

Master of Science with a Major in Marriage and Family Therapy

Marriage and Family Therapy addresses the interpersonal and social context of mental health and emotional problems. To qualify students to practice MFT, the curriculum for the master's degree program in marriage and family therapy focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to assess and intervene in the interactions among people. It prepares students to use an active, positive approach to therapy that will help individuals and their families build on their strengths, improve communication, and develop solutions to their problems.

The Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy prepares students for licensure in Georgia as Marriage and Family Therapists and for Professional membership in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). The curriculum, developed to meet national accreditation standards, links theory and practice throughout training. A twelve-month clinical practicum is required. Students accrue a minimum of 500 hours of direct client contact and 100 hours of AAMFT-approved supervision. Practicum experience is provided at FamilyWorks, the on-site Marriage and Family Therapy training clinic, and through off-campus community placements. Course work includes some assignments and activities that encourage self-exploration and personal growth.

MFT Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Valdosta State University Marriage and Family Therapy Program is to provide students the academic and clinical training required to practice relationally informed clinical work and to ready graduates for work in a variety of mental health settings.

MFT Program Philosophy

The philosophy of the Valdosta State University Marriage and Family Therapy Program is guided by a commitment to diversity and the belief that the differences that make up the weave of humanity must be embraced and cherished. The MFT Program assumes a relational understanding that all human behavior and meaning-making are context-dependent; thus, a deep appreciation of each client's context is a prerequisite of respectful treatment. The faculty believes that each student is unique and should be respected and developed through active, engaged learning with an accessible and supportive faculty.

Selected Educational Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the MFT program, students will:

1. Practice from a multi-culturally sensitive lens.
2. Practice from a systemic lens.
3. Be prepared to obtain entry-level employment in mental health settings.
4. Claim the professional identity of Marriage and Family Therapist.
5. Recognize the ways that research shapes the field of Family Therapy.
6. Practice informed by ethics.

Examples of Outcome Assessments

1. Faculty assessment of student performance in all courses includes requiring students to demonstrate their ability to integrate course content and translate their coursework to clinical practice.
2. The comprehensive exam taken by students prior to graduation evaluates the students' ability to integrate and apply information from the training program as a whole. It also measures effectiveness of the program in teaching essential concepts.
3. Practica supervisors will evaluate the clinical performance of all students. Community practicum site directors will also complete a form evaluating and giving their impressions of students.
4. The aggregated pass rate for graduates achieving licensure by passing the national MFT exam is an additional outcome measure.

Prior to admission to any graduate program at Valdosta State University, applicants must first submit a completed application to the Graduate School. A completed application packet includes the application and fee, official transcripts from all previously attended institutions, a personal essay, and three academic and/or personal letters of recommendation to be submitted by the admission deadline. It is the responsibility of the applicant to allow adequate time for document submission and review and to ensure receipt of all required documents.

Admission Deadlines

Fall Deadline: July 15

Go to the Graduate School website (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/welcome.php>) and click on Our Programs, then click on Marriage & Family Therapy for information on:

- Specific MFT Program Admission Requirements
- MFT Program Retention, Dismissal, and Readmission Policies
- MFT Program Graduation Requirements

To Apply Online, click here (<https://www.applyweb.com/apply/vsug/menu.html>).

Required Course Work

Code	Title	Hours
Area I: Theoretical Foundations		8
MFTH 6900	Foundations of Family Therapy	
MFTH 7101	Family Systems Theories ¹	
MFTH 7103	Advanced Theories Seminar	
Area II: Clinical Practice		15
MFTH 7102	Interventions in MFT	
MFTH 7400	Psychopathology & Pharmacology in MFT	
MFTH 7601	Treatment Issues in Family Therapy	
MFTH 7602	Couples and Sex Therapy	
MFTH 7700	Assessment in Marriage and Family Therapy.	
Area III: Individual Development & Family Relations		6
MFTH 7500	Development in the Family System	
MFTH 7050	Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice	
Areas IV: Professional Identity & Ethics		5
MFTH 6800	Relational Theory, Practice, and Ethics	
MFTH 7350	Legal Issues in MFT	
MFTH 7880	Professional Ethics Seminar	
Area V: Research		3
MFTH 7200	Research in Marriage and Family Therapy	
Area VI: Electives (minimum 5 hours)		5
MFTH 6700	Family Sociology	
SOCI 7021	Statistical Applications in Sociology	
MFTH 7510	Human Sexuality and Gender	
MFTH 7550	Family Stress and Crisis	
MFTH 7650	Special Topics in MFT	
Other approved courses		
Area VII: Supervised Clinical Practice		18
1 year, minimum 500 hours direct client contact		
MFTH 7600	Practicum in Marriage and Family Therapy	
Total Required for the Degree		minimum of 60

¹

Additional Theoretical Foundations included in MFTH 6800

A minimum of 60 semester hours is required for the degree, which includes summer study and requires a minimum of two years to complete. Students can reduce their per-semester course load and complete the program in three or four years.

The Marriage and Family Therapy Clinical Internship for Undergraduates

The Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program offers junior and senior undergraduate students the opportunity to participate in a virtual or face-to-face clinical undergraduate internship or a mini-clinical experience. Both provide hands-on experience for students as they learn what it means to work with families, individuals, couples, and children by participating in our consolation teams at FamilyWorks family therapy clinic.

Admission for the MFT Clinical Internship for Undergraduates

Prior to admission to MFT Clinical Internship for Undergraduates, all applicants must first submit a completed application to the MFT program. A completed application packet includes unofficial transcripts from the students' current institution and a completed application form submitted by the

admission deadline. It is the responsibility of the applicant to allow adequate time for document submission and review and to ensure receipt of all required documents.

Specific MFT clinical internship for undergraduates admission requirements include:

1. A minimum GPA of 2.75 on all attempted course work or a minimum GPA of 3.0 during the last two years of attempted course work.
2. A minimum of 60 credits completed by the time of the internship, some of which may be transferred credits from another university.
3. A personal interview with a faculty member
4. Registration with Minors on Campus (MOC), which includes signing the Authorized Adult Code of Conduct; completion of the 40-minute online MOC training through LawRoom (every four years); and signing permission to conduct a criminal background check that includes a sexual predator search. Before or after the start of the internship, the MOC office will send all new students links and information for completing these steps. There is no cost to the student.