

**College of Health and Rehabilitation
Sciences**



Student Handbook

Marriage and Family Therapy Program 2024-2025

**Department of Counselor Education and
Family Therapy**

Central Connecticut State University



Accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). This status is effective for a period of seven (7) years, May 1, 2023 - May 1, 2030.

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Introduction

This Student Handbook has been prepared to serve as a guide throughout the training process for students enrolled in the Master's program in Marriage and Family Therapy at Central Connecticut State University's Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy. The handbook is designed to provide detailed information about each stage of the process toward completing the Master's degree and to inform students about the unique characteristics of the program and the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy.

Each student is also assigned an academic advisor. The advisor will serve as a guide while the student is in the Marriage and Family Therapy program. It is recommended that students make contact with their advisors periodically and utilize the faculty member's services. Students may meet with advisors during regularly scheduled office hours or by appointment.

We hope that you find your experience at Central Connecticut State University an enlightening and fulfilling one. Suggestions on the part of all who use this handbook are encouraged. Please send your comments directly to:

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The Department of Counselor Education & Family Therapy and Central Connecticut State University reserves the right to revise, amend or change items set forth in this handbook from time to time. Accordingly, readers of this handbook should inquire as to whether any such revisions, amendments or changes have been made since the date of publication. The University reserves the right to cancel course offerings, to set minimum and maximum size of classes, to change designated instructors in courses and to make decisions affecting the academic standing of anyone participating in a course or program offered by the University.

DEPARTMENT MOTTO: "GROW WITH US"



The department motto "**Grow with us**" was selected as the result of a student contest. It was chosen by the faculty from several other entries because it best reflects the vision and attitude that we want to aspire to in the Department of Counselor Education & Family Therapy. The mission of our department derives from the mission of the counseling and family therapy professions (i.e., to promote the dignity and welfare of all human beings and to help individuals and families to lead healthy, happy, meaningful, and self-sufficient lives). By fostering healthy human beings, we are, by extension, making for a better human society, with stronger families, stronger schools, and stronger communities.

While all citizens bear responsibility for building a better world, counselors and family therapists willingly assume a larger share of this responsibility because they have chosen helping others as their life's work. As such, they are people of goodwill and compassion who have great respect for human dignity and diversity, are committed to promoting universal human rights and freedoms, and for working for a sustainable human community that provides for the wellbeing of all its citizens.

As your faculty and academic advisors, our greatest desire is to help you achieve your goals, not just by succeeding academically, but also by growing as self-aware and emotionally centered persons. We recognize that to be effective, we must also continue to grow. So, to the best of our ability, we pledge to practice the values espoused by the counseling and MFT professions, to live and practice our profession with integrity, treat all people with abiding respect and dignity, and provide the kind of leadership that will help you become the best mental health professional and person you can become.

So, come along, and grow with us.

General Information - CCSU

The University

Founded in 1849 as the New Britain Normal School - a teacher-training facility- CCSU is Connecticut's oldest publicly supported institution of higher education. It became the Teachers College of Connecticut in 1933, and after a period of extensive institutional growth and external expansion it became the Central Connecticut State College in 1959. In recognition of the institution's continual development in mission and aspiration, the present name and educational charter were conferred in 1983. Honoring our "visionary innovations in undergraduate education," the Association of American Colleges & Universities selected CCSU as one of only 16 "Leadership Institutions" in the nation - and the only one in Connecticut.

College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

The Department of Counselor Education & Family Therapy is part of the [College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences](#) (CHRS). The College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences is home to Central's health sciences departments such as Nursing and Physical Education and Human Performance, along with human service disciplines such as counseling and social work. Students are provided a comprehensive inter-professional education, equipping them with the essential skills and experiences needed for careers in various health and human service fields. Collaborative programs emphasize holistic, patient-centered approaches including prevention, assessments, diagnoses, treatment plans, and chronic illness management. These programs and practical experiences foster cultural competency and advocacy in healthcare, empowering students to become transformative leaders in health and rehabilitation services. The Dean of the College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences is Dr. Jayanthi Kandiah.

The Department

The Department of Counselor Education & Family Therapy prepares students for professional career in Clinical Professional Counseling, School Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Student Development in Higher Education. Courses are designed to develop student competence in the application of theory-based counseling models, to understand the concerns of diverse client populations and to enhance students' personal and professional development. All programs have practicum experiences and clinical internships that provide students with valuable opportunities to apply their skills in a field-based setting under close supervision. The Chair of the Department is Dr. Reginald Holt.

Diversity and the CCSU Marriage and Family Therapy Program

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at Central Connecticut State University defines human diversity as: "perceived variability along any category or dimension which differentiates individual persons, or groups of persons, one from another." Insofar as all human beings are unique, diversity is a ubiquitous phenomenon resulting from the universal habit of perceiving differences both consciously and unconsciously. Awareness of diversity itself is neither a virtue nor a problem.

However, judgment accompanying such awareness of diversity can be problematic, particularly when such judgments entail presumptions of superiority or inferiority, or expectations unfounded by direct experience with the particular individuals or groups perceived as similar or different from the perceiver. Historically, injustices have resulted from two broad types of acts: (1) those that result from unfounded judgments of specific persons or groups from the perceiver and (2) those that establish policies which result in favor or disfavor to persons or groups from any one or more category or dimensions.

Some of the major categories that have been attended to with consequent injustices are: Race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, and political belief. Some of the major dimensions are: Age, height, weight, physical attractiveness, and skin tone. We refer to such variables as HCADs (Historical Categories and Dimensions). The Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program is deeply committed, as is Central Connecticut State University of which we are a part, to the goal of maximal opportunity for all persons, irrespective to their membership in any perceived categories and dimensions. To this end, our program has adopted a policy of admissions to anyone having earned a Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution with a G.P.A. of 2.7 or better, along with favorable recommendations and a well-written essay. Recognizing that economic circumstances limit some individuals from attending our program, we encourage students to seek financial aid and offer a limited number of graduate assistantships.

Central Connecticut State University prides itself on its diversity and its emphasis on the “Non-traditional Student.” Most of the courses in the program are offered in the evenings; some are offered during summer and occasionally weekends. The program is designed to allow students to stay together as a “cohort” through critical stages in their training, thus creating an atmosphere of cohesiveness and connection to each other and the program. Students value this atmosphere, finding that it generates support, reinforcement, collegiality, and a sense of “ownership” in the program. Since the mid-1990’s, our program has attracted a student body diverse with respect to all the above-mentioned HCADs. We offer coursework that addresses the importance of respect for all persons; we support our MFT graduate student organization, which provides social as well as professional activities open to all. We encourage our students to inform their communities about our program, a policy which has resulted in continued HCAD diversity of our student body with respect to HCADs. We facilitate both practicum and internship placements with agencies that service an HCAD-diverse population.

Our program student body consists of over 17% males and over 30% non-European-Americans, which attests to the success our policies allow us to enjoy in regard to racial and ethnic diversity. Because of our emphasis on diversity, our program attracts students of all walks of life, cultural backgrounds, and ethnic origins. We have attracted students from all over the world, and have had students in our program representing such countries as Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Columbia, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Peru, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Syria, Turkey, Vietnam, and the West Indies.

Our program faculty and clinical site supervisors are diverse along many dimensions of the historical categories and dimensions as stated above. Regarding our faculty, we are diverse in respect to age, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, educational backgrounds, clinical experiences, and many other HCADs.

The program offers a broad selection of clinical placements across the State of Connecticut in diverse settings as urban, suburban, and rural settings, and across the spectrum of clinical venues. Students have the opportunity to work with minority clients and field supervisors.

Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment Policy

In accordance with Section 46a-68-46 of the Affirmative Action Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the following procedures provide an internal process for the handling of complaints involving claims of discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct/violence. This procedure is designed to further implement Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) policies relating to Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct by providing a process through which individuals alleging violation of these policies may pursue a complaint. This includes allegations of retaliation, discrimination, harassment based on age; ancestry, color; gender identity and expression; intellectual disability; learning disability; mental disability; physical disability; marital status, national origin; race; religious creed; sex, including pregnancy, transgender status, sexual harassment and sexual assault; sexual orientation; veteran status; or any other status protected by federal or state laws. When responding to an internal complaint, disclosure of information relating to the internal complaint and the identity of the complainant will be handled with appropriate sensitivity and in accordance with applicable laws.

Definitions

Discrimination. Discrimination is defined as conduct that is directed at an individual because of his or her protected class and subjects the individual to different treatment so as to interfere with or limit the ability of the individual to participate in, or benefit from, the services, activities, or privileges provided by the university or otherwise adversely affects the individual's employment or education.

Discriminatory Harassment. Discriminatory harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that is directed at an individual because of his or her protected class, and that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive so as to have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment.

Retaliation. Retaliation is subjecting a person to a materially adverse action because he or she made a complaint under this policy or assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation under this policy.

Responsibility

The responsibility for implementation of this policy is assigned to the Chief Diversity Officer, who may delegate duties as appropriate. The [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) will promptly address each complaint and make reasonable efforts to expeditiously affect a resolution. The investigation of such complaints will be managed with appropriate sensitivity.

Professional Conduct in the MFT Program Policy

The MFT Program at Central Connecticut State University seeks to create an inclusive and respectful and working environment for students, faculty, and staff. It is important to engage in a respectful manner with others and respect individuals' diverse backgrounds (i.e., ethnicity, gender, age, physical abilities, nation of origin, etc.) inside and outside of the classroom. Individuals are expected to be respectful and professional toward others in the classroom (students and faculty). Students will recognize and respect others' ideas and contributions during class (presentations, discussions, small group work, etc.). When in disagreement, students are expected to engage in constructive dialogue of each other's ideas.

Bullying, discrimination, derogatory remarks, or bigotry of any kind regarding students and faculty will not be tolerated. Failure to conduct yourself in a professional manner on campus may result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy Policy on Gatekeeping and Assessment of Professional Functioning and Behavior and Temporary Suspension from Program and/or Experiential Learning Policy.

Description of the Program

Program Philosophy

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) is designed to prepare students for professional careers as Marriage and Family Therapists in a wide variety of settings and roles. First, students are taught theories and techniques of practice in individual and group counseling modalities, as well as developmental theory. The foundation of the specialized training in Marriage and Family Therapy is Systems Theory, serving as the linchpin for the study of clinical theories and practices that are taught in preparation for clinical training. The philosophy of the program is that a student must integrate theories and techniques as tools for enhancing one's effectiveness as an agent of intervention and change. The program does so by interweaving theory and practice throughout the duration of the training process via graduated practical experiences while studying theory. Thus, through the process of study and practice, the student has an opportunity to incorporate a wide array of learnings gradually and comprehensively. The end product of such training is a therapist who is well-grounded in theory, and who has had the nurturing through an on-going training and supervisory process to use him- or herself effectively, professionally, and ethically as an agent of change at a variety of levels.

MFT Core Faculty

CCSU MFT Core Faculty work together under the leadership of the program coordinator to ensure the program's adherence to accreditation standards and delivery of the mission, goals and SLOs of the MFT program. They share responsibility for the creation, evaluation, revision, and maintenance of the program's outcome-based education framework, curriculum, policies and procedures. MFT Core faculty demonstrate professional identity as a marriage and family therapist and contribute to the MFT profession in various ways (e.g., scholarship, research, teaching, supervision, etc.).

Dr. Tatiana Melendez-Rhodes, Associate Professor

Program Coordinator/Director

Academic Advisor

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Tatiana Melendez-Rhodes, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the Marriage and Family Therapy at CCSU. Dr. Melendez-Rhodes is a Licensed marriage and family therapist in Connecticut, a Clinical Fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, (AAMFT), an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, and a Fulbright Scholar. She received her Master's and Doctoral degrees in Marriage and Family Therapy from the University of Connecticut. She was also a clinical Psychologist in Peru.

Dr. Melendez-Rhodes has taught several graduate and undergraduate courses of marriage, family therapy, supervision and psychology in the United States and Peru. She is passionate about teaching, mentoring, and interacting with her students. Dr. Melendez-Rhodes has worked in public hospitals, inpatient psychiatric hospitals, private practice and outpatient mental health organizations in the US and Peru. Her research interests focus on family violence, immigration issues, gender, interpersonal acceptance-rejection, couples therapy, medical family therapy, and clinical practice and outcomes. She has published in peer-reviewed journals and presented her research at national and international conferences. She is the Faculty Advisor for the CCSU MFT Society.

As a Program Coordinator, Dr. Melendez-Rhodes provides oversight to the overall operations of the education and practice components in the CCSU MFT program.

Dr. Mary Nedela, Assistant Professor

Clinical Coordinator

Academic Advisor

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Mary Nedela, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor and Clinical Coordinator in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at CCSU, a licensed marriage and family therapist in Michigan, a Clinical Fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), and AAMFT Approved Supervisor. She received her master's degree in child development and family studies with a specialization in marriage and family therapy from Purdue Calumet (now Purdue Northwest). She

received her doctoral degree in human development with a specialization in marriage and family therapy from Virginia Tech. Dr. Nedela has taught several undergraduate and graduate courses in marriage and family therapy, human development, and psychology. Additionally, she has comprehensive clinical experience working in various clinical settings, including in-home programs, in-patient style settings, and outpatient settings. She is particularly passionate about LGBTQ+ individuals and their relationships with family, friends, and partners. Additionally, she is driven to increase the quantity and quality of clinical services available to LGBTQ+ communities. Her specific research area of interest includes relational well-being among bisexual individuals and their partners.

Dr. Arpita Lal, Assistant Professor
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Dr. Arpita Lal is an Assistant Professor in the Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Program in the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy (CEFT) at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU). Prior to joining CCSU in 2022 she was a Clinical Assistant Professor in the MFT Department at Chapman University, California from 2015-2022. Dr. Lal is a Nationally Approved Supervisor through the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). She is also a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Connecticut and California. Her research interests include self-care and burnout in mental health professionals, MFT training and education, families coping with chronic illness, immigration, and diversity related issues. She is the Faculty Advisor for the Chi Chapter of the Delta Kappa MFT Honor Society.

CCSU MFT Outcome-Based Education Framework

Mission, Goals, Student Learning Outcomes, and COAMFTE Developmental Components

CCSU University Mission

Central Connecticut State University is a community of learners dedicated to teaching and scholarship that emphasizes development and application of knowledge and ideas through research and outreach activities, and prepares students to be thoughtful, responsible and successful citizens. As a comprehensive public university, we provide broad access to quality degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels.



CCSU MFT Program Mission

The mission of the CCSU MFT Program is to provide quality training in MFT education that promotes entry-level competence at the point of graduation. To accomplish this end, the program is committed to advancing and disseminating the Metaframeworks paradigm as a valued systemic basis for teaching and practicing marriage and family therapy, promoting culturally informed, ethical, and respectful systemic mental health practice, and promoting leadership in the MFT field among our students, faculty, and graduates.



Program Goals	Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and COAMFTE Developmental Competency Components
Program Goal 1: Knowledge and Research	
<p>Students will develop competence in the delivery of MFT services, including proficiency in:</p> <p>(1) applying systems thinking in case formulation, (2) utilizing systemic models and interventions, (3) utilizing findings of MFT research to inform clinical practice and (4) Self-reflection and self-improvement as therapists.</p>	<p>SLO #1: Students will become knowledgeable in the major schools of marriage and family therapy; (Knowledge)</p> <p>SLO #2: Students will develop proficiency in practice of systemically oriented therapy approaches to be applied in their clinical work with individuals, families and communities. (Practice)</p> <p>SLO #3: Students will become knowledgeable consumers of research and evidence-based clinical practice. (Research)</p> <p>SLO #4: Students will demonstrate self-awareness of their own social location (i.e., internal and relational) and identify biases that inform their clinical practice. Based on this self-awareness, students will demonstrate the ability to self-correct or be open to supervisory and peer feedback. (Diversity)</p>
Program Goal 2: Systemic/Integrative Practice	
<p>Students will develop competency in utilizing the integrative Metaframeworks¹ paradigm in assessment, treatment planning and application of systemic models of marital and family therapy.</p>	<p>SLO #5: Students will demonstrate the ability to assess a client system's resources and constraints through the "lenses" of the 6 core Metaframeworks domains (i.e., Organization, Sequences, Development, Multicultural, Gender and Internal Family System), select intervention strategies from systemic family therapy models that are appropriate and aligned with the removal of identified constraints, and implement interventions from such models based on their unique Metaframeworks assessment. (Knowledge; Practice)</p>
Program Goal 3: Ethics	
<p>Students will develop an understanding of and identify ethical issues that arise in academic and clinical practice based on the AAMFT Code of Ethics and state and federal laws applicable to the practice of marital and family therapy.</p>	<p>SLO #6: Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize ethical dilemmas in professional practice, apply relevant AAMFT Code of Ethics and models of ethical decision making when ethical issues emerge. (Ethics)</p>
Program Goal 4: Diversity	
<p>Students will develop cultural competence in Marital and Family Therapy practice.</p>	<p>SLO #7: Students will demonstrate an awareness of and respect for cultural differences among clients and their contexts as defined in the program's Metaframeworks Multicultural domain. (Diversity)</p>

Program Goals	Student Learning Outcomes	Target and Measure
Goal 1: Knowledge and Research	SLO #1: Students will become knowledgeable in the major schools of marriage and family therapy;	MFT 551 Final exam (4 out of 5) MFT 552 Aggregate score of 4 quizzes (4 out of 5)
	SLO #2: Students will develop proficiency in practice of systemically oriented therapy approaches to be applied in their clinical work with individuals, families and communities.	MFT 585 Spring capstone- Full rubric score (4 out of 5)
	SLO #3: Students will become knowledgeable consumers of research and evidence-based clinical practice.	MFT 598 Final proposal assignment- Full rubric score (4 out of 5)
	SLO #4: Students will demonstrate self-awareness of their own social location and identify biases that inform their clinical practice. Based on this self-awareness, students will demonstrate the ability to self-correct or be open to supervisory and peer feedback.	MFT 552 Genogram- Full rubric score (4 out of 5) MFT 585 Spring Capstone (#11, 12, 13)
Goal 2: Systemic/Integrative Practice	SLO #5: Students will demonstrate the ability to assess a client system's resources and constraints through the "lenses" of the 6 core Metaframeworks domains select intervention strategies from systemic family therapy models that are appropriate and aligned with the removal of identified constraints, and implement interventions from such models based on their unique Metaframeworks assessment	MFT 585 Spring Capstone (4 out of 5 on items #6, #7)
Goal 3: Ethics	SLO #6: Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize ethical dilemmas in professional practice, apply relevant AAMFT Code of Ethics and models of ethical decision making when ethical issues emerge.	MFT 542 Case study analysis- Full rubric score (4 out of 5)
Goal 4: Diversity	SLO #7: Students will demonstrate an awareness of and respect for cultural differences among clients and their contexts as defined in the program's Metaframeworks Multicultural domain.	MFT 544 SAT paper- Full rubric score (4 out of 5)

Program Format

The program offers one track option to meet the needs of diverse student populations:

Evening Track Each course meets once a week in the evenings during the academic semester. The majority of fall and spring courses are offered Monday through Thursday during the evening hours (4:30pm-7:10pm and 7:20pm- 9:50pm). During your internship, you may need to adjust your schedule, as supervision classes might be offered at different times of the day. You will be notified in advance to allow for proper planning. Some courses are available for summer registration. Admission is limited to approximately 20 students each Fall semester. When students enter the program, they must complete the following courses: CNSL 501, MFT 505 (or PSY 512), and MFT 541 with a minimum grade of "B." During the second and third year, students participate in field placement experiences (i.e., a 12-hour-per-week practicum in the 2nd year and a 20 hour-per-week internship in the 3rd year). The Evening Track is designed to be completed in three years. Students may take up to six years to complete the program, or a maximum of nine years with permission from the advisor and Dean of Graduate Studies.

What is a Marriage and Family Therapist?

A Marriage and Family Therapist is a helping professional who is trained to intervene in human problems holistically. A Marriage and Family Therapist (i.e., "MFT") is trained in various forms of theories and methods stemming from a model of understanding human interaction called **SYSTEMS THEORY**. Systems theory is an integrated set of concepts which describes how each person is interconnected with his or her context in complex ways and looks at the individual as simultaneously a whole entity and as part of a larger system. Systems theory holds that individuals function in relation to others and in relation to a set of circumstances that dictate how each person is to react. Conversely, the individual is also seen as being capable of having powerful input into how the larger system operates and can have an influence in changing their environment.

Since each person in a system has a unique perspective and role in the system's operation, there are "multiple realities" that exist in a family or other social unit that an MFT identifies and works with to assist the members in understanding themselves in new ways. The MFT identifies dysfunctional processes, structures, sequences, and beliefs in the family or system that maintain problems, symptoms, and constraints that keep individuals from developing their potential. With an understanding of how the system operates and the relationship between the presenting symptom and the system's operation, the MFT then designs interventions aimed at altering dysfunctional structures or processes and assisting the system in developing new realities and competencies that permit growth and individuation of its members while neutralizing symptoms.

Therapies based on systems theory often involve entire families or groups, but can involve individuals alone, couples, or entire networks of individuals who are interconnected in some way. Regardless of the unit of treatment, the MFT operates on the interconnections between the individuals and attempts to alter or "restructure" how systems function in order to permit the individuals that comprise such systems to realize their fullest potentials. MFTs are taught not only techniques and theories of individual counseling, but also how to assess and treat larger social structures. MFTs are trained in understanding complex relationships, and as such, are capable of intervening with non-family systems, including work groups, schools, medical settings, neighborhood organizations, political groups, etc.

MFTs often work with other human service professionals to ensure that both dysfunctional aspects of the system and strengths are appropriately assessed and addressed. The MFT professional must have competence in case management procedures, including referral skills, coordination skills, and communication skills. Marriage and Family Therapy is an active approach toward intervention, and often requires that the MFT extend his or her work outside the boundaries of the consultation room during the Clinical Hour. Such activities as home visits, conferences with teachers, visits to the probation department, coordination of treatment planning meetings with other professionals involved with a case, and many other tasks are often part and parcel of the work of the MFT. Such is in keeping with the principles of systems theory and the understanding of the complex interrelationships among parts of a system.

MFT Licensure in Connecticut

MFTs are licensed by the State of Connecticut after completing intensive post-graduate clinical work and supervisory requirements and passing a state exam. Such licensure permits the collection of third-party (insurance) payments, protects therapist-client privilege, and provides a standard of excellence and accountability to the profession.

In October 2019, a new law was passed in Connecticut that restricted the practice of psychotherapy to licensed professionals only. As part of this legislation, an “**Associate License**” status was created for all master’s-level mental health professions, thus allowing recently graduated MFTs the ability to provide services under supervision while meeting the other requirements of the full license. Please see the requirements for [Marital and Family Therapist Associate](#).

Licensure requirements: For MFTs, this includes successful completion of twenty-four (24) months of supervised postgraduate work experience. This experience must include a minimum of 1000 hours of direct clinical contact, 100 hours of post-graduate clinical supervision by an LMFT, passing of the [Association of Marital & Family Therapy Regulatory Boards \(AMFTRB\)](#) national licensing exam, and applicants must submit an official transcript, a form signed by an LMFT supervisor attesting that they will be providing post-graduate supervision for the purposes of licensure, and a completed application with photograph attached.

Application for licensure is made to the State of Connecticut and is only accepted online. Detailed information can be obtained [here](#) by contacting the state Department of Public Health at (860) 509-7603 or by email: dph.counselorsteam@ct.gov.

MFT Job Market- What does the MFT program prepare a student for and where will Jobs be Found Upon Graduation?

MFTs find employment in a wide variety of settings. Graduates of the CCSU MFT program can be found working in mental health facilities (outpatient and inpatient), hospitals, managed care centers, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, outpatient medical facilities, schools, family service agencies, family preservation programs, alternative incarceration programs, and private practice. Populations served by our MFT graduates span the full range of the life cycle and across many treatment populations. Other innovative employment possibilities for MFTs include such diverse settings as management consultation firms, courts, law offices, alternative health or holistic treatment settings, social welfare programs, and any other setting in which the systemic approach may lend itself to assist in the delivery of human services.

Requirements of Graduate Study

Matriculation, and Prerequisites.

Admission into the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at CCSU requires several steps. First, a prospective student must apply to the MFT program online through [Graduate Admissions](#). Students are required to submit official transcripts directly from all undergraduate and graduate programs attended. An undergraduate G.P.A. of 2.70 has been set as the minimum standard for admission. Other steps include submitting 2 letters of recommendation from professionals outside the program who can attest to the candidate's ability and readiness for graduate study in the field, a current resume, and a written essay as part of the determination of acceptance into the MFT program. After reviewing application materials, qualified applicants will be invited to interview with the Marriage and Family Therapy Faculty.

All students are assigned an academic advisor from the MFT core faculty. An initial meeting with the advisor will orient the student as to prerequisites, scheduling of courses, acceptability of possible transfer courses. The [Graduate Planned Program of Study](#) form will be completed and submitted to Graduate Studies for final approval. During the first year, students take two (2) prerequisite courses (CNSL 501, and MFT 505) and MFT 541. Also, students will take MFT 542 and MFT 556 before they start their practicum.

In addition to meeting academic criteria, a successful MFT student is expected to be mature, motivated for graduate studies, and invested in the welfare of others. Training in MFT is a process of learning to apply theory to practice and of learning to use oneself as an instrument of change with people who are in distress. The faculty assesses each candidate's adherence to the departmental [Checklist of Clinical Competencies](#), which reflects a student's values and ability to relate to others (see [Appendix II](#)). Meeting with the faculty advisor during the admissions process provides an opportunity for frank dialog as to the appropriateness of such training for each applicant.

Academic Advising.

Each student in the MFT program will be assigned an academic advisor. Your advisor will serve as your guide while in the program - **it is necessary that you make contact with your advisor periodically and utilize the faculty member's services on your behalf.** You may meet with your advisor during regularly scheduled office hours by appointment. Your advisor also provides you with structure and guidance to navigate the paperwork and procedures associated with your graduate studies and review your academic progress and professional development in the program.

Graduation Requirements for the M.S. Degree

Graduation is the first major milestone in launching a student's career as a professional and marks the beginning of an ongoing process of credentialing, continuing education, and ongoing personal growth. The faculty must recommend that the student is ready to take on the challenges of professional life. In preparing for graduation, the student must have completed all of the items listed on their Planned Program, including all the prerequisite courses, specialization courses, practicum and internship (including 400 clinical contact hours and a minimum of 100 supervision hours by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor), capstone project, and passing the CCSU MFT Exam; and must complete the thesis, if this option was chosen. At various points, faculty members have opportunities to provide

each student with feedback as to progress toward graduation and professional development. Once all requirements have been satisfactorily met, an “**Application for Graduation form**” must be filed with the School of Graduate Studies by **February 15th** of the year the student wishes to graduate for May and August graduations, and by **October 1st** for December conferral of the Master's degree. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the proper paperwork is filed by the appropriate deadline.** The Graduate School will then check to ensure that you have completed all of the courses listed on your Planned Program. Students will graduate with a Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy (M.S. MFT).

The "Capstone Project": The Case Presentation.

All graduate students must complete a “capstone project” in order to qualify for graduation. In the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, the Capstone Project takes the form of a Case Presentation, to be done after documenting the completion of most (at least 300) of the 400 clinical contact hours during the student's internship year. The format is designed to serve as a comprehensive written and oral examination, centered on application of the student's learning while in the program. Please see the Clinical Handbook for more information.

MFT Comprehensive Exam

All MFT graduate students must take an MFT Comprehensive Exam while enrolled in the Marriage and Family Therapy Internship course (MFT 585/Summer). Students will have three opportunities to pass the exam with a score of 70% or more. The first attempt will occur during the summer session, second attempt in Fall semester, and third prior to the start of the Spring semester. The fee for all three attempts is \$100 (this is subject to change over time). This payment also includes access to the online study guide.

The CCSU Comprehensive Exam consists of 180 questions. A progress report highlighting your Strengths and weaknesses will be provided after each attempt. The MFT Core Faculty will put a remediation plan in place if you fail the second attempt. Please be advised that failure to pass the MFT Comprehensive exam in 3 attempts will impact the timeline of your graduation from the MFT program. Successfully passing the exam by the end of the Internship year serves as a completion of the exam for the MFT program.

Important Note: Please be advised that passing the CCSU MFT Comprehensive Exam ***does not guarantee*** that you will pass the AMFTRB Marital and Family Therapy National Examination required for state licensure. This is a mock exam that will help you to assess your level of knowledge in different MFT areas, become familiar with the types of questions you will see in the national exam, identify Areas of strengths and weaknesses in relation to MFT knowledge, etc.

The Thesis Option

In addition to the Clinical Case Presentation, students have the option of completing a master's thesis instead of an elective course. A thesis is a major scholastic exercise demonstrating the ability for critical thinking, expressing ideas in writing to a professional audience, and showing the ability to make an original contribution to the field. Such a project involves considerable time and effort in order to develop a quality product. The thesis, being optional for MFT students at CCSU, is not a graduation requirement. Students who are interested in research or writing or plan to pursue doctoral studies, are

likely candidates for taking this option. Students who choose to do a thesis must formally apply to Graduate Studies with a proposal. A handbook on how to prepare a thesis and the procedures for pursuing the thesis option can be downloaded from [Capstone Handbook \(Plan A- Thesis\)- Graduate Studies](#)

A thesis student must have a departmental faculty member serve as Thesis Advisor, and a second reader must be chosen prior to the undertaking of the thesis project. The thesis student works closely with their advisor in the design, implementation, and write-up of the thesis project. The role of the second reader is to provide secondary input and to provide an "outsider's" critique of the finished product. On the advisor's and second reader's recommendation, the final product is sent to Graduate Studies for final approval.

Students who are considering doing a thesis must keep in mind that this undertaking is a major project and may take over a year to complete. It is wise to begin a thesis project early in one's program and to choose a topic of strong interest. It is also wise to keep a project simple and manageable, since most thesis students have limited resources with which to do the project. Some student research grants may be available ([CCSU Graduate Scholarship -GSA Research](#); [Faculty-Student Research Grant](#)); check with Graduate Studies or private sources to learn how to obtain grant funding for thesis projects). Also, all projects involving the use of human subjects must be approved by the Human Subjects Committee of the University. Thesis students are encouraged to write up their projects for submission to professional journals for publication or for presentation at professional conferences.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the MFT program is designed to provide students with a rich theoretical foundation for ultimately developing a set of complex clinical skills required for Marriage and Family Therapists to intervene at many levels of human problems and concerns. The program integrates theoretical foundations with clinical practice, culminating in the Clinical Case Conference, the capstone of MFT training.

Prerequisites and the Core Counseling Sequence

During their **first year**, students must complete the **prerequisite courses** (CNSL 501, MFT 505) and MFT 541, achieving a grade of B or better in each course. The three courses listed above are offered at CCSU and students are permitted to take them after they have been accepted into the MFT program: CNSL 501 and MFT 505 (PSY 512 may be substituted for MFT 505) are designated as prerequisites and they may be waived if the student can demonstrate that they have completed these courses at other educational institutions on the graduate level and have earned a B or better in the courses. MFT 541 is also taken during this period but is part of the core curriculum and is not considered as an official "prerequisite" (i.e., the course must be taken at CCSU and cannot be waived). Also, students must take MFT 542 (Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in MFT) and MFT 556 (Systemic Perspectives on Mental Disorders) before they start their practicum.

In addition to the three prerequisite courses, "**Introduction to Theories of Family Systems**" (MFT 541), which is one of the core MFT courses, is also taken during the first year. This course provides an overview of the field of Marriage and Family Therapy, organized according to the "Metaframeworks" model. This model provides a framework for understanding the complex aspects of General Systems Theory and provides a "road map" for understanding how various "schools" of

family therapy relate to General Systems Theory and to each other. The goals of the course are to provide the student with an outline of the MFT program, to ensure that the basic premises of systems theory are understood, and to expose the student to the major treatment models in the field.

Content Areas and Core Courses in the MFT Program

The Marriage and Family Therapy program is designed to provide a firm grounding in systems theory and to help each student develop a foundation of selected treatment models stemming from the systems theory approach. The "Metaframeworks" orientation provides a conceptual framework for putting each of the several treatment models in a theoretical perspective and allows the students the opportunity to develop flexible, yet sound and consistent parameters for formulating treatment plans and developing intervention strategies.

The mission of the CCSU MFT program is to provide quality training in MFT education that promotes entry-level competence at the point of graduation. In alignment with our mission, the program is dedicated to delivering a competency-based educational experience to support the academic and clinical training of our students.

The content areas of the MFT program align with COAMFTE Developmental Competency Components (Knowledge, Practice, Diversity, Ethics, Research), the American Marriage and Family Therapy Regulatory Board (AMFTRB) domains, the AAMFT Code of Ethics, the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) licensing regulations, and the program's curriculum

Following MFT 541, students take the two-course Family Therapy Models sequence (MFT 551 and MFT 552), presenting in-depth exposure and practice in several of the major "schools" of marriage and family therapy. Several courses on various topics important to general clinical practice and MFT practice in particular are required to expand the breadth of awareness of the student to the human condition. The Research Methods course provides exposure to statistics and research design to train the MFT student to review research studies with a scientific and critical "eye". Also important in the MFT's training is concentrated study in the areas of professional ethics, gender and culture. The curriculum is tied together with a holistic perspective on human systems, as exemplified in the "Metaframeworks" model taught in the Introduction to Theories of Family Systems course.

Foundational Curricula areas (FCA): The foundational curriculum areas (FCAs) included in the chart below cover the knowledge and skills required to practice as a Marriage and Family Therapist:

Foundational Curriculum Areas (FCA)	
FCA	Course #/Name, credits
FCA 1: Foundations of relational /Systemic practice, theories and Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 541: Introduction to Theories of Family Systems (3 cr.) • MFT 551: Structural/Strategic/Behavioral Family Therapy (3cr.) • MFT 552: Experiential, Intergenerational and Psychodynamic Family Therapies (3cr.)
FCA 2: Clinical treatment with individuals, couples and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 554: Couples Therapy (3 cr.) • MFT 557: Action Methods in MFT (3cr.)
FCA 3: Diverse, multicultural, and/or underserved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 544: Families in context: Gender and Cultural dimensions
FCA 4: Research and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 598: Research methods in MFT (3 cr.)
FCA 5: Professional identity, law, ethics and social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 542: Ethical, legal and professional issues in MFT (3 cr.)
FCA 6: Biopsychosocial health and development across the Life span	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 505: Counseling and Human Development across the Lifespan (3cr.) • MFT 543: The family life cycle (3 cr.)
FCA 7: Systemic, relational assessment and mental health diagnosis and treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 555: Dysfunctional Family Process (3 cr.) • MFT 556: Systemic Perspectives on Mental Disorders (3 cr.)
FCA 8: Contemporary issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 544: Families in context: Gender and Cultural dimensions (3 cr.) • MFT 542: Ethical, legal and professional issues in MFT (3 cr.)
FCA 9: Community intersection and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 583: Practicum I (3 cr.) • MFT 584: Practicum II (3 cr.)
FCA 10: Preparation for Teletherapy practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFT 542: Ethical, legal and professional issues in MFT (3 cr.) • MFT 552: Experiential, Intergenerational and Psychodynamic Family Therapies (3cr.) • MFT 554: Couples Therapy (3 cr.) • MFT 583: Practicum I (3 cr.)

Additional requirements for graduation:

- Elective course
- Capstone Project: Case Presentation
- MFT Comprehensive Exam

Sample full-time sequence can be found on **page 27**.

Course Descriptions

CNSL 501 - THEORIES AND TECHNIQUES IN COUNSELING (6 credits) - Prereq.: CNSL 500 (may be taken concurrently). Investigation of theories and techniques in counseling, including research findings and skill development. (Program prerequisite)

MFT 505 - COUNSELING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE LIFESPAN - The nature and needs of persons at all developmental levels with a focus on the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of growth. Psychosocial theories of development and counseling models will be addressed as they apply to the stages of the lifespan. Cross listed with CNSL 505. No credit given to students with credit for CNSL 505.

MFT 542 PROFESSIONAL, ETHICAL, AND LEGAL ISSUES IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY - Prereq.: Matriculation into the MFT Program. Professional, ethical, and legal issues in marriage and family therapy.

MFT 541 INTRODUCTION TO THEORIES OF FAMILY SYSTEMS - Prereq: Admission to department. Historical and theoretical underpinnings of General Systems Theory as it applies to families and family therapy. Major models of family therapy will be presented to orient the student to an understanding of functional and dysfunctional processes in human interaction. This course lays the foundation for the subsequent assessment and treatment courses which focus specifically on the major schools of family therapy.

MFT 543 - THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE - Prereq.: MFT 541. Developmental aspects of the family system over time, delineating critical issues for individual and other subsystems at various stages and transition points of the family life cycle. This course covers divorce, remarriage and blended families within the various stages a family may experience.

MFT 544 - FAMILIES IN CONTEXT: GENDER AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS - Prereq.: MFT 541. Integral principles of human organization that influence family growth and development. Students gain an understanding of ethnicity and gender from a systemic framework.

MFT 551 - STRUCTURAL/STRATEGIC & BEHAVIORAL FAMILY THERAPIES - Prereq: MFT 541. Assessment and interventions from the Structural, Strategic and Behavioral schools of family therapy are examined. Students learn about diagnosis and treatment of human dilemmas and symptomatology within a systemic context.

MFT 552 - EXPERIENTIAL, INTERGENERATIONAL AND PSYCHODYNAMIC FAMILY THERAPIES - Prereq.: MFT 551. Assessment and interventions from Experiential, Intergenerational and Psychodynamic schools of family therapy are explored. Students learn diagnosis and treatment of human dilemmas and symptomatology from these schools of therapy.

MFT 554 - COUPLES THERAPY - Prereq.: MFT 541. Assessment and treatment approaches to problematic dyadic relationships within a systemic framework are explored. Problems unique to couples are discussed, including sexual, communication and role expectations. This course covers treatment of spousal violence, sexual dysfunctions, mate selection, types of marriages, communication problems, gender and power issues, and the developmental stages of marriage.

MFT 555 - DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY PROCESSES - Prereq.: MFT 541. Examination of structures and processes of family dysfunction, including substance abuse, family violence and sexual abuse. Assessment and intervention strategies from a systemic framework.

MFT 556 - SYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVES ON MENTAL DISORDERS - Prereq.: MFT 541. Diagnostic classifications of mental, emotional and behavioral disorders of individuals within a systemic framework. Students learn how to communicate within a medical model framework using systemic conceptualizations.

MFT 557 - ACTION METHODS IN MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY - Prereq.: MFT 541 or permission of instructor. Introduces students to action methods involving physical movement and dramatic role-play in MFT. Uses hands on experience and theory to compare action-oriented and exclusively verbal methods regarding therapeutic effectiveness and skill level.

MFT 583 - MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PRACTICUM I (Fall only) - Prereq.: MFT 551, MFT 542, and MFT 556. Students participate in direct client contact, staff meetings, and supervision in a clinical setting.

MFT 584 - MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PRACTICUM II (Spring only) - Prereq.: MFT 583. Students participate in direct client contact, staff meetings, and supervision in a clinic setting.

MFT 585 - MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY INTERNSHIP - Prereq.: MFT 584, or MFT 594. Placement in a community agency providing marital and family therapy under supervision. May be repeated as needed to complete minimum requirement of 12 consecutive months (and 400 clinical contact hours/100 supervision hours). Students begin in the Summer semester and must complete 3 consecutive semesters in order to satisfy program requirements.

MFT 598 - RESEARCH METHODS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY - Prereq.: Admission to M.S. in MFT graduate program or permission of department chair. Quantitative and qualitative research design, data analysis, interpretation, and program evaluation methods related to marriage and family therapy.

ELECTIVE COURSES: MFT degree candidates must take **one** elective of their choosing at the graduate level (3 credits). Students may take any graduate-level course that fits their interests, with permission of their faculty advisor. Students are able to take as many extra elective courses as they wish. Elective courses offered through the MFT program include:

MFT 560 -EMOTIONALLY FOCUSED COUPLE THERAPY- This course will examine the principles of adult attachment theory, understand the dynamic and role of emotions and their relevance to the work with couples. Describe EFT stages, learn EFT skills and techniques, and the application of EFT in couple therapy. This course will be focused on the theory and practice of EFT.

MFT 559 – SEX THERAPY - This course will look at Human sexuality and sex therapy from a systemic (holistic) perspective. Foundational and current approaches to couple-focused sex therapy will be examined as well as several different aspects of sexuality including: biological, developmental, medical, cultural, historical and interpersonal. This course is especially designed to provide a foundation of sexual knowledge, experience talking about sexuality, and an introductory knowledge of traditional and contemporary relational sex therapy for master's level students in the MFT and Counselor Education fields.

OPTIONAL THESIS: CNSL 599 - Thesis - Prereq.: Permission of advisor; ED 598 or equivalent as accepted by advisor. Preparation of the thesis under the supervision of the thesis advisor. May be substituted for elective.

Clinical Training and Supervision Sequence

Clinical training is the second major component of the training experience in marriage and family therapy. Following the completion of prerequisite courses, the MFT foundation course (MFT 541), the first MFT therapy course (MFT 551), the diagnosis course (MFT 556), and the ethics course (MFT 542), students are able to begin a two-semester (Fall and Spring) **practicum**, followed by a 12-month **internship** (Summer, Fall, and Spring).

For the **practicum**, each student is required to provide services at an approved clinical site in the community for 12 hours per week. This experience provides the student with basic skills and techniques in interviewing, clinical assessment, and case management at the “novice” level. Students attend a weekly course seminar for one hour per week with a faculty instructor.

Following the practicum, each student undertakes a 12-month, intensive (20 hours per week) **internship** in a clinical facility, where the intern may hone their skills as an "apprentice" clinician under the mentorship of an on-site supervisor and oversight of a faculty supervisor. The internship is designed to be a much more extensive experience than the practicum experience, with the intern assuming primary responsibility for 12 -15 clinical cases per week. The student can expect much guidance during the internship experience, with over three hours per week spent in supervision to discuss clinical assessment, case dynamics, skill development, and use of self in the role of "therapist". By the end of the program, students must complete 400 clinical contact hours with a minimum of 100 hours of supervision of those clinical contact hours under an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. The specifics of these requirements will be discussed later. Please see the **Clinical Handbook** for more detailed information about the clinical training component.

Course Sequencing

Students may enroll as full-time or part-time students. Full-time students take a minimum of 9 credits during fall and spring semesters, follow a prescribed program schedule, may attend during the summer, and complete the program in 3 years. Their program of study is arranged with their advisor. Typically, students are enrolled part-time during their internship (3rd year) and are eligible for

consideration for part-time equivalency if they are only taking a practicum or internship field placement course.

Evening Track

Central Connecticut State University prides itself on its diversity and its emphasis on the "non-traditional" student. While most of the courses on this track are offered in the evenings, some are offered during the summer and occasionally on weekends. The program is designed to allow full-time students to stay together as a "cohort" through critical stages in their training, thus creating an atmosphere of cohesiveness and connection to each other and the program. Students highly value this atmosphere, finding that it generates support, reinforcement, collegiality, and a sense of "ownership" in the program.

Since clinical training requires intensive study, practice, and supervision in a systematic fashion, students are expected to follow the sequence of: (1) Prerequisites (MFT 505 or PSY 512 and CNSL 501); (2) MFT 541, MFT 542, and MFT 556; (3) MFT 551 and MFT 552; (4) Practicum; and (5) Internship. Other required courses may be taken when offered following completion of the prerequisites and MFT 541.

Practicum and Internship experiences must each be done in adjoining semesters, i.e., the practicum being taken during the Fall and Spring semesters and the internship being taken from Summer through Fall and Spring semesters (12 continuous months). Full-time students carry a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester.

Part-Time Equivalency Credit

Some students may choose to plan their Program of Study such that they enroll only in either the Practicum or Internship course. If you are interested in receiving financial aid, you must be minimally enrolled part-time, which equates to 6 credits each semester. The university allows for students to enroll in "ghost" credits or part-time equivalency credits when only enrolled in the Practicum or Internship course (3 credits) to increase your registration to 6 credits. To request these credits, you must contact your advisor and provide your name, student ID, the course and section number, CRN of the practicum or internship course in which you are enrolled, and year. This process should take place EVERY semester the ghost credits are needed, preferably no later than the end of the previous semester (December for Spring Semester and April for Fall semester). Since financial aid is not applicable in the summer, equivalency credits are unavailable for summer internship courses.

MFT Program Summer Courses

Some of the program courses are offered every summer. MFT 551, MFT 552 and practicum (MFT 583 and MFT 584) are not offered during the summer. The program also offers several elective courses that may not be taught during the academic year.

Below is a sample program for full-time students in the Evening Track:

Marriage and Family Therapy Plan of Study by Semester (Full Time).

(Sample Full Time Schedule)

PHASE 1 –

Prerequisites: May be taken during Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters during the first year.

MFT 505 – Counseling and Human Development Across the Lifespan (3)

CNSL 501 - Theories and Techniques in Counseling (6)**

YEAR 1

<u>Fall Semester</u>	<u>Spring Semester</u>	<u>Summer Semester</u>
<p>MFT 541 - Intro to Theories of Family Systems (3)**</p> <p>MFT 542 – Ethical, Legal, and Professional issues in MFT (3)**</p> <p style="color: red;">Prerequisite courses may be taken during this semester. Join AAMFT (www.aamft.org)</p>	<p>PHASE 2 –</p> <p>MFT 551 - Structural/Strategic/Behavioral Family Therapies (3)</p> <p>MFT 556 - Systemic Perspectives on Mental Disorders (3)**</p> <p>MFT 557 - Action Methods in MFT (3)**</p> <p style="color: red;">Last Friday in January – MFT Placement Fair for Practicum and Internship, held at CCSU</p>	<p style="color: red;"><u>NOTE:</u> Some MFT courses that are scheduled for the Fall and Spring semesters (except sequenced courses – <u>in BOLD</u>) are offered during Summer and Intersession semesters on a rotational basis for students' convenience. Students may take courses in the summer, as offered (denoted by an asterisk [*]). Courses taught every Summer are designated with [**]).</p>

YEAR 2

<u>Fall Semester</u>	<u>Spring Semester</u>	<u>Summer Semester</u>
<p>PHASE 3 – PRACTICUM YEAR</p> <p>MFT 543 - The Family Life Cycle (3)*</p> <p>MFT 544 - Families in Context: Gender & Cultural Dimensions (3)</p> <p>MFT 552 - Experiential, Intergenerational & Psychodynamic Family Therapies (3)</p> <p>MFT 583 - Marriage & Family Therapy Practicum I (3)</p>	<p>MFT 598 - Research Methods in MFT (3)**</p> <p>MFT 555 - Dysfunctional Family Processes (3)*</p> <p>MFT 584 - Marriage & Family Therapy Practicum II (3)</p> <p style="color: red;">(Practicum: 12 hours on-site at agency per week plus weekly 2-hour seminar with MFT faculty – MFT 583 and MFT 584)</p>	<p>PHASE 4 – INTERNSHIP</p> <p>MFT 585 - Marriage & Family Therapy Internship (3)</p> <p style="color: red;">3 semesters (12 months) requiring 400 clinical contact hours (200 must be “relational”) with minimum 100 hours of supervision by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor (offered via faculty supervision at CCSU) 50 hours of supervision must use “raw” clinical data (audio/video/live supervision formats)</p>

YEAR 3

<u>Fall Semester</u>	<u>Spring Semester</u>
<p>MFT 554 - Couples Therapy (3)</p> <p>MFT 585 - Marriage & Family Therapy Internship (3)</p> <p>Elective*</p>	<p>MFT 585 - Marriage & Family Therapy Internship (3)</p> <p>Capstone Project: Case Presentation</p> <p>MFT Comprehensive Practice Exam during the Internship year.</p>

Notes: This curriculum is designed to expose students to key theoretical knowledge and clinical techniques prior to the Internship experience. MFT 541 is a prerequisite for all MFT specialization courses. **All MFT students must follow the sequence** of MFT 541, MFT 542, MFT 551, MFT 556, MFT 552, MFT 583, MFT 584, and MFT 585 during the specified semesters. MFT 551, MFT 542, and MFT 556 are prerequisites for MFT 583/MFT 593. **All other MFT courses may be taken anytime after completion of MFT 541 and acceptance into the program.** The elective course can be any graduate-level course that fits coherently with the student's professional interests.

Evaluations

Student Evaluations.

In the process of training students in developing new skills, evaluation is crucial for providing students with feedback regarding their progress in the program. Students are evaluated at various points in the program to monitor and assess the accomplishment of learning goals. Students receive class grades in didactic portions of their education, as well as grades on assignments. In clinical supervision, students set learning goals, which become part of the basis by which they are evaluated at the end of each semester of practicum or internship. Prior to starting the internship, the student and advisor should sit down and discuss the student's goals and determine the student's readiness for intensive training. All students must complete their training experience with the Case Conference capstone project, through which they are evaluated on how well they have integrated theory and clinical practice. Also, students will take the MFT Comprehensive Exam during their internship year. Students pursuing a master's thesis are evaluated on the basis of their scholarly accomplishments.

Program Evaluations.

Students are asked to assist the program in ensuring the quality of the educational experience by providing feedback by means of written evaluations on courses and faculty, clinical supervisors, internship sites, and the overall quality of the program.

COAMFTE, AAMFT and Connecticut Licensure Considerations

COAMFTE Accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) is the accrediting agency for marriage and family therapy education and training. COAMFTE's mission is to promote best practices for Marriage and Family Therapy educational programs through the establishment, review and revision of accreditation standards and policies, and the accreditation of graduate and post-graduate educational programs. Some standards include all aspects of the program, including the degree the program is supported by the university; quality of the faculty, content of the curriculum; clinical training facilities and internships; and policies and procedures regarding admissions, documentation of clinical and supervisory hours, evaluations, grievances, dismissals, and other aspects of the program that influence quality of education and clinical training. The process for accreditation includes submitting a comprehensive Self-Study and hosting a site visit by representatives of the Commission on Accreditation. The site visit is the culmination of the program's moving toward meeting all the standards set forth by the Commission on Accreditation, and involves administration, faculty, students, and internship sites in the process.

COAMFTE accreditation provides several **benefits** for the university, the program, and our students. First, it adds prestige to both the university and to the graduates of our program. Second, the State of Connecticut recognizes the curriculum of AAMFT-accredited programs as meeting the educational standards for licensure as a Connecticut Licensed Marital and Family Therapist. This is important, as it qualifies our students to sit for the licensing exam if all other requirements have been fulfilled. Licensure is important for graduates who intend on working in settings that involve collection of insurance payments for services. Third, accreditation helps our graduates obtain Clinical Membership in AAMFT.

In August, 1997, the program was awarded Full Accreditation, which was renewed for a 6 year period in 2002, 2008, and 2015. Full Accreditation means that the program meets the accreditation standards set by AAMFT. A fully accredited program is recognized by the State of Connecticut department of Public Health as a requirement of MFT licensure. The self-study and site visit processes create an opportunity for revising and upgrading the program standards, policies, and procedures. The CCSU MFT program is currently accredited by COAMFTE until May 1, 2030.

AAMFT Student Membership

Another significant part of the socialization process in becoming an MFT is in interaction with professionals in the field. The program requires that students become Student Members in AAMFT as a requirement of beginning the practicum and are strongly encouraged to participate in the state organization's activities. Such activities include Conferences, committee work and other volunteer work, group discussions, social activities, study groups for the state MFT exam, and other professionally related activities. Benefits include Discounts on liability insurance, attendance at conferences, and other activities; ability to attend conferences free in exchange for volunteer services at the conferences, access to the organization's magazine and the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, and updates on the changes that are occurring rapidly in the field. Students often strive for the achievement of **Clinical Membership** following the completion of their master's degree, which represents a minimal level of competence and training. To join, go to www.aamft.org, click "Not a member yet?" in the light blue box in the upper-right of the home page, and follow the links.

AAMFT Clinical Membership

On completing graduate work, MFTs often join the AAMFT organization as either Pre-Clinical or Clinical Fellows. Pre-Clinical Fellows are graduates who are working toward meeting specific criteria for clinical membership, such as licensing. Clinical Fellows may advertise themselves as such in advertisements and telephone directories and are considered by their peers and the general public to meet the top standards of the profession. Clinical Fellows of AAMFT are eligible for Clinical Membership by holding a state license in MFT. This means that graduates who complete the post-degree requirements for licensure may apply for Clinical Membership to AAMFT. However, in Connecticut, such membership does not work the other way around: Licensing is not tied to AAMFT organizational membership. To apply for membership, please go to the [AAMFT membership website](#).

The AAMFT Code of Ethics and Expected Conduct

All MFT students at CCSU are required to join AAMFT as student members. By doing so, students are bound by the Code of Ethics of AAMFT. The program is accredited by the COAMFTE (the accrediting body of AAMFT) and our faculty members are all Clinical Members of AAMFT. Hence, all students, faculty, and program administrators must be familiar with the Code of Ethics and conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner, according to the standards of the profession. The Code of Ethics can be found on-line at www.aamft.org.

Student ethical behavior is expected in the classroom, on campus, at clinical placements, and anytime they are in public venues representing themselves as MFT students. Failure to maintain ethical behavior (as specified by the AAMFT Code of ethics) may result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the MFT program.

Personal and Professional Growth

Socialization Into a New Professional Identity

The Marriage and Family Therapist's development involves socializing into a new professional identity. This is no small task; in the course of learning how to be an MFT, a student will find themselves encountering unresolved personal issues and situations that have not been mastered in one's own life. The MFT student will begin to question roles and rules played in one's own family (both family of origin and family of choosing), which may generate stress and changes in relationships with family members and friends. Part of the training as an MFT is the exploration of patterns in one's own life (both functional and dysfunctional) that may become activated in the course of working with others. The MFT is constantly utilizing various parts of one's self as instruments of change for clients, and as such, must be able to discover both strengths and "stuck points". You will be asked, in an atmosphere of safety and respect, to share some of these patterns with instructors through assignments, and sometimes with classmates in a classroom discussion or supervisory context. It is understood that any personal information divulged by students will be treated with respect and discretion. While confidentiality cannot be assured in such a public setting, each student has a responsibility to contribute to creating a safe environment in which deeply personal information may be disclosed for training purposes.

A Word on Personal Therapy

Training as an MFT is neither psychotherapy or a substitute for psychotherapy or counseling when intense issues arise that may need exploration and/or resolution. While instructors or course material might stimulate the emergence of such issues and provide you with an opportunity to identify them, it is the student's responsibility to seek professional guidance outside the realm of the department. Faculty members who instruct you are not permitted to provide psychotherapy or counseling to you, as this constitutes a "dual relationship", from which you are protected by the AAMFT Code of Ethics and Departmental policy. Our faculty will be glad to provide guidance and referral to you and may perhaps suggest that a course of therapy is warranted in the event that a concern is brought to light. Students who have not experienced their own personal therapy or counseling or marital or family therapy should consider undergoing such an experience.

Counseling Services for Students

The CCSU [Counseling and Student Development Department \(Student Wellness Services\)](#) offers free and confidential short-term counseling to enrolled full and part time students who may be experiencing some kind of personal challenge that may be affecting their social, emotional and academic life. Counseling services are available in the Student Wellness Center located on the first floor of the Willard-DiLoreto Hall. For questions or to schedule an appointment, please call (860)-832-1926.

Graduate Student Assembly

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) sponsors orientation activities for new graduate students, lectures, the GSA Scholarship, and Leadership Development Grants. The latter assists graduate students to attend conferences and workshops or to complete research associated with the preparation of a thesis. The GSA also funds the activities of graduate student societies in the academic departments. In addition to sponsoring graduate student programs and activities, the GSA serves as a representative organization promoting graduate student interests on the Central Connecticut State University campus. Both the Counseling and the MFT

programs in our department have GSA chapters in their respective disciplines.

MFT Student Representatives

Each year, the MFT Program Coordinator will request two students from the program to serve as student representatives for a full academic year. One student will serve as primary, and the second student will serve as an alternate if unable to attend. Students who are interested in this leadership position and do not hold a current leadership role in another organization (e.g., MFT Society, Delta Kappa, CTAMFT, etc.) are encouraged to apply. The student representatives will be invited to attend all MFT faculty meetings where the first agenda item is student feedback. To facilitate the process of receiving feedback from students in the MFT program, student representatives will hold meetings at least once a month with current students in the MFT program to solicit information and feedback that will help the program meet its goals.

We encourage all students in the MFT program to attend these meetings. This is a good opportunity for you to get involved in the program, to be heard and share your concerns, suggestions, and/or highlight the strengths of the program. It is important to note that these meetings will not prevent you from meeting with the Program Coordinator, Clinical Coordinator, or faculty advisor if needed.

Your representatives will bring the items of discussion to MFT faculty meetings without divulging anyone's identity. There may be times in which the Program Coordinator will ask the student representatives to seek student input on some aspects or issues related to the program.

Delta Kappa Chi Honor Society

The MFT program at CCSU also is a chartered member of the Delta Kappa Honor Society, an international organization that supports scholarship and leadership in the MFT field. To become a member, you must have a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.75 out of 4.0 over a minimum of 15 credits. The organization supports various academic and research activities for our student members as well as service activities. There is a nominal one-time application fee of \$75 and an annual induction ceremony. The organization also elects a board of officers to conduct the organization's business. Notices are sent out to students when the annual membership opens up.

Attendance at Conferences and Professional Meetings

Students are encouraged to attend professional conferences and meetings. Such activities provide broad exposure to the field and an opportunity to meet others at various levels of professional development in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy. The Graduate Student Association has some funds to help subsidize a limited number of workshops and conferences. You can find information GSA Research and Conference Scholarships [here](#).

General Policies and Procedures

Tuition and Refund Policies

Policies regarding registration for courses, tuition, fees, and refunds are listed in the Graduate Catalog. Please refer to the catalog for detailed information regarding such policies. Information regarding graduate tuition can be found in the following link: <https://www.ccsu.edu/tuition-aid/graduate-tuition>. Questions about tuition should be directed to the [Bursar's Office](#), and inquiries regarding financial aid should be addressed with CCSU's [Financial Aid Office](#).

Scholarships, Grants and Graduate Assistantships

CCSU offers various opportunities for financial assistance, including Graduate Assistantships, scholarship opportunities, and loans. Graduate merit scholarships are periodically offered by the School of Graduate Studies and are announced through the Department of Counselor Education & Family Therapy.

- **CCSU Graduate Scholarships:**

The Graduate Studies at Central administers two scholarship awards. One, the *Graduate Academic Awards* and the *Outstanding Scholar Award program* occurs in the fall semester. In the spring semester, the CCSU Foundation through Graduate Studies accepts applications for the second award, the *Graduate Student Association Scholarship*. For more information about these and other CCSU scholarships opportunities, please visit the following website: <https://www.ccsu.edu/tuition-aid/graduate-scholarships>

- The **American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)** offers Minority scholarships and research grants:

AAMFT Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) Information: [Minority Fellowship Program \(MFP\)](#)

- **Graduate Assistantships:**

A Graduate Assistantship is a paid part-time position offered to graduate students at Central. As a Graduate Assistant, you'll work alongside faculty and staff in various roles, from research and teaching to administrative and creative projects. For more information, please visit the following website: <https://www.ccsu.edu/graduate-studies/graduate-assistantships>

Non-Discrimination Policy

The University has a clear policy statement on the prohibition against discrimination, which can be found in the graduate catalog and on promotional materials for the program.

Central Connecticut State University Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment Policy

Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in education and employment. No person shall be discriminated against in terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to or participation in programs, services, and activities with regard to: age; ancestry, color; gender identity and expression; intellectual disability; learning disability; mental disability; physical disability; marital status, national origin; race; religious creed; sex, including pregnancy, transgender status, sexual harassment and sexual assault; sexual orientation; or any other status protected by federal or state laws. Discrimination in employment- based on genetic information is prohibited. In addition, CCSU will

not refuse to hire solely because of a prior criminal conviction, unless that refusal is permitted by Connecticut law. [Note: The CCSU MFT program also recognizes that socioeconomic status can be a basis for discrimination and does not discriminate on the basis of socioeconomic status or social class.]

Harassment on the basis of any of the above protected classes is prohibited. Harassment may occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty and student, supervisor and employee, student and student, staff and student, employee and employee, and other relationships with persons having business at, or visiting the educational or working environment.

This policy is directed at verbal or physical conduct that constitutes discrimination/harassment under state and federal law and is not directed at the content of speech. In cases in which verbal statements and other forms of expression are involved, CCSU will give due consideration to an individual's constitutionally protected right to free speech and academic freedom.

Retaliation is illegal. No individual who opposes an allegedly discriminatory act or practice shall suffer retaliation as a result of such participation. Complaints of retaliation may be filed within a reasonable time of the alleged retaliatory act with the Chief Diversity Officer, or any manager not directly involved in the alleged retaliation who will then notify the Office of Diversity and Equity.

This policy shall apply to all individuals affiliated with CCSU including, but not limited to, students, employees, applicants, agents and guests and is intended to protect the rights of concerned individuals.

Disclosure of Personal Information

Information regarding students' status in the program, personal information regarding performance, disciplinary actions, and evaluations, and other such information is considered confidential and is kept in the student's departmental file. Faculty members who are involved in the student's education and training may have access to information regarding the student's academic and clinical performance at the discretion of the Program Coordinator and/or Department Chair. Students have a right to review their files and may do so by arrangement with the Department Chair.

Attendance Policy/Absences

Students are expected and required to attend each class on time. This is a demonstration of professional behavior and commitment to your own learning process. Instructor will take attendance and note timely arrival. Students would be allowed two excused absences without impacting their final grade. Excused absences are considered health and wellness related issues, family emergencies and religious holiday observance. If you know you will miss a class, please let your instructor know right away. Missing more than two classes will automatically result in a grade reduction for the attendance and participation section, which may result in final grade reduction.

A pattern of tardiness will impact your attendance and participation grade. In case a medical emergency requires you to miss more than two classes during the semester and affects your final grade, please contact [The Office of Accessibility Services](#) immediately (Please see Disability Statement in this syllabus). Accommodations regarding flexibility with attendance will be determined by instructor, student, and the Office of Accessibility Services.

Please be advised that no make-up assignments will be given, and if you miss a class during a date that an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to send it to your instructor in advanced and upload your work on Tevera or Blackboard. Students with accommodations regarding flexibility in assignment due dates, please coordinate the submission with the instructor. Rubrics are included in the MFT syllabi.

Communication

Your [CCSU email address](#) is the primary form of communication that is used by Department, Program coordinator, Clinical coordinator, faculty and university to communicate with students. Please check your email regularly (even during university breaks such as summer and winter sessions).

Regulatory Alignment Student Acknowledgement

As a part of each student's admission into the program, they are required to sign the Regulatory Alignment Student Acknowledgement Form before beginning their studies in the CCSU MFT program. The form indicates that they have read and understood how the program prepares students for licensure. The Regulatory Alignment Student Acknowledgement Form will be sent by Program Coordinator by email before the MFT New Student Orientation. A copy of the form can be found in **Appendix V** of this Handbook.

Gatekeeping Policy

Policy on Gatekeeping and Assessment of Professional Functioning and Behavior

Because of the special nature of a therapeutic counseling relationship, it is critically important that students are able to manage emotional distress, interpersonal challenges, or any psychological problems that may impair their effectiveness as a counselor or therapist.

The American Counseling Association (ACA), American School Counseling Association (ASCA), American College Personnel Association (ACPA), and American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) indicate the need for students and supervisees to monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others. Students/supervisees are encouraged to notify their faculty and/or supervisors and seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work (ACA, 2014).

As gatekeepers of the profession, department faculty and site supervisors have an ethical responsibility to monitor and intervene (when necessary) when there are signs of impairment in professional functioning and behavior. Through initial and ongoing evaluation, faculty and supervisors are aware of student/supervisee limitations that might impede performance. Faculty and supervisors assist students/supervisees in securing remedial assistance when needed. They can recommend dismissal from training programs, practicum or internship, counseling settings, and state or voluntary professional credentialing processes when those students or supervisees are unable to demonstrate that they can provide competent professional services to a range of diverse clients. Faculty and supervisors can seek consultation and document their decisions to dismiss or refer students/supervisees for assistance. They also can censure that student/supervisees are

aware of options available to them to address such decisions (this may include personal counseling or treatment) (ACA, 2014).

As referenced by Wolf, Green, Nochajski, and Kost (2014), a definition of impairment in counselor professional functioning in Lamb, Presser, Pfof, Baum, Jackson, and Jarvis (1987), and then amended by Bemak et al. (1999) to include students is:

An interference in professional functioning that is reflected in one or more of the following ways: (a) an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior,

(b) an inability to acquire professional skills in order to reach an acceptable level of competency, and (c) an inability to control personal stress, psychological dysfunction, and/or excessive emotional reactions that interfere with professional functioning. (p.598)

Assessment of Professional Functioning and Behavior

In addition to meeting acceptable academic standards, the faculty evaluates all students on the basis of certain personal characteristics and professional behavior that have been deemed essential to becoming effective counseling and therapy professionals. Students are expected to be mature, motivated for graduate studies, and invested in the welfare of others.

Research has shown that effective counselors and therapists possess characteristics that include: openness, flexibility, cooperation, a positive attitude, willingness to use and accept feedback, awareness on one's impact on other, ability to deal with conflict, ability to accept personal responsibility, and ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately. Additionally, the student must adhere to standards of ethical conduct and recognize and appreciate the worth of all people regardless of individual differences.

Faculty will complete an assessment instrument which measures attitudes, attributes, professional functioning and behavior, and competencies on all students that take CNSL 501 (CNSL Theories and Techniques) and 504 (Professional Studies in CNSL). The purpose of this is to ensure that no student has personal or professional functioning problems significant enough to limit his or her effectiveness as a as a counselor/therapist in training and future professional counselor. CNSL 501 and 504 are two courses that typically involve a good deal of self- exploration and afford opportunities for student self-disclosure. In addition to these academic courses, students will be evaluated in their first field placement experience in MFT 583/593 or CNSL 503 (practicum) at the midterm and final point of their placement. The assessment will continue the evaluation of attitudes, attributes, professional functioning and behavior and competencies while in field placement.

It is important that students are aware that they are being evaluated and that it is both their right and responsibility to monitor and set appropriate limits on the degree of self-disclosure. Students have the right to see their assessment instrument and discuss the results with their professor and/or advisor. In addition to evaluation of attitudes, attributes, professional functioning and behavior, and competencies for counseling or marriage and family therapy, the Department faculty reserve the right to assess its students as it pertains to academic and clinical performance and ethical professional behavior. Faculty also are permitted to complete the assessment instrument on a student at any point in their program of study. If problems are identified that call into question the suitability of counseling as a career option for a student the recommendation for continuation in program may be deferred.

Additionally, students are held to the ethical codes of ACA, ASCA, ACPA, or AAMFT. If, after having been given an opportunity to be heard concerning allegations of ethical violations, it is found a student has violated any code of ethics for counselors or therapists, the Department will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be dismissed from the Graduate School. In such an instance, the student would be advised of their appellate rights.

At its regular meetings, the department faculty may review student progress as needed. If problems are noted, the following process is utilized:

Probationary Process for the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy

If and when adequate mastery of attitudes, attributes, professional functioning and behavior, and/or competencies are not demonstrated (including during practicum and internship), it may be necessary to initiate a probationary process resulting from a majority vote of the Department faculty. The faculty members reserve the right to place a student on probationary status if it is clear that student is not progressing in a manner expected at that particular time or has exhibited impairment in professional functioning and/or behavior and competencies. The student will be notified, in writing, that the probation has been initiated.

Individual Remediation Plan

The process of probation may include a remediation plan to enhance student self-awareness and how their behaviors may impair academics, interpersonal relationships, and clinical progress in the program. The remediation plan means that a student, with their professor, advisor, or program coordinator, and the Department Chair (as necessary), will meet to review specific feedback related to the performance criteria required and expected of a student at that particular point in time, and an action plan with a timeline will be developed to address identified deficits. This information is specific and documented for clarity. All parties sign the remediation plan and a copy is placed in the student's department file. It is the responsibility of the student, their advisor, and program coordinator to monitor student status in meeting plan recommendations (this can include providing documentation of personal counseling). If the academic and/or professional issues are resolved within the designated remediation or probationary period, the student will be removed from probation.

If a student initially resolves issues identified in remediation, and then displays further problematic issues at a later point in the program, the faculty can decide if further remediation is necessary or make a decision to recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be dismissed from the Graduate School.

If a student is unable to successfully resolve the conditions of their remediation probationary status within the designated probationary period, the department will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be dismissed from the Graduate School. In such an instance, the student would be advised of their appellate rights. For additional information regarding student remediation, please refer to the **SEPS "Temporary Suspension from Program and/or Experiential Learning Policy"** that follows this section.

Temporary Suspension from Program and/or Experiential Learning Policy

This process is to be used when a student has been alleged of a serious behavior, or action, or a significant failure to demonstrate professional behaviors/meet learning outcomes associated with the program/experiential learning, typically defined/described in the program handbook that may impact a student's status or progression in a course/the program.

Experiential Learning includes but is not limited to: Clinical Rotations, Practicums, Student Teaching, and Internships.

It is imperative that this policy is followed to ensure a student is given due process before any final decision or action is taken.

Process:

1. Student is notified about the precipitating incident and the potential outcome(s) if the allegations hold true. This may include but is not limited to: suspension or termination of experience, probation with performance improvement plan/remediation, course failure, or program dismissal. This must be communicated to a student in writing (email or hardcopy). It is recommended that the *Notice of Temporary Suspension* form is used. **A copy of this policy should also be included with the notice to student.**
2. An in-person meeting is scheduled as soon as possible with the student, the course faculty, the department chair, and other individuals deemed appropriate such as clinical/practicum faculty or supervisor, coordinators, advisor, etc. In the event an in-person meeting is not possible, then a virtual meeting with recording capabilities such as TEAMS or WebEx should be used. A recording of the meeting should be archived. **Any written documents for/from the meeting should be archived.**
3. During the meeting the following must occur:
 - a. Student is informed of the allegation along with any additional information that may have been gathered since the original notification was sent to student.
 - b. Student is informed/reminded of the potential outcomes as stated in the initial communication to the student (Step 1 above).
 - c. Student is allowed the opportunity to share their side of the story. It is recommended that a written Narrative is also provided by the student or transcribed during the meeting.
 - d. Student is allowed to present reasons why the proposed potential outcomes should not be taken.
4. A second meeting with the appropriate faculty/staff is held to discuss and consider all the facts of the incident including the student's statements made during Step 2. After consideration of all facts and statements, a decision of the final outcome is reached.
5. Student is informed, in writing, of the outcome with appropriate supporting statements. Student is advised of their opportunity to meet with the appropriate Dean to discuss final outcome.
6. If necessary, documentation is sent to appropriate offices on campus (Dean, registrar, etc.).

Important notes:

- This process is to be used when an incident of serious concern is raised that has the potential for a serious impact on a student's status or progression in an academic program.
- This process does not replace the CCSU Academic Misconduct, or Student Misconduct policies. Depending on the allegation, a student may also be subject to one of those processes.

- Only CCSU can terminate an experiential learning experience. In the event that a partnering site wants to terminate an experiential learning experience, it should be considered as a request for CCSU to terminate the experience.

MFT Students Complaints and Grievances Policy

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Central Connecticut State University strives to have a safe environment in the classroom, amongst students, faculty, and staff. Central Connecticut State University expects students to adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct \(Approved 7/31/2024\)](#)

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at CCSU is committed to ensuring each student's educational needs are being met. If a student believes their educational needs are not being met, it is strongly recommended that students share this information with the appropriate program faculty and/or administrators so that the issue can be addressed. The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Central Connecticut State University uses the following protocol to address students' complaints:

- Students' complaints or disputes concerning a professor, faculty supervisor, or advisor or concerns with any aspect of the program, should first be addressed directly with the party involved. Faculty has the responsibility to acknowledge and communicate students' concerns and report that to the program coordinator.
- If a satisfactory outcome cannot be worked out with the direct party, concerns can be discussed with Program Coordinator, Dr. Melendez-Rhodes. Students and faculty shall document student complaints or concerns and communicate to the Program Coordinator in writing using the respective form included in the [Appendix VII \(Student Complaint Form\)](#). Every attempt will be made to explore the issue thoroughly and to work out an informal remedy. The program coordinator, the clinical coordinator, faculty, or whomever is most appropriate to respond, will give a response within ten business days.
- If, after discussing the concern with the Program Coordinator (or if the person with whom you have the dispute is the Program Coordinator), the Department Chair can mediate the concern. If necessary, the Program Coordinator and Chair of the Department will communicate or consult with the Dean of the College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences and/or Graduate Dean.
- Records regarding the resolution of complaints will be kept on file in the MFT program for seven years.

Complaints regarding grades are resolved through the grade appeals process, which is described in the [School of Graduate Studies Handbook](#) and initiated by the student through the [Appeal for Grade Change](#) form. For more information about grade appeals process, please review the CCSU [Grade Appeals Policy](#) webpage.

Central Connecticut State University also has [The Office of the Ombudsperson](#) which is located in Davidson Hall, Room 210. The Ombudsperson serves as an impartial and confidential mediator of disputes among members of the University community and is an excellent source of information and assistance in addressing concerns with faculty and other students in a supportive, respectful, and neutral environment.

According to COAMFTE, a student grievance refers to formal complaints filed with the program and/or the university through a formal grievance channel. They refer to issues that may violate students' rights. Examples include sexual harassment and discrimination. Information regarding filing a formal grievance can be found on the CCSU's [Office for Equity and Inclusion](#) webpage. Records regarding the resolution grievance are generally kept on file for a period of six years.

Policy and Procedure for Grade of Incomplete

1. A grade of Incomplete (hereafter referred to as **INC**) may be recorded at the discretion of the instructor when a student, for **extenuating circumstances which cannot be controlled**, is unable to complete the requirements of a course. Examples of extenuating circumstances that are beyond the immediate control of the student include but are not limited to the death of a close family member, a serious accident, and an unexpected hospitalization.
2. The course instructor is **required** to review the situation with the graduate student's assigned **faculty advisor** to verify the terms of the INC grade policy are being accurately interpreted as well as implemented.
3. If needed, the course instructor and faculty advisor may also **consult** with the applicable Program Coordinator and/or Department Chair to obtain additional guidance, recommendations, and confirmation of their plan.
4. The course instructor agreeing to an INC grade should examine if the incomplete course is a **pre-requisite for a future course**. If yes, the INC grade must be **successfully and fully resolved** so the student can meet the pre-requisite requirements **before registering** for a future course.
5. Students who have more than one grade of INC in the same academic semester will **not be allowed to register** for any course during future academic terms/semesters until all INC grades are successfully resolved—this may require the Department Chair to place a hold on the student's academic record to prevent course enrollment as well as an Individual Remediation Plan to be developed by the student's advisor in partnership with the Program Coordinator.
6. If the student's circumstance aligns with the terms of the INC grade policy, the course instructor should clearly identify the remaining assignment(s)/requirement(s) **in writing** so the student can fully understand what it is needed to successfully resolve the INC.
 - a. Details of the remaining course assignment(s)/requirement(s) should include a **specific due date/time** as well as the dated signature of the instructor.
 - b. The student should acknowledgement agreement and understanding of the terms by **signing/dating** the agreement, and then returning the document to the course instructor.
 - c. The student who is granted a grade of INC by the course professor must specifically **work within the written parameters** provided by the instructor, including being individually responsible for completing all outstanding course assignment(s)/requirement(s) within the timeframe identified by the instructor.
7. Unless there is an extenuating circumstance that warrants otherwise (such as a specific event directly related to a documented disability accommodation), the student who is granted a grade of INC **cannot earn a grade higher than a B** upon completion of all outstanding course assignment(s)/requirement(s).

8. Although a grade of INC that has not been changed by the instructor will automatically convert to a grade of F by the Office of the Registrar within one year, **the course instructor identifies the specific deadline for successful completion of all outstanding items (which should be completed as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary and prolonged delays).**
9. No individual full- or part-time faculty member **may deviate** from this policy **without the formal approval** of the Department Chair.
10. Academic **accommodations** issued by CCSU's Student Disability Services, when applicable, should be taken into consideration when agreeing to an INC grade, including the terms required to successfully resolve the INC.
11. CCSU's **"Grade of Incomplete" graduate policy is different** for students engaged in Thesis, Plan A, or Special Project, Plan C/E.

Reference: CCSU School of Graduate Studies Student Handbook, 2022, pp. 30-31.
<https://www.ccsu.edu/grad/resources/files/GradStudentHandbookREVISEDJanuary2022.pdf>

POLICY & PROCEDURE REVIEW / PROGRAM FACULTY APPROVAL

The "Policy and Procedure for Grade of Incomplete" was reviewed and approved by a majority vote of core faculty members of the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy faculty members on October 4, 2022. It was subsequently forwarded to Jillian Holt, Associate Registrar of Graduate Studies, who vetted the policy for implementation per the report provided by Dr. Cherie King to CEFT faculty members during the CEFT department meeting held on November 29, 2022.

A copy of the final policy and procedure shall be included in each respective student handbook for all program's offered by the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy.

Important Points to Remember

- Students must complete a planned program of study before completing 15 credits of graduate work.
- Up to twelve credits of equivalent graduate courses may be transferred in with the permission of the advisor. The courses must carry a grade of B or better. Courses taken on a pass-fail basis will not transfer. All courses on the planned program of study, including courses transferred in, must be finished within a six-year period. Students may request an extension through the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average to be in good academic standing.
- If a student withdraws from class without officially notifying the Registrar's Office, they will automatically receive an "F" for the course.
- If a student takes an incomplete in a course and does not complete the required work within one year, the incomplete grade will automatically convert to an "F."
- Students must apply in advance, through the MFT Program, to get into the practicum or internship courses.
- All students in the MFT program are required to join the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.
- All field experience courses require the student to have professional liability insurance.
- Students must apply in advance for graduation by February 15 (for May/August completion) or by October 1st (for December/January completion) of the year in which you expect to graduate.

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix I: Admissions Policy

Appendix II: Counselor Competencies Checklist

Appendix III: CCSU Resources – Websites and Contact Information

Appendix IV: Student Complaint Form

Appendix V: Regulatory Alignment Student Signed Acknowledgement

Declaration Page

Appendix I: Admissions

Admission Requirements for the Marriage and Family Therapy Program

Admission to the MFT program is made on a competitive basis one time per year. All applications must be completed with all required materials and received by **February 1** for fallonly admission. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

Candidates for admission will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1. Grade Point Average (GPA):** Minimum 2.70 grade point average (GPA) for all undergraduate courses and a 3.00 for all graduate courses, based on a 4.00-point scale where A is 4.00
- 2. Two recommendations** from individuals who know your academic competence, character, or professional work.
Note: Personal references from family members, friends, neighbors, or personal therapist will not be accepted.
- 3. Personal essay** regarding your motivation and readiness to pursue a degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. Please include the following (three pages maximum, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font):
 - a. Personal and professional experiences and reasons that influenced you to pursue the field of Marriage and Family Therapy.
 - b. Personal characteristics you believe will contribute to your educational success in the CCSU Marriage and Family Therapy program as well as your success as a Marriage and Family Therapist after graduation.
 - c. Comment on your definition of family.
 - d. Comment on any personal and/or professional experiences you have had with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- 4. Resume:** Submit a current resume
- 5. Interview:** After reviewing application materials, qualified applicants will be invited to interview with the Marriage and Family Therapy Faculty.

The online graduate application, application fee, and official transcripts from each institution attended except Central Connecticut State University are to be submitted directly to Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Office.

Instructions for uploading the personal essay and resume and for submitting the recommendation letters will be found within the online application.

Appendix II: Counselor Competencies Checklist

Central Connecticut State University
Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy

POLICY ON EVALUATING COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Because of the special nature of a counseling relationship, it is critically important that students are relatively free from emotional distress or any psychological problems that may impair their effectiveness as counselors. People who request counseling are often in emotional crisis and need to make important decisions about their lives; therefore, they have a right to expect that their counselor is competent, ethical and psychologically healthy. Additionally, research has shown that effective counselors possess characteristics that include, but are not limited to, openness, flexibility, cooperation, a positive attitude, willingness to use and accept feedback, awareness of one's impact on others, ability to deal with conflict, ability to accept personal responsibility, and ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately. Furthermore, effective counselors adhere to standards of ethical conduct and recognize and appreciate the worth of all people regardless of individual differences.

Taking the abovementioned into consideration, the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy evaluates all students on the basis of personal characteristics that have been deemed essential to becoming an effective counseling professional. Instructors in CNSL 501, CNSL 503 or MFT 583/593, and CSNL 504 (and certain other courses at the prerogative of the professor) complete a *Counselor-in-Training Skills and Competencies Checklist* on each student. This checklist becomes part of the student's file and is seen by the student's advisor prior to rendering a decision regarding admission into candidacy. It may also be used to assess a student's qualifications for continuing in a pre-professional program.

No student is expected to be a perfect self-actualized human being; nonetheless, it is important that students are motivated to grow personally and professionally as well as continuously evaluate their own needs, values, and personality traits that may have a bearing on their counseling effectiveness. The counseling curriculum is designed to provide ample opportunities for self-growth and self-awareness, and faculty members are committed to working with students throughout their training program. The CNSL 501 course tends to be experiential in nature and may provide opportunities for student self-disclosure. Students are expected to monitor and appropriately limit their self-disclosure and to determine for themselves the extent to which they wish to participate in classroom group discussions and exercises.

No student is counted out of the program strictly on the basis of *Counselor-in-Training Skills and Competencies Checklist* results alone. When faculty has concerns about a student's readiness for entrance into the counseling profession, they work with the student to provide sufficient opportunity for improvement. On the rare occasion where all efforts to remedy the situation have failed, the student is counseled to discontinue the program; in such an instance, the student is advised of their appellate rights. Please refer to the Student Handbook for detailed information on the gatekeeping process.



COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES CHECKLIST



Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy

- ◆ Student/Counselor-in-Training: _____
- ◆ Professor/Instructor: _____
- ◆ Course: _____
- ◆ Date: _____

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES SCALE		
SCORE	IDENTIFIER	DESCRIPTION
4	Fully Demonstrates Competencies (exceeds)	The student consistently demonstrates an advanced ability to synthesize knowledge, intentionally apply skills, and exhibit professional behaviors expected of a counselor-in-training.
3	Demonstrates Competencies (meets)	The student demonstrates proficient ability to synthesize knowledge, apply skills, and exhibit professional behaviors expected of a counselor-in-training.
2	Approaching Competencies (limited)	The student demonstrates a restricted but developing ability to synthesize knowledge, apply skills, and exhibit professional behaviors expected of a counselor-in-training.
1	Insufficient Competencies (unsatisfactory)	The student demonstrates an inadequate (and possibly harmful) ability to synthesize knowledge, apply skills, and exhibit professional behaviors expected of a counselor-in-training.
0	Not Applicable (N/A)	Does not apply /unable to evaluate/not observed

* The student's global rating of counselor skills and competencies should be (3) or (4) in order to successfully pass the course.

SECTION 1: FOUNDATIONAL COUNSELING SKILLS (to be completed by instructors of CNSL 501 and CNSL 503 or MFT 583/593)						
SKILL	DESCRIPTION	4	3	2	1	0
Nonverbal Attending	Exhibits contextually and culturally appropriate body posture, spatial distance, eye contact, facial expression, and gestures; demonstrates effective application of silence; presents in professional attire					
Minimal Encouragers	Nonverbal minimal encouragers, including head nods and other gestures indicating interest and attention to client; restating client's salient words and other verbal minimal encouragers (e.g., "Umm-hmm", "Okay", "Tell me more"); uses appropriate rate, rhythm, volume, and tone of speech					
Therapeutic Relationship	Demonstrates respect, compassion, empathy, and support; communicates acceptance, genuine interest, and a sense of care and concern; nonjudgmentally acknowledges client's experiences; recognizes client's strengths; provides a trustworthy, collaborative, and safe environment; appropriate use of self-disclosure; non-defensively responds to client concerns					
Basic Questioning	Primarily relies on open-ended questions to promote client disclosure, but appropriately asks closed-ended questions when specific information and clarification is needed; does not ask leading or double questions; avoids bombarding or interrogating the client					
Interactive/Facilitative	Allows clients to tell their story by using active listening skills; accurately paraphrases the client's verbal and non-verbal content to demonstrate understanding; accurately and succinctly reflects client's emotional state as well as values and beliefs; summarizes content/meaning, feelings, behaviors, patterns/themes; maintains immediacy ("here and now" focus)					

Deepening Behaviors	Helps clients to hear their own voice to gain a better understanding of stuck points, faulty thinking, or self-defeating behaviors; appropriately confronts incongruities and discrepancies; challenges the client in a supportive and empathic manner; maintains focus throughout the session; moves dialogue toward greater specificity; offers valuable feedback and accurate interpretations; checks perceptions and assumptions; addresses resistance and defenses					
Problem Solving	Works collaboratively with client to establish realistic and manageable goals and objectives; helps to develop a plan of action to address client's problems and promote health/wellness; encourages learning and application of learning; avoids overuse of giving direct advice					
Closing and Termination	Maintains sense of time throughout the session; provides advance notification and begins process of summarizing (does not end abruptly); therapeutically concludes services					

SECTION 2: COUNSELOR ATTITUDES, ATTRIBUTES, AND BEHAVIORS (to be completed by instructors of CNSL 501, CNSL 503 or MFT 583/593, and CNSL 504)						
DISPOSITION	DESCRIPTION	4	3	2	1	0
Personal Attributes	Shows initiative and enthusiasm; is open to learning; aware of impact on others; able to express feelings effectively and appropriately; able to manage conflicts and challenges; is personally responsible and accountable; is flexible and adaptable; demonstrates self-awareness/insight and emotional stability; able to articulate personal convictions; recognizes own personal strengths, limitations, beliefs, and biases					
Professional Attributes	Interacts with faculty, clients/students, organizational staff, and peers in a professional manner; understands and demonstrates ability to work cooperatively on a professional team; consistently on time and regularly attends all classes, sessions, and meetings; follows rules/policies and procedures of university, agency, and organization; accepts feedback in a non-defensive manner and integrates constructive feedback to promote professional and personal growth; maintains appropriate boundaries with faculty, clients, supervisors, staff, and peers; proactively seeks out needed experiences, feedback, and guidance; does not impose beliefs on others					
Professional Ethics	Demonstrates understanding and adherence to the ethical guidelines of the American Counseling Association (ACA), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), and American College Personnel Association (ACPA), as applicable to the student's degree program; maintains confidentiality, obtains informed consent, follows limits of confidentiality and duty to warn requirements					
Theoretical Knowledge	Has a fundamental understanding of the various theories, techniques, and interventions in counseling; demonstrates emerging application of theories and techniques					
Multicultural Competence	Appreciates diversity and recognizes the worth of all individuals; understands the impact that race, ethnicity, culture, sexual affiliation, gender identification, social class, disability status, religion, etc. have on individuals; uses language that demonstrates sensitivity and respect; able to appropriately identify and address personal biases, judgments, systemic barriers, and social injustices (inside and outside the classroom and counseling setting)					
Course/Site Operations	Aware of and cooperative with course expectations as outlined in the syllabi; Demonstrates knowledge of and compliance with organization's standards of care/policies and procedures, including client responsiveness, record keeping, treatment planning, and termination of care					

Appendix III: CCSU Resources – Websites and Contact Information

Resources

- 1) [CCSU Homepage](#)
- 2) [Graduate Studies](#)
- 3) [Graduate Student Resources](#) -Planned programs, Capstone and Thesis Handbook, Transfer course Form, Graduation program application form, etc.
- 4) [Bursar's Office](#) -Tuition and payment information.
- 5) [Financial Aid Office](#) -Financial aid information, support and guidance to CCSU's current and prospective students.
- 6) [Graduate catalog](#)
- 7) [Graduate Academic Policies and Requirements](#)
- 8) [IT Help Desk and Walk-in support](#)
- 9) [CCSU Library](#)
- 10) [Writing Center](#) -Free, one-on-one tutoring in person and on-line sessions. They provide resources, strategies and techniques for writing.
- 11) [The Learning Center](#) -Their mission is to provide high quality, individualized academic assistance for the students of CCSU, so that they may reach their maximum academic potential. They offer academic support services such as academic coaching and tutoring.
- 12) [Office of Accessibility Services](#)
- 13) [LGBTQ Center](#)
- 14) [Drop-in Child Care Center](#)
- 15) [Health Services/Student Wellness Services](#)

Appendix IV: Student Complaint Form

STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM

Student Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Student Email Address: _____

Date: _____

1) Complaint (Please provide a summary of the issue, parties involved, dates):

2) Course of Action (Meeting with faculty, Clinical coordinator, and/or Program coordinator, remediation plan, accommodation, etc.) [Only for faculty and administration]:

3) Has the issue been resolved? Yes _____ No _____ (If no, please follow-up)

4) Follow-up resolution [Only for faculty and administration]:

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Faculty Name/Signature: _____

Date: _____

Note: Please put a copy of this form in the student's file

Appendix V: Regulatory Alignment Student Signed Acknowledgment

Regulatory Alignment Student Signed Acknowledgement

Marriage and Family Therapy is a profession that leads to licensure in all 50 states; however, each state has its own law and regulations about what is needed to become licensed as a MFT in that state.

Not every state will accept a degree and supervised hours earned in another state. Review license requirements in the state you intend to practice as soon as possible so that you understand what may and may not be accepted across state lines. Here is the link to each state's licensure resources: [MFT State/Provincial Resources](#) (AAMFT.org)

The coursework for Central Connecticut State University was designed to meet MFT licensure requirements in the state of Connecticut. You may read more about the state requirements for MFT licensure in Connecticut by clicking this link to the [Connecticut State Department of Public Health](#).

If you have questions about the program's alignment with professional licensure you may contact the MFT Program Coordinator: Dr. Tatiana Melendez-Rhodes at tatianam@ccsu.edu.

Please sign this form and return it with your program admissions.

I acknowledge that I have been informed and am aware that licensing regulations differ across states and provinces. I understand that the Central Connecticut State University Master of Arts in Marriage & Family Therapy program is designed to meet the licensure requirements in the state of Connecticut, and that an MFT degree from this program may not meet MFT licensing requirements in a different state.

Printed name as shown in application

Signature (may be electronic)

Date

Declaration Page

My signature below indicates that I have fully read and understood the MFT Student Handbook, and I agree to comply with all the stipulations, policies and procedures. Should I fail to comply with any policy or procedure, I understand that I may be subject to disciplinary action, including remediation plans, probation, and/or dismissal from the MFT program.

Instructions: Please print this page and sign it. Obtain you advisor's signature and leave this form with them to be placed in your file. Keep a copy for your records.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Date

Advisor Printed Name

Advisor Signature

Date