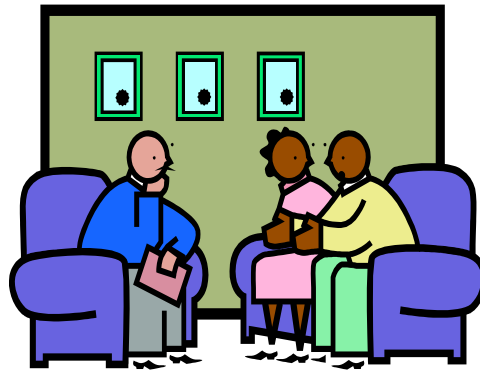




MMFT Student Handbook

Marriage & Family Therapy Program



Division of Applied Health Sciences

Revised AY 2021-2022

MMFT Student Handbook

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Pfeiffer University Mission/Educational Goals/Statement of Values

Pfeiffer University Statement of Mission

Pfeiffer University is a globally engaged, regional university distinctive for its transformational undergraduate experiences and its leadership in professional and graduate programs that fill demonstrated needs. Vested in its history as a United Methodist-related university and propelled forward by an innovative faculty and staff, Pfeiffer prepares its students for a lifetime of achievement, scholarship, spirituality and service (see Mission Statement, Pfeiffer University Catalog for Graduate Programs, 2020-2021; see Pfeiffer Forward brochure). Since the university was established in 1885, the institution has been committed to the ideas of servant leadership and has emphasized the preparation of students to become “transformative servant leaders.” Additionally, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (**SACSCOC**) is the regional accreditation body for all degree programs at Pfeiffer University.

Pfeiffer University Educational Goals for the Graduate Program

Educational Goals for the Graduate Program include the following statement: “The graduate programs are designed to offer the depth of education and specialized skills necessary for graduates to practice and contribute to their professions. Graduates will be expected to have demonstrated abilities in analyzing, planning, and performing in relation to specific problems and issues. These skills are evaluated through the use of a designated capstone course within each graduate program” (see Pfeiffer University Catalog for Graduate Programs, 2020-2021).

Pfeiffer University Statement of Values (Statement of Enterprise Strategy)

To guide Pfeiffer’s overall institutional strategic development as a learning and living community and especially the educational, moral, social, leadership, character, and spiritual development and formation of its students, the University commits to the following values which emanate from its affiliation with the United Methodist Church and reflect the Methodist tradition of intellectual and spiritual development (see Statement of Enterprise Strategy, pp. 11& 12):

- Liberal Learning and Professional Competence
- Free Inquiry and Intellectual Integrity
- Service and Leadership
- Unity in Diversity
- Faith and Reason
- Personal Piety and Social Action

Marriage and Family Therapy Program – Charlotte & Raleigh/Durham Locations

Charlotte Campus, 1515 Mockingbird Lane, Charlotte, North Carolina 28209

Eligibility Criteria Due: Oct 01, 2020 (Version 11 Accreditation since 2015)

Self-Study: Nov 01, 2021

Renewal Date: Nov 01, 2022

{Accredited by COAMFTE in November 2010/Reaccredited in December 2015}

Eligibility Narrative – October 1, 2020

Self-Study Renewal – October 1, 2021

Raleigh/Durham Campus, 600 Airport Boulevard, Suite 600, Morrisville, NC 27560

Eligibility Criteria Due: Apr 01, 2022 (Version 12 Accreditation) since 2017)

Self-Study: May 01, 2023

Renewal Date: May 01, 2024

{Accredited by COAMFTE in May 2014/Reaccredited in May 2017}

Teach-Out Process – August 1, 2022

Pfeiffer University -- Diversity Defined

Diversity refers to the recognition and appreciation of differences and similarity across a variety of overlapping domains, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, spirituality, worldview, geography, age, family status, and life experience. “A genuine community is achieved when persons of various backgrounds, interests, talents, cultures, faiths, and world views assemble around their shared humanity and personhood as children of God. Pfeiffer University encourages and celebrates the diversity of its educational community, realized by access to higher education for varied populations of students. Across all educational experiences, the University nurtures the dignity of each individual, her or his intrinsic self-worth and merit to the community, self- and mutual understanding, and civil discourse and collaboration” (Statement of Enterprise Strategy, p. 11). Additionally, “Unity in Diversity” is a priority as stated on p. 4, Pfeiffer University’s Statement of Values.

MMFT Program Diversity & Inclusivity Statement

The Pfeiffer University Graduate School strives to cultivate and sustain a diverse, inclusive and intellectually rigorous environment that embraces differences across domains (e.g., gender, race, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sex, appearance, body image, socioeconomic status, personal ideas/value systems, marital status, maternal/paternal status, power differential, chronic/terminal illness, etc.). Diversity and Inclusivity is explored within a context of cooperation, shared responsibility, humility, and mutual respect that promotes learning, personal growth, and service through culturally competent community engagement. It is achieved by fostering respect, appreciation, and safety of all students through clarity of purpose, authentic trust, and outcome education.

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program and Pfeiffer University Graduate School seeks to further these objectives:

- * Promote a culture of respect, appreciation, and safety
- * Cultivate a culture of open communication and encouraged feedback that expands and deepens the compassion, awareness, and worldviews of our faculty and students
- * Integrate related diversity principles and issues across the curriculum
- * Teach evidenced-based, culturally sensitive approaches through intentional training
- * Recruit and enroll faculty and students who reflect the diversity within the community
- * Maintain a diverse group of faculty members and students

- * Conduct activities (e.g., publications, presentations, clinical data, and intentional groups) that contribute to the academic peer reviewed literature on diversity issues and inclusivity
- * Maintain an ongoing review of faculty and student assessments of the academic climate
- * Outcome measures of diversity training include the Annual Student Feedback: Program Survey, Professional Fitness Evaluation (PFE), Clinical Performance Assessment (CPA), Graduation Exit Interview, Employer Feedback: Program Survey, and Stakeholder Feedback: Program Survey. Diversity enrollment and faculty hiring is verified in the Pfeiffer University Fact Book (2019-2020).

Sufficiency of Diversity -- Systematic Efforts

Diversity is a fundamental element of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, included as both a Program Goal (#1) and Student Learning Outcome (#2) -- see Appendices 1.1 and 1.2 for current MMFT Program Educational Outcomes. The MMFT program strives to provide students the opportunity to experience – both inside and outside the classroom – a range of ideas and beliefs, and to develop sensitivity to and appreciation for these differences. Diversity includes not only the various labels (race/ethnicity, age, SES, sexual orientation, religion, etc.), but also the intersections among those labels. In order to make sure diversity is covered from a range of perspectives, each professor dedicates one week of each course to diversity issues in the context of the topic of that course (e.g., DSM diagnosis and diversity).

Sufficiency of diversity in the MMFT program is reflected in two primary ways: representation and climate. Representation means that students in the program reflect a variety of diversity categories and intersections from within the local cities of Charlotte and Raleigh/Durham and without the surrounding regional areas. Aggregated data on student age, gender, and ethnicity is posted on the MMFT program website with results indicating that the majority of students are female, most are between 22 and 49 years old, and either Caucasian or African American. Other aspects of diversity are noted more informally at the program level; for example, socioeconomic status (current or family of origin), marital and parental status, “traditional” (straight out of undergrad) or more than one year post-graduate, geographic background, sexual orientation, and religion/religiosity. Rather than striving to achieve a particular percentage, the program – particularly the Program and Site Director who are responsible for recruiting on a particular campus - strive to achieve a variety of student and faculty demographics. The current student body consists of a variety of these aspects and intersections, but the program constantly strives to achieve more.

The systematic efforts to achieve and maintain diversity among the student body include:

- * Participating in recruiting events at local HBCUs
- * Recruiting from sources other than undergraduate colleges. e.g., agencies with bachelor-level employees.
- * Making contact with minority organizations, e.g., LGBT Center of Charlotte, Muslim Student Associations
- * Inviting guest speakers to present on a range of lifestyle topics
- * Attending community events, e.g., Trans101 presentation at the LGBT Center of Charlotte

Similarly, efforts to achieve and maintain diversity among faculty and supervisors include:

- * Recruiting a faculty experienced in working with diverse populations
- * Maintaining field placement sites at different types of organizations, e.g., state and private; inpatient and outpatient

Diversity is not simply reflected in numbers of categories represented; the MMFT program also promotes a climate where diversity of thought and belief is respected, where there is freedom to speak and be heard and supported (not just tolerated). Having a diverse group represented in the classroom, related to the representation issue described above, helps promote these conversations. The primary evidence for this aspect of diversity is found in the Program Climate of Safety, Respect and Appreciation Survey. Overall, the results for the 2020-2021 distribution of this survey on both the Charlotte and RDU campus (Fall 2020) showed that more than 75% of our students “agree” or “strongly agree” that the program provides a climate of safety, respect, and appreciation for students and faculty.

Diversity Experience

Students gain experience with diverse, marginalized, and/or underserved communities through professional activities (primarily therapy) in the training clinics (Pfeiffer Institute Charlotte and Pfeiffer Institute *Reach* in Morrisville (required) and a field placement in the community (optional). For example, Pfeiffer Institute *Reach* serves a varied clientele although as with most mental health clinics, the majority (61.2%) are female and all speak English (Reach does not currently have a bilingual therapist). The clientele are diverse in other ways: in terms of race/ethnicity, 40% of clients identify as a minority (27.8% of clients identify as African-American/Black, 4.2% as Latino/a, 6% as biracial or multiracial, 2.5% as Asian or Pacific Islander, 2.3% as other, and 56% as Caucasian/White); 10% identify as a sexual minority (4.4% gay or lesbian, 4.1% bisexual, and 1% other); 27.9% are Muslim (nearly 35% are Christian [Catholic, Protestant, or LDS], 24.9% are other, and 8.6% are none). The clinic makes therapy accessible to those who otherwise would likely not be able to afford it: 54.5% make less than \$30,000 per year. In a location replete with educational opportunities and not strongly affected by the recession, 49% have “some college” or less, and 51% are employed part-time or full-time.

The range of potential field placements also provides opportunities to work with diverse, marginalized, and underserved opportunities. Pfeiffer MMFT students work with adolescents in group homes, facilitate intensive in-home services primarily for low-income families, conduct foster placement services, and provide group therapy for refugees, among others. In addition to these professional activities, students also have the opportunity to directly interact with members of diverse communities in MFT-related activities. Through the clinic experience, interns have the opportunity to provide free workshops on a variety of topics (e.g., parenting skills, stress management), either at the clinic or an offsite location.

Students also interact with members of diverse communities through class assignments. Students in MMFT 600 Emerging Cross-Cultural Issues in Families and Communities are required to participate in “Diversity Activities and Reflection Papers.” In this assignment, students must choose three activities (one each from several categories), and then write a reflection paper about their experience. For example, a student might choose from the category Social Class to volunteer at a local shelter; from the category Religion to interview a faith leader from a tradition with which they are not familiar; and from

the category Sexual Orientation to hold hands with someone of the same gender in public for 15 minutes.

Students also have the opportunity to interact with members of diverse communities when they take MMFT 605 Addiction in Family Systems. In the 12-Step Reflection Paper assignment, students are required to attend one 12-Step, one Alanon, and one other type of meeting (NA, GA, OA, Rational Recovery, Celebrate Recovery, etc.) in the community, then write a reflection paper describing their experiences. In summary, the program clearly demonstrates a marriage and family therapy curriculum and practice replete with diverse, marginalized, and underserved communities through professional activities as well as a myriad of class projects and assignments.

Marriage and Family Therapy Program Mission Statement

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Pfeiffer University is designed to prepare servant leaders as marriage and family therapists and agents of positive change to work specifically with individuals, couples, and families in a wide variety of work settings. The mission of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program is to provide effective clinical and academic training in marriage and family therapy to students who affirm the dignity and integrity of all individuals and who demonstrate respect for diversity through life-long learning and competent practice of marriage and family therapy.

Herein, the acronym MMFT will refer to the Master of Arts degree program in Marriage and Family Therapy and also the course prefix for graduate MMFT coursework.

Marriage Family Therapy Program Educational Outcomes (Charlotte & Raleigh/Durham Campus)

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Pfeiffer University is designed to prepare servant leaders as marriage and family therapists and agents of positive change to work specifically with individuals, couples, and families in a wide variety of work settings. The mission of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program is to provide effective clinical and academic training in marriage and family therapy to students who affirm the dignity and integrity of all individuals and who demonstrate respect for diversity through life-long learning and competent practice of marriage and family therapy (see Appendix 1.0, MMFT Program flyer).

In collaboration with the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), the Master of Arts Program (MMFT) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) and has chosen to fulfill (6) Student Learning Outcomes across the curriculum as designated by prescribed Educational Outcomes that are also mutually supportive of Program Goals and expected Faculty Roles (also see Appendix 1.1, MMFT Program Educational Outcomes):

Program Goal #1 – Diversity (SLO #2: Diversity)

Program Goal #2 – Student Development (SLO #4: Individual & Relational Development/SLO #5: Professional Identity and Issues)

Program Goal #3 – Clinical Effectiveness (SLO #3: Clinical Effectiveness)

Program Goal #4 – Academic Achievement (SLO #1: Theoretical Knowledge/SLO #6: Research)

Students will also be expected to actively identify with the Marriage and Family Therapy profession by obtaining student membership in AAMFT (NCAMFT) and/or ACA (IAMFC), and attending local, state, and/or national conferences whenever possible. Additionally, all students who are enrolled in the MMFT Program must adhere to the AAMFT Ethical Code (see Appendix 1.5 for AAMFT Code of Ethics, 2015) in their therapy, training, teaching, and research. A complete copy of the 2015 AAMFT Code of Ethics is also available in the Marriage & Family Therapy Program Office and in the Pfeiffer Institute. For students who violate the AAMFT Ethics Code, an ad hoc Ethics Committee will convene and provide due process if the alleged violation is deemed factual. Violations that are found to breach the AAMFT Ethical Code may result in immediate termination of the student from the program.

Application & Admission to the Marriage and Family Therapy Program – Feb 1 & Mar 1

Admission to the Marriage and Family Therapy Program involves many steps. Applications are accepted in either one of two initial application groups: February 1 and March 1. Approximately 20-22 students are accepted annually as new students in the beginning cohort and may begin the program during either the condensed summer semester or the fall semester.

Prospective students should begin the admission process with ample time to complete the entire sequence. Generally, a full academic semester of lead-time is required for processing applications, credentials, references, and the required on-campus interview in small groups in either mid-February or mid-March contingent on the completion deadline of the application process. The admission procedure is designed as an initial evaluation of the candidates' suitability for graduate study in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program. The Faculty Admission Committee will assess each student on the applicant's presentation of self-understanding, disposition, maturity, and preparedness, including:

- Professional Demeanor
- Genuineness of Attitude
- Appropriate Disclosure
- Eye Contact
- Commitment to Growth
- Engagement and Presence
- Succinctness and Clarity of Answers
- Understanding of the Marriage and Family Therapy identity and profession
- Clarity on time commitment to internship, client care, and field placement accountability
- Recognition of curricular policy and scheduling limitations
- Communication skill in oral expression/writing
- Appropriateness of this program for applicant's career goals

Following the interview, each applicant is assessed by the Faculty Admissions Committee (FAC) with regard to admission documents and achievement of the criteria identified below as well as overall impressions from the on-campus interview and applicant references. Recommendations are forwarded to the Graduate Admissions Office and final decisions of admission or non-admission are conveyed to the student by the Graduate Admissions Office within approximately 10 work days of the interview.

Admission Requirements

- Bachelor's degree with 9-12 hours minimum of coursework in the social sciences
- Minimum undergraduate GPA in major: 3.00, overall: 2.75
- Acceptable GRE scores: official scores mailed to Pfeiffer University. Note: the applicant must receive a minimum writing score of 3.0
- Official transcripts sent from **all** colleges/universities attended
- (3) letters of recommendation written on official letterhead in addition to respective recommendation checklist forms (MFT application packet) sent directly from recent employers/supervisors and/or academic professionals/instructors who have been in an evaluative or supervisory position to attest to the student's ability. Letters from pastors and/or therapists will not be accepted.
- A writing sample describing how the student anticipates that his/her degree and experiential training will influence his/her personal and professional goals
- Current resume or curriculum vitae
- Personal small group interview with the Faculty Admissions Committee
- Proof of satisfactory criminal background record check (MFT website) for all states of residence within the past (5) years* -- admissions staff will process the background check upon receipt

* Grounds for denial may include a conviction of a felony under the laws of the United States or of any state of the United States, and/or conviction of any crime, an essential element of which is dishonesty, deceit, or fraud.

Transfer Course Work

A total of **six (6)** semester hours may be potentially transferred from a comparable marriage and family therapy graduate level program in which the institution was already accredited or seeking accreditation from COAMFTE. A grade of at least "B," or its equivalent, must have been earned. Transfer courses are reviewed on a case by case basis as evidenced by an official transcript, the program course description, and the respective syllabus concurrent with the semester the course was taken. **These credits must be less than (2) years old at the time of MMFT application, and the transfer form for credits must be completed during the semester in which the student first enrolls** in Pfeiffer University's Marriage and Family Therapy Program, either with provisional or formal admission status.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation from the Marriage and Family Therapy Program will require rigorous clinical training through the completion of a supervised practicum/internship during a minimum of (3) or more consecutive semesters, 500 minimum clinical face-to-face hours (minimum of 40% or 200 relational hours) with 100 hours of supervision (minimum of 50 hours based on raw or "live" data), achievement of designated student learning outcomes (SLOs), mastery of designated COAMFTE competencies in each and every course across the curriculum, knowledge of professional MFT principles (PMFTPs), endorsement of clinical performance as demonstrated in the Clinical Performance Assessment (CPA) with a score of "2" across all skill areas, endorsement of professional dispositions and traits as demonstrated in the Professional Fitness Evaluation (PFE) with a final average score of "4" and no scores lower than "3" across all traits/dispositions, verification of personal growth/counseling hours (30 hours during 3 years/35 hours during 3 ½ years/40 hours during 4 years), verification of attendance at a professional MFT local, state, or national workshop/conference, a 70% passing grade on the MMFT Comprehensive

Exam, and a minimum of 69 successfully achieved graduate semester hours with a minimum GPA of 3.0.

Note: Students are expected to graduate within a 3-5 year program window from the first semester of initial enrollment until graduation.

Program Overview: Core Curriculum & Internship (MMFT 690)

Student admission to the program will be determined by a structured application process and the approval of the designated Admissions Committee. The Master of Arts degree in Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) offers a license-eligible degree in academic and clinical training for the assessment and treatment of families, couples, and individuals in their systemic contexts. The 69-hour credit program provides students with foundational coursework and core courses in marriage and family therapy with clinical training that includes 500 minimum hours of direct client contact with 100 hours of supervision during a minimum of three consecutive semesters or 12 months and 15-20 hours weekly (under the supervision of an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor Candidate). At least 40% (200) of the 500 supervised, direct client contact hours must either be “relational hours,” “relational group hours,” or therapeutic sessions conducted with couples and/or families present in the therapy room. See Clinical Assessment for more details.

Marriage & Family Therapy students must complete his/her curriculum within a maximum (5) years after initial enrollment. Most students will need an average of (3-4) years to complete both the academic and experiential requirements of the program contingent on his/her full-time or part-time status respectively. Formally accepted students must be continuously enrolled and are required to register and complete a minimum of (6) semester hours/two graduate courses and a maximum of (9) semester hours/three graduate courses during each fall and spring semester and a minimum of (3) semester hours and a maximum of (6) semester hours during the summer semester until the course work is completed. Students may only choose (1) content course during Summer I and (1) content course during Summer II. If a student is enrolled in MMFT 690 during the summer semester, students may enroll in only (1) additional content course to fulfill the (6) credit hour maximum.

Please note that a 4th course or total of (12) credit hours during any Fall or Spring semester is restricted due to the graduate rigor of clinical program requirements. If a student is currently enrolled in MMFT 690, enrollment in a 4th course is prohibited due to client care, scheduling limitations of supervision, and field placement responsibility. Additionally, a 3.0 GPA must be maintained to continue in the program and to pursue candidacy. Not more than two (2) grades of “C” are allowed towards the satisfaction of graduation requirements. Neither may a student earn a grade of “C” or lower in their experiential applied coursework including MMFT 606, MMFT 607, MMFT 620, MMFT 621, MMFT 670, MMFT 685, or MMFT 690). In this event, the student will be required to enter the remediation process and retake the applicable course at the discretion of the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC). Herein, the FRC shall refer to all full-time faculty members including the Program Director and/or Site Director, and the Clinic Directors.

Additionally, the assessment of Professional Fitness in MMFT 601 and during internship candidacy (as indicated by a student’s maturity, integrity, and disposition on the “Professional Fitness Evaluation”), is critical to the evolvment of the student therapist. During internship candidacy, students are also required to request two former professors from the preceding semester to complete the “Professional Fitness Evaluation” as a barometer of readiness to enter the clinic for internship. An average score of “3” and no scores of “0” is required to proceed to MMFT 690. During the clinical internship, another PFE is completed with the expectation that an intern will achieve an average score of “4” and no scores below “3” across all items. In the case that an intern does not achieve an average score of “4” and no scores below “3,” an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) will be written by the Faculty Remediation

Committee. All students will also enhance self-understanding (person of the therapist) by completing (10) hours of personal growth every academic year during either the spring **OR** fall semester. Personal Growth Counseling is not offered during the summer semester. Should students not complete his/her personal growth hours during the fall or summer semester, s/he will not be able to register for the summer semester until the hours are completed and formally submitted to the Program Director.

Students are required to obtain a minimum of 100 hours of supervision, which includes at least 30 hours of individual supervision and up to an additional 70 hours of group supervision. Individual supervision is defined as supervision of one or two individuals. Of the 100 hours of required supervision, at least 50 must be conducted live (i.e., the supervisor reviews the case in live observation or via closed circuit video) or involve the student presenting recorded case material followed by a supervisor's Live Observation Assessment to clearly reflect student strengths and challenges at every opportunity. Under normal circumstances, students in the MMFT Program receive more hours of supervision than required.

Program Definitions

Student admission to the program will be determined by a structured application process and the **"Client Contact Hours"** are defined as face-to-face (therapist and client) therapy with individuals, couples, families, or groups from a systemic perspective and includes relational hours. Distance counseling, where the supervisee provides therapy directly to a client (video, i.e. Skype, secure, encrypted connection) may be counted in the same way as face-to-face hours. Telephone counseling is NOT face-to-face, and therefore cannot be counted toward clinical hours.

"Direct Client Contact" must relate to client treatment plans, be goal directed, and assist client(s) to effect change in relationships, cognition, affect, and/or behavior. Assessments (intake and otherwise) may be counted up to 250 hours of direct client contact. Assessment is a clinical encounter that involves gathering of current and historical data from a client that is then used to determine what type of therapeutic service is most appropriate. If the individual who conducted the assessment does not provide the therapeutic service, it is considered an assessment hour only. Client psycho-education may be counted up to 250 hours direct client contact. Psycho-education refers to a treatment approach that provides education for individuals and families in assistance with emotional, mental, social and relational disturbances (see North Carolina Licensure Board accrual limits).

The following are **not direct client contact** and may not be counted: observing therapy without actively participating in follow-up therapy at some point during or immediately following the session; record keeping; administrative activities; supervision; and client contact while not receiving supervision.

Marriage and Family Licensure – NC Statutes provide the following definitions for "Marriage & Family Therapy:"

"Marriage and family therapy" is the clinical practice, within the context of marriage and family systems, of the diagnosis and treatment of psychosocial aspects of mental and emotional disorders. Marriage and family therapy involves the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the delivery of services to families, couples, and individuals for the purpose of treating these diagnosed mental and emotional disorders. Marriage and family therapy includes referrals to and collaboration with other health care professionals when appropriate" (Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Act – NC Statutes 90-270.47. Definitions. 3a).

Practice of marriage and family therapy means the rendering of professional marriage and family therapy services to individuals, couples, or families, singly or in groups, whether the services are offered directly to the general public or through organizations, either public or private, for a fee,

monetary or otherwise” (Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Act – NC Statutes 90-270.47. Definitions. 4).

Professional Marriage and Family Therapy Principles (PMFTPs): Accredited MFT Programs are required to incorporate in their curriculum, the Professional Marriage and Family Therapy Principles (PMFTPs) that include relevant state licensure and statutes, AAMFT Core Competencies, and/or Educational Guidelines that are expected to be successfully demonstrated by students prior to the successful completion of corresponding course work.

“Relational hours” are defined as hours spent providing therapy with more than one client in the room who are all part of the same treatment plan. Relational hours may also include face to face communication with members of the larger system who are also working in direct collaboration with the same client(s).

This contact may only be counted if it is authorized by the client(s) or required by law for the purpose of developing and carrying out a treatment plan. These members must belong to an organized system with delineated boundaries while demonstrating a social and psychological interdependence and reciprocity. The members must also directly interrelate with repeated ongoing transactional patterns that impact and influence each other on a consistent basis to meet the needs of its members. Contact must be conducted via joining, assessing, diagnosing, or intervening. Additionally, marriage and family therapy includes referrals to and collaboration with other health care professionals when appropriate” (Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Act – NC Statutes 90-270.47. Definitions. 3a).

Relational group hours require interns to implement a family systems approach to treatment that includes more than one member of a group in the same session at the same time. These group members must belong to and live within an organized system with delineated boundaries while demonstrating a social and psychological interdependence and reciprocity for a period lasting no fewer than 10 days. The members must also directly interrelate with repeated ongoing transactional patterns that impact and influence each other and the group as a whole on a consistent basis to meet the needs of its members.

Pfeiffer Institutes for Marriage and Family Therapy

The Pfeiffer Institute in Charlotte and the Pfeiffer Institute *Reach* for Marriage and Family Therapy were established to provide an in-house therapy and training clinic for Master's level graduate students in the Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) Program of Pfeiffer University. The therapist interns provide direct services for individuals, couples, families, or groups and serve as servant leaders and community resources for other agencies in Charlotte, Raleigh/Durham, and/or the surrounding counties. The Pfeiffer Institute is located on the third floor of the Pfeiffer University academic building in South Charlotte at 1515 Mockingbird Lane, 28209. The Pfeiffer Institute *Reach* is located at 600 Airport Boulevard, Suite 600, Morrisville, 27560. The Pfeiffer Institutes are intended to be a community resource for affordable confidential therapy, education, and outreach. The clinics are housed in private office buildings and provide both electronically recorded supervision and live observation of interns in session with their assigned clients.

Please note that students entering the clinic must be available during the prior semester (at least by mid-late semester) for a clinic entry exam, clinic interview, orientation for special training, potential client transfers, and field placement consideration. If you are not available for the scheduled training, interns will NOT be accepted to begin internship in the clinic during the following semester.

All students will maintain a minimum caseload of at least 5-10 clients, or more clients when necessary to avoid a client wait list, each semester in-house at the Pfeiffer Institutes throughout a minimum of (3), but no more than (5) consecutive semesters. Students are also required to pursue specialized interests in therapy by choosing a pre-approved field placement that will allow for the continuing supervision of client sessions and evolving therapeutic skills. Additionally, weekly group supervision will include the rotation of interns in and out of (2) 1-hour live sessions and present during the group supervision session for a minimum of (1) hour weekly for supervisory assessment and peer feedback. A 1-hour individual session (Fall & Spring) with 1-2 supervisees is also required weekly. During the summer semester, both individual and group supervision is increased due to the condensed class sessions. Clinical training requires 500 minimum hours of direct client contact during a minimum of three consecutive semesters under the supervision of an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor Candidate (supervisor in mentoring). At least 40% (200) of the 500 supervised, direct client contact hours must either be “relational hours,” “relational group hours,” or therapeutic sessions conducted with couples and/or families present in the therapy room. Because many working students have restricted family and work schedules, it may require 1-2 additional semesters to complete the clinical requirement successfully.

Because the Clinic Director is ultimately responsible for all interns in the clinic, assigned supervisors must report any and all intern challenges and intern/client issues to the Clinic Director immediately, e.g., clinical hour accruals, client conflicts, intern reporting to DSS, conflictual student interactions, off-site supervisor complaints, etc. To be specific, the Clinic Director must be informed about any untoward situation at all times when it happens (documentation dated and signed by the intern and or supervisor is required).

Note: An additional **lab fee** for clinical training is charged in the amount of **\$150.00 per semester per intern** to defray the cost of clinic operating expenses and educational supplies. See Clinical Assessment for more details.

Co-Therapy

AAMFT COAMFTE regulations dictate what can be counted as co-therapy hours. To have a session count as co-therapy, it is necessary that each therapist be in the room with the client(s) for the majority of the session. Co-therapy can be especially useful in dealing with couples, families, and groups. Students may be assigned a co-therapist during part of the clinic experience and are encouraged to engage in co-therapy when it is appropriate. To avoid confusion, while working as co-therapists, one therapist must be declared as the primary therapist; the other therapist is the co-therapist. The supervisor who supervises the primary therapist will provide supervision for the case.

There may be times when an existing case could benefit from an additional therapist's involvement (e.g., conflictual couple, parents requesting therapy sessions for child). The primary therapist must consult with his/her supervisor to seek specific approval prior to adding an additional therapist to the session in order to discuss the intended case and client information in the strictest of detail.

Therapist interns involved in co-therapy must commit to the following per co-therapy case: 1) Plan additional time to discuss the case on a weekly basis, and 2) Work together until case terminates. No more than two therapists may work on the same case (e.g., couple, family).

Field Placement Contracts

Student interns who are enrolled in MMFT 690 or 690A must be aware that field placement agreements begin at the start of an academic semester and conclude at the end of an academic semester. It is the Clinical Coordinator who establishes the suitability of off-site field placements and supervision agreements; it is the Clinic Director who affirms the direct placement of the interns. Subsequently, student interns may not terminate their field placement once the semester has begun except under the most unusual of circumstances in which the assigned supervisor would deem it necessary to protect the public and/or protect the welfare of the student intern. Both the Clinic Director and the assigned Supervisor must speak conjointly to the off-site field placement supervisor directly to make any appropriate changes at that location. In settings that present inordinate conflict or unexpected challenges, the intern is instructed to report such concerns to his/her supervisor immediately so the clinic supervisor will be accurately informed and can meet in a timely manner with the respective Clinic Director and field placement supervisor to seek a mutually ethical and prompt resolution. Although the assigned clinic supervisor is expected to monitor the situation thoughtfully, it is only the Clinic Director who initiates and makes final changes in field placement assignments. Because the Clinic Director is ultimately responsible for all interns in the clinic, assigned supervisors must report any and all intern challenges including difficulties in the field placement to the current Clinic Director, e.g., intern off-site supervisor complaints, problems with punctuality/reliability, etc.

Please note, **in the event an intern completes the required 500 direct client contact hours (minimum of 40% relational hours) prior to the end of an academic semester, s/he must continue providing services until the end of the semester (either at the field placement and/or campus clinic).** In addition, it is expected that the intern coordinate a phasing out process with his/her field placement at the end of his/her final semester that will continue to support clients during the transition (e.g., not taking on new clients, transferring cases to another intern via co-therapy). **Note: Interns may not leave a field placement until the end of his/her internship or upon approval of both the Clinic Director and assigned supervisor together during a respective semester. If a field placement agreement is scheduled to end within a specific time frame, both the Clinic Director and the assigned supervisor together will be the only authorized persons to release the intern from the assigned site. Interns may not choose to leave a field placement of his/her own volition.**

MMFT 690A

Student interns who have successfully completed a minimum of (3) consecutive semesters of MMFT 690 with a letter grade of A or B and concurrently completed all applicable core competencies successfully with a minimum score of "3," yet have not fully acquired the 500 hours of clinical direct client contact (at least 250 individual and 200 relational hours), may opt to enroll in MMFT 690A with the written approval from his/her assigned clinic supervisor and the Clinic Director. This course designation is available only during the 4th and/or 5th semesters of the clinic experience in order to complete the required 500 hours for graduation. Although MMFT 690A does not require the intern to complete the customary class assignments as required during the first three consecutive semesters of internship training (MMFT 690), the supervisor has the right to assign necessary tasks (e.g., additional readings, review videos, written assignments) to supplement clinical growth and development. In addition, the applicable tuition and lab fees per semester will still be charged in MFT 690A to cover the continuing individual and group supervision by a faculty member who is either an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate (supervisor in mentoring) and the necessary clinic operating materials. **Students registering for MMFT 690A will receive only a grade of PASS or FAIL – no letter grades will be assigned for the course designation.**

Please note, students with an IRP (Individual Remediation Plan) may not have the option to enroll in the MMFT 690A section; the Clinic Director and the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC) will make such a determination based on their achievement of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and designated core competencies. During the final semester of enrollment, each student will be required to have his/her advisor, the MMFT Program Director, or the Site Director review their Clinical Hours Verification Form for the Final Report and approve the completion of his/her MFT Graduation Audit Checklist with proper signature and date prior to its final receipt. For further questions, please see the Clinic Directors, the MMFT Program Director on the Charlotte Campus or the Site Director on the Raleigh/Durham Campus.

Application for Clinical Internship Candidacy – MMFT 690

MMFT students may request an Application for Clinical Internship Candidacy no earlier than the mid-semester of their MMFT 607 (Practicum II: Clinical Procedures) coursework. Note: Students are required to furnish their own professional (student) liability insurance prior to their internship experience.

Application may occur only after the completion of 24 designated semester hours, a minimum GPA of 3.0, and the fulfillment of the following prerequisite courses: MMFT 601 (Introduction to Family Systems), MMFT 602 (Family Therapy Theories), MMFT 604 (Diagnosis of Mental and Emotional Disorders), MMFT 606 (Practicum I: Therapeutic Alliance), MMFT 607 (Practicum II: Clinical Procedures), MMFT 610 (Professional Identity and Issues in MFT), MMFT 630 (Assessment and Treatment Planning in Family Therapy), and MMFT 680 (Legal and Ethical Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy). Additionally, students must also take MMFT 620 concurrently or prior to MMFT 690. Students will also request two professors from prior semesters to complete the Professional Fitness Evaluation (PFE) which requires no scores of zero and an average score of “3” across all items to demonstrate perceived professional fitness and therapeutic readiness to enter the clinic. Students are also required to fulfill (10) hours of personal growth/therapy during every Fall or Spring during each academic year in which they are enrolled in the MMFT Program.

Because there is a maximum of (6) students per supervision group, students may be required to wait an additional semester on a formal wait list before entering internship. For obvious reasons, priority goes to students who have accumulated more credit hours toward completion of his/her program of study. Students are required to complete a candidacy application, clinic entry exam, a mock client session, and corresponding paperwork. Additionally, a Clinic Orientation will be scheduled at the end of the semester prior to internship. Every student enrolled in the first semester of MMFT 690 is required to attend. Note that students are required to furnish his/her own professional (student) liability insurance prior to their internship experiences.

In order to meet the 500-hour minimum direct client contact requirement within a one-year period, the student will need to conduct 15-20 hours of client times each week under appropriate weekly supervision. It is advisable that students leave a couple of afternoons and evenings or Saturdays each week free for clinical work, in addition to the regularly scheduled individual supervision hour and group supervision class. Good clinical practice dictates setting aside 2-3 large blocks of time for clinical work, rather than trying to fit clients into odd hours scattered throughout the week. In reality, more than 15 client contact hours per week must be scheduled to allow for vacation periods, slow times, illness, clients who fail to attend appointments, etc. Similarly, supervision sessions should be scheduled to allow for vacation times, conferences, illnesses, etc. For students who do not complete the 500 hours of client contact (minimum of 40% or 200 relational) within (3) or more consecutive semesters, additional full semesters will be required at his/her expense until the 500 minimum direct client hours have successfully been accrued and documented. If additional semesters are required, they must be carried out as a continuum of the first three semesters to maintain a consecutive experience.

Clinical Assessment – MMFT 690

Students enrolled in internship will be clinically evaluated for the mastery of designated Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and course embedded core competencies across three or more semesters of internship as needed to accrue the required 500 clinical hours and 100 hours of supervision. Of the 100 hours* of required supervision, at least 50 must be conducted live (i.e., the supervisor reviews the case during live observation or via closed circuit video, or the student presents previously recorded cases). The supervisor completes the Observed Clinical Skills Assessment form to track progress and areas of concern to clearly reflect student strengths and challenges at every opportunity. Subsequently, it is the ongoing Observed Clinical Skills Assessment and the Clinical Competencies Assessment during the semester that contribute heavily to the scores achieved on the Clinical Performance Assessment (CPA). Note: Prior to graduation, all interns must successfully achieve a minimum score of “2” across all skill areas on the CPA. Additionally, on the Professional Fitness Evaluation (PFE), interns must achieve no scores lower than “3” and an average of “4” (meets expectations in all respects) across all traits/dispositions before clinical training is successfully completed.

*Under normal circumstances, students in the MMFT Program receive more hours of supervision than required.

If students are unable to demonstrate mastery as evidenced by the Observed Clinical Skills Assessment and a culminating evaluation on the Clinical Performance Assessment (CPA) with a an average of “4” across all skill areas and no scores of 0, students will be remediated during an extended internship of additional semesters at the student’s expense per a detailed Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) outlined by the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC).

Both direct client hours and supervision hours will be documented in Clinical Hours Verification logs maintained by the student and formally documented and signed during the final semester via the “MCSR.” Students are responsible for having his/her supervisors co-sign these logs each and every month*. At specified times during each month, the student will forward his/her records to the Clinic Director who will maintain them on file. These records will be considered the definitive record of the student’s clinical and supervision hours.

***Note: Clinical hours will not be accepted by the assigned supervisor after the 25th day of each month.**

Supervision and Supervisory Relationship of Field Placement

The Field Placement must involve direct client contact and the intern must continue to meet with an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate weekly in the Pfeiffer Institute clinic for both ongoing individual and group supervision in compliance with COAMFTE guidelines for structured supervision. **Note: A supervisory hour at the field placement is required weekly. However, ONLY the supervisory hours conducted by Pfeiffer University faculty can be counted toward accrual of the pre-graduation supervision hours.** Each field placement must provide an administrative and/or site supervisor who is responsible for the efforts of the intern and who provides supervision of cases at least one hour per week. Responsibilities of the Field Placement Site Supervisor include the following: Site supervisors must be full-time administrative or clinical staff who can provide sufficient oversight and accurate assessment and evaluation of intern's progress. **Note: No dual roles or multiple relationships may exist between the site supervisor and the intern per the AAMFT Code of Ethics.** More importantly, the intern cannot accrue clinical face-to-face hours for his/her customary employment responsibilities (i.e., clinical hours must be different from the intern's customary employment responsibilities). Neither can the Site Supervisor for the intern's field placement be the same supervisor for his/her paid employment. In every case, interns will seek approval for his/her field placement from the Clinic Director.

Special Relationships with Professors, Supervisors, & Current and/or Former Clients

Under no conditions may students and/or interns fraternize with professors and/or supervisors off campus unless all participating students/interns are invited to a scheduled MMFT Club and/or Event, e.g., Delta Kappa retreat, GSA Service Project, Graduation Banquet, etc.

AAMFT Code of Ethics (2015)

4.1 Exploitation.

Marriage and family therapists who are in a supervisory role are aware of their influential positions with respect to students and supervisees, and they avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. Therapists, therefore, make every effort to avoid conditions and multiple relationships that could impair professional objectivity or increase the risk of exploitation. When the risk of impairment or exploitation exists due to conditions or multiple roles, therapists take appropriate precautions.

4.3 Sexual Intimacy with Students or Supervisees.

Marriage and family therapists do not engage in sexual intimacy with students or supervisees during the evaluative or training relationship between the therapist and student or supervisee.

Neither may students engage in personal relationships with current and/or former clients and/or their family members.

AAMFT Code of Ethics (2015)

1.3 Multiple Relationships.

Marriage and family therapists are aware of their influential positions with respect to clients, and they avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. Therapists, therefore, make every effort to avoid conditions and multiple relationships with clients that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, business or close personal relationships with a client or the client's immediate family. When the risk of impairment or exploitation exists due to conditions or multiple roles, therapists document the appropriate precautions taken.

1.4 Sexual Intimacy with Current Clients and Others.

Sexual intimacy with current clients or with known members of the client's family system is prohibited.

1.5 Sexual Intimacy with Former Clients and Others.

Sexual intimacy with former clients or with known members of the client's family system is prohibited.

1.7 Abuse of the Therapeutic Relationship.

Marriage and family therapists do not abuse their power in therapeutic relationships.

Clinical Emergencies – Please see Clinic Manual for additional information...

If a crisis develops in the course of a therapy session, the therapist intern should contact his/her assigned supervisor directly, if available, **and** the Clinic Director. All incidents must be immediately reported to the Clinic Director before the close of business. If there is a concern for the physical safety of the therapist intern, the client, or others, law enforcement should be called (911) at once. All therapist interns should be familiar with the emergency procedures outlined in the manual. If a purported crisis occurs, an official Incident Report must be completed and submitted to the Clinic Director.

Certain clinical situations require immediate attention and action from the clinician. The therapist intern must be prepared to deal with these situations should they arise. The therapist intern must act immediately if he/she has reasonable grounds to suspect or conclude that the following conditions exist:

- Current or ongoing sexual or physical abuse of a child, elderly person, or a disabled person
- Current or ongoing relational violence between partners
- Current intoxication of a client in therapy room
- Suicidal threats or gestures
- Client in acute need of psychiatric hospitalization (due to hallucinations, suicidal intent, etc.)
- Homicidal intentions or threats of physical violence towards others

If a therapist intern suspects or concludes that any of the above listed exist, there are two general rules to remember:

1. Act to protect any actual or potential victims, including the client and yourself.
2. Involve another person at once, including but not limited to one or more of the following:
 - a. Supervisor in the building
 - b. Another supervisor
 - c. Clinic Director
 - d. Law enforcement (911 – emergency, 919-829-1911 - non-emergency)

Note: The Clinic Director must be apprised of all incidents before the close of business that day.

Safety Risk to Therapist – Please see Clinic Manual for additional information...

When there is high conflict in the therapy room, the therapist intern must determine if there is an immediate risk of violence to self or client(s). If there is concern about intimate partner violence at the close of session, separate the clients into separate rooms, or take one with you if necessary and if no risk to the therapist intern. Involve another immediate therapist intern or staff member – by interrupting another session, opening the door to the therapy room, contacting the Clinic Director and informing him/her there is an emergency, etc. Identify options and develop a plan to handle the situation and remain calm.

If the therapist intern has been threatened or feels threatened, he/she should not go back into the therapy room by him/herself; rather he/she should call 911 and wait for help. Should any elevation of verbal threat to self or others or threat of physical altercation occur in the therapy room, the therapist should forewarn the clients in advance that the police will be summoned immediately if necessary. Stating the expected rules for professional therapy in advance during a potentially high conflict session, may in fact deter any violation of safety.

Once safety has been established, the therapist intern should contact his or her supervisor immediately and carefully document the situation on the Risk and Safety Assessment Form, session Progress Notes, Other Provider Contact Notes as appropriate, and on Case Review Forms. The supervisor will inform the Clinic Director about this situation at his/her earliest convenience, but no later than before the close of the clinic that day. Additionally, the supervisor is expected to debrief the therapist and document his/her own factual narrative of what s/he heard and saw during the incident.

Professional Dress Code in the Clinic – Standards of Appearance

All clinical interns who have been formally accepted by the Pfeiffer University MMFT Program and MMFT 690 Internship will comply with the maximal restrictions of approved field placement settings. Specifically, clinical interns will present themselves to clients, colleagues, and the community in traditional, well groomed, and professional attire and project a professional image through actions and appearance. Good judgment is the main guideline to follow in dressing appropriately for the clinical internship.

Please note that the focus of these sessions is the client, not the therapist. Dress code expectations will also apply to interns who represent the MMFT Program and/or Clinic outside of the physical clinic, e.g., field placements, workshops, training, conferences, etc., or attend external meetings of any kind to discuss clinic business. For students who may have doubts about accepted attire, the following guidelines have been designated:

- Moderately applied make-up for women if worn, well shaven men, and neatly combed hair is expected
- Extremes in hairstyle and color are not acceptable
- All clothing will be clean, correctly sized, wrinkle free, and in good condition; no tights, jeggings, or leggings are allowed
- Cotton/polyester button down shirts with collars and long sleeves for men with optional light sports jackets, and blouses or layered jackets with sleeves that meet the elbows for women are minimal expectations; ties are not required; note that knit/golf shirts are not acceptable
- Belts and socks for men are required
- Clothing should not be made of see-through fabric or expose bare skin of abdomens/bellies or display plunging necklines that reveal unnecessary cleavage
- Dresses/skirts must be conservative in style and length, enough so that bare legs do not touch the seat when seated
- Jeans of any color, denim clothing, mid-drift tops, evening attire, formal wear, sun-dresses, camisoles, cut-out blouses/tops, cold-shoulder blouses, tights, leggings, shorts, capris, cargo pants, culottes, drawstring and/or rucked pants, low rise pants, sweat shirts, sweat pants, and beach wear are unacceptable; pants/slacks for men and women should reach the ankle
- Neither hats or caps will be worn
- No open toed shoes, peep toes, backless shoes, rubber/plastic shoes, sandals, or tennis shoes are allowed; sling back shoes are acceptable
- No non-traditional accessories or outer wear such as chains or fanny packs may be worn
- Jewelry and other accessories must be conservative and not distract from the focus of the therapeutic relationship. Visible body piercings other than earrings are not allowed. For female

interns, earrings are limited to two per ear and the top earrings must be a post. For males, earrings are not allowed. Neither dental, lip, nose nor eyebrow jewelry will be worn while interning in the clinic, including tongue rings and/or tongue balls. Nose rings and/or studs must also be removed prior to entering the clinic space

- Nail length should be conservative in length, and nail designs and colors must be moderate and not distracting -- long nails are not appropriate for this intern setting
- Tattoos should be completely covered by clothing or concealed when necessary*
- Recognizable odor of tobacco smoke is not acceptable when on duty
- Use of tobacco and alcohol products including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, etc. is not allowed in the Pfeiffer Institute
- Use of chewing gum is not permitted at any time in the presence of clients, visitors, or guests – nicotine replacement products including gum, lozenges, nasal spray, and inhalers maybe used during work hours, but usage should be discrete and in accordance with physician and product manufacturer directions
- Neither colognes nor perfumes should be worn during therapy sessions with clients
- Neither candles or scent diffusers should be used in the clinic

***Tattoos** should be covered by clothing or accessories. If tattoos are visible ink on the hands/fingers/arms/neck/décolletage, then tattoo/flaw conceal tape, make-up/cover-up, a light skin toned sleeve/gloves, or fingerless gloves may be required to cover tattoos which could be perceptually disturbing/offensive/discriminating to clients. Tattoos which depict profanity, logos, slogans, violence, nudity, sexual images/words, racial, ethnic or other characteristics/attributes of a sensitive or legally protected nature should be covered at all times in the clinic. If the appropriateness of a tattoo is in question, a review will be conducted by an appointed ad hoc committee of MMFT faculty.

Note: The dress code applies to all interns working in the clinic, even when clients are not scheduled. The administrative staff reserves the right to determine the professional appropriateness of dress/attire, accessories, and/or appearance of all staff and interns. If the dress code is not respected and violations occur either intentional or unintentional, the Clinic Director will address them with the intern and draw up the appropriate Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) for immediate compliance and subsequent consequences that may potentially delay graduation for the intern.

Also, interns shall refer to oneself and their professional peers and colleagues with individual professional titles and/or full names during direct or indirect interactions inside or outside of the agency. First names are used with clients only “inside the therapy room” when a therapeutic alliance has developed, and the transition has been processed with the client.

University Organizational Structure – Pfeiffer University

The Marriage & Family Therapy Graduate Program is housed in the Division of Applied Health Sciences (AHS) under the supervision of the Assistant Dean, Dr. Elizabeth Fain, and includes seven full-time core faculty members: Dr. Susan Wilkie (also the Program Director), Dr. Isha Williams (Site Director – Raleigh/Durham Campus), Dr. Sarah Wolford (Clinic Director – Charlotte Campus), Dr. Travis Johnson (Clinic Director – Raleigh/Durham Campus), and faculty members, Dr. Tommy Bischoff and Dr. Michelle Cawn of the Charlotte Campus, and Dr. David Haralson of the Raleigh/Durham Campus. There are currently (2) adjunct faculty members who regularly teach non-core classes for the Marriage and Family Therapy Program on the Charlotte Campus: Dr. Deborah Lung and Dr. Robert Cox. Dr. Lung also assumes the role of Clinical Coordinator in the Pfeiffer Institute (Charlotte). Dr. Cox also assumes the role of Addictions and Crisis Consultant. Additionally, Dr. Cox is the Director of Misenheimer Counseling Services and Wellness on the undergraduate campus. Dr. Glen Rediehs is the MMFT Program’s Graphics and Drop Box Consultant. Sheila Lythcott is the Administrative

Assistant and front desk manager of the Pfeiffer Institute in Charlotte. Kimberly Jackson is the Administrative Assistant at the RDU Campus.

Administration and oversight of the Marriage & Family Therapy Graduate Program is the ultimate responsibility of the Program Director, Dr. Susan Wilkie and the Raleigh/Durham Site Director, Dr. Isha Williams. Administration of the Pfeiffer Institute Clinic (Charlotte) and the Pfeiffer Institute *Reach* Clinic (Raleigh/Durham) and field placements is the responsibility of the Pfeiffer Institute Clinic Directors, Dr. Sarah Wolford and Dr. Travis Johnson respectively.

All faculty and/or staff members of The Marriage & Family Therapy Program report to the Marriage & Family Therapy Program Director, Dr. Susan Wilkie. The Program Director reports to Dr. Christopher Boe, Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School reports to Dr. Daniel Mynatt, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Student and Faculty Governance in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program

It is the achievement of Educational Outcomes that link and support the success of the Program Goals, the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and the expected Faculty Roles and vice versa (see Appendices 1.1 and 1.2).

All students, faculty, and graduates are provided many opportunities to offer suggestions and feedback during annually scheduled program assessment surveys, face-to-face exchanges in faculty team meetings, student advisement meetings with his/her advisors every semester, student committee meetings, town hall meetings, alumni meetings, the annual alumni salute, faculty interviews, and admission interviews, etc. In fact, students, faculty, and alums play a very strong presence in the governance of our MMFT program at Pfeiffer University. To note, there are many consulting MMFT student organizations with standing boards of officers including the Graduate Student Association (GSA), Delta Kappa Honor Society (DK), Student Interview Committee, and Reaccreditation Committee which all impact the direction and success of Pfeiffer University's MMFT Program. Students also have an opportunity to weigh in with their thoughts on Course Evaluations every semester, and annual surveys every Fall and Spring.

For faculty, the program assessment process follows the same format every year as scheduled in the Distribution of MMFT Surveys. Pfeiffer's MMFT Program has an extremely collaborative faculty team and all members experience an opportunity to speak and be heard at monthly meetings or ad hoc meetings as needed. Major MMFT work retreats for specific survey/ feedback analysis and review are scheduled during the fall faculty conference and late spring semester. When reviewing surveys/assessments and student feedback, faculty members weigh in on critical discussion and make recommendations. A majority vote of core faculty is needed to make changes. Voted decisions/recommendations by the MMFT department are written by the Program Director or Site Director and forwarded to the Graduate School Division. If the proposal is approved by a majority vote among the Graduate Professors, it is passed first to the Graduate Curriculum Board and onto the University Faculty Assembly for a majority vote at the mid-year meeting in January. If the proposal is not approved by the Division, it goes back to the MMFT Department for review and revision. Once the proposal has been edited per the department feedback, it is then forwarded again for a majority vote by the Division and subsequently onto the Faculty Assembly for a final vote.

COAMFTE Accreditation on Behalf of AAMFT

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Pfeiffer University (Charlotte Campus) earned its initial COAMFTE accreditation in November 2010. The Raleigh Campus earned its initial COAMFTE accreditation in May 2014. Accreditation of universities and university programs is voluntary. Universities and programs choose to seek accreditation to ensure that their academic programs meet the highest standards that have been set by academicians, professionals, and professional associations throughout the United States. The Marriage & Family Therapy Program was first approved by SACS (The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges) as a substantive change to the Pfeiffer University curriculum in March, 2007. SACS is the regional body for the accreditation of higher education institutions in the Southern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) and Latin America that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees.

See direct link from the COAMFTE website below:

www.aamft.org/about/coamfte/AboutCOAMFTE.asp

AAMFT's Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) is a specialized accrediting body that accredits master's degrees, doctoral degrees, and post-graduate degree clinical training programs in marriage and family therapy throughout the United States and Canada. Since 1978, the COAMFTE has been recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) as the national accrediting body for the field of marriage and family therapy. In addition, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or (CHEA) officially recognizes the COAMFTE. CHEA is a non-governmental organization that works to foster and facilitate the role of accrediting bodies in promoting and insuring the quality and diversity of American post-secondary education. The USDE and CHEA regularly review the policies and practices of the COAMFTE for continued recognition.

COAMFTE Organization

The COAMFTE is made up of nine (9) Commissioners -- seven (7) professional members and two (2) public members. Professional Commission members must be senior marriage and family therapy educators or clinicians. Public members represent the interests of the general public and are not professional marriage and family therapy educators, supervisors or practitioners. In selecting Commission members, every effort is made to maintain a balance with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, and geographic location. The Commission must also reflect a balance regarding academicians and practitioners as well as training contexts (master's, doctoral, and post-degree).

Purpose of Accreditation

Specialized accreditation of marriage and family therapy programs is a public service that aims to encourage programs to continue their own self-study and development; and indicate that programs are meeting established standards and their own stated objectives.

This specialized accreditation is both a process and a condition. The process, or the act of accrediting, entails assessing a program's operations through compliance with specified professional standards developed by a national consensus of professionals in the field. The condition, or the state of being accredited, provides a credential to the public which attests that a program has accepted and is fulfilling its commitment to educational quality.

The COAMFTE works cooperatively with its parent organization, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), state licensing and certification boards, and the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB). The COAMFTE program educational standards often serve as the foundation for the development of individual credentialing requirements. The accreditation process is a voluntary process that requires self-study by the program, an on-site review by a selected group of peers, and a review and decision by the COAMFTE to determine compliance with accreditation standards. Once a program has become accredited, it is required to submit annual reports demonstrating continued compliance with standards. Accredited programs are reviewed at least every six years.

Benefits of Accreditation

In fostering quality assurance and program improvement, the COAMFTE's accreditation process benefits the public, programs, students, and the profession:

To the **public and consumers**, accreditation provides assurance that the program has undertaken extensive external evaluation, and meets standards established by the profession.

Accreditation serves **programs** by providing a stimulus for self-evaluation and a cost-effective review mechanism which strengthens the reputation and credibility of a program because of the public regard for accreditation. Accredited programs become eligible for funding under several Federal grant programs.

Students can be assured that the appropriate knowledge and skill areas will be included in the course of study that are necessary for entry into a chosen field and that the program demonstrates financial stability. An accredited degree assures a prospective employer that the student has undertaken a superior course of professional preparation. An accredited degree also allows students to apply for Clinical Membership in AAMFT through the accelerated Accredited Program Track in the absence of state licensure.

The **MFT Profession** benefits because specialized accreditation contributes to the unity of the profession. It brings together practitioners, teachers, and students in the vital activity of setting standards for the education of entry level professionals, and of continually improving professional preparation, education, research, scholarship, and clinical practice.

Scope of Accreditation

The COAMFTE's scope of accreditation includes the Master's Degree program:

Master's Degree Programs provide students with broad areas of theory and practice in marriage and family therapy. These programs provide entry level educational requirements for independent clinical practice in the profession. They are designed to prepare individuals for beginning a career in marriage and family therapy by providing basic didactic and clinical skills, as well as professional development and socialization.

Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure

All graduate students should plan to become licensed as a Marriage & Family Therapist in North Carolina or in whichever jurisdiction they plan to live and work. In addition, all students should be prepared to sit for the National Marital & Family Therapy Examination administered by the AMFTRB

(Association of Marital & Family Therapy Regulatory Board after his/her degree has been conferred and application has been submitted for the next exam administration, see www.amftrb.org).

The Pfeiffer University master of arts degree program in Marriage & Family Therapy includes all course requirements and clinical experience for licensure as a provisional marriage & family therapist (LMFTA) in the state of North Carolina: 500 maximum hours (40% or 200 client hours must be relational) provided pre-degree, a minimum of 100 hours of direct supervision (50 hours must be live observation) by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor Candidate, and all coursework necessary to prepare for the National Marital & Family Therapy Examination which requires a 70% passing rate. An additional 1,000 hours post-graduation or 1500 total hours of face-to-face client contact and a minimum of 200 hours of approved supervision is required to be eligible for the North Carolina LMFT state licensure (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist).

MMFT Course Cycle

Course	Course Title	Fall	Spring	Summer
MMFT 600	Emerging Cross-Cultural Issues in Families & Communities	X		
MMFT 601	Introduction to Family Systems	X		
MMFT 602	Family Therapy Theories		X	
MMFT 603	Theory and Practice of Group Therapy	X		
MMFT 604	Diagnosis of Mental and Emotional Disorders	X		
MMFT 605	Addiction in Family Systems			X
MMFT 606	Practicum I: Therapeutic Alliance*	X		
MMFT 607	Practicum II: Clinical Procedures*		X	
MMFT 608	Crisis Intervention		X	
MMFT 610	Professional Identity and Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy			X
MMFT 620	Couples Therapy, Theory, and Techniques		X	
MMFT 621	Advanced MFT Theories and Special Issues	X		
MMFT 630	Assessment and Treatment Planning in Family Therapy		X	
MMFT 640	Family Therapy: Children and Adolescents			X
MMFT 670	Human Sexuality & Contextual Sex Therapy		X	
MMFT 680	Legal & Ethical Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy			X
MMFT 685	Advanced Trauma Focused Assessment & Intervention	X		
MMFT 690	Internship in Marriage & Family Therapy*	X	X	X
PSYC 600	Advanced Human Growth & Development		X	
PSYC 615	Advanced Psychopathology in the Family Context		X	
PSYC 625	Research Methodology & Program Evaluation	X		

*Beginning 2020, newly enrolled students are now required to complete both practicums, MMFT 606 and 607, consecutively during the same academic year. When MMFT 606 and 607 have been achieved successfully, students must enter MMFT 690 within two semesters. Clinic enrollment in MMFT 690 is therefore expected within two semesters of completing MMFT 607.

Students must ensure they have completed all prerequisites for courses before they register each term. Under rare circumstances, students who could not otherwise qualify to register for the full course load of (3) courses during any one semester, may in fact be given special permission by the Program Director to waive a prerequisite for a course on a case by case basis. On the other hand, if students register for courses for which they are not qualified and have not been given special written permission during formal faculty advising, they will be required to drop such courses the first time the course meets. Prerequisite requirements will be vigorously enforced by professors so that the quality of instruction will not be compromised.

Full-time MMFT professors have the authority to determine whether a student will be admitted to closed classes in which they have been assigned. Students should contact the Program Director/Site Director directly if they wish to enroll in a closed class. In the event an adjunct professor is teaching a closed class, request for admission to that class should also be directed to the Program Director or Site Director.

Under very rare circumstances, students who request to enroll in more than 9 credit hours during the Fall/Spring semesters or more than 6 hours during the summer semester will need to request written permission from the Program Director or Site Director. S/he will hear the request and then move it to an ad hoc faculty meeting for consideration. A decision based on a majority vote will be formally documented and submitted to the student within (10) working days. A copy of the documentation summary will also be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School and filed in the student's folder. If the student chooses to appeal the decision, the Dean should be contacted by email within (3) working days.

Taking more than the recommended three courses during a semester, is strongly discouraged. Taking an additional course while enrolled in MMFT 690 is not recommended as the graduate rigor of clinical programs and the dually noted responsibility of both in-house clinic clients and concurrent field placement clients requires approximately 20 extra hours of client time. Graduate level courses are not structured like undergrad courses, nor are expectations the same. One applied graduate course can be experienced as having the requirements of two to three courses. What is most important in a clinical program, is the focus of the intern on the client, and the capacity to serve clients as fully present in the therapy room. The Program of Study is structured to prevent/mitigate burn out as the burden of four courses scheduled over four week nights limits the available time to schedule the 10 hours of client contact in the clinic, the minimum of 10 client contact hours at the externship, and the minimized amount of time to complete required clinic documentation. The ultimate ethical mandate is "Do no Harm." Should elective classes of specialized interest (Special Topics) be offered via MMFT 698, the condensed coursework may be scheduled only on weekends as a Friday/Saturday class with special permission.

Sufficiency of Resources

The MMFT Program Goals are designated according to the new 12.0 Accreditation Standards (see Appendices 1.1 & 1.2 for program restructuring of educational outcomes per Maintenance Compliance). The Pfeiffer University MMFT Program Goals are accomplished and supported by Pfeiffer University's Fiscal and Physical Resources.

The Charlotte Campus is located at 1515 Mockingbird Lane. This facility is a leased facility that is located on the 2nd floor consisting of 6 classrooms, 2 seminar rooms, and 16 academic and support staff offices with a student meeting area, kitchen, and library. This facility adequately services our current student body with the capacity to expand programs. Accessible technology includes video conferencing and smart boards.

The Pfeiffer Institute of Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic (PIMFT) houses a large separate private and confidential training and counseling facility on the 3rd floor open to the surrounding community with an experiential clinic lab. This is also a leased facility that is approximately 2,500 square feet consisting of a waiting room/large lobby, secure front desk, 10 therapy rooms, 2 administrative offices, a group room for supervision, computer lab, hallway bathroom, and complete video access in every therapy room that records and documents all communications between clients and interns for continuous observation and supervision.

The Raleigh/Durham Campus is currently located at 600 Airport Boulevard in Morrisville. The MMFT Program expanded first to the Raleigh/Durham Campus on Slater Road in Fall 2011, and then later moved to the MMFT Clinic in Morrisville during a 2017 transition (Pfeiffer Institute *Reach*) to combine the classrooms and clinic in one building. The Clinic was first established in January 2013 and continually serves diverse clients from a broad local and regional area surrounding Morrisville, NC. The state of the art clinic is a separate confidential training and counseling facility open to the surrounding community with an experiential lab that is approximately 3,500 square feet consisting of a waiting room, 9 therapy rooms, 2 administrative offices, a group room for supervision, and computer lab for interns with complete video access and monitoring in every therapy room. Additionally, the clinic offers a sliding scale and reduced fee schedule so that mental health services are afforded to “all” those who seek them.

Both the fiscal and physical resources support clinical effectiveness through the provision of both on-campus clinics for student training. The high-tech therapy room cameras and continuous recording devices allow students direct feedback from supervisors through live supervision and also recorded sessions. Students meet weekly for individual and group supervision and are able to receive/give feedback during student reflecting teams in group supervision. Upgrades to the clinic are provided as needed.

All faculty members are approved AAMFT supervisors or supervisor candidates, and are active participants/presenters at local/regional/state workshops who have become experts and mentors in diverse areas of clinical knowledge.

The MMFT Program also provides outreach to over 30 field placement sites throughout the Charlotte and Raleigh/Durham community areas, and further develops students’ clinical skills and agency accountability. Clinical interns also provide scheduled seminars, thematic workshops, and/or group counseling and education for community participants.

Assessments and benchmarks are outlined in the chart of Mission, Goals, and Outcomes Template (Appendix 1.1.2) which are continuously evaluated to affirm they are met or subsequently explored to inform the program and guide for improvement.

Classroom Attendance

There are 16 weeks during the **fall and spring semester** -- 15 weeks of instructional class and a final exam during the 16th week which requires a minimum of a 2-hour exam experience. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and come to class prepared to apply readings to class discussion and activities. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to notify the professor in advance if the student cannot attend class. In accordance with Pfeiffer policy, any student who misses more than (3) classes during the semester will receive an automatic failing grade. If this circumstance should exist, you are encouraged to drop the course by the published withdrawal date. The withdrawal code is "AW."

The student must be present during the entire class period to be counted as present. Roll will be called at the beginning of class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor at the end of class. Once the class is dismissed, the roll will stand. Arriving more than 15 minutes late, leaving class for 15+ minutes when in session, coming back from break 15 minutes late, or leaving class 15 minutes early will result in being counted absent for the entire class session. If you are not present, you do not hear the material being discussed, and you are not able to participate in class discussions.

For clarification, two absences are excused regardless of reason. Students who miss three (3) classes or 9 hours of class will receive a five (5) point deduction from their final grade. For example, a student who would have earned a final average of 90, will earn instead an 85 (B) in the course if s/he misses class a total of three nights. Students who miss more than (3) classes will receive an automatic failing grade and should withdraw immediately from the class.

There are 5 condensed weeks during the **summer semester** which incur 10 class sessions. During the 11th summer session, a minimum of a 2-hour exam experience is required. For clarification, one absence is excused regardless of reason. Students who miss two (2) classes or 9 hours of class will receive a five (5) point deduction from the final grade. For example, a student who would have earned a final average of 90, will earn instead an 85 (B) in the course if s/he misses class a total of two nights. Students who miss more than (2) classes will receive an automatic failing grade and should withdraw immediately from the class. **Please see the Pfeiffer Institute Clinic Manual for required attendance during individual and group supervision.**

MMFT Policies for ALL Virtual Learning

- 1) Classroom policies and learner expectations in all virtual classes will mirror those policies of seated classes on campus.
- 2) Students must locate a "private and secure" space that is an area where notes can be readily taken, e.g., not driving in a car as a driver or passenger, not lying across a bed in pajamas, not eating your meal up close and personal on screen, not texting friends in class, not lying on a beach blanket, etc. Rather show respect for the professor and your classmates by showing respect directly for the subject material at hand.
- 3) Students are expected to wear appropriate street attire, just as you would expect to wear in the physical classroom on campus.
- 4) Appropriate language is a must for the "chat" box. Use online netiquette and avoid texting slang and or acronyms.

5) Students must be in the waiting room at 3-5 minutes before the class is scheduled to begin. Virtual classes begin on time, pre-schedule all breaks, and end at the scheduled time. Professors do not wait for students to arrive past the scheduled hour.

6) During scheduled class times, cameras/videos must be actively shared. Only during breaks may videos be turned off. Students should be able to make eye contact with professors/instructors/guest speakers at any time.

7) Personal cell phones should be turned in the "off" position and not accessible for texting or surfing during class time. All other devices should be turned off.

Curriculum Requirements

69 SEMESTER HOURS MINIMUM

I. Assessment and Diagnosis (6 SH):

MMFT 604 Diagnosis of Mental and Emotional Disorders
MMFT 630 Assessment and Treatment Planning in Family Therapy

II. Human Development and Family Relations (9 SH):

MMFT 640 Family Therapy: Children and Adolescents
PSYC 600 Advanced Human Growth and Development
PSYC 615 Advanced Psychopathology in the Family Context

III. Practice of MFT (15 SH):

MMFT 600 Emerging Cross-Cultural Issues in Families and Communities
MMFT 606 Practicum I: Therapeutic Alliance*
MMFT 607: Practicum II: Clinical Procedures*
MMFT 620 Couples Therapy, Theory, and Techniques
MMFT 670 Human Sexuality and Contextual Sex Therapy

IV. Professional Identity and Ethics (6 SH):

MMFT 610 Professional Identity and Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy
MMFT 680 Legal & Ethical Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy

V. Research (3 SH):

PSYC 625 Research Methods & Program Evaluation

VI. Theoretical Foundation of MFT (9 SH):

MMFT 601 Introduction to Family Systems
MMFT 602 Family Therapy Theories
MMFT 621 Advanced MFT Theories and Special Issues

VII. Clinical Practice (9-15 SH): **

MMFT 690 Internship in Marriage & Family Therapy (3-5 consecutive semesters)*

VIII. Additional Core Coursework (12 SH)

MMFT 603 Theory and Practice of Group Therapy
MMFT 605 Addiction in Family Systems
MMFT 608 Crisis Intervention
MMFT 685 Advanced Trauma Focused Assessment & Intervention

*Beginning 2020, newly enrolled students are now required to complete both practicums, MMFT 606 and 607, consecutively during the same academic year. When MMFT 606 and 607 have been achieved successfully, students must enter MMFT 690 within two semesters. Enrollment in 690 is therefore expected within two semesters of completing MMFT 607.

1. Supervisors for MMFT 690 are AAMFT Approved Supervisors or AAMFT Supervisor Candidates under current ongoing supervision. The clinical internship will cover a minimum of (3) consecutive semesters and include a full summer semester. Additional semesters may be required for those students who are not able to fulfill the clinical hour requirements in (3) semesters. Students will receive 1 hour of individual supervision and 2 hours of group supervision weekly (Summer: 1-1/2 hours of individual and 3 hours of group supervision). Please note that in order for applicants to be issued full NC State Licensure, the applicant must receive a passing grade on the National Marital and Family Therapy Examination (AMFTRB), complete a total of 1,500 hours clinical experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy (not more than 500 hours of which were obtained pre-degree and at least 1,000 of which were obtained post-degree) with verified approved supervision and coursework consistent with the NCMFT Licensure Board criteria.

2. Prior to enrolling in MMFT 690, the internship experience in Marriage and Family Therapy, students may apply for internship candidacy only after the successful completion of 24 semester hours as documented by the following coursework: MMFT 601, MMFT 602, MMFT 604, MMFT 606, MMFT 607, MMFT 610, MMFT 630, and MMFT 680. Additionally, MMFT 620 must be taken concurrently or prior to MMFT 690. Internship approval will require completion of the Clinical Internship Candidacy Form and the consensus of all current MMFT Program Faculty, the Clinic Director, and the Program Director/Site Director. Students are required to furnish their own professional (student) liability insurance prior to their internship class, MMFT 690. Please note that it is not recommended by full-time faculty to take more than (3) classes during any one semester, particularly concurrent with the MMFT Internship.

3. 500 minimum clinical face-to-face hours (a minimum of 40% or 200 client hours must be "relational hours*") with 100 hours of documented supervision (minimum 50 hours based on raw or "live" data), mastery of designated course embedded core competencies and corresponding PMFTPs, endorsement of clinical performance as demonstrated in the Clinical Performance Assessment with a score of "2" across all skill areas, endorsement of non-academic personal and professional dispositions as verified by the Professional Fitness Evaluation with a final average score of "4" and no scores lower than "3," a passing grade on the Comprehensive Exam, verification of accumulated personal growth/counseling hours as required, attendance at a local, state, or national mental health related conference, and a minimum of 69 successfully completed graduate semester hours will be required for graduation.

4. If an intern provides therapy sessions at a field placement or other approved location outside of the Pfeiffer Institute, s/he may be required to video tape a session off-site as determined by the Clinic Director or Supervisor on a case by case basis. The intern must obtain permission from his/her off-site supervisor and off-site client(s) for permission to record sessions. Please see Field Placement Site Supervisor Agreement form. The Pfeiffer Institute is not required to provide therapist interns with video equipment outside of the clinic. If required by the Clinic Director or assigned Supervisor, it is the responsibility of the intern to obtain video recording equipment and materials (e.g., camcorder, DVDs, tapes) to record the required session(s) at an external internship site.

5. The MMFT program does not discriminate based on age, culture, ethnicity, gender, physical disability, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Course Descriptions – Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy
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MMFT 600 Emerging Cross-Cultural Issues in Families and Communities

An exploration of therapy issues related to a culturally diverse population, including societal attitudes and behaviors based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and disability status. The sensitive delivery of interventions to meet the special needs of clients and subsequent research on therapist-client cultural congruence will be also be addressed.

MMFT 601 Introduction to Family Systems

This course is an introduction to the history and systemic foundations of the study and understanding of family life with emphasis on the various theories of family process and development. Case examples to help students visualize the complexity of couple and family interaction and the need for both basic and specialized family counseling skills will be introduced.

MMFT 602 Family Therapy Theories

A survey of contemporary, multicultural, and contextual analyses of the major models of marriage and family therapy, the integration of various approaches in relationship therapy, and the research outcomes which document the state of MFT effectiveness.

MMFT 603 Theory and Practice of Group Therapy

This course is designed to provide students with theoretical understanding and training in the use of groups in clinical and educational settings. Included will be an application of effective psychotherapy skills and procedures to help prepare students to work with children, youth, and adults in a systemic context. Additionally, students will participate in an ongoing experiential process group throughout the semester.

MMFT 604 Diagnosis of Mental and Emotional Disorders in Family Systems

This course is designed to examine the adult DSM-IV-TR major classifications of psychological disorders that impede healthy family functioning. Methods of assessment and diagnosis, evidence based research, record keeping, case documentation, and treatment will be studied. Strengths and weaknesses of the current diagnostic system and a multi-dimensional individual assessment and social history approach including a biopsychosocial intake and mental status exam will be presented.

MMFT 605 Addiction in Family Systems

This course examines the disease model vs. systemic views of addiction and treatment. Markers of abuse and dependence are identified as well as its impact on individuals, couples, and families. Specific attention to a systems perspective and various therapeutic approaches for the treatment of chemical dependency and substance abuse will serve as a critical guide to assessment and intervention efforts.

MMFT 606 Practicum I: Therapeutic Alliance*

The study of theory, processes, and techniques involved in establishing and maintaining the therapeutic alliance with individuals, couples, and family systems. This course is designed as a pre-internship experience, specifically the transition from the classroom to the clinical experience, and includes the application of basic attending skills, accurate assessment, and effective treatment through laboratory demonstration and direct supervisory appraisal to develop and maintain therapeutic alliance.

MMFT 607 Practicum II: Clinical Procedures*

This is an advanced experiential course designed as a pre-internship experience and onboarding process with transition from the classroom into the clinical experience. Emphasis is placed on the application of concepts, methods, and procedures that ensure high standards of client care through accurate assessment and effective treatment.

MMFT 608 Crisis Intervention

This course is intended for advanced students pursuing studies in psychology, criminal justice, counselor education, and the human services and mental health professions. Basic issues and strategies in the theory and practice of trauma and crisis intervention will be addressed including the application of practical helping skills and techniques. Special topics include normal assessment of situation stress and chronic stress, grief and loss, lethality, suicide/homicide, mass disaster, child and elder abuse, domestic violence, rape and assault, violence in the schools and in the work place, post traumatic therapy and recovery, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD), and compassion fatigue.

MMFT 610 Professional Identity and Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy

A survey of current issues relating to professional identity and functioning in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy including a greater understanding of self-development and the therapist's understanding of self when working with systems. Students will also be introduced to the organizational structure of ethical practice including therapist-client agreements, record keeping, professional liability, third party coding and billing, referral resources for special needs, certification and licensure requirements, and the utilization of supervision and consultation in both professional and therapeutic practice.

MMFT 620 Couples Therapy, Theory, and Techniques

This course provides theoretical and practical foundations for the practice of couples' therapy including marital and pre-marital work. Students will experience the application of current evidence-based methods for assessing and treating relationship problems from a systems perspective. Students will also have an opportunity to explore a variety of dyadic relationships in which individuals are struggling with common clinical issues that cause distress and dysfunction as well as problems in the therapeutic discourse. Attention will be given to the influence and impact of socio-economic and socio-cultural factors on couple relationships including gender and power, jealousy, infidelity, partner abuse/violence, and sexual abuse.

MMFT 621 Advanced MFT Theories and Special Issues

Special focus will be given to advanced techniques and practical applications to individual, marital, couple, family, and group psychotherapy in the clinical setting, including an introduction to family mediation as an approach to helping families deal effectively with separation and divorce. Normative family transitions and processes, family competence, family resilience, and interactional patterns in marital success or failure are addressed. Interventions for the enhancement of family coping strategies also include special issues of diversity, acute relationship distress, child, spouse, and elder abuse in the family setting, disability, death, crisis intervention, depression, and grief and loss.

MMFT 630 Assessment and Treatment Planning in Family Therapy

An advanced look at clinical theory, systemic interviewing skills, biopsychosocial history, methods of assessment and interpretation, family assessment instruments, and systemic interventions for working with couples and families in marriage and family therapy.

MMFT 640 Family Therapy: Children and Adolescents

This course will present principles of healthy child/adolescent development and techniques used in establishing effective parent-child relationships from the perspective of marriage and family systems. Research, theory, and practice regarding childhood/adolescent diagnostic categories of the DSM-IV-TR

will also be studied. Special issues regarding therapy with minors and creative approaches for building mutually desired outcomes including the facilitation of play therapy will be explored.

MMFT 670 Human Sexuality & Contextual Sex Therapy

Introduction to the theory and practice of sex therapy will be presented to investigate the dominant issues of dysfunctional and pathological sexual functioning, and its effects on individuals, couples, and family systems. Appropriate assessment and intervention methods utilizing a contextual approach will be studied.

MMFT 680 Legal & Ethical Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy

This comprehensive overview stresses the ethical standards of professional therapy, ethical and legal issues, and their applications to various marriage and family tasks. Ethical dilemmas will be examined through a case approach and preparation and procedure for legal processes and court testimony will be addressed.

MMFT 685 Advanced Trauma Focused Assessment & Intervention

This course is intended for advanced students pursuing studies in psychology, criminal justice, counselor education, and the human services and mental health professions. This experientially focused course will address basic skills and strategies of trauma assessment and intervention including empirically supported models for the treatment of trauma. Models taught may include DBT, EMDR, TF-CBT, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Traumatic Incident Reduction Therapy, among others. Skills developed will also include the application of practical helping techniques. Special topics may include, but are not limited to, normal assessment of trauma and related symptomatology, neuroscience of trauma, suicide/homicide, domestic violence, natural disaster and community-based trauma, violence in the schools and in the work place, post-traumatic therapy and recovery, and compassion fatigue.

MMFT 690 Internship in Marriage & Family Therapy**

The central goal of this course is to assist students in applying theory, modalities, and methods of therapeutic process to face-to-face counseling sessions. Interns will learn the process of proper record keeping, confidentiality, intake processes, and treatment planning. Interns will participate in the process of supervision of counseling and case conferencing which are processes that must evolve following graduation from the MFT program in preparation for licensure and onto clinical practice. Interns will be encouraged to integrate theory and practice into their client sessions. This class is designed for structured supervision of advanced students in Marriage and Family Therapy. Appropriate placement in a clinical marriage and family therapy setting will include a minimum of 500 hours of client contact hours (250 individual & 200 relational*) over a minimum of 3 consecutive semesters, and a total of 100 hours of supervision by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisory Candidate (30 hours of individual supervision and 70 hours of group supervision). Note: Of the 100 required hours, 50 must be live supervision. Lab fee: \$125.00 per student per semester. **Prerequisite:** Permission of MMFT Program Faculty, Clinic Director, and Program Director/Site Director.

MMFT 690A Internship in Marriage & Family Therapy

The letter "A" designates that an intern has completed a minimum of (3) consecutive semesters of internship and has successfully achieved all core competencies and PMFTPs assigned to this course as evaluated by the corresponding primary assignments. If registration for the "A" section has been permitted by the Clinic Director, then the intern is only accountable to completing his/her clinical hours, not the continuing assignments used to demonstrate that the core competencies have been completed. **Prerequisite:** Permission of the Clinic Director.

MMFT 698 Special Topics

Formal courses of specialized interest will be offered on a rotating basis. At least one topic may be offered during any one semester as an elective course. A specific title will be used for each course and

will be entered on the student's transcript. The intention of this course is to permit the student to pursue special topics in professional therapy, e.g., Career Development and Life Skills, Analysis of the Individual, Play Therapy, Gerontology, Sex Therapy, Art Therapy, Military Therapy, Statistical Application, Trauma-focused Intervention, etc.

PSYC 600 Advanced Human Growth & Development

An examination of the principles of human development and a survey of the stages of lifespan development with emphasis on the resultant issues influencing family development and its subsequent therapeutic process. Developmental crises, disability, addictive behavior, psychopathology, and environmental factors are discussed.

PSYC 615 Advanced Psychopathology in the Family Context

This course is designed for advanced students in the helping professions who will need a broader and firmer background in psychopathology and psychopharmacology to administer client care at a professional level. Students will examine the interactive processes hypothesized in the etiology and maintenance of various mental and emotional disorders, and be introduced to effective treatment planning and the combined effects of currently used psychotropic medications. Diagnostic dilemmas and approaches with special emphasis on cultural and ethical considerations will be presented with an overall focus on the development of strong diagnostic skills.

PSYC 625 Research Methods and Program Evaluation

This introductory course is designed to enable graduate level students to read and understand existing research literature, to understand principal research methods, and to apply research principles to the conduct of research projects. This course lays a foundation upon which other counseling courses build during the graduate program in preparing students for the counseling profession.

* Effective January 1, 2016, students may graduate with a minimum of 40% (200 relational hours) of the total 500 face-to-face clinical hours instead of the previous 50% or 250 relational hours. Throughout the MMFT Student Handbook, the criteria of 500 minimum clinical hours will note that a minimum of relational hours has been changed to 40% or 200 hours. However, it should be understood that the 500 required clinical face-to-face hours has not been changed, and it is to the benefit of the student to achieve the 250 relational hours if possible prior to graduation to alleviate post-graduate stress to accrue the 250 relational hours at a later time.

*Beginning 2020, the two practicums, MMFT 606 and 607, must be taken consecutively during the same academic year. When MMFT 606 and 607 have been completed successfully, students must enter MMFT 690 within two semesters.

**Prior to Fall 2020, note that all students who successfully completed MMFT 606, must enter MMFT 690 within three semesters. If entry does not begin by the following fall semester, the student will be required to enroll in MMFT 607 to update preparation for entry into the Internship.

Prerequisites

MMFT 602 Family Therapy Theories -- Prerequisite: MMFT 601, or special permission.

MMFT 603 Theory and Practice of Group Therapy -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604, 610, 630, & 680

MMFT 605 Addiction in Family Systems -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604, 610, 620, 630, 680, or special permission.

MMFT 606* Practicum I: Therapeutic Alliance-- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604,610, 630, & 680.

MMFT 607* Practice II: Clinical Procedures-- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604,606, 610, 630, & 680.

MMFT 620 Couples Therapy, Theory, and Techniques -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 603, 604, 610, 630, 680, or special permission. Note that MMFT 620 must be taken prior to or concurrently with the first semester of MMFT 690.

MMFT 621 Advanced Clinical Procedures & Special Issues -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 603, 604, 610, 620, 630, 670, 680, or special permission.

MMFT 630 Assessment and Treatment Planning in Family -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 604, or special permission.

MMFT 640 Family Therapy: Children and Adolescents -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604, 610, 630, 680, or special permission.

MMFT 670 Human Sexuality & Contextual Sex Therapy -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604, 610, 620, 621, 630, 680 or special permission. Note that MMFT 620 must be taken concurrently or prior to MMFT 670.

MMFT 685 Advanced Trauma Focused Assessment & Intervention – Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 604, 608, 610, 620, 630, 670, 680, or special permission.

MMFT 690** Internship in Marriage & Family Therapy -- Prerequisites: MMFT 601, 602, 603, 604, 606, 607, 608, 610, 630, 680 & 620 (concurrently is permissible. Permission of MMFT Program Faculty, Clinic Director, and Program Director/Site Director is also required as part of Internship Candidacy requirements.

*Beginning 2020, the two practicums, MMFT 606 and 607, must be taken consecutively during the same academic year. When MMFT 606 and 607 have been completed successfully, students must enter MMFT 690 within two semesters.

**Prior to Fall 2020, note that all students who successfully completed MMFT 606, must enter MMFT 690 within three semesters. If entry does not begin by the following fall semester, the student will be required to enroll in MMFT 607 to update preparation for entry into the Internship.

Key Teaching and Learning Practices

Lecture & power point presentations
 Primary assignments to verify PMFTP competencies
 Professional papers, e.g., literature review for PSYC 625 & theory of change for MMFT 621
 Student papers, e.g., Self-reflection papers, family baggage papers, etc.
 Film family analysis
 Thematic process papers, e.g., clinic client capstones
 Group panel presentations & treatment plans
 Role modeling and video demonstrations/enactments
 Clinical Exposure Experiences (CEEs), e.g., MMFT 601 & 620
 Clinic intake, practice, demonstrations, mock sessions, and outcome assessments
 Research posters, research projects
 Breakout groups, e.g., ethical decision making, informed consent documents
 Classroom discussions
 Annual Surveys
 External Interviews
 Self-Evaluations
 Group projects, e.g., therapy brochures, core values, etc.

Academic Assessment

Each and every class requires your professor or instructor of record to prepare a course syllabus, course calendar, criteria for evaluation, and PMFTP assessment that must be presented the first night of the class meeting during a new semester. The syllabus designates the student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the Course Embedded Core Competencies (CECCs) that must be achieved by the conclusion of the course. Changes in these course documents may occur during the first week of class, but must be discussed and finalized during the second class meeting. Final documents must also be appended to Blackboard no later than the second week of class. The “Criteria for Evaluation” is a critical document to student assessment as it is intended to designate the core competencies and evaluative points broken down for each component of a primary course assignment. Core competencies designated for each course are demonstrated by students through a passing grade on each primary assignment. If some of the core competencies are not successfully demonstrated, the student will receive an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) with a grade of “I” for the semester, and have until the end of the first 30 days of the new semester to successfully demonstrate them. If the student is unable to demonstrate the prescribed deficiencies, the student will be required to retake the course the following year. If very few of the core competencies have been demonstrated, the student will most likely receive a grade of “F,” and the course will be repeated as long as the student’s GPA is still a 3.0. If not, the student may be formally advised by the university of either a probationary status or suspension (please see the Graduate Catalog for university-wide information).

Participation is also critical to a traditionally seated graduate class. Participation has two elements - attending class and taking part in discussions and exercises. Taking part in class discussion and exercises is an important part of this program. Students are also expected to complete designated readings before class meetings and be prepared to discuss them in class as well as participate in practice exercises. Assignments are NOT optional; students must complete ALL assignments in order to fully demonstrate his/her capacity to achieve all corresponding PMFTPs satisfactorily.

Attending class is an essential component of participation. Students are expected to arrive at class on time and be fully present for its scheduled duration and participate in class discussions and activities including giving and receiving constructive feedback. Students are excused to miss two classes during the regular fall and spring semester, and one class during the compressed summer semester. A third

absence during the regular semester will result in a deduction of 5 points from the final numerical average. A second absence during the summer semester will result in a deduction of 5 points from the final numerical average. Arrival at the class 15 minutes late, 15 minutes out during the class, or departure from class 15 minutes early constitutes (1) absence.

Additionally, in the MMFT Program, a student may not earn a grade of “C” or lower in their experiential coursework, MMFT 606, MMFT 606. MMFT 620, MMFT 621, MMFT 630, MMFT 670, MMFT 685, or MMFT 690. In this event, a student is automatically required to enter remediation with an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) and retake the course at the discretion of the Faculty Remediation Committee. Note: A course can only be taken twice during enrollment in the MMFT Program.

Final grades will be based on the average of all grades received during the semester with a letter grade assigned to the following schedule: 93-100 = A; 90-92.9 = A-; 87-89.9 = B+; 80-86.9 = B; 70-79.9 = C; below 70.

Academic Probation

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0, a “B,” to continue in good academic standing. Students who do not maintain a 3.0 average are placed on probation. Students on probation must achieve a semester GPA of at least 3.0 during the semester following probation and must achieve an overall GPA of at least 3.0 within two (2) semesters. Failure to maintain this standard will result in suspension from the program. Students who receive a grade of “F” in a course will be required to retake the course and meet with the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC). Additionally, only two grades of “C” may be applied toward graduate degrees at Pfeiffer University. Specifically, in the MMFT Program, a student may not earn a grade of “C” or lower in their experiential coursework, MMFT 606, MMFT 620, MMFT 621, MMFT 630, MMFT 670, or MMFT 690. In this event, a student will be required to enter remediation and retake the course at the discretion of the Faculty Remediation Committee. If potential remediation is approved, an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) will be outlined. If the student is unable to proficiently achieve the core competencies for the course during a second enrollment opportunity, the student will be dismissed from the program and counseled on other related career options that may also utilize transferable skills derived from the MMFT Program. Students who have been suspended from the program may request permission from the Program Director and respective Dean to re-apply after one full semester of suspended activity and a revised plan of study.

Grade Appeals

In the event a student believes that a final grade for a course is unfair, the matter should be discussed directly with the professor of record. If the situation is not resolved to the student’s satisfaction, the student should then consult with the Program Director/Site Director. After discussing the matter with the Program Director/Site Director, the student may appeal the grade according to grade appeal procedures outlined in the Pfeiffer University Student Handbook. Only final grades may be appealed.

Grievance/Complaint Policy (Students & Faculty)

All **program** complaints and grievances (see Appendix 1.4, Student Complaint form) will be written and signed by the complainant, and then submitted and discussed directly with the Program Director (Charlotte Campus) or Site Director (Raleigh-Durham Campus) during a scheduled meeting. If the grievance is a **clinical/internship** issue, each intern is expected to complete his/her own complaint form and make a scheduled appointment with the Clinic Director (even if it is a shared complaint). If the grievance is not brought to satisfactory resolution, the Clinic Director will sign off that the complaint has not been resolved, and the student complaint form will be forwarded to the Program Director/Site

Director. All matters proceed hierarchically from the Clinic Director to the Program Director/Site Director, and then to the Dean of the Graduate School. *If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved with the Dean, it will be formally referred in writing to the Provost or Vice-President of Academic Affairs.

In almost all cases, it is preferable to handle a grievance informally at the level at which the grievance was initiated. If the student does not feel safe, the Program/Site/Clinic Director or Director of HR should be contacted directly. For example, if the conflict is between two students, resolution between the students should be initially attempted. If the conflict is between a student and a faculty member, resolution between them should be initially attempted through email and/or a potential meeting. With specific regard to students, if the source of the issue is among or between students in the program and it cannot be resolved, the individuals should bring the grievance to the Program Director/Site Director who will attempt to help the parties mediate a satisfactory resolution. If the conflict is between two interns and cannot be resolved between them, the individuals should proceed to the Clinic Director. If the issue is not resolved at the Director level, it will be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School. All student complaints reported directly to his/her advisor or other faculty member directly must be properly documented on the printed Student Complaint Form and forwarded to the Program/Site Director for immediate processing.

If the issue is between faculty members, resolution should be initially attempted. If resolution cannot be secured, the individuals should bring the grievance to the Program/Site Director who will attempt to help the parties mediate a satisfactory agreement. If the conflict is between the faculty member and the Program/Site Director, the two parties will meet to attempt a satisfactory resolution. If the conflict cannot be resolved between them, the Program/Site Director and faculty member will proceed to the Dean of the Graduate School for mediation. All grievances/complaints must be ultimately reported at the program level and forwarded to the next administrative level until satisfactory resolution is rendered. Action Taken and Issue/Complaint Resolution will be officially documented on the Complaint Form (see Student Complaint Form; see Faculty Complaint Form).

*Please note that the Program Director must receive copies of the formal complaint form from whichever level it originates. If a complaint is not resolved by the Site Director on the Raleigh-Durham Campus, the Program Director will serve as the conduit before the complaint advances to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Student & Faculty Allegations

The Grievance/Complaint Policy is intended to officially hear and satisfactorily resolve all issues of concern for students and faculty within (10) working days. Formal complaints should therefore be documented and submitted no later than (72) hours after a conflict or issue occurs that cannot be resolved at the level at which the incident occurred. Should reporting and resolution not follow the Grievance/Complaint Policy, allegations not addressed within the structure of the policy and timeline cited, will not be adjudicated at a later date. Neither will allegations be addressed upon the separation of enrollment for students or separation of employment for faculty.

Mastery of Basic Skills – MMFT Core Competency Assessment Rubric Rating Scales

Course Embedded MFT Core Competencies Rubrics for the assessment of designated Core Competencies in each and every course will be distributed for review during the first class of the semester. The student will identify each competency and review the corresponding primary assessment tool for course evaluation. During the semester, the professor will be responsible for assessing the degree to which the competency has been developed at a minimal Performance Level of **3**” on the 1-5 Assessment Rubric Rating Scale.* If the student has not achieved most of the designated core competencies at the minimal level of success by the last day of the semester, the student will receive a

grade of “I,” and the professor will create an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP). The student will have (30) days after the final exam date to remediate the competency/competencies, and then report back to the professor to demonstrate how the competency has been met. If demonstration of the competency has not been satisfactorily completed at a minimal performance level of “3” after the 30 day period, the student will receive a grade of “F” and be referred to the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC). The student may be required to repeat the course or be dismissed from the program at the mutual recommendation of the FRC Committee members and the student.

* Assessment Rubric Rating Scale

- 5 = Exceptional:** Skills and understanding significantly beyond developmental level
- 4 = Outstanding:** Strong mastery of skills and thorough understanding of concepts
- 3 = Mastered Basic Skills at Developmental Level:** Understanding of concepts/skills evident
- 2 = Developing:** Minor conceptual and skill errors; in process of developing
- 1 = Deficits:** Significant remediation needed; deficits in knowledge/skills

Note: Ratings of “3” and above indicate performing well for developmental level

Academic/Non-Academic Integrity – Plagiarism/Assessment of Personal Behavior

In accordance with University guidelines, rigorous action is taken against students who engage in cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, or other dishonest practices. Students found in violation of the Honor Code will be treated in accordance with the policies as stated in your Student Handbook. When quoting another author, you must include quotation marks and an APA style parenthetical footnote to indicate the source of EVERY quote you use. Using an author’s words without indicating the source is plagiarism, and violates the University and Marriage and Family Therapy Program honor code.

This means that any written material in question will be submitted by the respective professor to the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC) for review. If plagiarism is evidenced, the honor code violation will result in a numerical assignment of zero (0) on the paper. The student will be asked to redo the assignment and either revise the paper to include his/her own words and/or cite the congruent reference(s) that properly credit(s) the intellectual property. However, the revised paper will still result in a numerical assignment of zero (0). Additionally, the student will verify the formal professor: student discussion by signing and dating the form which outlines the subsequent consequence for any additional violation. If a second offense occurs during the remaining time in the program, the written material in question will be submitted to the FRC for final review. If plagiarism is evidenced a second time, the professor will assign the student an automatic grade of “F” in the course and dismiss the student from the program. The honor code violation is documented by the respective professor as the result of a second and final offense, and then forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs to formally file the dismissal claim and action. The American Heritage dictionary defines the verb “to plagiarize” as, “to steal and use (the ideas or writings of another) as one’s own” (1970, p. 1001). Any paraphrase (using more than 3 or 4 words from someone else’s sentence) requires a footnote. When in doubt, footnote. The best option is to read the material, close the book, and write a summary. This should help the student avoid the temptation to copy the material. NOTE: APA reference materials are available in the library. All writing should reflect clear understanding of the content read, and should, therefore be expressed in his/her own words as much as possible. Grades will be substantially reduced if this pattern of writing is detected, i.e., a string of quotations. Additionally, note that students may not use written material and/or power point presentations for more than one class. Both papers and power point presentations for each class are expected to be original work.

More importantly, students who misrepresent the Marriage & Family Therapy Program or Pfeiffer University by demonstrating unethical conduct or intentionally participating in slanderous or libelous comments and/or acts of harassment or incivility to other students, field placement supervisors/personnel, or Pfeiffer faculty/staff (e.g., in implicit or explicit verbal or written communication, in social gestures, on social media, etc.), will be cited and referred to an ad hoc Ethics Committee who will convene and provide due process if the alleged violation is deemed factual. A student found to impair the professional integrity of the program may be placed on probation, suspended, or dismissed from the program. It is critical to note that a reprimand or discipline (by an educational institution, clinical or on-site supervisor, or employer for misconduct including acts of dishonesty, fraud or deceit, lying or misrepresentation of credentials, or academic misconduct, i.e., acts such as cheating, plagiarism, theft, or sexual harassment) may impair a student's access to successful application for state marriage and family therapy licensure.

Professional Marriage and Family Therapy Principles (PMFTPs)

The Professional Marriage and Family Therapy Principles include:

- AAMFT Core Competencies
- AAMFT Code of Ethics
- AMFTRB Examination Domains, Task Statements, and Knowledge Statements
- State Licensure Regulations

COAMFTE has developed a distinct method for measuring MFT knowledge and skills that is based on the achievement and demonstration of educational standards and competencies through primary assignments in the classroom and internship experience. Program goals (PGs) and student learning outcomes (SLOs) are defined as those identified measurable goals and benchmarks that are assessed via established thresholds of aggregated data targeted by the program, e.g., course embedded assignments/grades, annual feedback surveys, comprehensive exams, internship performance skills, etc. Each MMFT course has developed its own corresponding set of PMFTPs.

Professional Fitness (Personal & Professional Readiness) – Also see PFE

The issue of assessment of personal and professional readiness is essential for effectively functioning in the marriage & family therapy. “Who you are as a person will largely determine how effective you will be in working with others as a therapist -- the single best tool for helping others is simply how you live your life daily and the degree to which you understand yourself, i.e., values, beliefs, personal background history, personal conduct, and attitudes” (Hutchinson, 2007, p. 23). The Marriage & Family Therapy Program has clear guidelines for assessing personal and professional dispositions in both Professional Fitness (see Professional Fitness Evaluation, MMFT Student Handbook and Website) and Clinical Performance (see Clinical Performance Assessment and Clinic Policies & Procedures Manual, MMFT Student Handbook & MMFT Website). During MMFT 601 and in MMFT 606 or prior to Clinical Internship Candidacy application, the Program Director will request full-time faculty to evaluate each student's personal and professional fitness (PFE) to continue in the program or progress to internship respectively. Students must not score any zeros and must achieve an average of “2” on the PFE in 601. To enter the clinic, students must not score any zeros and have an average of “3” on the PFE to developmentally move to the next course without reservation. Where students show deficiencies, an individual remediation plan (IRP) will be implemented. During the clinical internship, all interns must achieve an average score of “4” and no scores below “3” to demonstrate preparedness to graduate.

In circumstances where deficiencies emerge as a result of the evaluations, the situation will be reviewed by the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC) to determine what intervention(s) may be appropriate for the student's improvement. At the end of a designated time period for remediation, the

FRC will meet again to review the student's progress. Other than an evidenced violation of the honor code, a student will be dismissed from the program for non-academic reasons only after the student has been given an opportunity to fulfill a remediation plan (IRP) outlined by the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC). In order for a student to be dismissed, it must be determined that a student has not been successful in fulfilling the prescribed core competencies designated in the remediation plan and determined by a majority vote of all full-time faculty, the Program Director/Site Director, and the Clinic Directors who serve continuously on the FRC. Note that a student may be automatically dismissed for violation of any rule of professional ethics and professional conduct or dishonesty, fraud, or gross negligence in the practice of marriage and family therapy.

Professional Fitness Evaluation (PFE)

This evaluation serves as a confidential barometer of professional fitness and therapist readiness to enter internship. The purpose of this evaluation is to ensure that a student does not have non-academic personal and/or professional problems significant enough to limit his/her effectiveness as a professional therapist. This evaluation encourages students to nurture their roles as "servant leaders" and monitor their attitudes and attributes for therapist identity development and self-regulation.

The Professional Fitness Evaluation (PFE) uses a growth scale. As a GROWTH evaluation, expected scores change as the student progresses through the program. Specifically, a score of 0 is problematic at any stage of the program. Students in their first year of the program are expected to obtain scores of 1 or 2. Students in their second year of the program are expected to obtain scores of 2, 3, and 4, with an average of 3. Students approaching graduation are expected to have an average of 4 with no scores below a 3. Students demonstrating outstanding professionalism may obtain scores of 6 in specific areas of strengths but scores of 6 are not generally expected.

As part of the Application for Internship Candidacy, the Professional Fitness Evaluation is completed by two current or former professors of the student. The student should meet with each evaluator to discuss their scores; the student must have no scores of 0 and must earn an average of 3 in order to enroll in MMFT 690. Students applying to enter the clinic with scores lower than 0 or an average lower than 3 will work with their academic advisor to create an Individual Remediation Plan addressing low scores. Upon completion of the IRP, the student will be re-evaluated by the Faculty Remediation Committee.

The Professional Fitness Evaluation is completed by the therapist intern's Pfeiffer University faculty clinical supervisor at the end of the therapist interns' final semester in the clinic. If the therapist intern has a score below 3 on any items or an average below 4, the therapist intern will discuss this with his or her supervisor and will develop a plan to demonstrate improvement in these areas so that the required scores are met prior to graduation. This may require a remediation plan and/or a delay in graduation. The therapist intern may request a copy of the evaluation; the original will be kept in the therapist intern's clinical file and an electronic copy will be stored in the therapist intern's file on Drop Box.

Clinical Performance Assessment (CPA)

The Clinical Performance Assessment is a GROWTH assessment and is repeated throughout the internship process and can show supervisee's improvement over time. The supervisee will not receive a grade for Internship until this form is received. Rating Scale: As a GROWTH evaluation, expected scores change as the student progresses through the program. Specifically, a score of 0 is problematic at any stage of the program. Students in their first year of the program are expected to obtain scores of 1 or 2. Students in their second year of the program are expected to obtain scores of 2, 3, and 4, with an average of 3. Students approaching graduation are expected to obtain scores of 3, 4, and 5, with an average of 4. Students demonstrating outstanding professionalism may obtain scores of 6 in specific

areas of strengths but scores of 6 are not generally expected. If the student is deficient based on the expected average per year of the program, the appropriate faculty member will discuss ways with the student how he/she can improve and may develop an improvement plan.

Student/Faculty Investment in Gatekeeping (Professionalism)

The faculty of Pfeiffer University's Marriage and Family Therapy Program believes that students must observe and support high standards of respect, honesty, and integrity in all aspects of education, practice, and research. "Gatekeeping refers to the responsibility of all counselors, including student counselors, to intervene with professional colleagues and supervisors who engage in behavior that could threaten the welfare of those receiving their services" (Foster & McAdams, 2009, p. 271). This responsibility is a personal obligation to the profession and is mandated in the ethical standards of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) by instructing counselors to "make every effort to avoid conditions...that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation" (AAMFT Code of Ethics 2015, 1.5). Neither do "marriage and family therapists provide services that create a conflict of interest that may impair work performance or clinical judgment...and subsequently must seek appropriate professional assistance for their personal problems or conflicts that may impair work performance or clinical judgment" (AAMFT Code of Ethics 2015, Principle III). More importantly, it is the responsibility of all students and faculty to uphold the competence and integrity of the Marriage and Family Therapy profession by protecting the profession from unethical behavior, promoting positive personal therapist development, and monitoring professional performance through corrective feedback (peer colleagues & supervisors) and fair remediation assurance when necessary to assist impaired students and/or supervisors. For this reason, all matriculated and non-matriculated students in this program are expected to abide by the MMFT Program's Student Handbook and accept responsibility to help ensure that these standards are maintained by reporting violations observed in others. All violations will be considered with gravest concern and may be punishable with sanctions as severe as suspension or dismissal. Although reporting a colleague or supervisor may create overwhelming anxiety, it is the well-being of a classmate or supervisor, and subsequently the ultimate harm that may impact a present or future client that must be addressed first and foremost. Failing to do so may jeopardize one's professional standing (Hutchinson, p. 175).

Remediation

There are times when a student or therapist intern may need remediation. Remediation is the process of evaluating a student's progress as "below standard" in performance, attitude, and academic and/or professional development and developing a plan to improve competencies and area(s) of concern for continuation in the MMFT Program.

In addition, the MMFT faculty may probate, suspend, or dismiss from the program any student who does not fulfill the academic or clinical requirements specified in the MMFT Student Handbook or Clinic Policies and Procedures Manual, or does not observe proper decorum and integrity on University premises or when representing Pfeiffer University off premises. In addition, any student whose work over a period of time shows a demonstrable lack of progress toward their degree may be put on probation, suspended, or dismissed from the MMFT Program.

Usually, the actions described above will be initiated by documentation submitted from the Faculty Remediation Committee to the student. The student may request a meeting to discuss the matter and/ or may appeal to the Dean of Applied Health Sciences. The levels of appeal follow those already stated in the Grievance/Complaint section.

Due to the clinical nature of the program, it may be necessary to dismiss a student from the MMFT Program for other than academic reasons. One of the most difficult tasks facing a team of faculty occurs when a student's behavior is deemed to be unethical, disrespectful, or inappropriate as to warrant major concern as to whether the person is emotionally, interpersonally, or ethically prepared for entry into the profession of marriage and family therapy.

The role of the professional is a serious and sensitive one. Responsibility must be assumed by the Faculty Remediation Committee to assure that any individual who might pose serious risks to clients, the community, and to the standards of the profession (due to emotional instability or questionable ethical standards) is not allowed to enter the profession. The Faculty Remediation Committee or its individual members have the right to refuse to endorse degree candidates to practice marriage and family therapy due to possible risks to clients (e.g., inability to regulate and modify appropriate behavior). Even though such measures are unpleasant, decisions are necessary in considering the welfare of everyone involved. Such issues may transcend effective adjustments via feedback provided in day-to-day supervision and instruction. Accordingly, when such problems occur, the Faculty Remediation Committee will meet and specify their concern(s) to the student in writing. In addition, an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) will be developed. The IRP will define the particular behaviors in question, the desired changes and means to address them, and a timeline for re-evaluation of the concern.

The IRP will accompany full verbal feedback to the student, particularly from faculty or others with information from direct observations of the student. If the student feels the matter has been misrepresented, he/she will reply to these concerns and present his/her perspective on the matter. The matter may be settled at the MMFT Program level or the recommended measure invoked (e.g., suspension from the program pending a student's attempts to resolve the problem via personal therapy with a NC/SC licensed therapist). At the end of the stated time or process, the matter will be reviewed and, in the absence of sufficient change in the desired direction, measures will be taken to dismiss the student from the program.

At any point in this process, the student has the right to appeal. If the student does wish to appeal a decision of this type, he/ she may do so, in writing, to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. From that point, the appeal procedure follows the organizational hierarchy already stated. Students who would be dismissed under these circumstances would be dismissed from the graduate program. However, under some circumstances, a dismissal decision may specify that the student retains the right to reapply for admission to other graduate programs within the university.

In regards to taking extended time off during Internship, remediation may occur.* It is important to anticipate long term absences such as personal, legal, or medical circumstances which might make it impossible to complete the requirements of the internship. If a pregnancy has progressed in time so that time off for the delivery and post delivery make it impossible to complete the requirements of the internship, students will be discouraged from enrolling to avoid remediation due to absence. If legal circumstances become apparent or known prior to enrolling in an internship, and those circumstances make it impossible to complete the requirements of any internship, students will be required to repeat the internship. If students conceal such legal circumstances from Pfeiffer University, the concealment may become grounds for dismissal from the internship and the MMFT program.

*Please note that the North Carolina MFT licensure requirements require a minimum of three consecutive semesters of internship to acquire 500 face-to-face clinical hours before graduation.

Any student convicted of a felony or any crime (an essential element of which is dishonesty, deceit, or fraud) while enrolled in the MMFT program will be addressed by a Pfeiffer University authority who may rule that the student be automatically dismissed from the program. In addition, misdemeanor offenses committed by the student while enrolled in the MFT program will be evaluated by Pfeiffer University and may also be deemed grounds for automatic dismissal from the program, especially if such offenses require probation and/or incarceration.

The relationship with field placement sites is vital to the Pfeiffer University Marriage and Family Therapy Program. Therefore, students who jeopardize any field placement site relationships (through, but not limited to, cited impropriety, negative attitudes, disrespectful behavior, dress code violations, incomplete field placement commitments, or excessive absences) will be evaluated through the IRP process.

Personal Growth/Counseling Required for All Students

According to David Hutchinson (2007, p. 23), “counselor self-awareness is a primary ethical consideration because it ensures that we will, at the very least, do no harm to our clients by unconsciously working out our own emotional unfinished business through them.” More importantly, self-reflection and modulation of self-regulation are ethical and professional obligations to therapist personal examination and self-understanding. Therefore, the Marriage & Family Therapy Program requires that each student access a minimum of (10) hours of personal growth and/or therapy during each and every academic year (either spring OR fall semesters) whichever applies (see Appendix 1.6, Personal Growth Log). Advanced, but unlicensed extern counselors from other universities are available at no cost on both the Charlotte and Raleigh/Durham campuses. If a student chooses to select his/her own North Carolina or South Carolina licensed clinician, verification of the mental health professional’s license must accompany proof of the personal growth form to show evidence that he/she has completed a minimum of (10) hours annually. A full-time student who has completed the program in (3) years will verify (30) hours of personal growth. A part-time student who has completed the program in (4) years will verify (40) hours of personal growth. Please note that students may not squeeze in counseling hours 2-3x weekly just to collect counseling hours for the sake of the program requirement. “This stepping back and taking responsibility for your own material allows for a clean working relationship with your clients” (Hutchinson, p. 27). If a student has officially entered the IRP process, it may be determined by the Faculty Remediation Committee that additional hours of personal growth are either recommended or required to successfully complete the IRP process.

Workplace/Classroom Harassment

Pfeiffer University maintains a strict policy that prohibits harassment in any form. Harassment is viewed as unacceptable behavior and will subject violators to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Harassment includes rude treatment, bullying (conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating), acts of intimidation, or derogatory comments about a person or person’s race, ethnic heritage, religious beliefs, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability, etc. Inappropriate use of email or the University’s internet servers is also prohibited. Such conduct can develop unsatisfactory working relationships and may lead to an objectionable or hostile climate in the workplace. Any student who believes they are being harassed, or any employee, who becomes aware of harassment, should promptly notify his/her advisor or immediate supervisor, Program/Site Director, or the Director of Human Resources (see Grievance/Complaint Policy & Student/Faculty Allegations). Additionally, Pfeiffer University has a no retaliation policy. Any person found to have retaliated against another individual will also be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination of employment.

Weapons on Campus and/or University Property

It is against University policy to possess weapons (concealed or otherwise) on the University campus. This can be defined as any illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons or dangerous chemicals on University premises or use of any such item even if legally possessed, in a manner that harms, threatens, or causes fear to others. No person, including but not limited to students, faculty, or staff shall possess, or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, explosive, bowie knife, dirk, dagger, sling-shot, leaded cane, switchblade knife, blackjack, metal knuckles or any other weapon of like kind, not used solely for instructional or University - sanctioned ceremonial purposes, in any public or private University building or vehicle. Regardless of student residence location on campus, Pfeiffer continues to prohibit weapons as outlined in our policy. Possession of any type of firearm, explosive (including any type of fireworks) or any other weapon is not allowed on campus. All BB, pellet, or air rifles are considered firearms and are not permitted on campus. This policy pertains to all campus areas including, but not limited to, common areas, public or private buildings, vehicles, student/university housing, and any campus residences occupied by full-time and/or part time employees of the University. This policy does not apply to law enforcement personnel who are on campus in the conduct of their duties. Persons violating the provisions of this section may also violate state and/or federal law and be subject to fines and penalties. Pfeiffer University will implement strict consequences for members who violate these provisions. Violators are subject to termination and/or suspension from the University.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as the unwanted written, spoken, implied, unwanted sexual or romantic advances made by any person towards another. Sexual harassment, like harassment on the basis of color, race, religion, gender orientation, or national origin, has long been recognized as a violation of Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Pfeiffer University will not tolerate sexual harassment and intimidation of its students and/or employees in the academic learning or working environment or allow students or interns to intimidate clients as such (see also AAMFT Code of Ethics 2015, Principle 3.8).

3.8 Marriage and family therapists do not engage in sexual, or other forms of, harassment of clients, students, trainees, supervisees, employees, colleagues, or research subjects.

3.9 Marriage and family therapists do not engage in the exploitation of clients, students, trainees, supervisees, employees, colleagues, or research subjects.

Harassment on the basis of sex exists when there are unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly as a term or condition of a student's grades or individual's employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for grading status or employment decisions thus affecting such individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with either an individual's academic or work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning and/or working environment.

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Pfeiffer University and the Pfeiffer Institute have adopted the stance that any report or witness of perceived, implicit, or explicit sexual harassment of a student or employee will NOT be kept confidential. All incidences will be reported to the proper administrative

authorities of Pfeiffer University and will require further investigation to maintain proper evidence and supporting corroboration.

Campus Safety

Faculty are asked to practice caution and safety when on campus both during business hours and after business hours. Should faculty desire to work on campus outside established office hours, they should monitor their surroundings. Students and therapist interns are expected to vacate the premises at the end of the last class or in the clinic after the last client. No student should remain alone on campus after business hours. If a student should feel unsafe to walk to his/her car, please ask a faculty member or supervisor on campus to escort you to your vehicle. Do not hesitate to ask.

In the case of dispositional or disciplinary meetings, a non MFT faculty member will join the faculty: student or faculty: faculty meeting as a scribe to observe and officially document process minutes of the exchange. The meeting minutes will then be forwarded to the student/faculty file and a copy emailed to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Email/Phone Communications & Etiquette

MMFT emails are sent and forwarded Monday through Friday between the hours of 9/a and 6/p ((we have no control over Pfeiffer University emails or campus wide emails, but a response can wait until the next morning at 9/a or Monday mornings at 9/a whichever one applies). Emails are entirely avoided on weekends by both faculty members and students unless intentional team projects are willingly established and agreed. Emails should be checked by both students and faculty members during Mon-Fri at least 2x daily (morning before noon and again before 7/p). Please make every attempt to respond to emails during the same day they are received. If you receive an email after the 7/p window, you can respond the next morning after 9/a. If you receive an email on a Friday after 6/p, you can respond on Monday morning after 9/a. In the event of a crisis or other emergency, please feel free to contact your professor or supervisor **immediately by phone** – do not hesitate!!

Unauthorized Covert/Secret Taping

Taping conversations is prohibited, unless all parties have prior notice that the conversation will be monitored or taped and have given written consent. Covert/secret taping of any conversation or meeting occurring at the workplace, or conversations or meetings offsite that deal with workplace matters of official concern is prohibited. Engaging in unauthorized/covert/secret taping OR having knowledge that it is being done/has been done will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the university with no opportunity for reinstatement. Additionally, watching the therapeutic sessions of other interns and their clients or listening in to supervision sessions or meetings conducted by Pfeiffer University personnel without proper prior authorization will result in immediate dismissal from the university. All communications in the MMFT Clinics are held CONFIDENTIAL.

Student and Faculty Governance in the MMFT Program

It is the achievement of Educational Outcomes that link and support the success of the Program Goals, the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and the expected Faculty Roles and vice versa (see Appendices 1.1 and 1.2).

All students, faculty, graduates, and stakeholders are provided many opportunities to offer suggestions and feedback during annually scheduled program assessment surveys, face-to-face exchanges in faculty team meetings, student advisement meetings with his/her advisors every semester, student

committee meetings, town hall meetings, alumni meetings, the annual alumni salute, faculty interviews, and admission interviews, etc. In fact, students, faculty, and alumni play a very strong presence in the governance of the MMFT Program at Pfeiffer University. To note, there are many consulting MMFT student organizations with standing boards of officers including the Graduate Student Association (GSA), Delta Kappa Honor Society (DK), Student Interview Committee, and Reaccreditation Committee which all impact the direction and success of Pfeiffer University's MMFT Program. Students also have an opportunity to weigh in with their thoughts on IDEA Course Evaluations every semester, Director Evaluations every January/February, Stakeholder Feedback Program Surveys, Graduation Exit Interviews, post-graduate and Alumni Feedback Program Surveys.

For faculty, the program assessment process follows the same format every year as scheduled in the Distribution of MMFT Surveys (see Appendix 1.3). Pfeiffer's MMFT Program has an extremely collaborative faculty team and all members experience an opportunity to speak and be heard at monthly meetings or ad hoc meetings as needed. Major MMFT work retreats for specific survey/feedback analysis and review are scheduled during the fall faculty conference, late fall semester, and late spring semester. When reviewing surveys/assessments and student feedback, faculty members weigh in on critical discussion and make recommendations. A majority vote of core faculty is needed to make changes. Voted decisions/recommendations by the MMFT department are written by the Program Director or Site Director and forwarded to the Applied Health Sciences (AHS) Division. If the proposal is approved by a majority vote at the Division Meeting, it is passed to the University Faculty Assembly for a majority vote at the mid-year meeting in January. If the proposal is not approved by the Division, it goes back to the MMFT Department for review. Once the proposal has been edited per the division feedback, it is forwarded again for a majority vote by the Division.

Students elect an annual Graduate Student Association (GSA) of (4) officers whose charge is to act as a constant and voluntary voice for the MMFT student body. The GSA President attends the prescheduled faculty team meeting monthly and is provided 30 minutes at the conclusion of the designated formal faculty meeting. Student concerns/issues/service projects/annual academic events, and proposals are topics usually received from the officers.

Students are also invited to a bi-annual student town hall meeting and open student forum whose purpose is to openly initiate issues/concerns/suggestions/recommendations/inquiries/complaints/discussion, etc. A designated student moderator reads the question from a 3 x 5 card and passes the issue to the faculty panel who is visibly seated at the front of the classroom. This issue is discussed to conclusion. If the issue is not reconciled to the satisfaction of the student, either the student is invited to speak further to the Program/Site Director or a faculty ad hoc committee is assigned to do further research and report back to the following scheduled faculty team meeting for further discussion and recommendations.

Program Assessment Process & Revision – See Student & Faculty Governance

All program assessment plans and curriculum changes are established in the same sequence. If program assessments do not meet prescribed benchmarks and/or program outcomes are not deemed satisfactory or adequate by virtue of faculty/student/COI/employer assessments or surveys, the deficiency is reviewed by the full-time core faculty at either one of (2) work retreats * scheduled annually during the year or urgent ad hoc concerns/issues reviewed at a prescheduled monthly faculty team meeting. The (2) work retreats are scheduled:

1 – at the Fall faculty conference in August

2 – at the Spring work retreat in early May

The process begins with discussion of the concern/issue – a motion is made to alter the assessment/benchmark/or outcome worded in a very specific way. Once the motion is worded respective to the issue, the core faculty vote for the change and a majority vote approves it. If a majority vote rejects the change, it is sent back to an ad hoc team of (2) volunteers for additional review and resubmitted at the following prescheduled faculty team meeting.

MMFT Committees/Associations

All MMFT students are invited and expected to demonstrate his/her leadership by participating in at least one committee during his/her enrollment in the program. The following committees are available for immediate participation after one semester of enrollment in the MMFT Program: Graduate Student Association (GSA), Delta Kappa Honor Society (DK) – designated criteria required, Accreditation/ Reaccreditation Committee, (Faculty) Interview Committee, and Student Open Forum Committee. See your advisor for further details.

Student Awards – Outstanding Graduates

Once each year during the spring semester, the faculty of the Marriage and Family Therapy Graduate Program will nominate outstanding master's graduates to receive program awards at the Graduation Banquet which is sponsored by the Graduate Student Association (GSA) at the end of the summer term in August. These awards are determined by a majority vote of core faculty at the May faculty team meeting. Those graduates eligible to receive an award include individuals who have completed their degrees in December at the end of the prior fall semester, spring semester, or concurrent summer semester.

The criteria for the awards include the following:

Outstanding MMFT Graduate

1. Potential for making significant and important contributions to the marriage & family therapy profession;
2. Earned high academic performance as a graduate student (3.5 or above);
3. Fulfilled all skill competencies;
4. Demonstrated professional readiness as indicated by student's disposition and demonstrated by consistent positive attitudes and attributes; and
5. Provided notable leadership.

Outstanding MMFT Intern

1. Exceptional performance as a student intern;
2. Received outstanding evaluations from clinical supervisors; and
3. Demonstrated professional readiness as indicated by student's disposition and demonstrated by consistent positive attitudes and attributes.

Outstanding MMFT Leadership

1. Evidence of leadership as a master's student in student or professional organizations; and
2. Demonstrated potential for future contributions to the marriage & family therapy profession in the area of leadership.

The selection procedures include the following:

1. Near the beginning of each summer term, the Program Director will provide all full-time MMFT Program faculty members with a list of students who are eligible for awards based on their official graduation dates.
2. Full-time program faculty are invited to nominate students for an award. The nomination includes justification to support the nomination for the designated award based upon the award criteria.
3. Nominees are discussed and award recipients are selected by a majority vote of core faculty.

Note: MMFT graduates who wish to be nominated for such awards are encouraged to discuss being nominated with their faculty advisor. Faculty members are pleased to support opportunities for recognition of students and graduates of the Marriage & Family Therapy Program.

Alumni Awards – Outstanding Graduates in the MFT Field

During the last Friday of April, the Alumni Mini-Conference will be sponsored annually by the Alumni Association and Alumni Sponsor to honor the accomplishments and contributions of graduates in the MFT Field or Professional Practice. A light menu and professional speaker will be provided along with continued educational units (CEUs) for licensure renewal. Two awards have been created: 1) the Trail Blazer Award, and 2) the MFT Leadership Award. All current MMFT Alumni Association Officers will receive recognition for his/her outstanding stewardship and distinguished work in representing Pfeiffer University in the MFT Field.

The selection procedures include the following:

1. During the March Faculty Team Meeting, the Program Director will provide all full-time MMFT Program faculty members with a list of alums who are eligible for awards based on their official graduation dates.
2. Full-time core faculty are invited to nominate alums for an award. The nomination includes justification to support the nomination for the designated award based upon the alum's specific contributions to the field.
3. Nominees are discussed and award recipients are selected by a majority vote.

Marriage & Family Therapy Honor Society – Delta Kappa
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Delta Kappa is an international marriage and family therapy honor society. The purpose of Delta Kappa is to provide marriage and family therapy professionals a face-to-face, ongoing scholarly forum for the exchange of ideas related to the development of research, theory, and clinical practice. To this end, members are received and local chapters chartered to create symposia, seminars, workshops, and other activities through which such professional leadership is encouraged and supported.

Marriage and family therapy professionals are invited into membership in Delta Kappa through three avenues. The first includes students in accredited marriage and family therapy programs who have earned at least 12 hours with a grade point average of 3.7. The second includes graduates from such accredited marriage and family therapy programs with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5. The third includes senior marriage and family therapy professionals who demonstrate high dedication to scholarship and professional leadership through instruction, research, and/or student/new professional

training. Membership requires approved application through a local charter and respective application fee. Delta Kappa Inductions will occur annually during the month of March.

Graduate Student Associations (GSA) & MMFT Alumni Association (MFTAA)

A Graduate Student Association (GSA) for the Marriage & Family Therapy Program is available for active membership, participation, and evolving leadership, scholarship, and service opportunities. The GSA sponsors the Town Hall Meetings, hospitality at the student admission interviews, a fall/spring service project, and the annual Graduation Banquet. For more information, please contact your Program Director/Site Director.

A Pfeiffer University MMFT Alumni Association is also available for MMFT Graduates. Alums serve up presentations in various MMFT classes, participate in the Clinical Exposure Experiences (CEEs in MMFT 601 and MMFT 620), provide expertise in post-graduation LMFT processes, conduct the "Life After Pfeiffer" Panel, participate in prospective student and faculty interviews, and attend the annual Graduation Banquet with a warm send off for new graduates.

Student/Faculty OPEN Forums

Students and faculty will be openly invited to voluntarily share student reflection, discuss highlighted strengths and weaknesses of the program, discuss the program's educational outcomes, and participate in communication about critical change and pathways for improvement. The purpose of open student forums is to create a "climate of transparency in which student's perceptions of the MFT Program's values, intentions, and expectations are congruent with those of the program faculty and administration members" (Foster & McAdams, 2009, p. 275). Student/faculty forum groups will meet at the close of the Fall and Spring Town Hall Meetings, and will not require a significant time commitment. Students will also be invited to virtual monthly open forums scheduled with specific student requested themes or faculty concerns on the potential agenda.

Town Hall Meetings – Sponsored by the Graduate Student Association (GSA)

At the beginning of every fall and spring semester, students will be encouraged to attend a Town Hall Meeting sponsored by the GSA. Hopefully, this increased opportunity to make announcements, meet new students and faculty, ask questions, share concerns, and clarify personal and professional program and performance expectations, will enhance student investment and provide a greater understanding of program policy and procedure. Through ongoing "dialogue between students and evaluating faculty members at regular intervals and contact points (Foster & McAdams, 2009, p. 277)," it is the MMFT Program's intent to foster a shared vision of commitment to high standards of scholarship and program excellence. For more information, contact Dr. Susan Wilkie McHale.

Professional Associations

The Marriage & Family Therapy Program faculty strongly encourages the professional development of students through active membership and participation in national and state therapy/counseling associations. Membership dues in NCAMFT and ACA (IAMFC) are reasonably discounted for graduate students. Membership benefits include regular newsletters, professional liability insurance, professional scholarly journals, and student information/discounted student rates for workshops, conferences, and national conventions. Additionally, NCAMFT holds a conference each year in North Carolina and many students register and attend. AAMFT and ACA also hold annual national conferences and students are encouraged to attend AAMFT and ACA (IAMFC) when possible.

AAMFT = American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy

NCAMFT = North Carolina Association for Marriage & Family Therapy

ACA = American Counseling Association

IAMFC (subdivision of ACA) = International Association of Marriage & Family Counselors

Professional Liability Insurance

For your protection, you are required to purchase a professional liability insurance policy for mental health professionals before you begin your clinical practicum/internship (MMFT 690) and see clients at the Pfeiffer Institute. A professional liability policy is available at a student discount rate for master's level internship students or may be included as a benefit for student membership in some professional organizations. AAMFT has endorsed CPH & Associates and ACA Insurance Trust (ACAIT) has partnered with Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO). Additional information can be found on their respective websites for student rates. CPH and Associates at www.cphins.com or call (800) 875-1911 OR HPSO at www.hpso.com or call (800) 982-9491.

Faculty Advisors

Upon formal acceptance into the Marriage & Family Therapy Program, each student is assigned to a faculty advisor by the Program Director. The assignment of faculty advisors is contingent upon the alpha order of last names. All newly accepted students on the Charlotte Campus will be divided alphabetically between the full-time faculty: **Dr. Wilkie = A – G, Dr. Coley = H – M, Dr. Wolford = N-R, and Dr. Cawn = S - Z.** All students at the Raleigh/Durham Campus will be advised by Dr. Williams, Site Director.

Faculty advisors serve a number of important functions for students. These advisors should be consulted by students if there are any problems related to academic programs. Faculty advisors can also answer questions related to program requirements and scheduling. At a minimum, faculty advisors ensure that students have developed a reasonable plan of study for degree completion. Students have the responsibility for initiating meetings with advisors in order to have documents created and filed on their behalf. Students are required to meet with his/her respective advisors during the fall semester for spring registration and during the spring semester for summer and fall registration. Students may not formally register for classes unless they have been formally advised.

Student Orientation

New students are required to attend new student orientation meetings prior to the fall semester in which they will be officially enrolled. Total comprehension of the MMFT Student Handbook is critical to the Marriage and Family Therapy program experience. Students will have an opportunity to meet new classmates and faculty, speak freely about their expectations and concerns, and ask questions of the faculty. Educational Outcomes, program revisions, and the new MMFT Student Handbook are topics of discussion. Additionally, peer mentors are introduced to their newly assigned mentees. A signed MMFT Student Handbook Compliance form is required to be placed in the student's file by September 15th of every new academic year.

Graduation Exit Interview

All graduating students will be scheduled to attend a small group evaluation session with all full-time program faculty, the Clinic Director, and the Program Director/Site Director of each campus. Each student will participate in a personal self-evaluation and final assessment of the MMFT program experience with the faculty. Students will also speak to the program strengths and needed areas for improvement. Additionally, an electronic survey will be forwarded to each student prior to their graduation exit interview – the written survey will be returned electronically to Dr. Wilkie or Dr. Williams within (3) working days for data collection, careful review, and program improvement.

Comprehensive Examination – 200 Multiple Choice Questions

Master of Arts degree students enrolled in the Marriage & Family Therapy Program must successfully pass a Comprehensive Examination before being awarded the MMFT degree. Students are encouraged to take the exam during the semester prior to their last term (example: a student should take the comprehensive exam in March if they plan to complete their degree in July and walk for graduation in August). The Comprehensive Examination is administered only once during early November, early March, and early June. Students are responsible for registering for the exam no later than 10 days prior to the comprehensive exam administration. There are no late exam registrations and no make-ups for the Comprehensive Exam. If students miss a scheduled registration deadline above, they will be scheduled for the next exam date.

The Comprehensive Exam consists of 200 multiple choice questions which fulfill designated core competencies as the result of applied questions. The student will have (4) hours to complete the examination. A university laptop computer is provided for each student.

Note: A passing score of 70% or higher is required to PASS the MMFT Program Comprehensive Exam.

Students may take the Comprehensive Exam a total of two times. In the event a student fails the exam a second time, the Faculty Remediation Committee (FRC) will meet and determine eligibility to take the exam during a third attempt. The FRC may require a student to retake or audit a corresponding course in the program (i.e., Family Therapy Theories) before taking the exam for a third time. If the student fails the exam during the third attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program and will not receive a Marriage and Family Therapy degree from Pfeiffer University.

Note: * Questions are represented by all required MMFT coursework and the Professional MFT Principles (see MMFT Website). The following areas are highlighted:

Marriage & Family Therapy Theory (systemic theory & perspectives): Including, but not limited to history of the marital & family therapy field, couple therapy, child & adolescent therapy, sex therapy, theories of personality and psychopathology, human growth & development, crisis intervention models, and addictions:

The Practice of Systemic Therapy

Assessing, Hypothesizing, and Diagnosing: Including knowledge of the DSM-5

Designing & Conducting Treatment: Including applied interventions and techniques

Evaluating Ongoing Process and Terminating Treatment

Managing Crisis Situations

Maintaining Ethical, Legal, and Professional Standards

**** The integrated client scenarios implemented in the multiple choice questions may refer to couples or families, or other collaborative systems that are a part of treatment.**

Before taking the Comprehensive Exam, students must have met with his/her faculty advisor and completed/filed an application for registration that meets the following requirements:

- 1) Successful completion of all 69 semester hours of coursework with the exception of a maximum of three (3) final classes,
- 2) Verification of ten (10) hours of personal growth/counseling for each academic year enrolled (completed or in process) by the last day of class prior to final exams,
- 3) Verification of attendance at a local, state, and/or national professional mental health related workshop/conference,
- 4) Satisfactory Professional Fitness Evaluation (at least a “4” across all categories) by the end of MMFT 690,
- 5) Documented “mastery” of core competencies across the curriculum (at least a score of “3”), AND
- 6) Satisfactory Clinical Performance Assessment (performance level of “2” across all categories).

No exceptions: If students miss a scheduled registration deadline or fail to submit verification of their personal growth/counseling hours by the announced deadline, they will be automatically scheduled for the next exam date.

Graduation

Students who have successfully completed all required coursework within (5) years of the date of formal enrollment by demonstrating mastery of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and designated course embedded core competencies (CECCs) at a minimal mastery performance level of “3,” fulfilled 500 minimum hours of direct client contact (40% or 200 relational hours) with 100 hours of supervision over a minimum of three, but no more than five consecutive semesters with verification of clinical and supervision hours (see Final Report of Internship Client Contact and Supervision Hours), been endorsed by all full-time faculty via the Professional Fitness Evaluation with a score of “4” across all traits, and Clinical Supervisors via the Clinical Performance Assessment with a score of “2” across all categories, verified cumulative personal growth/counseling hours, and passed the Comprehensive Exam are eligible to graduate. A score of 70% or higher is considered a passing score for the Comprehensive Exam. The Comprehensive Exam is administered only once during early November, Mid-March, and mid-June. Students are responsible for registering for the exam no later than 10 days prior to the exam. There are no late exam registrations and no make-ups for the Comprehensive Exam. Students who miss a scheduled registration deadline should register for the next exam date. If a student has not taken the Comprehensive Exam and passed the exam, he/she will NOT be eligible for graduation.

If a student anticipates graduation, it is his/her responsibility to set up an appointment with his/her MMFT Advisor to compare all coursework and grades with the “Degree Audit” found on FALCONN. Once the Clinic Director, Advisor, and Program/Site Director have signed off on the student’s MMFT “Graduation Audit Checklist” with his/her signature AND the Clinic Director has signed off on his/her final documentation of 500 clinical hours and 100 hours of supervision, the student will make an appointment with the Program/Site Director to sign and date, and then submit documentation to Rick Kivior on the Charlotte Campus. If there are any discrepancies between what is listed and what was

actually taken, it is the student's responsibility to reconcile the coursework with the Registrar immediately.

An Application for Graduation with the Program/Site Director's official signature must be completed within the very first few weeks of two semesters prior to the student's expected graduation date. For example, August graduates must complete their forms by December. Check the university graduate calendar for deadlines (see university website). Students will need to inquire about any outstanding debts that would prevent someone from graduating, and pay the Graduation Fee. Graduate students walk for graduation only one time yearly during early August, usually the 1st Saturday of the month.

Students must be enrolled during the semester before they plan to graduate. In the event that all coursework is successfully completed and the student has not passed the Comprehensive Exam, students will be prevented from graduating until the end of the following semester.

Withdrawal from Classes

All Marriage and Family Therapy students are required to attend classes during consecutive semesters of each and every academic year while they are formally enrolled. Formally accepted students must be continuously enrolled and are required to register and complete a minimum of (6) semester hours during each fall and spring semester and at least (3) semester hours during the summer semester until course work is completed. Please note -- In order to achieve a timely graduation, enrollment during the Summer semester is also required.

A student may sit out for a maximum of one semester for health/medical reasons with the required recommendation and proper documentation of a licensed physician. If a student does not return the following semester, the student will be required to withdraw from the program and reapply at the appropriate time. If a student should decide to withdraw from the MMFT Program, the student is obligated to contact the registrar immediately and complete the designated forms to withdraw officially. A letter of explanation to the Program/Site Director for the withdrawal is also highly encouraged. If a student does not officially withdraw from enrolled classes, the student may receive a failing grade in all classes where excessive absence in the class was unexplained.

If a student withdraws from the program for even one semester without health/medical documentation, s/he is required to submit a hard copy of a personal withdrawal letter to the Program Director and forward copies to his/her respective advisor and associate registrar, Rick Kivior. If the required withdrawal letter is not submitted at the time of departure, a student may not reapply for the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, but may apply for alternative graduate programs should they choose to return.

A student may reapply for the Marriage and Family Therapy Program only during the customary summer or fall application process. A student file is maintained for a maximum of (2) semesters after s/he has formally withdrawn. However, reapplication will require an updated application and the respective application fee for rematriculation.

Resources

Foster, V. A., & McAdams, C. R. (2009). A framework for creating a climate of transparency for professional performance assessment: Fostering student investment in gatekeeping. *Counselor Education & Supervision*, 48, 271-284.

Hutchinson, D. (2007). *The essential counselor: Process, skills, and techniques*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Worden, M. (2003). *Family therapy basics* (3rd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole.

www.ncbmft.org (NC MFT Licensure Board)

www.ncamft.org (NC MFT Association)

www.aamft.org (American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy)

www.amftrb.org (Regulatory Board)

www.proexam.org (Exam Service)

www.mftexam.com (Question of the Day)

www.mftlicense.com (Family Solutions Institute Exam Study Materials & Workshop)

Communities of Interest (COIs) – Process for Disclosure

Communities of Interest (COIs) are all stakeholders who either impact the MMFT Program directly or are impacted directly by the program and its university operations and initiatives. During the Fall Work Retreat when all annual program surveys and aggregated data are reviewed by the entire MMFT Core Faculty, the Program and Site Director will compile an Annual Program Letter for distribution to all Communities of Interest during the month of December. The report will include a description of the program's Educational Outcomes, how the outcomes are assessed, and general results of the assessments. Finally, the report will detail several specific examples of how feedback was used to make changes to the program. Once the report is included on the MMFT website, the Program/Site Director will email a link of this annual report to each contact for the COIs by January 1 of that year (see Distribution of MMFT Program Assessments & Surveys: Timeline for Program Feedback). Results of the Annual Report for each campus will also be placed on the MMFT homepage (SAC) in January and July respectively just after the COAMFTE Annual Reports have been successfully aggregated and entered.

Distribution of MMFT Surveys – Timeline for Program Assessments/Feedback

The Distribution of MMFT Surveys – Timeline for Program Assessments/Feedback is an identified list of communities of interest (stakeholders) who either impact or are impacted by the MMFT Program at Pfeiffer University. These include students, alumni, faculty, staff, clients, professional state/national organizations, state licensure boards, accrediting bodies, field placements, and community agency partnerships. In order to establish accurate data and report program data to communities of interest, the program seeks the support and help of all stakeholders. Additionally, the program will seek the support and help of current students and post graduate alumni including, but not limited to, information

regarding national exam passing rates, licensure completion, current employment, and employer satisfaction. This pertinent Student Achievement Criteria is reported for the AAMFT/COAMFTE Annual Report and posted on the MMFT Website for current review. Personal information and employer data is confidential, and is solely solicited for accreditation reporting purposes.

For specific surveys and a timeline for distribution, please see Appendix 1.3 for the Distribution of MMFT Surveys – Timeline for Program Assessments/Feedback. Additionally, Client Satisfaction Surveys are distributed at regular intervals in the Charlotte and Raleigh/Durham Clinics. Aggregated data from 2019-2020 program surveys and assessments is available upon request.

Electronic Portfolios (Drop Box)

Note that a Drop Box electronic portfolio of documentation pertaining to Pfeiffer University's Marriage and Family Therapy Program has been implemented since the Fall of 2010. A summative form of all course embedded core competencies is also included on Drop Box for each enrolled student.

Appendices

- 1.0 = Educational Outcomes Revised
- 1.1 = MMFT Educational Outcomes Chart
- 1.1.2 = Mission, Goals and Educational Outcomes
- 1.2 = MMFT Educational Outcomes & Linkages Chart
- 1.3 = Distribution of MMFT Program Assessments & Surveys: Timeline for Program Assessments & Feedback
- 1.4 = MMFT Student Compliance Form
- 1.5 = AAMFT Ethics Code (2015)
- 1.6 = Personal Growth Log
- 1.7 = Student Handbook Compliance
- 1.8 = Organizational Chart 2021-2022

Assessments and benchmarks are outlined in the chart of Mission, Goals, and Outcomes Template (Appendix 1.1.2) which are continuously evaluated to make certain they are met or subsequently explored to inform the program and guide for improvement.