



PFEIFFER
INSTITUTE *for*
**MARRIAGE &
FAMILY THERAPY**

Pfeiffer Institute
for Marriage and Family Therapy (PIMFT)

Annual Report (July 2020 – June 2021)

PIMFT Annual Report

(July, 2020 – June, 2021)

Purpose and Philosophy

The Pfeiffer Institute for Marriage and Family Therapy (PIMFT) was established to provide training opportunities for Master’s level graduate students in the Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Program. The PIMFT student therapist interns provide direct services for individuals, couples, families, or groups and serve as servant leaders and community resources for other agencies in Charlotte and the surrounding areas of Mecklenburg County. The focus of all services, direct and indirect, is on assessing and improving the way relational systems function – whether the system is a couple, family, group, classroom, or agency. The PIMFT adheres to the rules and regulations of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Code of Ethics for Marriage and Family Therapists in the provision of direct and indirect services. In addition, PIMFT adheres to the policy and procedures of the Pfeiffer University Marriage and Family Therapy Program Manual.

Pfeiffer Institute for Marriage and Family Therapy (PIMFT) serves as the primary clinical training facility for the MFT Graduate Program at Pfeiffer University, in Charlotte, NC. Each entering student therapist is required to obtain an adequate amount of clinical training, as well as much of their supervision at the PIMFT. Further description of obtaining and completing hours are discussed in the “Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) Requirements for Graduation” section of this manual.

Clinical training is obtained through an on-site internship at the PIMFT, the student’s first experiential course (MMFT 606 Practicum: Therapeutic Alliance), participation in community outreach opportunities, and continued training through an off-site field placement during their internship (MMFT690). All students entering the program will spend a portion of their first year becoming acquainted with the program, specific clinical requirements, and protocol prior to serving clients. Most students will begin collecting client contact hours in the PIMFT during the second half of their second year of coursework. Students are required to observe other student therapists working with the clients in PIMFT during their first year in order to become better acquainted with PIMFT and its operating protocol.

In addition to being a training facility for the MFT Program, PIMFT is also a service facility for the community. PIMFT operates much like any other mental health related business. PIMFT serves residents of Mecklenburg County and surrounding counties, in addition to providing services to Pfeiffer University students, faculty, and staff.

As a service facility, the student therapists and supporting staff of PIMFT have an obligation to clients to conduct themselves in a professional manner including, but not limited to, the way one dresses, one’s attitude and behavior towards clients, and one’s focused attention to the details of how the business portion of the PIMFT is conducted. Regardless of how much a client may pay per session, each and every individual will be treated with respect and compassion.

Additionally, PIMFT attempts to provide services to all clients, regardless of ability to pay, supporting a much needed service to the community and leading by example for PIMFT students.

Overview

The PIMFT is pleased to report a **substantial increase** in overall revenue as compared to the previous fiscal year (July 2019 to June 2020), with an increase of **31.2%** in revenue (from \$39,418.00 to \$51,707.00: Surplus of \$12,289.00). Please see Table 1-3 below. Several factors that led to this success are described throughout the report.

In addition, the PIMFT successfully transitioned to an entire fiscal year in which in-person and telehealth/online therapy services were provided in order to meet the safety and health needs of our clientele and PIMFT team. Offering a hybrid approach of in-person services as well as telehealth therapy provided flexibility to the clientele, and fostered a lower-risk environment for health purposes. For instance, only first semester therapist interns (TIs) were allowed to see clients in-person, so as to ensure they have the proper training to begin therapy. For 2nd- 3rd semester students, clients were provided the option for telehealth services, in order to reduce the flow of traffic within the clinic. While the onset of COVID-19 posed serious challenges to our daily operations, this last year in particular has been easier to adjust to, given the routine of telehealth training for all incoming therapist interns, and a better awareness of the effects of the virus itself. As the PIMFT adjusted to the “new norm” of operating through a global pandemic, incoming therapist interns starting in the summer of 2020 to the present all received telehealth training, with a total of 29 therapist interns fully approved to provide telehealth/online therapy to clientele.

Fortunately, the PIMFT continues to remain steady in the number of incoming interns, with no major declines over the fiscal year. For example, in the Summer of 2020, there were 18 of interns, with Fall 2020 including 17 of interns, and the Spring of 2021 with 19 interns. In the Summer of 2020, the PIMFT had 18 interns, in which 8 graduated as 3rd or 4th semester interns who successfully completed their hours, despite the barriers presented due to the pandemic. In the Fall of 2020, 5 interns graduated, with an additional 4 interns in the Spring of 2021. Summer 2021 projections include 6 interns ready to graduate and on time, and Fall 2021, with a total of 6 interns. It is important to note that since the start of the pandemic in the spring of 2019, every therapist intern at the PIMFT has been able to graduate without delay, and 100% of interns across the 2019, 2020 and 2021 year passed the clinical competencies examination.

In the summer of 2020, the MMFT Program hired a full-time Office Manager in order to manage and collaborate with the Clinic Director on all administrative and business-related tasks associated with the clinic. After one year with our Office Manager, the PIMFT has experienced multiple layers of stabilization regarding the monitoring and tracking of daily revenue, clinic expenses and annual reporting with continued precision and accuracy. Further, therapist interns have benefited from a year of stability in which they clearly see the designated roles and responsibilities of the Office Manager, Clinic Coordinator, and Clinic Director, leading to less confusion regarding which person they should speak to regarding any administrative, clinical or externship site matters. Further, the Clinic Director and Office Manager have tailored a two-part,

PIMFT training session, including all administrative duties and tasks (Part 1), followed by an all-day risk and safety and clinical documentation training (Part 2). Both trainings occur approximately 2-3 weeks before students enter the clinic to ensure they are fully prepared for all administrative, clinical and academic responsibilities.

In the past year (from July 2020 to June 2021), the PIMFT served 286 active clients (i.e., individual, couple and family), serviced by a total of 29 therapist interns [Summer 2020 + Fall, Spring and Summer 2021], as well as increased our number of AAMFT Approved Supervisors or AAMFT Supervisors in Mentoring from 5 to 6 faculty. In addition, the number of total client sessions increased from 3,117 in the previous fiscal year, to 3,589 sessions for the current year, with an increase of 472 client sessions (see Table 8). Further, in a given month, on average, 300 sessions were conducted, which is an increase of 40 sessions from the previous fiscal year (260 sessions). The rise in sessions may also signal higher retention rates, as well as clientele seeking a higher frequency of services due to crises related to the global pandemic.

The following report includes the cumulative, quarterly breakdown in revenue, as well as the number of therapist interns, new clients and overall session activities throughout the last fiscal year at the PIMFT. We also include the overall ratings in client satisfaction surveys, which signals continued, high achievement in client outcomes over the year. The second half of the report consists of the ongoing achievements and growing partnerships with externship community sites, and finally, projections and goals for the July 2021 through June 2022 fiscal year.

Outcomes of Fiscal Year (July, 2020 - June, 2021)

Financial Growth of Fiscal Year

Quarterly Income Activity (Table 1)

1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total
\$11,463.00	\$13,564.00	\$11,913.00	\$14,768.00	\$51,707.00

The PIMFT is pleased to report a **substantial increase** in total revenue from the previous fiscal year to the current year. The PIMFT accrued a total of \$51,707.00 in revenue—a marked increase of **\$12,289.00**—as compared to the previous fiscal year (July 2019 – June 2020 total revenue: \$39,418.00). The PIMFT faculty and staff team projected a previous goal for a modest overall revenue increase of 10% (\$3,941.80), **however, the clinic far exceeded this projection with a 31.2% overall revenue increase (\$12,289.00)**. This success is attributed to a number of factors, including proper oversight and management of the front desk via the role and responsibility of our Office Manager, alongside clinical efforts to train and model to therapist interns, the proper boundaries and communications necessary to agree upon a set fee, maintain the weekly fee, and obtain payments on time. Supervisory and Clinic Director efforts have also led to group supervisions in which the importance of fee arrangements are discussed, per the AAMFT Code of Ethics, Standard VIII: Financial Arrangements. Weekly excel audits were also conducted in order to track client payments and client-therapist fee agreements, and then

reviewed by the Office Manager and Clinic Director. It is also important to note that the sliding scale system remained the same, with no increased fees, and that scholarships, as well as fee reductions have been granted throughout the fiscal year. Finally, this increase may also be due to the convenience and variety of options of having a new check and credit card payment system including taking payments for telehealth sessions over the phone.

Indeed, efforts to provide low or no cost efforts have also been in effect since the start of the pandemic. For example, approximately 15 clients (individuals, couples and families) received approval for a request for a fee reduction, due to loss of employment or unforeseen hardship. In addition, since the inception of the Ashley D. Roberts Scholarship—a fund created in the honor of an MFT student who tragically lost their life during the Summer of 2020—the PIMFT has been able to serve 8 clients at no cost, with a total of 25 sessions offered free thus far. No client is ever turned away due to inability to pay for sessions, and all fee reduction and scholarship applications are reviewed and approved.

2020 vs. 2021 Revenue Comparison by Quarter (Table 2)

Year	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total
2020	\$11,131.00	\$11,750.00	\$9,727.00	\$6,810.00	\$39,418.00
2021	\$11,463.00	\$13,564.00	\$11,913.00	\$14,768.00	\$51,707.00

In light of the deleterious impact and associated circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic on the daily operations and clinical work at the PIMFT, there are a number of potential factors contributing to a 31.2% increase in overall revenue, as compared to the 2020 previous year. First, the PIMFT diversified its platform to receive therapy services to include telehealth/online services for clientele, which created an ease of access for clientele, as well as their potential concerns for in-person sessions due to increased risk of COVID-19. The ease of online services may have contributed to greater retention rates of clients already accepted at the PIMFT. Second, all therapist interns entering the clinic in the Spring of 2021 (4th Quarter), were trained immediately in telehealth services, which may have generated increased opportunity for retention of existing clientele, and thus, may explain the approximate 50% increase in revenue for the 2021 4th quarter, as compared to the 2020, 4th quarter (\$6,810.00 vs. \$14,768.00).

Across all 4 quarters for 2021, as compared to 2020, there is a consistent increase in overall revenue. Third, and perhaps most importantly, as the PIMFT began closely tracking cancellations, no shows, and paid for sessions, therapist interns became more comfortable discussing financial matters with their clientele, which most likely lead to greater compliance and adherence to routine with financial policies and procedures at the PIMFT. The PIMFT expects continued success as the clinical supervision of client financial arrangements alongside the support of daily administrative oversight remains on a daily basis.

Annual Revenue by Year (Table 3)

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
\$46,573.00	\$55,019.00	\$52,357.00	\$39,418.00	\$51,707.00

Financial Spending of Fiscal Year**Quarterly Expense Activity**

1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total
\$321.00	\$155.00	\$183.00	\$266.00	\$925.00

The PIMFT continued to purchase items as necessary for all intern workroom and general office purposes. In the 3rd quarter, speakers were purchased to ensure better quality of sound during group and individual supervisions. In addition, general office items, such as legal notepads, pens, and post-its, were also purchased to meet the needs of faculty, staff and therapist interns. Finally, the PIMFT purchased a thermometer to ensure that daily, routine temperature checks were conducted with all who enter the PIMFT, in order to protect against possible exposure to COVID-19. Upcoming expenses will include a renewal purchase for the SPSS Software program, which supports daily tracking of client satisfaction surveys among other data-tracking needs. Finally, the Clinic Directors of the MMFT Program on the Misenheimer, and Raleigh-Durham Campuses, received approval for an IRB research project in which confidential, de-identified information was documented on a secure flash drive (Details regarding this exciting project can be found below). To ensure HIPAA transportability protection of the flash drive, a locked box was purchased to allow secure travel with the flash drive across sites.

Student Lab Fees of Fiscal Year**Student Lab Fee**

Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Grand Total
\$125.00 (16 interns)	\$150.00 (16 interns)	\$150.00 (19 interns)	\$7,250.00

Students are charged a Lab Fee each semester, which is \$150.00. Between actual total revenue generated and lab fees, using presumed operating costs for clinic lease and daily cleaning services of approximately a total of \$40,000, the clinic is fully self-sustaining for all necessary operating costs and has a surplus in revenue after total expenses paid.

Number of Interns by Semester/Year

Semester	Number of Interns
Summer 2014	25
Fall 2013	25
Spring 2014	34
Summer 2014	31
Fall 2014	25
Spring 2015	22
Summer 2015	17
Fall 2015	16
Spring 2016	17
Summer 2016	11
Fall 2016	14
Spring 2017	12
Summer 2017	14
Fall 2017	17
Spring 2018	16
Summer 2018	17
Fall 2018	16
Spring 2019	16
Summer 2019	17
Fall 2019	16
Spring 2020	12
Summer 2020	16
Fall 2020	16
Spring 2021	19
Summer 2021	20

It is important to note that the PIMFT has not seen a steady rise in therapist interns to a total of 20 or more since the Spring of 2015. This signals that the program continues to perform well, with students successfully entering the program and clinic, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the nation.

Client Growth in Fiscal Year

Quarterly New Client Activity

Year	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total
2020	94	50	67	40	251
2021	46	32	46	46	156

The PIMFT had a successful year for new intakes with consistent retention rates for all our therapist interns. A new intake is considered a new client, first visit. Please note that new intakes consist of multiple potential members (e.g., couple and family systems), as well as individuals. The table above compares the 2019 – 2020 vs. 2020 – 2021 quarterly and total numbers. In the first and second quarter, client intakes dropped by approximately 50% (251 intakes to 156). However, this was during a major transition time in which restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic were occurring, alongside the multiple holiday season in which clients typically do not call for services as frequently. Many clients who were prior attending in-person sessions, explained that they would rather resume in the Spring 2021 term as they remained quarantined in their homes. In addition, therapist interns who were trained in telehealth in the Summer of 2020 successfully graduated, causing a slight delay in the training process for incoming Fall 2020 therapist interns. However, in the third and fourth quarters, new intakes began to steadily rise again, with the 4th quarter almost matching the same number of intakes as the previous 4th quarter, fiscal year. Currently, PIMFT also has a waiting list managed by front desk staff and the Office Manager on a consistent basis. Clients with imminent needs are provided the number for various crisis centers available 24/7. At times, the Clinic Director also assists clients in finding local Behavioral Health Centers, as well as emergency psychiatry needs.

Diversity Data at Intake

It is important to note that within the last fiscal year, the PIMFT has been conscious of how many clients identify as racial/ethnic/multi-heritage and sexual/gender identity minorities, in order to ensure quality care and promote change in the stigma of mental health for minority populations. Additionally, the PIMFT has robust therapist intern representation, which supports racial-ethnic and minority-identification in therapist-client matching, at the request of the client at the time of the initial phone intake. For example, at present, the PIMFT has 20 therapist interns, in which 11 identify as African American/Black, Hispanic, and/or bi-racial/bi-ethnic. In addition, therapist interns are diverse in terms of a wide range in age, and in distribution of gender. In the last year, for example, during the phone intake process, 2 clients requested an LGBTQAI allied-therapist, while 8 clients requested a therapist of color. In addition, 18 clients requested a specific gender for their therapist. Knowing that the PIMFT offers a variety of options for matching client-therapist requests, ensures that the clinic is sensitive to cross-cultural considerations for all clientele. Overall increases in our client satisfaction surveys indicate this continued success in services (See details below).

In the last year, the PIMFT has served 41% of clients (63 of the 156 new intakes) who identified as a racial/ethnic or multi-heritage minority. In addition, 7 new intakes (11%), including couple

or family systems, identified as a sexual minority (e.g., Lesbian/Gay, Bisexual, Asexual etc.). Two new intakes (3%) identified as transgender. Thus, a total of 55% of new intakes this fiscal year constituted service rendered to a majority, minority group of individuals, couples and families. The PIMFT believes this is a major success considering the current climate of sociopolitical unrest, as more clients of minority background continue to receive quality mental health care.

Quarterly Client Sessions Activity

Year	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total
2020	1097	939	814	267	3,117
2021	949	825	817	998	3,589

The table above compares the current fiscal year and the previous 2020 fiscal year, in recurring client numbers. In the past fiscal year, the PIMFT had a total of 3,589 client sessions with an increase of 472 sessions overall. Perhaps the most notable increase can be seen when comparing the 4th Quarter from 2020 to the current year. It is likely that sessions increased as the restrictions on COVID-19 decreased, as more therapists and clients became vaccinated. In addition, several clients wanted to return for services in-person, once vaccinations became available to the public.

First session fees at the PIMFT are \$30.00 regardless of annual income, and recurring sessions vary based on annual income. The sliding scale is shared with client/s during the initial phone intake and again at their first intake session. Please note that students and veterans pay all subsequent session fees at \$15.00, regardless of income. Clients that report job loss either at the first or subsequent session are provided a fee reduction form, in which they may request a lower rate for services. It is important to note that no client is denied this request.

The average session fee paid (combining both new intakes and recurring clients) has increased slightly when compared to the previous fiscal year. However, when compared to all previous fiscal years (apart from 2019-2020), the average session fee paid is still lower than any other fiscal year at the PIMFT. Overall, this indicates that services are provided at a slightly lower cost on average for clients, as well as the services provided at no cost. It is important to highlight that the PIMFT generated a revenue increase of 31.2% while maintaining significantly lower session fees, as compared to nearly all previous session fees below. This signals that the PIMFT does not need to raise the cost of sessions by income, but rather, continue monitoring costs through clinical supervision, such that therapist interns are routinely checking in with their clients to ensure payments are made regularly and on-time.

Average session fee 2020-2021 (both paid and unpaid sessions calculated)	\$13.81
Average session fee 2019-2020 (both paid and no-cost sessions calculated)	\$12.65
Average session fee 2018-2019 (when all sessions calculated)	\$16.04
Average session fee 2018-2019 (when only paid sessions are calculated)	\$18.36
Average session fee 2017-2018...\$17.54	
Average session fee 2016-2017...\$15.47	
Average session fee 2015-2016...\$15.06	
Average session fee 2014-2015...\$15.97	

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

The Client Satisfaction Survey is given to clients at regular intervals to ascertain their experience in the clinic as well as with their therapist intern. It also gives demographic information on the clients seen. This past fiscal year included client feedback via 98 total surveys. During the past fiscal year, the clients seen who provided survey feedback were 62.2% female (63 clients) and 35.8 % male (33 clients), with 2% (2 clients) as other-identified or no gender specified. As far as the breakdown of the type of client unit, 61% of the clients were individuals (59 clients) 28% were seen a couple (27 couples) and 11% were seen as a family (11 families). It is also important to note that several previous clients chose the PIMFT to return to for follow-up services (e.g., 26 returning clients), and 43 clients heard about the PIMFT through a family or friend.

Overall, the clients appeared to have a continued high satisfaction rate with their therapist intern, as evidenced by the positive response from clients from the Client Satisfaction Surveys. On all items measured, relative to services provided by the therapist interns, all clients responding rated satisfaction (Agree or Strongly Agree) as 95% or above—a 5% increase from the previous 2020 year. Of all the questions surveyed, (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), clients rated the lowest of 4.4/5 on all indices, with the highest rated items as 4.7/5. The highest rated items remain with #7, “I am benefitting from therapy” and #2, “The therapist listens to my concerns/is thoughtful.” This year, clients also rated the likelihood of recommending their therapist intern to a future person was strong, at 4.7/5. These steady increases in client satisfaction with services is a direct result of the growing competency and professionalism demonstrated by all therapist interns.

Community Outreach and Seminars

The PIMFT continues to be well-represented in the greater Charlotte area, as the community at large continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, the PIMFT was able to connect with various community agencies and non-profit groups throughout the pandemic crisis, to continue seeking and securing externship placements, as well as to promote two-way referral opportunities. Specifically, the PIMFT continues to strengthen their partnership with the ANSWERS Scholarship—a non-profit that provides educational scholarships to mothers of school-aged children. On September 10th, 2020, representatives from the program came to the PIMFT campus to share information about the scholarship to therapist interns. As a result, clients were also provided flyers in the waiting room, and directly from their therapist intern, if it applied. In addition, the PIMFT Clinic Director facilitated a leadership training for ANSWERS mentors, which included strategies to support mothers in crisis through resource identification (e.g., connection to Mobile CriSyS, Women, Infants and Children—WIC; EBT food benefits, etc.). Most importantly, reduced cost therapy services through the PIMFT were offered to the mentoring mothers.

In addition, the PIMFT has continued to be marketed through a variety media and outreach opportunities. The PIMFT previous website (www.pimft.com) was combined with the pfeiffer.edu website as an avenue for the community to learn about our facility (www.pfeiffer.edu/mmftclinics). Further, the PIMFT participated in several zoom and in-person site visits with existing and new externship sites, such as Hope Way—a treatment facility

specializing in residential services for serious mental illness (e.g., Major Depressive Disorder, Bi-Polar I and II). As a result of this communication, Hope Way has expressed interest in establishing a tour for therapist interns on-site, as well as host a tour for clinical faculty in August of 2021. In addition, Hope Way would like to consider partnership for an externship program with our current and onboarding therapist interns, particularly for the Veterans Association program, which services military families.

On July 15th, 2021, the PIMFT Clinic Director attended an open house for providers at the TMS Mind Path Institute—a facility specialized in the treatment of severe mental illnesses, including Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder. At this open house, the Clinic Director was able to connect with several on the marketing team and provided flyers and business cards for low cost services through the PIMFT. Further communications have been arranged for follow-up. Referrals from neighboring outpatient and private practice clinics have also been a significant source of new clients. Current clients also report referring the PIMFT to their own friends and family as a result of their positive experiences with the PIMFT. Marketing will continue through the pfeiffer.edu website and outreach activities.

Finally, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, and the delta variant on the rise in the state of North Carolina, the PIMFT clinical team and MFT faculty at large believe that it is in the best interest and safety of all to continue to suspend all group therapy at the PIMFT. As soon as the concerns for the pandemic lift, alongside increasing vaccination trends, the PIMFT will uphold this decision until safer circumstances are maintained. In the interim, all faculty, staff and therapist interns, as well as clients, are required to wear masks, sanitize and socially distance while at the PIFMT.

Partnerships for Field Placements

The PIMFT has partnerships with various business and service facilities throughout the Charlotte region. Despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PIMFT continues to secure several new as well as developing partnerships with various externship sites. In addition, a select number of externship sites have allowed therapist interns to take on secondary externship sites (e.g., the ARC, CRS Atrium Health), provided their schedule allows for it, and that they do not have any more classes. Further, three new potential partnerships are in development. Most notably, Hope Way and Spiritual Care at Mercy Hospital are viable options for therapist interns to diversify their clinical training experiences through experience with primary mental illness (Hope Way) and acute settings (Mercy Hospital). The following list contains field placement sites that allowed our interns the opportunity to receive additional clinical training during this past fiscal year:

- Carolina’s Medical Center: Surgical Trauma Intensive Care (STICU)
- The Ronald McDonald House (RMH) of Charlotte
- Atrium Health: Carolina Rehabilitation Services (opening a psychiatric unit in which TIs may participate)
- The Adult Rehabilitation Center (ARC)—The Salvation Army

- Wake Health: CareNet Counseling Services of Lake Norman
- Pfeiffer University: Student Counseling and Wellness Center—Misenheimer Campus
- The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders*
- The Blanchard Institute*
- The Relationship Counseling Group*
- The STEP Program Recovery Courts of Mecklenburg County (and a lateral site: Hope Haven, INC.)
- Hope Way*—*partnership in process*
- Spiritual Care—Mercy Hospital*—*partnership in process*
- Thompson, Inc*—*partnership in process*
- Mind Path*- *partnership in progress*

**New or developing partnerships*

Evaluation of Interns

To ensure proper professional development for all therapist interns in training, the PIMFT and program at large, utilizes several forms to evaluate the growing clinical skillset and professionalism of our students. These evaluation forms are robust and comprehensive, and have not changed over the fiscal year, except for the Office Performance Evaluation (OPE). For instance, an identified need of the PIMFT included better clinical oversight of recording keeping, calendar updates, and general management of documentation procedures for all clientele. The Office Performance Evaluation was slightly adjusted from 20 to 40 points of the intern's overall score, per their grade in MMFT690 Internship in Marriage and Family Therapy. Therapist interns are required to review this form with their supervisor each semester and discuss the ways in which they maintained their calendars, client records, and responsiveness to general communications (e.g., email) while at the PIMFT. Therapist interns and their supervisors are encouraged to talk openly about their challenges and strengths, and to agree on a final score for the OPE. In order to anchor this process as objectively as possible, the clinical supervisor may use the weekly audits, conducted by the Office Manager, to ensure there are no discrepancies or issues with weekly, routine maintenance of client care.

The following evaluations represent the continued efforts in which faculty, on-site and field placement supervisors, ensure growth and development of our interns:

- Clinical Performance Evaluation – given by PIMFT & field placement supervisors/semester
- Professional Fitness Evaluation (provided by 2 faculty per clinic entry and 1 by exit)
- Office Performance Evaluation (conducted by clinical supervisor and their supervisee)
- Live Observation Assessment – given by PIMFT supervisor at least 2 times per semester (1 time in the summer semester)
- 2-3 randomly selected live supervisions (scheduled and unscheduled/chosen at random by the therapist intern's current supervisor)

In addition to evaluations, the students are responsible for meeting the standards and expectations of MMFT690: Internship in Marriage and Family Therapy. Throughout their experience in internship, the students will demonstrate knowledge of the COAMFTE Core Competencies in assignments and in the application to practice of therapy, as well as clinical implement and adhere to all AAMFT Code of Ethics.

Finally, for onboarding therapist interns, the Office Manager and Clinic Director and Coordinator work closely to provide Part 1, Administrative Training, and Part 2, Clinical Documentation and Risk and Safety Training, approximately 2 -3 weeks before clinic entry and the start of the MMFT Internship in Marriage and Family Therapy group supervision course. Further, students are provided several one-on-one sessions with the Clinic Director to practice the informed consent process, as well as review all necessary forms for client intake sessions so that the therapist intern is well-prepared. Most importantly, the therapist intern is paired with an MFT faculty member, such as the Clinic Coordinator, Program Director or Clinic Director, to practice a mock intake session and receive formal feedback regarding content, process, and overall delivery. As a result, therapist interns report much greater ease with the onboarding process and expressed feeling fully prepared to meet the client's needs upon intake.

Improvement in Clinical Training for Specialized Populations (e.g., Substance Use Disorders)

The PIMFT is pleased to report that in February of 2021, the MMFT Clinical Team (e.g., Substance Use/Addictions Specialist and Clinic Director on the Misenheimer campus, as well as the RDU Clinic Director) received full IRB approval to collect data regarding client demographics and expressed clinical needs as a result of the stress associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This project, entitled, "*Client Substance Use Issues Among Marriage and Family Therapy Training Clinics in the Age of COVID-19: A Call to the Profession and a Pilot Approach to Training and Treatment*" will consist of gathering de-identified client demographic and intake data in which a better understanding of specific issues may be addressed through strengthened training to our therapist interns. For instance, in January of 2021, the Clinic Director and Addictions specialist on the Misenheimer campus offered a 1.5 hour training to all current therapist interns, on best-practices for identifying, assessing, and providing recommendations for clientele that indicated elevated clinical concerns for substance use issues per their treatment requests. This research project will include a proposed model in which the systemic assessment and treatment of SUD in the context of family may be provided to therapist interns and their supervisors, to better meet the needs of clientele. Finally, this approach will

result in a manuscript submission to the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* (JMFT), with qualitative and quantitative future research efforts proposed as follow-up.

Plans for the Future

Clinic Operations

The PIMFT has become an established provider of therapy services for the Charlotte community. Since its inception in August, 2008, the clinic has grown significantly in the number of clients it serves and in revenue. A major success has been that the clinic has reached previous, average levels of revenue and has exceeded the number of recurring clients. Interns are required to have at least 10 client times available at the clinic. However, between class schedules, externship requirements, and these required client times, both students and faculty have become creative in the way in which weekly goals are achieved. For instance, students are encouraged to take advantage of the fact that the clinic is open relatively late (until 9pm Monday-Thursday) and again on Saturday (10-2pm). Further, the PIMFT received approval to extend our hours of operation on Friday until 8pm, with 7pm being the last client session. Several therapist interns have also been able to participate in a Friday supervision group, making it that much easier to see cases and attend class during Friday hours of operation. In addition, therapist interns have been assigned shared therapy rooms to reduce difficulties in overlap of scheduling. This new system has greatly benefitted the interns to meet their schedules, as well as to reduce the flow or number of individuals at any one time in the therapy rooms, per the requirements of the CDC throughout the pandemic.

Clinical Opportunities

In terms of co-therapy sessions, 2nd and 3rd semester interns have offered to conduct co-therapy sessions with 1st semester interns for mentorship as well as case transfer purposes. This system has also increased the likelihood of obtaining additional relational hours, as well as excellent modeling for a co-therapy as well as co-worker, professional experience among therapist interns. Since the co-therapy model has worked so well for our students and their clients, the Clinic Director at the PIMFT, in addition to the Clinic Director at the RDU campus, do plan to collaborate on a training to all students to enhance their co-therapy experience through an examination of the evidence-based practice of co-therapy, alongside learning any facilitation techniques to enhance their experience.

The combined efforts of the PIMFT faculty and staff have also resulted in continued approval for alternative client contact hours using mock therapy sessions, which have been approved until December 31st, 2021. In the last year, the MMFT Faculty joined to offer over 100 supervised mock therapy session hours with students in order to support their need for direct client contact hours. There were no additional costs associated with the implementation of mock therapy sessions, and, most importantly, these alternative hours allowed 3rd semester interns to accrue relational and individual hours that were needed in order to graduate on time. In the Fall of 2020 as well as Spring 2021, the PIMFT hosted a two-day intensive, all-day “Mockathon” to help therapist interns obtain additional hours. Several therapist interns joined in planning for the event, which supported efforts towards the accrual of hours, but also towards socializing and

general team-building at the PIMFT. For students onboarding with the PIMFT, the Clinic Director allowed these students to count mock therapy hours as well, so long as their clinic entrance paperwork and training requirements were prior met. At present, the MFT faculty team will continue to offer mock therapy sessions to all therapist interns, in order to ensure timely accrual of clinical training hours.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PIMFT received free Telehealth trainings (e.g., from PESI, Inc, or the AAMFT network) at a total of 12-15 hours of telehealth training, with a certificate of proof at the end of both offered courses. In the Spring and Summer of 2020, all therapist interns (except 1st semester interns), were provided telehealth services at no cost. This allowed therapist interns to not only provide telehealth services to others, but to utilize telehealth sessions as a format for additional mock session requests. The combined efforts of services to clients via telehealth, as well as the opportunity to conduct mock sessions via telehealth, has provided opportunity for our therapist interns to accrue hours despite the adverse impact of COVID-19. In the last fiscal year, every single therapist intern has obtained training in telehealth services as a result of the needs of alternative platforms due to the pandemic.

Technology Assisted Services

At present, therapist interns are currently using all paper-based services to document and maintain all records per therapy services rendered at the PIMFT. While this maintains the highest confidences in maintenance and security measures per HIPAA requirements, it does present an issue of ease of use for all PIMFT. For instance, therapist interns report that it would be easier to have one electronic system to gather all important clinical documentation. The Clinic Directors at both the RDU and Charlotte sites plan to address this ongoing concern by identifying and applying for a grant to support electronic health records (EHR) services in the future.

Services to Support Students

The number of supervisors at the clinic has increased in order to accommodate the number of interns at the clinic, as well as diversify the supervisory feedback interns receive. For instance, two clinical supervisors from the community—a Caucasian-identified male, as well as a female therapist of color—were hired for the Summer 2021 in order to provide greater experience and feedback to the supervision team. Therapist interns anecdotally report feeling supported by our Adjunct Professors, and that having outside feedback reinforces what they are learning in the MMFT Program. As the number of interns is expected to increase in the upcoming year, the number of faculty available to teach MMFT 690 is also prepared to increase. For instance, both Adjunct faculty for the Summer of 2021 reported that they would like to return to teach at any time, including Fall and Spring semesters.

Some students attended the North Carolina Association of Marriage and Family Therapy training sessions via telehealth, as well as regular Diversity Meetings, which focus on various topics related to working with minority populations. Most importantly, the Clinic Coordinator, also the Alumni Association chair—was able to coordinate a phenomenal day of workshops on racial justice, ethical conduct in the field of MFT, among other topics, to all current therapist interns and students, as to the professional community at no cost.

Summary of Fiscal Year (July, 2020– June, 2021)

Pfeiffer Institute for Marriage and Family Therapy (PIMFT) has maintained an increasing flow of clients and revenue during the past fiscal year (July 2020 – June 2021), despite the ongoing and abrupt challenges and obstacles faced as a direct result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Most importantly, the PIMFT is pleased to report an overall revenue increase of **31.2%**, as compared to the previous fiscal year. This increase in revenue signals to the leadership team that daily efforts and collaborations, as well as concentrated training to our therapist interns, has resulted in better business management and overall revenue. This increase also signals that therapist interns are becoming more comfortable and competent in discussing fee arrangements with clientele. It is important to highlight that the fee scale was not increased to account for this boost in revenue, and that it does not need to be increased in order to generate profit. In addition, the PIMFT continues to offer telehealth services to all clientele who wish to have this platform of services, as well as continue to train current and onboarding therapist interns in telehealth services. Further, in the Spring of 2021, all students in the MMFT program who wish to enter the clinic for the following Summer 2021 term, will be enrolled in a new class, called MMFT 607: Practicum II: Clinical Procedures, in which they will have formal onboarding training, as well as greater practice in all clinical documentation and basic core counseling skills. The PIMFT is thrilled that students will have this pre-clinical training opportunity to support the ease of any anxiety about becoming a new therapist in the clinic.

Relationships with field placement sites have also continued to evolve and expand with several new or developing externship sites (see above). Many externship site supervisors continue to promote strong partnerships with the PIMFT team, and report success with all externs on their sites. Most importantly, on July 29th, from 4:30-6pm, the PIMFT will host an on-site tour of the clinic and campus to all externship site supervisors. This will be another time and opportunity to promote continued positive connections and partnerships with our sites.

Finally, as the PIMFT wrap up yet another successful year, the entire MFT program applauds all the recent and upcoming graduates, who, despite the influence of the pandemic, were able to complete their hours on-time. Students from December 2020 to the current term will have the opportunity to participate in an in-person Pfeiffer University graduation in August of 2021. All at the PIMFT are proud of the students and do plan to host a goodbye celebrate in-house.

For the next fiscal year, we look forward to continued stabilization and growth of our clinical program.

Achievements

- 18 interns successfully completed the requirements for graduation in this fiscal year
- The PIMFT had a 31.2% increase in overall revenue this year as compared to the previous year. This increase far exceeds the minimal projected goal of 10%.
- The PIMFT collectively trained 18 graduated interns, including 6 new interns for the Summer 2021 term.

- The PIMFT began tracking client-therapist demographics and needs, in order to diversify therapist-client matching needs, as well as support a diverse community with specialized treatment requests (e.g., substance use support, referrals for eating disorders).
- The PIMFT continues to support applications for the Ashley Roberts Scholarship, as well as any applications for a fee reduction rate. No applicants have been denied.
- PIMFT continues to be open on Saturdays and has seen a consistent number of clients on this day, often in the afternoon
- The PIMFT hosted Dr. Robert Cox—core faculty and addictions specialist who trained all incoming interns of the Substance Use Disorder Semi-Structured Interview. As a result, therapist interns have been better able to identify positive indicators of substance use or addiction challenges, and appropriately treat or refer to services as needed.
- The PIMFT continues to expand externship site partnerships to include four additional locations in process (e.g., Hope Way, Thompson, Inc, Spiritual Care—Mercy Hospital and Mind Path).
- Therapist Interns from Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021 all plan to graduate on-time and without any delay in the accrual of their hours.
- The PIMFT will continue to offer alternative, direct client contact hours, including a Fall 2021 Mockathon, in which therapist interns can accrue up to an additional 20 relational hours. In addition, all MMFT faculty across both the Charlotte and RDU campuses will continue to offer organized mock sessions, including up to 40 additional hours of opportunity for therapist intern participation.
- The PIMFT will host an on-site, Externship Supervisors tour, hosted by the Clinic Director and the Delta Kappa Honors Society on July 29th, 2021.

Proposal for New Fiscal Year

- Support ongoing training efforts in co-therapy teams through collaboration with the RDU and Misenheimer campuses.
- Maintain revenue status and promote steady increase; The PIMFT to project another **10% increase** in revenue from this fiscal year to the next.
- Incorporate telehealth training into a new MMFT607 Advanced Therapeutic Alliance course in order to better prepare for clinic entry and service delivery methods of therapy (e.g., in-person vs. telehealth)
- Offer a Fall 2021 Mockathon for all current therapist interns to accrue direct client contact hours. In addition, open up this learning opportunity to students who are not yet in the clinic.
- Review the clinic forms to ensure non-gender specific language, and to remain inclusive to a diverse clientele.
- Promote continued training in Substance Use Disorder assessment and treatment recommendation efforts, per the instruction of Dr. Robert Cox.
- Produce a manuscript for submission to the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (JMFT) based on client clinical presentation of needs, as well as training efforts in SUD and trauma for all PIMFT interns.
- In August of 2021, the MMFT Clinic Director will participate in facilitating and leading a workshop with the Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Nursing programs at

Pfeiffer University. Discussion will focus on greater interdisciplinary collaboration and future goals to maximize treatment outcomes for clients, as well as promote strength in education to our students.

- Continue marketing efforts and outreach opportunities to help our community during this difficult and unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic.