



## **MFT Handbook**

2024 Cohort

Marriage and Family Therapy  
Masters of Science in Human Sciences  
College of Sciences and Education

Oklahoma Christian University  
Edmond, Oklahoma

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## WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Oklahoma Christian University and to the Marriage and Family Therapy program. You and your cohort members were selected thoughtfully and intentionally, and we are glad you are here.

For the next two years, you will be challenged academically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. You will learn new ways of viewing relationships, new ideas about how to create change within relationship patterns, you will grow as a person, and you will grow in your own relationships.

Your academic and clinical experiences will be significant. Academically, your journey will be guided by official policy as determined by the university. Clinically, your journey will be guided by the Masters in Human Sciences Marriage and Family Therapy program policies, under the umbrella of the university and accrediting bodies, and informed by the State of Oklahoma Board of Behavioral Health Licensure (OK BBHL), the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and the Commission for Accreditation on Marriage and Family Therapy Training Education (COAMFTE). You will be given the opportunity to earn 300+ hours of client contact and 100+ hours of supervision within the context of the 24 months of the program.

Our program equips you for the profession of marriage and family therapy, thus the emphasis will be upon relational-systemic-interactional-contextual approaches to therapy and supervision. Our program also will emphasize the importance of working from a multicultural perspective, highlighting the importance of the AAMFT Code of Ethics and ethical behavior in your development as a therapist.

This Handbook is designed to be an aide to you through the next two years. It will provide much of the information necessary to complete your journey successfully. It does not, however, supersede any official university documents or policies. It is your responsibility to be familiar with all the University and Graduate School policies and procedures.

The electronic form of this Handbook will allow us to make changes as the year progresses. When situations arise that are not addressed in this manual, consult with a professor, supervisor, or the Chair.

We are so glad you are here ~

*Kelly M Roberts, PhD, LMFT*  
AAMFT Approved Supervisor  
Chair, Graduate Programs in Human Sciences

## Program Overview

Building on OC's mission to educate, mentor and inspire learners to fulfill their God-given potential, it is the mission of the M.S. in Human Sciences program to employ the scientific study of family systems and close interpersonal relationships to prepare graduates to support healthy development and to offer primary, secondary and tertiary services to families and individuals of all ages and a broad diversity of backgrounds/cultures.

The program will accomplish this mission within a learning environment that fosters an inclusive atmosphere valuing the collective and individual talents, skills, and perspectives of our learning and service communities in order to influence a culture of belonging, collaborative practice, innovation, and mutual respect.

The structure of the M.S. in Human Sciences program:

- is grounded in systems theory and evidence-based practice,
- integrates a biopsychosocial-spiritual perspective, and
- provides opportunities for skill development through professional application and personal reflection.

Consistent with the guidelines established by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), the curriculum includes coursework in human development, marital and family studies, marriage and family therapy, professionalism and ethics, research and statistics, and supervised practicum. Students are required to follow an organized sequence of study in which academic and practicum coursework are integrated. A minimum of 49 graduate credit hours is required across a minimum of two calendar years for degree completion.

Table 1. Annual Degree Completion Rate

Cohort Start Date	Students Enrolled in First Semester	Students who Gained Clinical Admission	Clinical Admits who Graduated in 2 years
2022	11	8	100%
2023	14	11	Exp. 2025
2024	20		Exp. 2026

### Mission Statement

The MFT program's mission is to train future marriage and family therapists to provide competent services across diverse communities in a way that is uniquely rooted in ethical and relational/systemic knowledge reflecting Oklahoma Christian University's values of faith, scholarship and service.

### Integration of Faith and Therapy

The Christian faith and therapy align with hope for humanity and a deep desire for redemption. The OC MFT program believes providing excellent therapeutic services to our community is a

missional activity meeting the needs of a hurting world. The OC MFT program provides a higher learning community that transforms lives for Christian faith, scholarship and service.

OC's curriculum is developed responsively to MFT best practice training models in order to achieve national accreditation. COAMFTE's mission is to promote best practices for MFT educational programs through the establishment, review and revision of accreditation standards and policies, and the accreditation of graduate and post-graduate educational programs. OC MFT students will receive exposure in treating a broad range of populations, reflective and representative of the general public at large.

### **OC's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The OC MFT program aims to be inclusive to all students, volunteers, staff, and clients affiliated with the program and the Family Therapy Clinic to ensure a comfortable, safe, and respectful environment reflecting the diverse interests of all parties involved. We are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all in which students will be provided opportunities via courses, practicum experiences, and other encounters to be exposed to and discuss issues of diversity. (For full policy, see page 31.) As students examine their own and others' identities with regard to diversity and explore associated beliefs and values, it is imperative that students acknowledge and respect differing perspectives and experiences and maintain a safe environment encouraging ongoing conversation.

### **Cornerstones**

The OC MFT Program is centered around these 5 organizing goals:

1. Knowledge & Practice: Graduates will demonstrate systemic/relational knowledge essential to practice of Marriage & Family Therapy.
2. Diversity: Graduates will be culturally responsive in their work with people from diverse backgrounds, communities, and identities.
3. Ethics: Graduates will demonstrate an understanding of relevant ethical codes and legal principles as well as competence in relational/systemic ethical decision-making skills.
4. Research: Graduates will demonstrate competence in synthesizing and applying research to clinical practice and incorporating feedback measures to improve client outcomes.
5. Self of the Therapist: Graduates will demonstrate ability to assess and monitor "self of the therapist" (including biopsychosocial/spiritual [BPSS] beliefs) with respect to clients and treatment process and its impact on clinical outcomes.

### **Licensure Preparation**

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at OC will be applying for accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) at the earliest possible opportunity (expected 2025). As a registered applicant, the OC MFT program has been designed such that graduates meet qualifications to apply for licensure in Oklahoma and many other states. Some states mandate additional requirements such as coursework and/or clinical hours.

The U.S. Department of Education (regulation 34 CFR § 668.43(a)5.v.) requires institutions enrolling students in programs for which state licensure is required for employment to clearly communicate the sufficiency of our program’s requirements in meeting the licensure requirements in each state. The [Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards \(AMFTRB\)](#) maintains an updated list comparing [education and licensure requirements](#) from each state.

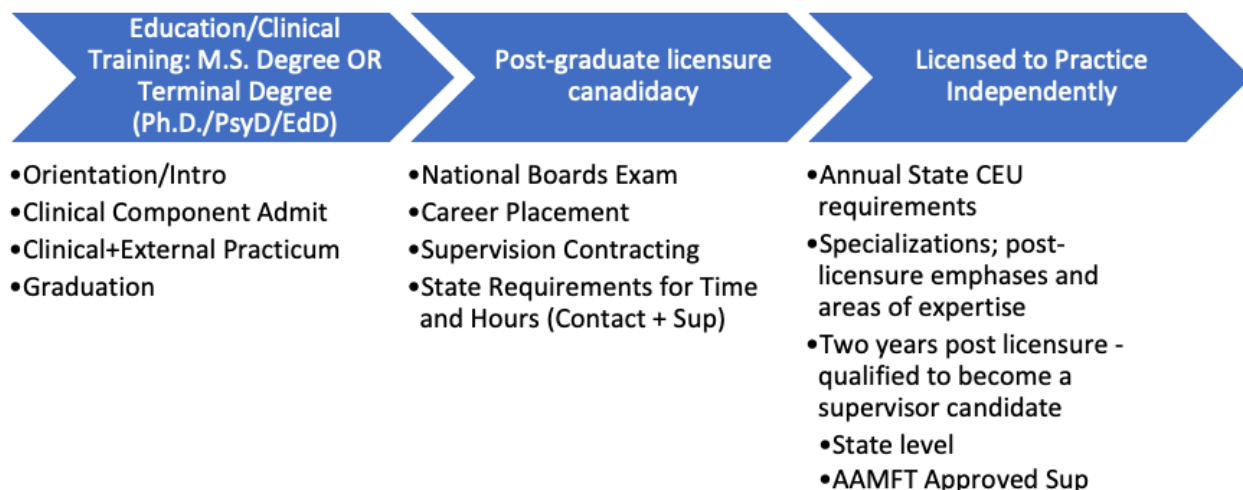
For more information regarding licensure in each state, visit the following webpages and consult the specific state regulatory body that governs MFT licensure. Direct links for each state statute may be found within the following sites, however, weblinks often change, so please be aware of this when attempting to locate the exact statutory language for each state.

- [www.mft-license.com](http://www.mft-license.com)
- [www.behavioralhealthworkforce.org/tableau-embed-new](http://www.behavioralhealthworkforce.org/tableau-embed-new)
- [www.amftrb.org/licensure-general-info](http://www.amftrb.org/licensure-general-info)
- <https://amftrb.org/resources/state-licensure-comparison/>
- [https://www.aamft.org/AAMFT/Advocacy/State\\_Resources/MFT\\_State\\_Resources.aspx](https://www.aamft.org/AAMFT/Advocacy/State_Resources/MFT_State_Resources.aspx)

It should be noted that states often revise their statutory language governing state licensure requirements, portability of licenses once received, etc. and policies for transferring or accruing client contact hours (e.g., specific relational hours; supervised by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor) while still unlicensed. The determination of whether OC’s MFT program fulfills, does not fulfill, or is undetermined may change without adequate notice. The program will do its best to notify the students in the program of these changes. However, it is best for students to remain aware of their options while enrolled in OC’s MFT program and to work with their advisor in making decisions for enrollment.

OC MFT faculty are sincerely interested in each student’s professional success within the program and after graduation. Please consult any of the faculty on questions about the program requirements, course enrollment, and/or the future licensure process. Education is the first step of a longer process to licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist.

Figure 1. MFT Career Trajectory



## **Program Roles and Responsibilities**

### **MFT Program Director**

The Program Director is responsible for the oversight of program curriculum and the clinical training program, in addition to the planning and growth of the Family Therapy Clinic (FTC) facilities in conjunction with the Clinical Director, and both the maintenance and enhancement of the program. The Program Director is ultimately responsible for providing year-round direction for the MFT program through adherence to the MFT program mission as well as the goals and objectives related to the maintenance and enhancement of the mission.

The Program Director is additionally responsible for the program's compliance with MFT State of Oklahoma licensure law, achieving (and then maintaining) COAMFTE accreditation standards, and the overall success of the program as determined by a joint group of the MFT faculty, the OC Masters of Science in Human Sciences (MSHS) Department Head, and the College of Sciences and Education Dean. Each student who satisfactorily completes an MFT Masters level program is to receive a formal declaration from the Program Director attesting to that fact. The Program Director will not attest to a student's completion of a Masters level program without adequate records demonstrating that all requirements for graduation have been met.

### **MFT Clinical Director**

The Clinical Director is responsible for confirming that services provided within the scope of the Family Therapy Clinic (FTC) meet appropriate ethical, legal, and competent service standards. The Clinical Director is responsible for the year-round clinic operations, maintaining economic viability, and for the services provided being consistent with the policies of the MFT program and greater MSHS department. The director approves all activities to be conducted in the clinic on the basis of said activities meeting the stated requirements. This authority may be delegated temporarily to designated faculty or clinic staff.

Clinical students and staff are responsible to the Clinical Director for all clinic activities in the FTC not otherwise specified. The Clinical Director, and ultimately the MFT Program Director, can authorize changes or waivers of student responsibilities in the clinic. The Clinical Director, in conjunction with the MFT faculty, is responsible for maintaining the clinic facilities upkeep and planning toward growth or development of the facilities, services provided, or staffing and resources needed to meet said growth and development. The Clinical Director is also responsible for maintaining off-site placements for students, contracts, assessments, site visits, and clinic assistantship contracts.

### **MFT Core Faculty**

There are currently four core MFT faculty members in the Masters of Science in Human Sciences department at OC. All core faculty professionally identify as marriage and family therapists, are AAMFT Clinical Fellows, have completed a course in MFT relational/systemic supervision, and are AAMFT Approved Supervisors (or Candidates). All Core Faculty Members hold a contracted position with the University in which 50% or more of their assigned role is specific to the MFT program. Along with the Program Director, core faculty members share responsibility for the creation, evaluation, revision, and maintenance of the program's

outcome-based education framework, curriculum, policies, and procedures. Core faculty contribute to the MFT profession in various ways: scholarship, research, teaching, supervision, practice and/or service—all of which are congruent with the program’s mission, goals, and outcomes. The MFT program core faculty are clearly identified to students, communities of interest, and the public.

Students work closely with the MFT faculty as they pursue their degree. The MFT faculty teach the majority of student courses, provide students with clinical supervision, and one of the MFT faculty members will generally serve as the chair of a student’s thesis committee (if applicable). Following is a brief introduction to each faculty member.

[Jessica Colls](#), PhD, LMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor  
Associate Professor of Family Studies and Psychology  
OC MFT Program Director & Core Faculty  
Chair Elect, Graduate Programs in Human Sciences  
[Jessica.Colls@oc.edu](mailto:Jessica.Colls@oc.edu)

Dr. Jessica Colls obtained her Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy from Oklahoma Baptist University before completing her PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy with a Systemic Studies emphasis from the University of Louisiana Monroe. Dr. Colls dissertation research focused on Native American generational trauma and Contextual theory. Since 2016 Dr. Colls has been teaching in higher education at other private institutions such as Oklahoma Baptist University and California Baptist University. She has worked in a variety of clinical settings in addition to teaching, such as private and group practice, outpatient, and residential settings. Most recently, she has owned and operated a Christian counseling center in Harrah.

[Julie Kellogg](#), M.S., LMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate  
Assistant Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy  
[Julie.Kellogg@oc.edu](mailto:Julie.Kellogg@oc.edu)

Julie Kellogg is pursuing a doctoral degree in psychology at Swansea University, Wales, UK, with a dissertation emphasis of Positive Childhood Experiences and Intimate Relationship Quality (exp. 2024/25). Julie is a state-approved supervisor pursuing AAMFT-approved supervisor status. Julie’s clinical experience has centered on individuals with anxiety, launching adults, premarital couples, and families whose story includes adoption and/or foster care. Prior to coming to OC, Julie taught in the Family Science program at the University of Central Oklahoma where she served as the MFT program director. She previously worked in community mental health serving families/individuals with serious mental illness.



[Jennifer Patterson](#), M.S., LMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor  
Clinical Instructor of Family Science and Psychology  
OC MFT Clinical Director & Core Faculty  
[Jennifer.Patterson@oc.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Patterson@oc.edu)

Jennifer Patterson holds a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and is an AAMFT Approved supervisor. Jennifer's clinical expertise entails couples treatment particularly affair recovery, child and adolescent treatment, and individual treatment for trauma and anxiety. Jennifer is a certified PCIT therapist and is completing within-agency supervisor training for PCIT. Jennifer is also an EMDR trained provider, has advanced TF-CBT training, and training in filial therapy. Prior to coming to OC, Jennifer owned a private practice business and previously worked in community mental health with time spent working in outpatient child and adolescent treatment, school settings, and crisis response.

[Kelly M Roberts](#), PhD, LMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor  
Associate Professor of Family Studies and Psychology  
OC MFT Program Director & Core Faculty  
Chair, Graduate Programs in Human Sciences  
[Kelly.Roberts@oc.edu](mailto:Kelly.Roberts@oc.edu)

Dr. Kelly Roberts is a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) and American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Approved Supervisor. Her career includes teaching scholars from high school through post-graduate university and medical residency programs. With almost 20 years of research experience covering premarital and family policy, marital relationships, help seeking, prior to divorce and divorce decision-making, and indigenous acculturation, Roberts has gained an extensive understanding of dynamic intimate family relationships across the lifespan of the individual. She has served as President and Legislative Liaison of the Oklahoma Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (OKAMFT), and currently serves as a family policy and advocacy leader for the "AAMFT Family Therapists in Medical Settings" interest network. She serves as a national board member of the AAMFT. Dr. Roberts is a member of the AAMFT, the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), the Society for Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) and the Society for Clinical Trials (SCT).

### **Program Clinical Supervisors**

The core MFT faculty will provide primary oversight of student clinical training throughout the program. Though students meet regularly with their site supervisors during their offsite placements, students are required to meet with their faculty supervisor each week they are clinically active. The supervision received from site supervisors does not count towards the supervision hour requirements of the program. If another supervisor is utilized to provide supervision within the OC MFT program, the supervisor will be licensed and a state-approved supervisor; they may or may not be contracted via MSHS as adjunct faculty.

OC MFT has identified the following as supervisors most likely to serve as substitutes in the Family Therapy Clinic:

[Travis Ernst](#), LMFT, LADC, is the Director of Clinical Services for Arcadia Trails INTEGRIS (Edmond). Travis has vast experience in behavioral health with dual licensure as Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor and LMFT. He earned a Master of Science in Human Development & Family Sciences with a Marriage and Family Therapy Specialization from Oklahoma State University. He is trained in Advanced Motivational Interviewing, Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy, and Problem Gambling.

### **Non-Clinical Faculty**

Additional courses required for the MFT option may be taught by non-clinical faculty in the MSHS department. These faculty may also serve as graduate committee advisors or members and assistantship supervisors. These faculty also serve as a community of interest for the MFT program in that their feedback on student development is solicited and utilized to guide feedback to students provided by the MFT faculty. It is important for students to maintain professional relationships with all faculty within and outside of the MFT program and MSHS department.

[JP Miller](#) earned a Ph.D. in behavioral neuroscience with a minor in quantitative methods at Bowling Green State University in 2005. Dr. Miller served as faculty at OC for 4 years before moving to Lipscomb University where he joined the faculty in the Department of Psychology, Counseling, and Family Studies. Dr. Miller's recent research focuses on the psychology of religion and problematic mobile phone use. Dr. Miller teaches Research Methods for OC MFT students.

### **Clinical Staff**

A "Clinical Staff" designation may be made by the Clinical Director in conjunction with the MFT faculty for individuals to engage in clinical practice or supervision in the Family Therapy Clinic (FTC). This designation must be carried in order to provide FTC services, supervise clinicians operating in the FTC, view or gain access to FTC electronic storage and case management systems, or engage in training or supervision within the scope of the FTC clinic operations. FTC support personnel would need to be given clinical staff designation before managing intakes, working with clinic data, etc.

A temporary designation may be given to a visiting faculty member, clinician, or other appropriately qualified person for purposes fitting with the MFT program mission and goals. The temporary designation may be given only by the Clinical Director in communication with the Program Director.

### **Advisor**

Students may be advised by all MFT core faculty members pertaining to academic and professional endeavors. However, each student will be assigned one major advisor via alphabetical order upon entering the program.

## **Associate Provost of Graduate Programs**

The Associate Provost of Graduate Programs oversees all graduate programs at OC and presides over the graduate council. Any changes to OC's MFT program must be reviewed and approved by the graduate council.

[Byron Newberry](#), MS, ME, PhD,  
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## **Students**

### *Student Professionalism and Code of Conduct*

Given the nature of the MFT program as a professional degree program and the close connection with student work being completed within the FTC, students are expected to act in accordance with the FTC Policies and Procedures Manual, the AAMFT Code of Ethics and the Oklahoma LMFT Act and Regulations in addition to the MFT Program Handbook. Please see the Diversity & Inclusivity section in this handbook for further details on student professionalism and adherence to non-discrimination policies. The FTC Policies and Procedures Manual specifically outlines student rules and procedures for work with clients, case management, confidentiality responsibilities, use of OC technology, parking, preparation and engagement in supervision, etc. Violation of the policies outlined in the FTC Policies and Procedures Manual will result in dialogue with the MFT faculty to address the violated policies and/or additional sanctions related to the status or nature of student involvement with the FTC and/or MFT program.

### *Interactions with Others*

Given the degree of close relationships with the MFT program, it is expected that students maintain a high degree of professionalism in their interactions with fellow colleagues, faculty, student interns, non-MFT faculty, clients, supervisors, etc. Though the faculty often choose to work collaboratively with students, students should respect the authority and hierarchy within the program as well as the liability under which their clinical work falls. Thus, students should understand that the faculty have the ultimate responsibility for student case management, research advisement, and assistantship management.

Students should also be aware that their behaviors in the classroom have an effect on faculty instruction and peer learning and should adhere to each faculty members' preference governing the use of technology, social media, etc. during class, MFT program meetings, events, etc. Any lack of professional behavior within the program will result in direct feedback from faculty with additional sanctions (e.g., removal from clinical activity, formal sanctions through the MFT program, MSHS department, College of Sciences and Education and Sciences, OC Provost(s) and/or OC) for continued unprofessional actions.

### *Professional Appearance*

As a professional in the MFT program, it is important to maintain a professional appearance. Although personal and class time allows for casual wear (e.g., shorts, tank tops, flip flops, sweatshirts, etc.), it is expected that students will dress professionally and in accordance to the FTC dress code outlined in the FTC Policies and Procedures Manual during times when they are clinically active with clients and/or teaming (the dress standard applies even when just observing cases). All students are expected to adhere to “business casual” guidelines at the minimum when interacting with clients in the clinic, which could include casual slacks and skirts, collared shirts, blouses, or sweaters. Inappropriate attire includes sportswear, jeans, and unkempt clothing, among other options. Please exercise good judgment and attempt to wear dark-colored clothes to minimize being seen behind the mirrors if you’ll be working behind mirrors in rooms 2 or 3. Also, please respect all FTC space and behave in a professional manner when in the clinic.

### *Academic Professionalism/Code of Conduct*

Overall, it is expected that students maintain a high degree of academic preparedness for classes as well as supervision (e.g., completed weekly readings and assignments, materials necessary for note-taking and active involvement). Students should also be timely for class, meetings, clinic meetings, supervision, and other events that are required by the program, department, or college. Student behavior is a direct reflection of this program, its faculty, and the department. Therefore, student professionalism and the utmost attention to these details is imperative. As program, clinic, department meetings and classes are regularly held virtually (e.g., zoom, MS Teams), it is critically important to maintain professionalism during these meetings. Professionalism in virtual meetings includes, but is not limited to; attending meetings on time, keeping camera on during meetings, not multitasking during meetings, maintaining confidentiality during meetings, minimizing distractions, not abusing chat features, etc.

### *Attendance Requirements*

As part of an intense clinical program, there will be guest speakers and additional program meetings (e.g., MFT program/FTC orientation meetings, FTC Staff Meetings, MFT Advisory Board Meetings) outside of class time. Students will be required to attend these meetings but will be given appropriate notice to make arrangements to attend. Any absence from required MFT program meetings will need special approval well in advance of the scheduled meeting by MFT faculty (see the Vacations & Absences section (pg. 35) for additional details on mandatory attendance for program activities).

### *Substance Use/Abuse*

As you are in a professional training program, students are expected to consistently demonstrate professional behavior, which also includes abstaining from substance use while in class or while providing therapy services. We are committed to cultivating an environment in which student therapists are held to the same expectations that they will be held to by the state of Oklahoma upon receiving licensure. Specifically, section 86:15-3-3. Professional competence and integrity states:

(b) LMFTs are presumed to have violated high standards of integrity or competence and it shall be unprofessional conduct if they: (1) plead guilty to or no contest to or be convicted of a state or federal felony crime if the violation substantially relates to the practice of therapy and poses a reasonable threat to public safety. (2) have their licenses or certificates suspended or revoked; or (3) are no longer competent to practice marital and family therapy because they are impaired due to physical or mental causes or the abuse of alcohol or other substances.

For this reason, we instill the following policy: Students/therapists are prohibited from unlawfully consuming, possessing or using controlled substances while in class, before coming to class, or during/before therapy session. In addition, students/therapists may not be under the influence of any controlled substance, such as drugs or alcohol, while on campus, while working at the FTC or any clinical placement, or while engaged in any FTC or clinical placement business. Prescription or over-the-counter medications, taken as prescribed, are an exception only as long as the substance does not impair professional functioning. Anyone violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

#### *In-Program Dating*

Consensual amorous relationships between students are a reality of many MFT clinical training programs. As a systemic-minded program, we remain cognizant of the potential impact of successful and unsuccessful relationships on the community. Therefore, should students enrolled in the MFT program begin a consensual amorous relationship, they may choose to bring this relationship to the attention of their advisor and/or program director. Upon request, MFT program faculty will do everything it can to support and separate the individuals to avoid a dual relationship in academic and/or clinical casework. Should any intra-student relationship (currently or in the past a consensual amorous relationship, or strictly platonic) become disruptive to client care and/or the learning of the individuals enrolled in the program (including those in the relationship, and/or other students enrolled in the MFT program), MFT Core Faculty may require one or both individuals to register and participate in separate course sections to support and maintain the learning environment of the program.

#### *Provision of Feedback*

Within a COAMFTE Accredited program, feedback from Communities of Interest (COI) is a critical component to assess how well the program is meeting its program goals and student learning outcomes. Several assessments (e.g., course evaluations, supervisor evaluations, basic skills evaluations, annual program survey, offsite placement survey, etc.) are used in the MFT program to gather feedback and it is expected that MFT students will provide this feedback to the program when requested.

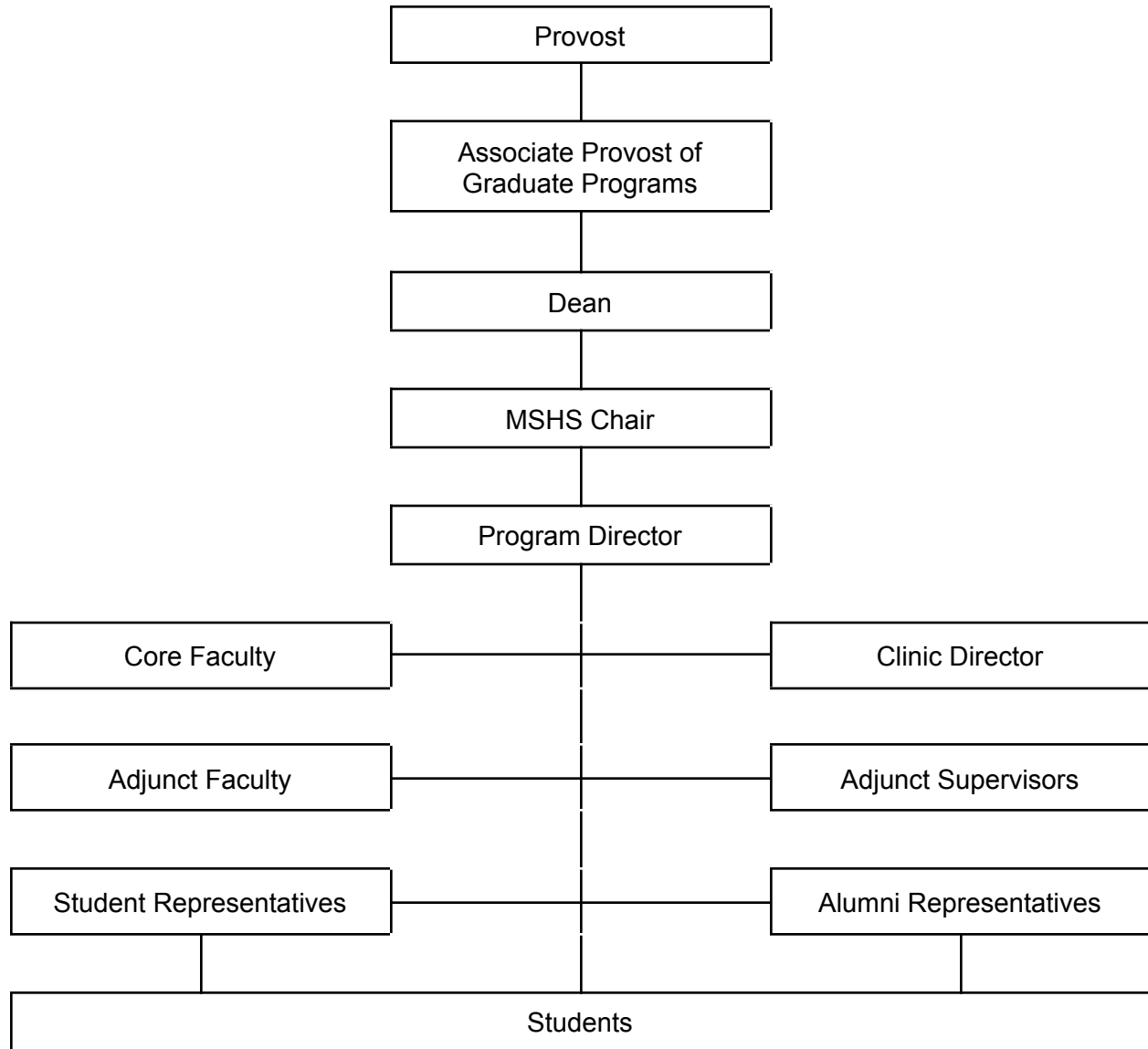
#### *Individual Documentation*

Students in the MFT program will also adhere to the requirements of the program by ensuring that they have current copies of all required forms, contracts, etc. on file in the program. These forms include: Accufax Background Report, MFT Program [Informed Consent for Clinical Training](#), [FTC Confidentiality Agreement](#), Proof of Liability Insurance for each year clinically

active in the program, Offsite Placement Contract, Clinical Competencies Reviews, Clinical Exit Checklist, and any requests to enroll in a non-approved elective course. Failure to have all required forms on file by required deadlines will result in removal from program and/or clinical activity.

### Program Organizational Flow Chart

Figure 2. OC MFT Program Organizational Flow Chart



Students participate in the governance of the program through representing their cohorts on MFT Council, providing input to cohort representatives who serve on MFT Council, completing annual surveys, and providing direct feedback/requests to faculty.

### **Student and Alumni Representatives**

The OC MFT Advisory Council is composed of 2 student representatives elected by their peers in each cohort. It is the responsibility of the Advisory Council to gather and report questions, observations, and/or concerns from their respective cohorts to the MFT Faculty. The Advisory Council will meet briefly with the faculty in quarterly meetings (usually scheduled during the faculty's regularly scheduled meetings) and create notes to be made available to all students afterward.

Alumni Representatives will be invited to share observations, suggestions, and field experiences with the MFT faculty. This data will be gathered during a representative's attendance at the annual Communities of Interest Meeting and requested access to faculty meetings.

## **PROGRAM COMPONENTS & DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Major requirements for successful completion of a Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy include:

- Completion of all required coursework with a B average (3.0 GPA) or better Completion of all clinical requirements with a minimum of 300 hours of direct client contact, with 100 of these hours being relational (with couples and families)
- Demonstration of development of the [program core competencies](#)
- Completion of the thesis track (optional)
- Obtain 4 experiences in Cultural Passport

### **Cultural Passport**

Gaining experience and understanding of diverse cultures and people is an essential part of therapist development; therefore, students will be required to complete four Cultural Passport experiences across the program. Students may choose experiences within these parameters:

1. Students must engage with a culture or people with whom they have had little or limited in-depth knowledge and/or first hand experience.
2. The experience needs to be more than a casual observational experience. It is ideal, if appropriate, for students to participate in the activity and/or actively engage with others.
3. Students should be able to document personal, productive reflections for each experience.

Students are encouraged to minimize inaccurate assumptions by completing independent research prior to each event; this additional research should be referenced in each reflection. Detailed instructions including reflection prompts as well as examples of acceptable experiences are provided in each practicum syllabus. Students will submit reflections within one week of the experience to their current practicum supervisor. Cultural experiences will be tracked by students on their Master Hour Tracking sheet

### **Additional Instruction and Training Requirements**

In addition to coursework, students will have other opportunities to receive additional instruction and training. Students are required to participate in FTC activities where speakers may be invited to teach students about specific clinically relevant topics and staff meetings addressing FTC business. Absences from or alternatives to any scheduled program meeting or event should be requested before the event.

### **Semester Check-Ins**

Faculty members will conduct 20-30 minute clinical interviews with each student at the end of the first semester (in which students have synchronized with a cohort). During the interview, students and faculty will discuss student perspectives and faculty assessments of each student's clinical readiness as well as steps for continued progress.

Competency reviews will also be conducted at the end of each subsequent semester for all clinical students using the [OC MFT Core Clinical Competency Assessment](#). Faculty members will use the form to record feedback regarding each student's growth in the core competencies outlined as necessary for the profession; students will be provided a formal, in-person opportunity to respond to the feedback. An [expanded version](#) of the 16 core competencies may be accessed for more information. The competency assessment outcomes completed at the end of Capstone are recorded on the Student Learning Objectives and Program Goals spreadsheet.

Graduating students are required to respond to an exit survey and meet with the Clinic Director to complete a Clinical Exit Checklist. During the final meeting with the Clinic Director, students will ensure that they have all items checked off prior to final grades being turned in. The [Clinical Exit Checklist](#) can be found in the Clinic folder of the OC MFT shared drive.

### **Curriculum Requirements & Sequencing**

Graduates of the program meet academic requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist [in Oklahoma](#) as well as [Professional Membership of AAMFT](#) and MFT licensure in other states.

OC MFT will be applying for our Commission on Accreditation of Family Therapy Education ([COAMFTE](#)) accreditation as soon as our program has attained the years and data to make that application (expected 2025). OC's curriculum is developed responsively to MFT best practice training models in order to achieve this accreditation. Our OC MFT students will receive exposure in treating a broad range of populations, reflective and representative of the general public at large via the following courses:

18 Hours Human Sciences Foundation

[HMSC-5013 Systems Theory](#)

[HMSC-5023 Family Trauma and Resilience](#)

[HMSC-5033 Development and Diversity Across the Lifespan](#)



[HMSC-5043 Sexuality and the Family](#)  
[HMSC-5053 Ethical and Legal Issues in the Human Sciences](#)  
[HMSC-5063 Research Methods in Human Sciences](#)

31 Hours Marriage And Family Therapy

[MFTH-5013 Theoretical Models of the Family](#)  
[MFTH-5023 Basic Therapy Skills](#)  
[MFTH-5033 Family and Individual Assessment](#)  
[MFTH-5043 Psychopathology and Psychopharmacology](#)  
[MFTH-5053 Child and Adolescent Therapy](#)  
[MFTH-5063 Couples Treatment and Contemporary Issues in Marriage and Family Therapy](#)  
[MFTH-5713 Marriage and Family Therapy Practicum I](#)  
[MFTH-5723 Marriage and Family Therapy Practicum II](#)  
[MFTH-5733 Marriage and Family Therapy Practicum III](#)  
[MFTH-5794 Marriage and Family Therapy Capstone](#)

6 Hours Thesis (Optional)

A thesis option is available for the MFT degree. An independent research track leading to the completion of a thesis project will require six additional hours to accommodate for your research time and consistent research advising meetings.

The total program requirement is 49 credit hours (or 55 hours for students completing a thesis track).

### **Plan of Study**

Each student's Plan of Study is loaded into OC's enrollment system as soon as they are accepted into the program. Each semester is planned along a "progress timeline," and although students will meet with their advisor each semester, they will be responsible for enrolling themselves. If a student needs to deviate from the approved plan, they will co-create an alternative plan for the best approach to completing the program. Enrollment and progress timelines may be accessed via [my.oc.edu](http://my.oc.edu).

### **Typical Course Sequence and Alternate Sequence**

This program is designed such that full-time students can complete all requirements in 2 calendar years (i.e., 24 months). Those students who begin classes in the summer immediately following acceptance (e.g., May 2024) and complete courses according to the typical course sequence will finish after the spring semester 2 years later (e.g., April 2026). The typical course sequence is outlined in Table 2 below.

There are 2 main sequencing alternatives students may pursue:

- If students are unable to begin in the summer immediately following admittance, they will stay to complete requirements through the summer semester 2 years later.
- If students desire to extend the program beyond 2 years, they may elect to take approved classes their first year and then align with a cohort their second year to begin practicum. This plan must be approved by a faculty advisor upon enrollment.

Any other sequencing alternative must be approved by the faculty team before enrollment.

Table 2. Typical Course Sequence

Semester	Course	Modality
Summer 2024	HMSC 5063 Research Methods in Family Science	Online
	HMSC 5033-99 Development & Diversity Across the LifeSpan	Online
	HMSC 5023-99 FamilyTrauma & Resilience*	Online
Fall 2024	MFTH-5023-99 Basic Therapy Skills	In Person
	HMSC 5013 Systems Theory	In Person
	HMSC 5053 Professional, Ethical & Legal Issues	Hybrid
Spring 2025	MFTH 5713 Practicum I	In Person
	MFTH 5013 Theoretical Models of the Family	In Person
	MFTH 5043 Psychopharmacology & Psychopathology	Hybrid
Summer 2025	MFTH 5723 Practicum II (Includes off-site placement)	In Person
	MFTH 5063 Couples Tx & Contemporary Issues	In Person
Fall 2025	HMSC 5043 Sexuality & the Family	Hybrid
	MFTH 5733 Practicum III (Includes off-site placement)	In Person
	MFTH 5033 Family & Individual Assessment	Hybrid
Spring 2026	MFTH 5794 Capstone	In Person
	MFTH 5053 Child & Adolescent Therapy	In Person

\*Family Trauma and Resilience is an online, self-paced course that is offered throughout the program. Students should plan to take it when they can best balance academic and personal needs.

### Important Links

All personal academic information is organized in [my.oc.edu](http://my.oc.edu). At this central site, students will find a link to Blackboard (OC's learning management system) where classes are housed, access to OC forms and class schedules, and campus information like a directory and meal plan balance. OC email is hosted by google mail, and students can log into gmail using their OC-assigned email address; OC email can be accessed directly at my.oc.edu as well.

## Clinical Requirements and Sequencing

The foundational practice component in the MFT program requires that students complete at least 16 months of clinical practice. The clinical sequence of training begins after the completion of Basic Skills, typically in a student's first spring semester. Before beginning clinical training, students in the program are required to sign the MFT Program [Informed Consent for Clinical Training](#) form as well as the [FTC Confidentiality Agreement](#). These documents clearly outline students' rights and responsibilities as clinical trainees while enrolled in the program and engaging in professional/clinical services. Students are also required to hold professional liability insurance (to be renewed annually) and provide proof of enrollment each year they are in the program. Students may obtain this insurance as a benefit of student membership in AAMFT (at a cost of \$99 per year). Students will present copies of these annual forms to the Clinical Director and each will be electronically saved to the students' files.

During the fall semester, students will begin observing other therapists' sessions via video and in the clinic. At the close of the fall semester, the MFT faculty will determine whether each student is ready to begin seeing clients in the FTC. This determination will be based primarily on the student's grasp of course concepts and demonstrated maturity and professionalism. Faculty will discuss with students their perceived clinical readiness during the [Clinical Readiness Interviews](#). Students who are judged by faculty to be clinically and personally ready for the next phase of clinical training may be assigned a fitting case as therapist or co-therapist; or, the faculty may also determine a student will first be assigned to a reflecting team to gain some first-hand experience with clinical work. A student's co-therapist may be another student from the same cohort, a more advanced student, or an MFT faculty member. When students have demonstrated the ability to handle therapy sessions, supervision, and the environment of the training clinic while seeing one client, additional cases will be assigned. During the first semester of practicum, a student therapist will carry a minimal caseload of 1 to 4 cases and will be expected to be an active and contributing member of the cotherapy team, in addition to continuing to observe other therapists' cases.

Students are responsible for complying with program requirements concerning accurate and prompt clinical recordkeeping. Case files will be audited regularly. As long as students are enrolled in practicum, they are expected to be present and to participate in client contact each week according to the guidelines set forth in Table 3 below. (The complete table outlining [Practicum Requirements and Focus](#) may be found in the OC MFT drive.) Participation includes direct client contact, actively observing cases, and working at the front desk.

Table 3. Practicum Requirements

Semester	Weekly Clinical Requirements	Supervision	Off-site Placement
1st Fall	4 observation hours	Basic Skills (pre-prac)	N/A
1st Spring	6 clinical hours, maintain 3 observation hours	1 hour dyadic 1 hour group	Discuss placement Interview as needed

Semester	Weekly Clinical Requirements	Supervision	Off-site Placement
Summer	6 clinical hours, maintain 2 observation hours	1 hour dyadic 1 hour group	May start off-site with slow case increase
2nd Fall	2 observation hours	1 hour dyadic 1 hour group Off-site supervision	1-2 days at off-site, 5-6 clinical hours
2nd Spring	Caseload assigned by Clinic Director, no observation hours	May continue as is or change configuration with approval	1-2 days at off-site, 5-6 clinical hours
Summer*	Caseload assigned by Clinic Director, no observation hours	May continue or change configuration with approval	1-2 days at off-site, 5-6 clinical hours

\* Completion of the program requires 2 summers in a typical sequence. If a student did not begin classes the summer immediately following acceptance and must enroll to complete required coursework after entering the clinical portion of the program, they will be required to enroll in practicum their 2nd summer as they finish client contact hours.

### Supervision

Students will be assigned to a practicum supervisor and complete individual/dyadic as well as group (3-8 students) supervision each semester, with exceptions based on scheduling, group assignments/discussions, etc. Students must meet with a program clinical supervisor for at least one hour any week they are clinically active.

In addition, a substantial number of a student therapist's cases at the FTC will be "live observed" by a supervisor. Specifically, a supervisor will observe therapy sessions and may provide feedback before, during, and after a therapy session. Much of group and individual supervision will also include the opportunity for students to demonstrate their skills to supervisors through showing video recordings as students are expected to present video in at least 50% of supervision meetings.

Students must receive a minimum of 100 hours of supervision (e.g., individual, group, live) provided by a program clinical supervisor. Of those 100 supervision hours, students must receive a minimum of 50 supervision hours including observable data (e.g., video, live, audio).

In the event of planned or unplanned interruptions to the supervision schedule, students and faculty will work closely to avoid delays in receiving supervision for student clinical activity. Students should work primarily with their assigned individual supervisor to address concerns and if not able to communicate with them, should then shift to contacting the Clinical Director and/or other MFT faculty. In the event that clinical services shift to tele-delivery, students and supervisors will meet virtually using Microsoft Teams or another HIPAA compliant platform.

More information about supervision expectations and requirements, as well as protocols for all telehealth services can also be found in the FTC Policies and Procedures Manual.

### **Supervisor to Student Ratio**

The OC MFT program includes four core faculty who provide oversight for all student clinical activity in both the FTC and at offsite placements. The OC MFT program typically accepts 15-20 students in each cohort with one faculty supervisor overseeing no more than 8 students' clinical work each semester (in each practicum section). This provides a low faculty supervisor to student ratio (i.e., 1:8 faculty supervisor to supervisee) each semester that allows for a high degree of quality in supervision experience and is sufficient for students to meet the benchmarks for each of the Student Learning Outcomes and Program Goals.

### **Off-Site Placements**

Upon faculty approval following the clinical competency review at the end of their first semester practicum, students will be cleared for off-site placement. Students who receive "negligence" or "area of concern" feedback on the Competency Assessment during their first practicum semester may be asked to take additional time to develop the necessary competencies prior to beginning off-site clinical work. No student therapist is placed at an off-site placement until all supervisors agree that the student can function as a solo therapist in relative autonomy from close supervision. The Clinical Director maintains a list of approved [off-site partners](#); if a student is interested in pursuing off-site placement with a partner not included on the approved list, the Clinic Director must be informed so the potential partnership may be assessed. It is each student's responsibility to reach out to placements of interest to inquire regarding position responsibilities as well as application and interview processes. Once an off-site placement has been secured by the student, they should inform the Clinical Director so the necessary contract can be completed with the off-site supervisor. Students are not to begin training or clinical activity at an off-campus placement without having a [contract](#) signed by the off-site coordinator, the student, and the Clinical Director on file with the MFT program; this contract outlines all responsibilities and expectations for students, off-site supervisors, and OC MFT faculty/Clinical Director.

Unless other arrangements are agreed upon by the Clinical Director/MFT faculty, the student, and the off-site supervisor, a student will spend between 5 and 15 hours per week working at the off-site placement with no more than 10 hours a week in direct client contact. Students are responsible for documenting and tracking all client contact hours conducted at their off-sites and should add these hours to their weekly Hours Log turned in to the Clinical Director (see pg. 45). Students are required to provide transportation and other expenses associated with these placements.

Students may only see clients at their offsite placements during weeks they are receiving supervision by their OC MFT supervisor. In addition, students will be required to complete an [evaluation of their off-sites](#) (see pg. 91) and to have site supervisors complete an [evaluation](#) (see pg. 45) of their performance/professionalism at the end of each semester of practicum and at the conclusion of their off-site work. These evaluations help faculty assess whether the sites are providing the students with an appropriate context for student development as well as student performance.

If the student has not made successful progression towards achieving an adequate number of clinical hours at their off-site, they should report this delay to their practicum supervisor who will consult with the Clinic Director regarding next steps. In extreme cases, appropriate arrangements may be made between the MFT program and the off-site placement to terminate the site contract earlier than expected.

### **Clinical Hours Requirement**

Each student is required to conduct a minimum of 300 direct-contact client hours including a minimum of 100 relational hours (e.g., couple or family sessions). The 300 hours of clinical contact should be seen as a minimum expectation and not as an absolute end as students will be required to continue their clinical training until faculty agree that students have met the minimal level of clinical competency. Students who receive “Nearing Expectations” or lower composite score on the [Clinical Competency Assessment](#) and/or received a practicum grade of “C” or lower during their final semester of practicum may be removed from the program or asked to enroll in practicum the following semester or until they meet competencies. If a student has not met the above-mentioned benchmarks, students will continue to work on the program’s clinical competencies while enrolled in practicum (even if they have accrued the required 300 client contact hours) until the faculty are satisfied that the student has developed the necessary competencies and met program benchmarks. In this case, all faculty would meet with the student to develop a written plan specifying the expectations for the student along with specific steps the clinical supervisor and student would take to accomplish the plan. The plan will be signed by the student and the Clinical Director.

Learning to be a therapist is challenging and requires a high degree of commitment to clients, co-therapists, and supervisors. If at any time during the clinical portion of training a student determines that they do not want to complete their degree in MFT, the student should inform the Program Director in writing. Students may be expected to fulfill commitments to clients and co-therapists until the end of the semester in which they withdraw from training or complete their clinical hours.

### **Mentor/Mentee Process**

First-year and second-year students are matched by the faculty during the early fall semester of each year to form a mentor/mentee relationship. The second-year student (mentor) is responsible for meeting with the mentee regularly to acclimate the first-year student (mentee) into the program and to assist with training the mentee in aspects related to the program including but not limited to: use of the FTC technology and computing, engaging in the teaming process, FTC policies/procedures, case file management, case conceptualization, etc. Both mentor and mentee are responsible for arranging appropriate meetings and maintaining a high level of professionalism during the process.

Assuming the student has met the benchmarks to continue on pace through the program, the typical sequence of clinical work is outlined in Table 4.

Table 4. Typical Clinical Sequence Summary

Year One	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Informed Consent for Clinical Training</li> <li>- Complete FTC Confidentiality Agreement</li> <li>- Child Abuse &amp; Neglect Reporting training (Ethics class)</li> <li>- Begin observation of cases (Basic Skills class)</li> <li>- Meet with 2nd year mentor</li> <li>- Obtain and submit verification of Professional Liability Insurance</li> <li>- Participate in Clinical Readiness Interview</li> </ul>
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receive assignment of a fitting case as therapist or co-therapist (OR first be assigned to a reflecting team to gain first-hand clinical work)</li> <li>- Habitually comply with program requirements concerning accurate and prompt clinical recordkeeping</li> <li>- While working with 1 client, demonstrate ability to handle therapy sessions, supervision, observation, and the environment of the training clinic</li> <li>- Receive additional cases (up to 4) once</li> <li>- Begin submitting FTC Monthly Clinical Hours Report</li> <li>- Consider the options and procure an off-site placement with contract</li> </ul>
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain caseload assigned by Clinic Director at FTC</li> <li>- Demonstrate ongoing commitment to ethical provision of services and record keeping</li> <li>- Begin accruing hours at off-site placement</li> </ul>
Year Two	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue accrual of hours at FTC and off-site placement</li> <li>- Renew and provide verification of Professional Liability Insurance</li> <li>- Begin mentoring 1st year student</li> </ul>
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue accrual of hours at FTC and off-site placement</li> <li>- (Potentially partner with 1st year student as co-therapists)</li> <li>- Complete at least 300 hours (100 relational) clinical hours</li> <li>- Complete Clinical Exit Checklist</li> <li>- Make application to Oklahoma Board of Behavioral Health Licensure</li> </ul>
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students who did not complete necessary hours and/or demonstrate graduate-level clinical readiness in spring semester will be required to enroll in summer practicum and finish tasks listed for Spring of Year Two.</li> </ul>

## Student Learning Outcomes

### Program Goals

Knowledge & Practice: Graduates will demonstrate systemic/relational knowledge essential to practice of Marriage & Family Therapy.

Diversity: Graduates will be culturally responsive in their work with people from diverse backgrounds, communities, and identities.

Ethics: Graduates will demonstrate an understanding of relevant ethical codes and legal principles as well as competence in relational/systemic ethical decision-making skills.

Research: Graduates will demonstrate competence in synthesizing and applying research to clinical practice and incorporating feedback measures to improve client outcomes.

Self of the Therapist: Graduates will demonstrate ability to assess and monitor “self of the therapist” (including biopsychosocial/spiritual [BPSS] beliefs) with respect to clients and treatment process and its impact on clinical outcomes.

### Student Learning Outcomes with Targets and Measures

#### *Knowledge & Practice*

1. Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of systemic concepts, theories and techniques of marriage & family therapy.
  - a. Systems Final - 80% of graduates scoring  $\geq 80\%$
  - b. Models Final - 80% of graduates scoring  $\geq 80\%$
  - c. 80% of graduates will score “Meets” or “Exceeds Expectations” on Core Clinical Competency Assessment #1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11,
2. Graduates will demonstrate application of knowledge to practice (clinical decision-making)
  - a. 80% of graduates will score  $\geq 90\%$  on the Capstone Project.
  - b. 70% of graduates will pass three of the first four domains (domains 1, 2, 3, and 4) of the AMFTRB practice exam.

#### *Diversity*

3. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to examine their own biases and stereotypes and engage diverse, minority, and marginalized groups
  - a. 90% of graduates will complete at least five Cultural Passport Experiences (includes reflection).
  - b. 80% of graduates will score at least 90% on the Case Study Analysis in Development & Diversity Class
4. Graduates will demonstrate multicultural responsiveness in clinical assessment and treatment.
  - a. 80% of graduates will score “Meets” or “Exceeds Expectations” on Core Clinical Competency Assessment #3 & #5
  - b. 80% of graduates will score at least 90% on the cultural aspects of Theory of Therapy: Pract III paper.



### *Ethics*

5. Graduates will demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of key ethical principles, laws/regulations, and professional codes of conduct.
  - a. 80% of graduates who take the AMFTRB practice exam will score a passing grade on Domain 6: Maintaining Legal, Ethical and Professional Standards
  - b. 80% of graduates will score at least 90% on the Final Exam in Ethical & Legal Issues
6. Graduates will adhere to professional and legal standards in clinical decision making and crisis management.
  - a. 80% of graduates who take the AMFTRB practice exam will score a passing grade on Domain 5: Crisis Management
  - b. 80% of graduates will score “Meets” or “Exceeds Expectations” on Core Clinical Competency Assessment #5, 10, 12

### *Research*

7. Graduates will become knowledgeable consumers of research and evidence-based clinical practice.
  - a. 80% of graduates will score at least 90% on the Final Research Proposal in Research Methods
8. Graduates will effectively use clinically relevant research and assessment tools to inform clinical practice.
  - a. 80% of graduates will score “Meets” or “Exceeds Expectations” on Core Clinical Competencies Assessment #15, 16

### *Self of the Therapist*

9. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to examine aspects of “self of the therapist” (e.g., spiritual/religious beliefs, family of origin, boundaries, triangulation, current stress level, current life situation, cultural context, transference, supervision) and how it relates to their work.
  - a. 80% of graduates will score at least 90% on the Theory of Therapy Paper: Prac III
10. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to employ “self” effectively in their work in response to the BPSS profile of those being served.
  - a. 80% of graduates will score “Meets” or “Exceeds Expectations” on Core Clinical Competencies Assessment #13, & #14

## **Evaluation and Assessment of Educational Outcomes**

In addition to directing course instruction and learning opportunities toward fostering student competencies, faculty also focus course evaluation and assessment of student knowledge and skill relative to the core program competencies (Student Learning Outcomes). There are several purposes to assessing student progress with regard to these competencies:

- Students are provided with a continuing source of direct feedback concerning their progress which helps them know where to focus their efforts.
- Faculty are aided in identifying student strengths and growth areas in order to best know how to continue to foster student development.

- Faculty are helped in determining student readiness for increasing responsibility and challenge (i.e., begin clinical work, begin independent work at off-site placement, etc.).
- Faculty are assisted in the assessment of the instruction and training in the program with respect to fostering in the students the desired competencies and determining where instruction and training may need to be modified to be more effective.

Much of the assessment of the program Student Learning Outcomes takes place within courses and in conjunction with students' clinical work in the Family Therapy Clinic. Exams, papers, scoring checklists, and rubrics that are used to assess program competencies are kept for a minimum of 7 years after the completion of the work to enable faculty to track student performance across cohorts. Google Workspace provides the web-based interface used for much of the recording and reporting of assessment data on student performance. It is also used as a mechanism through which students are asked to provide feedback on faculty and program performance and through which students and alumni are asked to provide feedback on their experience in the program.

Importantly, data are aggregated across students, as well as across cohorts, such that no one individual student is intentionally identified when creating reports on outcomes. Faculty, supervisors, instructors, and staff may have access to a student's data, along with the COAMFTE site visit team. Otherwise, data collected is confidential and will not be released to anyone without the student's written authorization.

OC MFT Student Learning Outcomes are assessed via the following:

- Written Examinations & Papers
  - Written exams used to assess core competencies include exams of systems theory and models of family therapy as well as ethics and legal issues. Other written evaluations include a case study analysis regarding development and diversity, individual theories of therapy including self of therapist, and research proposals.
- Comprehensive Exam
  - In Capstone, an authorized AMFTRB Practice Exam will be administered to each student with official results being shared with the program.
- Clinical Skills Evaluation
  - Practicum supervisors will evaluate students utilizing the standardized Core Clinical Competency Assessment. Students are required to perform a self-assessment for each competency. Supervisor and student discuss this evaluation which is updated at the end of each semester.
- Integrative Projects
  - In their final semester, students will present their growth thus far and yet to come, specifically with respect to integrative models, diversity, and self of therapist; this will culminate in a Capstone Project presented in the manner of the Three Minute Thesis.
  - Students will collect various experiences to create a Cultural Passport illustrating their exposure and reflection to diverse populations.

## **Grading**

Objective formative and summative assessments of each student will occur throughout the program. Clinical progress will be assessed via the Core Clinical Competency Assessment aforementioned. Students' submitted coursework will be graded according to the expectations set forth in each course syllabus. Unless otherwise noted in the syllabus, letter grades adhere to the following scale: (A) 90-100, (B) 80-89.9, (C) 70-79.9, (D) 60-69.9, and (F) ≤59.9. To create cohesive expectations across the program and promote the demonstration of graduate-level writing skills, a [writing rubric](#) has been provided. Students' clinical progress and coursework grades are major factors used to assess graduate readiness.

## **Thesis Track Requirements**

OC MFT students may complete a thesis while simultaneously pursuing their degree. Students who desire to complete a thesis should consult with a program representative during recruitment as well as their assigned faculty advisor about potential areas of interest and goals for the paper. Students will likely be matched with a faculty member who has a similar research interest or skills particular to the topic.

Each thesis plan must be approved by a student's thesis advisor, and students will be responsible to set ongoing and regular meetings with their supervisor while enrolled in thesis hours. To enroll, students may select additional hours of variable credit (ranging from 1 to 3 hours) in any semester for a total of 6 credit hours across the program. Traditionally, students spend the first academic year learning about the research process, composing a literature review, and outlining a thesis plan. The second academic year is dedicated to research design, data collection, and documentation of results and analysis. Publication is not required but can be pursued if students so choose.

[General guidance](#) for writing your thesis has been provided, but detailed guidance, personal goals, and a co-created timeline with your thesis advisor will be essential to achieving this important benchmark.

## **MFT Program and Graduate College Timeline**

Students will monitor program progress in Colleague to determine if they are on track to graduate according to their preferred/allowed timeline. Course schedules aligning with personal graduation plans will be discussed between students and advisors during enrollment advisement appointments each semester. If a student changes their plans with respect to their desired graduation date, it is the student's responsibility to communicate that clearly with their advisor post haste. Beyond the successful completion of coursework, students must meet all program requirements (outlined previously in this document) to be eligible for graduation.

Currently, students must successfully graduate from an accredited MFT program (such as this one) before [applying for candidacy with the Oklahoma licensure board](#). The application process for OC MFT students is outlined [here](#). If desired, graduating students may submit their

application for candidacy prior to graduation to secure a testing window as soon as possible after graduation; this early application is only available to those who plan to graduate within 60 days.

## **PROGRAM POLICIES**

### **Student Behavior**

#### **Expected Behavior**

It is expected that students will comport with guidelines laid out in the roles and responsibilities section of this handbook in addition to [OC's Student Handbook](#) and specificities communicated in course syllabi. While it is impossible to list all appropriate behaviors, students shall conduct themselves recognizing that their choices reflect themselves, this program, and the university regardless of location or intent.

A key value of OC's MFT program is the understanding, respect, and equal treatment of others, regardless of individual differences. It is expected that faculty, staff, and students will live by this value, whether it be with each other, other professionals, or clients. We expect all parties to abide by these principles in all venues of OC and the MFT program, including ancillary or other events in any official capacity:

- Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants.
- Alert MFT program faculty if you notice violations of expected behaviors.

#### **Unacceptable Behavior**

Unacceptable behavior from any member of the OC MFT program will be met with empathy and practicality in a serious manner. Examples of unacceptable behavior include but are not limited to unethical behavior; criminal activity; substance abuse; intimidating, derogatory, or demeaning speech/actions; harmful or prejudicial comments or images; inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces (including presentation slides); harassment; sustained disruption of talks or other events; assault; and real or implied threat of any harm.

If a student participates in unacceptable behavior, they are expected to self-report as soon as possible; failure to disclose such behavior will result in more stringent outcomes. If a student sees a colleague engaging in any unacceptable behavior, it is expected they will immediately report the information to OC MFT Faculty.

#### **Handling of Unacceptable Behavior**

To ensure that no member of the OC MFT program feels unsafe or uncomfortable, these are the parameters for handling the unacceptable behavior explained above:

- Program faculty will provide assistance to those participants to which the incident occurred.

- Program faculty will attempt to resolve the issue in a civil manner for those scenarios which call for such treatment. This means resolving the issue will allow for productive conversation in which both parties may come to a peaceful conclusion.
- Program faculty reserve the right to remove an individual from any MFT program interaction and, if necessary to preserve the integrity of the policies outlined above, to prohibit an individual from future participation in MFT program interactions.
- Program faculty will report criminal behavior to the appropriate authorities.

Students who participate in the following violations will be automatically dismissed from the OC MFT program:

- Willful ethics violation
- Providing services under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Behavior that demonstrates will disregard of others including but not limited to... harm, misrepresentation, manipulative practices,
- Felony conviction
- Egregious behavior unbecoming a therapist
- Pending criminal charges
- Other violations at the discretion of MFT Faculty

### **Required Trainings for All MFT Students**

OC does not require campus-wide training for all graduate students (such as Title IX or Working with Minors). However, as student clinicians, you become de facto employees and training may be required in the future.

### **Addressing Student Deficiencies**

One of the major responsibilities of this training program is to produce graduates who provide competent and ethical services and proficiently represent the profession of Marriage and Family Therapy. Where there is a question about a student's ability to provide such services, faculty members will address those concerns with individual students. In addition, because of the vulnerable position that clients are in when they receive treatment, it is imperative that students of this program meet high standards of conduct and performance in areas including, but not limited to, professionalism, emotional health, and ethical behavior. If concerns are not sufficiently rectified by the student, then the student may be delayed in progress or dismissed from the program.

MFT faculty have the responsibility of determining whether a student is emotionally, ethically, and professionally suited to enter the profession, and to advise students to leave the program when they might pose serious risk to their clients and the standards of the profession. What follows is a list of areas of student performance/functioning and a short description of the expectations associated with each.

### **Academic**

It is expected that students will be invested in and perform well in their coursework. Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average ("B" Average) at all times per OC policy. In compliance

with Oklahoma's Board of Behavioral Health, no course with a grade of "D" or "F" can be used on the Plan of Study to satisfy the degree course requirements. Per faculty policy, receiving a grade of a C or below in any course requires departmental approval prior to enrolling in subsequent semesters. Thus, students who do not meet the minimum academic requirements will be placed on academic probation and/or dismissed from the program.

### **Professionalism and Code of Conduct**

Students are expected to consistently interact in their work with faculty, site supervisors, other students, and clients in appropriate ways. Students are expected to behave in professional fashion, taking care to discuss cases in confidential and sensitive ways, approaching colleagues with respect, and responding appropriately to feedback given by faculty and site supervisors. When a student disagrees with the feedback of a faculty or site supervisor, the student is expected to discuss this with that person and not passively dismiss it or discuss it as a problem with other students and faculty. Similarly, students are expected to be sensitive when giving feedback to colleagues, recognizing when their advice may be ill-timed or inappropriate to the situation.

### **Emotional**

Students are expected to demonstrate emotional strength and stability. Students must take appropriate steps to prevent their emotional problems from having a negative effect on their clients or others with whom they work as judged by faculty or site supervisors. Students are expected to resolve any personal problems that impede their ability to be effective in their clinical work and/or their ability to be appropriate in their interaction with other students, faculty, or other professionals with whom they work. Where students are unable to resolve their personal problems through their own efforts, they may need to seek professional help. Where these issues are evident in the students' conduct/performance, faculty will provide feedback to students and encourage them to address the problematic issues. In cases where students' emotional problems pose a risk to their clients, they may be immediately removed from cases and may be asked to immediately discontinue all clinical work. In cases where students fail to adequately address the problematic issues, they may be counseled out or dismissed from the program.

### **Ethical Issues & Authenticity of Student Work**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in their clinical work and in their general conduct according to ethical and legal guidelines as outlined in Oklahoma law and the AAMFT code of ethics. Due to the sensitivity of the professional role of a marriage and family therapist, ethical conduct is taken very seriously. As determined by the faculty, students found to have engaged in or to be engaging in ethical misconduct in their clinical work or in other areas involving the authenticity of student work such as cheating in coursework, misrepresenting facts in clinical paperwork or in communication with faculty, or engaging in other ethically questionable conduct may be subject to corrective measures. Examples of corrective measures include, but are not limited to, receiving a failing grade, removal from cases and all activity in the clinic, removal from external placements, completion of sanctioned activities (e.g., attend ethics trainings, retake a specific course, write essays, enroll in additional practicum hours), and dismissal from the program.

### **Clinical Competencies**

Students are expected to be able to appropriately apply theoretical material in the clinic setting. This relates to being able to engage clients in therapy, assess existing problems, and design and implement intervention strategies. Students are expected to be familiar with a variety of family therapy theories. A deficiency may exist when a student appears to not be able to apply general tenets of systems theory or specific tenets of family therapy theory as guided by the practicum supervisor. When an area of concern is identified with regard to a student's clinical performance, specific goals and strategies will be implemented in supervision to help the student develop the necessary skills. This is a normal part of the supervision experience. However, if the faculty or site supervisor believes that the problem fits within the category of a severe deficiency and it is not alleviated through initial goal setting, the faculty member will discuss the concern with the entire MFT faculty.

### **Matter of Record**

If a student engages in unprofessional or unethical conduct in their clinical work at the FTC, the faculty will consult on the infraction and may issue a Matter of Record to the student. The form will include details related to the specific infraction and will be reviewed and signed by the student, their clinical supervisor, and the Clinical Director. A first offense with a Matter of Record is considered a warning. A second offense requires the student to meet with the MFT faculty to discuss their conduct in the program and may result in a remedial plan being issued to the student. A third offense will be discussed by the MFT faculty and may result in being removed from the program depending on the infraction and the student's clinical professionalism and progress in their clinical development. All Matters of Record will be reviewed by the MFT faculty and discussed with the student directly. Copies of this Record will be added to the Student's personal program file.

### **Severe Deficiency**

The faculty will make the determination of when a problem warrants the label, "severe deficiency." If the problem is termed a severe deficiency by the faculty, the student will be notified by their practicum supervisor, major advisor, or the Program Director. The faculty member(s) will strategize and contract for specific steps the student can take to resolve this deficiency and decide on a time schedule for accomplishing the sanctions. This contract will be finalized in writing with a copy given to the student, a copy to remain in the student's file, and copies for all members of the MFT faculty. If the student satisfactorily resolves the severe deficiency, the student will receive a letter notifying them of such with a copy placed in their file and copies for all members of the MFT faculty.

### **Dismissal from the Program**

If the student still does not resolve the severe deficiencies in an adequate manner or timeframe, the student may be dismissed from the program. The student will meet with the MFT faculty to discuss the situation, and if dismissed from the program will receive a letter from the Program Director notifying the student of dismissal. Copies of the letter may also be sent to all MFT faculty members and the graduate coordinator with one placed in the student's file. Counseling a student out of the program is a difficult situation for both faculty and students. Where possible,

faculty will work with those students, who exhibit severe deficiencies in an effort to assist them in correcting the problems. Where remedial action on the part of the student is not deemed feasible such as in cases, including, but not limited to, ethical misconduct or emotional instability, the student may be dismissed from the program. In such cases, the student will be given specific feedback about the reasons for their dismissal. The members of the MFT faculty remain committed to students' growth and are invested in the success of all students in the program. As such, we will make every effort to help students address any deficiencies in a way that will allow students to benefit fully from the training and to reach their potential as therapists.

### **Important Links**

- [OC's Student Handbook](#) for Student Appeals, Leave of Absence Policy, and Student Code of Conduct
- [AAMFT Code of Ethics](#)
- [Oklahoma's Licensed Marital and Family Therapist Act](#)
- [Oklahoma's Permanent Rules Licensed Marital and Family Therapist](#)
- [Oklahoma's New Rule Amendments LMFT 07-25-2024](#)

### **Diversity & Inclusivity Policy**

It is expected that during the program students will strive to learn about and understand the unique life experiences, values, practices, and beliefs of individuals from diverse backgrounds and will learn to respond sensitively and appropriately to client needs. Students will be provided opportunities in program courses, practicum experiences, and other meetings to be exposed to and discuss issues of diversity. As students examine their own and others' identities with regard to diversity and explore associated beliefs and values, it is imperative that students acknowledge and respect differing perspectives and experiences and maintain a safe environment encouraging ongoing conversation.

The OC MFT program aims to be inclusive to all students, volunteers, staff, and clients affiliated with the program and the Family Therapy Clinic to ensure a comfortable, safe, and respectful environment by reflecting the diverse interests of all parties involved. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, relationship status, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religious or spiritual belief, religious or spiritual affiliation or national origin in any of its activities or policies relating to students. Faculty, including instructors, supervisors, other relevant educators and professional staff are subject to university hiring policies including [OC's covenant and statement of beliefs](#).

These values align with OC's policies as documented below:

OC's Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy (Student Handbook Sec III. A.) states,

Oklahoma Christian University is a Christian community that has committed itself, unequivocally, to ensuring a working and learning environment in which the dignity of every individual is respected. Therefore, it is the purpose of this policy to maintain a work and academic environment that is free of harassment. (Sexual



harassment is specifically addressed in the Sexual Misconduct Policy, rather than this, Anti-Harassment Policy.)

This policy applies to all members of the OC community, including trustees, faculty, staff, students, volunteers, vendors, and visitors and serves to protect those community members from harassment regardless of where the alleged misconduct occurred. However, misconduct that is alleged to have occurred outside of University property, or that is committed by a person outside the OC community, may be more difficult to investigate and remedy.

Harassment, as defined herein, is not tolerated at Oklahoma Christian University. Harassment is unchristian and uncivil behavior. It is a breach of community, which expresses disrespect, exploits and undermines relationships based on trust, and interferes with learning and productive work.

Any person who experiences Harassment or who otherwise becomes aware of such an incident may object to this behavior by telling the perpetrator to stop and should promptly report the incident pursuant to this policy. Such harassment allegations must be made in good faith. It is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and the Employee Standards of Conduct to make an intentionally false report of any policy violation, and it may also violate state criminal statutes and civil defamation laws.

OC's Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity Policy (Student Handbook Sec III. J.) states,

The University shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, disability, or national or ethnic origin in employment opportunities, in employment, admissions, or the provision of services, in keeping with applicable state and federal laws. Accordingly, subject to the provisions of the following paragraph, the University shall actively seek to diversify its employee and student base.

In applying this policy, the Board recognizes that Oklahoma Christian University is affiliated with the fellowship of the Church of Christ and that the University is controlled by a Board of Trustees all of whom are members of the Church of Christ, and is operated within the Christian-oriented aims and ideals and religious tenets of the Church of Christ as taught in Holy Scripture. Thus, as a religiously-controlled institution of higher education, Oklahoma Christian University is exempt from compliance with some provisions of certain civil rights laws, including some provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

OC's Sexual Misconduct Policy (Student Handbook Sec III. K.) states,

Oklahoma Christian University prohibits all unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities. Discrimination on the basis of sex is also prohibited by federal laws, including Title VII and Title IX. Notwithstanding, Oklahoma Christian University is a religious institution with sincerely held religious beliefs, based in scripture, and is therefore exempt on religious grounds, from certain civil rights laws including portions of Title VII and Title IX.

This policy governs the University's response to unlawful discrimination based on sex, and all forms of sexual misconduct which includes sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and stalking. Such behaviors are against the law and are unacceptable behaviors under Oklahoma Christian University policy. These unacceptable behaviors are hereafter referred to as "sexual misconduct." The University does not tolerate sexual misconduct and it will take action to prevent and address such misconduct. The University has jurisdiction over all Title IX and related complaints. Questions about Title IX may be directed to Oklahoma Christian University's Title IX Coordinator, Tamie Willis, (405) 425-5320, or the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

Individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct are strongly urged to promptly report such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Oklahoma Christian University will respond promptly to all reports of sexual misconduct. According to the procedures below, the University will provide a fair and impartial review and resolution for complaints and, where appropriate, issue sanctions and remedial measures. The severity of the corrective action, up to and including termination or expulsion of the respondent, will depend on the circumstances of the particular case. Any person who is a Responsible Employee, at the University, such as administrators, supervisors, managers or certain faculty members, and who has received information or has knowledge of sexual misconduct, must make a report to designated University officials or be subject to disciplinary action (see section on Responsible Employees).

### **Program Communication**

Students must use their OC-assigned email to communicate with faculty, staff, and students about program and clinic matters. Group communication will occur and items of record (to be found/referred to later) will be posted in MS Teams. Text messaging is used for more personal/individual communication such as scheduling and case assignments. Google Drive has 2 main OC MFT folders: Clinic and Program. Clinic Files pertain to all clinic business such as assessments, resources, the client assignment spreadsheet, and individual provider folders; only students with clinical privileges can access this folder. The Program Folder contains everything else including our program's handbook, the calendar, our contact info, and monthly

social media assignments. Students are responsible to remain current with information communicated across all of these channels. These categories are summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Communication Locations

E-mail	MS Teams	Google Drive	Texting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Matters related to class, e.g., readings, assignments, etc.</li> <li>- May occur directly in gmail or via Blackboard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication across cohorts</li> <li>- Used to post items of record that can be searched or referenced later</li> <li>- Cohort chats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clinic Files like assessments, resources, the client assignment spreadsheet, personal hours log, etc.</li> <li>- Program Folder contains everything else</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal matters such as schedules and case assignments</li> <li>- Urgent updates</li> <li>- Quick questions</li> <li>- <i>No confidential communication</i></li> </ul>

## Technology

### Technology Appropriate Use Policies

While in the OC MFT program, students will have access to technology located in the FTC and across campus. Students will complete clinical case management on the computer utilizing software (Jane) and electronic/virtual storage space (Vault) provided by the FTC. Students will also have access to FTC recording equipment within the FTC, be issued a recording device, or receive training on using free software (i.e., Microsoft Teams) to record sessions for use as raw data for clinical supervision. If a student experiences computing issues with the provision of teletherapy, they should contact the Clinical Director for support in resolving the issue(s) to discuss options for checking out needed equipment. °

OC has clear policies on [“Technology Appropriate Use”](#) as it pertains to all University owned or controlled information technology resources whether individually controlled or shared, stand alone or networked as well as users of University information technology resources, whether such persons are students, staff, faculty, or authorized third-party users. These policies specifically outline acts or omissions that are considered unethical and unacceptable, and which may result in immediate revocation of privileges to use the University's computing resources and/or just cause for taking disciplinary action up to and including discharge, dismissal, expulsion, and/or legal action, which may include referral for criminal investigation and/or prosecution. These policies include but are not limited to OC email use, digital media communications, social media use, network usage, and software licenses and copyrights.

Students are required to comply with all policies on Appropriate Use of Technology as well as additional policies on technology use in class and regarding aspects of clinical work (e.g., teletherapy, telesupervision, electronic case management, etc.) and signing off as receiving and reviewing this handbook constitutes your agreement to comply with these policies. Failure to abide by these policies may result in immediate dismissal from the MFT Program.

## Technology Requirements

A computer laptop with wifi and memory capabilities sufficient to stream video is required to participate in this program. Faster internet connection capabilities will ensure better access to necessary programs including Valt and research databases. OC provides students with an OC email account managed by Google; other Google suite applications (such as Drive, Sheets, and Docs) will be accessed regularly throughout the program.

## Vacations & Absences

Students are expected to plan vacations and absences around the OC academic calendar and FTC official closures. For clinic/program responsibilities, students must get MFT Program Director, Supervisor, and Clinic Director permission for absences that impact class attendance, client sessions, clinic night attendance, internship, assistantship duties (when applicable), and/or other program requirements or events that require attendance (see Table 5 below). The best practice for leave request situations is to email your immediate supervisor with the request, who will then process with the core faculty.

As outlined in [Practicum Expectations](#), students are expected to adhere to required clinic night attendance and client hours. Class attendance policies are set by individual instructors, but it is the expectation that students will make a strong effort to attend every class scheduled. An updated calendar can be found in [Academic Files](#), but annual events typically occur as reported in the table below.

Table 6. Annual MFT Program Events

Event	Typically Occurring
Orientation	August
Fall Break	October
Thanksgiving Break	November
Christmas Party	December
Christmas Break	December
Spring Break	Mid-March
Graduate Banquet	April
Graduate Hooding, Reception, and Graduation	April
May Break	Mid-May
Personal 1-Week Summer Break	Personal preference

## Assistantship & Scholarships

At this time, OC MFT offers two types of Assistantships. Each year, one Clinic Graduate Assistantship is offered for an MFT student to assist the Clinic Director in the completion of administrative tasks and provide services to clients at [Oklahoma Christian Academy](#) as well as some clients seen at FTC. This 10 -hour assistantship will be awarded for June through April of a student's final year and will be paid at a rate of \$20/hour. The person with this graduate assistantship can count this work as their off-site placement. Five hours of work each week will be administrative and 5 hours of providing direct services will be payable hours. The GA may still need to have more than the 5 payable hours to meet their needs for completing 300 required program hours. For more information, see the complete [job description here](#).

OC MFT has entered into a research partnership with the Chickasaw Nation regarding two contracts: *Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences through Data to Action* and *Essentials for Childhood Evaluator*. This partnership has created one .5 FTE (20 hours per week + 9 hours of tuition per semester) research assistantship. This position will be again competitively open to a student in Spring of 2025 (hired before the current RA graduates so a smooth transition can take place). We expect this funding to be sustained through 2028 or 2029. Each position will be hired for one or two years, depending upon the competitive talent pool of the incoming class.

Based on funding, other research assistantships may be available in the future.

To learn more about what Financial Aid may be available to you, please visit [OC Financial Aid](#). An important step in arranging any graduate financial aid (including loans, grants and some scholarships) is to complete and submit your [Free Application for Federal Student Aid - FAFSA](#).

The [Oklahoma Health Corps](#) offers loan repayment assistance to health care providers including MFTs serving facilities located in Oklahoma's health professional shortage areas. Awards of up to \$35K or \$50K, depending on type of clinician, will be offered in exchange for a two-year service commitment. The program is made possible by a federal grant from the Bureau of Health Workforce, division of National Health Service Corps.

## Criminal History Information Request

Each student must submit a [Criminal History Information Request](#) after receiving clinical permission (and before seeing their first client). This request will be processed through OC's Human Relations department. The OC MFT Program reserves the right to deny any student admittance into the clinical portion of the program dependent on results from the background check.

Some off-site placements require an additional background check before beginning.

## **AAMFT Membership & Liability Insurance**

Student Membership in American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) required at a cost of \$99/year. Using their AAMFT membership, students will obtain proof of liability insurance and provide verification to the Clinic Director each fall.

## **Student Electronic Files**

Electronic files are stored across various platforms including Google Drive, Jane, and Valt. It is expected that students will fully uphold applicable confidentiality standards so that client privacy is protected at all times. VPN access may be required to utilize specific apps off campus; for VPN assistance, visit [Support Central](#) or submit a ticket at [supportcentral@oc.edu](mailto:supportcentral@oc.edu). Students are apprised that information shared and stored via OC electronic communication/storage is not necessarily private.

## **Grievance Policy**

Open and honest communication between students and faculty is a high priority. To encourage such communication, the faculty have established the following information governing handling grievances and instances of sexual harassment. This MFT policy is intended to reinforce and supplement the existing OC Grievance Policy, not to replace that policy. The specific OC policies governing student discrimination and conduct can be found in the [Student Handbook](#) or at [my.oc.edu](http://my.oc.edu).

Students may hesitate to express concerns for a variety of reasons (like avoiding conflict, getting others “in trouble”, or potential consequences). However, expressing concerns in a healthy, respectful, and mature manner can benefit all parties. As such, students are encouraged to address issues directly when possible. For example, if students would like clarity regarding an assignment or grading policy, communicating directly with the professor (in person or via email) is the first step. If concerns are not then sufficiently resolved OR the student is unwilling to address concerns directly, students are encouraged to make a report using one of the methods outlined here:

- Student Therapist Issues: Report concerns of unprofessional conduct by a fellow therapist (out of dress code, late to sessions, not booking rooms, etc.) to the Clinic Director via email or face-to-face. Preferably, the person who witnessed the unprofessional conduct would be the one to report, but if the witness is unable or unwilling to report, then the report may come through the Student Representative. The Clinic Director may take the complaint to the Program Director if complaints are repetitive or egregious.
- General Cohort Requests: For issues that cannot be resolved quickly or that involve the majority of the cohort, students can lodge an informal complaint in either the regular Staff Meeting or through the Student Representative in the Supervisors Meeting. Examples might include a request for additional resources, a suggestion for a new policy or

procedure, or a recommendation for a training. Students are welcome to lodge these as formal complaints as well.

- Formal Requests and Complaints: For issues that need investigation, that are particular to a student or faculty/staff member, that are sensitive, or that are grievous, students should file a formal complaint in writing with the Program Director. Examples include harassment or offensive behavior by a student, faculty member, supervisor, or staff; ethical violations; cheating or plagiarism; complaints against faculty, supervisors, or staff; and ongoing issues between students and others that students have been unable to resolve on their own. Although the student may include as much or as little information in their complaint as they choose, detailing the complaint and suggesting a resolution when possible is most helpful. Complaints can be anonymous and may be filed on paper or via email. Should the student not be satisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing directly to the Department Chair. The next appeal is to [Byron Newberry](#), Associate Provost of Graduate Programs and then to [Brian Starr](#), Provost of the University. Complaints involving the Program Director can be taken directly to [Byron Newberry](#), Associate Provost of Graduate Programs.

Generally, reports should be timely and include as much detail as possible (names, dates, quotes, action, et cetera) and the desired intervention/resolution. Reports should also be timely. The more detail we have, the better we can respond. Although faculty will attempt to inform the student when the issue has been addressed, in some cases this may not be possible.

OC Technology and Physical Campus complaints should be directed to [Support Central](#). Students may make complaints to Academic Affairs (Grade Appeal, Academic Honesty Appeal), Title IX (Sexual Misconduct or Gender Discrimination), Campus Police (Crime Incident Report), or Student Life (Safety, Discrimination, Residential Life, Misc.) using the student form on my.oc.edu. [Explanatory information](#) regarding the complaint form is available.

Students are encouraged to report a grievance or make a complaint when appropriate and are assured of non-retaliatory practices as outlined in OC's policies which state:

No member of the OC community may be subject to restraint, interference, or retaliation, by any employee or student, for actions taken in good faith to file or encourage one to file a complaint, participate in a review, or oppose unlawful harassment. Moreover, because a claim is not proof of prohibited conduct, a claim shall not be taken into account during performance review, promotion, reappointment, or other evaluation unless a final determination has been made that this policy has been violated. If necessary and appropriate, such decisions shall be deferred until the claim is resolved. (Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy (Student Handbook Sec III. A.))

Retaliation against anyone who makes a report of sexual misconduct is prohibited by University policy as well as Title IX and other state and federal laws. Procedures for reporting incidents of sexual misconduct, and investigating

and adjudicating sexual misconduct complaints are part of this policy and are included or linked below. In exceptional cases the University reserves the right to take prompt action without employee or student conduct proceedings. (Sexual Misconduct Policy (Student Handbook Sec III. K.))

### Getting Involved

Students are encouraged to get involved in national organizations and their local chapters where possible. Such participation provides the opportunity for networking, building leadership skills, and gaining experiences. Following is a list of available state/national organizations to increase your connections:

#### AAMFT ([www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org))

- The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) is the professional association for the field of marriage and family therapy. AAMFT represents the professional interests of more than 50,000 MFTs throughout the US, Canada, and abroad.

#### OKAMFT (<https://networks.aamft.org/oklahoma/home>)

- The Oklahoma Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (OKAMFT) is your first and best stop for news on employment and practice building opportunities in your state/province. The Division represents you at the state or provincial government on legislative and regulatory matters that affect your ability to make a living. You will find opportunities to enhance your leadership skills, stay up-to-date on the latest innovations in the field, and meet, work with other MFTs throughout Oklahoma. Historically each year, student/associate members of OKAMFT elect a student representative to the OKAMFT board. The student rep serves as a non-voting member of the board and president of the OKAMFT student board. The student board is made up of graduate student representatives from each of the MFT graduate programs across Oklahoma. Each fall, the OKAMFT student board also hosts the Student & New Professional Conference.

#### NCFR ([www.ncfr.org](http://www.ncfr.org))

- The National Council on Family Relations is the premier professional association for the multidisciplinary understanding of families.

#### Others

- American Family Therapy Academy ([AFTA](#))
- American Association of Christian Counselors ([AACC](#))
- APA Division 43: Society for Couple and Family Psychology ([APA 43](#))
- Collaborative Family Healthcare Association ([CFHA](#))
- EMDR International Association ([EMDRIA](#))
- International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors ([IAMFC](#))
- International Family Therapy Association ([IFTA](#))
- Parent Child Interaction Therapy International ([PCIT International](#))
- Association for Play Therapy ([APT](#))



## APPENDIX

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## List of Abbreviations

AAMFT	American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
AMFTRB	Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards
BBHL	Oklahoma State Board of Behavioral Health Licensure
COAMFTE	Commission on Accreditation of Family Therapy Education
FTC	Family Therapy Clinic
LMFT	Licensed Marital and Family Therapist
MSHS	Masters of Science in Human Sciences
MFT	Marriage and Family Therapist
OC	Oklahoma Christian University
OC MFT	Oklahoma Christian Marriage and Family Therapy (Program)

## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I complete a Master’s Thesis or gain a comprehensive research experience?

A: Students who wish to complete a Master’s Thesis or gain a comprehensive research experience will need to take an additional minimum six hours.

Q: Is this program online or in-person? What personal technology is required?

A: This program is currently being offered in a 30% online and 70% in-person learning format. The current structure precludes international students from applying for a residential student status. We may redress this structure in the future, but currently, the faculty believes an in-person, face-to-face clinical skills training is best experienced on-site where direct and timely feedback can be provided to graduate level therapists-in-training.

Students are required to have a laptop for individual use; this laptop should have enough storage and processing speed to easily interface with high demand applications such as Valt (clinic video viewing app) and Jane (paperwork and scheduling software). Students will use apps within the google suite as well as Microsoft Teams.

Q: Is this program available to international students?

A: Yes, international students may apply for entrance into this program. However, students should be advised that the TOEFL scores required for admittance are limited to top 5% of scores across all portions of the exam.

Q: What kind of costs can I anticipate?

A: Tuition for the 2024/2025 academic year has been set at \$575 per credit hour. A clinic fee of \$75 is charged once per semester for all students enrolled in a practicum class (including Basic Skills and Capstone). There is a \$25 enrollment fee per semester ([see full financial policy](#)). International students will be charged an International Administrative fee at \$25 per credit hour (beginning Fall 2024). Additional costs include textbooks/required reading materials, personal liability insurance (\$99/year), and class supplies. Some students will choose to pursue additional training (e.g., PREPARE/ENRICH or EMDR) at additional personal cost.

Q: Is this program accredited?

A: The program has been approved by the Oklahoma Board of Behavioral Health Licensure. Graduates of this program are qualified to apply for candidacy (the process required for graduates of all training programs to gain clinical experience before full licensure). An accreditation letter of intention was submitted to the Commission on Accreditation of Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) in spring 2024; further steps toward this goal will be taken this fall (2024) and spring (2025) after we have collected the data necessary for accreditation (2 years).

Q: Can I work full time while completing the program?

A: While it is possible for students to work while pursuing their MFT graduate degree, it is not advised that students work full time if they plan to graduate in 2 years. (Thus far, students who are pursuing program credits full time have not concurrently held a full time job for the entirety of the program.) In the first semester before clinical requirements have begun, some students have found it possible to work full time, but once clinical requirements increase (seeing clients in the FTC *and* at offsite placements), the hours to work full time, be a full time student with clinical obligations, and continue personal pursuits becomes nearly impossible. Students are therefore encouraged to rearrange their schedules as much as possible to accommodate the expectations of this rigorous clinical program.

Q: Do I have to attend this program full time?

A: No. It is possible to complete the program with a schedule extended over a longer period of time - 3 or 4 years possibly. Students would earn credit hours at a slower pace (fewer classes each semester) and then join a cohort gaining clinical experience in their last year.

Q: What kind of schedule am I committing to, and what kind of breaks can we expect?

A: This program is similar to all clinical training programs in that you will be asked to closely attune to your studies and clinical opportunities each week over the course of at least 2 calendar years. A full-time student takes nine course hours/semester and should allot necessary out of class time for reading, completing assignments, etc. Each student also has variable clinical commitments throughout their tenure starting with 4 hours/week of observation in their first semester and increasing to 12-15 hours/week of clinical contact their final semester. Previous students have estimated the amount of time they've spent on academic and clinical work each semester, and their responses range from ten hours per

week to twenty hours per week. Clinical experience could take that time up to thirty with some external placement loads. Independent study or thesis work could increase that load as well. Practicum classes do not always stick to “traditional” scheduling or expectations; for example, students may be asked to meet at a mental health care facility to learn about that type of care outside the normally scheduled class schedule. This will be communicated in advance and does not occur often, but there are some variations from typical time and place.

Class breaks follow a traditional academic calendar with time off for Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break. Clinic closures (when students do not see clients in OC’s clinic) align with those class breaks with an additional break in May and a week of the student’s choosing over the summer. Classes occur over the summer, and students can choose 6 hours for full time or 3 hours for an extended program completion.

### **Graduate College & University Resources**

Students may refer to the [student handbook](#) for more information, but the following list will help you navigate most needs on campus.

[Support Central](#) is OC’s hub for student support services. By accessing this website or calling the office ((405)425-5555), students may contact the following departments:

- [Information Technology](#) is the contact point for issues related to Email, Google Drive, Microsoft Office Products, MyOC, Printing, Network, etc.
- The [North Institute](#) manages needs pertaining to Blackboard, OC’s learning management system.
- [Residence Life](#) manages on-campus living arrangements.
- The [Admissions Office](#) aids students obtain a student ID card, email account, and apply for campus housing (when appropriate).
- [Financial Services](#) may be contacted with queries regarding managing financial aid, meal plan options, and how to access your 1098-T tax form.
- The [Student Life](#) office oversees services such as lost and found, student mail, spiritual life, and intramural sports.
- The [Campus Police](#) assist in campus safety, registration of student vehicles, and enforcing rules and regulations.
- The [Registrar](#) manages transcripts, degree plans, and course registration.
- OC’s Career Services are organized in [Handshake](#).

### **Informed Consent for Clinical Training**

The clinical portion of training in the Marriage and Family Therapy graduate degree involves the student in a unique, applied learning experience. The clinical experiences, with their additional responsibilities and methods of evaluation, are not typical of other nonclinical graduate programs. Because of the unique aspects of clinical training, the [Informed Consent for Clinical Training](#) is designed to describe aspects of the Marriage and Family Therapy specialization of

which the student might not otherwise be aware. This document should be read and used in conjunction with other documentation concerning the MFT program.

### **Clinical Skills Evaluation**

To monitor each student's core clinical skills, students and their supervisor will complete a [Clinical Competency Assessment](#) as they finish the semester in Practicum I, Practicum III, and Capstone. This process allows the student to recognize the growth they have made and attend to the areas that require increased attention. The assessment informs that practicum's grade as well as a student's readiness to graduate.

### **Family Therapy Clinic Weekly Clinical Hours Report**

Students must submit a weekly accounting of clinical hours; this report includes client contact, observation and supervision hours. (Cultural Passport experiences will also be recorded on this sheet.) Each student will be provided an individual recording sheet that will automatically update a master list documenting all students' progress. For more information about how to count hours, students may refer to the [Counting Hours Guidance](#).

### **External Site Practicums**

The [External Site Practicum Contract](#) outlines the expectations of all parties involved in off-site placements - OC MFT program and students as well as the off site organization and supervisor. Topics addressed include duration of placement, clinical hours made available to students, an understanding of ethical record-keeping, and supervisor availability. Externship site requirements are listed within this contract.

### **Off-Site Evaluation of Clinical Intern**

The [Off Site Supervisor Feedback Form](#) provides off-site practicum supervisors an opportunity to record their professional impressions of the student(s) placed at their site. Students are evaluated on a likert scale from "major growth area" to "major strength area" in categories including joining/rapport, assessment and diagnosis, treatment planning and interventions, case documentation, and professionalism.

### **Intern Evaluation of Off-Site**

The [Off Site Evaluation Form](#) enables students to provide feedback concerning their experience working at their off-site placement. Responses concern the site, the supervisor, and support/resources made available. Student feedback allows faculty and future students to more thoughtfully consider future placement opportunities.

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- Southern Connecticut State University

We are thankful for the cooperative spirit of MFT programs across the nation.