

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Marriage & Family Therapy



UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs
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DEPARTMENT OF MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

This handbook contains the information essential for students in Graduate Programs in the Marriage and Family Therapy Department. It is updated annually and is designed to provide students with all the information necessary to successfully enroll in, and complete, a course of study in this department. The handbook is not intended to substitute for, replace, or supercede the Graduate Catalog, but rather to supplement it. Students should be familiar with both sources of information.

Like the Graduate Catalog, the handbook in effect when a student is officially admitted into the department is the final authoritative document outlining the department's requirements. Subsequent changes to the handbook do not apply to students who are admitted under a previous edition, unless the student requests to be placed under the new edition's requirements. Students are bound to requirements delineated in only one edition of the handbook.

It is the responsibility of the student to be familiar with the contents herein and to meet all requirements and deadlines (See the Affidavit of Commitment, p. 26).

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) is housed in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs, along with several other departments, sharing a common mission to address the needs of urban living. The department offers graduate studies leading to either a Master's degree or a Certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy. The department also provides coursework for the undergraduate minor in Family Studies.

The master's degree program has been nationally accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Therapy and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) since the 1990's. The program will maintain that accreditation through December 31, 2006. In order to enhance the marriage and family therapy programs, the Department is actively pursuing accreditation by the accrediting body of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE).

Graduate education is directed and conducted by the department in collaboration with the UNLV Graduate College; therefore, all degree-seeking graduate students fall under the auspices of the Graduate College, as well as those of the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy.

Students enrolled in the department's programs must maintain current contact information in the MFT Department's main office. It is the student's responsibility to provide a correct address to which official correspondence can be sent, a telephone number or numbers by which a student can reliably be reached, and a UNLV e-mail address. All students must obtain university e-mail accounts.

THE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy at UNLV is to provide quality training in the theory and practice of marriage and family therapy to students primarily from the Southern Nevada region, but also those from the state, across the country, and throughout the world. We are committed to helping students become competent professionals through developing greater self-awareness, appreciating and embracing diversity, learning the art and science of clinical practice, and promoting a sense of ethical behavior, professionalism and professional identity.

The purpose of the MFT programs is to help students become Marriage and Family Therapists. Students receive training in theory, research, practice and ethics. Translating theory and research into practice is achieved through training in therapeutic approaches, strategies and techniques through the hands-on experience of practica and internship. Students who complete the Marriage and Family Therapy programs are eligible to apply for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Regulation of Marriage and Family Therapy is directed by State Licensing Boards, varying from state to state, and students should consult with the licensing boards of the state(s) in which they are considering practicing.

FINANCIAL AID

Graduate Assistant Positions

The department receives an allocation of funds each academic year from the Graduate College to typically support three or four graduate assistants (only students who are fully admitted degree-seeking students are eligible; provisionally admitted students are not eligible). Other sources of funds, e.g., from faculty research grants, are also sometimes available to fund assistants. Both the department and Graduate College advertise vacant graduate assistant positions. The department advertises its own vacant positions via announcements placed on the department's bulletin boards and through announcements made in classes. The Graduate College contacts graduate coordinators when an assistant position is available in another department. Students seeking assistantships must submit a completed application by November 1st (for positions beginning the following spring semester) or February 1st (for positions beginning the following fall semester).

Graduate assistantships in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy are awarded to qualified students based on their experience, skills, and the needs of the department. The selection process is competitive in that there are typically more applicants than positions available. Assistants are hired to assist faculty and/or the department to accomplish specific academic functions. One essential function includes supporting faculty in their research and scholarly endeavors. Research-based activities include, but are not limited to, library (and internet) activity including literature searches, writing abstracts and/or literature reviews, copying and filing, data entry, basic database management, performing statistical analyses, editorial functions, and collaborative writing. Assistants also may be expected to perform additional clerical tasks on a limited basis that remain significant aspects of departmental functioning.

Students who are awarded assistantships in their first year are given priority in the second year, based on their performance. The department will permit students to have a maximum of two years of graduate assistant work, unless funding for additional time is generated from a source other than the Graduate College.

Other Aid Opportunities

There are also other scholarships/fellowships available to students through the Graduate College and the Student Financial Aid office. The Graduate College catalog has additional information about graduate assistantships and other fellowships.

RECRUITMENT POLICY REGARDING DIVERSITY

Diversity and equal rights are accepted and valued by the Marriage and Family Therapy Department of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The department's commitment to "equal opportunity" includes active recruitment of students with diverse backgrounds.

The department works to recruit and retain students with diverse backgrounds by:

1. Targeting contact with groups with diverse backgrounds, organizations and institutions, both on campus and off.
2. Using equitable admissions requirements; i.e., using multiple criteria.
3. Facilitating an environment that is conducive to and accepting of diversity.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAMS

Marriage and Family Therapy Department programs emphasize putting theory into practice. This includes opportunities for students to work in real situations under supervision, with different client populations, in a variety of settings. Students are required to become competent clinicians and informed consumers of therapy literature and research. Because personal qualities play a vital part in the determination of success as a therapist, opportunities are provided for the development of self-awareness, as well as an understanding of the effect one has upon others in interpersonal interactions and relationships.

The philosophical underpinnings of the department include a systemic world view. This includes a relational view of individuals in their contexts, including individual, couple, family, group and community influences. A core value is respect for diversity and embracing non-discrimination.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

Marriage and Family Therapy Master's Degree

The Marriage and Family Therapy Master's Degree Program, a 63 (professional paper) or 66 (thesis) semester hour course of study, provides the essential coursework preparing candidates for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) in Nevada. MFTs work with individuals, couples, families and groups on mental health, behavioral, personal and/or relational concerns. MFTs are employed in a wide range of settings, including public and private, profit and non-profit agencies, hospitals and social service agencies, and they may practice privately when licensed. Most states have similar licensure requirements. However, students are strongly encouraged to become familiar with other states' licensing statutes prior to moving. Students nearing the completion of their degrees may apply to sit for the licensing examination to the State of Nevada Board of Marriage and Family Therapist Examiners. When this examination has been successfully passed, applicants become Registered Marriage and Family Therapy Interns in the state of Nevada, eligible to practice under the direct supervision of a licensed

AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor Candidate. Further information on this process may be obtained by calling the state MFT licensing office. Students should understand that the state's post-master's internship and the department's pre-master's internships are in no way related. The department does not offer or otherwise sanction state internships.

Advanced Certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy admits applicants to an Advanced Graduate Certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy program. Applicants who have earned a Master's Degree in a related mental health field, but who have not completed the requirements for licensure as delineated by the State of Nevada Board of Marriage and Family Therapist Examiners, may complete a course of study designed to comply with the state's requirements. Students are responsible to consult with the State of Nevada Board of MFT Examiners regarding the courses they will need for licensure. Certificate students are recognized by The Graduate College as Department of Marriage and Family Therapy students. Typically, certificate students will complete a course of study very similar to that of the second year for master's degree graduate students in Marriage and Family Therapy. Once admitted, certificate students are viewed by the department as full participants in the department.

Program Objectives/Goals

Our program requires students to:

1. Demonstrate advanced theoretical and applied knowledge in six areas of marriage and family therapy including:
 - Theoretical Knowledge
 - i. Marriage and Family therapy theories
 - ii. Theoretical and empirical foundations
 - iii. Historical development
 - iv. Contemporary conceptual directions
 - Clinical Knowledge
 - i. Address from a relational/systemic perspective psychopharmacology, physical health and illness, and traditional psychodiagnostic categories
 - ii. Assessing, hypothesizing, and diagnosing
 - iii. Developing an appropriate therapeutic relationship
 - iv. Effective treatments for a wide variety of presenting problems and diverse client backgrounds (including evidenced-based treatments)
 - Individual Development and Family Relations
 - i. Development across the lifespan
 - ii. Family life cycle and relationship patterns
 - iii. Education specific to diverse groups (racial, ethnic, religious, gender, etc).
 - Professional Identity and Ethics
 - i. Professional standards, socialization, scope of practice, professional organizations, licensure, and certification
 - ii. Ethical standards and issues
 - iii. Legal standards and precedence

- Research
 - i. Research in couple and family therapy
 - ii. Methodology, data analysis, and the evaluation of research, including quantitative and qualitative methodologies
- 2. Demonstrate the ability to communicate orally and/or in writing and interact effectively with other professionals.
- 3. Provide treatment to a diverse population demonstrating cultural sensitivity and awareness.

ADVISORS

Upon acceptance into the program, each student (including certificate students) will be assigned a temporary faculty Advisor to facilitate the student's enrollment. **The program begins in the fall and enrollment is expected to occur in the fall term.** By the end of the student's first fall semester, the student is expected to make any changes, if necessary, in his/her advisor. In addition, students need to complete the Program of Study Form with their advisors prior to beginning their second semester in the program.

Consultation with an Advisor is required for:

1. Completing and filing Program of Study with the Graduate College.
2. Appointing or modifying an Examination Committee (professional paper or thesis).
3. Selecting and registering for courses each semester; students must have their advisor's signature on a Course Request form before they will be allowed to register.
4. Changing a previously submitted Program of Study.
5. Filing applications for Practicum and Internship.
6. Professional Paper/Thesis Proposal and Final Defenses.
7. Filing an application for graduation.

There may be other occasions when Advisor consultation is required or desired. When in doubt about any issues or concerns about your Program of Study or progress towards your degree, consult your Advisor. **It is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure that the Program of Study submitted meets departmental and Graduate College requirements. In addition, students are responsible for ensuring that they have met any and all prerequisite requirements for all courses in which they attempt to enroll.**

Changing Advisors

In addition to selecting a permanent Advisor after their admission, should the need arise, a student may request an Advisor change at any point in the program. The procedure for changing Advisors is as follows:

1. Contact the prospective Advisor to ascertain his/her availability and agreement to the proposed change.
2. Obtain his or her signature on a "Request for Advisor Change" form (available in the Department office).
3. Submit the form to the Department Chair for signature. The student will be notified when the request is approved or denied.

FORMING AN EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

All master's degree students are required to select an examination committee. The committee must be selected prior to submitting a Program of Study. The examination committee consists of four members. The faculty advisor may continue to act as Chair of the examination committee at the discretion of the faculty member and the student. The committee will be formed according to the guidelines below. The applicable forms may be obtained from the Graduate College webpage.

The Chair and at least two other members of the student's committee come from the list of MFT faculty who have Graduate Faculty Status. The fourth member of the committee serves as a representative of the Graduate College and is approved by the Dean of The Graduate College from faculty members who are not associated directly with the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy. The purpose of the outside member is to see that the examination is conducted in an unbiased and professional manner, thus monitoring the performance of the student and the Department. The Department and the Graduate College must approve exceptions to the above procedures. After the examination committee is formed, no guarantee is made that the student will be successful on the final examination. Students must follow Graduate College schedule deadlines in scheduling defenses and submitting graduation applications.

FILING A PROGRAM OF STUDY

With the consultation and approval of the Advisor, all students must prepare a Proposed Graduate Degree Program, and complete a form for the Graduate College. The degree program outlines the courses the student will complete for the degree. The proposed program is to be submitted to the Graduate College prior to the student's completion of 16 credit hours of work toward the degree (this is typically done during the first fall semester). If the student requests that 15 or more credit hours (taken prior to formal admission) be considered for use toward the degree, the program must be submitted to the Graduate College within six weeks of the beginning of the semester of admission. It is the student's responsibility to schedule an appointment with his/her advisor for the purpose of filing the program well in advance of the program deadline.

PROGRAM COURSES

Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy

Course No.	Course Title	Credits
COU 701	Introduction to Counseling	3
COU 705	Child Counseling	3
COU 725	Multicultural Counseling	3
COU 731	Crucial Issues and Treatment Programs in Substance Abuse Counseling	3
COU 759	Family Dynamics	3
COU 762	Appraisal and Diagnosis	3
COU 771	Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling	3
COU 779	Counseling Research Seminar	3
COU 719	Sexual Issues in Counseling	3
COU 748	Counseling Professional Paper	3
COU 749	Thesis	6
COU 756	Human Development, Medical Aspects, and Psychopharmacology of Disability	3
COU 763	Family Systems Theory	3
COU 764	Principles and Practices of Marriage and Family Therapy I	3
COU 765	Principles and Practices of Marriage and Family Therapy II	3
COU 773	Advanced Family Practicum (taken three times)	9
COU 777	Marriage Counseling	3
COU 776	Internship in Marriage and Family Counseling (two semesters)	6
COU 781	Best Practices in MFT	3

Total Minimum Hours Required = 63

*Students will take either COU 748 or 749 depending on their chosen option, either professional paper (COU 748) or thesis (COU 749).

Students must earn a B or higher in all program courses to remain in good standing in the program (see graduate catalog).

Advanced Certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy

Course No.	Course Title	Credits
COU 759	Family Dynamics	3
COU 763	Family Systems Theory	3
COU 764	Principles and Practices of Marriage and Family Therapy I	3
COU 765	Principles and Practices of Marriage and Family Therapy II	3
COU 771	Ethical and Legal Issues in Therapy	3
COU 747	Advanced Family Practicum	3
COU 773	Advanced Family Practicum	3
COU 777	Marriage Therapy	3

Total Minimum Hours Required = 24

In addition, students are advised that the Nevada licensing Board requires a minimum of one course in each of the following areas: Diagnosis & Assessment (e.g., COU 762) and Substance Abuse (e.g., COU 731, Crucial Issues and Treatment Programs in Substance Abuse).

PROPOSED COURSE SEQUENCING

Marriage and Family Therapy Master's Degree

Year 1

Fall	Spring	Summer
COU 764 – Principles and Practices of MFT I (3)	COU 765 – Principles and Practices of MFT II (3)	COU 705 – Child Counseling (3) ¹
COU 759 – Family Dynamics (3)	COU 777 – Marriage Counseling (3)	COU 773 – Advanced Counseling Practicum (3)
COU 763 – Family Systems Theory (3)	COU 701 – Intro to Counseling (3)	COU 771 – Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling (3) ¹
COU 762 – Appraisal and Diagnosis (3)		

Year 2

Fall	Spring	Summer
COU 773 – Advanced Practicum (3)	COU 731 – Substance Abuse (3)	COU 776 – Internship (3)
COU 719 – Sexual Issues in Counseling (3)	COU 773 – Advanced Family Practicum (3)	COU 756 – Human Development (3) ¹
COU 779 – Counseling Research Seminar (3)	COU 781 – Best Practices in MFT (3)	COU 725 – Multiculturalism (3) ¹
	COU 748 – Professional Paper (3)	
	OR	
	COU 749 – Thesis (6) ²	

Year 3

Fall
COU 776 – Internship in Marriage and Family Counseling (3)

NOTE: Students are expected to follow this sequence. If not, graduation may be delayed.

¹ These courses will be offered every other summer.

² Students electing to complete a thesis must register for a total of 6 credit hours over the course of their program. The 6 credits can be spread out across several semesters. Students must be registered for at least one credit of thesis during the semester of their defense.

Advanced Certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy

Year 1

Fall	Spring	Summer
COU 759 – Family Dynamics (3)	COU 773 – Advanced Family Practicum (3)	COU 771 – Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling (3) ³
COU 763 – Family Systems Theory (3)	COU 765 – Principles and Practices of MFT II (3)	COU 773 – Advanced Family Practicum (3)
COU 764 – Principles and Practices of MFT I (3)	COU 777 – Marriage Counseling (3)	

NOTE: Students are expected to follow this sequence. If not, completion may be delayed.

¹ This course will be offered every other summer.

POLICY ON INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students with a particular interest in an area of study in the Therapy field may pursue Independent Study courses (COU 758, Individual Instruction) with Faculty that have expertise and/or substantive interest in the area in question. These Independent Study courses afford students an opportunity to tailor an experience to their individual educational needs. Independent studies are to be used for these purposes only. If a course is offered as a required course in the program, it is not eligible to be taken as an independent study.

PRACTICUM INFORMATION

PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

The practicum is the culminating training experience in becoming a competent marriage and family therapist. The curriculum has been designed to prepare students for their clinical work and their role as a professional in the field. Student readiness for practicum will be assessed by the faculty. Your clinical training is the primary focus during your second year, and the expectation is that you will plan your schedule to be maximally available to see clients in the evening hours.

Because the program requires 500 direct clinical hours, the expectation is that students will accumulate a minimum of 50 contact hours per practicum experience, with a target of 100 hours per semester. A minimum of 200 of the 500 clinical hours must be relational (couple and/or family). It is the student's responsibility to track the ratio of individual to relational hours. Students are required to use appropriate documentation for logging clinical and supervisory hours.

Students not completing their clinical hour requirements in during a given practicum will be assigned a grade of "X." Upon completion of clinical hour requirements, students should contact the practicum instructor who gave the "X" and make arrangements for a grade change.

Practicum Assignments

Students will be assigned to their practicum sections. If for some reason you are unable to maintain the sequence outlined previously, it is your responsibility to inform the Graduate Coordinator.

Advanced Family Practicum (COU 773)

COU 773 is the Advanced Practicum, and is designed as a three-semester sequence. The course is designed to help MFT students to build upon academic experiences to work with individuals, couples and families. Student Marriage and Family Therapists will provide therapy services in the Center for Individual, Couple, and Family Therapy under direct faculty supervision.

- Students are expected to conduct co-therapy during the first semester of practicum and may continue until subsequent semesters at the faculty's discretion.
- Students are expected to maintain flexibility in their schedule to accommodate client needs and various clinical experiences (e.g., co-therapy, live supervision, reflecting teams, group work, etc.).
- Student therapists will see a variety of clients (individuals, couples or families) throughout each semester in the Center (a minimum of 50 direct client hours per practicum experience).
- Student therapists will be expected to conduct a minimum of 5 intakes during each semester. These hours will count toward the 50 direct client hours.
- Group supervision is scheduled for minimum of 1-1/2 hours per week with the Advanced Practicum instructor.
- Students schedule one hour a week of individual supervision with the supervisor; additional supervisory hours will occur at the discretion of the faculty supervisor but will be specified in the course syllabus.
- All therapy sessions must be videotaped.
- Students are required to obtain and maintain liability insurance. Proof of insurance must be on file with the Center for Individual, Couple, and Family Counseling prior to contact with clients.
- Students are expected to provide services to clients over the entirety of the semester, regardless of how many hours they have accrued.

Supervision Requirements

You **MUST** meet and carefully **DOCUMENT** the following:

1. 500 total hours of client contact hours are required (practicum + internship) in a facility that offers services to the public and appropriate supervision is available.
2. At least 200 clinical hours will be with couples and/or families.
3. You must receive at least 100 hours of face to face supervision.
4. You receive a ratio of 1 supervision hour to every 5 clinical hours.
5. Supervision must occur weekly when you have direct clinical contact.
6. Individual supervision must occur at least every other week when seeing clients.
7. Group supervision shall not exceed 10 students per group.
8. Individual supervision shall not exceed 2 students per session.
9. 50 hours of your supervision will be based on direct observation, videotape, or audiotape. At least 25 hours of supervision will be based on direct observation or videotape.

Please make sure you share these requirements with you Internship site supervisor and carefully document your adherence to these requirements. You internship supervisor is responsible for providing you with the appropriate supervision, but you are ultimately responsible for all documentation. In short, if it isn't **DOCUMENTED** it **DIDN'T** happen.

INTERNSHIP INFORMATION

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Internship is the opportunity for students to accrue the remainder of their 500 direct clinical hours not obtained in practica within a community agency setting. Internship activities will take place at departmentally approved community sites with appropriately qualified supervisors where the intern can work with individuals, couples, and families. During your internship, students are enrolled in COU 776 for the purpose of receiving group supervision on clinical issues and professional development. **Attendance at this course is required.**

Students not completing their clinical hour requirements in during a given internship will be assigned a grade of “X.” Upon completion of clinical hour requirements, students should contact the internship instructor who gave the “X” and make arrangements for a grade change.

APPLICATION FOR INTERNSHIP

Applications for Internship must be filed by the appropriate deadline. Students will not be permitted to register for internship unless an application is on file with all the necessary departmental and faculty approvals. Students are required to consult with their Advisor regarding these applications in order to ensure that all prerequisites have been met prior to participation in this experience. Applications may be obtained in the Department office. The application deadline for Internship, beginning in Summer, is April 15th. Students must choose an internship site approved by the department. The department maintains a list of approved internship sites. Students opting to use a site not listed on the already approved internship site list are responsible for making sure that the prospective site takes the requisite steps for becoming an approved site. Completed materials must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by March 1 for approval as an internship site. **Certificate students do not take COU 776.**

Enrollment in Internship

In the semester prior to beginning Internship, students should select an Internship site in consultation with the Advisor that is consistent with their needs. **All Internship sites must be approved by the Department** (a current list of approved sites is available in the Department office). Students are expected to contact approved internship sites and negotiate placement at those sites. Most often, sites require resumes and interviews in their selection process. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain placement in an internship setting.

Work at the Internship site begins only after the student enrolls in, and begins attending, COU 776. Students must register for a minimum of three credit hours of COU 776 each semester during which they work as Intern, resulting in a total of at least 6 credit hours.

Internship Supervision

The site supervisor will conduct supervision of the student's therapy activities. Administrative supervision will be the responsibility of the department faculty and will include at least one visit each semester to the Internship site at which the intern is working. The Internship seminar will follow a group supervision format.

Student Internship Requirements

Students enrolling in Internship must have their coursework completed before, or concurrently with, their first Internship semester, excluding thesis and professional paper credits. Students must complete an evaluation of both the Internship site and the supervisor before Internship credit is awarded. Site supervisors are to make a semester-by-semester evaluation of the students with whom they work. Students also must continue to attend internship classes throughout the semester in which they registered, regardless of whether they have completed their 500 hours. It is your professional responsibility to continue to treat clients throughout the entire internship semester. Terminating a client because you have reached your 500 hours is **not** acceptable.

Field Supervisor Criteria

Supervisors of marriage and family therapy students must:

- An AAMFT Approved Supervisor **or**
- An AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate, **or**
- Meet the COAMFTE Supervisor equivalency requirements

Internship Site Criteria

- a. The Internship site must provide a wide range of experiences that allow the student to become familiar with both direct client contact and other professional activities consistent with the role of a professional in the organization.
- b. The mission of the Internship site should be consistent with the Department's philosophy.
- c. Clients served at the site should be appropriate for MFT students.
- d. The site must be able to provide adequate regular supervision (supervisor on site and a minimum of one hour of individual supervision each week).
- e. The site must provide the opportunity for students to earn the necessary hours of direct client contact to fulfill the remainder of the 500 direct clinical hours required in the program.
- f. The Internship site must be willing to allow students to record their work at the site via either video or audiotape.

Evaluation of Supervisors and Sites

Internship sites and supervisors will be evaluated once each year. Continuation as an approved site and supervisor would depend on continued compliance with the Department's requirements for Internship, including continued ethical and professional conduct, continued support to the professional philosophy of the department and favorable student evaluations. The site evaluations will be composed of a formal student evaluation and information gained from the site visits. Following the evaluation, the department may reassess the approved status of sites and supervisors.

POLICY ON STUDENT DEMEANOR AND PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP CONDUCT

Professional behavior is required of students at all times. This is especially true for students in Practicum and Internship, because these students are, for all intents and purposes, functioning as professional therapists despite their status as students. In view of this, student conduct in these settings is of the utmost significance. It is during these experiences that students and faculty alike will have the best opportunity to evaluate any areas of concern regarding a given student's appropriateness and preparedness for the professional role. Student readiness for internship will be assessed by the faculty.

The Department adheres to the American Association for Marriage and Family (AAMFT) Code of Ethics. Copies of this code are readily available in a variety of places, including many texts used in therapy classes and on the AAMFT website. Important areas of ethical concern for students are confidentiality and multiple relationships. The former requires that a student not discuss clients, cases, or confidential information about other students outside of a professional setting. The latter refers to any relationship simultaneously developed with a client beyond the therapy room. Any violation is gravely serious and will be treated as such. **Ethical breaches are grounds for separation from the department and for reporting the violation to the professional organizations of which the student is a member, and although not a certainty, such action is a very real possibility.**

In the event that a student's conduct is anything less than absolutely professional, the faculty has the obligation to the student, to the profession and to the public to take whatever steps are necessary to rectify the situation. Violations of professional ethics codes, insubordination to supervisors, mistreatment of colleagues, support staff or clients, demonstrations of gross clinical misjudgment or other actions inconsistent with professional standards of behavior are evidence of unprofessional conduct. These will not be tolerated and could result from dismissal from the program.

When a student is dismissed from a Practicum or Internship site, or a student's behavior is evaluated as being otherwise unprofessional by faculty, site supervisors or other qualified professionals in a position to offer a valid perspective, the faculty will initiate the following procedure:

- 1) Upon observation and documentation of a student's unprofessional conduct, the responsible faculty member will contact the Department Chair, the Graduate Coordinator, the student's Advisor and the student within 24 hours (if possible) of the allegations of unprofessional conduct. The entire faculty will be apprised of the situation as soon as possible and the Student Review Process (the "Red Flag" process) will be implemented. Depending upon the nature of the allegation, the student may be required to discontinue clinical work immediately. In this event, the faculty and the site supervisor will take the responsibility for the disposition of any cases that the student may be carrying, and the student will immediately be placed on a temporary suspension from continuing in practicum or internship. This means that the student will not pursue another clinical setting until receiving faculty approval.
- 2) The faculty will make an immediate investigation into the specifics of the allegations, and the student will be given the opportunity to present any evidence in defense of his or her conduct. The faculty will document and present their findings and conclusions to the student, and other relevant parties, as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. If the allegations are substantiated and the situation warrants, the student will be either placed on probation or dismissed from the program. In both cases, a recommendation to that effect will be made to The Graduate College. A student who is dismissed from the program has the right of appeal through standard university procedures (see the graduate catalog). Students who are dismissed from The Graduate College are not eligible for admission or re-entry and must petition for reinstatement.
- 3) For students placed on probation, the faculty will craft a remediation plan designed to address the specific needs identified by the investigation. The remediation plan will specify requirements and corresponding deadlines for their completion. Requirements may include additional academic study in the form of classes or independent study, personal therapy, or other activities selected by the faculty, such as additional practicum and/or internship hours. A leave of absence may be required in order to fulfill the remediation plan. Failure to comply with the remediation plan could result in the student's dismissal from the program.
- 4) Upon completing the remediation plan, it is the student's responsibility to meet with the faculty as a whole to summarize his/her progress and demonstrate fulfillment of the remediation plan. The faculty will evaluate the student's completion of the remediation plan. After faculty determination that the student has completed the remediation plan may continue in the program. If the faculty conclude that the student has not satisfactorily completed the remediation plan, they may either make additional remediation requirements or dismiss the student from the program.
- 5) Students who are involved in unethical behavior will be reported to licensing and credentialing bodies and professional organizations in the interest of protecting the profession, the public, and not least, the student.

STUDENT REVIEW PROCESS (“RED FLAG”)

All students admitted to department programs are reviewed to determine adequate progress in the program. Each semester the faculty will conduct a student review meeting at which each student’s performance to date will be reviewed (typically around midterm). A major purpose of this meeting is for faculty members to identify students experiencing difficulty. The faculty may document the nature of any difficulties, e.g., poor performance on class assignments or tests, inappropriate behavior in class or in clinical settings, or inadequate or inappropriate performance in therapy sessions. The faculty as a group may suggest the steps outlined below. When problems with students arise during the semester, any faculty member of the department, as well as faculty in other departments, lecturers, adjunct faculty or part-time instructors, may also begin that process independent of the student review meeting.

Once a problem situation has been identified, an effort will be made to work out a solution with the student. The following procedures may be used, and **will be followed to the point of resolution:**

- | <u>Step</u> | <u>Process</u> |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. | Student difficulty noted and documented by individual Professor. <u>In the event that a student’s conduct is in direct violation with UNLV policies on student conduct, or, if the student commits an act in violation of academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism, cheating), the faculty has the option recommending dismissal to The Graduate College.</u> This principle is in effect at all times, and is not subject to this due process policy. |
| 2. | Student/Professor Conference: Professor will initiate and document this meeting, including any agreed upon remedial steps. If resolution is reached, Department faculty is informed and all documentation is placed in student’s file, with copies to the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator. If resolution is not reached, the process continues to Step 3. |
| 3. | Faculty recommends a course of action and documents it. |
| 4. | Advisor/Student Conference: Advisor informs student of faculty recommendations and documents this meeting, including any agreed upon remedial steps. If resolution is reached, Department faculty is informed and all documentation is placed in student’s file, with copies to the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator. If resolution is not reached, the process continues to Step 5. |
| 5. | Faculty develop remedial plan if warranted and stipulate specific actions that must be taken, and document them. Remedial steps may include personal therapy, remedial academic work, including writing laboratory work, or additional coursework, and/or probation or temporary suspension. The remedial plan will include specific dates by which requirements must be met and the faculty responsible for monitoring student progress. |
| 6. | Advisor/Student Conference: Advisor informs student of requirements, remedial agreement signed and placed in student file, with copies to the |

Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator. Department faculty is informed and all documentation is placed in student's file. If resolution has not been reached (i.e., the student has not or will not comply), the process continues to Step 7.

7. A final decision is rendered by the faculty. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, probation, with recommendations as above, or dismissal from the program. All documentation is placed in student's file and copied to the Graduate College.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Occasionally, a student will not agree with a grade received from a faculty member, or will otherwise be concerned about faculty conduct or behavior toward the student. In these instances, the student should proceed along the following steps:

1. Student has the responsibility of initiating contact with the Professor in question and addressing concerns.
2. If resolution is not reached, or the student is not satisfied with the response, the student may appeal to the Department Chair. If the Chair is the faculty member of concern, the student can appeal to his/her Advisor and/or the Graduate Coordinator.
3. Upon written notification from the student, the Chair can either a) review the situation and render a decision, or b) appoint a faculty review committee, excluding the faculty member in question, to investigate the situation and make recommendations. The Chair has final authority within the department to make decisions.
4. If the student is not satisfied, he/she may appeal to the Graduate College using the existing appeals process.

ACADEMIC APPEAL POLICY

Appeals are to request consideration of an admission decision, course grade, alleged unfair practice, and relief or waiver from a UNLV policy or requirement. Appeals must be filed with the Graduate College Office (FDH 309) in a timely manner. The Graduate College must receive grade appeals within 60 calendar days from the last day of the term/semester in question. The Registrar's Office must receive notification to change a grade due to clerical error within 60 calendar days from the last day of the term/semester. Each appeal is reviewed individually and a decision will be based on the merits and documentation provided.

It is the student's responsibility to provide a clear and concisely written statement of the appeal and to provide all relevant documentation to be reviewed. Written appeals must include:

1. *UNLV Graduate College Appeal Form* as a cover sheet

2. Written Statement of Appeal addressed to the appropriate UNLV administrator
3. Relevant documentation and support. For example, documents may include medical records, work verification, police reports, death certificates, airline receipts, letters from professors on university letterhead, transcripts, etc. If the issue is not resolved between the student and course instructor, a written appeal should first be directed to the Graduate Coordinator of the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy. If the problem remains unresolved to the student's satisfaction, appeals must be directed in progressive order to the Department Chair, College Dean, then subsequently to the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean may act to resolve the problem or request the Graduate College Committee on Graduate Student Faculty Issues to review the problem and make its recommendation to the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean will inform the student of the final decision.

The Graduate College Graduate Student and Faculty Issues Committee is the designated College Committee to hear certain graduate student and faculty appeals and is composed of graduate faculty and graduate student representatives.

INACTIVE STUDENT POLICY

The Graduate College stipulates that students are expected to register for a minimum of six semester hours during a calendar year. Students who do not register for coursework within one calendar year may be separated from the Graduate College.

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy will contact students who have not registered for two consecutive semesters (excluding summers). Those students will be asked to inform the Graduate Coordinator in writing of their intentions to matriculate. Students who do not respond within 30 days will be separated from the program.

If a student does not intend to register for a class for one calendar year, he or she must request a leave of absence from both the Advisor and the Graduate Coordinator.

LACK OF SATISFACTORY PROGRESS TOWARD A DEGREE

If a student is not making satisfactory progress towards meeting the degree requirements, the Department may request that the Graduate Dean either separate the student from the College or place the student on probation.

Failure to make satisfactory progress may be determined in several ways:

1. Failure to complete two courses in two consecutive semesters (excluding Summer).
2. Failure to register for a minimum of six credits each calendar year.
3. Unsatisfactory grades (including grades below a B, Incompletes or Withdrawals).

4. Failure to consult with an Advisor.
5. Failure to develop an official degree program.
6. Failure to successfully complete a professional paper or a thesis.
7. Failure to complete all master's degree requirements within 6 years.

Faculty Advisors will monitor the progress of their Advisees. When an Advisor has determined that an Advisee has not been making satisfactory progress, the student's record will be evaluated and a recommendation will then be forwarded to the Department for action. A grade of Incomplete (I) is given only in extenuating circumstances. An incomplete is not a substitute for an F. Students given an incomplete should be able to receive a passing grade based upon the work completed thus far. The incomplete must be removed in one calendar year or it reverts automatically to an F. Students are responsible for initiating completion of the incomplete grade. See the Graduate Catalog for further details.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) is the primary professional association representing the professional interests of more than 23,000 marriage and family therapists throughout the United States, Canada and abroad. Its purpose is to provide continuing education, professional development, and advocacy services for its members. Student membership is available in AAMFT and students are required to join. The membership includes a subscription to the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* and the *Family Therapy Magazine*. Membership in AAMFT allows students to receive professional liability insurance at a reduced rate. By joining AAMFT, students automatically become members of the Nevada Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (NAMFT). This state organization advocates for the interests of marriage and family therapists in the state, sponsoring workshops, newsletters, networking and other opportunities. Further information may be obtained from current student members, from faculty members, and on the web: www.aamft.org.

GRADUATE PROGRAM FINAL EXAMINATION

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy requires students to successfully complete a final examination. This examination is intended to test the student's knowledge in the area of specialization. Students must either complete a professional paper or thesis. After the professional paper or thesis has been written, students must also prepare an oral presentation and defense with their advisory committee members. All members of the advisory committee must be present and may question the student. In the examination, the student must be able to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the broad field of study (MFT) and a detailed understanding of a more limited field (topic area of paper or thesis).

The oral defense must be held at least three weeks before the last day of instruction in the term in which the student plans to complete the degree requirements.

Professional Paper

Candidates for a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy may choose to complete a professional paper. Professional Paper (COU 748) provides experience in preparation and completion of the professional paper. The minimum number of credits required is three. The student should initiate a consultation with his/her Advisor to discuss the professional paper. The student is also expected to be familiar with guidelines for the oral defense as presented in the Graduate Catalog. The oral defense of the completed professional paper will serve as the final examination. The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy highly recommends students schedule their oral defense at least 3-4 weeks before the end of the semester.

Thesis Option

Candidates for a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy may choose to complete a thesis. Thesis (COU 749) provides experience in preparation, completion, and writing of original empirical research, which will prove useful should the student pursue a doctoral degree in the future. The minimum number of credits required is six. The student may work with any faculty member who has graduate faculty status in the department as director of the thesis and form a committee as described above, as early as possible after choosing this option. The student is also expected to be familiar with guidelines for the oral defense as presented in the Graduate Catalog. The oral defense of the completed thesis will serve as the final examination.

APPLYING FOR GRADUATION

The Application for Graduation may be obtained from the Graduate College website. A completed application, properly signed, must be filed with the Graduate College by the date indicated on the UNLV academic calendar of the semester of graduation. All fees must be paid by this deadline. See the Graduate College website for further information.

Students will not be permitted to participate in Commencement ceremonies until they have finished all of the requirements for their degree. **Additionally, students must be enrolled for at least one (1) credit during the semester in which they intend to graduate.**

NOTE: It is the student's responsibility to be aware of graduation requirements and their corresponding deadlines.

POLICY ON HANDBOOK REVISIONS

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy will regularly update this handbook in order to meet changing accreditation standards and state licensure requirements, as well as to document programmatic and/or policy and procedure changes.

DEPARTMENTAL FACULTY

FIFE, Stephen T., Assistant Professor

Education:

B.S., M.S., Brigham Young University; Ph.D., Brigham Young University

Areas of special interest and expertise: Change Processes in Marital Therapy, Conceptualization and Treatment of Marital Conflict, Forgiveness, Theory and Philosophy of Marriage and Family Therapy Approaches

License/Certification:

Registered Marriage and Family Therapy Intern
AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate

HERTLEIN, Katherine, M., Assistant Professor

Education:

B.A., Truman State University; M.S., Purdue University Calumet;
Ph.D., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Areas of special interest and expertise: Infidelity, Sexuality, Technology and Relationships, Differentiation, Therapeutic Writing

License/Certification:

Registered Marriage and Family Therapy Intern
AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate
PREPARE/ENRICH Certified Counselor

PETERSON, Colleen M., Assistant Professor in Residence, Graduate Coordinator, and Director, Center for Individual, Couples, and Family Therapy

Education:

B.A., M.S., Brigham Young University
Ph.D., Kansas State University

Areas of special interest and expertise: Medical Family Therapy (oncology), Supervision, Impaired Students, Ethics, and Outcome Research in Marriage and Family Therapy

License/Certification:

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
AAMFT Approved Supervisor

WEEKS, Gerald R., Professor and Department Chair

Education:

B.A. M.A., East Carolina University
Ph.D., Georgia State University

Areas of special interest and expertise: Strategic/Brief Therapy, Hypoactive Sexual Desire, Reframing, Therapeutic Compliance, Termination, Affairs, Paradox, Therapeutic Writing, and Sex and Couples Therapy.

License/Certification:

Licensed Psychologist
AAMFT Approved Supervisor
Diplomate--American Board of Professional Psychology
Diplomate--American Board of Sexology

AFFIDAVIT OF COMMITMENT

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand this handbook and I agree to be bound to its stipulations, policies, and procedures. I understand my rights and responsibilities as a graduate student in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy.

Furthermore, I commit to enroll in a minimum of two classes per semester, unless I obtain departmental permission in writing to do otherwise for a legitimate reason and a specific period of time.

Student Signature

Date

Print Student Name

Advisor Signature

Date

INSTRUCTIONS: Read and sign above. Obtain your advisor's signature and leave this form with him/her to be placed in your file. You may request a copy for your records.