

**MASTER'S OF MARRIAGE & FAMILY  
THERAPY**

**STUDENT ACADEMIC HANDBOOK**

**2016-2017 REVISION**

## Student Academic Handbook Receipt and Acknowledgement

I have access to a copy of the Abilene Christian University Master's of Marriage and Family Therapy Student Academic Handbook for 2016-2017.

The handbook contains policies and rules that apply to me. I agree to read the handbook and follow it during my period of graduate study in the Marriage and Family Therapy program. I further understand it may be amended at any time. In that case, changes will be communicated to me in writing.

I understand and agree that the minimum requirements for graduation from the Marriage and Family Therapy program include 500 client contact hours, 250 of which must be couple/family hours, and 100 hours of supervision, including 50 hours of individual supervision and 50 hours of raw data (live or video) supervision. I understand that this will be accomplished within the context of the 24 months of the program. In accordance with COAMFTE standards, the weekly ratio of client contact hours to supervision must be 5:1 (10 hours of client contact to 2 hours of supervision each week). I also understand that I will be provided with the opportunity to be a part of the development of my caseload.

I also understand that I am required to attend four to six therapy sessions with a therapist arranged by the Chair's office by the end of the spring semester of my first year in the Marriage and Family Therapy program.

Furthermore, I have received and read a copy of the AAMFT Code of Ethics.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Student Name (Printed)

\*Print two copies. Turn one in to the Administrative Coordinator and keep the other for your records.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>WELCOME</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>MISSION STATEMENT</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION 1</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>University and Graduate School Policies and Procedures</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Dealing with The Graduate School</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Grievance Policy for Students</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Grievance Policy for Faculty</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>SECTION 2</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Program Policies and Procedures</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Costs</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Department Calendar</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Resource Room</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Class Representatives</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Graduate Assistantships</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Student Membership in AAMFT</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>SECTION 3</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Didactic Program Requirements</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Degree Plan</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Student Evaluation Process</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Department Writing Style</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Research Projects</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>Comprehensive Examination</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>Graduating Student Survey</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>SECTION 4</b> .....	<b>277</b>
<b>Program Requirements – Direct Clinical Contact/Supervision Information</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Reporting Contact and Supervision Hours</b> .....	<b>288</b>
<b>Supervision</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>Reporting Hours</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Completing Hours</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>SECTION 5</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>Post-graduation Information</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>AAMFT</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Insurance</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Texas Licensure</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Information about Licensing Exam, Links to State Regulatory Boards and Other Pertinent Information</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Types of Information the Program will Collect about you after Graduation</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>APPENDIX A</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>Additional Policies of the Program</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>Policy on Student Requirement</b> .....	<b>34</b>

ACU Non-Discrimination Policy in Admission of MFT Students.....	34
ACU Student Code of Conduct.....	34
MMFT Policy on Admission.....	35
Policy on Student Retention.....	36
Graduation Policy.....	36
Remediation and Dismissal Policy of the Program.....	36
Policy on Technology and Technology Requirements for the Classroom and Clinic.....	36
Training in Technology Used in the Program.....	37
Policy on Academic Integrity (Plagiarism)/Authenticity of Work.....	37
APPENDIX B.....	38
Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes for the Program.....	38
Program Goal 1 Diversity.....	38
Program Goal 2 Ethics.....	38
Program Goal 3 Clinical/Practice Preparedness.....	39
Program Goal 4 Research/Evidence Informed Practice.....	39
Program Goal 5 Integration of Faith and Learning.....	40
Program Goal 6 Knowledge of Professional Marriage and Family Therapy Principles.....	40
The Faculty & Supervisors Roles in Supporting the Mission, Program Goals, and Student Learning Outcome of the Program.....	41
Understanding Dr. Bertram's Role as Department Chair/Program Director & Dr. Merchant's Role as the Clinical Director (Director of the MFI).....	41
APPENDIX C.....	42
Program Diversity 2016-2017.....	42
Faculty & Supervisor Diversity.....	42
Student Diversity.....	42
APPENDIX D.....	43
ACU's Non-Discrimination Policy .....	43
APPENDIX E.....	44
Faculty in the MMFT Program (2016-2017).....	44
APPENDIX F.....	45
Student Achievement Criteria Data (COAMFTE).....	45

## WELCOME

Welcome to Abilene Christian University and to the Marriage and Family Therapy program. The university is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the MFT program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). You are part of a group of people selected through prayer and careful consideration, and we are glad you are here. For the next two years, you will be challenged in a variety of ways -- academically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. You will learn new ways of viewing relationships and new ideas about how to create change within relationship patterns, and you will grow as a person and in your own relationships.

Your academic and clinical experiences will be significant. Academically, your journey will be guided by official policy as determined by the University. Clinically, your journey will be guided by the Department of Marriage and Family Studies and the Marriage and Family Therapy program and their policies under the umbrella of the University. You will be given the opportunity to earn 500+ hours of client contact and 100+ hours of supervision within the context of the 24 months of the program. The program equips you for the profession of Marriage and Family Therapy, as our training program is a Marriage and Family Therapy Training program. Thus, the emphasis will be upon relational-systemic-interactional-contextual approaches to therapy and supervision.

The program also will emphasize the importance of working from a multicultural perspective and will also highlight the importance of the AAMFT Code of Ethics and ethical behavior in your development as a therapist. These are areas we are very serious in emphasizing during your time in the program.

This Handbook is designed to be an aide to you through the next two years. It will provide much of the information necessary to complete your journey successfully. It does not, however, supersede any official University documents or policies. It is your responsibility to be familiar with all the University and Graduate School policies and procedures.

The electronic form of this Handbook will allow us to make changes as the year progresses. When situations arise that are not addressed in this manual, consult with a professor, supervisor, or the Chair.

Blessings to you as you join us in this ministry of helping hurting people. God will use you as his instrument while you are here.

Dale E. Bertram, PhD  
Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy  
Chair, Department of Marriage and Family Studies

## **DEPARTMENT OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STUDIES**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

The mission of the Department of Marriage and Family Studies is to equip students to strengthen family relationships and solve personal and relational problems through child and family services or therapeutic intervention while cultivating Christian leadership and character in each student.

The undergraduate program in Family Studies accomplishes this mission through:

- emphasizing the formation of healthy relationships and the promotion of optimal human development;
- examining current research and theory regarding the normal issues with which individuals and families must contend as they grow and evolve;
- creating opportunities for students to design, implement, and evaluate family life education programs; and
- providing diverse practicum experiences that prepare students for future employment.

The graduate program in Marriage and Family Therapy accomplishes this mission through:

- Emphasizing a Christocentric view of human nature and personal/relational problems within a context of diversity;
- Providing a diverse clinical training experience;
- Encouraging development of a professional identity by fostering involvement in the profession of marriage and family therapy; and
- Creating a culture of research.

## **SECTION 1**

# **University and Graduate School Policies and Procedures**

## UNIVERSITY AND GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### **Student Responsibility To Know the Policies of The Graduate School And To Interact With the Graduate School**

Knowing the Graduate School policies and interacting with the Graduate School is the sole responsibility of the student. The graduate advisor must be consulted for all degree plan and course scheduling issues, but the policies and procedures of the Graduate School must be followed and coordinated with them. If you do not already have one, it is in your best interest to secure a current copy of the Graduate Catalog and become familiar with the information it contains.

- The [Graduate School section of the ACU Catalog](#) describes the Graduate School at ACU. Read this material carefully.
- The [Financial Assistance section](#) may prove useful in dealing with money matters. To be a GA in our department, you must notify the Department Chair of your interest and submit a GA application (available online or through the Graduate School). GAs are selected in the spring of each year for the following academic year.
- The [Academic Definitions and Graduate Policies and Regulations sections](#) provide information regarding required GPA, “C” grades, incomplete grades, and other information that may be important.
- Please pay special attention to the [Preparing for Graduation section](#). The application is a **MUST** and the graduate school will prevent you from graduating on time if you fail to file this before the final date. You must get a current form from the graduate school.
- All other information regarding policies and procedures of The Graduate School is available on their [web page](#).



### **Grievance (Formal Complaint) Policy for Students**

In the instance of a grievance occurring with the faculty or staff of the Department of Marriage and Family Studies, the student should initiate dialogue with the person with whom s/he has a grievance. Should the student not be satisfied with the outcome, s/he should then appeal in writing to the Chair of the Department of Marriage and Family Studies. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, s/he should appeal directly in writing to the Dean of the College of Biblical Studies. The next appeal is to the Dean of the Graduate School and then to the Provost of the University.

Likewise, in regard to the grievance process for student-to-student grievances, the student should initiate dialogue with the other student in question. If resolution is not reached, the student with the grievance should appeal in writing to the faculty of the Department of Marriage and Family Studies via the Chair of the Department. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, s/he will be encouraged to appeal in writing to the Dean of the College of Biblical Studies. Further appeals should be made to the Assistant Provost for Student Services.

### **Grievance Policy for Faculty**

In the instance of a grievance involving faculty of the Department of Marriage and Family Studies and a student, existing graduate school policies apply. This policy applies to but is not limited to instances involving student behavior and student impairment. Full-time or adjunct faculty will initiate dialogue with the student and develop a plan for remedial actions that may be required based on each specific grievance. The following actions are not meant to be an exhaustive list and may include: a writing assignment (in addition to those required by class syllabi), suspension from the program, required counseling, a probationary period, suspension of clinical internship, required mentoring with faculty, or a reduced grade in Internship.

All steps in the grievance process will become part of the student's permanent record. Each violation will be dealt with individually between the student and faculty and remedial actions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

See the current [Catalog](#) for additional information.

## **SECTION 2**

### **Program Policies and Procedures**

## **PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Additional Costs**

There are some extra expenses in the Marriage and Family Therapy program in addition to tuition. In the fall, students are required to become student members of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (\$25 first time processing fee and \$64.00 dues). They are also required to download and read a copy of the [AAMFT Code of Ethics](#). In the spring semester, students are required to attend the annual conference of the Texas Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. The cost of the TAMFT conference may be defrayed by volunteering to work the conference. In addition, funds are available from the Graduate Student Association for travel to professional conferences. More information is available on the Graduate Student Association [website](#). Students may be required to attend other workshops and/or seminars throughout the academic year (approximately \$20 each).

As part of the Professional Ethics and the Law course, students will be required to participate in a field trip to Austin, TX. On alternate years, students will attend either TAMFT's Day at the Dome or the Ethics Committee meeting of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists.

Each year the program has two social functions, a fall social to introduce the new students and a graduation celebration. There may be some costs involved for the student at these functions. Students are not required to attend either of these functions, but the faculty strongly encourage them to do so.

During the Spring Semester in the Sexual Therapy course, students will be required to take the AMFTRB Practice exam and submit the results.

Other approximate expenses include the following:

Books	\$300-600/semester
Copying/Interlibrary loans	\$100-150/semester
Assessment fees	\$30/one semester
Misc. Supplies	\$25/semester
TAMFT Day at the Dome/ Ethics Committee Meeting	\$50 minimum
Banquet	\$15/person in the first year of the program

## Department Calendar

The Department of Marriage and Family Studies and the Marriage and Family Therapy Program maintain a calendar on Google calendars. This calendar is shared with all MFT students. Please refer to it for important dates and meetings throughout the year.

### Important Dates for 2016-2017 Academic Year

EVENT	DATE
<b>Opening Social*</b>	August 17, 2016
<b>AAMFT Conference*</b>	Indianapolis, IN– September 15-18, 2016
<b>Labor Day</b>	Monday, Sept. 5, 2016– <b>Classes are in session &amp; clinic open</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	Wednesday, Nov. 23rd- Sunday, Nov.27th– Clinic Closed

<b>Christmas Break</b>	<p>Christmas/Winter Break (December 12, 2016-January 17, 2017)</p> <p><b>Clinic closed from Thursday, Dec. 24,2016 – Sunday, Jan. 2, 2017</b></p>
<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</b>	Monday, January 16, 2017 (No Classes & Clinic Closed)
<b>TAMFT Conference</b>	Austin, TX-February 22-25, 2017
<b>Prospective Student Interview Weekend (subject to change)</b>	March 2-4, 2017 (Subject to Change)
<b>Spring Break</b>	March 13-17, 2017 (Clinic <b>Open</b> March 13-16) <b>Clinic Closed on March 17<sup>th</sup>.</b>
<b>Easter Holiday</b>	April 14-16, 2017 (Clinic Closed)

<b>Commencement (Second Year Students Walk Even Though They Still Have the Summer Semester)</b>	May 13, 2017
<b>Memorial Day</b>	Monday, May 29, 2017-Clinic Closed
<b>Comprehensive Exam (Second Year Students)</b>	Wednesday, June 21st and Thursday, June 22nd, 2017
<b>Independence Day</b>	Tuesday, July 4 <sup>th</sup> (Clinic Closed)
<b>Graduation Banquet *</b>	TBD

Items with the star (\*) beside them are optional events.

In addition to the events listed in the table above, there are several regularly occurring meetings as noted below.

Staffing meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month during the fall and spring semesters. All MFT students are required to attend these meetings. The dates and times of the meetings for 2016-2017 year are as follows (Meeting times are from 12:00 PM-1:00 PM):

September 21 (1 PM-1:00 PM)	February 2 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)
October 6 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)	March 2 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)
November 3 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)	April 6 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)
December 1 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)	May 4 (12:00 PM-1:00 PM)

- MFT Supervisor & Staff Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month immediately prior to Staffing, with the exception of the December and May meetings. All MFT faculty and staff as well as student representatives from each cohort are required to attend these meetings. The dates and times of the meetings for 2014-2015 are as follows:

September 1 (11:00 AM-12:00 PM)	February 2 (11:00 AM-12:00 PM)
October 6 (11:00 AM-12:00 PM)	March 1(11:00 AM-12:00 PM)
November 3 (11:00 AM-12:00 PM)	April 5 (11:00 AM-12:00 PM)
December 1 Student Representatives Do Not Attend the Dec. Evaluation Meeting (1:00 PM-3:00 PM)	May 3 Student Representatives Do Not Attend the May Evaluation Meeting (1:00 PM-3:00 PM)

## Resource Room

Students are encouraged to use the Resource Room to supplement their academic and clinical pursuits. Materials in the resource room **ARE TO BE USED IN THE RESOURCE ROOM**. If you wish to make a copy of the material, you must do so in the MFI reception office. Copies should be paid for at the time they are made (8¢ per copy). Department majors have priority access to the resource materials. Supervision sessions and faculty meetings have priority use of the room.

## Class Representatives

In the Fall semester, each class will select a representative for the year. The class representative helps represent students in the governance of the program. Following is a list of duties of the

class representative.

**First Year Class Representative:**

- Attends monthly MFT staff and supervisor meetings and serves as liaison between 1<sup>st</sup> year students and faculty and staff in these meetings. The program views this as a way the students exercise their voice in the governance of the program, including voicing student concerns/complaints. These concerns and complaint are then discussed by the faculty-supervisors to help facilitate a resolution Note: From time-to-time the class representative will be asked to attend other meetings in which input is needed.
- Works with the MFI Administrative Coordinator to communicate desk coverage needs during the Christmas and Spring Break holidays or upon short notice for such reasons as illness, medical appointments, etc.
- Covers the desk and/or makes arrangements with peers for desk coverage if the person assigned to the desk does not show for desk duty.
- Assists Graduate Assistants with set-up for meetings and special events.
- Brings to the faculty all non-academic issues/concerns on behalf of the 1<sup>st</sup> year class. Academic issues/concerns should be addressed with the faculty individually or with the Chair of the department.
- Works with 2<sup>nd</sup> year class representative to coordinate a Q&A panel made up of current students for the Prospective Student Interview weekend.
- Works with the Administrative Coordinator of the department to provide transportation for prospective students (i.e. pick up from the Abilene airport and bring to campus and then back to airport for departure).
- Offers a brief, 5-7 minute message from the first year class to the graduating cohort at the annual Graduation Celebration.

**Second Year Class Representative:**

- Attends monthly MFT staff and supervisor meetings and serves as liaison between 2<sup>nd</sup> year students and faculty and staff in these meetings. The program views this as a way the students exercise their voice in the governance of the program, including voicing student concerns/complaints. These concerns and complaints are then discussed by the faculty-supervisors to help facilitate a resolution. Note: From time-to-time the class representative will be asked to attend other meetings in which input is needed.
- Assists Graduate Assistants with set-up for meetings and special events.
- Brings to the faculty all non-academic issues/concerns on behalf of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year class. Academic issues should be addressed with the faculty individually or with the Chair of the department.
- Works with the MFI Administrative Coordinator to cover the desk when the 1<sup>st</sup> year students are in class. Will also arrange desk coverage in emergency situations when the 1<sup>st</sup> year class cannot be available for regular desk coverage.
- Works with the 1<sup>st</sup> year class representative to coordinate a Q&A panel made up of current students for the Prospective Student Interview weekend.
- Works with the Administrative Coordinator of the department to provide



transportation for prospective students (i.e. pick up from the Abilene airport and bring to the campus and then back to the airport for departure).

- Offers a brief, 5-7 minute message to his/her colleagues in the graduating cohort at the annual Graduation Celebration.

### **Graduate Assistantships (Classified As Student Worker Positions)**

In the spring semester of each year, MFT students are eligible to apply for graduate assistantships within the department. Students will be notified of the application due date. Each full-time faculty member will select her or his own GA and selections will be named by the end of the spring semester. Graduate assistants' tasks will vary depending on the needs of the faculty but will include:

- Setting up meetings and special events
- Working with the department administrative coordinator to assist with prospective student interview housing and meals
- Transporting the ACU/MFI display to the TAMFT conference

### **Student Membership in AAMFT**

Students are required to join AAMFT as student members in the Fall semester.

See [www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org) for on-line application procedures. Then, inform the Administrative Coordinator of the department that you have joined. Current costs are a one-time processing fee of \$25 and dues of \$64.

## **SECTION 3**

### **Didactic Program Requirements**

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS - DIDACTIC**

### **Degree Plan**

The degree plan for the Marriage and Family Therapy program is included in Table 1 below. This plan may change as the Commission on the Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) makes revisions.

Use this copy to keep track of the courses you have taken. Record the semester and the year. Any transferred courses must be approved in advance by the Department Chair. An official transcript from the other universities must be sent to the Graduate School. The document requesting that a transfer course be considered is available from the Administrative Coordinator of the department.

The degree plan is the official agreement between the student, department, and University. These courses must be taken before a degree will be awarded. Any changes must be approved by the Department Chair and a written change order given to the Graduate School.

### **Student Evaluation Process**

An evaluation process is necessitated by COAMFTE's guidelines and by the faculty's wish for each therapist to be as competent and professional as possible. The feedback, both personal and professional, occurs at specific intervals. The *Faculty/Staff Comprehensive Intern Evaluation* as well as the *Individual Supervision Evaluation Form* is completed by the faculty and staff and discussed with the student at the end of each semester. The initial evaluation occurs at the end of the Fall semester as a prelude to entering clinical internship in the Spring semester. At that point the options are:

- a) proceed into the internship phase without conditions,
- b) proceed into the internship phase with conditions to be addressed/remediated,
- or
- c) postpone admission into the internship cycle until conditions are met to the satisfaction of the clinical faculty.

The faculty will complete the *Readiness to See Clients Form* and this will be the basis for proceeding into the internship. The *Individual Supervision Evaluation Form* is completed by the supervisor at the end of each semester. Given the unique nature of the supervisory context and relationship, the supervisor will make recommendations for personal and professional growth in an ongoing manner as well as at the end of the semester. Your assigned supervisor each semester will provide supervision for both your work at MFI and any off-site work you are completing,

unless an AAMFT-Approved Supervisor is provided by the site. In addition, your work at your off-site placement will be considered in your evaluation at the end of each semester. However, only the supervision done by your Internship Supervisor will count toward your 100 hours of approved supervision for the program.

**Table 1: MFT Degree Plan (Non-Thesis Track)**

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Professor</b>
<b>Year One, Fall</b>		
BMFT 639	Family Theory	Milholland
BMFT 610	Couples Therapy	Milholland
BMFT 601	Pre-Internship	Merchant
BMFT 641	Family Therapy I	Bertram
<b>Year One, Spring</b>		
BMFT 602	Internship I	Merchant
BMFT 645	Systemic Diagnosis and Assessment	Bertram
BMFT 615	Research Methods in MFT	Perry
	Elective	
<b>Year One, Summer</b>		
BMFT 662	Family Life Cycle	TBD
BMFT 643	Professional Ethics & the Law	Merchant
<b>Year Two, Fall</b>		
BMFT 663	Cultural Diversity	Merchant
BMFT 665	Family Therapy across the Life Cycle	Howard
BMFT 634	Addictive Disorders	Bertram
BMFT 603	Internship II	Faculty
<b>Year Two, Spring</b>		
BMFT 651	Sex Therapy	Bertram
BMFT 661	Family Therapy II	Merchant
BMFT 604	Internship III	Faculty
	Elective	
<p><i>Student chooses two electives from a related area in the university. For students wishing to pursue the LPC, Group Psychotherapy or Career Counseling are suggested. For students wishing to pursue a Ph.D., Intermediate Statistics is suggested. All three of these courses are offered in the Psychology Department.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The cohort graduating in 2016 will only have one elective, as the changes in the curriculum for the first year Spring Semester will begin during the 2015-2016 school year.</i></p>		
<b>Year Two, Summer</b>		
BMFT/BIBM 696	Theological Perspectives on Human Behavior & Change	Bertram & TBA
BMFT 605	Internship IV	Faculty

**Table 2: MFT Degree Plan (Thesis Track)**

Course Number	Course Name	Professor
<b>Year One, Fall</b>		
BMFT 639	Family Theory	Milholland
BMFT 610	Couples Therapy	Milholland
BMFT 601	Pre-Internship	Merchant
BMFT 641	Family Therapy I	Bertram
<b>Year One, Spring</b>		
BMFT 602	Internship I	Merchant
BMFT 645	Systemic Diagnosis and Assessment	Bertram
BMFT 615	Research Methods in MFT- <b>Students Apply for thesis track during this course</b>	Perry
	Elective	
<b>Year One, Summer</b>		
BMFT 662	Family Life Cycle	TBD
BMFT 643	Professional Ethics & the Law	Merchant
<b>Year Two, Fall</b>		
BMFT 663	Cultural Diversity	Merchant
BMFT 665	Family Therapy across the Life Cycle	Howard
BMFT 634	Addictive Disorders	Bertram
BMFT 603	Internship II	Faculty
	Thesis (3 hours)	Faculty
<b>Year Two, Spring</b>		
BMFT 651	Sex Therapy	Bertram
BMFT 661	Family Therapy II	Merchant
BMFT 604	Internship III	Faculty
	Elective-Elective will be selected in consultation with the thesis committee chair	
	Thesis (3 hours)	Faculty
<p><i>Student chooses two electives from a related area in the university. For students wishing to pursue the LPC, Group Psychotherapy or Career Counseling are suggested. For students wishing to pursue a Ph.D., Intermediate Statistics is suggested. All three of these courses are offered in the Psychology Department.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The cohort graduating in 2016 will only have one elective, as the changes in the curriculum for the first year Spring Semester will begin during the 2015-2016 school year.</i></p>		
<b>Year Two, Summer</b>		
BMFT/BIBM 696	Theological Perspectives on Human Behavior & Change	Bertram & TBA
BMFT 605	Internship IV	Faculty
	Defend Thesis	

**Department Writing Style**

The Department follows the *APA Publication Manual 6th Edition* for all written papers. The student is responsible for purchasing an APA Manual (6th Edition) and learning the necessary sections.

## Research Projects

The MFT faculty are committed to creating a culture of research within the program. As such, students are required to participate in a research project, beginning in the spring of their first year in the program. Rather than being an individual endeavor, it is highly recommended that students work in teams of 3-4. The research project is conducted in conjunction with BMFT 615: Research Methods in MFT and is advised by an MFT faculty mentor (non-MFT faculty may be asked to advise the project with the permission of the Department Chair). The student group may choose a topic of interest to them, or students may choose to join faculty in ongoing research. Guidelines regarding research topics are as follows:

- Must have a direct link to the field of marriage and family therapy
- Must have a systemic focus
- Should attempt to fill a gap in the marriage and family therapy literature

The research process should proceed according to the following steps:

1. Students will register for BMFT 615: Research Methods in MFT during the spring semester of their first year. In this course, each student will write a research proposal as part of his/her grade in the course.
2. Based on the proposals that have been written, students will self-select to participate as a small group in carrying out one of the proposals to completion.
3. Students choose a faculty advisor within the MFT program or seek permission from the Department Chair if they wish to have an advisor in another academic department on campus.
4. The group should meet with their faculty advisor to determine the specific research questions and methods. Abstracts for conference submissions should be developed with the faculty advisor's input.
5. Students are required to submit their research project for presentation at the annual conference of the Texas Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Abstract submissions are typically due in June or July. If the group wishes to submit their research to another conference in addition to TAMFT (i.e., AAMFT, CAPS, etc), they are encouraged to do so. TAMFT typically notifies presenters in August or September regarding their acceptance for presentation. If a group of students has been invited to present at multiple conferences, they may choose which one to attend with the consultation of their faculty advisor.
6. Students are required to submit an application to ACU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the start of data collection. Students should go to [www.acu.edu/academics/orsp/institutional.html](http://www.acu.edu/academics/orsp/institutional.html) for the application. The Research Review Request Form (available on the website) should be completed and submitted both electronically and in hard copy to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

## **Comprehensive Examination**

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to assess the student's knowledge of clinical portions of master's level study. There are two portions to the comprehensive examination: 1) a theory of change paper and 2) a clinical presentation. Students must pass the Comprehensive Examination in order to graduate from the program.

### Theory of Change Paper

Students will write a 15-20 page theory of change paper of professional, journal quality that addresses from an integrative perspective his or her primary theoretical orientation for treating relational systems. This paper will demonstrate an intellectual exercise in which you present your theory of change based on research and theory. The paper should demonstrate critical thinking. Rather than consisting of disjointed pieces, the sections of this paper should inform one another. For example, your philosophical/theological/spiritual considerations should make sense in light of the theory you choose and vice versa. The paper must adhere to APA, 6<sup>th</sup> edition standards.

Writing in APA format requires that you use subheadings to divide your paper into sections. You may use first person in the writing of this paper. You should use 15-20 references (at least one reference for each page). The paper should include the following sections/topics:

- Introduction
- Literature review on change in therapy
- Theoretical considerations (at least two theories)
  - Theory #1 – assumptions, change, role of therapist
  - Theory #2 – assumptions, change, role of therapist
- Philosophical/theological/spiritual considerations of change (minimum of 2 references in addition to sacred texts such as the Bible, the Qur'an, the Talmud, the Vedas, the Book of Mormon, etc.)
- Integrated theory of change – Based on research, theoretical considerations, and theology, what is your theory of change? How do you go about integrating research findings and theory?
  - Phase I – assessment/engagement
  - Phase II – interventions
  - Phase III – termination
- Conclusion

### Case Study Presentation

The student must also prepare a 30-minute clinical presentation during which time he or she will present a case study including video clips from a relational client system that has been seen in the Marriage and Family Institute. The presentation should begin with a **brief** description of your

integrated theory of change. The majority of the presentation should focus on the case study with the following points being addressed:

- Briefly describe the client system, including your initial assessment. Include relevant data from the intake/assessment packet.
- Describe your conceptualization/systemic hypothesis of the case. This should be informed by your integrated theory of change (**Hint:** Use the conceptual language of the theories you are using to describe the source of dysfunction in the client system.)
- Discuss the relevant ethical and legal issues.
- Identify and describe the relevant diversity issues.
- Using the DSM-5, state your diagnostic impressions for each of the members of the system. Discuss the basis for your diagnoses.
- Discuss all referrals you made and any consultations you engaged in, including your supervision consultations.
- Describe the stages of therapy and the interventions you used based on your integrated theory of change.
- Describe the progress of the case over time.
- Assess how the case reflects your theory of therapy. Evaluate the quality of your therapy with this case. Reflect on the personal journey that has drawn you to the two theories you have chosen to integrate.

The clips should illustrate the stages of the student's particular model of therapy in a relational system.

The full-time faculty will serve as the committee for MFT students and will be responsible for grading the paper as well as the presentation, but the presentation will be open to all students in the Marriage and Family Therapy program. The faculty will determine an average grade for the presentation based on the rubrics below. For both the paper and the presentation, an average grade of 3 or above is a pass. An average grade of 2-2.99 is a pass with reservations and will include an additional writing assignment. Any score below a 1.99 is a fail. Both portions of the Comprehensive Exam must be passed in order for the student to graduate.

The date for the Examination must be at least 4 weeks before graduation and will be set each summer for the next year. A sign-up sheet of presentation times will be posted. Students should refer to the MFI Policies and Procedures Manual, page 10, for guidelines on Level 3 Dress for the oral presentation.

Students who are out of sequence should plan on taking the Comprehensive Examination in the last semester of their program, but prior to the Graduate School deadline for Comprehensive Examinations. Students in the prescribed sequencing will take the exam at the announced time.

It is anticipated that most students will pass the examination on the first attempt. Some students may be required to do further study or write additional material. If a student fails the examination a second time, the faculty may choose to assess an academic or clinical penalty upon the student before he/she is allowed to take the examination for the third time. Failure to



pass the examination can lead to dismissal from the program. A student has the right to appeal the decision of the comprehensive examination committee through procedures described in the Graduate Catalogue.

Exemplary papers written by former students are available for your reference in a binder in the MFI Reception Office.

### **Comprehensive Examination Theory of Change Paper Rubric Marriage and Family Therapy Program**

- 1 = Fails to meet minimum expectations
- 2 = Meets some but not all expectations
- 3 = Meets expectations
- 4 = Exceeds expectations

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Literature review on change	
2. Adequate description of foundational aspects of chosen theories	
3. Philosophical/theological/spiritual considerations of change	
4. Integrated theory of change	
5. Use of reputable, professional resources	
6. Level of professionalism in writing (adherence to APA, 6 <sup>th</sup> edition)	
7. Clear articulation of ways in which different sections of the paper inform others	

### **Comprehensive Examination Presentation Rubric Department of Marriage and Family Therapy**

- 1 = Fails to meet minimum expectations
- 2 = Meets some but not all expectations
- 3 = Meets expectations
- 4 = Exceeds expectations

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1. Provides a clear description of the integrated theory of change	
2. Provides an adequate description of the client system including assessment considerations	
3. Demonstrates understanding of relevant ethical and legal issues	
4. Ability to identify and describe relevant diversity issues	
5. Possesses the ability to diagnose clients according to the DSM-5	
6. Demonstrates clinical judgment in making referrals and seeking consultation	
7. Provides a clear description of the stages of therapy and the interventions used based on the integrated theory of change and describes the progress of the case over time	
8. Demonstrates the ability to think critically about the personal journey of choosing a model of therapy	

**Graduating Student Survey**

Each student will be given the opportunity to evaluate the program in a formal manner. Your responses will be anonymous. This document will be provided by the Administrative Coordinator of the Department and should be returned prior to the comprehensive exam.

## **SECTION 4**

### **Program Requirements – Direct Clinical Contact & Supervision**

## **Program Requirements - Direct Clinical Contact & Supervision**

### **Direct Client Contact Requirements**

Students are required to complete 500 direct client contact hours, 250 of which must be relational, in order to graduate from the MFT program. An intern may complete no more than 250 hours of direct client contact at his/her off-site internship. Direct client contact may consist of individual, couple, family, process group, and group psychoeducational sessions. Procedures for students who fail to meet this requirement are discussed on page 28. Direct client contact hours are accrued as follows:

- Pre-Internship, fall semester of first year – First year interns will be paired with one or two second-year interns and will be required to choose several relational client systems being seen for therapy in the MFI by the 2<sup>nd</sup> year interns. First-year interns will observe those client systems for at least 50 hours. The first year intern is expected to observe every session that is conducted with the chosen client systems as a member of the therapy team. No more than three first year interns may be on the therapy team of any one case. First year interns will be required to document their observations as part of the Pre-Internship class, and practicum supervision will be provided in this class as well. The 50 observation hours must be completed before the intern will be permitted to see clients in co-therapy.
- Internship I, spring semester of first year – At the start of the spring semester, first year interns will begin seeing clients with a second year co-therapist. Co-therapy will continue throughout the spring semester.
- Internships I (summer semester), II, III, & IV – First year interns will begin being assigned their own clients at the beginning of the summer semester. Depending on the needs of the second year interns, however, they may continue in co-therapy for relational cases until the second years graduate in August.

### **Reporting Contact and Supervision Hours**

The following forms are used to record your clinical contact and supervision hours. You should keep the original copy of these documents and turn in only copies. All of these forms are available in the filing cabinets in the Intern Room and on the MFI Blog.

#### Cumulative Practicum Client List

This list details all direct clinical contact during practicum and serves as a complete listing of all clinical cases and the hours for each case. New clients are to be added to this list according to case number.

#### Supervision Report

This is the complete record of your supervision. Record your supervision hours on the form and use it to generate any reports. It is important to remember that individual supervision involves no more than two interns and group supervision involves no more than ten interns. Interns must

maintain a ratio of 5:1 supervision hours; this means for every five hours of client contact, the intern must receive one hour of supervision. Interns are required to obtain 100 hours of supervision throughout the program, and 50 of these hours must consist of sharing raw data (live, video, or audio) with the supervisor. Additionally, 50 of the 100 hours must take place in individual supervision.

### Client Contact Monitoring Sheet

Use the CCMS to maintain an accurate count of your hours. This form will be turned in to your supervisor each week.

### **Supervision**

Interns must receive at least 100 hours of supervision throughout the course of the program, 50 of which must consist of raw data (video, live, or audio). The supervision which counts toward these 100 hours is that which is done at the MFI, rather than the supervision at your externship sites. If students accumulate more than 500 hours of direct client contact, however, they must maintain a cumulative client contact to supervision ratio of 5:1.

### How Supervision is Provided

Individual supervision is defined as one or two supervisees receiving supervision. Group supervision is defined as three to ten supervisees receiving supervision. Two supervisees in the therapy room (co-therapy) may receive individual live supervision credit. Others behind the mirror will receive individual live supervision credit if no more than two are observing. Three to eight supervisees behind the mirror constitute group for those observing while those in the therapy room will receive individual supervision.

Supervisees will receive supervision in three settings: 1) one hour each of individual and group with the supervisor assigned by the Department Chair each semester; 2) live supervision on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays as part of the reflecting team protocol; and 3) when a case demands time and attention outside of regularly scheduled supervision.

It is the policy of the program that all supervisors at the MFI are either AAMFT Approved Supervisors and AAMFT Supervisor candidates.

### Reflecting Team Supervision Hours

It is the responsibility of the reflecting team members to negotiate with the                      nightly supervisor to do a live supervision on a given evening. The team should inform their supervisor of their scheduled clients so the supervisor can plan to provide at least one hour of supervision for every five hours completed by the reflecting team.

### Off-Site Hours and Supervision

Hours obtained at off-site internship placements will be supervised by the intern's regular semester supervisor. The Program Director serves as the liaison with off-site placements and is

responsible for dealing with administrative and/or structural issues that occur at the sites. Interns should speak with the Program Director and their supervisors for guidance if disputes arise at their sites. If an intern is receiving more client contact hours than can be covered through regular supervision, it is his/her responsibility to discuss this with the Clinical Director and to secure additional supervision.

### Missed Hours

When an intern has missed supervision hours due to an illness or other absence, those hours must be made up during the reporting period.

### **Reporting Hours**

Client contact reports must be submitted to the Department Academic Coordinator by the required dates in order to receive a grade in Internship. Failure to report hours by the deadline will result in a grade reduction in the Internship course. In addition, the intern must complete the hours report located in the MFI Reception Office at the end of each week in order to receive new intakes during the following week. All other practicum requirements are found in the Internship I, II, III, IV, and V syllabi.

### **Completing Hours**

For various reasons, students may have difficulty completing their 500 hours of client contact within the advertised two years of the program. In the event an intern does not complete his/her hours by the day of graduation, the following procedure must be followed:

- The student must inform the Department Chair, in writing, of his or her intention to complete the required hours. This should happen no later than July 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The student may continue to see his or her existing clients and receive supervision in the MFI until the start of the fall semester. However, he or she will not receive new intakes after the date of August graduation.
- After the fall semester begins, the student must obtain a AAMFT-Approved supervisor and a site at which to complete the hours. This information must be approved by the Department Chair prior to obtaining hours at the site. If the supervisor requires payment, it is the intern's responsibility to do so.
- The intern must complete all necessary reports for the Department Academic Coordinator upon completion of the hours. Consequently, hours reports must be submitted to the Department Academic Coordinator by the end of the fall reporting period in order to graduate in December.
- The student will receive a grade of IP in Internship V. Provided the intern completes his/her hours in time for December graduation, this grade will be changed. If, however, the student does not complete his/her hours by the end of the fall semester, s/he will have to register and pay tuition for another semester of internship.

## **SECTION 5**

### **Post-Graduation Information**

## **Post-Graduation information**

### **AAMFT**

Upon graduation, each student will need to transfer from student to associate status with AAMFT. The website is <http://www.aamft.org>.

### **Insurance**

An important consideration is purchasing liability insurance. Annual costs depend on the amount of coverage and the insurance company. Many of you are with [CPH & Associates](#) because that is the company from whom you purchase insurance through your AAMFT membership. **In making future choices about insurance coverage, you are encouraged to select an occurrence policy rather than a claims made policy.** The following hotlink will explain the differences: <http://www.hpsso.com/individuals/professional-liability/claims-made-occurrence>

### **Texas Licensure**

Those who plan to obtain an associate license (LMFTA) in Texas should plan to take the national licensing exam. All appropriate forms, requirements, and testing dates can be found at the following website: [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mft/mft\\_exam.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mft/mft_exam.shtm). It is best to take the exam in the summer semester before graduation. Check the website for important due dates.

### **Information about Licensing Exam, Links to State Regulatory Boards and Other Pertinent Information (Portability of the Degree)**

To obtain information about different state licensure requirements, you may search the Association of Marital and Family Regulatory Boards at <http://www.amftrb.org>. This website also contains information about the AMFTRB National exam, as does the website of the Texas Board of Examiners for Marriage and Family Therapists. It is the policy of the program to review Texas LMFT requirement during the interview weekend and again at new student orientation. During those meetings we also discuss how students can utilize the [www.amftrb.org](http://www.amftrb.org) site to obtain information about contacting state licensure boards to inquire about licensure requirements in states other than Texas. The Department Chair will meet with any student who wants assistance in knowing how to contact the licensure board in jurisdiction to determine if the ACU MFT program meets the requirements for that state.

### **Types of Information the Program Will Collect About You after Graduation**

It is important for the program to know about your experiences after graduation. This allows us to better assess how well the program equips students to work in the field. There will be an alumni survey administered each year that will include the following information:



1. Your place of employment
2. Your licensure status
3. If you have or have not passed the AMFTRB National Exam
4. Your perception of the MFT Program and how well it prepares graduates for careers as MFTs.
5. We will also ask your permission to speak with your employer/supervisor for feedback about the program's strengths and weaknesses in preparing people for the workplace.

Additionally, the program may look at directory information published by licensure boards and the AAMFT membership list to ascertain the licensure status and AAMFT membership of our graduates.

## **Appendix A**

### Additional Policies of the Program

#### **Policy on Student Recruitment**

The ACU MFT program works with the university admissions office to recruit students from multidisciplinary backgrounds. We are intentional in recruiting students from diverse backgrounds in accordance with the ACU non-discrimination policy on admission listed each year. We also seek to admit at least one student to each cohort who is fluent in both the Spanish and English languages, since our on campus clinic (the MFI) often serves clients whose first language is Spanish.

#### **Policy on Student Safety (Safe Climate in the Classroom)**

The MFT program's definition of safety and policy on creating a safe climate in the classroom is:

Safety is the ability to express self without fear of reprisal. Within the classroom and clinic, faculty and students will not discriminate based on students' race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion, or worldview. Safety does not include freedom from discomfort, as students grow through challenging experiences, which may cause discomfort.

#### **ACU non-discrimination Policy in Admission of MFT Students**

The MFT Program policy on non-discrimination in admission is the same as the non-discrimination policy of the university:

**Abilene Christian University complies with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws and does not engage in prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, age or disability in admissions decisions, financial aid and provision of student services, programs and activities. As a private educational institution, however, ACU reserves the right to deny admission to any applicant whose academic preparation, character or personal conduct is determined to be inconsistent with the purposes and objectives of the university.**

#### **ACU Student Code of Conduct**

The ACU Student Code of Conduct policy is found in the Student Handbook. It is summarized in the ACU 201-2017 Catalog and included here for your convenience.

Student Conduct Expectations By enrolling in the university, students signify their willingness to observe Christian standards of honesty, ethics, and morality. They agree to respect the personal and property rights of others. They agree to fulfill their responsibilities under all published university regulations and to obey local, state, and federal laws. Information about student conduct and regulations can be found in the Student Handbook at [www.acu.edu/studentlife](http://www.acu.edu/studentlife) (select the Policies link). The Student Handbook is published at the beginning of each school year, and it details various important provisions that each student should read and understand. The Student Handbook determines the current regulations and policies that impact campus life. On

reasonable notice to the students, the Student Handbook may be amended. Regulations such as those below, and others, are included in the Student Handbook.

- Possession or use or sale of illegal drugs will result in automatic suspension from the university.
- Possession or use of alcohol is subject to strict disciplinary measures and may result in suspension.
- Students must conform to the current dress code
- Class attendance is an important student responsibility; students may be dropped from classes or failed for excessive absences.
- Chapel attendance is required for all undergraduate students that are enrolled full-time and are under the age of 25. (Required chapel attendance does not apply to graduate students)
- Hazing is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action from the university and criminal penalties from the state of Texas.
- Many activities are expressly listed in the Student Handbook as prohibited and are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including: smoking or other use of tobacco on campus, violation of residence hall visitation policies, falsification of university records, cheating, theft, sexual immorality, vandalism, and possession of firearms

For a more complete description of the university alcohol policy please review the information here: [http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/deanofstudents/For%20Students/Alcohol\\_Policy.html](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/deanofstudents/For%20Students/Alcohol_Policy.html)

### **MMFT Policy on Admission**

Admission to the program is on a competitive basis. The admission requirements for the MMFT are: 1. A completed application for admission with a nonrefundable application fee; 2. An official transcript(s) in English (or translated to English) of all previous colleges attended. The transcript must indicate an earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university or equivalent; 3. A cumulative undergraduate approximate B average or above in the area of focus or related area and evidence of an overall productive GPA; 4. A minimum GRE score of 280 5. Three letters of recommendation; 6. A written purpose statement declaring why the applicant wishes to study marriage and family therapy at ACU and what he or she plans to do professionally upon graduation; 7. Completion of a psychosocial history; 8. A quality of life that reflects high moral standards; 9. An on-campus interview with the faculty. The personal interview for applicants residing outside the continental United States can be done via Skype. When all required materials are received, the application will be reviewed by the MFT faculty. Students are admitted once a year and begin their program of study in the fall semester. All application materials **MUST** be completed by the preceding February 15 for the fall semester. The GRE and personal interviews **MUST** be completed by March 15. Acceptance into the program will be granted by April 1.

No specific undergraduate major is essential for admission. Applicants are encouraged to have undergraduate credit in subjects that embrace human development, family relations, theology, sociology, psychology, and statistics. Applicants without adequate preparation may be accepted upon the condition that they register for additional courses deemed necessary by the graduate advisor.

### **Policy on Student Retention**

The MMFT program reviews the progress of each student at the end of the semester Faculty/Supervisor meeting which occurs toward the end of the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Academic, clinical, and interactional considerations, along with adherence to program and clinic policies and procedures are reviewed in this meeting and given as feedback on the faculty/staff evaluation. This is part of the program's effort to facilitate the success and retention of MFT program students in ways that are consistent with the university mission and anti-discrimination policy, and student conduct policy. We also utilize academic support services when needed, along with academic advising, and encourage students to bring concerns as they arise so that we can better meet student needs.

### **Graduation Policy**

Students must meet the academic and clinical requirements outlined in this handbook in order to graduate. Thesis track students will also have to meet the requirements in the Thesis Handbook in order to graduate. Students must also meet all required university requirements for graduation. Although many students participate in the graduation ceremony at the end of the Spring Semester in the second year in the program, students are not yet graduates of the program until they complete the requirements of graduation and the degree is conferred. For most students this will be at the end of their second summer semester in the program. For a few who do not complete all requirements in that window, it may be longer.

### **Remediation and Dismissal Policy of the Program**

The 2016-2017 ACU catalog contains this statement on graduate student dismissal from the university:

**The Assistant Provost for Graduate Programs, through action of the college dean, reserves the right to refuse continued enrollment to any student who is negligent in conforming to student regulations or academic standards.**

In addition to that policy, the MFT Program may dismiss students from the program who do not demonstrate the clinical abilities to work safely with clients as an MFT. When possible, the program develops a remediation plan to assist students who struggle in meeting the requirements of the program. Students may appeal decisions related to dismissal through the university and program grievance procedure (please see p. 9 for the program's grievance policy).

### **Policy on Technology and Technology Requirements For the Classroom and Clinic**

Each faculty member in the MFT program will establish a policy for the classes in which he or she teaches in terms of appropriate use of technology in class (e.g., laptops tablets, cellphones, etc.). These are included on the syllabi for courses. Additionally, students are responsible for ensuring that they handle clinical information in a secure way. For this reason, student-therapists shall not use email to contact clients because our email is part of the larger ACU email system. Additionally, student-therapists are responsible for doing their electronic record entries in a place in which others might not see the information, and are responsible for ensuring that in observing cases or reviewing video that doors to the observation areas are closed and the sound mufflers are turned on to protect privacy. Additionally, student-therapists will be required to follow the

Standard VI guidelines of the AAMFT Code of Ethics in using technology related to clinical material and the federal HIPAA Standards.

Students are expected to have basic computer skills. While not required, it is strongly encouraged that each student obtain a laptop to use during the program. However, computers are available in the clinic for clinical work and in the library for papers and class projects.

### **Training in Technology Used in the Program**

Training in using our electronic records system, as well as the equipment for observing and recording sessions in the clinic will be delivered in the internship course sequence. Also, there is support in the Library for learning about how to use technology more resourcefully and Team 55 in the library is available to assist with personal computer issues. The program is committed to ensuring that program faculty, staff, supervisors, and students are aware of training opportunities in technologies that support our program. Faculty and Supervisor should also utilize these resources for their technology training needs.

### **Policy On Academic Integrity (Plagiarism)/Authenticity of Work**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated within the program. Each syllabus contains a statement about plagiarism and confirmed cases of plagiarism within the program will follow both the course policies of the instructor and the university policies related to plagiarism. Instructors will use Turnitin.com to assess for the authenticity of student work and may submit any assignment suspected of being plagiarized to Turnitin.com or successor programs the university opts to use to assess for authenticity.

## Appendix B

### Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes for the Program

**Program Goal 1 Diversity**-The program will equip graduates to work with ethnically, religiously, socioeconomically diverse and LGBTQ populations.

Alumni SLO 1-Alumni Benchmark- 85 percent of students at the time of graduation will have seen clients who are diverse ethnically, socioeconomically, religiously, or in sexual orientation as measured by alumni survey.

SLOs Designed to Help the Program Achieve Program Goal 1

SLO 1-Students will demonstrate knowledge related to diverse populations-85% of the students will average a score of 92 percent or better on the assignments related to the cultural plunge (including the final paper) in the Cultural Diversity in Family Therapy course.

SLO 2-Students will demonstrate they have developed the clinical practice skills to conduct therapy competently and ethically with diverse clients-85% of students will average a score of 3.5 on the diversity related questions on their final internship evaluation

SLO 3-Students will demonstrate an appreciation for working with LGBTQ clients-85% of students will average a score of 4 on the rubric related to the transgender assignment and the LGB assignment in the Sexual Therapy course.

SLO 40 Students will demonstrate an appreciation for gender diversity-85% of students will average a score of at least 92 percent on the gender and diversity assignment in Sexual Therapy.

**Program Goal 2 Ethics**- The program will equip graduates to work in an ethical and legal manner through equipping them in ethical decision making, skills in reading and interpreting the AAMFT Code of Ethics, and applicable state and national codes.

Alumni SLO 1-Alumni Benchmark- 85 percent of alumni will report that the program has equipped them to apply ethical decision making in diverse work settings, to read and interpret the AAMFT Code of Ethics, and applicable state and national codes.

SLOs the Program Has Designed to Help it Achieve PG 2

SL01- Students will demonstrate an ability to apply the AAMFT Code of Ethics in clinical decision making -85% of students who take the AMFTRB Practice exam will score at least a 67% on domain 6 (Maintaining Legal, Ethical and Professional Standards) of the AMFTRB Practice Exam

SLO2-Students will demonstrate an ability to practice in an ethical manner--85% of students will average a score of 3.5 on the Legal Issues, Ethics and Standards section of the Individual Supervision Evaluation Rubric in Internship IV

SLO3- Students will demonstrate an ability to adequately document their clinical work-85% of students will complete their charting each week with a supervisory review signature signifying that it has been completed as measured by random audits on a weekly basis.

**Program Goal 3 Clinical/Practice Preparedness** -The program will equip graduates to work competently with a variety of populations and presenting problems from systemic/relational/interactional perspectives.

Alumni SLO 1-Benchmark One-85% of students on an alumni survey will report the program equipped them to work competently with a variety of populations and presenting problems from systemic/relational/interactional perspectives.

Alumni SLO 2- Benchmark Two- 85% of employers who respond to the relevant question on the employer survey will report that our graduates in their employment setting are equipped to practice competently with a variety of populations and presenting problems from systemic/relational/interactional perspectives.

SLO1- Students will demonstrate the ability to explain how they assess, diagnose, and treat clients from a systemic perspective-85% of students will score an average of 3 on each area of the rubric for the case presentation portion of the comprehensive exam.

SLO2-Students will demonstrate an ability to proficiently work as systemic therapists at the end of the program-85% of students will score an average of 3.5 on their Individual Supervision Evaluation Rubric in Internship IV.

SLO3-Students will demonstrate they have developed knowledge across the AMFTRB domains to practice as systemically oriented therapists-85% of students who take the AMFTRB Practice Exam will score at least a 67% on the AMFTRB Practice exam.

SLO4-Students will receive the opportunity to work with clients who present with a variety of presenting problems-85% of students across Internship I-IV will assess and diagnose at least 5 different DSM 5 diagnoses among clients seen in the clinic.

**Program Goal 4-Research/Evidence Informed Practice**-The program will equip graduates to read, apply and conduct research so as to be informed users of research to improve services.

Benchmarks-85% of students who complete the research class will either present research at a conference or successfully defend a master's thesis.

Benchmark-At least one student admitted each year will select the thesis track (Note: This begins with the cohort admitted for the 2016-2017 cohort)

Alumni SLO 1-At least 20% of alumni will present research at a conference, or publish in a refereed journal, or will continue to build their research skills in a doctoral program within three years of graduation, as measured by responses to the alumni survey.

SLO1-Students will demonstrate the ability to write a research proposal-85% of students will achieve an aggregate score of at least 3.5 on the Research Proposal Rubric in BMFT 615.

SLO2-Students will demonstrate an ability to utilize the literature for evidence based (evidence informed)

practice-85% of students will achieve a score of at least 3.5 on the “application of evidence based literature into clinical practice” item on the clinical case presentation rubric for their comprehensive exam.

SLO3- Thesis Track students will demonstrate an ability to complete a major research project -85% of thesis track students who successfully defend their thesis will score of at least 3.5 on their thesis defense rubric. (SLO 3 is offered for transparency reasons -This is a future SLO as we do not have thesis track students yet. Students will be eligible to opt into this in the Spring 2017 semester, but it may be that nobody opts for this. So we will track this in the future and it should not be considered part of our current outcomes).

**Program Goal 5-Integration of faith and learning** -The program will equip graduates to ethically and competently interact with clients and colleagues around issues of religion, spirituality, and epistemology in therapeutic and supervision contexts.

Alumni SLO1-85% of alumni will identify that the program equipped them to assess for relevant religious, spiritual and epistemology influences in presenting problems in therapy sessions they conduct. SLO 1-Students will demonstrate an ability to competently and respectfully work with clients’ faith, epistemology and worldview-85% of students will score a 3.5 or above on their Internship IV Individual evaluation form on the section related to the integration of faith/spiritual perspectives and therapy.

SLO 2-Students will be able to articulate their integration of faith, epistemology and worldview-85% of students will score at least an 80 percent on the following assignments throughout the program, which highlight the integration of assimilating faith, and spirituality and epistemology into their development as therapists:

- Integration of Faith and Ethics paper in BMFT 643, Professional Ethics and the Law
- Cultural Plunge #4--Religion, in BMFT 663, Cultural Diversity in Marriage and Family Therapy
- Sex Therapy Reflection Paper in BMFT 6
- Final Paper in Theological Perspectives

SLO 3- At the end of their training, students will articulate their personal view of faith, epistemology and worldview and how these are incorporated into their practices as therapists-85% of students will score at least a 3.5 on the “Philosophical/theological/spiritual considerations of change” question on the Comprehensive Exam paper rubric.

**Program Goal 6-Knowledge of Professional Marriage and Family Therapy Principles**-The program will equip students to be knowledgeable in the AAMFT Core Competencies, the AMFTRB Domains, and the AAMFT Code of ethics so that they may pass the AMFTRB National Exam and work as knowledgeable practitioners after graduation

Alumni SLO1-85 percent of our graduates who take the AMFTRB exam will pass it.

SLO 1-Students will demonstrate they have a solid grasp of the AAMFT Core Competencies highlighted in their classes-85 percent of our students will achieve a scores of 80 percent on the assignments which measures these.

SLO 2- Students will demonstrate mastery of the AMFTRB Domains-85 percent of students who take the AMFTRB Practice exam will score at least a 67 in each domain.

SLO 3-Students will demonstrate competence in the AAMFT Code of Ethics-85 percent of students who take the Ethics course will pass with a grade of A for the course



### **The Faculty & Supervisors Roles in Supporting the Mission, Program Goals, and Student Learning Outcome of the Program**

The faculty of the MFT program at ACU support the mission of ACU, the mission of the program, and the mission of the MFI. Every faculty member is expected to be a missional fit for the university's mission, as a Christian university. Each full-time faculty member in the program establishes goals each year in teaching, scholarship, and service. Students have an opportunity to evaluate the instruction in courses provided by faculty and also have an opportunity to evaluate their Internship supervisors at the end of each semester. Faculty are dedicated to strong teaching, as this is an important component of helping students achieve the student learning outcomes that are connected to the six program goals. Each faculty member engages in research and also serve as mentors for student research projects and thesis committee members, which is part of the program's dedication to a culture of research. Faculty service to the university, community, profession, and the church all create opportunities for them to use their experience and talents to enhance the lives of others. These service activities also often enhance their abilities to serve as better teachers, supervisors, and research mentors in the program. Each faculty member is required to be clinically active, and to maintain MFT licensure, AAMFT Membership, and to be AAMFT Approved Supervisors or AAMFT Approved Supervision candidates.

The supervisors in the MFI also play a critical role in helping the program accomplish the program goals and students to achieve the student learning outcomes. It is no accident that several program goals have a student learning outcome that is measured by the Internship IV Individual Supervision Evaluation form. Supervisors serve to guide you on your journey toward eventually becoming a licensed MFT. Each of our supervisors in the MFI are required to be licensed MFTs in Texas, to be members of AAMFT, and to be AAMFT Approved Supervisors or AAMFT Approved Supervision candidates. They also are required to be a missional fit for the university's mission, as a Christian university.

### **Understanding Dr. Bertram's Role as Department Chair/Program Director & Dr. Merchant's Role as the Clinical Director (Director of the MFI)**

Sometimes it is difficult for students to know who to see when there are concerns about the program or the clinic. This brief description is designed to help students know where to direct their questions. Dr. Bertram is the Department Chair and Program Director. His role is to oversee all aspects of the MFT Program and the undergraduate Child and Family Studies program. He is responsible for the budget, the academic portion of the program, and oversees the faculty and supervisors work. Ultimately, he is responsible for overseeing the operations of the MFT program and the MFI. He is tasked with the responsibility of maintaining the program's quality and also tasked with enhancing the program as needed. Academic concerns and concerns about program policies and purchases should be brought to Dr. Bertram. Dr. Bertram works on a 12-month contract.

Dr. Merchant as the Clinical Director oversees the day-to-day functioning of the clinic and as the Clinical Director is the one who has been delegated the responsibility for making decisions about student requests for time away from the clinic, in collaboration with the Internship Supervisor for the student. Dr. Merchant does the hands-on management of the clinic and is the person to report concerns about the clinic to and is the first person to contact if your supervisor is not available, except on the on-call evenings when a faculty member is in the clinic (Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday). Dr. Merchant works on a 12-month contract.

As a rule of thumb, if the concern is an academic program one, a policy one, a concern about the sufficiency of resources, or related to budget, these concerns should come to Dr. Bertram. Concerns about

the MFI and about client concerns should go to Dr. Merchant (after speaking with your supervisor).

### **Appendix C** Program Diversity 2016-2017

COAMFTE requires the program to provide and publish a description of diversity within the program each year. Our program's definition of diversity is: **The MFT program defines diversity as the representation of diverse, minority or marginalized races, ethnicities, religions, classes, genders and sexualities.**

#### Faculty & Supervisor Diversity

##### Fall 2016

- Four Caucasian faculty members (two core and two part-time)
- Two male faculty and two female faculty

##### Spring 2017

- Three Caucasian faculty members (two core and one visiting)
- Two male and one female

#### Supervisors

- Four male and two female MFI Supervisors (and one female faculty member who also supervises in the program).
- Seven Caucasian faculty members

#### Student Diversity

##### Second Year Cohort

- Eleven female students and six males
- 17 Caucasian and one Hispanic

##### First Year Cohort

- Eleven female students and six males
- Seven Caucasian students, five Hispanic students, and Five African-American Students

**Appendix D**  
**Understanding the ACU Non-Discrimination Policy and Its Alignment with**  
**COAMFTE Standards**

Abilene Christian University's MFT Program welcomes students who are diverse in race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, relationship status, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religion and spiritual beliefs and/or affiliation, and/or national origin. This is true in regard to the recruitment, admission, codes of conduct, hiring, retention, and dismissal decisions related to the program. However, ACU students are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct mentioned on pages 34-35 of this Handbook.

Abilene Christian University is affiliated with the Churches of Christ and faculty and supervisors are hired who are a missional fit with the university's mission. Faculty and supervisors are aware of this requirement and it plays a role in hiring and retention decisions of faculty and supervisors employed by the university.

**Appendix E**  
**Faculty in the MMFT Program (2016-2017)**

**Dale E. Bertram, PhD, Professor (Department Chair & MMFT Program Director)-** Dr. Bertram is an LMFT-S in Texas and holds licensure as an LMFT in Kentucky and Alabama. An AAMFT Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor. Dr. Bertram enjoys working with students in the classroom, clinic, and collaborating with them on research activities. His research is focused on the rhetorical aspects of family therapy dialogue, Ericksonian supervision, and the integration of faith and learning.

**Lisa Merchant, PhD, Assistant Professor (Clinic Director)-** Dr. Merchant is an LMFT in Texas. She is an AAMFT Clinical Fellow and is an AAMFT Supervision Candidate. She is a graduate of the MMFT program at ACU and completed her PhD in MFT at Texas Tech. Dr. Merchant is a seasoned clinician. She currently directs a BIPP program in Abilene and has a private practice. Her research is focused in the area of domestic violence.

**Tom Milholland, PhD, Professor (Assistant Provost for Institutional Effectiveness)-** Dr. Milholland is an AAMFT Clinical Fellow and an LMFT in the state of Texas. Dr. Milholland has taught in the MFT program from a number of years. Due to his administrative responsibilities for the university, he only teaches in the Fall.

**Jamie Miller Howard, PhD, Adjunct Instructor-** Dr. Jamie Howard completed her PhD in MFT at Amridge University and her Master's in MFT at Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Howard has worked in community mental health, substance abuse treatment facilities, and private practice. She has also extensive experience working with military populations. She holds licensure as an LMFT.

**Wayne Perry, DMin, PhD, Visiting Professor-** Dr. Wayne Perry is an LMFT in Alabama and an AAMFT Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor. A retired United States Air Force Chaplain, Wayne holds a DMin from Emory University and a PhD in MFT from Amridge University. Following his career in the U.S. Air Force, Dr. Perry served as the Clinical Programs Director at Amridge University and later as the Clinical Director of the MFT Program at NorthCentral University. Dr. Perry has extensive experience in private practice.

## Appendix F Student Achievement Criteria Data

Below is the official template that programs should use to disclose their program's COAMFTE Student Achievement Criteria Data in accordance with the Accreditation Standards Version 12. Programs are required to publish data on all of the required Student Achievement Criteria set by the Commission per cohort on an annual basis on the landing page of their program's website. The information must be clearly labeled and identifiable on the program's home page and provide all of the required information.

COAMFTE Student Achievement Criteria Data for [Program Name] Accredited: [Initial Accreditation Date]										
Minimum Program Length*: [Years] / Advertised Program Length*: [Years] / Maximum Time to Complete Program*: [Years]										
Year Students Entered Program**	# of Student in Program (optional)		Graduation Rate (Minimum Time)		Graduation Rate (Advertised Time)		Graduation Rate (Maximum Time)		Job Placement	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	
2005-2006	20	0	20	0	20	0	20	0	65%	
2006-2007	20	0	20	0	20	0	20	0	45%	
2007-2008	20	0	20	0	20	0	20	0	50%	
2008-2009	20	0	19	0	19	0	19	0	31.57%	
2009-2010	18	0	17	0	18	0	18	0	16.66%	
2010-2011	14	0	14	0	14	0	14	0	35.71%	
2011-2012	23	0	22	0	23	-0	23	0	69.56%	
2012-2013	21	0	19	0	19	0	19	0	90.47%	
2013-2014	23	0	22	0	22	0	22	0	95.45%	
2014-2015	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2015-2016	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

FT=Full-time

PT=Part-time