

# MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY – M.S., D.M.F.T.

## The marriage and family therapy profession

Marriage and Family Therapy is a distinct international mental health profession based on the premise that relationships are fundamental to the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Marriage and family therapists (MFTs) evaluate and treat mental and emotional disorders and other health and behavioral problems; and address a wide array of relationship issues within the context of families and larger systems. The federal government has designated marital and family therapy a core mental health profession—along with counseling, social work, psychiatry, psychiatric nursing, and psychology. All 50 states also support and regulate the profession by licensing or certifying marriage and family therapists.

## Ongoing program review

The M.S. and D.M.F.T. degrees engage in ongoing review of student outcomes and use this information to improve program effectiveness. Data on student outcomes are collected through aggregate scores on the following: quarterly evaluations of clinical competency, results of qualifying examinations and clinical demonstrations, client session and outcome data, and exit surveys and interviews of students at graduation. Alumni surveys are also conducted every two years to track graduates' attainment of marital and family therapy licensure, data on employment, and feedback regarding how well the program prepares graduates for their job responsibilities. The program faculty also maintains regular contact with community agencies and educational institutions in the region to obtain input into curriculum planning and improvements in clinical training.

## Financial assistance

Students who are accepted into the M.S. or D.M.F.T. degree curriculums may apply for work-study and department-funded research, teaching, and administrative assistantships awarded by the Department of Counseling and Family Sciences. Departmental awards are contingent upon the availability of funds. Students may also apply for need-based financial aid, such as a loan or other work-study programs on campus. There are also small school-based scholarships for which students may apply. Students accepted into the D.M.F.T. degree curriculum in marital and family therapy are eligible for and encouraged to apply for the AAMFT minority fellowships. See <<http://www.aamft.org/>> for information.

Students may apply for financial aid by writing to:

Student Financial Aid Office  
Student Services  
Loma Linda University  
Loma Linda, CA 92350  
909/558-4509

## Accreditation

The Doctor of Marital and Family Therapy degree program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), 112 South Alfred Street, Alexandria,

Virginia 22314; telephone: 703/838-9808; email: <[coa@aamft.org](mailto:coa@aamft.org)> ([coa@aamft.org](mailto:coa@aamft.org)).

## Program Requirements

- Marital and Family Therapy—M.S. (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/marital-family-therapy/ms/>), D.M.F.T. (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/marital-family-therapy/dmft/>),

## Courses

### MFAM 501. Research Tools and Methodology: Quantitative. 3 Units.

Current social research methods, practice in the use of techniques, consideration of the philosophy of the scientific method, and familiarization with behavioral health test instruments. Cross-listing: COUN 501.

### MFAM 502. Research Tools and Methodology: Qualitative. 3 Units.

Qualitative methodology. Prepares students to undertake research projects using the intensive interview method of qualitative research. Explores practical and epistemological issues and problems in qualitative research in a workshop format. Cross-listing: COUN 502.

### MFAM 515. Crisis Intervention and Client Advocacy. 3 Units.

Presents basic counseling theory, techniques, crisis intervention, and client-centered advocacy in recovery-oriented practice environments. Includes confidentiality, interprofessional cooperation, working with consumers, professional socialization, and collaboration. Discusses suicide, substance abuse, domestic violence, incest, spousal abuse, rape, treating the severely mentally ill, and disaster and trauma response. Cross-listing: COUN 515 .

### MFAM 516. Play Therapy. 2 Units.

Experiential course that teaches practitioners and graduate students to apply play therapy techniques in dealing with childhood problems such as molestation, physical abuse, depression, trauma, and family conflict.

### MFAM 524. Psychopharmacology and Medical Issues. 3 Units.

Introduces common physical and medical issues related to the practice of marriage and family therapy. Students learn a biopsychosocial-spiritual model to assess and intervene—with emphasis given to psychopharmacology, neuroanatomy, the mind-body relationship, and research relative to the field of medical family therapy.

### MFAM 528. Culture, Socioeconomic Status in Therapy. 3 Units.

Addresses current information and historical narratives related to cultural diversity that impact belief systems, communication patterns, roles, and expectations within human relationships and systems. Examines SES and a wide range of social, racial, and ethnic factors that create meanings for individuals, couples, families, and mental health counselors. Emphasizes populations that become professional partners or clients served within this geographic region. Cross-listing: COUN 528.

### MFAM 535. Case Presentation and Professional Studies. 3 Units.

Introduction to mental health recovery-oriented care. Exploration of personal biases toward various cultures/ethnicities, and how poverty and social stress impact consumers. Reviews ethics developed by the Board of Behavioral Science, the American Counseling Association, and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists. Examines spirituality and client-centered advocacy as important processes. Explores the interface between MFTs, counselors, and other professionals.

**MFAM 536. Case Presentation and Documentation. 3 Units.**

Through observation of live cases, trains student in applied psychotherapeutic techniques, assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of premarital, couple, family, aging population, the severely mentally ill, and child relationships. Examines dysfunctional and functional aspects, including recovery process, health promotion, evaluation from a systems perspective, documentation, and illness prevention.

**MFAM 537. Case Presentation. 3 Units.**

The third of six quarters of training work that the student will be expected to complete during the course of their on-campus practicum experience. Focuses on the development of a theoretical orientation as a way to develop, critique, and refine the personal and theoretical perspectives of the therapist. A clinically oriented seminar in which students are asked to prepare brief and focused presentations of individual, marital, or family cases.

**MFAM 538. Theory and Practice of Conflict Resolution. 2 Units.**

Overviews the field of conflict management and resolution. Basic theories and methodologies in the field, with opportunity to develop basic clinical mediation skills.

**MFAM 539. Solution-Focused Family Therapy. 2 Units.**

Provides an in-depth understanding of solution-focused family therapy and practice. Focuses on the work of de Shazer and Berg, along with the foundational constructs of MRI.

**MFAM 547. Social Ecology of Individual and Family Development. 3 Units.**

Studies human individual development and its relationship to the family life cycle from birth through aging and death of family members. Discusses biological, psychological, social, and spiritual development in the context of family dynamics involving traditional two-parent families, alternative partnerships, single parents, blended families, and intergenerational communities. Cross-listing: COUN 547.

**MFAM 549. Christian Counseling and Family Therapy. 2 Units.**

Integrates Christian concepts and family therapy in a conceptual and clinical context.

**MFAM 551. Family Therapy: Foundational Theories and Practice. 3 Units.**

Provides an overview of the major theories in marriage and family therapy. Explores systems theory concepts in light of the major models of family therapy. Exposes students to the recovery process and consumer advocacy. Examines evidence-based models—such as cognitive behavioral, multidimensional family therapy (MDFT), and emotional-focused therapy. Through MDFT, exposes students to the treatment of addicted adolescents and their families.

**MFAM 552. Couples Therapy: Theory and Practice. 3 Units.**

Overview of the couples/marital therapy literature—including divorce, child rearing, parenting, step parenting, and blended families. Evidence-based practices studied relevant to consumer treatment and recovery. Examines how culture, SES, poverty, social, stress and addiction affect clinical practice.

**MFAM 553. Family Systems Theory. 3 Units.**

Reviews Bowen theory of family systems. Introduction to family psychotherapy as an outgrowth of the theory. Students examine their own families of origin.

**MFAM 555. Narrative Family Therapy. 2 Units.**

Narrative therapy and social construction as important developments in social theory and in clinical practice. Uses narratives and the role they play in a person's life through language and meaning systems. Examines issues of power, collaboration, culture, community, and re-authoring narratives, particularly in the works of Michael White and David Epston.

**MFAM 556. Psychopathology and Diagnostic Procedures. 3 Units.**

Explores the history and development of psychopathology and how it relates to current clinical practice in general and marriage and family therapy in particular. Utilizes the multiaxial classifications of the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual as a practical basis for diagnostics. Cross-listing: COUN 556.

**MFAM 559. Cognitive-Behavioral Couples Therapy. 2,3 Units.**

Experiential course that surveys major cognitive-behavioral family therapy therapists, and integrates treatment techniques into practice in laboratory.

**MFAM 564. Family Therapy: Advanced Foundational Theories and Practice. 3 Units.**

Comprehensively surveys more recent therapy models, such as narrative, collaborative language systems, and solution-focused theory. Using these models, student learns to assess and consider diagnosis; as well as learn the role of language, meaning, and process in relationships. Class examines the theoretical strengths and limitations of these models in relation to culturally diverse populations.

**MFAM 567. Treating the Severely and Persistently Mentally Ill and the Recovery Process. 3 Units.**

Addresses identification, treatment, and referral procedures for severely mentally ill consumers in diverse populations. Focuses on the recovery process and on evidence-based or agreed-upon approaches during treatment. Includes etiology, diagnosis, treatment planning, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders, and dysfunctional behavior.

**MFAM 568. Groups: Process and Practice. 3 Units.**

Surveys major theoretical approaches, including individual theories, marital groups, network, and family therapy groups. Group laboratory experience provided wherein students apply theory to practice and develop group leadership skills. Cross-listing: COUN 568.

**MFAM 584. Advanced Child and Adolescent Development. 3 Units.**

Psychodynamics involved in child and adolescent problems with respect to the family relationship. Demonstrates a variety of counseling approaches to the treatment of children and adolescents, with emphasis on diverse settings (e.g., education, hospital, and agency). Cross-listing: COUN 584.

**MFAM 604. Social Context in Clinical Practice: Gender, Class, and Race. 3 Units.**

Introduces social inequalities that result in unfairness, health disparities, assaults to personal dignity, and family stress. Focuses on how one's position within social hierarchies—such as gender, socioeconomic status, race, and sexual orientation—affects psychological and relational health. Examination of how family therapists and counselors address these social contextual factors as part of a recovery-based approach that empowers people within their relationships and social systems. Cross-listing: COUN 604.

**MFAM 605. Gestalt Family Therapy. 2 Units.**

Principles of Gestalt psychology and therapy; the relationship between the individual and the physical, emotional, societal, and spiritual environment. Group experience that permits the spiritual and affective aspects of Gestalt therapy to be expressed and integrated with systems theory.

**MFAM 606. Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy. 2 Units.**

Students examine the theory of emotionally focused therapy and concentrate on the work and research of Susan Johnson.

**MFAM 614. Law and Ethics. 3 Units.**

Examines child welfare, separation, and divorce law, and financial aspects of family maintenance. Includes case management, referrals, professional and client interactions, ethical and interprofessional relations, legal responsibilities, and confidentiality. Explores interactions among the practitioner's sense of self and human values, professional behavior, scope of practice, and ethics. Examination of impacts of culture, SES, poverty, social stress, and biology on the recovery process.

**MFAM 624. Individual and Systems Assessment. 3 Units.**

Applies psychological testing methods in the diagnostic assessment of individual, family, and group behavioral dynamics as encountered in behavioral health counseling. Cross-listing: COUN 624.

**MFAM 635. Case Presentation and Legal Issues. 3 Units.**

A clinically oriented course in which students prepare brief and focused oral and/or video presentations of individual, marital, or family cases with which they are currently working at their clinical placements that demonstrate an understanding of systems theory; as well as of legal, ethical, cultural, SES, spiritual, and developmental issues. Students discuss how cases support consumer advocacy.

**MFAM 636. Case Presentation and Client-Centered Advocacy. 3 Units.**

Examines the recovery process in relation to case write-ups. Ongoing individual, marital, and family cases formally presented by trainees discussing how consumer advocacy is supported; as well as collaboration with other mental health practitioners. Requires an in-depth case write-up on a couple or family that demonstrates an understanding of legal, ethical, cultural, SES, spiritual, client-centered advocacy, recovery model, disability act and services, and developmental issues.

**MFAM 637. Case Presentation and Global Practices. 3 Units.**

Students receive case supervision and prepare for a final oral comprehensive examination that requires four videotaped segments of the case over a minimum of six sessions or six hours, depending upon the clinic site; a write-up of the case; an epistemology paper; and a vignette.

**MFAM 638. Substance Use Disorders, Relationships, and Recovery. 3 Units.**

Examines current theories of etiology of substance use disorders and the effects of psychoactive drug use. Emphasizes assessment and evaluation strategies; impact on mental, biological, relational, and community systems; evidence-based prevention and treatment approaches within a recovery process orientation. Explores issues of regional multicultural competence, human diversity, and access to care. Cross-listing: COUN 638.

**MFAM 644. Child Abuse and Family Violence. 3 Units.**

Presents characteristics of physical and emotional abuse, neglect, sexual molestation, and family violence including offender and nonoffender traits. Focus on treatment including individual, group, and family therapy. Ethical and legal issues, community resources, and multidisciplinary approaches to child abuse. Examines cultural, SES, poverty and/or social stress impacts on mental health and recovery. Cross-listing: COUN 644.

**MFAM 645. Advanced Treatment Strategies – Substance Use Disorders. 3 Units.**

Explores contemporary treatment strategies in depth for substance use disorders with adults, adolescents, families, groups, and those with multiple diagnoses.

**MFAM 654. Practicum in Drug and Alcohol Counseling. 1 Unit.**

Practicum course in which students discuss with individuals and families and apply current theories and strategies for treating substance use disorders. Explores issues of multicultural competence, human diversity, and access to care. Prerequisite: Acceptance into the Drug and Alcohol Counseling certificate.

**MFAM 665. Structural and Multidimensional Family Therapy. 2 Units.**

Enhances observational, conceptual, planning, and intervention skills. Increases ability to understand verbal and nonverbal communication and evidence-based family therapies. Broadens understanding of structural and multidimensional family therapy.

**MFAM 674. Human Sexual Behavior. 3 Units.**

Sexuality in contemporary society from the sociopsychological viewpoint. Anatomy and physiology of human sexuality: reproduction, normal and abnormal sexual response, psychosexual development, human fertility, human sexual dysfunction. Integration of systems theory. Cross-listing: COUN 674.

**MFAM 694. Directed Study: Marriage and Family. 1-4 Units.**

Individual study in areas of special interest concerning the family and its problems. May be repeated for credit at the discretion of the faculty.

**MFAM 731. Clinical Training. 6 Units.**

For MFT students beginning their clinical training. An IP grade will be assigned until student completes 200 hours at an approved site.

**MFAM 732. Clinical Training. 9 Units.**

For students who have completed MFAM 731 and are at an approved clinical site. Students register for 9 units and receive an IP grade until 500 hours or five consecutive quarters have been completed.

**MFAM 734. Professional Clinical Training. 1.5,3 Unit.**

Supervised clinical counseling of individuals, couples, families, and children. At least one hour of individual supervision per week and two hours of case presentation seminar per week. Continuous registration for this portion of the clinical training until completion of at least fifty clock hours.

**MFAM 734A. Professional Clinical Training. 1.5-6 Units.**

Supervised clinical counseling of individuals, couples, families, and children. At least one hour of individual supervision per week and two hours of case-presentation seminar per week. Continuous registration for this portion of the clinical training until completion of at least 300 clock hours.

**MFAM 744. Clinical Internship. 1 Unit.**

Supervised clinical counseling of individuals, couples, families, and children. One hour of individual supervision per week. Postgraduates only. Approved by internship coordinator.