

Converse University
Master of Marriage and Family Therapy
Student Program Handbook
Spartanburg and Greenville Locations

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Master of Marriage and Family Therapy

Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) program at Converse University is to train clinically-skilled and culturally-competent systemic marriage and family therapists who can practice effectively and ethically with a wide variety of clients.

Diversity Statement

The program values diversity in its faculty, students, and the client population it serves. Our definition of diversity includes, but is not limited to, the following: race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, ancestry, relationship status, veteran status, physical status, or any other characteristic protected by law. We do not discriminate against students or faculty based on any of the aforementioned characteristics. The program is committed to creating a learning environment in which the accompanying values, beliefs, traditions, and symbols of diverse cultures are respected and cultivated.

Converse University strives for a diverse student body and faculty. We publish our diversity statement on our admissions materials sent out to prospective students. In addition, the Core Faculty have specifically targeted historically Black undergraduate institutions in the state for advertisement and invitation to an MMFT Open House in the fall in an attempt to recruit minority graduate students. The Program Director (UCG Campus) and Associate Program Director (Spartanburg campus) encourage current students to confidentially share any diversity-related concerns in Student Representative Meetings to foster an inclusive environment on campus. On a campus wide level, Converse University has hired a Director of Community and Inclusion whose responsibility is to develop programs and training that foster respect and raise awareness of diverse experiences and perspectives

(<https://www.converse.edu/life-at-converse/student-life/community-inclusion/>)

Retention and Graduation Statement

Retention and graduation are important components in an effective training program. Students may access Student Achievement Disclosure (SAC) Data at

<http://www.converse.MFS/program/master-of-marriage-and-family-therapy-mft/>.

Accreditation

Converse University is accredited by the Southern Association of Universities and Schools. The Master of Marriage and Family Therapy program is accredited nationally by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) at both the Spartanburg campus and the University Center of Greenville campus. Accreditation provides the oversight and accountability necessary to assist the program to insure our students are provided with the best academic and clinical experience possible.

The following are the program outcomes and student learning outcomes for both the Spartanburg and Greenville locations:

Program Outcomes

The MMFT Program will:

1. Train students to be effective, systemic clinicians who positively contribute to the well-being of individuals, couples, families, and communities.
2. Teach students MFT models, theories, treatment techniques, and how to use and understand research to inform systemic practice.
3. Prepare students to practice in a culturally competent manner with a wide variety of client populations.
4. Prepare students to develop into professionals who practice ethically in the field of MFT.

Associated Student Learning Outcomes

MMFT Students will:

1. Learn to practice skillfully in collaboration and communication with other disciplines, agencies, and professions.
2. Use basic clinical skills, including admission to treatment, establishing a therapeutic alliance, maintenance of treatment records, case management, crisis intervention, and systemic treatment planning.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in assessing, diagnosing, and treating serious mental illness as defined by the state of South Carolina, and will understand its impact on the system.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the theories and history of marriage and family therapy and the understanding and application of major models of marriage and family therapy.
5. Comprehend research methodology and be able to apply current research findings to the practice and assessment of clinical work in the field of marriage and family therapy.
6. Students will apply in both an academic and clinical setting knowledge of individual and family development, including issues related to human sexuality and sexual dysfunction.
7. Understand contemporary and diversity issues and be able to implement that knowledge in a clinical setting.
8. Understand and internalize ethical, legal, and professional issues associated with the practice of marriage and family therapy and be able to apply that knowledge in a clinical setting.

Program Director

The program director's primary responsibility is to maintain and enhance students' educational experience, curriculum, and clinical training in the MFT program at both the Spartanburg and Greenville location. Specifically, the Program Director assesses and reports on Program and Student Learning Outcomes, collects data and meets with faculty members annually for faculty evaluations, runs annual faculty retreats, collects and distributes feedback concerning the program, schedules academic and clinical coursework, approves and assigns adjunct faculty to courses, helps maintain COAMFTE accreditation, distributes and collects student surveys, meets with Student Representatives biannually at the UCG campus, conducts the MFT Program Open House and program interviews at UCG, completes a progress evaluation on each student at the UCG campus, implements Academic Comprehensive Exams at the UCG campus, participates in Clinical Readiness at UCG, Clinical Comprehensive exams at UCG, clinical meetings at the UCG campus, approves students for graduation, maintains UCG students' academic files,

maintains academic data, participates in weekly clinical faculty meetings to oversee clinical and facility maintenance and community service, and supervises at least 2 semesters each year.

Associate Program Director

The Associate program director's primary responsibility is to maintain and enhance students' education experience, curriculum, and clinical training in the MFT program at the Spartanburg location. Specifically, the Associate Program Director assesses and reports to the Program Director on administrative oversight at the Spartanburg location, attends faculty retreats and departmental meetings, collects feedback concerning the Spartanburg location, helps maintain COAMFTE accreditation, maintains Spartanburg students' academic files, meets with Student Representatives biannually at the Spartanburg campus, helps conduct the MFT Program Open House in Spartanburg, completes a progress evaluation on each student at the Spartanburg location, implements Academic Comprehensive Exams at the Spartanburg location, participates in Clinical Readiness meeting in Spartanburg, Clinical Comprehensive exams in Spartanburg, clinical meetings at the Spartanburg campus, participates in departmental meetings, distributes weekly students emails, participates in weekly clinical faculty meetings, and supervises at least 2 semesters each year.

Clinical Director

The clinical director's primary responsibility is to maintain and enhance students' clinical experience and training at the Spartanburg location. Specifically, the Clinical Director collects semester student evaluations, assigns practicum supervisees to individual and group Supervisors, oversees file audits, coordinates clinical readiness meetings and clinical comprehensive exams, collaboratively works with the Emerge Operations Director and clinical Supervisors to plan and implement quarterly clinical meetings, monitors students' clinical and Supervision hours, organizes site placement, mentor assignment, and transfer therapists for incoming practicum students (in collaboration with the Emerge Operations Director), maintains clinical data, develops and revises clinic-related forms and evaluations (e.g., student evaluations, client forms), participates in weekly faculty meetings and annual faculty retreats designed to oversee clinical and facility maintenance and community service, and supervises at least 2 semesters each year.

Associate Clinic Director

The associate clinical director's primary responsibility is to maintain and enhance students' clinical experience and training at the UCG location. Specifically, the associate clinic director collects semester student evaluations, assigns practicum supervisees to individual and group Supervisors, oversees file audits, coordinates clinical readiness meetings and clinical comprehensive exams, collaboratively works with the Emerge Operations Director and clinical Supervisors to plan and implement quarterly clinical meetings, monitors students' clinical and Supervision hours, organize site placement, mentor assignment, and transfer therapists for incoming practicum students (in collaboration with the Emerge Operations Director), maintains clinical data, develops and revises clinic-related forms and evaluations (e.g., student evaluations, client forms), participates in weekly faculty meetings and annual faculty retreats designed to oversee clinical and facility maintenance and community service, and supervises at least 2 semesters each year.

Community Engagement Director (CED)

The CED oversees community partnerships. Their role is to build and maintain relationships with

community partners to increase relational therapeutic work for practicum students. The CED will track partnerships and maintain a list of students who provide therapy at each location.

Accreditation and Research Specialist:

With assignment to the Spartanburg and Greenville locations, the Accreditation and Research Specialist works with the Program Directors to monitor assessment, data collection, and adherence to COAMFTE standards. The Specialist also oversees clinic research, IRB approval, and client outcomes at both Emerge clinical placement sites. As a core faculty member, the Accreditation and Research Specialist teaches at least 9 credit hours a year, attends Open House, Student Interviews, Clinical Readiness Meetings, and Comprehensive Exams at the Spartanburg location.

Program Benchmarks:

The MMFT program is designed to support students in achieving the above student learning outcomes. To best accomplish this task, the program consists of five important benchmarks. These benchmarks include 1) Professional Disposition, 2) Clinical Readiness Meeting, 3) Clinical Comprehensive Exam, 4) Academic Comprehensive Exam, and 5) Graduation. This handbook discusses the components, requirements, and assessments associated with each benchmark.

General Information

Advisement

Upon admission into the MMFT program, students will receive an email from their assigned advisor, a core faculty member within the MMFT program. Students can meet with their advisor at least once in the fall and spring semesters. Although students will receive notification of advisement times via email, it is the student's responsibility to schedule these meetings. Students should also consult with their advisors concerning any program-related issues. Advisors are located in the MMFT offices, upstairs in the Ezell Building at the Spartanburg location or in the Converse suite at the UCG location.

Registration

Students will receive information about registration times from their advisor and/or the program director at their campus, as well as from Converse listserv announcements and the academic calendar posted at: <https://www.converse.edu/academics/registrar/academic-calendars-exams/>. Students are responsible for registering for the correct courses each semester in my.converse.edu and should consult with their advisor if there are any issues.

COVID-19

The MMFT department is committed to following all COVID-19 guidelines mandated by Converse University including changes and updates to the existing protocol. Please visit the following link for the most up to date information: <https://www.converse.edu/life-at-converse/covid/>.

Tuition

Each class within the MMFT program is worth 3 credit hours. Please visit <https://www.converse.edu/admissions/graduate/financial-planning/graduate-tuition-and-aid/> for the most up to date information about graduate tuition costs by scrolling down to the MMFT section. The entire program is 63 credit hours.

In addition to tuition fees, practicum fees are \$1400.00/semester, and there are five semesters of practicum (total of \$7,000). As of 2022, we are one of the top five most affordable COAMFTE-accredited Marriage and Family Therapy programs in the nation (including practicum fees). Tuition and fees can change without notice.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available for MMFT students in the form of student loans. To learn more about the specific loans available and how to apply, contact the Converse Financial Planning office at (864) 596-9019 or go the financial planning website at <http://www.converse.edu/MFS/admissions/graduate-financial-planning/#1463501902525-305151f0-e5e4>. The Financial Planning office is located in Carnegie Hall on the Lower Level in Suite 102.

Textbooks

Before each semester, you will be emailed the list of required textbooks for your courses. You

may purchase the textbooks from the source of your choosing. Some, but not all, of the instructors will submit their book list to the campus bookstore in order for them to stock the store with the textbooks. To access the bookstore, go to <http://www.bkstr.com/converseUniversitystore/home>. Click on BOOKS. Select the class or classes you will be taking and the required and recommended texts will be listed there. You do not have to buy the books from the University bookstore, but if you decide to, follow the online instructions for purchasing or go in-person to the bookstore, which is located in the Montgomery building on campus.

Renting Versus Buying.

The program requires students to purchase a large number of books for coursework. For the majority of the required books, it is important that the students buy them. These books will assist the students when they sit for the MFT Licensure Exam. Additionally, most books will become a resource for students during their clinical work post-graduation. However, students may contact instructors at the start of each semester to ask them which books they suggest buying versus renting. The faculty understand the expense of books each semester and they are willing to provide assistance.

Emails

All students in the MMFT program are required to have a Converse email for purposes of communication. Your MMFT admission acceptance package includes an email account. Students are also required to join the MMFT listserv as soon as possible in order to receive important information about the program throughout the duration of their enrollment. Students will receive an invitation to join the listserv before the beginning of their first semester.

Checking Course Schedules

The University-wide course offering schedule may be accessed by going to <http://www.converse.MFS/office/registrar/course-offerings-academic-catalogs/>. Choose the appropriate semester. The schedule will give you course meeting dates, times and locations. Students can also view the MMFT specific course offering schedule by going to their student portal on my.converse.edu, clicking “register for courses” > “course search” > select the correct term, select “Marriage and Family Studies” under department, select “graduate” under division, and hit “search”. This will bring up the full list of courses offered within the MMFT program for that term.

Grades

Instructors within the MMFT program utilize Canvas for posting assignments and grades. You can access your Canvas page through my.converse.edu and/or access your final grades at my.converse.edu through your student portal.

Removal Policy:

Students are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA at all times while in the MMFT program. Dropping below a GPA of 3.0 or failing a course may be grounds for dismissal. Please consult the Converse Graduate Student Handbook, found at my.converse.edu.

Student Complaint Procedure:

Students can provide anonymous feedback about the program through the Google Form titled “Student Feedback Form” located on the Converse Google Drive. MMFT Faculty regularly review feedback submitted through this form and provide a timely response. Students in the MMFT program who wish to file a formal complaint should do so by contacting the Dean of the School of Education and Graduate Studies, Dr. Lienne Medford. Her office is located in Ezell Hall. Email: lienne.medford@converse.edu.

Student Grievance Procedure:

All members of the Converse community are encouraged to resolve conflicts directly with all parties involved in a given situation. Students are expected to speak openly with peers, faculty and/or staff to address concerns and find solutions. However, there are times when circumstances warrant direct reporting to the appropriate source for resolution.

Converse provides opportunities and processes for students to report incidents related to Honor, Civitas, Sexual Harassment and any form of grievance that may emerge during the course of their experience. Reports are given directly to the appropriate area contact to advance investigations and reconciliation.

Please visit the following link for the latest Student Grievance Procedure including how to file a Title IX complaint: <https://www.converse.edu/life-at-converse/success/converse-cares/>.

MMFT Program General Time Away Policy

Due to the nature of the program, attendance in courses is extremely important. Students are expected to be present and communicate with Faculty when they need to take time off. To help streamline this process, the Department has a “Time Off Request” form available for students to complete when they prepare to take time away from the program. Students are expected to complete the form before formal travel plans are solidified. The form can be found here: <https://forms.gle/BSHRBMZQH6tJkLxz5>.

Parental Leave Policy

Converse MMFT faculty support students in the completion of the degree requirements during periods of family expansion. The following outline lends support to help make this transition as smooth as possible. If students plan to take more than two weeks away from the program for parental leave, students will need to follow this process:

1. Notify the faculty on your campus
2. Complete the Time Off Request form: <https://forms.gle/BSHRBMZQH6tJkLxz5>.
3. Prior to the beginning of the semester your child is expected, meet with your campus’s faculty to create a leave plan detailing (1) how you will complete your course work for each class, (2) how you will maintain ethical client care, and (3) how you will transition back into the clinic and/or classroom once your leave is complete
4. Sign the letter provided by your campus’s faculty outlining the details of your plan and specify your return date

5. If there are changes to your intended plan, you need to update your campus's faculty as soon as possible, renegotiate the terms and details of your leave plan, and resubmit your Time Request Off form. Failure to follow this plan may result in a failing grade for your courses that semester

Additionally, students who are enrolled in practicum will need to create a detailed plan with both the direct supervisor and the campus's clinic director regarding how and when you plan to return to the clinic. Details of the plan should include notifying the supervisor and clinic director when you begin your leave and when you return to the clinic. Students should not contact clients at the end of leave without first notifying both the supervisor and the clinic director. Meeting with the supervisor and clinic director at the end of the leave term will also serve as a check-in to ensure that the student is ready to begin clinical work again.

Support Plan

Support plans are created in collaboration with the faculty and a student when the student expresses the need for support during the program. The student leads this plan, and it empowers the student to reach out to faculty when they need additional support. Examples of when to reach out to faculty to create a support plan include a family death, difficulty adjusting to the clinical practicum, additional support for academic writing, etc. Support plans are student-led. Faculty may contact students to ask if they want to create a support plan. If the student denies the option to create a support plan, then the faculty will document it in the student's file. Support plans are created for specific semesters and should be revisited at the start of a new semester. If the student cannot maintain program and/or clinical requirements (course work, clinical work, program benchmarks, etc), then the student will need to meet with faculty to create a remediation plan (see below).

Remediation Plan

Remediation plans are created in collaboration between faculty and the student when a student has consistently failed to meet program and/or clinical requirements (course work, clinical work, program benchmarks, etc). This plan will include step-by-step instructions on how the student can improve their performance and a timeline for improvements to be completed (typically a semester). If the student fails to complete the remediation plan, then the student will need to create a probation plan with the faculty (see below).

Probation Plan

Probation plans are created when a student is not able to meet program and/or clinical requirements and a remediation plan was not successfully completed. This plan includes specific items that a student needs to complete to stay enrolled in the MMFT program. The student will be given a timeframe to complete the required plan. If the student does not complete the plan, then they will be dismissed from the MMFT program.

Delta Kappa

Delta Kappa is the International Honor Society for Marriage and Family Therapy graduate students. Students are eligible to join Delta Kappa after they have completed 12 credit hours in the program and have maintained a 3.7 grade point average. Induction ceremonies are held once yearly in the spring, and fees to join are \$60.00. Please contact Dr. Morgan Strickland if you want more information or are interested in applying.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEI) is open to all students, faculty, and supervisors who demonstrate a commitment to working towards racial and social justice for marginalized groups. The committee focuses on increasing inclusion and cultural sensitivity efforts within the MMFT Program and beyond. Meetings are held once a month, and projects/initiatives are student directed. There is no fee to join. Please contact Dr. Scott-Poe if you are interested in joining.

Student Governance

During the fall semester, students will elect two representatives each from the first-year class and the second-year class to serve as a student advisory committee (Spartanburg and Greenville will have separate Student Representatives). There is a limit of two years as a student representative. Here is a list of student representatives' tasks:

1. Collecting student feedback:
 - a. Each semester, student representatives will create a feedback form to be completed by current students.
2. Faculty responses to the students' concerns and a plan of action will be added to the minutes and distributed via email to the students following the faculty retreat.
 - a. The feedback form will request information regarding any issues, positive experiences, or suggestions regarding class content, course sequencing, the overall program, and clinic procedures.
 - b. Meet with faculty at respective sites each semester to review student feedback information.
 - c. Create a student contact list containing mobile numbers and personal email addresses for the cohort to be added to the future alumni contact list.
3. Attending open house and interview day:
 - a. Student representatives will attend all open houses and interview days for prospective students.
 - b. Student representatives are encouraged to share information about the program and their own experience in the program
4. Attending virtual faculty meetings for the first hour
 - a. Student representatives will attend monthly faculty meetings to provide feedback and work directly with faculty.
 - b. Information about what topics were discussed will be shared with fellow students afterward.
5. Work with faculty to host current student and alumni events.
6. Attend any partnership meetings that may require student clinical feedback.
7. Connect with students and collect information regarding any program change.

During the next faculty retreat, the faculty will review the response and ensure the response is executed if action items are listed. Students are also encouraged to discuss items where they do not feel the faculty appropriately responded.

Communities of Interest (COIs)

Narrative Description of the Program's Communities of Interest		
List Communities of Interest	Community of Interest (COI) Description (e.g. number, location, relevant characteristics)	Involvement in Program
Faculty	Six core faculty in the Marriage and Family Therapy Department. One Dean of the Graduate School.	Yearly faculty retreats, monthly core faculty meetings, bi-weekly supervision meetings, monthly meeting with EMERGE leadership, monthly program meetings. weekly email.
Students	32 total enrolled students across both campuses.	Monthly program meetings, weekly friday email, yearly program evaluation survey.
Alumni	Alumni who are involved with the Alumni Board and Alumni listserv. 35 total members of the Alumni listserv.	Alumni board meetings, alumni listserv, post-graduation program evaluation survey.
Noncore faculty & supervisors	Currently there are three noncore faculty members who teach and supervise in the program and two noncore faculty members who teach in the program.	Bi-weekly supervision meetings, monthly program meetings, yearly faculty retreats (virtual attendance).

Mentor/Mentorship Program

While in the program, students will be paired with a mentor who is in the cohort above them. The goal of the mentorship program is to provide additional support to first year students as they navigate the program and clinical requirements.

Technology Requirements

Students will need access to the Internet and a computer/tablet to check email and complete assignments. They may use the computer labs located on campus. They also need access to a private phone so that they can be available in case of a clinical emergency.

Steps to AAMFT Clinical Membership and Licensure and Portability of Degree

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) is the national professional organization for marriage and family therapists, and students are urged to become active student members. For more information on AAMFT, please visit their website at www.aamft.org. The curriculum of the Converse University Master of Marriage and Family Therapy program is designed to follow the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) requirements as well as the requirements for Clinical Membership in AAMFT. Every effort is made to ensure that the curriculum follows state licensure requirements in South Carolina for licensure as a marriage and family therapist. However, students are advised to contact the appropriate state licensure board independently for application materials and current curriculum requirements. Application packages for South Carolina are available from the South Carolina Board of Examiners at

<https://lir.sc.gov/cou/links.aspx>. The program is not responsible for changes made in state licensure laws. The licensure process is discussed within several of the MMFT program courses and student advisors are also available for assistance with the application process.

After receiving the Master of Marriage and Family Therapy degree, the student should submit an application to the state credentialing board for permission to sit for the National MFT Exam. The credentialing body will review the applicant's coursework. Upon approval by the credentialing body, the student schedules a time to take the exam. Upon passing the exam, the student applies for a provisional license as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Intern. After this license is granted by the state licensure board, the intern begins an internship of no less than two years. During this two-year internship, the intern must provide a minimum of 1350 client contact hours and receive 150 hours of supervision from a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor. Of the 150 hours of supervision, 50 may be group supervision. Upon completing the internship, the intern applies for and is granted full licensure.

Students seeking licensure as an MFT outside of South Carolina are strongly encouraged to consult the following site about requirements for specific states:

https://www.aamft.org/Directories/MFT_Licensing_Boards.aspx.

Lastly, all students are required to sign the Regularoty Alignment Student Form (found in appendix) that demonstrates that they full understand the licesnure requirements for South Carolina.

Coursework

(Updated Fall 2023)

Curriculum:

For both the Spartanburg and Greenville locations, the Master of Marriage and Family Therapy at Converse College is a 63-credit hour master's degree and utilizes a semester format. The 15 credit hours required by the clinical practicum are included in 63 credit hours. All coursework will meet for a total of 45 contact hours. During the regular semesters, fall and spring, each course meets once a week for three hours. During the shorter semesters, such as the January term or the summer term, classes will need to meet more frequently.

Course Sequencing:

Fall Semester – First Year

MFS634 Systems of Family Therapy I	3.0 credit hours
MFS661 Basic Techniques	3.0 credit hours
MFS643 Cultural Competence & Family Therapy	3.0 credit hours
MFS646 Couples Therapy	3.0 credit hours
Total	12.0 credit hours

January Semester – First Year

MFS683 Pre-Clinical Practice	3.0 credit hours
Total	3.0 credit hours

Spring Semester – First Year

MFS680 Systems of Family Therapy II	3.0 credit hours
MFS639 Advanced Applications I	3.0 credit hours
MFS648A Clinical Practicum	3.0 credit hours
MFS642 DSM-5 in Marriage & Family Therapy	3.0 credit hours
Total	12.0 credit hours

Summer Semester-First Year

MFS633 Child Psychopathology	3.0 credit hours
MFS648B Clinical Practicum	3.0 credit hours
Total	6.0 credit hours

Fall Semester –Second Year

MFS648C Clinical Practicum	3.0 credit hours
MFS647 Research Literacy	3.0 credit hours
MFS681 Individual Psychopathology	3.0 credit hours
MFS636 Treatment of Sexual Issues	3.0 credit hours
Total	12.0 credit hours

January –Second Year

MFS648D Clinical Practicum	3.0 credit hours
MFS645 Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in MFT	3.0 credit hours
Total	6.0 credit hours

Spring Semester – Second Year

MFS648E Clinical Practicum	3.0 credit hours
MFS641 Resiliency	3.0 credit hours
MFS635 Advanced Applications II	3.0 credit hours
Elective	3.0 credit hours
Total	12.0 credit hours

Variation from the course sequencing:

Should students feel that they must stray from the above course sequencing, they must receive written permission from their advisor and sign a new program of study form stating that they agree to follow a different path that is explicitly written out with their advisor's help. Failure to follow this policy may result in being excused from the program. Although advisors will work closely with students to assist them in meeting graduation timeline goals, there are no guarantees that this will be possible.

Evaluation

Grade Scale

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

A 95-100	B 84-86	C 74-76
A- 90-94	B- 80-83	C- 70-73
B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	F Below 70

Coursework Evaluations

Professors in the MMFT program use a variety of methods to evaluate student work, including but not limited to: exams, research papers, presentations, role plays, and projects. Each professor has the academic freedom to construct a course based on his or her idea of how best to deliver the course content and assess student learning. If students have questions regarding course evaluation, they should consult the corresponding class syllabus first, then the professor for that course if further clarification is needed. The MMFT program values the diverse experience students have the opportunity to receive through various teaching styles and evaluative procedures. Additionally, students are highly encouraged to complete course evaluations sent electronically to their Converse email address at the end of each semester to provide constructive feedback for each instructor.

Participation/Attendance

Students are expected to complete all assigned reading before arriving in class so they can participate in an active and informed manner in classroom discussions and activities. Class attendance is extremely important and students are expected to be present and on time to class sessions unless unavoidable. Please inform the class instructor if you are unable to attend. The student is responsible for all coursework missed. Students are not permitted to miss any part of a class to meet with clients.

Respectful Learning Environment

The MMFT program values dialogue, openness, and intellectual curiosity in both students and faculty. We respect individual differences, beliefs, and opinions and believe classroom discussion is the appropriate venue for exploring ideas, discussing controversial topics, and engaging in critical thinking. Therefore, in the spirit of promoting a respectful learning environment in which these intellectual pursuits can best flourish, we ask that students adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Please set your cell phones to silent and refrain from accepting calls or texts during class times. If you have a situation at home, such as a sick child, etc., please inform the instructor before class begins that you may need to take an emergency call from home.
2. Refrain from texting and engaging with social media during class time.
3. If you are using a laptop to take notes or access readings, please stay on-task. You should not be surfing the internet or browsing social media.
4. Please do not engage in sidebars with your classmates that are noisy and distract from class lectures or discussions.

5. By all means, offer comments and opinions and ask questions. Please be sure, though, that your questions and comments promote the discussion rather than derail or bog it down.
6. Respect the opinions and comments of other students as well as those of the instructor.

Incompletes

Occasionally, emergency situations arise during the semester, which may require that a student take an incomplete grade in a specific course to allow them to complete the requirements for the course. Incompletes should be avoided if at all possible, but should an incomplete become necessary due to extenuating circumstances, students have until the end of the next full semester to complete the course requirements. If the student does not complete the coursework before this time, the incomplete will turn into an F and the student must retake the course. Students must clear up any incompletes before entering the practicum. It should also be noted that if a student receives an F in any graduate course while in the MMFT program, he or she may be removed from the program. See the Graduate Handbook located on my.converse.edu for more details on this policy.

APA Style

All writing projects in the MMFT program utilize the APA style of formatting. Students should purchase a copy of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition. Unless otherwise specified on a course syllabus, writing assignments will follow APA formatting for font style and size, spacing, margins, headings, and citations, and will include running heads, pagination, and abstracts, as per the APA manual.

Syllabi

You should keep a copy of the syllabus for each course you take in the MMFT program. If you are transferring any courses or take an outside course while in the program, you should also keep a copy of the syllabus. When you apply for licensure, you must produce copies of the syllabi of each graduate course you take.

Faculty

Core faculty roles in teaching, scholarship, service and practice are highlighted on the MMFT program webpage at the following link:

www.converse.MFS/program/master-of-marriage-and-family-therapy-mmft/ (click on each faculty member's name for detailed description). Core faculty members teach, supervise, practice, and serve in the MMFT program, local community, and the MFT field. This helps to promote a systemic, service-oriented approach where faculty practice, model, teach, and supervise students to meet the program goals and student learning outcomes.

As documented below, MMFT faculty members are highly qualified through education, experience, and expertise to fulfill the program mission. In addition, the program and University require and support quality teaching and supervision. Scholarship, including grants, publications, and presentations promote both faculty and student success to fulfill program goals and student learning outcomes. Faculty service roles at the University and in the community exemplify the dedication to the field and keep faculty experienced in the field. The program requires that full-time faculty members provide supervision in the program, since faculty members skilled in the supervision and implementation of marriage and family therapy are better able to instruct and model skills for students. Please see the table below for a more detailed review of how our faculty help to achieve our student learning outcomes:

Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

Student Learning Outcome	Faculty Role in Achieving SLO
1. Learn to practice skillfully in collaboration and communication with other disciplines, agencies, and professions.	Faculty's service work with professional organizations create networking and learning opportunities for students to hear from outside professionals about how to collaborate in the field. Faculty teach key courses such as Advanced Models and Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues to help prepare students for collaboration and communication with outside disciplines, agencies, and professions. Faculty regularly invite clinicians and community mental health partners to quarterly clinic training meetings to inform students about local agency resources for their clients, as well as agencies' preferred method for collaborative communication. In their clinical supervisor role, faculty advise students regularly on their client cases and how to address requests for information, subpoenas, mandated clients, and other various aspects of community collaboration.
2. Use basic clinical skills, including admission to treatment, establishing a therapeutic alliance, maintenance of treatment records, case management, crisis intervention, and systemic treatment planning.	Faculty serve as clinicians in the community, which increases their direct experience with systemic therapy. Faculty teach key courses such as Basic Skills of the Psychotherapy Interview to help students practice and understand basic clinical skills. Faculty often role play or do co-therapy with students in the classroom and in the practicum. All core faculty members have academic and clinical training with COAMFTE accredited doctoral programs. All faculty are AAMFT Approved Supervisors or are Supervisors in Training. As clinical supervisors, faculty regularly engage in live supervision to assess students' clinical skills and therapeutic alliances. Additionally, faculty supervisors routinely oversee file audits of students' clinical cases, which includes assisting with and signing off on all treatment planning.

<p>3.Demonstrate proficiency in assessing, diagnosing, and treating serious mental illness as defined by the state of South Carolina, and will understand its impact on the system.</p>	<p>The majority of core faculty members are licensed in the state of South Carolina to practice marriage and family therapy. Faculty teach two key courses (Diagnostics in Interpersonal Systems and Individual Psychopathology), as well as include diagnostic practice in various other courses (e.g., Resiliency, Advanced Models) to help prepare students to diagnose and treat mental illness. Faculty serve as clinicians in the community to continue practicing diagnosing and treating serious mental illness. Faculty supervisors advise and approve client treatment plans created by students, which includes a clinical diagnosis in DSM 5 formatting.</p>
<p>4.Demonstrate an understanding of the theories and history of marriage and family therapy and the understanding and application of major models of marriage and family therapy.</p>	<p>All faculty teaching courses in MFT theory are core faculty who have academic and clinical training from COAMFTE accredited doctoral programs. Some of the courses taught by faculty specifically focus on major MFT theories and models (e.g., Systems II, Self of the Therapist, Advanced Models II, Systemic Approaches to Couples Therapy). In each of these courses faculty facilitate discussion, lecture, role plays, and assignments that teach and assess for student comprehension of the history, theory, and application of major models of MFT. Faculty serve as clinicians in the community to practice application of major models of marriage and family therapy. Faculty attend state SCAMFT trainings each year and serve on the board to ensure continued systemic training. As clinical supervisors, faculty utilize major models regularly in advising students in supervision of their cases. Additionally, faculty supervisors help students plan and prepare for the clinical comprehensive exam in which they must successfully apply a major MFT model in written and video format with a relational case from their caseload.</p>
<p>5.Comprehend research methodology and be able to apply current research findings to the practice and assessment of clinical work in the field of marriage and family therapy.</p>	<p>Core faculty members engage in their own scholarly projects and allow students to work with them on those projects if they so choose. The core faculty members, led by the Clinical Director, are currently working to implement research at EMERGE Family Therapy Clinic to allow students the opportunity to gather data and apply that research to their current clinical practice. One core faculty member teaches a Research Literacy course to help students comprehend research methodology. As clinical supervisors, faculty evaluate students at the end of each semester of their practicum regarding their demonstration of applying research findings in their clinical practice.</p>
<p>6.Students will apply in both an academic and clinical setting knowledge of individual and family development, including issues related to human sexuality and sexual dysfunction.</p>	<p>Faculty teach two key courses (Resiliency and Sexual Dysfunction in Systems) to help students learn about individual and family development, including issues relating to sexuality. Both faculty members attend regular continuing education to learn more about this area of focus. Two core faculty members are Registered Play Therapists and are able to teach students more about child development and how it relates to systemic therapy. As clinical supervisors, faculty evaluate students at the end of each practicum semester regarding their demonstration of knowledge of individual and family development including issues related to sexuality and dysfunction.</p>

7. Understand contemporary and diversity issues and be able to implement that knowledge in a clinical setting.	The Clinical Director oversees the practicum partnership with Emerge Family Therapy Clinic and helps manage externship sites for students to gain a more diverse experience working with various clinical populations. The Program Director works to incorporate adjunct faculty and supervisors from different backgrounds and areas of specialization to enhance the students' learning experience in the classroom and in clinical supervision. As clinical supervisors, faculty conduct weekly live supervision utilizing a cultural competence lens. Students are regularly challenged on self-of-the-therapist and/or cultural competency-related issues when deemed necessary by the supervisor, as well as evaluated on this at the end of each semester of the practicum.
8. Demonstrate an understanding and competency of ethical, legal, and professional issues associated with the practice of marriage and family therapy and be able to apply that knowledge in a clinical setting.	A core faculty member teaches a professional and legal ethics issues course. Faculty serve on the state professional organization's board of directors and have presented at a state conference, as well as the national AAMFT conference. All faculty supervisors are AAMFT Approved Supervisors or are Supervisors in Training who facilitate students' understanding of ethical, legal, and professional issues while in the practicum. Additionally, students are evaluated by faculty supervisors at the end of each semester of the practicum on their ethical clinical choices and professionalism in the clinic.

Core Faculty Members

M. Evan Thomas, PhD, LMFT (He/Him) – Dr. Thomas is the Department Chair, an Assistant Professor, and the Program Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program. He has a BS in Psychology, a master's in child and Family Development with a Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy, and a PhD in Human Development and Family Studies with a Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy. He is an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. As Department Chair, his role includes resolving any student concerns and overseeing marketing and admissions. As Program Director, he is Site Coordinator for the UCG location of the MFT Program. In his free time, he owns a small private practice in Greenville that focuses on LGBTQ couples and substance use.

Morgan Strickland, PhD, LMFTS (She/Her)– Dr. Strickland is an Assistant Professor and the Associate Program Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program. She has a BA in Psychology, an MS in Marriage and Family Therapy, and a PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy. She is an AAMFT Approved Supervisor and a practicing, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in both North Carolina and South Carolina. She owns and operates a small private practice in Spartanburg, SC where she sees couples struggling with infidelity and conflict resolution, and individuals with anxiety.

Deneisha S. Scott-Poe, PhD (She/Her) - Professor Deneisha Scott-Poe is an Assistant Professor and Clinical Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, based at the Spartanburg location. Professor Scott-Poe obtained her MA in Marriage and Family Therapy from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC and is a fifth-year doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech. Her dissertation and research focuses on African American adult daughters who are providing care to a parent with Alzheimer's disease through the lens of Intersectionality.

A'Lyric Miles, M.A (She/Her) - Professor A'Lyric Miles is an Assistant Professor and Clinical Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program (UCG Campus). She has a BS in Psychology and her MA in Marriage and Family Therapy, obtained from Appalachian State University. Professor Miles is a doctoral candidate in the Couple, Marriage and Family Program at Texas Tech University. Her dissertation and research interest focuses on the African American communities perceptions and/or mistrust of the mental health field and how clinicians are adequately understanding bias, increasing cultural framework, modifying therapy styles, etc to alleviate or encourage those perspectives to help in repairing and rebuilding mistrust within the relationship between the mental health field and the African American Community.

Cassandra “Cassie” Cacace, PhD, LMFT (she/her) – Dr. Cacace is an Assistant Professor and the Community Engagement Director (CED) of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program. She has a BA in Psychology and her MS and PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in both South Carolina and Florida, an AAMFT Supervisor Candidate, and a member of the SCAMFT division. Dr. Cacace’s research interests focus on the application of Bowen Systems Theory to explore challenging workplace cultures, including those in the healthcare and teaching professions. She has presented her work on Bowen’s theory at the Western Pennsylvania Family Center and has a small private practice, Palmetto Therapy Connections, LLC, where she works with service professionals, couples, and individuals.

Kelly Kennedy, Ph.D., LMFT-S (She/Her) – Dr. Kennedy is a part-time core faculty member and serves as the research and data specialist for the Marriage and Family Studies Department. She has a BA in Psychology, an MS in Child and Family Development, and a Ph.D. in Child and Family Development with a specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy. She is a licensed MFT, an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, clinical member of AAMFT, and a board member for SCAMFT division. She teaches and supervises students in various phases of the practicum. Dr. Kennedy has received three grants while at Converse University and has conducted two studies. One study investigated the influence of Marriage and Family therapy for teen mothers using a systemic CBT model. The other study was a grounded study exploring resilience in African American women with breast cancer. Dr. Kennedy owns a group practice called Modern Wellness Family Counseling, LLC in Spartanburg, SC.

Adjunct Faculty Members and Supervisors

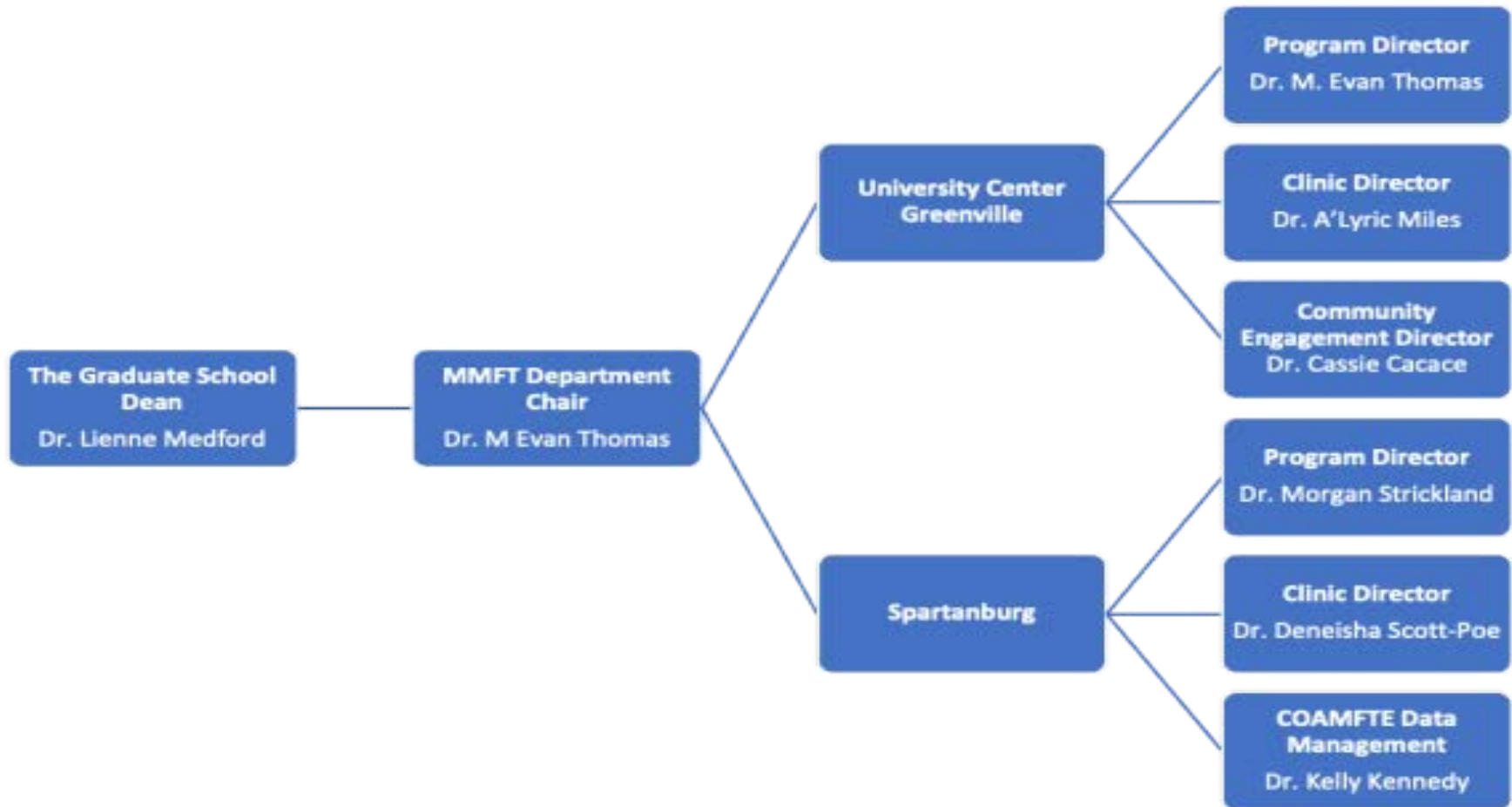
Jamie Brazell, LMFT, CST (she/her) - Jamie has an AA degree in Photography from Antonelli Institute, a BA in Women's Studies from Temple University, a M.Ed. in Human Sexuality from Widener University, and a Masters in Marriage & Family Therapy from Converse. She completed a post-graduate fellowship through WestGate Family Therapy (now known as Emerge). She is an AASECT Certified Sex Therapist, a supervisor-in-training, an adjunct professor at Converse's Marriage & Family Therapy program, and licensed as a Marriage & Family Therapist in NC. Jamie is the owner of a group practice called Out of the Woods Therapy that specializes in intersectional feminist-informed, sex-positive, LGBTQ+ inclusive psychotherapy for adults and teens in Asheville, NC. She is also a part of the lead faculty for the Sex Therapy track of the Sexual Health Certificate Program through Emory University. Jamie remains involved with community-based sex education efforts that include regular panel discussions through Vino & Vulvas as well as sex-education and trauma-informed care training events for local medical and health providers in Asheville.

Ruvi Tsokodayi English, Ph.D., MFT (She/Her) – Dr. English is an Adjunct in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at the Spartanburg Campus, and also a Senior Research and Evaluation Analyst in the Office of Accountability at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Dr. English earned her PhD in human development and family science from Virginia Tech in 2019, with a concentration in child and adolescent development. Prior to that, she earned a master's degree in marriage and family therapy from Mercy College in 2014, and a BS in Health Sciences from Mercy College in 2010. Her research and professional interests are in child and adolescent development, parenting and parent-child attachment, and family stress and coping among immigrant and refugee families. Dr. English enjoys spending time with her family when she is not working; her husband is a middle school special education teacher, and they are enjoying being parents to a new baby girl.

Dominique Vadrine, Ph.D., LMFT (She/Her)- Dr. Dominique Vadrine is a researcher practitioner who has harmonized her roles as educator, researcher, therapist, diversity facilitator and perpetual learner to provide a healing presence in the collaborative work she does with individuals, families, organizations and educational institutions. She has a BS in Child & Family Studies from Syracuse University and has her Master's in Marriage & Family Therapy from University of San Diego and her Ph.D. in Couple & Family Therapy from Drexel University. She is a AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate wherein supervises individuals who are seeking licensure as MFTs. Dr. Vadrine has a private practice, Vadrine's Healing Services, wherein she provides outpatient therapy and works with a team of trainers in providing professional development trainings for community-based and faith-based organizations. She is licensed to practice in CT, NC & SC. Dr. Vadrine is also part of the executive team and serves as lead facilitator with Speaking Down Barriers, a nonprofit organization, whose mission is Equity for all. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, painting, and her favorite hobby of all, eating delicious meals.

Susan Lea, LMFT, LMFTS, AAMFT Approved Supervisor (she/her) serves as an adjunct professor at Converse University working with the Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy program. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Masters of Marriage and Family Therapy, both from Converse University, and a graduate certificate in Child Advocacy Studies from USC Upstate. She has worked with Converse MMFT students providing clinical supervision. She also has a private practice, Susan Lea, LLC, where she specializes in anger management and domestic violence and provides mental health services for individuals, couples and families. She also works with adolescents providing behavioral health services in a middle school. She serves as the Chair of the Advisory Board for Mental Health America of Spartanburg County.

Department Organizational Chart



Program Benchmarks

There are five MMFT program benchmarks that students must move through successfully to earn their degree. If a student does not pass one of the following benchmarks or fails one of the requirements for graduation, the student and the Program Director will form a remedial plan. In addition, if a student receives three matters of record from EMERGE Family Therapy Clinic, he or she will meet with the EMERGE staff and Converse faculty to determine the need for a remedial plan. If the issue is clinic related, the student's individual supervisor and Clinic Director will also participate in formulation of a remedial plan. The remedial plan will include behavioral markers the student should achieve within the next long semester of the program to remain in the program. The Program Director will take responsibility to review the student's progress toward the remedial plan one month after putting the plan in place as well as at the end of the remedial period. If a student does not pass the remedial plan, they may be removed from the practicum or from the program altogether. Additionally, the Program Director reviews students' academic performance throughout the program. Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA average at all times. Students dropping below a 3.0 GPA average are in danger of being dismissed from the program.

Benchmark 1 – Professional Disposition

The first benchmark occurs during the Fall semester of the first year in the program in anticipation of beginning the practicum. The timing of this benchmark depends on when the student will be entering the practicum. This benchmark occurs automatically (i.e., students do not need to do anything to begin the process).

The Associate Program Director asks all instructors within the MMFT program to fill out a Professional Disposition form on each student that they have taught in the program. This form is found in the appendix of this handbook. The form assesses time management, respect for diversity, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. Students must receive at least a 3.5 on this form in order to pass the benchmark. After collecting this data, the program director informs students in writing of the outcome of the evaluation. Students who pass the Professional Disposition are eligible to continue to the next benchmark in the program, which is the Clinical Readiness Committee meeting.

Benchmark 2 – Clinical Readiness Meeting

Benchmark 2, the Clinical Readiness Meeting, assesses whether students are ready to enter the Pre-Practicum and Practicum stages of the program. Students must complete an application form and essay provided by the Clinical Director in order to begin this benchmark. The form must be signed by their academic advisor and then turned in through the MFT Canvas page at least one week before the scheduled Clinical Readiness Meeting. A release to run the background check is part of the application. A clean background check is necessary in order to complete this benchmark and to enroll in the spring pre-practicum course.

The Clinic Director at each location will coordinate for each student to schedule a meeting with the Clinical Readiness Committee. The Clinical Readiness Committee is generally made up of the Clinic Director and Program Director for the corresponding campus, and several EMERGE staff including the Executive Director. Students should come to the meeting prepared to discuss why they believe they are ready to begin the practicum, how they will manage their time, what hours they will be devoting to the practicum, and what placement site, if any, they might prefer. Committee members will interview students and fill out the Clinical Readiness Meeting rubric found in the appendix of this handbook. Students must obtain an average of 3.5 on the Clinical Readiness Meeting rubric in order to pass. At the end of the interview, if there are no concerns,

students will be notified that they have passed. After successful completion of the meeting, the EMERGE Operations Director will obtain the students' liability insurance. If students do not pass this interview, the Clinic Director will develop a remedial plan which the student must complete in order to register for the pre-practicum course.

Upon completion of Benchmark 2, students are able to register for the spring Pre-Practicum course. Students are required to take the Pre-Practicum course in the semester **immediately preceding** their first semester in Practicum. If a student completes the Pre-Practicum course and is then unable to register for the Practicum in the following semester, the student will be required to retake the Pre-Practicum course before starting the Practicum experience.

Other requirements for enrolling in Practicum:

1. Completion of a minimum of 24 credit hours in the program or permission of academic advisor.
2. Completion of practicum prerequisites MFS634; MFS680; MFS661; MFS645; MFS642; MFS639, MFS635, or MFS646; and MFS683, or permission of academic advisor.
3. No academic incompletes.
4. Successful completion of Benchmarks 1 and 2
5. Receipt of liability insurance.
6. Passing a criminal background check.

Information about Clinical Practicum

The clinical practicum is a 15 consecutive month, five semester experience. Students should prepare to devote a minimum of 20 hours a week to clinic responsibilities, including client contact, supervision, quarterly clinic meetings, telephone calls, interfacing with other agencies and professionals, and record-keeping. Students should also expect to continue to see clients during academic breaks. No student should be absent from the clinic longer than one week without permission from his or her supervisor. Students should also remember that there will be additional fees associated with the practicum that will be scheduled from their financial aid disbursement.

EMERGE Family Therapy Clinic

The practicum experience is provided by EMERGE Family Therapy & Training Clinic (EMERGE). Converse University partners with EMERGE, but the clinic is not owned or operated by the University, which is why there are additional fees associated with the practicum experience. In addition to providing the practicum experience for graduate students, EMERGE also provides the internship experience for licensed interns who, as part of a Fellowship at the clinic, often serve as mentors to incoming practicum students. The fellowship is only available at the Spartanburg clinic.

EMERGE has two clinics. The main clinic is located at 138 Dillon Drive in Spartanburg, and the branch clinic is located at the University Center of Greenville. Heather Witt is the Executive Director of EMERGE. Externship sites are listed in the Practicum Application.

Students will be expected to use a clinic specific email account assigned to them at the start of the practicum. This email can be linked to students' Converse email for ease of communication.

Supervision

All students are assigned a supervisor for each semester. This first semester is designed to be a

very structured experience that transitions the student gradually into clinical work. Any questions a student has about any aspect of the clinical experience should be directed to students' assigned individual supervisor or the Clinical Director. The EMERGE staff provides a clinic orientation that is mandatory for practicum students. More information about supervision and conducting therapy sessions will be provided in-depth in the Pre-Practicum course and can also be found in the EMERGE Handbook.

Requirements of the Clinical Practicum

Client Contact Hours

- Client contact hours are defined as time spent with a client system (individual, couple, or family), including intake sessions, assessments, and weekly therapy sessions. Telephone calls (e.g., scheduling or check-in phone calls) do not count towards client contact hours.
- Students must log in a total of 500 direct client contact hours during their five-semester clinical practicum.
- No more than 100 hours of the total 500 can be counted from observation hours. Observation hours include viewing another student therapist during a live or recorded therapy session.
- At least 250 of the 500 direct client contact must be relational, that is with couples, children under 18 years old, or families. Groups may also be considered relational.
- At least 250 of the 500 direct client contact must be within the Emerge facilities.
- At least 60% of the total hours must be in person sessions. (Up to 40% of the total hours may be TeleHealth sessions.)
- Students must complete a minimum of 100 supervision hours
- 50 of the 100 hours of supervision must be direct observation, defined as audio, video, or live supervision
- Students must maintain a ratio of one hour of supervision for every five hours of direct client contact (.20 ratio).

Documentation

- Students are to keep a log of their client contact hours using the provided Google Spreadsheet by the 5th of each month (e.g., August hours should be submitted no later than September 5th). Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- Students are responsible for filling out a Weekly Supervision Summary sheet and giving this log to their Supervisor at each weekly individual Supervision meeting (see Appendix).
- Students are to fill out a Form D at the end of the Practicum after they have completed all requirements. This should be turned in through Canvas (see Appendix).
- File audits are regularly conducted by Post Degree Institute fellows of all student files assessing for accuracy and completeness. In preparation for this audit, the student turns in a list of their caseload to the file audit coordinator. Results of the audit are given to the student and the student's individual supervisor for feedback during the practicum student semester evaluation. Students have one week after receiving audit feedback to make any necessary corrections. Failure to complete audit corrections will result in a grade reduction of one full letter grade.

Maintain Client Confidentiality

- Students are responsible to maintain their clients' confidentiality at all times.
- Client files, located on TheraNest, are never to be viewed in public spaces.

- Recording sessions are part of a client's file and should be treated with the same confidentiality as other clinical material.
- If a student knows or recognizes a client's name during an intake assignment, they should inform the office manager and return the intake.
- If students realize they know a client being presented at individual or group supervision, they must excuse themselves from the supervision session.
- Students should exercise caution when discussing client cases whether in the clinic, the classroom, or in public places, such as restaurants.
- Current students should not refer themselves or immediate family members to either clinic EMERGE Clinic to avoid dual relationships.

Practice Effectively with a Wide Variety of Clients

- The purpose of the Clinical Practicum is to provide students an opportunity to apply in a clinical setting all the academic knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. By the completion of the 5-semester practicum, students should be practicing effectively and applying clinical skills with a wide variety of clients at a developmental level consistent with an entry-level therapist.
- Students are expected to have an active caseload of at least 15 clients once a caseload is established and may not remove themselves from client assignment without discussing with their supervisor.

Assessing Effective Practice

- Through direct observation methods, individual and group supervisors provide students with a great deal of assessment and feedback surrounding effective practice
- Supervisors fill out a Practicum Student Evaluation form (see Appendix) which quantitatively assesses student competencies for clinical effectiveness and professionalism. This form is used during end-of-semester evaluations, as well as to calculate final grades for each semester of the practicum.
- Clinical comprehensive exams will also evaluate effectiveness (See Benchmark 3).

Gap Supervision Requirements

Gap supervision is provided during breaks between semesters to students signed up for practicum and clinically active. Gap supervision dates are determined at the beginning of each school year, and email reminders and sign-up sheets for group times are sent before the semester break. During gap supervision, students must communicate directly with their gap supervisor and attend group supervision as instructed by their clinic director.

Virtual Supervision

South Carolina does not have any regulations that prohibit virtual supervision. Virtual supervision is offered to students as needed and is up to the individual supervisor. The virtual supervision requirements are equivalent to in-person supervision (i.e., discussing safety concerns, completing client logs, and being in a confidential space).

Telehealth Training Requirement

EMERGE Family Therapy Clinic provides [telehealth training](#) for all practicum students. This 3-hour self-paced Essential Telehealth Law and Ethical Issues training explores legal and ethical requirements, how to respond to crises, how to properly document telehealth sessions, and the importance of using a confidential space to conduct telehealth sessions. Students are required to complete this training before beginning their practicum experience.

Grounds for Dismissal from the Practicum:

The Executive Director of Emerge may remove a clinical practicum student for appropriate reasons. Appropriate reasons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Disobeying a Supervisor's instructions on a practicum case involving a legal or ethical issue, including suicidal or homicidal clients, duty-to-warn or mandatory reporting issues, or dual relationship issues
- Failure to inform your practicum supervisor if you have cases that involve the above issues
- Lack of progress in clinical competency
- Breach of professional ethics as defined by the AAMFT and SC Licensure Board
- Failure to comply with COAMFTE standards or licensure statute or regulations
- Engaging in substance abuse behaviors that threaten client care
- Endangering clients in any way, including not contacting or covering clients for over 24 business hours when out of town or unavailable
- Non-compliance with EMERGE guidelines

The student may request a hearing from a Student Evaluation Committee composed of the faculty at EMERGE upon dismissal notification. The decision of the evaluation committee is final.

Appeals Process

Students enrolled in the clinical Marriage and Family Therapy program have the right to appeal any action taken that adversely affects them. The appeal process is as follows:

1. The student consults with his/her individual supervisor. If no resolution occurs, the student proceeds to the second step.
2. The aforementioned parties carry the concern to the Clinical Director of the MMFT program. If no resolution occurs, the student proceeds to the third step.
3. The aforementioned parties carry the concern to the EMERGE Executive Director. If no resolution occurs, the student proceeds to the fourth step.
4. The aforementioned parties carry the concern to the EMERGE Evaluation Committee. This committee is composed of all clinical supervisors and clinical faculty of EMERGE. The decision of the Evaluation Committee is final. Each member of the Evaluation Committee has one vote. Should a member of the Evaluation Committee be involved in that student's concern, they are to be present but not participate in any voting. Clear written documentation of any interventions and/or decision-making in connection with the process is to be entered into the official records of EMERGE and the MMFT program.
5. Any student may exercise his/her right of appeal through the South Carolina Board of Examiners for the Licensure of Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists,

Addictions Counselors, and Psycho-Educational Specialists. He/She may also appeal to the Ethics Committee of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy by first contacting the Ethics Committee chair of the South Carolina Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. The contact information for these organizations is as follows:

SCAMFT – telephone 1-803-779-0340
AAMFT – 112 South Alfred Street, Alexandria, Va. 22314-3061
Telephone: 703-838-9808
Fax: 703-838-9805

South Carolina Board of Examiners for LPC, LMFT, and PES
P. O. Box 11329
Columbia, SC 29211-1329
Telephone: 803-895-4658

Benchmark 3- Clinical Comprehensive Exam

Upon passing Benchmarks 1 and 2 and demonstrating successful progression through the first three semesters of practicum, students will sit for their Clinical Comprehensive Exam. The exam will take place during the fourth or fifth semester of the practicum experience (typically spring semester).

Requirements to sit for Clinical Comprehensive Exam:

1. Student must be in the MFS 648-D or MFS 648-E semester of the Practicum.
2. Student must have a current GPA of 3.0 or above in the MMFT program overall as well as in the practicum.
3. Student must have the approval of their individual supervisor and the Clinical Director of their campus.

For the Clinical Comprehensive Exam, students will select a client system that they have seen consistently for at least three months. The Clinical Comprehensive Exam is composed of three parts: 1) a written paper, 2) video clips of the student conducting therapy, and 3) a presentation and oral defense. On the exam presentation date, the student will present this case along with the videotaped excerpts and their written narrative to the Clinical Comprehensive Exam Committee made up of supervisors at EMERGE.

The written paper

The written portion of the exam should include a clear and concise description of systems assumptions and concepts that specifically inform your theory of change. It should include the identification of a specific model and concepts about that model that are integrated with your theory of change. You should discuss the practical application of your integrated theory from the initiation of therapy through termination. Papers are to be written in APA 7 format, using subheadings to organize your paper. *At least six references at minimum are expected. Citing your own papers or PowerPoints from the program is not permitted.* Papers are to be no longer than 14 pages excluding references. **Students will submit the paper to the MFT Program Canvas site at least two weeks prior to the scheduled exam presentation date.**

Students must use one of the following theories:

1. Emotionally-Focused Therapy (EFT)
2. Structural Family Therapy
3. Collaborative Language Systems (CLS)
4. Bowen
5. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)
6. Narrative
7. Experiential
8. Framo
9. Contextual
10. Strategic Family Therapy
11. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
12. Milan
13. Internal Family Systems (IFS)
14. Couples Behavioral Therapy

Expectations for the written paper and presentation:

- The student must be prepared to describe the MFT model he/she used for the case and answer any questions about their conceptualization
 - Note: If the videotape shows the student using a technique not consistent with the model they state they are using (i.e. asking a Miracle Question when you are using Structural Therapy), the student should be able to explain this choice
- Please remember, the exam presentation is not a supervision session. The supervisors are not interested in the client dynamics except as they informed your therapeutic approach. The supervisors are interested in seeing examples of your clinical work that clearly demonstrates the your ability to remain consistent with a model

*For the following questions, please discuss your overall theory of change AND how this is represented in the case you chose to use for clinical comps. Video examples are expected to be shown that represent this narrative. An example outline is provided on the Canvas page.

DESCRIBE YOUR JOINING PROCESS.

How do you build a strong relationship with your clients?

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THERAPY?

How do you delineate between client goals and therapist goals?

HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN PROBLEM FORMATION FROM A SYSTEMIC OR INTERPERSONAL PERSPECTIVE (DIAGNOSIS/ASSESSMENT)?

Give an example of how you shift a potential client problem that is initially presented or assessed in a linear, individual and/ or pathologizing manner, and how you could reconceptualize the problem systematically.

WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT CHANGE?

What causes people/systems to change? How does the process of change occur in the therapy room? Is there a difference between change that occurs in the therapy room and change that occurs outside of therapy?

DESCRIBE YOUR INTEGRATED THEORY OF CHANGE.

Describe (and reference) the major theory that guides your work. What are the major theoretical tenets? How do you integrate these theories into your clinical work? Clearly indicate that you understand the theories, and make sure that the video clips shown represent this theory.

WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR INTERVENTIONS?

Be sure the interventions you show flow from the theory you are declaring to use. Indicate how your intervention specifically impacted client change.

At least one video clip needs to show this intervention.

HOW DOES CULTURAL DIVERSITY INFORM YOUR THEORY OF THERAPY?

How do the issues of gender, culture, race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, religion and/or spirituality inform your theory of therapy? Give examples.

At least one video clip needs to show this.

REFLECT UPON YOUR “SELF OF THE THERAPIST”.

How have you influenced therapy, and how has therapy influenced you? How do your values affect therapy? Given your stage in the learning process, reflect upon your strength and growth areas.

The student must receive a passing score on the Clinical Comprehensive Exam rubric (see Appendix) from a majority of the Clinical Comprehensive Exam Committee members in order to pass this benchmark. Students will be asked to briefly step out of the room at the end of the presentation so that committee members can discuss scores. Students will be asked to reenter the room and will be notified if they have passed or failed. Students who do not pass will create a remedial plan with the Clinical Director and will need to schedule another exam.

Benchmark 4- Academic Comprehensive Exam

The Academic Comprehensive Exam is a multiple choice exam that is administered through Canvas in one of the computer labs or from students’ personal computers during a designated testing window. The topics covered include major theories of MFT, major models of MFT, diagnosing using DSM criteria, ethical issues, cultural and diversity issues, developmental and family life cycle issues, and treatment of sexual dysfunction issues. Students do not need to pass their clinical comprehensive exam before being allowed to sit for their academic comprehensive exam.

Requirements to sit for exam:

1. Student must have a current GPA of 3.0 or above in the MMFT program.
2. Student can have no incompletes in the program.
3. Student must be in or about to enter their last long academic semester of the program.
Students who are in their last semester of academic coursework but have not completed their practicum requirements may still sit for the exam.

Students must pass the Academic Comprehensive Exam before graduation. A score of at least 70% is considered a passing score. If a student does not pass with 70%, they must take the exam a second time. Failure to pass twice will result in the student taking a written exam created by the Converse Faculty.

Benchmark 5 – Graduation

The requirements for graduation from the MMFT program are as follows:

1. Sixty-three credit hours of required and elective MFT coursework with at least 3.0 GPA.
 - a. Including 15 credit hours of clinical practicum including the following:
 - i. Successful completion of all the requirements of the Clinical Practicum.
 - ii. A rating of “pass” on Clinical Comprehensive Exam
2. A rating of “pass” on the Academic Comprehensive Exam

3. Completion of any incomplete work by the end of the final term with grades sent to the Registrar and recorded by the appropriate deadline. (See Converse Academic Calendar).
4. Not receiving any incomplete grades in the summer semester immediately preceding summer graduation.
5. Have all transfer work sent to the Dean by the end of the spring term. The dean, who with the advisor approves the transfer, notifies the Registrar by the appropriate deadline. (See Converse academic calendar)
6. Have fulfilled all financial responsibilities no later than one week prior to graduation.
7. Request and complete a Degree Application form the Graduate School
8. Turn in Form D (final hour form) to Canvas

Appendix

- Professional Disposition Standards Survey for MMFT Instructors
- Clinical Readiness Committee Meeting Rubric & Typical Interview Questions
- Weekly Supervision Form
- Weekly Client Contact Tracking Sheet
- Practicum End-of-Semester Evaluation Rubric
- Clinical Comprehensive Exam Rubric
- Form D
- Regulatory Alignment Student Signed Acknowledgement

Converse University Professional Disposition Standards

Master of Marriage and Family Therapy

An important responsibility of a Marriage and Family Therapy training program is to ensure that those who proceed to the clinical practicum manifest the appropriate disposition for providing therapy to clients. Students are expected to demonstrate quality of character and the ability to make a contribution to the field of marriage and family therapy. This assessment sheet exists to provide students with feedback from their instructors on any behaviors that may be inconsistent with the professional disposition required of practicum students and, ultimately, marriage and family therapists. Each student will be rated on the following dispositions when they have completed from 15 to 30 credit hours.

Please rate students on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 representing little or no evidence of this disposition and 5 representing exemplary evidence of this disposition. Circle the appropriate number. If you rated a student at 3 or below, please explain the deficit in the space provided, or attach a separate sheet.

Instructor: _____

Student: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Displays good time management, i.e. class attendance, punctuality, and completion of assignment within class guidelines.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Respects diversity and individual differences.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Displays intellectual curiosity and interest in subject matter.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Values philosophical and theoretical perspectives in discussion and reflection.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Balances self-exploration with appropriate personal boundaries in class discussions and assignments.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Demonstrates an awareness of his/her own beliefs and attitudes.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Demonstrates a positive attitude toward self, instructors, potential clients, peers and fellow students, and subject matter.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Handles class role-plays and therapy observations in a competent and mature manner.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Values professional growth and development, i.e. professional organizations, presentations, conference attendance, additional study, etc.

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5 Receives and values feedback.

Comments: _____

***Emerge Therapy Clinic
Clinical Readiness Committee Meeting Rubric***

1 Poor; 2 Below Average; 3 Average; 4 Above Average; 5 Excellent

Student Demonstrates:	1	2	3	4	5
Self of the Therapist Awareness (Therapist is conscious of issues that may arise during practicum, therapist has a strong support network, therapist is reasonably prepared for challenges they will encounter, therapist receives feedback well, therapist demonstrates appropriate boundaries during a professional evaluation)					
Preparatory Life Experiences (Serving others, volunteering, personal counseling, resiliency in surviving personal struggles)					
Philosophy of Helping Others (Evidence that student genuinely desires to serve others, and work within a systemic framework)					
Coursework Requirements (Student has successfully completed prerequisite coursework in preparation for practicum)					
Favorable Faculty Evaluations (Student has support of clinical director and at least one other faculty member to enter practicum)					
Cultural Diversity (Student has demonstrated a sensitivity to and understanding of diversity issues in clinical applications)					
Interview (Answers questions genuinely, and relates well to faculty and site coordinators, appears to have some level of confidence in ability to successfully navigate practicum, seems to be a good fit for program or placement site, appropriate dress & professionalism)					

Optional Qualitative Questions generally asked during Clinical Readiness Meetings:

- How will you balance work, family, practicum, and coursework responsibilities? How have you prepared yourself and significant others for this rigorous commitment?
- What are your sources of support and how will you care for your self during this challenging experience?
- Does your current schedule accommodate seeing a minimum of 10 clients a week in addition to coursework, Supervision, and paperwork?
- What populations are you interested in working with and what would be an ideal placement for you?
- You'll be seeing a very diverse population in terms of diagnoses, culture, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. What issues do you anticipate might crop up for you?
- In what ways do you feel prepared for entering the practicum?
- What are you most concerned about in regards to entering the clinical practicum?
- How many courses will you take throughout the practicum? Is this a realistic expectation?

- How has the MFT course work and/or life experiences prepared you for entering the clinical practicum?
- What questions do you have for faculty and site Supervisors?
- What do you hope to gain from this experience?

Converse University
Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Client Summary Sheet

Therapist: _____ Updated date: _____

Client	I, C, or F	Presenting Concern and/or Diagnosis	Date of Last Session	Date of Next Session	Total # of Sessions	Any Risks or Crisis?	Is All Paperwork Up to Date?	Date of Next Tx Plan Update	Last Date Discussed in Supervision

*This form should be updated weekly and turned into your supervisor during individual supervision meetings. Insert more rows to correspond to the number of clients on your caseload

Weekly Client Contact Tracking Sheet

Date	Client Initials	Modality	Client Constellation	Child? Y/N	
Weekly Total:					
Previous Week Total:					
Cumulative Monthly Total:					

Indicate modality as:
 Individual (1 System)
 Group (2+ Systems)
 Alternative

Indicate client constellation as:
 Individual
 Couple
 Family
 Group Individual
 Group Couple
 Group Family
 Alternative Individual
 Alternative Group
 Alternative Family

This sheet should be used to track your weekly client hours and kept for your own records. There is also an online version of this sheet if you prefer Excel. Note: Please record hours in terms of .5 or 1 by rounding to the nearest half hour of each session. You will only be asked to turn these forms in if there is a discrepancy on your Time2Track hours log.

Practicum End-of-Semester Evaluation

Student: _____ Supervisor: _____

Date: _____ Semester: (Circle/Highlight) A B C D E

1 Poor; 2 Below Average; 3 Average; 4 Above Average; 5 Excellent

Student Learning Outcomes	Student Demonstrates	1	2	3	4	5
4, 7	Professional Dress & Behavior (No jeans, athletic wear, tight clothing, heavy perfume, etc.; On-time for Supervision, client sessions, & meetings; Professional demeanor towards clients, students, outside professionals; Returns calls quickly; Shows strong work ethic)					
1, 2, 4	Case File Management (Maintains orderly client files; Updates treatment plans when necessary; Legible progress notes; Has all appropriate signatures and documentation in timely manner; Passes file audit)					
4	Consistent Attendance (Attends individual and group Supervision regularly; Attends quarterly clinic meeting; Consistently schedules & attends client sessions)					
1, 2	Application of Systems Theory & MFT Models of Therapy (Displays theoretical knowledge of MFT; Can distinguish between context, content, & process; Attempts to apply MFT models in therapy)					
5, 7	Openness to Feedback & Personal Growth (Open to discussion of self-of-the-therapist issues; Willing to learn by taking risks; Open to being challenged by Supervisors and peers; Utilizes Supervision suggestions with clients; Has clear personal & professional goals; Utilizes current research findings in clinical work)					
1, 2	Participation in Supervision (Encourages others in individual & group Supervision; Engaged in case discussion; Prepared for case presentations; Supportive of peers)					
4	Meets Supervision Requirements (Has had at least 3 live Supervision sessions; Maintains a .20 or higher Supervision ratio; At least 50% of Supervision hours consist of raw data; Presents clinical comps video if applicable)					
1, 2, 4	Improvement of Clinical Skills (Shows progress in utilizing basic therapy skills; Shows awareness of diversity issues and other aspects of cultural context; Able to develop strong rapport with clients; Appears comfortable in the therapy room; Able to appropriately assess & diagnose clients using the DSM 5; Able to develop goals & treatment plan with each client)					

Clinical Comprehensive Exam Scoring Rubric

	5-3.5	3.4-0	Program Outcomes	Student Learning Outcomes
Videotaped sessions Score from back of sheet: _____	Student presented three video clips demonstrating mastery of a designated model, basic skills, and progress of therapy over a period of at least 3 months with a relational case. <i>See attached rubric on following sheet.</i>	Student presented less than three video clips or video clips do not demonstrate use of designated model, basic skills, or progress of therapy.	1, 3	1, 2
Written narrative Score: _____	Student's written narrative includes thorough, accurate, and grammatically correct psycho-social history, presenting complaint, theoretical conceptualization, treatment plan and progress of therapy, any cultural/diversity issues, any collaboration with other agencies, any ethical/legal issues, description of model used and theory of change, self-of-therapist issues, and relevant DSM-5 diagnoses.	Student's written narrative does not include all of the components listed, or discussions are poorly developed and unclear.	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8
Oral presentation Score: _____	Student provided accurate verbal description of theoretical approach and techniques used in video clips during presentation. Student responds to Supervisors' questions accurately and completely.	Student's verbal description of theoretical approach and techniques used are inaccurate or inconsistent with videotaped sessions presented; Student responses to Supervisors' questions are inaccurate or inadequate.	1, 3, 5, 7	1, 2, 7, 8

To pass the clinical comprehensive exams, students must receive a cumulative average score of at least 3.5.

Student: _____ Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Overall Grade: _____

Videotaped Sessions:

3 points

Student demonstrates an understanding of theory and the model and uses techniques and stances of the therapist appropriately.

_____ Session 1 followed the model, or if wasn't consistent, a valid explanation was given (1 point)

_____ Session 2 followed the model, or if wasn't consistent, a valid explanation was given (1 point)

_____ Session 3 followed the model, or if wasn't consistent, a valid explanation was given (1 point)

1 point

Student utilizes basic techniques consistently throughout the session and shows exemplary empathy, warmth and genuineness

_____ Body language and facial expression was calming and reflected interest and concern; eye contact with client (.2 points)

_____ Counselor to therapist talk time appropriate; tone and volume were appropriate and mirrored the client's (.2 points)

_____ Comfortable with any silences that occurred (.2 points)

_____ Used both open and closed questions to facilitate the telling of the client's story; tracked the client's story closely (.2 points)

_____ Used basic listening skills; Reflected the client's feelings accurately and with compassion when appropriate (.2 points)

1 point

Three videotaped sessions over 3 months (.25 points)

_____ Student demonstrates exemplary dress, language, and management of the sessions (.25 points)

_____ Student demonstrates exemplary respect for client's position, contextual issues and/or power differential (.25 points)

_____ Student identifies ethical issues and takes appropriate action if needed (.25 points)

Video Total: _____/5

FORM D: Graduating Client Contact and Supervision Hours Reporting Form

Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Program – Converse University

This form should be completed and turned in to the Clinical Director before you apply for graduation. **Please keep a copy of this form for your records.** This form must be turned in for you to receive a final grade for your practicum.

Student name: _____

Modality	Individual	Couple	Family	Relational Total	TOTAL CLIENT CONTACT HOURS	Case Report	Live	Video / Audio	Direct Observation	TOTAL SUPERVISION HOURS
Individual										
Group										
Alternative					(no more than 100)					
CUMULATIVE TOTAL HOURS IN PROGRAM:				(250 hours)	(500 hrs)				(50 hrs)	(100 hrs)
	Ratio of Supervision to Client Contact (1:5 = bb/nn should equal .20 or greater): _____									

Student's Signature: _____	Supervisor's Signature: _____
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Regulatory Alignment Student Signed Acknowledgement

Marriage and Family Therapy is a profession that leads to licensure in all 50 states; however, each state has individual laws and regulations about what is needed to become licensed as an 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 Converse University was designed to meet MFT licensure requirements in the state of South Carolina. You may read more about the state requirements for MFT licensure in South Carolina by clicking this [link](#).

If you have questions about the program's alignment with professional licensure, you may contact the Program Director: Dr. Evan Thomas, at evan.thomas@converse.edu

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

I acknowledge that I have been informed and am aware that licensing regulations differ across states and provinces. I understand that the Converse University MFT program is designed to meet the licensure requirements in the state of South Carolina and that an MFT degree from this program may not meet MFT licensing requirements in a different state.

Printed name as shown in the application

Signature (may be electronic)

Date