MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STUDIES

The primary focus of the courses in Marriage and Family Studies—the Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy (M.A.M.F.T.) in St. Paul and the Master of Arts in Marital and Family Therapy (M.A.M.F.T.) in San Diego—is to prepare students for the role of marriage and family specialists with a strong biblical and theological understanding of the need for and implications of this ministry. This role could be practiced as a marriage and family therapist or as a specialist in family ministries within a church setting, in a parish-based counseling practice or other kinds of parachurch or pastoral counseling agencies, in a secular community mental health center, or in other treatment settings requiring family therapy expertise. The M.A.M.F.T. program is not intended for persons who will eventually seek ordination.

Objectives for students

- Develop a professional identity as agents of formation and transformation who respond to God's call to minister to couples, families, and other systems by intentionally integrating biblically grounded, professionally coherent theological and theoretical understandings with ethical clinical practice;
- Provide effective therapeutic responses (both preventive and interventive) in a broad range of settings for a wide variety of issues;
- Demonstrate sensitivity and expertise in ministering to individuals, couples, families, and members of other systems who differ from themselves in areas such as culture, race, ethnicity, religious background, socio-economic level, worldview, values, and family constructs;
- Demonstrate emotional and spiritual maturity and wholeness, which enable them to reflect on their own continuing formation process in ways that enhance their personal relationships as well as their professional effectiveness.

This program offers students a comprehensive, advanced opportunity to learn to:

- Understand their own family relationships in ways that enhance therapy and ministry;
- Offer effective programming for prevention and enrichment;
- Intervene appropriately with individuals, couples, families and systems; and
- Understand systemic dynamics in congregations and organizations.

MF 500 • Principles of Counseling 3 Credits.
This course is designed to provide a foundation of basic skills for people who want to enhance their therapy and abilities. It combines theoretical understanding and hands-on practice of essential counseling micro-skills and will serve as the prerequisite counseling course for students enrolling in or transferring to the Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy program. Special Notes: MF 500 is a prerequisite for students without an undergraduate/graduate degree in counseling or a related discipline, or without an introductory course in counseling/psychotherapy theory and technique. St. Paul enrollment limited to students in MAMFT.

MF 611 • Foundations of Marriage and Family Studies 3 Credits.
This course examines the historical development and theoretical foundations of marriage and family studies, as well as theological issues in the study of marriage and family and the practice of marriage and family therapy. Special attention is given to family systems theory. Students are encouraged to examine their own assumptions about families and to develop increased congruence between their theological convictions and their theoretical perspectives. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T.

MF 612 • Families in Context: Gender, Class and Culture 3 Credits.
This course explores differences in family structure and interaction related to race, ethnicity, culture, and socioeconomic status. The influences of gender role perceptions are examined. Students identify challenges of providing therapy and pastoral care to families who differ from themselves in terms of gender, class, and culture. Prerequisites: MF 611. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in the M.A.M.F.T. Campus: St. Paul.
MF 613 • Dynamics of Family Interaction: Sexuality, Spirituality and Socialization 3 Credits.
This course analyzes dynamic processes of family and couple relationships such as love and intimacy; communication; shame; power; family stress; and coping. Family changes such as divorce, remarriage, and grief are also addressed. Special attention is given to the ways couples and families interact around issues of sexuality and spirituality. Students are encouraged to develop an awareness of the influences of these family dynamics in their own families of origin. 
*Prerequisites: MF 611. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in the M.A.M.F.T. Campus: St. Paul.*

MF 621 • Individual Development Within the Family 3 Credits.
This course explores the development of individuals within the family over the life cycle. Childhood, adolescent, and adult development and aging are examined with attention given to physical, spiritual, intellectual, and social development and their implications for the practice of therapy and pastoral care. 
*Prerequisites: MF 611. Campus: St. Paul.*

MF 622 • Individual and Family Psychopathology I 3 Credits.
This course helps students understand and identify individual and relational problems and gain awareness of abnormal and/or unhealthy development of individuals and relationships. The course includes introduction to and critique of DSM-5 diagnostic categories. 
*Prerequisites: MF 611, MF 621, or concurrent with MF 621. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T.*

MF 623 • Individual and Family Psychopathology II 3 Credits.
This course helps students assess and diagnose relational problems and mental illness and disorders in children, adolescents, and adults. The course includes thorough interaction with the DSM-5 diagnostic categories. 
*Prerequisites: MF 611, MF 622. Campus: St. Paul.*

MF 624 • Challenges over the Family Life Cycle 3 Credits.
Students examine therapeutic strategies for addressing developmental issues throughout the family life cycle, such as marriage preparation, transition to parenthood, parenting over the life cycle, work and family issues, chronic illness, and aging. 
*Prerequisites: MF 611. Campus: St. Paul.*

MF 625 • Theories and Best Practices of Marital and Family Therapy I 3 Credits.
Students review and critique—from theological, spiritual, and theoretical perspectives—the major approaches to family therapy. Applications of techniques from these approaches are practiced in class. Students also examine the place of marriage and family therapy in pastoral care and begin to articulate their own approach to working with families. Campus: San Diego.

MF 626 • Theories and Best Practices of Marital and Family Therapy II 3 Credits.
Working with case studies, students will build on their knowledge of MFT theories by focusing on theory-based assessment, treatment planning, goal prioritization and intervention informed by the recovery model. Therapy adaptations will be explored for a variety of clinical settings with culturally and economically diverse clinical populations. Special emphasis will be given to AAMFT’s Core Competencies and self-of-therapist dynamics. 
*Prerequisites: MF 625. Campus: St. Paul.*

MF 627 • Research Design and Evaluation 3 Credits.
Students explore the interpretation and design of qualitative and quantitative research in the social sciences with special focus on human development, mental health, relational issues and processes and outcomes of marriage and family therapy, and mental health counseling. Principles of understanding and critiquing published research are examined with the goal of enabling students to use current literature to ground their therapeutic and pastoral responses to family and mental health concerns. 
*Prerequisites: MF 625 or MH 625. Campus: San Diego.*

MF 629 • Community Mental Health 3 Credits.
The history of community mental health care provides a context for introducing students to contemporary mental health issues and services especially in Southern California. The course emphasizes strengths based systemic recovery-oriented treatment with consumers, their families, and their communities who struggle with the challenges, among others, of severe mental illness, chronic medical conditions, poverty, joblessness, and violence. Direct contact with public and private agencies and their clients is a core part of this course. 
*Prerequisites: MF 625 and MF 646. Campus: San Diego.*
MF 631 • Professional and Ethical Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy 3 Credits.
This course addresses legal and ethical situations arising in the practice of marital and family therapy and examine unique challenges of maintaining appropriate boundaries within ministry settings. Issues of professional development are discussed, and students are encouraged to develop strategies for continuing professional, personal, and spiritual growth. Prerequisites: MF 611. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T. Campus: St. Paul.

MF 633 • Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Their Families 3 Credits.
Theories and techniques for working with children, adolescents, and their families, including evidence-based treatments for common childhood disorders, assessment approaches, play and child therapy techniques, child abuse assessment reporting and treatment (7 hours of instruction), domestic violence, self-harm, suicide interventions and cultural influences in the realm of parenting. Prerequisites: MF 500. Campus: San Diego.

MF 635 • Individual Development, Aging, Family Life Cycle 3 Credits.
This course explores the development of individuals within the family over the life cycle and therapeutic strategies for addressing developmental issues. Childhood, adolescence, marriage preparation, transition to parenthood, parenting over the life cycle, work and family issues, aging, chronic illness and long term care of older people are examined. Attention is given to physical, spiritual, intellectual, and social development and their implications for the practice of therapy and pastoral care. Prerequisites: MF 625. Campus: San Diego.

MF 641 • Theories of Marriage and Family Therapy 3 Credits.
Students review and critique, from theological and theoretical perspectives, major approaches to family therapy, including structural, strategic, transgenerational, experiential, object relations, contextual, systemic, and other emerging models of therapy. The application of techniques from these approaches is practiced in class. Students also examine the place of marriage and family therapy in pastoral care and begin to articulate their own approaches to working with families. Prerequisites: MF 611. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T. Campus: St. Paul.

MF 642 • Couple and Family Assessment 3 Credits.
Theoretical perspectives on marital and family assessment are presented, along with an overview of and experience with frequently used personality and relationship assessment tools. This course also introduces the student to the fundamental skills necessary for mental health diagnostic assessment and treatment planning. Students will learn and practice the skills essential to the first three sessions of family treatment. Both medical model and systems integration will be addressed so that students may become bilingual in their ability to negotiate professional relationships with insurance companies, Rule 29 agencies, and other professionals who use a medical model as their primary approach to mental health, while retaining an inherently systemic approach to treatment. Prerequisites: MF 611. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T. Campus: St. Paul.

MF 643 • Advanced Clinical Issues 3 Credits.
This course focuses on developing therapeutic and pastoral care strategies based on research, theory, and theological reflection to address issues such as separation and divorce, single-parent and remarried families, infertility, adultery, sexual dysfunction, abuse and violence in the family, and addictive and compulsive behaviors. Prerequisites: MF 611 and MF 642. Special Notes: Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T. Campus: St. Paul.

MF 644 • Counseling Couples in Relationship 3 Credits.
Theories and techniques for working with couples, including overview of current theories, evidence-based treatment, research on successful marriages and divorce and dynamics of faith, privilege and oppression as related to couples. Assessment and treatment of spousal abuse. Study of sexual dysfunctions and sex therapy. Prerequisites: MF 625. Campus: San Diego.

MF 645 • Psychological Assessment 3 Credits.
This course familiarizes students with the psychometric characteristics and limitations of projective techniques and standardized psychological assessment tools in the context of psychotherapy. Students learn how to administer and score various instruments, interpret assessment data, and write clinical reports that assist in diagnosis and psychotherapeutic treatment. MFT students will focus on relational...
instruments while MHC students will primarily work with individual assessment tools. Legal, ethical, and cultural issues will receive particular focus, as well as students’ interpretation of their own assessment profiles. 

**Prerequisites:** MF 625 or MH 625, and MF 646.  
**Campus:** San Diego

**MF 646 • Individual and Family Psychopathology**  
3 Credits.  
This course helps students identify individual and relational problems and gain awareness of abnormal and/or unhealthy psychological and relationship functioning. Students will learn how to think critically about the concept of mental disorder informed by the recovery model. The appropriate use of the DSM-5 and its diagnostic categories with diverse populations in various clinical settings will be stressed. 

**Prerequisites:** MF 625 or MH 625, and MF 635.  
**Campus:** San Diego

**MF 651 • Research Design & Evaluation in Marriage & Family Therapy**  
3 Credits.  
Students explore the interpretation and design of qualitative and quantitative research in family issues and in processes and outcomes of marriage and family therapy. Principles of understanding and critiquing published research are examined, with the goal of enabling students to use current literature to ground their therapeutic and pastoral responses to family concerns.  

**Prerequisites:** MF 611.  
**Special Notes:** Enrollment limited to students in M.A.M.F.T.  
**Campus:** St. Paul

**MF 662 • Clinical Issues in Human Diversity**  
3 Credits.  
Self-assessment of knowledge, sensitivity and attitudes toward diverse populations, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, spirituality, ability and language. Examination of family structure and social patterns in California’s ethnic populations and differences across social class. Experientially examines intentional and unintentional oppression and privilege, promotes social justice advocacy, and develops competencies in addressing biases. Multicultural counseling theories, techniques and mental health service delivery to individuals and family groups struggling with persistent poverty will receive special focus.

**MF 670 • Directed Study in Marriage and Family Studies**  
1-9 Credits.  
Research and study by arrangement with the professor.  

**Special Notes:** Permission is required.

**MF 675 • Professional, Legal & Ethical Issues in Psychotherapy**  
3 Credits.  
This course addresses legal and ethical situations arising in the practice of marital and family therapy and examines unique challenges of maintaining appropriate boundaries within ministry settings. Issues of professional development are discussed, and students are encouraged to develop strategies for continuing professional, personal, and spiritual growth.  

**Prerequisites:** MF 625 or MH 625.  
**Campus:** San Diego

**MF 711 • Supervised Clinical Experience I**  
3 Credits.  
MF 711 and MF 712. These two units constitute a nine month practicum including 300 hours of clinical contact and 80 hours of supervision by a licensed marriage and family therapist and/or an AA M.F.T.- approved supervisor. The practicum must conform to the guidelines of the M.F.T. program manual. A continuation fee of $375 is assessed for any semester of participation in group supervision beyond the second S.C.E. unit for M.F.T. students, or for any extension required in certificate programs.

**Prerequisites:** MF 631 and permission of the director of the M.F.T. program.  
**Campus:** St. Paul.  
**Special Notes:** Audit unavailable.

**MF 712 • Supervised Clinical Experience II**  
3 Credits.  
MF 711 and MF 712. These two units constitute a nine month practicum including 300 hours of clinical contact and 80 hours of supervision by a licensed marriage and family therapist and/or an AA M.F.T.- approved supervisor. The practicum must conform to the guidelines of the M.F.T. program manual. A continuation fee of $375 is assessed for any semester of participation in group supervision beyond the second S.C.E. unit for M.F.T. students, or for any extension required in certificate programs.

**Prerequisites:** MF 631 and permission of the director of the M.F.T. program.  
**Campus:** St. Paul.  
**Special Notes:** Audit unavailable.

**MF 715 • Supervised Clinical Experience I**  
3 Credits.  
MF 715, 716, 717. These three units constitute a 12-month practicum including 500 hours of clinical contact and a minimum of 100 hours of supervision by a qualified California Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, who is an AAMFT approved supervisor and/or a CAMFT Certified Supervisor, and/or other approved supervisor. The
practicum fulfills the requirements of the BBS for face-to-face experience counseling individuals, couples, families, or groups. A continuation fee of $357 is assessed for any semester of participation in group supervision beyond the third SCE unit for MFT students.

Prerequisites: MF 625; passing the practicum qualifying exam, and permission of the MFT program administrator. Campus: San Diego Special Notes: Audit unavailable.

MF 716 • Supervised Clinical Experience II 3 Credits.
MF 715, 716, 717. These three units constitute a 12-month practicum including 500 hours of clinical contact and a minimum of 100 hours of supervision by a qualified California Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, who is an AAMFT approved supervisor and/or a CAMFT Certified Supervisor, and/or other approved supervisor. The practicum fulfills the requirements of the BBS for face-to-face experience counseling individuals, couples, families, or groups. A continuation fee of $357 is assessed for any semester of participation in group supervision beyond the third SCE unit for MFT students.

Prerequisites: MF 625; passing the practicum qualifying exam, and permission of the MFT program administrator. Campus: San Diego Special Notes: Audit unavailable.

MF 717 • Supervised Clinical Experience III 3 Credits.
MF 715, 716, 717. These three units constitute a 12-month practicum including 500 hours of clinical contact and a minimum of 100 hours of supervision by a qualified California Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, who is an AAMFT approved supervisor and/or a CAMFT Certified Supervisor, and/or other approved supervisor. The practicum fulfills the requirements of the BBS for face-to-face experience counseling individuals, couples, families, or groups. A continuation fee of $357 is assessed for any semester of participation in group supervision beyond the third SCE unit for MFT students.

Prerequisites: MF 625; passing the practicum qualifying exam, and permission of the MFT program administrator. Campus: San Diego Special Notes: Audit unavailable.

MF 780 • Senior Integrative Seminar: Worldview, Ethics, and Practice 3 Credits.
This seminar is designed to encourage students to integrate theoretical, theological, and clinical elements into a coherent worldview that will facilitate congruence in professional therapy and ministry practice. Attention will be given to epistemological theories in shaping integrative knowledge; the moral nature of clinical practice, research, and theory; and the value of paradigms of virtue ethics and wisdom for effective ministry to individuals and families.

Prerequisites: MF 611. Campus: St. Paul. Special Notes: Limited to graduating seniors in the M.A.M.F.T. degree program. Audit not available.

MF 785 • Marital and Family Therapy Senior Integrative Seminar 1 Credit.
This capstone project is designed to be concurrent with, yet separate from, students’ practicum experience. Students’ theology (biblical and theological formation), spirituality (personal and spiritual formation as a therapist), and clinical theory with clinical practice (professional formation) are expressed in a culminating master’s level project that integrates their academic, interpersonal, and practice experience in the program.

MF 785C • Marital and Family Therapy Senior Integrative Seminar C 0.5 Credits.
This capstone project is designed to be concurrent with, yet separate from, students’ supervised clinical experience. Students’ theology (biblical and theological formation), spirituality (personal and spiritual formation as a therapist), and clinical theory with clinical practice (professional formation) are expressed in a culminating master’s level project that integrates their academic, interpersonal, and practice experiences in the program.

Prerequisites: Admission to MFT Practicum. Campus: San Diego