University of Alabama
MFT Program Handbook

Marriage and Family Therapy Concentration

Department of
Human Development & Family Studies

University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

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Introduction

Welcome and Congratulations on your continued academic success!

Graduate school represents a new educational experience, and students are faced with a large amount of complex information. The UA MFT Program Handbook describes expectations from the point of admission to degree completion and provides information about the program’s policies and procedures. Although every effort has been made to provide accurate information throughout this handbook, the enclosed materials are minimal guidelines toward a comprehensive and integrated educational program. Therefore, students may receive educational and training materials while enrolled in the program beyond those covered in this handbook. It is important that students work closely with, as well as, direct personal and educational questions to the MFT Program Director.

All students receive a copy of the UA MFT Program Handbook upon entrance to the program. An electronic version of the Handbook is provided to students on the program’s website.

It is important for you to be familiar with this handbook and to review it periodically as it is your responsibility to ensure that you are meeting all requirements for continued progress and graduation.
SECTION I: UA MFT PROGRAM OVERVIEW
MFT Program Mission and Overview

MFT Program Mission
The Marriage and Family Therapy Graduate Program at the University of Alabama will prepare students to become licensed MFTs that are trained in relational/systemic and evidenced-based models and theories, with a strong focus on adopting multiculturally-informed, and ethically-aligned practices in working with diverse populations.

Program Overview
The Master of Science in Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) with a concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) at The University of Alabama (UA) is designed to provide students with the basic knowledge, skills, and professional identity essential to the practice of marriage and family therapy. Our goal is to train students who will function as marriage and family therapists at the highest level of clinical competence, and who also are capable of making unique contributions to the field of marriage and family therapy through research, teaching, and other activities extending beyond helping particular clients. The University of Alabama is committed to the principle that in no aspect of its programs shall there be differences in the treatment of persons because of race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, age, sex, or disability, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all.

Students in this program will be involved in an educational experience that will qualify them to practice in controlled settings, while continuing education, personal growth, and professional experiences accumulate. Consistent with the guidelines established by the Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy (ABEMFT), the curriculum includes coursework in human development, marital and family studies, marriage and family therapy, professionalism and ethics, research and statistics, and supervised practicum. The program emphasizes parallel development in the areas of clinical skills, self-awareness, and the establishment of an integrated systemic approach to marriage and family therapy, with a progressive synthesis of the three areas as the student develops basic competence in each area.

Students are required to follow an organized sequence of study, in which concurrent academic and practicum coursework are integrated. The faculty does not teach or adhere to a single theory, school or approach to couple, marriage, and family therapy. Rather, students are exposed to a broad range of marriage and family therapy and evidenced-based models. Throughout the program, students are encouraged to develop their own systemic approach to treatment. The process of developing proficiency as a marriage and family therapist is viewed as an ongoing integration of growing awareness and development of self, growing skillfulness in the application of various therapeutic methods, and growing knowledge and understanding of individual/family dynamics, diverse family forms, problems, resources and possibilities for change.

The UA Marriage and Family Therapy Program allows students to apply for Clinical Membership in the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and licensure in the state of Alabama, and most other states’ MFT licensure (some states require additional coursework due to unique requirements), after they have completed the required number of post-graduate hours practicing family therapy. It is the student’s responsibility to explore licensure in the state she/he plans to practice Marriage and Family Therapy given that licensure requirements change from time to time, and differ from state to state.
Upon completion of the Marriage and Family Therapy concentration, we expect the student to have achieved competence as defined by the Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes. We believe marriage and family therapy as a profession is in a unique position to advance our understanding of the human condition. The social and behavioral sciences have turned increasingly to the study and recognition of the importance of the family in its impact on societal problems ranging from behavior problems in children to depression and alcoholism in adults. Unfortunately, much of the academic work on these problems has been undertaken by those with little direct clinical experience and understanding of families and social context. On the other hand, the field of marriage and family therapy has developed with too little attention to establishing the validity of its theoretical base and clinical wisdom by a body of competent research findings.

The MFT Faculty are actively involved in all aspects of the student’s education and training and provide extensive and sustained mentoring in both research and clinical work throughout the program. The faculty views the academic and clinical portions of our program as equally important. Clinical training must proceed from a solid understanding of child development, adult development and aging, and marriage and family processes. The UA MFT Program emphasizes the integration and application of clinical practice, academic, and research for supporting individuals, couples, and families.

**Licensure in Marriage and Family Therapy**

The UA MFT Program meets all course-related and clinical requirements for applying for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate (MFT-A) in the state of Alabama. Students graduating with a M. S. in HDFS with a concentration in MFT are required to complete 500 hours of face-to-face therapy (including at least 250 hours with couples or families). The total hours are comprised of hours accumulated in clinical work at the UA Capstone Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC) and approved off-site community placements.

The UA MFT Concentration is not currently accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). However, The University of Alabama is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Your degree is nationally recognized and accepted, and once you complete the degree, you may identify yourself as having completed a Master of Science (M.S.) in Human Development and Family Studies with a Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy.

Many states require complete transcripts and evidence of course content for licensure regardless of accreditation status. Because licensure is regulated by individual states, it is possible that a state other than Alabama may have additional requirements not provided as part of the standard UA MFT Program curriculum. Students considering pursuing licensure in other states are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor and visit the licensure board for the state of interest (see below links).

After MFT-As receive additional supervised training by an approved supervisor during a clinical residency period, alumni may be eligible to apply for a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in Alabama. Individuals must pass the national licensure examination (Marriage and Family Therapy National Examination; www.amftrb.org) in order to receive the LMFT license. You are
encouraged to visit the ABEMFT website to learn more about MFT licensure guidelines: http://mft.alabama.gov/.

In Alabama, full licensure as an MFT requires 1000 hours of face-to-face therapy (including at least 250 relational), beginning only after the granting of the Associate License. While other states’ requirements differ, AAMFT requires full state licensure for Clinical Fellow Membership. Students enrolled in the UA MFT master’s degree program are strongly encouraged to take the national licensure exam as soon as possible after graduation (even if you plan to seek licensure in another state) and apply for the MFT-A (associate license) as soon as the degree is conferred. The UA MFT program is not designed to meet the requirements for licensure in other professions (e.g., licensed professional counselor; LPC).

AAMFT Link to state licensing boards: https://aamft.org/Directories/MFT_Licensing_Boards.aspx?WebsiteKey=8e8c9bd6-0b71-4cd1-a5ab-013b5f855b01

Third Party Aggregator of MFT Licensure Requirements: http://www.mft-license.com/
Program Goals, Student Learning Outcomes, and Benchmarks

The UA MFT faculty have identified a list of Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes we believe to be key to competent and sound practice for new professionals in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy. The activities, assignments, and learning experiences in courses throughout the program are focused on assisting students in the development of these fundamental competencies. The competencies are listed below by domain.

**Program Goal #1 (Knowledge): Students will learn to operate from a systems/relational, developmentally appropriate, and science-informed perspective.**

SLO #1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of operating from a systems/relational, developmentally appropriate, and science-informed perspective with individual, couple, and family clientele.

**Benchmarks**

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Practicum Evaluation.
  
  o TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Practicum Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (relational/systemic theory) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.
  
  o TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Internship Evaluation.
  
  o TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the Question 1 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

  o TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the Questions 3 and 6 - 7 (clinical) of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (items 1-2) of the Alumni Survey.

  o TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (items 1-2) of the Alumni Survey.
**Goal #2 (Practice): Students will be prepared to apply a systems/relational, developmentally-informed orientation to the assessment and treatment of clients.**

SLO #2: Students will demonstrate effective systems/relational, developmentally-informed therapeutic practice in the treatment of individuals, couples, and families.

**Benchmarks**

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Practicum Evaluation.
  - **TARGET:** 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Practicum Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.
  - **TARGET:** 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Internship Evaluation.
  - **TARGET:** 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 1 of the Program Exit Evaluation.
  - **TARGET:** 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 1 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the clinical practice items on Question 15 (items 6-7) of the Alumni Survey.
  - **TARGET:** 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the clinical practice items in Question 15 (items 6-7) of the Alumni Survey.

**Goal #3 (Diversity): Students will understand the intersection of cultural/contextual factors (Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Socio-Economic Status, etc.) and application to clinical practice.**

SLO #3: Student will demonstrate knowledge and application of the intersection of cultural/contextual factors (Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Socio-Economic Status, etc.) to clinical practice.
Benchmarks

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Practicum Evaluation.
  - TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Practicum Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.
  - TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Internship Evaluation.
  - TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 3 of the Program Exit Evaluation.
  - TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 3 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the diversity items on Question 18 of the Alumni Survey.
  - TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the clinical practice items in Question 18 of the Alumni Survey.

**Goal #4 (Ethics): Students will be prepared to apply appropriate systemic/relational ethics and relevant laws and legislation to clinical practice.**

SLO#4: Students will demonstrate knowledge and application of AAMFT Code of Ethics, and relevant laws and legislation.

Benchmarks

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 4 (Ethics) of the Practicum Evaluation.
  - TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 4 (Ethics) of the Practicum Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 4
(Ethics) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 4 (Ethics) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 4 (Ethics) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 2 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (items 4-5) of the Alumni Survey.

SLO #5: Students will demonstrate an identity of a professional Marriage and Family Therapist.

Benchmarks

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 5 (Professional Identity) of the Practicum Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 5 (Professional Identity) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 5 (Professional Identity) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 1 (Professional Identity) of
the Program Exit Evaluation.

- TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 1 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (item 1) of the Alumni Survey.

- TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (item 1) of the Alumni Survey.

**Goal #5 (Research): Students will be prepared to consume the Marriage and Family Therapy research and evidence-based practice literature and apply research to clinical practice.**

SLO #6: Students will demonstrate comprehension and application of relevant research to clinical practice.

**Benchmarks**

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Practicum Evaluation.

  - TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Practicum Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

  - TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Internship Evaluation.

  - TARGET: 90% of students will receive scores of 6 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Questions 5-6 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

  - TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Questions 5-6 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (item 5) of the Alumni
Survey.

- TARGET: 90% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (item 5) of the Alumni Survey.
Roles and Responsibilities

**MFT Program Director**
The Program Director, a core MFT Program faculty member, is responsible for oversight of the curriculum and the overall clinical training program, planning, and growth of the CFTC in conjunction with the UA MFT Program Clinic Director, and for both maintenance and enhancement of program quality. The Program Director is ultimately responsible for the MFT program through adherence to the MFT program mission, and 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 Alabama licensure law, maintaining and/or achieving COAMFTE accreditation standards, and the overall success of the program as determined by a joint group of the MFT faculty, the UA HDFS Department Chair, and the College of Human Environmental Sciences 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 master’s level program without adequate records demonstrating that all requirements for graduation have been met. The Program Director serves as the advisor for all students enrolled in the UA MFT Program.

**MFT Director of Clinical Training**
The UA MFT Director of Clinical Training (DCT), a core MFT Program faculty member, is responsible for overseeing the services provided within the scope of the CFTC meet appropriate ethical, legal, and competent service standards. The DCT is responsible for the clinic operations maintaining economic viability, and for the services provided being consistent with the policies of the MFT program and greater HDFS department. The DCT approves all activities to be conducted in the clinic on the basis of said activities meeting the stated requirements.

Clinical students and staff are responsible to the DCT for all clinic activities in the CFTC not otherwise specified. The clinic director and ultimately, the MFT Program Director, can authorize changes or waivers of student responsibilities in the clinic. The Clinic 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 resource needs to meet said growth and development.

**MFT Core Faculty**
There are currently two core MFT faculty members in the HDFS department at UA. You will work closely with the MFT faculty as you pursue your degree. The MFT faculty will teach the majority of your courses and provide the majority of your clinical supervision. Following is a brief introduction to each of these faculty members.

**Blake Berryhill, Ph.D., LMFT** is a graduate of the COAMFTE accredited Ph.D. program at Kansas State University. Dr. Berryhill came to UA in 2015 and is an Alabama Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and AAMFT Approved Clinical Supervisor. His research interests include focus implementation and dissemination of mobile health technologies (Telemedicine) for the prevention and treatment of mental health
symptomology in rural schools. Additionally, he examines the interrelationship between adolescent and emerging adult family functioning, self-compassion, and mental health outcomes. Dr. Berryhill serves as the UA MFT Program Director.

**Karly Downs, Ph.D., LMFT**, is a graduate of the COAMFTE accredited Ph.D. program at Michigan State University and is an Alabama Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and AAMFT Approved Clinical Supervisor. Dr. Downs came to UA in 2015. She specializes in working with anxiety, depression, and addictions, and has experience both in the academic and private practice fields. Dr. Downs serves as the UA MFT Director of Clinical Training.

**Clinical Supervisor**

A “Clinical Supervisor” designation must be made by the Program Director in conjunction with the core MFT faculty. This designation must be carried in order to provide CFTC services, supervise student clinicians operating in the CFTC or otherwise have access to view or to provide services, training or supervision within the scope of the CFTC clinic operations. Clinical Supervisors must be AAMFT Approved Supervisors/Supervisors in Training.
The faculty of the UA MFT Program are dedicated to a model of program governance that is collaborative where possible and honors the voices of all the program faculty and students. In almost all cases, decisions about program governance are made through program faculty consensus, with input from students and stakeholders. Students participate in the governance of the program through representing their cohorts on the MFT Advisory Council, providing input to cohort representatives who serve on MFT Council, completing annual surveys, and providing direct feedback/requests to faculty.

**Program Director Responsibilities**

The UA MFT Program Director is the facilitative lead for the MFT graduate program and one point of contact for program, clinical, or faculty related concerns. If you have a concern or suggestion, you can always bring it to the program director directly. The responsibilities of the program director include:

**Academic Program Director**

- Coordinate bi-weekly faculty meetings addressing issues relative to the MFT Program.
- Coordinate interview and acceptance processes of applicants for the MFT Program.
- Receive and distribute messages to students and faculty related to position openings, internships, training opportunities, and other pressing matters.
- Meet with students to address and resolve issues related to program of study, cohort concerns, and comprehensive exams.
• Coordinate the grading of comprehensive exams.
• Function as an advisor for students in the program.
• Response to regular inquiries from prospective MFT Program graduate students.
• Coordinate management transition issues related to faculty and staff turnover.
• Meet with all MFT graduate students to coordinate their programs of study, off-site placements, and graduation plans.
• Coordinate regular review of program data, resources, and teaching/learning practices.

Department, College and University Interaction
• Liaison with the HDFS Department Chair
• Serve as MFT liaison with College and Graduate School
• Respond to immediate needs from Department, College or University

National and State Interaction
• Participate in AAMFT program director’s listserv
• Lead national and state representation at conferences.

Accreditation
• Coordinate accreditation of UA MFT program
• Correspond with Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) to address ongoing issues related to changes and concerns
• Coordinate submission of annual reports and accreditation site visits
• Coordinate the response to accreditation concerns with program functioning
• Coordinate the preparation and submission of annual reports and the Self Study.

Business Management
• Coordinate all course content and sequencing
• Coordinate recruitment, admissions, and retention efforts
• Maintain the program website
• Coordinate the tracking of accreditation related data

Capstone Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC)
• Coordinate with the Director of Clinical Training on the following responsibilities
  o Manage clinic finances
  o Coordinate supervision of graduate and undergraduate students in the clinic
  o Maintain Clinic data base and address issues related to service delivery
  o Update and enforce CFTC policies and procedures manual
  o Coordinate community initiatives (e.g., education groups, internship placements) outreach, and networking.
  o Assists with clinic emergencies and client concerns
  o Maintain compliance with ethical and professional standards of care regarding client confidentiality
**Director of Clinical Training Responsibilities**

The DTC functions as the CFTC Clinic Director, and is the primary point of contact for issues related to clinic operation, clinical issues, and internship/externship issues. The Clinic Director works closely with the Program Director and all program Faculty to ensure the UA CFTC functions to support the Program goals and SLOs. Responsibilities of the UA MFT Director of Clinical Training include:

**Clinical Director of the Capstone Family Therapy Clinic**

- **General CFTC operations**
  - Maintain FTC recording equipment and clinic facilities
  - Update and maintain the FTC Policies & Procedures Manual
  - Train incoming students on clinic policies and recording equipment
  - Address student concerns when primary faculty supervisor is unavailable
  - Maintain compliance with ethical and professional standards of care regarding client confidentiality, record keeping, and professional conduct of student therapists.

- **Clinic Finances**
  - Track clinic income and expenditures
  - Deposit clinic fees/process account transfers

- **Staff Management**
  - Case assignment/intake scheduling
  - Maintain MCSR database and syntax to track student hours
  - Organize program special events
  - Maintain client records/scanned files
  - Monitor therapy rooms/supplies forms
  - File scanning and storage
  - Special projects as assigned

- **Database Management**
  - Maintain the Advanced MD software for client file management
  - Maintain the clinical assessment/research database
    - Purchase software & measurement licenses/renewals
    - Write and maintain syntax to score assessments
    - Facilitate access to data for student and faculty research
    - Implement outcome-based procedures/data collection

- **Off-site Placement Coordination**
  - Facilitate student placements
  - Process internship documentation
  - Maintain contact with site/agency contact
  - Provide clinical supervision as assigned

- **Clinic Development and Community Liaison**
  - Public Relations/Marketing/Community outreach and networking
    - Participate in health fairs, campus resource events, and other community events
    - Update and coordinate outreach and placement of promotional materials
      - Distribute to referral sources and attend local organizational meetings
      - Assess and expand current and new referral sources
Program Faculty Responsibilities
The program core faculty are expected to take active roles in the ongoing governance of the program. Although the Program Director and Director of Clinical Training have specific coordination roles, all the faculty have an equal voice in the governance of the program. Wherever possible, decisions about teaching/learning practices, curriculum, clinical training, supervision, hiring, admissions, allocation of resources, and student issues are made by consensus of the program faculty. Governance responsibilities of the program faculty include:

- Attend and participate in bi-weekly MFT faculty meetings.
- Participate in the review of application for admission, the interview for admissions process, and the selection of students for the program.
- Be available and open to hearing concerns or suggestions from students and communicating the concerns or suggestions to the program faculty as a whole.
- Participate in the grading of comprehensive exams.
- Participate in regular review of program goals, student learning outcomes, resources, teaching/learning practices, and curriculum.
- Participate in the production of annual reports and self-studies for accreditation.
- Function professionally in ways that support the programs goals related research, clinical training, supervision, teaching, diversity, and addiction sciences.

Students
We value the input of our students and want you to have an active role in the governance of the program. You are always welcome to discuss ideas or concerns with any of the program faculty and should expect them to be responsive. In addition to informal input, there are three formal mechanisms by which you can be directly involved in the governance of the program:

- Consider becoming a student representative: Student representatives from each cohort become a part of the UA MFT Program Advisory Council. Student representatives attend one faculty meeting per month to share ideas, suggestions, or concerns about the program with the program faculty.
- Offer honest, considered feedback during your annual review. All students participate in the annual review process in order to evaluate your progress in the program. However, the annual review is also, intended as an opportunity for you to give feedback to program faculty about your experience in the program. We want to hear your ideas, concerns, and suggestions for how the program can be better.
- Take the time to thoughtfully complete the Practicum Self Evaluations, Supervisor Evaluations, Internship Evaluation Survey, Program Exit Evaluation, and Alumni Surveys. Your feedback is used to shape the program and to determine if we are meeting the program goals. We want to hear what you really think!

Stakeholders
We value the input of our stakeholders and want their input to influence the governance of the program. We maintain informal dialogue with all of our stakeholders and welcome their feedback and suggestions. In addition to informal feedback, a formal data collection process exists:

- Stakeholders are regularly asked to complete the Internship/Stakeholder Evaluation. The survey has two components. The first portion of the survey requests information on student intern/extern performance specifically related to program goals and SLOs. The second portion of the survey requests more general feedback about the program and the
relationship between the program and the stakeholder. Data from the surveys is used as part of our assessment plan to evaluate program goals, curriculum, and teaching learning practices.

**UA MFT Advisory Council**
The MFT Advisory Council is made up of the MFT faculty and student representatives from each active cohort. The council meets regularly to discuss student and program needs. Students in the program are encouraged to share any concerns, feedback, or recommendations with their representative so that their representative can relay the information to the MFT council in their regularly scheduled (monthly) meetings (students can also share feedback directly to MFT core faculty). Notes from council meetings will be made available to all students in the program following the meetings.

**Student Representatives**
One student from each cohort will be elected (by the members of their cohort) to serve as a cohort representative on the MFT Advisory Council. Student representatives serve for a minimum period of one semester. Student representatives will attend MFT council meetings and bring feedback, concerns, suggestions, and questions to the meeting from the members of their cohort.
SECTION II: DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
Program Components & Degree Requirements

Following admission to the program, the MFT Program Director will provide academic advising for all incoming MFT students. Students must conform to the rules of the graduate school at The University of Alabama as reflected in the current UA Graduate Catalog (https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/). Students should be registered for the number of hours that reflects the extent of their involvement in the graduate program. Students holding assistantships or scholarships must be enrolled for the appropriate number of hours each semester (including summer sessions).

Degree Completion Timeline
Students typically complete their M.S. degree in an average of two-years. The normal course load for MFT students is 9-12 hours in the Fall/Spring semesters and 9 hours in the Summer term. The UA Graduate School states that students have a maximum of six years to complete their degree.

Degree Completion Requirements
In order to graduate with the Master of Science in HDFS with a concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy, the following minimal requirements must be satisfied:

- Completion of required 51 credit hours in residence within a six-year timeframe following the first semester registered in the program (See UA MFT Program Curriculum Requirements & Sequencing).
- Completion of all required coursework with a cumulative B average (3.0 GPA) or better.
- Completion of 500 hours of face-to-face direct client contact, with 250 of these hours being relational (with couples and families in residence).
- Completion of 100 clinical supervision hours, with 50 hours of individual supervision. Supervision must include 50 hours of observable data (e.g., audio and video recordings; live supervision).
- Passing of the MFT Program Comprehensive Exam (see Comprehensive Examination).

Additional Instruction and Training Requirements
In addition to coursework, students will have other opportunities to receive additional instruction and training. Students are required to attend monthly CFTC staff meetings. In addition to addressing CFTC business, during the monthly CFTC meetings guest speakers will be invited to teach students about specific clinically relevant topics. Absences from any scheduled program meeting or event should be approved by the Program Director before the event.

Annual Check-In Interviews
Each student will have annual 20-30-minute interview with program faculty to review the student’s progress and discuss steps for continued growth in the program. Interviews will be held for the first-year students near the beginning of the spring semester and for the second-year near the end of the fall semester. During the interview, the student and faculty will discuss the evaluations from
each perspective (student, MFT faculty, other instructors, and assistantship supervisors) and discuss next steps for continued progress.

**Mentor/Mentee Process**
First-year and second-year students are matched by the faculty during the early fall semester each year to form a mentor/mentee relationship. The second-year student (mentor) is responsible for meeting with the mentee each week 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: application of basic skills content to clinical practice, use of the CFTC technology and computing, engaging in the teaming process, CFTC 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.
UA MFT Program Curriculum Requirements & Sequencing

Course Requirements

Clinical Practice in Marriage and Family Therapy ........................................... 9 credit hours

- HD 640 Couple and Sex Therapy (3)
- HD 664 Family Therapy (3)
- HD 665 Advanced Family Therapy (3)

Multicultural Competency in Marriage and Family Therapy ....................... 3 credit hours

- HD 645 Cultural Diversity in Marriage and Family Therapy (3)

Ethics and Professional Identity in Marriage and Family Therapy ............. 3 credit hours

- HD 641 Ethics and Professional Issues in MFT (3)

Mental Health Diagnosis and Treatment ...................................................... 3 credit hours

- HD 642 (3) Systemic Assessment and Diagnosis of Psychopathology in MFT

Human Development and Family Studies .................................................. 6 credit hours

- HD 500 Lifespan Development (3)
- HD 562 Dynamics of Family Relations (3)

Research ........................................................................................................... 6 credit hours

- BER 540 Stats I (3)
- HES 509 Research Methods (3)

Practicum and Internship ................................................................................ 15 credit hours

- HD 567 Pract Marriage Family Therapy (3)
- HD 568 Pract I Marriage Family Therapy (3)
- HD 667 Pract II Marriage Family Therapy (3)
- HD 668 Intern Marriage Family Therapy (6)

Elective Courses ............................................................................................. 6 credit hours

- *Approved Elective (3)
- *Approved Elective (3)
- *one elective must be a HD graduate course

Total Credits Required for Concentration: 51 (36 didactic + 15 practicum and internship)

Students Must Complete 500 Client-Contact Hours (at least 250 couple/family hours)
UA MFT Program Curriculum Sequence Example

**Year 1**

**Fall I, (12 credits)**
- HD 500 (3) Life Span
- HD 567 (3) Practicum
- HD 664 (3) Family Therapy
- HD 641 (3) Ethics and Professional Issues in MFT

**Spring I, (12 credits)**
- HD 665 (3) Advanced Family Therapy
- HD 568 (3) Practicum I
- HD 640 (3) Couple and Sex Therapy
- HES 509 (3) Research Methods

**May Interim (3 Credits)**
- HD 642 (3) Systemic Assessment and Diagnosis of Psychopathology in MFT

**Summer Semester (6 credits)**
- HD 645 (3) Cultural Diversity in MFT
- HD 667 (3) Practicum II

**Year 2**

**Fall (9 credits)**
- HD 562 (3) Dynamics of Family Relations
- HD 668 (3) Internship
- BER 540 (3) Stats I

**Spring (9 credits)**
- HD 668 (3) Internship
- *Approved Elective Course (3)
- *Approved Elective Course (3)
- *one elective must be a HD graduate course

Total Credits Required for Concentration: 51 (36 didactic + 15 practicum/internship)

Students Must Complete 500 Client-Contact Hours (at least 250 couple/family hours) as part of their practicum/internship.

**Academic Calendar**

The UA MFT Program will follow the UA academic calendar for beginning and end dates of each semester [https://registrar.ua.edu/academiccalendar/](https://registrar.ua.edu/academiccalendar/)
Comprehensive Examination

During their final semester, students complete a: 1) paper describing their integrated systemic model of change, and 2) presentation demonstrating their integrated systemic model of change.

**Integrated Theory of Change Paper Description**

Per the graduate school policy, students have two opportunities to take the final written exam. Students will write a minimum of a 20-page academic quality paper not including references (APA format; need to have a minimum of 10 references) that focuses on their personal integrated theory of change. This paper is designed for you to integrate your education and training into a personal integrated theory of change that guides your own clinical work. While your theory of change will continue to develop after graduation, the paper should be a **current representation** of your theory of change (due date details will be provided during the Fall 2 semester).

**First Attempt**

The MFT core faculty will grade your papers independently and then average your score to determine your final grade. **All students must receive at least an 85% on the paper to pass.** Based on your paper score, you will receive one of the following grades: pass, revise, or fail. Your integrated theory of change presentations will not be scheduled until you receive a passing grade for your paper. Students who receive a “revise” grade (i.e., below 85%) will have two weeks to submit their revisions on their first attempt. If students receive a failing grade on the revisions of their first attempt paper, their presentation will not be scheduled for the current semester.

**Second Attempt**

For students who receive a failing grade on the revisions of their first attempt, he/she will have up to three academic semesters to complete the second attempt (e.g., Summer, Fall, Spring). If the student decides to complete the second attempted, he/she must enroll in a 1-credit HD 591 Independent Study Course. Students will not have the opportunity to revise their second attempt. The grading procedures will be the same as the first attempt grading procedures. If the student fails to enroll in the HD 591 course within the three semesters, or fails the second attempt, then he/she will be dismissed from the program and graduate school (per graduate school policy).

**Integrated Theory of Change Paper Rubric**

- **Personal Values and Beliefs about Therapy (10 pts.)**
  - Describe your personal values and beliefs about therapy
  - How does your “self of the therapist” impact your therapy?

- **Role of the Therapist (10 pts.)**
  - What is your role as a therapist in treatment?
  - Please state and elaborate on a metaphor that illustrates how you see your role as a therapist.

- **Describe your conceptualization for the connection of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (10 pts.)**

- **Theory of Change (Include separate sections for individuals, couples, and families (60 pts.)**
  - Provide an illustration of your theory of change for individuals, couples, and families.
o **Assumptions**
  - What are the major theoretical assumptions that guide your work with clients (i.e., attachment theory; functional analysis; differentiation)?
  - How is systems thinking evident in your theory?
  - Describe in detail the therapeutic modalities (or theories) that you use with individuals, couples, and families (have separate sections).
    - Explain your theory in detail. If your theory is integrated, describe in detail the components of each theory you are drawing from and how each is utilized in the development of your own model. You need to explain your reasoning for integration and how this integration is used to create change in therapy.
    - If you utilize different theories for individuals, couples and families please describe each of these theories and how you utilize them.
    - What guides your thinking when you are deciding to move back and forth between different theoretical approaches with clients?
    - Describe any potential contraindications for when you would not use a certain theoretical approach.

o **Conceptualization**
  - Based on your theoretical model(s), what is your definition of a healthy individual, couple, and family? For couples and families, what is your definition of healthy interactional patterns?
  - How do you think problems develop for individuals, couples, and families? For couples and families, how do unhealthy interactional patterns develop and how are they sustained?

o **Theory of Change**
  - Based on your theoretical model(s), what is your overarching goal of therapy for individuals, couples, and families?
  - Based on your theoretical model(s) how do you think change is created in therapy for individuals, couples, and families? For couples and families, specify your process for changing interactional patterns?

o **Therapeutic Process**
  - Who is necessary to be present in your therapy sessions? How do you decide upon who will be invited to sessions (partners, kids, friends, coworkers, etc.)?
  - Describe your assessment strategies in therapy
  - Describe the process you use to determine the goals of therapy
  - Describe a number of techniques/interventions you are likely to use and the intended outcome of each.
    - How do you evaluate techniques/interventions as successful?
    - How do you decide when techniques/interventions may be contraindicated?
  - Describe your plan for termination
    - How will you know when clients are ready to terminate?
    - What is your plan for follow-up care (if needed)?
• **Contextual Variables (10 pts.)**
  o Discuss how contextual variables impact your work with clients. Address how you attend to issues such as gender, culture, race, ethnicity, etc. How do you handle issues of power and privilege in your clinical services? How do other contextual variables affect your theory/therapy, such as physical health concerns, or work, school, and extended family?
  o Discuss your plan for collaborating with professionals outside the therapeutic setting in order to meet client goals.

**Integrated Theory of Change Presentation Description**

Students will give a 45 minutes presentation to the MFT faculty in which you will present your theory of change with video clips of your theory in action. After you have presented your theory, you will present your video clips, explaining how your clips fit into your theory of change. You must present 4 video clips and at least 2 relational clips. This can be done through showing video clips of the same client(s) that demonstrate (a) the problem, (b) the intervention, and (c) the outcome. The presentation should be structured approximately as follows: 15 minutes presenting your personal integration/theory of change, 20 minutes showing and discussing video clips of you demonstrating your theory in action, and 10 minutes of questions from the MFT faculty. **All students must receive an 85% to pass.** Based on your presentation score, you will receive one of the following grades: pass or fail. If students receive a failing grade on their presentation, the student will present again the following semester in order to provide the student the needed time to make necessary improvements to the presentation. If the student still does not receive a passing grade of the presentation, the student will meet with the Program Director to discuss potential options for completing the degree.

**Integrated Theory of Change Presentation Rubric**

- Quality of presentation (50 pts.)
- Demonstration of theory in action (50 pts.)
Clinical Requirements and Sequencing

Clinical Hours Requirement
In order to meet graduation requirements, each student is required to conduct a minimum of 500 direct-contact client hours with at least 250 hours being relational (i.e., couple/family sessions) and participate in a minimum of 100 hours of qualifying supervision. Students who meet this requirement can apply for Alabama’s MFT-A Licensure.

Students will gain their clinical hours through the Capstone Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC) and their approved off-site placement(s). Students shall work with their current MFT core faculty/clinical supervisor to ensure that they are maintaining a balance of clinical hours within the CFTC and at their offsite placement(s) with respect to several factors including but not limited to: the demands of their offsite placement(s), clients’ presenting problems/needs (e.g., high risk), assistantship requirements, the location of their offsite (when additional commuting needs are required), and their capacity to manage the multiple demands as a professional, student, employee.

Definition of Clinical Hours

- **Direct Clinical Contact Hours:** therapeutic meeting of a therapist and client (individual, relational, or group) occurring in-person synchronously, either physically in the same location or mediated by technology. Assessments may be counted if they are in-person processes that are more than clerical in nature and focus. Also, therapy services delivered through interactive team modalities may provide direct client contact for specific team members who have in-person interaction with the client/system during the session. Therapy team members who engage the therapeutic process only behind the mirror may not count the experience as direct client contact. Activities such as telephone contact, case planning, observation of therapy, record keeping, trainings, role-playing, travel, administrative activities, consultation with community members or professionals, and/or MFT relational/systemic supervision are not considered direct client contact.

- **Individual:** The session is counted as individual when you are meeting with one person.

- **Relational:** Relational Hours is a category of direct clinical contact hours in which a clinician delivers therapeutic services with two or more individuals conjointly, who share an ongoing relationship beyond that which occurs in the therapeutic experience itself. Examples include family subsystems, intimate couple subsystems, enduring friendship/community support subsystems, and residential, treatment, or situationally connected subsystems.
  
  - Relational hours also may be counted with relational subsystems that include a person whose only available means to participate in the in-person therapeutic meeting is telephonic or electronic (e.g., incarcerated, deployed or out-of-town subsystem members).
  
  - Group therapy can be counted as relational hours if those in the group therapy have a relationship outside of (above and beyond) the group itself. Conversely, group therapy sessions of otherwise non-related individuals are not considered as relational hours.
Supervision Requirements
Students will be assigned a clinical supervisor when beginning to see clients in the CFTC. Each semester, students will be assigned to an individual supervisor and to a practicum group supervisor (AAMFT Approved Supervisor, AAMFT Supervisor-in-training, or equivalent). Both individual and group supervision are required in each semester, with few exceptions. Students are expected to attend individual and group supervision once a week (students will reschedule if they cannot meet with their supervisor during their regularly scheduled time). Students are required to receive supervision from a designated supervisor when seeing clients during times when the University is closed (i.e., Spring Break, Winter Break, etc.). Students shall arrive to supervision well-prepared to discuss current cases, including showing video of recoded sessions.

All student therapists are required to record their client contact and supervision hours. In this program, students will receive a minimum of 100 hours of supervision, including individual, group, and live observation. Students are specifically required to receive a minimum of 50 hours of supervision utilizing observable data (i.e. live & video). Thus, when students receive live supervision, students should be sure to specify these hours of live/video supervision on their monthly supervision hours log. Students are responsible for maintaining acceptable supervision for any hours of direct client contact.

Definitions of Supervision Hours
- **Individual Supervision:** This type of supervision occurs in the presence of your UA MFT supervisor and with one to two supervisees.
- **Group Supervision:** This supervision occurs with a group less than 8-students.

Types of Supervision
- **Case Consultation:** This is counted when your case or another student’s case is reviewed and supervised without the use of raw data (video, audiotape, or live supervision).
- **Video:** This is counted when you are supervised, and videotape of the case is presented. In Group Supervision, this is counted when you or another student is supervised, and a videotape of the case is presented.
- **Audio:** This is counted when you are supervised, and an audiotape of the case is presented. In Group Supervision, this is counted when you or another student is supervised, and an audiotape of the case is presented.
- **Live:** Live supervision is counted when you conduct therapy in the presence of your supervisor at the CFTC, or you view a live case with your supervisor. This is to be counted only if the session was conducted at the CFTC. It can be counted as live, by the one or two therapists conducting the session, or those therapists viewing the session. No more than 6 total students can be involved in a live supervision session (combined total conducting and observing the session.).

Clinical Sequencing
Student sequencing for seeing clients in the CFTC begins during the students 1st semester. Below is the description of the clinical sequencing.
**Clinical Observation**  
The clinical sequence of training begins, for most students, during the first fall semester with clinical observations in the CFTC (as part of HD 567: Practicum). Prior to student observations, students in the program are required to sign the UA MFT Program Informed Consent for Clinical Training form (see Appendices). This document clearly outlines the students’ rights and responsibilities as a clinical trainee while enrolled in the program and engaging in professional/clinical services.

**Determining Student Readiness to see Clients in the CFTC**  
Students typically begin seeing cases during the Fall semester of their first-year. Before this time, the MFT faculty will make a determination as to whether each student is ready to begin seeing clients in the CFTC. This determination will be based primarily on student demonstration of: 1) sufficient counseling skills via role-plays in the Fall Practicum Course (HD 567); 2) student’s grasp of course concepts; 3) and demonstrated maturity and professionalism. The MFT core faculty will meet to discuss student readiness for seeing clients in the CFTC. Students will be notified via letter of their readiness to see clients. Students who are not deemed ready will meet with the Program Director and Director of Clinical Training to develop a plan for the student to begin seeing clients.

Students need to complete the following before seeing clients in the CFTC: 1) pass the CFTC Policy and Procedure Manual quiz (as part of HD 567); 2) pass the CFTC Crisis Procedure quiz (as part of HD 567); 3) complete Alabama Child Protective Services Interactive Training for Mandated Reporters training (as part of HD 641); 4) complete Counseling on Access to Lethal Means training (as part of HD 641); 5) provide proof of CPH liability insurance (as part of HD 567). Students will begin seeing one individual client. During the Fall 1 semester, a student therapist will carry a minimal caseload (1-3 cases) and will be expected to begin clinical supervision at the onset of seeing clients.

During the next stage (Spring semester of 1st year) of the clinical sequence, students are assigned relational cases. During this stage, the student therapist’s caseload is increased to four or more cases. Students are expected to have a minimum caseload of at least six clients in the CFTC by the end of the Spring semester of their 1st year (students typically have more than six clients)

**Off-Site Placements**  
Student therapists who have demonstrated readiness will begin an off-campus placement during the summer semester of 1st year/early Fall semester of 2nd Year. Readiness will be determined by the MFT core faculty and clinical supervisors, and be primarily based on: 1) student clinical performance in the CFTC Clinic (as rated by Practicum Evaluation); 2) student’s grasp of course concepts and demonstrated maturity and professionalism. The MFT core faculty and supervisors will meet to discuss student readiness for seeing clients at an off-site placement. Students will be notified via letter of their readiness to begin their off-site placement. Students who are not deemed ready will meet with the Program Director and Director of Clinical Training to develop a plan for the student to begin their off-site placement.

While student therapists can state a preference for geographic location (i.e., Tuscaloosa; Birmingham) or type of placement (e.g., children, adolescents, substance abuse, domestic violence), the decision of where to place a student therapist is the responsibility of the MFT core faculty. During the Spring semester, 1st year students will write an interest letter outlining their top three off-site placement choices. The faculty will take into consideration student requests, the areas of competency in which the student needs to grow, and how well the site will provide the student with diverse clinical experience in terms of client background and presenting problems. The MFT core faculty will review the letters and decide of where to place a student therapist. Once students are notified via
letter, it is students’ responsibility to reach out to the placement site to identify the position responsibilities, as well as the application and interview process (students are not to begin their off-site placement until there is a signed Clinical Affiliation Agreement signed by the offsite coordinator and the MFT Program Director; see Clinical Affiliation Agreement in appendices).

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. Unless other arrangements are agreed upon by the Program Director, the student, and the offsite supervisor, the students will spend no more than 16 hours per week working at the offsite placement and no more than 10 hours a week in direct client contact. On their clinical hours reporting form for the CFTC, students will be required to report their clinical hours from their offsite placement each month.

In addition, students will be required to complete an evaluation of their sites (i.e., Offsite Placement Evaluation). Offsite placement supervisors will also complete an evaluation performance/professionalism at the conclusion of their off-site work (i.e., Offsite Placement Student Evaluation). These evaluations help faculty assess whether the sites are providing the students with an appropriate context for student development as well as student performance. Note that students may not provide direct therapeutic services to clients off-campus until they have been cleared by the faculty to begin their externship. Students who are not cleared will meet with the Program Director or DTC to develop a plan to begin the offsite placement. If students desire to provide therapeutic services off-campus at sites other than the one assigned to them, they must have the approval of the program faculty. Students can only see clients at their off-site placements during weeks they are receiving supervision by their offsite placement clinical supervisor.

**Recording Clinical and Supervisory Hours**

It is the MFT Program policy that students must record their clinical and supervisory hours by completing the Monthly Clinical Hours Report and Monthly Supervision Hours Report forms; see appendices) and turn it in to the CFTC at the end of every month. Reports for the month are due to the Director of Clinical Training by the 1st of each month. Reports received after the due date will not be accepted, and hours will not be counted toward the student’s cumulative hours.
### Sequence of Clinical Experience*

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<tr>
<th><strong>First Year</strong></th>
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| **Fall** | • Complete **CFTC Informed Consent for Clinical Training**  
• Submit proof of **CPH Insurance**  
• Meet with 2nd year clinical mentor  
• Begin observation of cases in CFTC  
• Begin seeing individual clients  
• Begin individual and group supervision  
• Begin turning in **CFTC Monthly Clinical/Supervision Hours Reports**  |
| **Spring** | • Begin seeing relational clients  
• Turn-in offsite placement(s) letter  
• Contact offsite placements/interview (if necessary)  |
| **Summer** | • Begin work at offsite placement (if possible)  |

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<tr>
<th><strong>Second Year</strong></th>
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| **Fall** | • Begin work at offsite placement  
• Begin mentoring 1st year student  
• **Renew CPH Insurance** and provide verification form to MFT program  |
| **Spring** | • Complete **Comprehensive Exam (i.e., Theory of Change Paper)**  
• Complete Comprehensive Exam Presentation  
• Complete work at offsite placements  
• Complete **Evaluation of Offsite Placement**  
• Complete 500 (250 relational) client-contact hours & 100 supervision hours  |

*This timeline identifies the typical sequence of clinical training based across 2 years, but progress of clinical training is dependent upon student readiness.*

### Evaluation of Practicum Performance

Prior to the end of each semester enrolled in clinical practicum or supervision practicum, both the clinical supervisor and the student will use the Qualtrics system to complete the Practicum Evaluation and the Practicum Self Evaluation. One week prior to the end of the semester, the student therapist and the practicum supervisor will meet to review practicum performance. The student will complete a self-evaluation. However, these comments do not constitute an appeal of the grade for practicum (see MFT Student Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal Procedures, for grade appeal procedures). The Practicum Evaluation and the Practicum Self Evaluation will become part of the student's MFT program record.
Applying for Graduation

All students are required to submit a degree application in order to graduate. The degree application should be filed for the term in which the student expects to complete all degree requirements. Students need to pay specific attention to the published deadlines for submitting the application for graduation. Late submissions may delay your graduation. Instructions can be found at: https://registrar.ua.edu/graduation/
SECTION III: POLICIES
Non-Discrimination

The University of Alabama Marriage and Family Therapy program’s non-discrimination policy is in accord with UA university-wide policies on discrimination (https://compliance.ua.edu/ua-policies/). We endorse and uphold the anti-discrimination and affirmative stance of The University of Alabama, and embrace the plurality of the human experience as an invaluable resource to the quality and vitality of our program and profession. We are committed to the principle that in no aspect shall there be differences in the treatment of persons or discrimination with regard to the recruitment, admission, codes of conduct, hiring, retention, or dismissal of students, faculty, and supervisors or other relevant educators and/or staff on the basis of race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, relationship status, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, veteran/military status, religion and spiritual beliefs and/or affiliation, and/or national origin. The MFT program is committed to understanding and appreciating the diversity among people and to the principle that in no aspect shall there be discrimination in the treatment of any person, including but not limited to prospective and enrolled students, clients, faculty, staff, or supervisors. Non-discrimination applies also to activities, including but not limited to recruitment, admission, codes of conduct, hiring, retention, or dismissal of students, faculty, and supervisors or other relevant educators and/or staff. The faculty, supervisors, and staff are fully committed to function in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding non-discrimination.
**Diversity and Inclusion**

The UA MFT program embraces COAMFTE’s definition of diversity and inclusion as being inclusive of race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, relationship status, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, veteran/military status, religion and spiritual beliefs and/or affiliation, and/or national origin. The University Alabama Marriage and Family Therapy program adopts a posture of respect with regards to the worth and uniqueness of each individual, understanding and accepting the variability among social, religious, cultural, and other groups. Thus, we are committed to: a) include the representation of multiple groups in the student body, program clinical supervisors, program core and non-core faculty with regard to race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religious or spiritual affiliation, nation of origin or other relevant social categories; and b) ensure issues of diversity are central to all aspects of the training environment.

The UA MFT program aims to be inclusive to all students, volunteers, staff, and clients affiliated with the program and the CFTC to ensure a comfortable, safe, and respectful environment by reflecting the diverse interests of our all parties involved. Our philosophy is that all humans must be afforded dignity and respect and that the oppression of any member or group within a society occurs to the detriment of all members of that society. We believe that without intentional intervention to resolve sources of discrimination and oppression, all social systems contribute to the continuation of the oppression of underprivileged individuals and groups.

We recognize that our goal of achieving a more diverse program entails accepting that our goals will be fluid and will continue to adapt to new and ever changing ideals of equity, equality and inclusivity. Nevertheless, we value the process of seeking human dignity and we attempt this in many ways, including: 1) prioritizing program resources to recruit and maintain a diverse faculty and student body, 2) promoting an atmosphere conducive to mutual respect for individual and group differences, 3) identifying aspects of the program which promote disadvantages for marginalized groups or individuals, and 4) implementing interventions to resolve and eliminate identified problem areas.

This process involves efforts to value diversity in ways that are not always easily measured (e.g., beyond ethnic breakdown of students). For example, we try to teach and emulate respect for various viewpoints and infuse this type of instruction and content into all our classes through our language usage and our actions. However, even though it is not always adequate or measurable, we do take specific steps to help make this happen.

Our benchmarks for achieving diversity include the following:

1. We assess the composition of the faculty, supervisors, student body, and clinical populations in terms of diversity definition of the program. This is done with our annual report as well as faculty reviews during meetings and yearly retreats.
2. During recruitment we utilize measurement and outreach regarding our goals for diversity:
   a. We calculate the number of applications of diverse status, as well as the numbers accepted and enrolled in the program.
   b. We ask questions of our interviewees regarding their appreciation and comfort with diverse individuals in potential clinical settings.
   c. We attempt to connect with diverse faculty and potential students at national
conferences.
3. We discuss in practicum and other classes issues of diversity, which generates an openness regarding this topic that can lead to further in- and out-of-class discussions.
4. We have a master’s class on diversity (HD 645) that focuses on knowledge and practice of working with diverse clinical populations.
5. All faculty are required to complete Employee Non-Discrimination training every year at UA.

Non-Discrimination, Diversity, and Inclusion Code of Conduct
Our goal is to foster a spirit of respect and tolerance for others and take corrective action when we feel an individual’s rights or dignity are not being protected (see Student Grievance, Deficiency, and Dismissal Procedures).

Below outlines our expectations for all those who participate in UA MFT program interactions, as well as the handling of unacceptable behavior. “MFT Program interactions” in this policy includes, but is not limited to, MFT program events, including meetings, courses, conferences, staff meetings, non-MFT program courses, forums, and any other interaction involving students in the MFT program.

Expected Behavior
We expect all parties to abide by this Inclusivity Statement in all venues of UA and the UA 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 UA MFT program faculty if you notice violations of this Inclusivity Statement.

Unacceptable Behavior
- Intimidating, derogatory or demeaning speech, or actions by any member of the UA MFT program, at all program-related events and in all personal and written communications.
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, age, gender identity, race, health status, national origin, relationship status, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and religion.
- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces (including presentation slides).
- Deliberate stalking or following.
- Harassing photography or recording.
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.
- Unwelcome and uninvited attention or contact.
- Physical assault (including unwelcome touching or groping).
- Real or implied threat of physical, professional, or financial damage or harm.
- Retaliation for reporting an incident is a violation of the Inclusivity Statement. Reporting an incident in bad faith is a violation of the Inclusivity Statement.

Handling of Unacceptable Behavior
Unacceptable behavior from any member of the UA MFT program will be addressed in a timely manner. To ensure that no member of the UA MFT program feels unsafe or uncomfortable, these are the parameters for handling the unacceptable behavior explained above. Students who participate in unacceptable behavior will be subject to the procedures outlined in the UA MFT Program Student Grievance, Deficiency, and Dismissal Procedures.

**If You Are Subject or Witness to Unacceptable Behavior**
If you are feeling uncomfortable or unsafe, witness any inappropriate behavior, or have any other concerns, please contact a UA MFT program faculty member and address your comments to the MFT Program Director.

If possible, provide the following information in writing on the provided form:
- Identifying information (name/badge number, appearance) of the participant who allegedly violated this policy.
- The behavior that was in violation.
- The approximate time of the behavior.
- The circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Other people involved in or witnessing the incident.
**Statement of Human Dignity**

The UA MFT Program is dedicated to the idea that all human beings are of worth and value simply by virtue of their humanity. We believe that all our professional activity as therapists and family therapy trainees should reflect this value and worth by according our clients and each other basic human dignity and respect. This is a core value of our training program.

The UA MFT Therapy program respects and encourages the expression of a wide diversity of personal values and behaviors. As family therapists, we are aware that we will encounter clients, colleagues and trainees with values and behaviors that are different from our own, perhaps even in opposition to our own. In our role as helping professionals, the accordance of dignity and respect to all humans requires us to help those who seek our expertise, regardless of how we might personally feel about their values, behavior and lifestyle.

Clearly, part of our role as helping professionals involves responding appropriately to illegal behavior or behavior that endangers others who are not willful, knowledgeable participants. However, it is not our professional role to evaluate and respond to other people's behavior based on our own code of ethics and conduct. It is reflective of the devaluation and disrespect of humans when we behave in a judgmental manner toward those who conduct themselves in a manner that we might not find appropriate for our own moral or ethical code.

Refusal to provide family therapy services to those whose values and behavior are not reflective of our own devalues and denigrates those human beings. This principle also applies to lecturing or moralizing about behavior that is different from our own, but is conducted in a manner that is reflective of the participants' values.

As an MFT program, we understand that personal values are very important. We also believe that the core values of the program and profession of marriage and family therapy are important for those who wish to pursue the profession. There may be times when personal values come in conflict with program and professional values. It seems very important for each of us to evaluate personal and professional values in an ongoing manner. If maintaining the program value of basic human dignity cannot be accomplished without compromising an individual’s personal values, it is the duty of that person to seriously evaluate his/her continued participation in the profession. It is also the duty of the program to make a similar evaluation of the wisdom of offering continued training to persons who cannot accept core professional values.
Given the nature of the MFT program as a professional degree program and the close connection with student work being completed within the CFTC, students are expected to act in accordance with the CFTC Policy and Procedures Manual, the AAMFT Code of Ethics, the Alabama LMFT Rules and Regulations, and the MFT Program Handbook. The CFTC Policy and Procedures Manual specifically outlines student rules and procedures for work with clients, case management, confidentiality responsibilities, use of CFTC computers, parking, etc. Violation of the policies outlined in the CFTC Policy 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 CFTC and/or MFT program (see Student Grievance, Deficiency, and Dismissal Procedures).

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 (Student Grievance, Deficiency, and Dismissal Procedures).

Given the degree of close relationships within 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, 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.

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 you will dress professionally and in accordance to the CFTC dress code outlined in the CFTC Policy and Procedures Manual during times when clients are present in the CFTC (the dress standard applies even when you are observing cases). Specifically, male students are not mandated to wear neckties; however, a collared shirt is preferred with slacks or dark jeans. For female students, please avoid unprofessional clothing (e.g., low cut shirts, short skirts, see-through tops; open-toed shoes are acceptable except for flip-flops). When observing, please attempt to wear dark-colored clothes to minimize being seen behind the mirrors. Also, students need to respect all CFTC space and behave in a professional manner during non-CFTC activities (i.e., supervision, staff meetings, etc.). The specified dress code can be found in the CFTC Policy and Procedure Manual.

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 be timely for class meetings, clinic meetings, supervision, and other events that are required by the program, department, or college. Your behavior is a direct reflection of this program, its faculty, the department, and your profession and the utmost attention to these details is imperative. Finally, as part of an intense clinical program,
there will be guest speakers and additional program meetings (e.g., MFT program/CFTC orientation meetings, Comprehensive Exam Presentations, CFTC Staff Meetings, MFT Council Meetings) outside of class time. You will be required to attend these meetings, but you 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 the MFT Program Director.

Within the UA MFT Program, feedback from Communities of Interest is a critical component for assessing 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.
Confidentiality in Supervision and Training

Marriage and family therapists are under an ethical obligation to avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of students and supervisees. Students are expected to share personal information about themselves and their family of origin in MFT classes and in supervision. We believe that dealing with such material is essential to the process of MFT training. Such information will be treated sensitively and will not be shared with anyone outside of fellow class members and the MFT faculty.

Section 4.7 of the AAMFT Code of Ethics defines the limits of confidentiality for supervisees. The UA MFT Program has a clear responsibility to protect clients under the care of student therapists from unethical or incompetent practices. We have an additional responsibility to The University of Alabama to protect the integrity and well-being of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program as well as an obligation to the profession of Marriage and Family Therapy to prevent unethical and/or incapacitated individuals from entering the profession.

In response to our ethical obligations to avoid exploiting students, any decision regarding the fitness of any student to continue training as a marriage and family therapist must be made in consultation with the entire MFT clinical faculty. Comparative evaluations of students must be made among faculty members. Such information will not be shared with other students. For these reasons, the MFT clinical faculty must operate as a confidentiality unit, meaning that information defined as sensitive will be retained within the group. The information gathered in supervision, classes, or individual conversations between students and faculty members, which is relevant to the well-functioning and ongoing evaluation of the student, must be shared among the clinical faculty. Students retain responsibility for those things which they choose to share with faculty members.

Successful MFT training and supervision is, in large part, dependent on the quality of relationships between faculty and students. The MFT faculty are committed to the respect and dignity of students. We feel that maintaining a faculty confidentiality unit is the most effective way of dealing with students' personal issues in a respectful manner, allowing us to fulfill our obligations to, students, clients, the University of Alabama, and the profession of marriage and family therapy.
Student Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal Procedures

A quality graduate education program in Marriage and Family Therapy involves a shared faculty-student investment in the pursuit of professional education and training. The faculty recognize that their role is to mentor and coach students as they develop academic, clinical, and professional competencies. Ongoing professional relationships between and among faculty and students continually contribute to the development of such competencies. At times, students will struggle to develop necessary competencies, and faculty will employ additional focused efforts to assist students in their development. This document describes the recommended approach for resolving grievances among students, and between students and faculty, competencies students are expected to develop over the course of their graduate career, and the procedures that the faculty will implement when students struggle to develop these competencies.

Recommend Grievance Processes

Student Grievance: If a student has a problem with a fellow student, he or she is expected to follow the following procedures (for Title IX related grievances, students will follow University procedures https://titleix.ua.edu/):

- Initiate contact by means of a direct conversation with that student. The two parties will then attempt to resolve the conflict to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- If the aggrieved party has done this, come to a common understanding of the problem, and agreed upon a course of changed behavior, and the other individual continues to do the offending behavior, the aggrieved party still has the obligation to follow up with another direct conversation about the lack of change in behavior. In other words, the aggrieved individual is expected to initiate direct contact with the other individual involved and to persist in problem-solving discussions.
- If the offending behavior stops, the situation is resolved.
- If the offending behavior persists, the aggrieved person may, at that point, ask for one or more of the faculty to serve as mediator in the problem situation.

Faculty Grievance: The faculty of the HDFS Marriage and Family Therapy Concentration prioritizes open and honest communication between faculty and students. The following Grievance Policy addresses students who may at some time feel they have been unjustly treated by a faculty member. While it is recommended that students take the below steps to resolve the grievance, students can also follow the procedures outlined in the faculty handbook (https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/grievance-procedure-faculty-handbook/):

- Contact the faculty member with whom you have a grievance and make an appointment to discuss the matter.
- If, after the meeting, you do not feel the matter was adequately resolved, you should meet with the MFT Program Director, or another MFT core faculty member if the grievance involves the Director, about the grievance.
• If, after meeting with the Director, you do not feel your grievance was adequately resolved
the next step is for you to explain the grievance to the HDFS Department Chair.

• If, after all of the above steps are completed, you are not satisfied that your grievance has
been adequately addressed, the next step is for you to contact the Assistant Dean for Student
Affairs in the College of Human Environmental Sciences to try to resolve your concerns.

**Academic Competencies**

**Grading:** Academic performance is evaluated by the faculty and is based upon the student’s
performance in his/her coursework. It is the responsibility of the faculty to inform students of
assignments and corresponding due dates. Penalties for the failure to complete the assignment
adequately or on time should be made known to the student at the beginning of the course or
project. The faculty should discuss (via syllabus/discussion) with the students the criteria for success
or failure.

Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average (“B” Average) at all times while enrolled as
graduate students in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. Grades below
"C" count in computing the GPA but do not carry credit toward a degree. Academic standards are
set forth by the UA Graduate School [https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/academic-policies/scholastic-requirements/](https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/academic-policies/scholastic-requirements/).

The faculty considers the student’s satisfactory progress toward the completion of his or her degree
to be an issue of competence. Students who do not meet the minimum academic requirements will
be placed on academic probation and/or dismissed from the program.

**Authenticity of Student Work:** All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are
expected to be honorable and observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars.
The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the
minimum required to avoid discipline. When enrolled at The University of Alabama, students are
expected to abide by the Academic Honor pledge. Additionally, at the discretion of the course
instructor, each student will be expected to sign an Honor Pledge.

The Academic Honor Pledge reads as follows: I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be
involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at
The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary
procedures that will result from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will
result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University.

Academic misconduct by students includes all acts of dishonesty in any academic-related matter and
any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student commit
an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, each of the
following acts when performed in any type of academic or academic-related matter, exercise, or
activity.

(1) Cheating: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or
computer-related information.
(2) Plagiarism: representing words, data, pictures, figures, works, ideas, computer programs or outputs or anything generated by someone else, as one's own. Self-Plagiarism: resubmitting your own previously submitted work without proper citation and permission from the current instructor to whom the original work is subsequently submitted.

(3) Fabrication: presenting as genuine any invented or falsified citation, data or material.

(4) Misrepresentation: falsifying, altering, or misstating the contents of documents or other materials related to academic matters, including schedules, prerequisites, and transcripts.

Except in divisions that have an alternate academic misconduct policy that has been approved by the Provost, academic misconduct cases shall be resolved by the divisional academic misconduct monitor or the academic dean of the division in which the alleged action took place. Appeals from the monitor’s decisions may be made to the academic dean; appeals from the academic dean’s decisions may be made to the Office for Academic Affairs.

The Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Policy will be followed in the event of academic misconduct. Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official Academic Misconduct Policy provided in the Online Catalog.

**Clinical Skills Assessment**

In a clinical program, academic performance includes more than grades on specific assignments; it also includes the student’s performance in meeting clinical obligations. Students are expected to be able to meet clinical competencies throughout the program, including engaging clients in the therapeutic process, assessing existing problems, and designing and implementing intervention strategies for improving outcomes.

The MFT faculty and supervisors evaluates students’ clinical competency throughout their time in the program. These judgements are subjective in nature and based on live clinical supervision, observation of video tapes, and case discussion within supervision. Every effort is made to corroborate these judgments among all clinical faculty. To facilitate this, grades for clinical performance (e.g., HD 667 & HD 668) are based upon the discussion among all supervision faculty involved in each grading period. Feedback from that discussion is made available to each student in both written and verbal form at the completion of each semester in which the student is enrolled in either a clinical or supervisory practicum.

Supervisors will also complete quantitative evaluation via the Practicum Evaluation at the end of each semester. One meeting per month is dedicated to the review of students’ clinical progress. When an area of concern is identified regarding a student’s clinical performance, specific strategies will be implemented in clinical supervision to help the student develop the necessary skills. This is a normal part of the supervision experience. However, if the MFT faculty/clinical supervisor believes that the problem is not alleviated through clinical supervision, the faculty member/clinical supervisor will discuss the concern with the MFT Program Director. The “Minor Deficiency Procedures” will be initiated (see below). If the problem is not alleviated through the improvement process, the problems will be considered a “severe deficiency,” and the “severe deficiency” procedure will be enacted.
The MFT Concentration’s policy follows the UA graduate school policy regarding the evaluation of student performance in programs including a clinical component.

“In graduate programs that include clinical components, practicum experiences, internships, or other similar program requirements, each student’s effectiveness will be given a broad-based evaluation by faculty and supervisors. Final decisions will be based on factors such as course grades, demonstrated clinical competence, personality factors, and relevant test scores. Many programs establish additional academic and/or professional requirements for their students. Failure to meet program requirements for academic progress and/or clinical components may result in the student’s being dismissed from the program. Dismissal from a degree program also results in suspension (dismissal) from the Graduate School” (UA Graduate School Handbook).

**Professional Competencies Assessment**

Students are expected to consistently interact in their work with faculty, clinical supervisors, internship placement supervisors, and other students in appropriate ways. Students are expected to adhere to the Capstone Family Therapy Clinic Policies and Procedures and off-site internship policies and procedures (if available). Students are 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 internship 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.

Students must take appropriate steps to prevent their own mental health struggles 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/clinical 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, the MFT faculty/clinical supervisor will discuss the concern with the MFT Program Director. The “Minor Deficiency Procedures” will be initiated (see below). If the problem is not alleviated through the improvement process, the problems may be considered a “severe deficiency,” and the “Severe Deficiency Procedures” will be enacted (see below).

**Ethical and Legal Competencies Assessment**
Each student and faculty member are required to understand and adhere to the ethical and legal guidelines outlined in Alabama Law and the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Any breach of legal or ethical code of conduct by student may be grounds for remediation or dismissal. 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, such as misrepresenting facts in clinical paperwork or in communication with faculty, or engaging in other ethically questionable conduct, may be subject to corrective measures in addition to the “Minor Deficiency Procedures” or “Severe Deficiency Procedures” described below. When deemed appropriate, this may be submitted as a violation of the UA code of academic misconduct.

**Remediation and Dismissal Procedures**

Generally, faculty provide three levels of support for student development. The first level encompasses the typical day-to-day professional interactions and practices that occur during coursework and clinical supervision. The second level comes into play when a student struggles to make progress on one or more competencies through typical coursework and supervision procedures. Such “minor deficiencies” will be addressed through the collaborative development and implementation of an improvement plan via the “Minor Deficiency Procedures.” The third level typically occurs when a student fails to make progress toward overcoming a “minor deficiency,” but there may be occasions when a “severe deficiency” appears suddenly (e.g., a student commits a significant ethical violation). “Severe deficiencies” are addressed through the collaborative development and implementation of a remediation plan via the “Severe Deficiency Procedures.” Failure to adequately address a “severe deficiency” will result in dismissal from the program.

**Minor Deficiency Procedures**

The following procedures outline students who do not make progress on one or more competencies through typical coursework and supervision procedures.

Clinical supervisors will identify the deficiency to be addressed and conduct initial goal setting to improve said deficiency. The following process will be enacted for problems not alleviated through initial goal setting in clinical supervision or if there are differing perspectives between student and supervisor as to the identification and/or severity of the identified issue:

- The student’s clinical supervisor will notify the MFT Program Director/Clinical Director, who will then discuss the deficiencies with the student and develop an improvement plan. The improvement plan will consist of the following:
  - Specific measures to be taken
  - Timeline for completing improvement plan
  - Means for determining whether measures taken have resulted in improvement
  - Consequences if student does not adequately remedy the problem
  - Protection of student rights during the process
- A copy of the improvement plan 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 fails to meet the outline improvement goals, the MFT faculty may make the
determination that the problem is termed a “severe deficiency,” which will then initiate the
“Severe Deficiency Procedures.”

Severe Deficiency Procedures

The MFT faculty will make the determination of when a problem (in the area of competency, ethics
and/or professionalism) is termed a “severe deficiency.” “Severe Deficiency” is defined as 1) competency problems that are not alleviated through implantation strategies during clinical supervision and the aforementioned “Minor Deficiency Procedures; 2) egregious ethical violations. Problems that are termed “severe deficiency” will enact the following procedures:

• The student will meet with the MFT Faculty to discuss grievances and develop a plan for remediation. The plan for remediation will include at least the following components:
  o Specific measures to be taken
  o Timeline for completing remediation plan
  o Means for determining whether measures taken have resulted in remediation
  o Consequences if student does not adequately remedy the problem, which may include dismissal from the Graduate HDFS MFT Concentration, which also results in the dismissal from the Graduate School.
  o Protection of student rights during the process
• A copy of the grievance(s) and remediation plan 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.
• The meeting summary will be given to the student, Department Chair, and if appropriate, the College of Human Environmental Sciences Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

At the end of the designated time, if the MFT Faculty determines that remediation has occurred, all of the individuals listed above receive notification by letter of that determination.

Dismissal from Program Procedures

If the student still does not resolve the severe deficiencies s/he may be dismissed from the program. Below are the procedures outlining the dismissal process:

• The student will be given the opportunity to prepare and present his/her case to the MFT faculty. The MFT faculty will make a recommendation to the HDFS Department Chair and Graduate Faculty based on input from the student and the MFT faculty.
• If the student remains in good academic standing the HDFS Department Chair and Graduate Faculty may offer the student the option of formally changing into a different HDFS graduate concentration. If the student decides to apply to a different Graduate HDFS Concentration, he/she will follow Departmental procedures for switching concentrations.
• If the recommendation is made to withdraw the student from the HDFS Marriage and Family Therapy Concentration and the student is not offered to transfer concentration within the department, the committee will prepare a statement reiterating the grievances and forward it to the student, the HDFS Department Chair, and when appropriate the CHES Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
• If the final decision is to dismiss the student from the graduate school, the MFT faculty will be responsible for facilitating this transition for the student.

The student dismissed from the program will receive a letter from the Program Director notifying him/her of dismissal. Copies of the letter may also be sent to all MFT faculty members, HDFS Department Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School. A copy will also be placed in the student's file. Students seeking to appeal the dismissal decision will follow the UA student grievance policy outlined in the Faculty Handbook (https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/grievance-procedure-faculty-handbook/).

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 his/her 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.
Degree Portability for Licensure Acknowledgement

Before beginning their program of study, students will acknowledge in writing that while the UA MFT program meets licensure requirements and regulations in Alabama and many other states, there may be states in which the degree may not meet state licensure and regulation requirements. Students will complete the “Licensure Portability Acknowledgement” form (see Appendices) by July 15th for students beginning the program in the Fall semester, and December 15th for students beginning the program in the Spring semester.

Vacations

Students are expected to plan vacations and absences around the UA academic calendar and/or the UA employee calendar and UA/CFTC official closures. You must get MFT Program Director, Supervisor, and/or Director and Clinical Director of Training permission for absences that impact class attendance, client sessions, internship, and/or other program requirements. Students are expected to follow the procedures outlined in CFTC Policies and Procedures Manual.
**Evaluation of Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

The UA MFT Program is committed to a recursive process of data collection and evaluation. The process is designed to evaluate student achievement on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) through data collection, which in turn, informs program structure, content, and curriculum. The program faculty will meet at least once each semester to review the relevant aggregated data and to adjust the program design to best meet program goals. The Schedule of Data Collection & Data Review provides an overview of the timetable.

There are several purposes to assessing student progress with regard to these competencies: First, it provides students with a continuing source of direct feedback with regard to their progress which helps them know where to focus their efforts; second, it helps faculty to identify student strengths and growth areas in order to best know how to continue to foster student development; third, it aids faculty in determining student readiness for increasing responsibility and challenge (i.e., begin clinical work, begin independent work at offsite placement, etc.); fourth, it helps faculty identify whether the instruction and training in the program are fostering in the students the desired competencies and where the instruction and training may need to be modified to be more effective.

Faculty review SLO data in aggregated form early spring semester for the prior summer and fall semesters, and during late-summer for the prior spring semester. Faculty review data to assess whether students, faculty, and the program as a whole are meeting established benchmarks. Where benchmarks are not met, faculty identify ways to strengthen the training in order to improve student development. During these biannual meetings faculty also review the Student Learning Outcomes of the program, the methods for assessing outcomes, the teaching and learning practices in the program, policies, and procedures of the program, and feedback from students and other communities of interest.

**Practicum Evaluations**

Each semester the student is enrolled in clinical practicum, the student’s clinical supervisor will complete a Practicum Evaluation. Practicum Evaluations are completed through the Qualtrics online survey service and data is aggregated every time the survey is completed. The Practicum Evaluation provides student feedback and data related to program goals specific to the understanding the knowledge of relational/systemic theory, the practice of relational/systemic theory, understanding and application of knowledge related to contextual factors, application of relational/systemic ethics, maintaining a professional identity, and use of empirical research to inform practice.
**Practicum Self Evaluations**
Each semester the student is enrolled in clinical practicum, the student will complete a Practicum Self Evaluation. The Practicum Self Evaluation covers the same domains as the Practicum Evaluation completed by faculty, as well as questions concerning perceptions of fiscal/physical, technology, instructional and clinical, and academic resources.

**CFTC Clinical Supervisor Effectiveness**
Students assigned a clinical supervisor will complete a Clinical Supervisor Effectiveness Survey via Qualtrics.

**Internship/Internship Stakeholder Survey**
At the conclusion of the student’s off-site placement, the stakeholder with responsibility for direct supervision of the student will complete the Off-Site Placement/Internship Stakeholder Survey. The survey is completed through the Qualtrics online survey service and data is aggregated every time the survey is completed. The Off-site Placement/Internship Stakeholder Survey Stakeholder Survey provides student feedback and data related to program goals specific to understanding the knowledge of relational/systemic theory, the practice of relational/systemic theory, understanding and application of knowledge related to contextual factors, application of relational/systemic ethics, maintaining a professional identity, and use of empirical research to inform practice.

**Program Exit Evaluation**
Each student will complete a Program Exit Evaluation at the end of their final semester of study. The survey is completed through the Qualtrics online survey service and data is aggregated every time the survey is completed. The Program Exit Evaluation is designed to allow students to provide feedback to the program about their educational experience.

**Evaluation of Program Director/Director of Clinical Training**
Students and supervisors will complete an annual evaluation of the Program Director and Director of Clinical Training. The survey is completed through the Qualtrics online survey service and data is aggregated every time the survey is completed.

**Alumni Survey**
The Alumni Survey will be sent to all program alumni during the spring semester of even numbered years. The survey is completed through the Qualtrics online survey service and data is aggregated every time the survey is completed. The survey is designed to provide alumni the opportunity to reflect and give feedback on their experience of how the program prepared them to meet the clinical and/or research of their chosen profession.
# UA MFT Program Data Collection & Evaluation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES/BENCHMARKS</th>
<th>DATA COLLECTION</th>
<th>DATA REVIEW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SLO #1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of operating from a systems/relational, developmentally appropriate, and science-informed perspective with individual, couple, and family clientele.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Practicum Evaluation.</td>
<td>x x x x x x</td>
<td>x x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (relational/systemic theory) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.</td>
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<td>Additional practicum as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Internship Evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 1 (Knowledge) of the Program Exit Evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (items 1-2) of the Alumni Survey.</td>
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<td><strong>SLO #2: Students will demonstrate effective systems/relational, developmentally-informed therapeutic practice in the treatment of individuals, couples, and families.</strong></td>
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<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Practicum Evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Practicum Self Evaluation.</td>
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<td>Additional practicum as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 2 (Practice) of the Internship Evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the Question 1 of the Program Exit Evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (items 6-7) of the Alumni Survey.</td>
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| Semester of graduation | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| End of internship | |
| Spring of even years | Even years |
### SLO #3: Student will demonstrate knowledge and application of the intersection of cultural/contextual factors (Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Socio-Economic Status, etc.) to clinical practice.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 3 (Diversity) of the Practicum Evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Prerequisite</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td>Additional</td>
<td>End of internship</td>
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<td>Self</td>
<td>practicum as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Internship</td>
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<td>Semester of graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Program Exit Evaluation</td>
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<td>Spring of even years</td>
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<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Alumni Survey</td>
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<td>Even years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SLO #4: Students will demonstrate knowledge and application of AAMFT Code of Ethics, and relevant laws and legislation.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 4 (Ethics) of the Practicum Evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Prerequisite</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td>Additional</td>
<td>End of internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>practicum as needed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td></td>
<td>Semester of graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Program Exit Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring of even years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Alumni Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Even years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SLO #5: Students will assume an identity of a professional Marriage and Family Therapist.

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 5 (Professional Identity) of the Practicum Evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Timeframe</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Alumni Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Even years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 5 (Professional Identity) of the Internship Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the Question 4 of the Program Exit Evaluation.

- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on Question 15 (item 5) of the Alumni Survey.

| SLO #6: Students will demonstrate comprehension and application of relevant research to clinical practice. |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| • 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Practicum Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Question 6 (Research) of the Practicum Self Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the items included in Questions 6 (Research) of the Internship Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the Questions 5-6 of the Program Exit Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items on the Program Exit Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items on the Practicum Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items on the Program Exit Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • Annual Review of Students | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • MFT Representative attend MFT faculty meeting | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |

Fiscal/physical resource sufficiency assessment

<p>| Fiscal/physical resource sufficiency assessment |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| • Department and program will have sufficient fiscal resources to maintain two full-time faculty lines. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items included on the Practicum Self Evaluation | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items on the Program Exit Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items on the Practicum Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the fiscal/physical items on the Program Exit Evaluation. | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • Annual Review of Students | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |
| • MFT Representative attend MFT faculty meeting | x | x | x | x | x | Additional practicum as needed |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Technology resource sufficiency assessment</th>
<th>Instructional and clinical resources assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty Meeting Review and Discussion of Resources</td>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the technological resource items included on the Practicum Self Evaluation</td>
<td>• 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the instructional/clinical resource items included on the Practicum Self Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(concurrent with review of SLOs)</td>
<td>• 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the technological resource items on the Program Exit Evaluation.</td>
<td>• 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the instructional/clinical resource items on the Program Exit Evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technology resource sufficiency assessment</td>
<td>• 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the technological resource items on the Practicum Evaluation.</td>
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<td>(concurrent with review of SLOs)</td>
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<td>(concurrent with review of SLOs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semester of Graduation x
### Academic resources and student support services assessment

- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the academic resources and student support services items included on the Practicum Self Evaluation.
- 80% of students will record scores of 4 or greater on the academic resources and student support services items on the Program Exit Evaluation.
- 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the academic resources and student support services items on the Practicum Evaluation.
- 80% of faculty and clinical supervisors will of 4 or greater on the academic resources and student support services items on the Program Director Evaluation.
- 80% of students will receive scores of 4 or greater on the academic resources and student support services items included on the Practicum Self Evaluation. Semester of Graduation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic resources and student support services assessment</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practicum Self Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Exit Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Director Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Curriculum and Teaching/Learning Practices Review

- Occurs every semester in conjunction with the review of SLO aggregated data for SLOs during faculty meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum and Teaching/Learning Practices Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semester of Graduation</strong></td>
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</table>

### Program Climate Review

- Annual review with students
- MFT Representative attend MFT faculty meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Climate Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual review with students</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MFT Representative attend MFT faculty meeting</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Program Director Effectiveness Review

- Program Director Evaluation (for students)
- Program Exit Evaluation Items
- Program Director Evaluation (for faculty/supervisors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Director Effectiveness Review</th>
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<td><strong>Program Exit Evaluation Items</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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### Clinical Director Effectiveness Review

- Clinical Director Evaluation (for students)
- Program Exit Evaluation Items
- Clinical Director Evaluation (for faculty/supervisors)

<table>
<thead>
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### CFTC Clinical Supervisor Effectiveness Review

- CFTC Clinical Supervisor Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CFTC Clinical Supervisor Evaluation</strong></td>
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Evaluation: Sufficiency of Faculty & Supervisors

A comprehensive deliberation of faculty and supervisor sufficiency is completed on an annual basis in the context of a faculty meeting during the Spring academic semester with emphasis on overall program performance and development. Students are engaged in this process through direct interaction with the Program Director, Director of Clinical Training, core faculty members, and through feedback provided on Practicum, Supervision, and Program Exit evaluations. The available data is utilized by the program faculty in their process of collaborating with our departmental chair, college dean, the graduate school, and higher administration while determining faculty performance and sufficiency in light of the program mission, goals, and requirements for each entity within which the MFT program is housed.

Faculty Sufficiency
Assessment of faculty sufficiency entails several factors that can roughly be categorized within five domains:

- **Course coverage:** Most (at least 80%) MFT courses will be developed and delivered by core MFT faculty without requiring a teaching load beyond the departmental requirement for any of the core MFT faculty.
- **Accessibility to students:** Students will have direct, live, and regular (face to face contact with faculty at least weekly throughout the course of studies) access to faculty within the context of didactic instruction, research team work, clinical/supervision and other mentoring experiences, and informal interactions in the form of office meetings and social functions.
- **Advisory and Mentoring assignments:** There are a sufficient number of faculty to complete each aspect of student oversight including advisory & mentoring.
- **Collective knowledge/skills among the faculty cohort:** Expertise by the faculty within each of the core content domains relevant to the program's mission and goals will be sufficient in providing for the educational and developmental needs of the students.
- **Ability to meet Program Goals and achieve the associated SLOs or demonstrate improvement when deficits are identified.**

Supervisor Sufficiency
The UA MFT Program is designed so that all clinical supervision is provided by AAMFT approved supervisors/supervisor candidate. Clinical supervisors consist of the MFT Program core faculty and outside supervisors. It is important to note that the supervisor role is distinct from that of classroom instructor/faculty. As such, all clinical supervisors, whether UA MFT core or outside supervisors, must meet the following qualifications:

- **AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate under appropriate supervision mentorship.**
- **Core MFT Faculty Supervisor Candidates are expected to be making progress toward AAMFT Approved Supervisor status.**
- **Primary orientation as a relational/systemic clinician/supervisor.**
- **Attend all scheduled clinical practicum student meetings and supervisor meetings with core MFT faculty.**
- **Sound knowledge of the AAMFT Code of Ethics**
- **Ability to provide direct feedback to UA MFT Core Faculty.**
- **Able to complete and distribute all required program assessments.**
• Clinical experience providing systemic/relational family therapy.

Sufficiency of clinical supervisors is determined based on the following criteria:

• The program maintains a ratio of clinical supervisors to clinically active students of 1:8 or better.
• The clinical supervisors meet the minimum requirements listed above.
• All clinically active master’s students receive a minimum of one hour of weekly contact with a clinical supervisor.
Performance and Retention Policies

Academics
Students are expected to be invested in their academic coursework and to be active participants in the learning process. The UA MFT Program requires that all graduate students maintain a minimum of 3.0 throughout the course of the program. Final course grades of lower than a “C” or lower will not be accepted or applied to your degree plan. Any course in which a final grade of lower than a “C” is earned must be repeated until a grade of “C” or higher is achieved. Students that demonstrate a pattern of difficulty meeting the grade standard will meet with the Program Director to develop a remediation plan (see Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal, and Procedures).

Ethics
Students are expected to conduct themselves in their clinical work and in their general conduct according to ethical and legal guidelines as outlined in Alabama 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 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 (see Program, Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal, and Procedures).

Clinical Performance
As a program, we endeavor to train high quality relational systemic clinicians. Sometimes, even academically capable students will face challenges with the clinical application of knowledge. 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 and evidenced-based theories. A deficiency may exist when a student appears to not be able to apply general tenets of systems theory, apply specific tenets of family therapy theory, or struggles to join effectively with clients 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 minor deficiency (or beyond), the Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal, and Procedures will be enacted.

Professionalism
Students are expected to consistently interact in their work with faculty, site supervisors, and other students 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.

We encourage the free expression and discussion of ideas in an environment that is supportive of diversity of experience and perspectives. While we would never want to encourage an environment where any point of view is suppressed, we expect students and faculty to be able to engage in
discussion, debate, or disagreement while maintaining respect for all involved. Students who are disruptive to the mission and goals of the program due to unprofessional behavior may be subject to the Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal, and Procedures.

What should I do if I am Struggling?
In our experience, one of the most frequent mistakes made by graduate students is to assume they have to do it all, on their own. The UA MFT program faculty are fully invested in your success and want to see you achieve your goals. We will work with you and make any reasonable accommodations we can to ensure your success.

Don’t wait until it is too late, and an issue has compromised your academic, clinical, or professional performance.

If you find yourself struggling academically, clinically, professionally, or personally:
- Talk with the Program Director or Director of Clinical Training to identify steps you may take to address the concerns.
- Talk with the MFT Program Director to make changes to your plan of study where possible.
- Talk to a therapist. It is surprising how many therapists are resistant to engaging in therapy for themselves. If you need help identifying a therapist, we can provide referrals.
UA MFT Handbook Updates

The UA MFT Program undergoes periodic reviews by program faculty (described earlier in this handbook). These reviews are primarily focused on program improvements related to coursework, policies, and contemporary educational standards and often are based on student and alumni feedback, as well as site supervisor feedback. In addition, as a comprehensive master’s degree program, policy or procedural changes are sometimes required to conform to national accreditation standards, state licensure guidelines, college or university policies, or advances in the broader counseling profession.

Before implementation, programmatic changes will be thoroughly reviewed by MFT core program faculty members and university administration. Some programmatic changes may apply only to newly admitted MFC/T Master’s students starting the program during the semester admitted. However, when deemed necessary for program integrity and student success, some programmatic changes may apply to all current/active UA MFT students regardless of admission date. If programmatic changes are implemented after a student has already been admitted into the program, program faculty will attempt to inform all students of programmatic changes applicable to them by sending an E-mail to all active UA MFT students, as well as holding meetings to discuss the changes. *It is important that all UA MFT students check their UA Crimson E-mail regularly.*

If an academic/programmatic issue arises that is not addressed in this manual, or an extraordinary change in policy is needed immediately (i.e., before a new student handbook is disseminated) to help ensure a student’s academic success, core Program faculty shall deliberate about the issue on a case-by-case basis.

The UA MFT Program faculty encourage all students to fully participate in the program’s academic and training process. The program’s success is predicated upon students and faculty working together for students’ success, clients’ mental health, programmatic improvements, and societal advancement. Student contributions are therefore expected, welcomed, and appreciated throughout the program via active student surveys, exit surveys, and alumni surveys.
Additional Policies

Human Subject Research
All research involving human subjects, whether led by faculty or independently pursued by students is governed by UA's Office of Research Compliance (ORC) and Institutional Review Board (IRB). All students must be familiar with and follow the requirements for proposal submission and reporting established by the IRB, BEFORE starting any research that involve human subjects or data collected from human subjects. It is expected that you will work in conjunction with faculty to ensure that you are following appropriate ORC and IRB protocols. The policies and procedures for human subject research are available at: http://ovpred.ua.edu/research-compliance/institutional-review-board-irb/

Publications
In conducting research and in assigning authorship to publications, students and faculty in the MFT Program follow the relevant regulations on conduct of research with human participants as well as the AAMFT Ethical Principles. Assigning authorship credit follows the principle of assigning credit in proportion to each individual's contribution. It is very helpful to negotiate, in advance, responsibilities and authorship issues on joint research projects. A written contract agreed to by all parties prior to beginning a joint research project is highly recommended.

Co-authorship by a faculty member and a student on work done in the course by the student is not automatic. The faculty member's contribution would have to be substantial, going beyond editing or giving comments on papers at the level ordinarily provided by the instructor of a course. Similarly, students who conduct library research or data analyses for a faculty member as part of an assistantship or independent study would not ordinarily receive co-authorship. In the event of substantial contributions, co-authorship by faculty members and students is warranted.

Access to Personal Records
Guidelines governing student access to personal records and the procedures for challenging information in these records are located at https://registrar.ua.edu/academics-policies/ferpa/

Sexual Harassment & Misconduct
The University of Alabama does not tolerate sexual harassment misconduct, and the UA MFT strictly adhere to all policies concerning sexual harassment. The Title IX policy and reporting procedures at https://titleix.ua.edu/

Students with Disabilities
The UA MFT Program adheres to all policies concerning individuals with disabilities as stated under the Office of Disability Services (ODS). The policy and reporting procedures are located at http://ods.ua.edu/.

Grade Appeals
Students who wish to appeal a course grade should follow the policies and procedures outlined by the Graduate School and the College of Human Environmental Sciences. Note that grades may be appealed through this process only when there is demonstrable evidence that prejudice, or arbitrary or capricious action on the part of the instructor has influenced the grade. A student who wishes to appeal the results of a comprehensive examination, alleged excessive requirements by an advisor or committee, and other matters relating strictly to graduate education, may appeal under procedures established by the Graduate School.
**Academic Conduct**
Students are expected to hold themselves to high standards of ethical conduct in all phases of their academic work. Students should understand that such actions as plagiarism or cheating, or attempts to do so, are unethical and will not be condoned. PAPERS CANNOT BE SUBMITTED TO FULFILL REQUIREMENTS FOR MORE THAN ONE COURSE. To do so constitutes academic misconduct. This is not meant to deter students from further development of a research or topical area through extension of previous work. Students should consult with the course instructor to be clear on the acceptability of papers that are based on prior coursework or other projects. Academic misconduct will follow the policies found at [https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/](https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/).

**Advising Policy**
The MFT Program Director will be the academic advisor for students enrolled in the UA MFT Program. The faculty advisor is responsible for official program advising and research mentorship, including program policy, curriculum advising, licensure, internship/externship placement, and comprehensive exam progress. The advisor has the responsibility to communicate concerns about, or from, the student to the faculty, and will relay feedback from the faculty to the student. The advisor will evaluate progress of the student annually to determine the progress of the student in fulfilling the requirements for their degree in the pursuit of their post-graduate goals. Students considering pursuing licensure in other states are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor and visit the licensure board for the state of interest.

It is important to note that each student also has responsibilities related to the advisee-advisor relationship. Developmentally, it is an appropriate time in graduate school to begin the process of becoming an independent and self-sufficient professional. The student’s primary responsibility is to access her/his resources prior to contacting her/his advisor. This includes reading through and accessing the program manual as needed. The student also should take the role of a self-advocate, and reach out to her/his faculty advisor when s/he has questions/concerns or when s/he is struggling and may be in need of accommodations.

**Student Technology Requirements**
Neither the UA Graduate School nor the UA HDFS Graduate Programs have specific technology requirements for students in the program. However, we recommend that students have easy access to:

- A modern computer with internet access
- Word processing software
- Presentation software
- E-mail software
- Calendar software
- Web browsing software

UA OIT offers guidance for students considering the purchase of computer hardware at [https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ithelpcentral/recommend/](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ithelpcentral/recommend/).

The University of Alabama has site license software agreements with a large number of vendors, many of which provide free software to students. We strongly encourage students to take advantage of the site license for Microsoft Office 365 and UA Box. The software is free to students, provides the recommended software, and 1TB of cloud storage. A list of site licensed
software and instructions for downloading the software is available at https://oit.ua.edu/software/

Students have access to Computer Labs computing labs. Information can be found at https://oit.ua.edu/service/computer-labs/. Students in the MFT Program also have access to the computers in the CFTC clinic office (Child Development Research Center Room 253. The UA MFT Graduate Program do not require specific software or hardware training. However, basic familiarity with word processing, presentation, web browsing, and e-mail software is strongly recommended and will be necessary for successful completion of your degree. Individual courses will require writing papers and developing class presentations. Also, the vast majority of official University and UA MFT Program communication will take place using e-mail. All UA MFT students are provided with an individual school e-mail account. Office of Information Technology Support offers a wide variety of technology services at no cost (see https://oit.ua.edu/services/)

Students will receive training in the use of the electronic client file management system used by the UA Capstone Family Therapy Clinic during new student orientation and/or during clinical practicum. Training in the use of research/statistical software will take place as part of your required courses.

**AAMFT Membership**

Students are expected to become student members of AAMFT within their first semester of joining the UA MFT program. Guidelines for applying are found on the website at www.aamft.org.
SECTION IV: APPENDICIES
Commonly Asked Questions about the UA MFT Program

How do I know what classes I should take?
The Program Director will be your academic advisor throughout the program and the primary source of information about the classes you should take. In addition, a curriculum with recommended sequence is included in this handbook.

Is health insurance available for graduate students?
Yes. Some graduate students receive health insurance from UA as part of their graduate assistantship package. If your graduate assistantship does not provide health insurance, or you are not on an assistantship, you can enroll in UA’s Student Injury and Sickness Insurance Plan with UnitedHealthcare Student Resources (UHCSR). Eligible UA students can voluntarily enroll in the health plan on a semester basis or for the entire plan year beginning August 1 and ending in July 31 of each academic year. More information can be found at https://shc.sa.ua.edu/billing/university-sponsored-health-insurance/.

Are computers available for student use?
There are several means for students to have access to computers. There are computers available to clinically active students in the CFTC clinic office (Human Development Research Center #253). The UA Library also has laptops available to check-out. More information on laptop check-out can be found at https://www.lib.ua.edu/using-the-library/equipment/.

When will I know about assistantships and financial aid opportunities?
Assistantships are assigned each Spring by the HDFS Department Chair. The number of assistantships available vary from year to year. If you are interested in an assistantship, please indicate your interest on your graduate application. You can also email the HDFS Department Chair, Dr. Bobby Laird (rlaird@ches.ua.edu), of your interest in in receiving a HDFS graduate assistantship.

In addition, there are other sources of financial assistance, such as scholarships and fellowships. Consult the UA Graduate School website for more information: https://graduate.ua.edu/

Finally, there are government loan programs for which you might qualify. Consult the UA Student Financial Aid website for more information: https://financialaid.ua.edu/

How much time should I plan to commit to this program?
Most students complete the program in five semesters, taking a full load of classes and having clinical responsibilities every semester. It is likely that the time commitment increases with each semester due to the increasing clinical responsibilities. Even as a full-time program, most students take about two-years to complete all graduation requirements. Students have six years to complete their degree requirements.
Do I have to complete a thesis?
No, there is no requirement to complete a thesis. However, students must pass a Comprehensive Examination (see description in UA MFT Program Handbook).

Should I join a professional organization?
Yes. You will be expected during your time at UA to become a student member of AAMFT/Alabama MFT and to actively participate in professional development activities. Becoming an active professional is highly encouraged. AAMFT has a website with much valuable information (including a membership application) at http://www.aamft.org.

Am I guaranteed a job when I finish?
No, but the employment record of our graduates is excellent. Most of our graduates have been able to find employment as therapists (in a private practice or agency setting) within a few months after graduation (many before graduation), even when competing in some very tough job markets.

How will I know when I am finished with my degree?
You will be finished with your M.S. in HDFS with a concentration in MFT when you:
- Completed all classes on your degree plan (receiving an average of a B /3.0 GPA across all course)
- Completed 500 (minimum) hours client contact with at least 250 hours with couples or families present
- Completed 100 (minimum) hours of supervision (including both group and individual)
- Demonstrated basic clinical competencies as judged by faculty supervisors
- Passed Comprehensive Exam

What support services are available to me?
Students are entitled to 15 counseling sessions per academic year through the UA Counseling Center in 3000 South Lawn Office Building. For more information go to: https://counseling.sa.ua.edu/ Or, to contact the Counseling Center call 205-348-3863.
Graduate Campus Student Tuition rates for Fall 2020 or Spring 2021 are listed below (https://studentaccounts.ua.edu/cost/tuition-rates/#graduate):

### Full Time Rates – per semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Resident</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-15</td>
<td>$5,390.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrolled hours over 15 are assessed an overload tuition charge of $470.00 per hour for graduate residents and $1,550.00 for graduate nonresidents.

### Part Time Rates – per semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Resident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$615.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$1,230.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$1,845.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$2,460.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$3,075.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$3,690.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$4,305.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$4,920.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All rates are subject to change without notice.*

*The rates for 1-4 hour enrollments do not include activity, recreation, nor athletic privileges.*
## Graduate School Links

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Catalog</th>
<th><a href="https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/">https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistantship/Financial Aid</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for holding/maintaining an assistantship</td>
<td><a href="https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/financial-assistance/index.html">https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/financial-assistance/index.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTA Workshop materials (Student of Concern etc.)</td>
<td><a href="https://graduate.ua.edu/events/gta/">https://graduate.ua.edu/events/gta/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance evaluation policy for GTA/GRA/GA</td>
<td><a href="https://www.ua.edu/about/policies/files/Teaching%20Credentials%20for%20UA%20Faculty%20and%20Teaching%20Assistants%20Policy.pdf">https://www.ua.edu/about/policies/files/Teaching%20Credentials%20for%20UA%20Faculty%20and%20Teaching%20Assistants%20Policy.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowships &amp; Financial Aid</td>
<td><a href="https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/financial-assistance/index.html">https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/financial-assistance/index.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UA Jobs site for student employment</td>
<td><a href="https://uastudentjobs.ua.edu/">https://uastudentjobs.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School Conference &amp; Research funds</td>
<td><a href="https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/financial-assistance/index.html">https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/about/general-information/financial-assistance/index.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student health insurance</td>
<td><a href="https://shc.sa.ua.edu/billing/university-sponsored-health-insurance/">https://shc.sa.ua.edu/billing/university-sponsored-health-insurance/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Center and other job resources/guidance</td>
<td><a href="https://career.sa.ua.edu/">https://career.sa.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Care &amp; Wellbeing</td>
<td><a href="https://bamacares.sa.ua.edu/">https://bamacares.sa.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td><a href="https://writingcenter.ua.edu/">https://writingcenter.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Studio</td>
<td><a href="https://speakingstudio.ua.edu/">https://speakingstudio.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capstone International Center</td>
<td><a href="http://international.ua.edu/">http://international.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Disability Services (ADA accommodations etc.)</td>
<td><a href="http://ods.ua.edu/">http://ods.ua.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Licensure Portability Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the potential differences in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) licensure requirements across state/provincial regulatory bodies. I understand that while my qualifying degree in MFT meets MFT licensure requirements and regulations in Alabama and many other states, there may be states in which my qualifying degree does meet MFT licensure requirements and regulations.

____________________________
Printed Name

____________________________    ___________________________
Signature       Date
UA Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Faculty/Assistantship Supervisor Evaluation Form

Student’s Name:                      Date:

Name of Faculty Member/Assistantship Supervisor:

Capacity in which you know student:
Student in course (list course):
Graduate Assistant (place of assistantship):

Please evaluate the student(s) on the following items. The performance level is as follows:
1: UNSATISFACTORY
2: LESS THAN SATISFACTORY
3: SATISFACTORY
4: VERY GOOD
5: EXCELLENT

N/A: NO BASIS FOR EVALUATION

_____ Completed course work/assistantship duties in a timely manner
_____ Punctuality (i.e., attended class/assistantship hours on time and stayed until end)
_____ Attitude toward assignments/assistantship duties
_____ Appearance (appropriate for setting)
_____ Organizational/time management skills
_____ Writing skills
_____ Interpersonal relationships with instructor/assistantship supervisor
_____ Interpersonal relationships with classmates
_____ Emotional stability

COMMMENTS

_______________________________________ _________________________
Faculty/Assistantship Supervisor Signature   Date

***Please Return Directly to the MFT Program Director***
Informed Consent for Clinical Training

The University of Alabama
Capstone Family Therapy Clinic
Marriage and Family Therapy Program

Informed Consent

PREFACE: The clinical portion of training in the M.S. in HDFS with a Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy 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 non-clinical, graduate programs offered by HDFS. Because of the unique aspects of clinical training, this document is designed to describe aspects of the Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy.

CLINICAL PRACTICUM: Beginning Fall of the first-year, students must be continuously enrolled in a three-credit hour practicum/internship for a minimum of five semesters and until the 500 client contact hour requirement (at least 250 relational) is completed and the faculty agree that students have met the minimum level of clinical competencies. During the time that students are enrolled in practicum they will receive supervision during every week that they see cases. The student is responsible for the accurate recording and reporting of these hours to the Director of Clinical Training on a monthly basis.

Students are responsible for complying with MFT Program and Capstone Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC) policies and procedures concerning accurate and prompt clinical record-keeping. Case files will be audited regularly. During the latter stages of clinical training, students are placed at off-campus sites. Students are required to provide transportation and other expenses associated with these placements.

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 she/he does not want to complete his/her 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.

LIABILITY INSURANCE: Students and their supervisors incur liability for the therapy services provided by the student. During the practicum experiences in the CFTC, students are required to obtain and pay for liability insurance before enrolling in a clinical practicum or working clinically with clients. Liability insurance is provided through AAMFT when the student becomes a member.

THE NATURE OF SUPERVISION: The primary goal of supervision is the enhancement of the supervisee's professional competence and a secondary goal of assuring quality of service to clients. Each student enrolled in a clinical practicum must receive weekly individual and/or group supervision. A large portion of this supervision must be live observation or video review.
of recorded sessions. Supervisors vary in the degree to which they focus on theory, skills, and use of self. However, each of these issues will receive attention at some point in the program.

If the supervisor thinks that personal material is interfering with the student's assessment or treatment of clients, the supervisor will bring that concern to the attention of the student and may suggest that the student seek professional services to address the issue further. **Supervisors will not conduct personal therapy with supervisees, nor will the program require a student to obtain personal therapy.** However, if personal issues appear to the faculty supervisors to continue to interfere with the student's performance as a therapist, the supervisor will provide consultation for the student therapist, and that difficulty will be reflected in the student's practicum grade and possibly in the student's progress through the program. If the personal issues continue to negatively affect the therapist's clinical work, the therapist can be removed from cases in accordance with Alabama MFT Rules and Regulations and AAMFT Code of Ethics concerning protection of clients (see Student Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal Procedures).

Students who choose to reveal personal information during clinical supervision deserve to have that information treated with respect. AAMFT ethical standards and Alabama Rules and Regulations will be followed regarding confidentiality. Supervisors may, however, share information about general areas in which the student is having difficulty in the conduct of therapy with another supervisor with whom the student is now, or will be, working. In addition, end of semester evaluations are routinely forwarded to the student's next on-campus clinical supervisor to assist him/her in continued supervision of the student.

Students in a clinical practicum can expect to receive live supervision from behind a one-way mirror, as well as supervision based on video recordings of sessions and case notes. Students can also expect regular feedback on their progress in clinical practicum. This regular feedback will be verbal during the course of the semester unless the faculty have reason to be especially concerned. In that case, the Student Grievance, Deficiency, & Dismissal Procedures will be enacted. Copies of the end of semester evaluations will be placed in the students file.

**PROGRESS TOWARD LICENSURE AND AAMFT CLINICAL MEMBERSHIP:** The student is responsible for direct communication with the appropriate licensing board regarding licensure and AAMFT regarding clinical membership. Most students continue to work on licensure and clinical membership after graduation. The Program Director at UA will provide documentation of supervision and client contact hours accomplished at UA as requested.

I understand the nature of clinical training as described above and choose to enter the clinical practicum in marriage and family therapy.

Therapist Signature: _______________________________ Date:_________________

MFT Director of Clinical Training Signature: ________________ Date:_________________

MFT Program Director Signature: ________________________ Date:_________________

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CFTC Teaming Form

Name: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

of Teaming: ____________________________

Therapist Name: ____________________________

Client Number: ____________________________

Client Type: Individual  Couple  Family

Number of Teaming Hours Accrued for this Session: ____________________________

Description of Session Content (2-3 sentences)

Description of Session Process (2-3 sentences)

Description of Post-Session Discussion with Treating Therapist (2-3 sentences)

Student Signature: ____________________________

Supervisor Signature: ____________________________
MONTHLY CLINICAL HOURS REPORT
Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Department of Family Studies and Human Services
The University of Alabama

Name: ________________________________  Date: ________________________________
for Month: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement Site</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Couple</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capstone Family Therapy Clinic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Off-site Placement</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Couple</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group:</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Couple</th>
<th>Individual</th>
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<tr>
<td>Group:</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative Hours</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Couple</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Students in clinical practicum are expected to carry a case load between 10-12 hours per week

Therapist Signature ________________________________  Monthly Total: ________________________________

Monthly Relational: ________________________________

Overall Total Hours: ________________________________

Overall Total Relational Hours: ________________________________

Supervisor Signature ________________________________
MONTHLY SUPERVISION HOURS REPORT
Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Department of Human Development and Family Studies
The University of Alabama

Name: ____________________________________________
Date: ____________________________________________
for Month: _______________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement Site:</th>
<th>Live</th>
<th>Audio</th>
<th>Video</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
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<th>Audio</th>
<th>Video</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>Group</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therapist Signature: ____________________________
Month: ____________________________

Supervisor Signature: ____________________________
Total Hours: ____________________________
CLINICAL AFFILIATION AGREEMENT WITH UA CAPSTONE FAMILY THERAPY CLINIC AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES

This Agreement is entered into by and between THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, a public corporation of the State of Alabama, by and on behalf of its member institution, The UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, and specifically THE CAPSTONE FAMILY THERAPY CLINIC ("University"), and ___________________________ ("Agency").

WITNESSETH:

WHERE

AS, the University’s Capstone Family Therapy Clinic is engaged in the higher education and training of Marriage and Family Therapy Masters Students (hereinafter referred to individually as “Student” and collectively as “Students”) and utilizes community facilities to provide clinical experience for such Students; and

WHERE

AS, Agency has available facilities well suited for providing clinical training and experience for Marriage and Family Therapy Students; and

WHERE

AS, the parties desire a cooperative relationship that will promote the education of Students by allowing them to gain practical experience;

NOW, THEREFORE, University and Agency, in consideration of the mutual benefits to be attained by both and the mutual promises herein, do hereby agree each with the other to participate in a cooperative program of instruction ("Program") whereby the Agency will accept Students for supervised learning experiences in the treatment of Agency’s clients as follows:

1. Mutual Responsibilities:

1.1 Designated Personnel. University and Agency will designate and submit to the other the name of the person to be responsible for coordination of the Program on its behalf and will notify the other of any change or proposed change in such designated personnel.

1.2 Agreement on Program Details. Prior to the commencement of the Program, University and Agency shall mutually arrange and agree upon the number of Students to be assigned to the Program, their schedules, the learning resources to be utilized, the dates of the Program and any health requirements. To the extent licensure is required, University will only refer students with appropriate licensure.

1.3 Information on Students. Prior to the commencement date of the Program, University shall provide to Agency the name of each participating Student and any additional information reasonably required by Agency.

1.4 Confidentiality of Student Information. University agrees that for purposes of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Agency will be considered a University
official with a legitimate educational reason to have access to limited personally
identifiable information from Student records. University agrees to provide authorized
representatives of Agency limited personally identifiable information about Students that
is reasonably necessary for participation in the internship. No other information from
Student’s education record will be provided unless Agency provides a written consent
from the Student to the release of such information, and/or Agency otherwise establishes
to University’s satisfaction that the need for such information is related to the educational
internship experience or the release of such information is in compliance with FERPA.
Agency agrees that it will not further disclose personally identifiable information about
any Student that it receives from University pursuant to this Agreement, unless the
Student consents in writing to such disclosure or unless Agency can otherwise legally
disclose the information under FERPA. In consideration for the personally identifiable
information, Agency expressly warrants and represents that it will not use the Student
information provided by the University for any purpose other than to comply with the
terms of its Agreement with University.

1.5 **Non-Discrimination.** In compliance with federal law and University policy, including
but not limited to the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in
Employment Act of 1967 and 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990,
ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, each party
hereto will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic
origin, age, disability, military service, veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other
class protected by law or regulation in either the selection of Students for participation in
the Program or as to any aspect of the educational training Program; provided, however,
that with respect to disability, the disability must not be such as would, even with
reasonable accommodation, in and of itself, preclude the Student’s effective participation
in the Program.

1.6 **Cooperation in Investigating Claims.** The parties agree to notify each other as soon as
possible in writing of any incident, occurrence, or claim arising out of or in connection
with this Agreement which could result in liability or claim of liability to the other party.
Further, Agency and University shall have the right to investigate any incident or
occurrence and the parties shall cooperate with one another in the conduct of such
investigation.

2. **Responsibilities of the University:**
2.1 **Student Eligibility.** To be responsible, in coordination with Agency, for the assignment of Students and the planning of the Program. Students assigned shall only be those who meet the criteria for eligibility as established by the University and approved by Agency, and no Student shall be assigned to Agency without prior consent of University.

2.2 **Faculty.** To provide qualified faculty members who will evaluate the experience of Students.

2.3 **Student Evaluation.** To establish the Student’s learning objectives and criteria for evaluating the quality of Student performance in the Program.

2.4 **Require Students to Adhere to Agency Rules/Policies/Laws.** To inform Students that they will be expected to comply with the applicable policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of Agency and University, including, but not limited to, the use of personal protective equipment, the rules of patient confidentiality, and the procedures relating to medical record documentation. University agrees to advise all participating Students of the importance of complying with all relevant state and federal confidentiality laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and amendments thereto. University will advise Students and faculty of the importance of complying with Agency’s policies and procedures relative to HIPAA. University agrees to report to Agency any unauthorized use or disclosure of protected health information obtained from access to patients or records of Agency that it becomes aware of.

2.5 **Student Use of Patient Information.** To inform Students and University faculty that they must not submit for publication any material relating to the clinical education experience without prior written approval of University and Agency. University and Agency acknowledge that students and faculty may use patients’ information for educational purposes at Agency and at University, provided such information is appropriately de-identified (per HIPAA guidelines) so as to remove all data that may be used to connect such information back to the patient to whom it relates, or provided Agency otherwise gives written permission.

2.6 **Insurance.** To maintain in effect during the term hereof a self-insured and self-funded Professional Liability Trust Fund that provides professional or malpractice liability coverage with a limit of $1,000,000 per claim/occurrence and $3,000,000 aggregate to its Students and faculty while they are acting within the scope of their approved assignments at Agency and will provide Agency with appropriate evidence whereof upon written request.
2.7 **Withdrawal of Students** To withdraw a Student whose progress, conduct, or work does not meet the standards of its program. Final academic action regarding the Student is the responsibility of University.

3. **Responsibilities of the Agency**

3.1 **Direct Client Contact Hours.** To provide direct client contact hours, both relational and/or individual, for Students to conduct professional marriage and family therapy in adherence to their scope of practice.

   Direct Client Contact Hour: defined as face-to-face contact with individuals, couples or families for a minimum of fifty (50) minutes.

   Relational Hours: defined as direct client contact hours with more than one family member or a significant other in the room.

   Individual Hours: defined as direct client contact hours with one client in the room.

   Marriage and Family Therapy Scope of Practice in the state of Alabama:

   “Marriage and Family Therapy in the State of Alabama is a professional practice which affects the public safety and welfare and requires appropriate regulation and control in the public interest. The practice of marriage and family therapy is the process of providing professional marriage and family therapy to individuals, couples, and families, either alone or in a group. The practice of marriage and family therapy utilizes established principles that recognize the interrelated nature of the individual problems and dysfunctions in family members in order to assess, and treat emotional, mental, and behavioral disorders. Marriage and family therapy includes, without being limited to, individual, group, couple, sexual, and family therapy, whether the services are offered directly to the general public or through organizations, either public or private, for a fee or other compensation. Marriage and family therapy is a specialized mode of treatment for the purpose of resolving emotional, mental, and behavioral disorders and modifying intrapersonal and interpersonal dysfunctions. Marriage and family therapists do not practice beyond their scope of training in the areas of assessing, diagnosing, and treating clients.”

   Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy, [http://www.amhc.state.al.us/rules.aspx](http://www.amhc.state.al.us/rules.aspx)

3.2 **Maximum Hour Limitation.** Students shall work no more than 16 hours per week during the Program. Of those 16 weekly hours, a maximum of 12 will consist of direct client contact hours within the Agency.

3.3 **On-Call Limitation.** Students will not be permitted to work “on-call” positions between the hours of 6pm and 8am.

3.4 **Supervised Experience.** To provide Students accepted into this Program access to a planned, supervised program of clinical experiences.

3.5 **Staff Supervision.** To provide designated staff members to facilitate Students’ clinical experiences.
3.6 **Access to Clinical Training and Facilities.** To make available clinical areas for Student training, including necessary and appropriate supplies for administering training; adequate space and facilities for clinical instruction; a reasonable amount of storage space for apparel and personal effects of participating Students and faculty; faculty/Student access to the Agency dining facilities at the faculty/Students’ own expense, and, in general, to provide an environment that will permit Students participating in the Program to gain clinical experience.

3.7 **Appropriate Staffing Levels.** To maintain a sufficient number of support staff to carry out normal service functions, so Students will not be performing in lieu of staff.

3.8 **Accreditation Inspections.** To permit, upon reasonable request, University and/or agencies charged with the responsibility for accreditation of University’s curriculum, to inspect its clinical facilities, the services available for the clinical experiences, and any other items pertaining to the Program, solely for the purpose of University meeting accreditation requirements.

3.9 **Patient Care.** To retain responsibility for patient care and related duties at all times. The Agency will maintain administrative and professional supervision of University Students insofar as their presence affects the operation of the Agency’s facilities and/or the direct and indirect care of patients. Agency agrees that it will provide sufficient and qualified supervisory personnel for the supervision of patient care to the extent patient care is impacted by any Student assignment.

3.10 **Orientation and HIPAA Training.** If Agency is a HIPAA-covered entity, to provide University Students and faculty involved in the Program with training/orientation including, but not limited to, personal protective equipment availability and use, fire and emergency response plans, and Agency’s policies and procedures and applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to confidentiality of individually identifiable health information of Agency’s clients, including HIPAA Privacy and Security Standards. Agency agrees that Students and faculty are part of Agency’s “workforce” as defined in the HIPAA privacy regulations, and Agency consequently agrees to provide Students and faculty placed with Agency with training regarding Agency’s HIPAA policies and procedures. Education and training relating to these specific policies and procedures as well as any other Agency-specific policies and procedures deemed appropriate and necessary by University and/or Agency shall be provided by Agency to Students prior to their rotation at Agency.
3.11 **Reporting Training.** Agency agrees to provide training and information to Students immediately upon or before the start of the Program about Agency’s policies and procedures related to addressing all forms of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Included within this should be information on how to report potential harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.

3.12 **Reasonable Accommodations.** Agency agrees to make reasonable accommodations for Students in accordance with the ADA and ADAAA.

3.13 **Emergency Medical Treatment.** To provide the same emergency health care or first aid to Students as that extended to Agency’s employees for injury or illness while fulfilling activities of the Agency, but only at the expense of the Student. Agency assumes no responsibility, financial or otherwise, regardless of whether or not these services are covered by the Student's insurance.

3.14 **Removal of Students.** To immediately remove a Student from its premises for behavior that Agency deems to be an immediate threat or danger to Agency’s patients, clients, staff members, visitors, other Students, or to the quality of Agency services, for unprofessional behavior, including, but not limited to, a breach of HIPAA Privacy or Security regulations or Agency’s HIPAA policies or procedures or a breach of confidentiality of patient information. In such an event, Agency shall notify University in writing of its actions and the reasons for its actions as soon as practicable.

3.15 **Withdrawal of Students.** To request University to withdraw or dismiss a Student from the Program at Agency when his or her clinical performance is unsatisfactory to Agency or his or her behavior, in Agency’s discretion, is disruptive or detrimental to Agency and/or its patients. The University agrees to immediately remove a Student from assignment at the Agency upon Agency’s request, after Agency reasonably has determined that such removal is of urgent necessity. Agency will discuss each particular situation with University’s Program Coordinator, prior to requesting removal unless emergency circumstances preclude such discussion. Subject to the provisions of Subsection 3.10 above, it is understood that only the University can dismiss the Student from the Program at Agency.

4. **Other Agreements**

4.1 **Immunity.** It is hereby stipulated and agreed between Agency and University that with respect to any claim or action arising out of any activities performed under or pursuant to this Agreement, such claim or action shall be governed by applicable Federal and State law with respect to governmental liability and immunity. University, a division of The
4.2 **Independent Contractors.** The parties agree that at all times they shall be considered independent contractors and shall not be considered employees or agents of the other for any purpose.

4.3 **Status of Students and Faculty.** The Students and faculty participating in the Program shall in no event become or be deemed to be employees, servants, or agents of Agency. As such, they shall not be entitled to monetary compensation or to employee benefits, including worker’s compensation benefits. Nor shall any person on the staff or administration of Agency become nor be deemed to be an employee, servant, or agent of the University.

4.4 **Authority to Execute.** The undersigned individuals represent and warrant that they are fully authorized to execute this Agreement on behalf of the respective parties.

4.5 **Assignment.** University and Agency agree and acknowledge that they may not assign or transfer any rights, duties, or obligations under this agreement, in whole or in part, to any third party and/or that they may not delegate responsibility for performance under this Agreement.

4.6 **Publicity.** Neither University nor Agency shall cause to be published or disseminated any advertising materials that identify the other party or its facilities with respect to this Agreement without the prior written consent of the other party.

4.7 **Third Party Interest/Liability.** This Agreement is entered into for the exclusive benefit of the undersigned parties and is not intended to create any rights, powers, or interests in any third party. Agency and/or University, including any of their respective officers, directors, employees, or agents, shall not be liable to third parties by any act or omission of the other party.

4.8 **Headings.** The headings used in this Agreement have been prepared for the convenience of reference only and shall not control, affect the meaning of, or be taken as an interpretation of any provisions of this Agreement.

4.9 **Non-exclusivity.** Each party shall have the right to enter into similar agreements with other parties.

4.10 **Waiver.** No waiver of any default under this Agreement or under any agreement or document executed in connection herewith shall constitute or operate as a waiver of any subsequent default, and no delay, failure or omission in exercising or enforcing any right,
privilege or option hereunder or thereunder shall constitute a waiver, abandonment or relinquishment thereof or prohibit or prevent any election under or enforcement or exercise of any other right, privilege or option. Failure by a party to enforce any of the terms, covenants or conditions of this Agreement for any length of time or from time to time shall not be deemed to waive or decrease the rights of such party to insist thereafter upon strict performance of the other party.

4.11 **Severability.** If any part of this Agreement should be held to be void or unenforceable, such part shall be treated as severable, leaving valid the remainder of this Agreement notwithstanding the part or parts found void or unenforceable.

4.12 **Notices.** All notices required under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall either be served personally or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. All mailed notices shall be deemed received three (3) days after mailing. Notices shall be mailed to the following addresses or such other addresses as either party may specify in writing to the other party:

To University:  
Universi  
214  
Child Development Research Center  
Box 870160  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
Attn:  
Dr. Blake Berryhill and Dr. Karly Downs

To Agency:  
Agency  
Name:  
Address:  
Attn:

4.13 **Governing Law.** This contract and agreement shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Alabama, and any claim against the University under the terms and conditions of this agreement must be made through the Alabama State Board of Adjustment.

5. **Terms of Agreement**

5.1 **Entire Agreement.** It is expressly agreed that this written statement embodies the entire agreement of the parties relating this affiliation, and no other agreements exist between the parties except as herein expressly set forth.
5.2 Amendments. This agreement may be modified by mutual consent at any time, provided that any changes or modifications must be in writing and be signed by both parties.

5.3 Renewal. This Agreement shall become effective upon execution by both parties, and shall be automatically renewed at the beginning of each academic year thereafter unless either party notifies the other in writing of their intent to terminate the agreement.

5.4 Termination. In the event that either party desires to terminate the Agreement, a minimum of three (3) months’ written notice of intent to terminate is required. Both parties agree, however, that no cancellation or termination of the Agreement shall interrupt or interfere with any Student currently in this Program at Agency, and such Student shall be given a reasonable opportunity to complete their Program at Agency, even after termination of the agreement.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives on the dates indicated below.

**Agency**

By _____________________________
Title ____________________________
Date ________________

**The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama, by and on behalf of The University of Alabama, Capstone Family Therapy Clinic**

By ______________________________
Name: Dr. Blake Berryhill
Title: Program Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program in the College of Human Environmental Sciences
Date ______________________________

**The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama**

By ______________________________
Name: Julie Shelton
Title: Associate Vice President for Finance
Date ______________________________
I reviewed the MFT Program Handbook of the HDFS Marriage and Family Concentration Program. I have discussed my questions with the program coordinator and/or faculty members. I understand that I am responsible for the information presented in the handbook. By signing this document, I affirm that I have read and understood the terms outlined in the handbook and that I agree to abide by those terms.

Student Name:___________________________________________________________

Student Signature:________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________________________

Note: Please return this document to the Program Director, Dr. Blake Berryhill, by September 15th. This document will be placed in your student file.