

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY (MS)

Program Length Part-Time: 4.5 Years

Program Length Full-Time: 3 Years

MFT Program Chair and Director of Clinical Training: Yesim Keskin

The MS in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) specialization prepares students for careers as licensed marriage and family therapists. The primary mission of the MFT program is to prepare masters students to become multiculturally competent professionals in the specialty of marriage and family therapy. Principles of diversity and multiculturalism are infused throughout the curriculum to meet the psychological needs of families, couples, and children in a changing and multicultural society. The MFT curriculum combines theoretical training with practical experiences to prepare students for professional counseling careers, emphasizing the best practices of the Recovery Model. In addition to the Recovery Model, students receive exposure to a range of theoretical orientations that reflect a systems perspective. In California, completion of this program fulfills the academic requirements of the Board of Behavioral Science (BBS) for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT). The program has not confirmed whether it meets other states' licensure and certification requirements. Students pursuing licensure in other states are responsible for verifying compliance with their respective state's regulations.

Statement on Diversity and Nondiscrimination

The MFT program embraces diversity within its various forms. The MFT program welcomes students, faculty, and staff from diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, sexual orientation, age, and ability backgrounds. The program is committed to creating and maintaining a positive educational experience and affirmation of all aspects of human diversity.

The MFT program is committed to providing equal access and opportunity for all members of the University community in a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment. In accordance with the requirements and prohibitions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other federal and California laws, the program (and University) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), marital status, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic characteristics, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic or status protected by applicable law as to the admission or enrollment of any student, or its educational programs and activities; the employment of any member of the faculty or staff; the selection and treatment of volunteers or unpaid interns; or to the election of any officer or trustee of the University.

Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

Goal 1: Students will gain knowledge of the subject matter and best practices within the field of mental health, specifically for Marriage, Family Therapists (MFTs) in the State of California.

Learning Outcome 1.1: Students will be able to identify and discuss the various psychotherapeutic approaches, and correctly classify

corresponding diagnostic and intervention techniques (from perspectives of theory, research, and practice).

Learning Outcome 1.2: Students will be able to identify and explain MFT ethical guidelines, as well as California State and U.S. Federal laws pertaining to mental health services for MFTs.

Learning Outcome 1.3: Students will be able to identify and describe the scientific method, and summarize its role in the field of mental health.

Goal 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply theory and research to their training and practice as a mental health professional.

Learning Outcome 2.1: Students will be able to perform thorough intake interviews (including suicide assessments), summarize the themes of the interview, discuss diagnostic considerations, and identify goals and potential treatment plans for therapy through a recovery model framework.

Learning Outcome 2.2: Students will be able to effectively apply the field (MFT) ethics, and California State and U.S. Federal laws, to case vignettes and in vivo counseling sessions. This includes competency in the assessment, detection, and intervention for spousal abuse and for abuse reporting (e.g. child, elder, dependent adult).

Learning Outcome 2.3: Students will be able to synthesize various psychotherapeutic approaches. Furthermore, they will be able to provide rationale for selected theory integration.

Learning Outcome 2.4: Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, informed by the scientific method, to evaluate and criticize specific issues in the counseling profession.

Goal 3: Students will have an awareness of cultural and diversity issues in the counseling profession.

Learning Outcome 3.1: Students will develop cultural responsiveness in terms of alliance building, intake, diagnosis, treatment planning, and intervention selection.

Learning Outcome 3.2: Students will be able to discuss the various types of privilege and oppression that often arise for select cultural identities (i.e., select racial and ethnic groups, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical and mental ability).

Learning Outcome 3.3: Students will be able to identify potential limitations of mainstream, Western Psychological Practices for diverse populations and make suggestions for minimizing these limitations, as informed by theory, practice, and by the research literature.

Goal 4: Students will have an awareness of self (cultural identities/values/biases) as it applies to their role as mental health professionals.

Learning Outcome 4.1: Students will be able to express an increased level of self-awareness as it applies to their role as MFTs, which includes an understanding and ability to articulate their own cultural identities, related values and biases.

Learning Outcome 4.2: Students will demonstrate case conceptualizations which reflect a refined understanding of the impact of their cultural identities and related values on the therapeutic process (specifically the therapeutic alliance/relationship).

Learning Outcome 4.3: Students will demonstrate good listening skills during in vitro and in vivo client sessions.

Goal 5: Communication – Students will effectively communicate ideas in their speech, writing and other forms of expression.

Learning Outcome 5.1: Students will be able to describe and evaluate select topics in, or related to, the counseling profession in their speech.

Learning Outcome 5.2: Students will be able to describe and evaluate select topics in, or related to, the counseling profession in writing.

Admission Requirements (Fall 2024 and Forward)

The graduate psychology programs participate in a Centralized Application Service (PSYCAS). Applications are accepted beginning in September each year. All MFT applicants must have their applications completed by February 1st for consideration of Fall admission.

1. Completed PSYCAS application.
2. Official transcripts from a regionally accredited institution. A bachelor's degree is required. However, a bachelor's degree in psychology is not required.
3. Completion of the following three prerequisite courses: introduction to psychology, abnormal psychology, and psychological research methods or experimental psychology.
4. An overall undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is preferred. Applicants with a GPA below 3.0 may be considered with additional requirements.
5. Completion of a 3-page double-spaced statement of purpose and a 3-page double-spaced autobiography that address all required content areas from the guidelines (i.e., relevant clinical or volunteer experience, long-term professional goals, specific interest in the MFT program, knowledge of MFT as a profession, commitment to working with underserved populations, being a consumer of research, etc.).
6. A current Curriculum Vitae.
7. Three letters of recommendation are required from professors and other professionals who are qualified to objectively assess the applicant's ability to succeed in graduate-level study and potential to function competently as professional Marriage & Family Therapist. At least one letter should be from a professor and letters from friends or family members are not allowed.
8. International students must submit proof of proficiency in the English language via a satisfactory total TOEFL or Duolingo score. The minimum required TOEFL total score for the 3 versions of the TOEFL are as follows: 600 (paper-based version), 250 (computer-based version), and 100 (internet-based version). Duolingo English Test score of 120 or higher.
9. Applicants are strongly encouraged to have at least one year of volunteer or paid experience working with families, children, couples, or individuals.
10. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to demonstrate that they are consumers of research and demonstrate their commitment to working with underserved populations.

Following receipt and review of application materials by the MFT Admissions Committee, applicants who are being considered for admission will receive an invitation for an interview. Applicants will interview with faculty members in March and complete a writing assessment. Applicants will receive notification of their admission status in April and admitted students must respond no later than May 15. Applicants may solely defer their admission for one year.

Prior to enrolling in the fall, admitted students must provide an official transcript indicating the completion of their undergraduate degree and required prerequisites. Simultaneous enrollment of prerequisites and MFT courses is not permitted. Applicants who fail to complete all required prerequisites before the start of the Fall semester are not allowed to register for their courses. They will automatically forfeit their eligibility for admission due to noncompliance with admission requirements. Only admitted students may enroll in MFT courses.

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1. Completed PSYCAS application.
2. Official transcripts from a regionally accredited institution. A bachelor's degree is required and completion of the following three prerequisite courses: introduction to psychology, abnormal psychology, and psychological research methods or experimental psychology. A bachelor's degree in psychology is not required. Undergraduate course work is evaluated on an individual basis for its currency and appropriateness for the MFT program.
3. A minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 3.0.
4. Completion of a 3-page double-spaced statement of purpose and a 3-page double-spaced autobiography that address all required content areas from the guidelines (i.e., relevant clinical or volunteer experience, long-term professional goals, specific interest in our MFT Program, knowledge of MFT as a profession, commitment to working with underserved populations, being a consumer of research, etc.).
5. A current Curriculum Vitae.
6. Three letters of recommendation are required from professors and other professionals who are qualified to objectively assess the applicant's ability to succeed in graduate-level study and potential to function competently as professional Marriage & Family Therapist. At least one letter should be from a professor and letters from friends or family members are not allowed.
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Professionalism

MFT students' professional conduct and attitude should reflect an understanding of professional ethics codes, such as those set forth by the **American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)** and the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT). The MFT program is a professional training program and as a result students are expected to consistently demonstrate professional behavior; this is counted toward participation grades in each course.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Being on time: to class and with assignments
- Respectful interactions with students and faculty
- Proactive engagement in the learning process and assignments
- Being organized and prepared
- Managing paperwork and technology effectively
- Managing personal crises effectively
- Managing personal information (own and others') appropriately

Participation and Attendance. This program requires regular and prompt attendance to each class meeting. Students are also required to participate in classroom exercises and discussions. Students must attend all class sessions with no less than 80% attendance. Missing more than two sessions, chronic tardiness, or leaving early, as determined by the instructor, may result in a lower grade or failure in the course.

Classroom Conduct, Behavior Standards, and Ethics. Professionals in the field of counseling are governed by numerous ethical principles. Students in the MFT program are expected to follow such principles. Students should be aware that evaluations will consider personal suitability for the field and professional development. Classroom conduct, behavioral standards, and ethical behavior will be considered in this evaluation. Failure to display appropriate behaviors in each of these areas may result in dismissal from the program.

Note: Serious problems with professional conduct will increase the weight of the participation grade in any required course up to 100%; students in this situation may be withheld or removed from the program due to serious conduct concerns.

Academic Progress

The MFT program adheres to the grading policies stated in the current University of La Verne catalog. It should be noted that grades of B- or better are required for successful completion of the MFT program. Students earning grades lower than B- will be required to retake these classes if they are required for the MFT degree. In addition, students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to maintain normal academic progress and good standing in the program.

Time Limitation

All requirements for the master's degree are to be completed within five years from the time of first course registration post admission for the MFT program at the University of La Verne. Appeals for extension of time limitations must be made in writing to the Graduate Appeals Committee.

Program Candidacy

All students are admitted into the MFT program under a pre-candidacy status. After the completion of PSY 512 Clinical Psychopathology, PSY 516 Counseling Theories & Skills I, PSY 517 Counseling Theories & Skills II, and PSY 527 Professionalism, Ethics, and Law in Counseling, all students become eligible for candidacy status and are evaluated by the following criteria: GPA of 3.0 or above, a passing score on the PSY 595 Competency Exam, and demonstrated personal suitability for the counseling profession. Occasionally, students may receive provisional candidacy status in which certain conditions must be completed before they can receive candidacy status. In some instances, students may be denied candidacy and will be discontinued from the program. All students must receive candidacy status to complete the program.

During their coursework in the MFT program, students will receive ongoing evaluations for demonstrated suitability for the program and counseling profession. Occasionally, discontinuation of a student from the MFT program may occur, even after the conferring of candidacy status, if the student's personal or professional behavior does not continue to meet minimum professional and/or academic standards.

Required Completion of 225 Direct Client Contact Hours

Aligned with BBS standards, the program requires completion of 225 direct client contact hours, up to 75 of which can be Client Centered Advocacy hours completed while taking required PSY 580 Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy I and PSY 581 Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy II classes.

Professional Liability Insurance

Students are expected to purchase their own professional liability insurance while they are enrolled in Supervised Fieldwork classes (PSY 580 Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy I, PSY 581 Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy II, or PSY 584 Supervised Fieldwork Continuation).

Personal Psychotherapy

The MFT program believes that students entering the counseling profession benefit professionally, personally, and academically from experiencing personal psychotherapy, and believes that psychotherapy is a necessary training experience for counseling professionals. Therefore, all students enrolled in the MFT program are required to complete a minimum of 10 hours of personal psychotherapy during their year of fieldwork placement (PSY 580 Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy I & PSY 581 Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy II). The therapy may include individual, couples, family, or group therapy, depending on the individual student's issues and preferences. The program will not request any information about the content of the personal psychotherapy process.

Competency Exam

The Competency Exam (PSY 595 Competency Exam) is a program requirement that must be completed to become eligible to begin the fieldwork experience. For students in the MFT program, the exam is based upon, and occurs after successful completion of PSY 512 Clinical Psychopathology, PSY 516 Counseling Theories & Skills I, PSY 517 Counseling Theories & Skills II, and PSY 527 Professionalism, Ethics, and Law in Counseling. The Competency Exam is scheduled in June each year. All conditions of admission must be completed, and students must demonstrate satisfactory progress in the MFT program to complete the Competency Exam. Students who are not in good standing will be dismissed from the program. Students should complete the Competency

Exam after all graduate level prerequisites are completed, but prior to the start of the 30th semester hour. Exceptions to these requirements must be approved by the Program Chair in writing.

Advanced Standing

Students must receive Advanced Standing to enroll in PSY 596 Graduate Seminar, the culminating activity for students in the MFT program. Students are eligible to apply for Advanced Standing when they have completed 43 semester hours. Students must complete all stipulations of admission, pass the competency exam, be in Good Standing, and attain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all work applicable in the degree program to apply for Advanced Standing. To apply for Advanced Standing, students must submit an application for Advanced Standing with the approval of their academic advisor/program chair along with an Application for Graduation (with graduation fee) to the Office of Graduate Academic Services. Approval for Advanced Standing can take 2-3 weeks to complete.

Transfer Credit for Previous Graduate Work

Students who completed previous graduate work at another university may request transfer credit for this work. Request for transfer of academic credit and coursework will be reviewed by the MFT program on a case-by-case basis for currency and applicability. Only completed courses from a regionally accredited university, with a grade of B (3.0) or better may be considered for transfer. The maximum number of transfer credits is 12 semester hours.

Leave of Absence

Students are expected to participate in their coursework each semester until degree completion. Students who find it necessary to interrupt their studies and desire to return should contact the Program Chair to request a Leave of Absence. With a Leave of Absence, a student may be absent from the University of La Verne for no more than two semesters without reapplying for admission. Students absent during a Fall or Spring semester without an approved Leave of Absence will be considered withdrawn from the program.

Degree Requirements

61 semester hours

Code	Title	Semester Hours
PSY 502	Research Methods in Counseling	3
PSY 507	Human Development	3
PSY 522	Group Counseling	3
PSY 523	Multicultural Counseling	3
PSY 527	Professionalism, Ethics, and Law in Counseling	3
PSY 595	Competency Exam	0
PSY 506	Human Sexuality	1
PSY 509	Psychology Testing	3
PSY 512	Clinical Psychopathology	3
PSY 516	Counseling Theories & Skills I	3
PSY 517	Counseling Theories & Skills II	3
PSY 518	Family Therapy	3
PSY 519	Couples Therapy	3
PSY 521	Child Therapy	2
PSY 528	Substance Abuse Counseling	3
PSY 530	Violence and Abuse in Family Systems	2

PSY 534	Psychopharmacology	3
PSY 536	Counseling Older Adults	1
PSY 542	Working with Clients' Anger Issues	1
PSY 543	Grief and Loss Counseling	1
PSY 544	Trauma Focused Treatment	1
PSY 545	Working with Anxiety Disorders	1
PSY 550	Community Mental Health Counseling	3
PSY 580	Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy I	3
PSY 581	Supervised Fieldwork in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy II	3
PSY 596	Graduate Seminar	3
Courses Not Required for All MFT Students		
PSY 584	Supervised Fieldwork Continuation	
Total Semester Hours		61