

MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY

College of Health, Human Services, and Nursing
Department of Marital and Family Therapy

Program Description

The Department of Marital and Family Therapy (MFT) prepares students in systemic theory, research, and relational practice to critically and ethically engage concerns of intersectionality, equity, and social justice to improve systems of oppression and promote wellness among individuals, couples, and families of diverse and underserved communities. It offers a three-year, 64-unit MFT degree program structured to provide curriculum and clinical training that meets MFT licensure requirements, according to California Business and Professions Code (BPC) §4980.36. In addition, the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) evaluated this as a qualifying Master of Science (M.S.) required to pursue a marriage and family therapist license in California. The curriculum aligns with the educational and clinical standards outlined by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE).

This degree program consists of comprehensive educational experiences in the study of theories and techniques of marriage and family therapy (MFT), along with 300 client contact hours of supervised clinical practice that applies to the 3,000 supervised hours of experience required to be eligible for the MFT licensure. The Department permits enrollment in courses solely to students admitted to the M.S. in Marital and Family Therapy program.

Features

The Master of Science in Marital and Family Therapy at CSU Dominguez Hills is one of few publicly supported programs in Southern California offering an evening course of study to accommodate those who work during the day. The cohort-model allows students to attend full-time and complete the program requirements in 3 years. Options for a part-time plan of study is available with advisement.

Pre-Admission Disclosure for Academic Programs Leading to Licensure or Credentialing

Admission into this program does not guarantee that students will obtain a license or credential. Licensure and credentialing requirements are set by the California Board of Behavioral Science that is not controlled by or affiliated with the CSUDH. Requirements for licensure may change from time to time. For example, licensure or credentialing requirements can include evidence of the right to work in the United States (e.g., social security number or taxpayer identification number) or successfully passing a criminal background check. Students are responsible for determining whether they can meet licensure or credentialing requirements. The CSU will not refund tuition, fees, or any associated costs, to students who determine subsequent to admission that they cannot meet licensure or credentialing requirements.

Academic Advisement

Students currently enrolled in the program receive advising from the faculty advisors. The MFT core faculty maintains current academic and clinical information on licensure guidelines and standards published

by the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS), California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT), Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), and the Southern California Consortium of MFT programs.

Preparation (Prerequisite Courses)

The following prerequisite courses - Introduction to Research Methods, Theories of Personality, and Abnormal Psychology, or other course equivalents - are required to qualify for admission to the Marital and Family Therapy program. Status of admission is contingent upon the successful completion of all the necessary prerequisite coursework or equivalent course(s). Prerequisite courses must be completed within the last five years.

Admissions Requirements

1. Completion of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
2. A grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better in the most recent 60-semester units of upper division course work undertaken as a student
3. Completion of the Graduate Record Examination General Aptitude (GRE) Test. An average GPA of 3.5 OR attainment of a previous master's degree waives this requirement
4. Applicants are required to apply to the University via Cal State Apply
5. Personal Statement
6. Writing Sample
7. Three letters of recommendation.
8. Interview with the admission committee

Classified Standing and Conditionally Classified Status

Students must meet all **Preparation** requirements for the M.S. in the Marital and Family Therapy Department for consideration for admission with Classified Standing. See the **Admission Requirements** section for complete requirements for admission to the Marital and Family Therapy program.

Consideration for admission into the program with Conditionally Classified Standing may be available for students who are insufficient in any admission requirement. Acceptance with Conditionally Classified Standing permits students to enroll in the University to correct the deficiencies while allowing students to take up to nine-semester units of graduate course work towards their degree if granted. Please note that admission to Conditionally Classified Standing does not guarantee that a student will achieve Classified Standing required to complete the program.

Requirements for Advancement to Candidacy

Candidacy status requires the successful completion of all Required Courses before the last semester of study. Upon review of students' course completion, the program will authorize students who achieve Candidacy status to enroll in and take the Comprehensive Examination. Candidacy status and eligibility to enroll in the Comprehensive Exam require a successful review of all graduate work by the department administrative coordinator. Consult the section in the catalog entitled **Graduate Degrees** (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/general-information/graduate-degree-> (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/general-information/graduate-degree-postbaccalaureate-studies/>)postbaccalaureate-

studies/ (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/general-information/graduate-degree-postbaccalaureate-studies/>) in **General Information** for complete requirements for Advancement to Candidacy.

MFT Coursework Open Only to those Admitted into the MFT Program

MFT courses are only accessible to students formally admitted into the MFT Program. The MFT Department evaluates and designs its coursework and curriculum to provide a strong foundation for individuals who are interested in a career in marital and family therapy, to satisfy the requirements for licensure as stipulated by the California Board of Behavioral Science (BPC §4980.36), and to meet accreditation standards, which results in comprehensive MFT training. As a result, students not admitted to the program are unable to use these courses as elective courses.

Required Course Sequence

As part of the admission to the MFT Program, all students agree to adhere to the program's planned class sequence. The program organizes the curriculum to ensure that fundamental courses address foundational knowledge, and subsequent coursework is dependent on the prerequisite semester's experience. See Course Sequence. Failure to take classes in sequence may delay admission into Practica and or graduation. Under exceptional circumstances, students who are permitted to attend the program part-time understand that graduation will differ from the program's proposed plan of study.

Cohort Program

The CSUDH MFT program is a cohort program. The cohort model organizes students into peer learning communities to develop shared knowledge, gain better understanding in clinical skills, and progress professionally through the MFT program collectively. This model allows students to learn from a planned sequence of coursework as well as advances their professional and personal growth and development effectively.

B or Better Policy

The MFT department requires students to maintain a level of competence determined as "B or Better" in all courses, in addition to cumulative GPA requirements. The "B or Better" policy requires that students achieve an "A," "A-," "B+," or "B" in a class to receive credit and is a program requirement to advance to subsequent courses. If a student gets any grade less than a B (which includes B-, C+, C, or lower), the student will be required to retake the course. Failure to meet this standard may cause a delay in admission into practica, and could delay the student's graduation. Each class can only be retaken one time; failure to pass a course on a second attempt will result in dismissal from the MFT program.

Assistance to Students with Disabilities

The MFT department provides accommodations for students with disabilities recognized by the Student disAbility Resource Center. The department encourages students who require additional support beyond their identified accommodations to access the University's resources, such as the Writing Center and University Library Resources.

Professional Conduct

Courses in the MFT Program can include controversial topics and perspectives that require in-depth, experiential, and reflective discussions and exercises. The nature of the program requires that students share personal beliefs and reveal aspects central to their cultural, ethnic, religious, or ability-status backgrounds. The program expects the students to maintain an environment of respect for professors and fellow students at all times. Students who are disruptive or disrespectful to the sensitive nature in a course may have their participation points deducted, given a lower grade, or even removed from the class.

Academic Dishonesty

The department does not permit academic dishonesty. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of unethical behavior will result in a student either being penalized by the professor, receiving a failing grade in the course, or dismissal from the MFT program.

Computer Literacy, APA Format, and Competence in Writing

Each course and syllabus in the MFT Program include requirements for computer literacy specific to graduate-level standards. The program expects that all students' papers to adhere to standards set by the American Psychological Association (APA). Furthermore, the program expects all students to submit current, comprehensive, and accurate documents, forms, or other materials required by the MFT Department. Failure to complete the materials needed may cause a delay in students' graduation.

Career Possibilities

The MFT program's primary function is to meet the educational requirements set by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BPC §4980.36) to become a Registered Associate Marriage and Family Therapist. Associate Marriage and Family Therapists can gain employment in the public and private sector, including private practice. Career possibilities include and are not limited to the following: Hospitals with a mental health division, counseling centers at schools, department of mental health, community counseling centers, non-profit counseling centers, dual diagnosis treatment centers, chemical abuse treatment centers, shelters for domestic violence, youth centers, and faith-based counseling centers.

Graduate Programs

- Marital and Family Therapy, Master of Science (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/academics/marital-family-therapy/marital-family-therapy-ms/>)

Faculty

Karen Quek, PhD., LMFT., LPCC., MFT Department Chair

Jennifer Jackson, M.A., LMFT., Clinical Training Director

Chaka McAlpin, Psy.D., LMFT., Assistant Professor

Courtney Rago, Psy.D., LMFT., Assistant Professor

MFT Office: James L. Welch Hall (WH) 320 Phone: (310) 243-2032

MFT Email: mftdept@csudh.edu

Courses

MFT 400. Foundations to Marital Family Therapy. (3 Units)

Course examines the theoretical underpinnings and fundamental concepts to marriage and family therapy. Focus will address a breadth of foundational information in Marital and Family Therapy in the following areas: Research methods, theories, and psychopathology.

Offered Fall, Spring

MFT 495. Special Topics in MFT. (1-4 Units)

A course designed of special interest topics. Topic of content will vary as announced. Repeatable course

Offered As needed

MFT 496. Internship: Practicum Training Management. (0 Units)

MFT 496. Internship: Practicum Training Management. (0 Units) The Practicum Training Management 0-unit course enables students to organize, gather, manage, and store crucial MFT experiences and information necessary for clinical training and competencies. Through the program's management system, students will document their academic knowledge and clinical skills in practical activities

Offered Fall, Spring, Summer

MFT 515. Pre-Practicum I: Therapy Skills. (2 Units)

Prerequisites: Admission to MFT program. Co-requisite: MFT 566, MFT 570, MFT 576 Instructional seminar and demonstration of supervised basic clinical skills, clinical interviewing, assessment, and clinical intervention in the classroom. Emphasis is placed on the therapeutic alliance, the self-of-the-therapist, and collaboration.

Offered Fall

MFT 520. Group Therapy. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 525, MFT 572, MFT 584, MFT 586. Co-requisites: MFT 575, MFT 578, MFT 580. Course provides students with practical instruction and seminar in theory, therapy process and the use of empirically supported practice in group therapy. Attention is paid to group and contextual factors including age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, culture, and economic status.

Offered Fall

MFT 525. Pre-Practicum II Advanced Therapy Skills. (2 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 515, MFT 570, MFT 566, MFT 576. Co-requisites: MFT 572, MFT 584, MFT 586. Instructional seminar and demonstration of supervised advanced therapy skills in the classroom and in mental health settings with individuals, couples and families. Include assessments, diagnosis, treatment planning, case management, safety planning, clinical documentation, and assessment of legal and ethical issues.

Offered Spring

MFT 530. Community Mental Health. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 520, MFT 575, MFT 578, MFT 580. Co-requisites: MFT 560, MFT 565, MFT 582. Instruction, seminar and activity in community mental health and case management skills. Emphasis includes competencies in mental health recovery-oriented care and resiliency in community mental health from both traditional and non-traditional MFT practices applying case management and systems of care.

Offered Spring

MFT 541. Practicum in MFT Fieldwork IV. (2 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 500, MFT 520, MFT 521, MFT 530, MFT 531, MFT 570, MFT 572, MFT 584. Fourth practicum required for program, concurrent with field placement and training experience. 8 hours per week required. CR/NC grading.

Offered As needed

MFT 560. Life Span, Family Development, and Aging. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: MFT 520, MFT 575, MFT 578, MFT 580. Co-requisites: MFT 530, MFT 565, MFT 582. Instruction in family development and human sexuality across the lifespan; includes contextual factors (age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, culture, race/ethnicity, gender, class, socioeconomics). Addresses elder and dependent adults including biopsychosocial impacts of aging, long-term care, and treatment of abuse/neglect.

Offered Fall

MFT 565. Assessment & Mental Health Treatment. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 520, MFT 575, MFT 578, MFT 580. Co-requisites: MFT 530, MFT 560, MFT 582. A survey and supervised practice in empirically supported assessment to treat primary mental health conditions and common presenting problems in individuals, couples, and families. Includes six-hours hours on suicide prevention, evidence-based suicide risk assessments, treatments, and interventions.

Offered Spring

MFT 566. Mental Health, Diagnosis, and Systemic Treatment. (3 Units)

Required Prerequisite: Admission to MFT program. Required Co-requisites: MFT 515, MFT 570, MFT 576. Studies and analysis of human mental health as it affects the individual, couple, and family functioning. Development, identification, assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, and techniques of common any and serious mental illness will be explored.

Offered Fall, Spring

MFT 570. Theories and Techniques of Marital and Family Therapy I. (3 Units)

Required Prerequisite: Admission to MFT program. Required Co-requisite: MFT 515, MFT 566, MFT 576. Major Marital and Family theories, research and practice used in the treatment of individual, couples and families from a systemic and biopsychosocial perspective.

Offered Fall

MFT 572. Theories and Techniques of Marital Family Therapy II. (3 Units)

Required Prerequisites: MFT 515, MFT 566, MFT 570, MFT 576. Required Co-requisites: MFT 525, MFT 584, MFT 586. A continuation of the major MFT theories, this course includes postmodern and evidence-based practices and techniques in marriage and family counseling applied to treatment of individual, couples and family.

Offered Spring

MFT 574. Human Sexual Behavior. (3 Units)

Advanced study of the psychological, physiological, and sociological aspects of human sexual behavior, with attention to the origin and treatment of sexual dysfunction in its environmental context.

Examinations and/or papers used in evaluation.

Offered As needed

MFT 575. Relational Therapy: Treatment of Couples and Partners. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 525, MFT 572, MFT 584, MFT 586. Co-requisites: MFT 520, MFT 580, MFT 578. Instruction in treatment and assessment strategies necessary to treat couple/partner problem or sexual issues in conjoint therapy. Addresses issues related to age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, culture, race/ethnicity, socioeconomics, and spousal or partner dynamics associated with abuse assessments and interventions.

Offered Fall

MFT 576. Human Communication, Theory, and Skill. (2 Units)

Prerequisites: Admission to MFT program. Co-requisites: MFT 515, MFT 566, MFT 570. Instruction in the purposes, theory, and skills of communication applied to intrapersonal and interpersonal experience. The course addresses personal awareness, self-of-the-therapist, bias, and stereotyping to promote equity and diversity in clinical treatment. Offered As needed

MFT 578. Treatment Approaches with Children and Adolescents. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 525, MFT 572, MFT 584, MFT 586. Co-requisites: MFT 520, MFT 575, MFT 580. Treatment focuses on diagnostic and treatment needs of children and adolescents from a systemic perspective to include familial and sociocultural considerations. Emphasis is placed on empirically supported and evidence-based treatment modalities. Includes seven-clock hours on child abuse assessment and reporting. Offered Fall

MFT 580. Sociocultural Diversity & Marginalized Communities. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: MFT 525, MFT 572, MFT 584, MFT 586. Co-requisite: MFT 520, MFT 575, MFT 578. Diversity factors (age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, spirituality, socioeconomic,) affecting human behavior in family and the larger community situated in complex societies. Additional emphasis is placed on clinical competency with diverse, marginalized and under-served populations in California. Offered Fall

MFT 582. Psychopharmacology and Mental Health Treatment. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: MFT 520, MFT 575, MFT 578, MFT 580. Co-requisite: MFT 530, MFT 560, MFT 565. The impact of psychotropic medications on the behavioral and emotional states of individuals and on their relationships is addressed. Emphasis is placed on the development of vocabulary, basic knowledge of medications, how to assess effects and consultation/collaboration with prescribing physicians. Offered Spring

MFT 583. Research Methods in Marital Family Therapy. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 530, MFT 560, MFT 565, MFT 582. Co-requisites: MFT 585, MFT 588, MFT 589. Emphasis will focus developing competencies in critical analysis and evaluation of published research, examining evidence-based research to improve practice, and conducting independent research. Generating hypothesis, research design, data collection, interpretation and utilization of findings in clinical practice will be summarized. Offered Spring

MFT 584. Law, Ethics, and Professional Practices. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 515, MFT 566, MFT 570, MFT 576. Co-requisites: MFT 525, MFT 572, MFT 586. Current legal and ethical professional issues in marital and family therapy. Examination and application of BBS and AAMFT ethics and legal responsibilities. Offered Fall

MFT 585. Treatment of Substance Use, Addiction, and Dependence. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 530, MFT 560, MFT 565, MFT 582. Co-requisites: MFT 583, MFT 588, MFT 589. Studies of the theories of substance use as they effect and relate to the family system. Explore advanced interviewing techniques, assessment procedures, recovery and relapse prevention, and implementation of evidence-based treatment modalities in family therapy. Offered Fall

MFT 586. Current Issues in Marital Family Therapy. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 515, MFT 566, MFT 570, MFT 576. Co-requisites: MFT 525, MFT 572, MFT 584. Current and emerging issues in the field of MFT relevant to advancements in practice and influences on family, local and larger global community. Emphasis in contextual factors such as an economic status, culture, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability. Offered Spring

MFT 588. Treatment of Trauma with Individuals, Couples, and Families. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 530, MFT 560, MFT 565, MFT 582. Co-requisite: MFT 583, MFT 585, MFT 589. Treatment of trauma with individuals, couples, and family. Beginning and advanced techniques in assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and crisis intervention of child and elder abuse, domestic violence, rape, disaster, crime, and other trauma will be explored. Offered Fall

MFT 589. Advanced Therapeutic Approaches and Application. (2 Units)

Prerequisites: MFT 530, MFT 560, MFT 565, MFT 582. Co-requisites: MFT 583, MFT 585, MFT 588. An inclusive survey of major theoretical approaches, integrative psychotherapies, evidenced-based practice, research, legal and ethical issues applied to individuals, couples and families. Case conceptualization, diagnosis, assessment, treatment planning and interventions are demonstrated utilizing vignettes, role play, and video demonstration. Offered Spring

MFT 590. Career Development, Theory, and Practice. (3 Units)

The course emphasizes career development throughout life, covering theory, techniques, and counseling practice. It examines the interrelationship between diversity factors (such as gender, culture, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and ability), the workplace, and career development. Offered As needed

MFT 594. Independent Study. (3 Units)

Prerequisites: Consent of the instructor and Program Coordinator. Student must have completed at least twelve semester units. In consultation with a faculty member, the student will investigate in detail current research and scholarship in some area relevant to the field of Marital Family Therapy, or will complete a project involving original and creative research. Content of research will be specific to the program and licensure as an MFT. Offered As needed

MFT 595. Special Topics in MFT. (1-3 Units)

A course designed of special interest topics. Topic of content will vary as announced. Repeatable course. Offered As needed

MFT 596. Practicum: Marital Family Therapy Traineeship. (3 Units)

A multi-semester course that encompasses fieldwork training, on-site supervision, and classroom participation. The traineeship spans a minimum of 12 months, requiring at least nine semester units for graduation. The course includes instructional seminars and demonstrations of supervised advanced therapy skills in both classroom and mental health settings, working with individuals, couples, and families from diverse and marginalized backgrounds. It covers assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, case management, safety planning, clinical documentation, and the evaluation of legal and ethical issues, with an emphasis on the development of the therapist's self-awareness. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer

MFT 597. Directed Reading MFT Comp Prep. (3 Units)

In consultation with the faculty member, completion of readings to prepare for the comprehensive exam. The course is limited to students who have completed one year of courses. CR/NC grading. Course is repeatable for a total of 6 units.

Offered As needed

MFT 599. Comprehensive Examination. (1 Units)

Prerequisite: All Required Courses must be completed excluding Practicum: MFT Traineeship. Registration in MFT 599, Comprehensive Examination, is restricted to students who have advanced to candidacy and completed all prerequisite degree coursework with a grade of B or better and a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0. Students on academic, professional, or clinical probation are not permitted to enroll in MFT 599. Enrollment in this course is necessary to take the comprehensive examination, which assesses content including theories, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, crisis intervention, and law and ethics. The exam requires evidence of the application of theory, practice, and research.

Offered Spring

MFT 600. Grad Continuation Course. (1 Units)

Graduate students who have completed their course work but not their thesis, project, or comprehensive examination, or who have other requirements remaining for the completion of their degree, may maintain continuous attendance by enrolling in this course. Signature of graduate program coordinator required.

Offered As needed