Marital and Family Therapy — Ph.D.

Interim program director
Mary E. Moline

The Ph.D. degree in marital and family therapy follows the scientist-practitioner model in which students are expected to develop expertise in both research and clinical practice. The 108-unit curriculum requires a minimum of three-to-four years of full-time study for completion—including two-to-three years of course work, 1000 hours of face-to-face client contact, a dissertation, and supervised professional development experiences. The purpose of the curriculum is to develop family therapy scholars-practitioners who will advance theory, research, clinical practice, and teaching in the field of marital and family therapy. Students will be prepared for academic and clinical training positions in universities and postgraduate institutes. Ph.D. degree students develop expertise in conducting original research from quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method approaches.

Students who have not completed an M.S. degree in marital and family therapy prior to acceptance into the D.M.F.T. or Ph.D. degree program can be accepted into the interim-M.S./D.M.F.T. or M.S./Ph.D. degree program in order to fulfill the marriage and family therapist licensure requirements.

Knowledge and skills promoted

Theory and practice
Students study the work of the original thinkers in marital and family therapy, as well as the most recent developments in the field—such as social constructionism, evidence-based practice, and global perspective. They will develop a critical understanding of the theoretical and philosophical foundations of marital and family therapy; critically examine the interrelationships between sociohistorical factors, transnational family structures and relationships, and clinical approaches; be conversant in the current issues in the field; and contribute to the discourse regarding them. They will use this knowledge to advance the field of family therapy.

Personal development
The program encourages students to develop a clear understanding of themselves; and it invites reflection and consideration of the impact of their personal values, social positions, and contexts on their clinical and scholarly practices. Students are supported in the development of their strengths as they create an epistemological framework and ethical consciousness to guide their research and practice, and are encouraged to engage beyond their local communities to include experiences in wider cultural and global contexts.

Practice and supervisory skills
Students will apply a critical understanding of theory to the practice of marital and family therapy at the family, community, and societal levels—drawing on the core modalities of the field. They will develop sophistication in their personal clinical skills, supervisory skills, and skills for active multisystemic involvement.

Research skills
Students will develop skills and a critical understanding of the process of research and evaluation related to families and marital and family therapy. This includes the ability to apply research findings to clinical practice and to utilize research findings in creative ways for the benefit of the general population. Ph.D. degree students will develop expertise in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research approaches, leading to publication in scholarly journals and presentations at professional conferences.

Student learning outcomes
1. Students will develop a professional identity as doctoral-level marital and family therapists aligned with national practice standards.
2. Students will become adept in systems/relational practice, demonstrating sophistication as a scientist-practitioner.
3. Students will be able to analyze, synthesize, and critique MFT theory, human development, and family science literature to advance and integrate research, theory, and practice in the field.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills as researchers in the field of marital and family therapy.
5. Students will be responsive to the societal, cultural, and spiritual contexts in which health and well-being are embedded.
6. Students will develop an ethical consciousness that guides their practice in aspects of professional work.

Interim master's degree
The Ph.D. degree with interim master's degree requires 175 units. This combined degrees program is for selected advanced students whose master's degree is not in marital and family therapy (or equivalent) or for students currently enrolled in COAMFTE-accredited master's degree programs. A minimum of five years of full-time study is required to complete the program with an interim master's degree.

Admissions
Applicants must meet Loma Linda University (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/admissionrequirementstext) admissions requirements; and School of Behavioral Health (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/#generateregulationstext) admissions requirements; and give evidence of academic ability, professional comportment, and mature judgment. The Ph.D. degree curriculum represents advanced study over and above a standard master's degree curriculum in the field. Admission is based on an integrated evaluation of the following criteria:

- Five-page personal essay (guidelines included in the online application).
- M.S. degree in Marital and Family Therapy, or equivalent.
- Grade point average (3.3 minimum).
- Structured oral interview with department (one day).
- Three letters of reference (two academic and one professional).
- Curriculum vitae (preferred but not required).
- GRE scores (taken within the past five years).

The admissions committee uses the above criteria to evaluate applicants on each of the following equally weighted criteria:

1. Academic preparedness
2. Professional preparedness for doctoral study
3. Research potential
4. Ability to work with diversity
5. Clinical skills

Pre-entrance clearance (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#preentrancerequirementstext):

- A background check
- Health clearance

Program requirements
Corequisites
Student transcripts will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis for the following areas of corequisite study. A plan of study incorporating these standard master's degree-level courses is available for students who have not completed these corequisites:

Theoretical knowledge in family systems/relational therapy 8
Clinical knowledge in marital and family therapy 16
Individual development and family relations 8
Additional study in the three areas above 4
Professional issues and ethics in marital and family therapy 4
Research 4
Additional related study 4

Total Units 48

Curriculum
Theory and practice
MFT 504 Advanced Theory in Marital and Family Therapy 4
MFT 506 Clinical 1—Foundations for Systemic Practice 3
MFT 507 Clinical 2—Social Constructionism and Postmodern Practices in MFT 3
MFT 508 Clinical 3—Larger and Multiple Systems in MFT Practice 3

Individual development and family relations
MFT 505 Advanced Family Studies 4

Supervision
MFT 501 Fundamentals of Supervision in Marital and Family Therapy 3
MFT 502 Advanced Supervision in Marital and Family Therapy 1

Spirituality
RELE 505 Clinical Ethics (or RELE 5__ Graduate-level Ethics elective) 3
REL R 535 Spirituality and Mental Health 3
RELT 615 Seminar in Philosophy of Religion 3

Research
MFT 601 Statistics I 4
MFT 602 Statistics II 4
MFT 603 Statistics III 4
MFT 604 Advanced Qualitative Methods 4
MFT 605 Advanced Quantitative Methods 4
MFT 606 Issues in MFT Research 4
MFT 607 Scholarly Skills 1
MFT 608 Analysis and Presentation Issues in Research 3

MFT 668 Qualitative Research Practicum 2

Dissertation/Doctoral project
MFT 698 Dissertation Research 1 20

Professional development and practice
MFT 634 Practicum in Marital and Family Therapy 1 9
MFT 694 Doctoral Seminar 1
MFT 785A Begin Clinical Training in Couple, Marital, and Family Therapy 2
MFT 785B Clinical Training in Couple, Marital, and Family Therapy (1000 client contact hours required) 1, 2 20
MFT 786 Professional Development Proposal 2
MFT 786A Professional Development in Marital and Family Therapy 1, 2

Electives
Select one concentration (see choices below) for a minimum of 12 units
Elective (In addition to units required for the concentration) 6

Total Units 108

1 Course repeated to fulfill total unit requirement
2 700-numbered courses do not count in total didactic units required for the degree

Noncourse requirements
Doctoral degrees in marital and family therapy will be awarded when students have completed all the required course work and the following noncourse requirements:

- 1000 approved client contact hours, and
- 200 approved hours of clinical supervision, and
- A written qualifying examination, and
- An oral defense of the doctoral dissertation or project.

Normal time to complete the program
4 years (15 academic quarters) based on full-time enrollment

Concentrations
Family studies
The family studies concentration focuses on the knowledge regarding family and child development that provides the theoretical basis for family interventions and programs. Students also may select from a variety of courses to enhance their skills in family life education and/or therapy.

FMST 518 Advanced Theories in Child Development 3
FMST 526 Marriage and the Family 3
Select 6 units of the following 6
CHLS 507A Aspects of Illness and Disease
CHLS 507B Aspects of Illness and Disease
CHLS 508 Grief and Loss
COUN 576 Exceptional and Medically Challenged Children
FMST 524 Family Resource Management
FMST 525 Sociology of the Family
FMST 528 Parenting
FMST 529 Family Life Education
MFAM 548 Men and Families
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**Family, systems, and health**

This concentration prepares marital and family therapists to work with issues related to health and illness in medical settings and/or in collaboration with other health-care professionals. The concentration includes opportunities to work in the primary care LLU clinics to get life experience with patients, doctors, and other health-care professionals (family medicine and SACHS); as well as the opportunity to work with some specific health-related research projects.

**School Consultation**

The school consultation concentration broadens the systematic work of professionals in marital and family therapy or family studies to include more knowledgeable consultation with school administrators, teachers, counselors, and psychologists regarding the well-being of children, adolescents, and college or university students in educational environments. Doctoral students may select 12 units of study for this concentration from the list of courses below.

**Systems Consultation and Professional Relations**

**Additional required courses for MFT licensure in California**

For doctoral students who have not previously met academic requirements for MFT licensure. Units are in addition to overall total required for the degree.