

# Respect for Diversity

The Online Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program is committed to creating a learning context that is characterized by the inclusion of multiple groups in the student body and faculty. Further, the faculty and program leadership view matters of diversity as integral to the foundational curriculum and foundational practice component.

The university's mission is to “educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world” (<http://www.acu.edu/aboutacu/mission.html>) .

The Online MFT program, within this mission, strives to celebrate the gift of diversity by employing faculty and recruiting students with diverse ethnicities, experiences, interests, abilities, and training. Because the program aspires to graduate clinically competent, ethical, and professionally engaged marriage and family therapists, the curriculum and practice component seeks to be enriched by diverse ideas, thoughts and perspectives.

Faculty and staff within ACU, and within the Online MFT program, understand that creating a learning environment that accepts and respects diversity requires intentional practice. Such a learning environment must extend beyond the classroom. A total learning environment in which respect for, and acceptance of, diversity must be cultivated explicitly and implicitly throughout the program. Explicit content on diversity is integrated throughout the curriculum and taught by instructors who model respect for, and appreciation of, diversity. This culminates in a required emphasis in the final Capstone presentation required of each student. Implicitly, the Online MFT program models respect for, and appreciation of, diversity in its policies, procedures, recruiting, daily practices, and attitudes. As a professional MFT training program in the landscape of Christian higher education, appreciating and respecting all humans, regardless of differences, is of utmost importance. The end result are graduates who demonstrate a high level of comfort with diversity in the therapeutic practice.