. Graded pass/no pass. 1.5 credits.

MFT 661 MFT Practicum II: Contextualizing the Content of Therapy

Prerequisite: MFT 660.

MFT Practicum II is designed for therapist-trainees to demonstrate their ability to clinically conceptualize cases from a systemic perspective. Students will demonstrate their ability to conduct comprehensive clinical assessments including identification and management of crisis-related issues. Students will focus on developing clinical assessments, treatment plans, and the ability to contextualize the content of therapy using clinically relevant documentation and progress notes. Students will also provide evidence of their clinical skills developed through the presentation of recorded (audio or video) clinical sessions. Practicum courses are to be taken consecutively. Graded pass/no pass. 1.5 credits.

MFT 662 MFT Practicum III: Exploring the Therapeutic Process

Prerequisite: MFT 661.

MFT Practicum III is designed for therapist-trainees to utilize diagnostic assessment tools to conceptualize a clinical diagnosis and prognosis in the beginning and middle stages of treatment. Students will use objective measures in addition to the clinical assessment of clients' symptomology/impairments to formulate a diagnosis. Students are required to demonstrate their knowledge of diagnosis and treatment planning by completing a case synopsis presentation and submitting recorded (audio or video) clinical sessions. Practicum courses are to be taken consecutively. Graded pass/no pass. 1.5 credits.

MFT 663 MFT Practicum IV: Theoretical Application and Capstone 1

Prerequisite: MFT 662.

MFT Practicum IV will provide therapist-trainees the opportunity to implement acquired theoretical knowledge and skills in the clinical setting. This course will focus on assisting students in developing clinical hypotheses, identifying and applying theories of choice and demonstrating an understanding of the application of different theoretical orientations. Students will conceptualize a treatment plan based on theories, rooted in a systemic perspective that includes beginning, middle, and end stages of treatment. This course is an introduction to the capstone paper process, and students are required to begin writing the capstone paper while in this class. Students will be required to present a recorded (audio or video) clinical case demonstrating specific therapeutic interventions based on theoretical orientations. Practicum courses are to be taken consecutively. Graded pass/no pass. 1.5 credits.

MFT 664 MFT Practicum V: Social Context and Capstone 2**Prerequisite:** MFT 663.

Practicum V will focus on therapist-trainees' ability to demonstrate knowledge of community mental health and client-centered advocacy. Students will engage in discussions reflecting on social contextual factors while demonstrating cultural humility and creating a safe space for clients to share their lived experiences. As a final project, students will collaborate with classmates to create a community resource manual to provide referrals to diverse and vulnerable populations. Students will complete their Capstone Case Study paper to demonstrate mastery of advanced clinical skills and competencies acquired throughout the program. Practicum courses are to be taken consecutively. In addition, students will be required to present a recorded (audio or video) clinical case demonstrating the application of their clinical skills. Graded pass/no pass. 1.5 credits.

MFT 665 MFT Practicum VI: Beyond the Classroom and Capstone 3**Prerequisite:** MFT 664.

MFT practicum VI is the final practicum course for therapists in training. Students will demonstrate their ability to integrate clinical knowledge and skills acquired within their program through the submission of the Capstone Case Study paper. Students will demonstrate mastery of advanced clinical skills, application of systemic/relational therapeutic interventions, and competencies acquired throughout the program. They will synthesize concepts related to self-of-therapist by identifying the impact of their social location and environmental challenges when working with units of treatment, including vulnerable populations and communities. In this course, students will meet all practicum requirements and present a visual presentation of their Capstone Case study. In addition, students will be required to present a recorded (audio or video) clinical case demonstrating the application of their clinical skills. Practicum courses are to be taken consecutively. Graded pass/no pass. 1.5 credits.

MFT 696 MFT Practicum Continuation**Prerequisites:** Enrollment in MFT 660, MFT 661, MFT 662, MFT 663, MFT 664, and MFT 665.

This course allows students to complete the required practicum clinical hours when the hours have not been completed by the end of the session in which a student is enrolled in the final one and a half-credit course of their practicum course series (MFT 665). Please see Tuition and Fees section of the catalog for the corresponding Graduate Practicum Continuation Fee. This course is graded on a pass/no-pass basis. This course may be repeated. 0 credits.

MFT 699 Independent Study

Advanced supervised independent study or research on a special problem or in a selected area. 1-3 credits.