

LIBERTY
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SCHOOL *of* BEHAVIORAL
SCIENCES

Master of Marriage and Family Therapy

2026-2027 Program Handbook

Department of Community Care & Counseling

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Authority of the Handbook

The policies and procedures described in this handbook supersede those described in previous handbooks and replace all other communications on issues addressed herein. Particular policies and procedures are Department of Community Care and Counseling (DCCC) specific. The policies and procedures apply to current and newly accepted students. Students who are currently taking master's courses in Marriage and Family Therapy must adhere to these guidelines except for any changes in the academic program.

Disclosure Statement

All state boards have unique licensure requirements. Therefore, before enrolling in a licensure program at Liberty University, students should consult the rules and regulations regarding marriage and family therapy for the particular state that they intend to seek licensure after graduation. The 60-hour Master of Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) degree is designed to lead to professional licensure as outlined by most states and territories in the United States. It is important that you review this link for your specific state https://www.liberty.edu/statelicensure/.

Enrollment in MMFT licensure programs does not guarantee a degree from Liberty or qualification for professional licensure. Students are responsible for meeting all academic and professional requirements for graduation. Further information regarding these academic and professional requirements is outlined in this handbook. Students enrolled in the Marriage and Family Therapy licensure program are responsible for knowing the material outlined in this handbook.

For issues regarding course scheduling, contact LUO (Liberty University Online) Academic Advising. Then, if needed, contact the Director, Dr. Marcus N. Tanner mntanner@liberty.edu. For Internship, please contact internship@liberty.edu. If appealing a decision made by the Internship office, please contact Dr. April Crable at acrable@liberty.edu.

Contact Information

Liberty University Executive Leadership

Department of Community Care and Counseling Administration (For further information call 434-592-4049)	
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Department of Community Care and Counseling Faculty and Staff

From the Marriage and Family Therapy Program Director

On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Community Care and Counseling (DCCC), I would like to welcome you to the online Graduate Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) program. The faculty are honored that you have chosen to pursue your studies here at Liberty University! This *2026-2027 Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Handbook* serves as a guide to help you better understand the program, courses, requirements, policies and procedures, and student rights and responsibilities as of Fall 2026. The faculty consider the handbook to be "required reading" for all online MMFT students, and it should be read in its entirety. It is ultimately your responsibility to know the information contained in this handbook.

Review this handbook periodically, and if questions arise, contact the program director or LUO Academic Advising. Because program policies and requirements may change from one year to the next, it is essential that you always refer to the most current handbook as you plan your graduate program, enroll in classes, and make arrangements for field placements and graduation. Although there is a lot of information contained in this handbook, it may not provide answers to all of your questions. In addition to talking with LUO Academic Advising, you may access the Liberty University Graduate Catalog.

This handbook is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of all Liberty University policies. For information about current University and departmental policies, please refer to the 2026-2027 Graduate Catalog. We are glad you are here! You are about to engage in the exciting process of becoming a marriage and family therapist. As you will see in the following pages of this handbook, the process and experiences offered at Liberty University are planned to ensure a comprehensive personal and professional educational experience. As a faculty, we feel honored to accompany you on your journey. Please contact us if we can offer additional information. We look forward to serving you.

In His Service,

The Department of Community Care and Counseling

The Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Program

1.1 Accreditation

Liberty University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Liberty University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org). Liberty is also a member of the Association of Christian Schools International.

Liberty's Master of Marriage and Family Therapy program is **not** accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). However, this program is aligned with the general coursework as required by COAMFTE. For further information on this accreditation, consult the agency website at www.coamfte.org.

1.2 Overview

The Department of Community Care and Counseling (DCCC) is a department of the School of Behavioral Sciences. The Graduate Counseling program, launched in 1981, is committed to providing quality professional training for healing human hurts from a perspective permeated by Christian faith. Our training in theory and the practice of marriage and family therapy is designed to prepare students to work as marriage and family therapists in a variety of settings. The MFT program provides foundational studies that equip students for licensure, to pursue doctoral studies and careers in community mental health and human service agencies, educational institutions, private practice, government, and business and industrial settings.

1.3 Mission

The mission of the Department of Community Care and Counseling (DCCC) is to produce ethically and spiritually aware marriage and family therapists who possess the knowledge, values, skills, and personal disposition to promote the mental health and holistic wellness of clients across diverse populations with unique worldviews.

The DCCC purpose is to accomplish this mission by the professional development of the student across the following domains:

1. Attainment of scholastic competency in all coursework,
2. Acquisition of, and ability to, apply marriage and family therapy skills with a diverse population to a standard acceptable by licensed marriage and family therapists,
3. Demonstration of emotional and mental stability and maturity in interaction with others including the ability to maintain healthy boundaries, communicate

appropriately, successfully manage personal anxiety or uncomfortable feelings, work collaboratively with others and resolve interpersonal conflict.

4. Adherence to the Professional Identity and Standards outlined by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and Liberty Graduate Student Code of Honor, and
5. Demonstration of the ability to integrate faith and spirituality into marriage and family therapy where appropriate in an ethically competent manner

1.4 Purpose

Consistent with the University's mission to develop "Christ-centered men and women with the values, knowledge, and skills essential to impact the world," DCCC seeks to educate the whole person within a framework of grace and truth, which are core values exemplified in the life of Christ and necessary for professional service; developing the knowledge, values, skills, and personal disposition necessary for effective professional service. Our mission is achieved, in significant measure, through offering rigorous academic programs, dynamic interaction with mentors, faculty, and carefully structured internships.

1.5 Commitment to Diversity

Liberty University is a school founded upon fundamental Christian values like grace, truth, and love for all persons. As believers in Christ, we must demonstrate our commitment to loving others (cf. Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28).

We approach marriage and family therapy as a profession that fosters holistic human growth and development in the cognitive, emotional, behavioral, relational, and spiritual domains of life. Our marriage and family therapy approach also supports the worth, dignity, potential and uniqueness of others who are made in the image of God. This means for us that all persons possess dignity and worth because they are unique subjects of Divine Creation. Our vision is focused on nurturing an academic community of diverse people and ideas and assuring that diversity enhances academic excellence and individual growth.

Our faculty and students are comprised of persons that represent various national, ethnic, spiritual, and denominational backgrounds. Learning to be respectful and appreciate other cultures will add to each student's experience at Liberty. For that reason, we are committed to nurturing and training a diverse student body in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of differences.

The DCCC provides an academic community for students, faculty, and staff to teach and learn from the experiences of others and to submit personal values and assumptions for reflection and critical examination. Student learning, professional and personal growth occur in a climate that encourages a deepened appreciation of differences. Therefore, we do not discriminate in our educational and counselor or MFT training programs on the basis of: race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, national/ethnic origin, sexual orientation, and physical or mental disability.

While recognizing the importance of all dimensions of diversity as mentioned above, the DCCC adheres to the following initiatives:

- To increase, through recruitment and retention measures, the diverse representation of students, faculty, and staff;
- Promote full implementation of professional standards of practice and multicultural therapy competencies across the curriculum and in specialized courses;
- To include issues of diversity throughout the instructional programs and professional development activities;
- To develop graduate assistantships opportunities to serve diverse student groups;
- To provide departmental opportunities for students and faculty to engage in the exchange of ideas and information related to diversity; and
- To maintain ongoing educational opportunities and equality of access to our academic community.
- To equip students to ethically utilize spirituality as a force for healing when and where appropriate.

Students in the MMFT program must exhibit the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy standards and ethics of the marriage and family therapy profession regarding sensitivity to and celebration of diversity.

Liberty University admits students of any race, color, and national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or handicap in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

1.6 Special Student (Non-Degree) Status

The Department grants special admissions only under exceptional circumstances. The following must be met to be enrolled as a non-degree seeking student:

1. A student must be currently enrolled in or a graduate of a master's level marriage and family therapy, clinical mental health, or a closely-related program at a regionally accredited university in order to take MMFT courses as a special student.
2. Special students will not be allowed in the MMFT 692, 693, or 694 courses. However, we will review cases for individuals who have graduated and are practicing clinicians who need additional coursework for licensure.

Students seeking additional information related to enrollment under special student status may contact Academic Advising (luoadvising@liberty.edu).

Academic Policies

2.1 Program Learning Objectives

The Master of Marriage and Family Therapy provides students with both academic course work and applied learning experiences in the classroom and at supervised internships. Students are expected to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions considered essential to the professional preparation of marriage and family therapists. To this end, the faculty developed the following learning outcomes applicable to all students. ***Master of Marriage & Family Therapy PLOs***

Cluster 1 2025-26

PLO 1: Apply Ethical/Legal Standards

Demonstrate ethical, legal, and professional competency consistent with AAMFT Code of Ethics and COAMFTE standards.

PLO 2: Apply Diverse Populations for Treatment

Understand equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive systemic therapy practices.

Cluster 2 2026-27

PLO 3: Assess Marriage and Family Therapy Skills

Use systemic family therapy theories and interventions when establishing relationships or developing treatment plans.

PLO 4: Use Developmentally Appropriate Assessments

Conduct relational assessments which incorporate systemic, trauma-informed, or evidence-based diagnostic approaches to treatment planning.

Cluster 3 2027-28

PLO 5: Integrate Biblical Principles and Secular Theories

Integrate systemic theories and evidence-based interventions in assessing, diagnosing, and treating relational and mental health concerns in individuals, couples, and families.

See Graduate Catalog

2.2 GPA Requirements and Incomplete Courses

A student must maintain a minimum of a 3.0 GPA to remain in the program. While all course grades are averaged into the GPA, course credit toward degree completion is not granted for a grade of D or F. A student may petition the registrar's office for permission to retake a course in which he or she received a grade of C+ or below. See below for information on Incompletes.

Incomplete Policy (including Medical Incomplete)

Military Incompletes

2.3 Transfer of Credits

It is the responsibility of each applicant to supply transcripts along with a request to have the credit applied to the degree program. Students may be requested to submit the course syllabus for any coursework being considered for transfer along with a rationale of why the student believes the course meets the program's requirements. The Office of Transfer Evaluations will process the information. Questions related to transfer of credit may be directed to the Registrar's Office (registrar@liberty.edu).

2.4 Independent Studies & Directed Studies

Students who need specific course work unique to their state and not offered through our program are encouraged to seek these classes in their specific state. The departmental policy is that independent studies and directed studies are not offered for these circumstances.

2.5 Planned Program of Study

The following chart lists the courses students will take and the order and times they should enroll in the courses. Students are notified that this curriculum guide is a planning document. It is not a substitute for regular consultation with their LUO advisor. This guide is subject to change. Use this guide for course planning and for discussions with your faculty/academic advisor when you set up your course of study.

Master of Marriage and Family Therapy (LUO)

COURSE #	COURSE NAME	Prerequisites/Course Notes
MMFT 500	Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy	None
MMFT 501	Professional Identity, Ethics and Legal Issues in MFT	None
MMFT 502	Family Life Cycle Development	None
MMFT 504	Cultural and Contextual Diversity in MFT	MMFT 500, 501
MMFT 506	Theological and Spiritual Integration in MFT	MMFT 500, 501
MMFT 510	Theoretical Foundations of systemic Therapy	MMFT 500, 501, 502
MMFT 515	Research Methods and Evidenced Based Practice in MFT	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504
MMFT 600	Psychopathology and Systemic Assessment	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 510
MMFT 601	Marriage and Family Therapy I: Systemic Family Therapy	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 510, 600
MMFT 602	Marriage and Family Therapy II: Contemporary Approaches and Complex Family Systems	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 510, 600, 601, 667
MMFT 603	Couples Therapy	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 510, 600, 601, 667, 602
MMFT 604	Crisis Therapy	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 506, 510, 600
MMFT 605	Addiction and Family Systems	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 506, 510, 600 601

MMFT 610	Human Sexuality	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504,506, 510, 600
MMFT 620	Counseling Children, Adolescents, & Families	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 506, 510, 600
MMFT 640	Trauma and Relational Healing	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 506, 510, 600, 601, 602, 603
MMFT 667	Systemic Diagnosis and Treatment	MMFT 500, 501, 502, 504, 510, 600
MMFT 692	MFT Internship I	MMFT 500, 501,502, 504, 510, 600, 601, 667
MMFT 693	MFT Internship II	MMFT 692
MMFT 694	MFT Internship III	MMFT 693
	Total Hours	

Recommended Course Sequence

Semester	Courses	Semester	Courses	Semester	Courses
1st Semester	MMFT 500 MMFT 501 MMFT 502	2nd Semester	MMFT 504 MMFT 510 MMFT 506	3rd Semester	MMFT 515 MMFT 600 MMFT 601
4th Semester	MMFT 602 MMFT 667 MMFT Elective	5th Semester	MMFT 603 MMFT 604 MMFT 692	6th Semester	MMFT 610 MMFT 640 MMFT 693
7th Semester	MMFT 605 MMFT 694				

Travel with LU Send

LU Send organizes international and domestic travel experiences that are linked to course credit. Details related to requirements for participation, specific destinations, and course credit information can be found here: https://www.liberty.edu/osd/lu-send/.

2.6 Course Delivery Formats

Students enrolled in the online program primarily complete their degree using a 16-week online semester with 8-week courses offered 3 times throughout the semester. The Department of Community Care and Counseling offers courses in an online delivery format. Below some are listed in addition to specific courses that may include a weekly synchronous component through an online platform. Please see the Academic Calendar for the semester and sub-term schedule.

Format 1: Online Formats

Master of Marriage and Family Therapy online courses are carefully designed to provide students with a full academic experience via distance learning. The University currently uses *Canvas®*, an online software platform, as its primary online instructional delivery method. Students interact with other students taking the same course, utilize links to online resources, view supplemental streaming video clips, and receive direct feedback from their professors using this innovative means of delivery.

Professors may also utilize Microsoft Teams for instructional purposes

Canvas

Microsoft Teams

Format 2: Synchronous Courses

MMFT online students are required to complete three full semesters of clinical experience including, Internship I, Internship II, and Internship III with a weekly class meeting component. In addition to the weekly class time, students are expected to complete additional work online over the duration of the term. Some students may need additional internship hours as required by their state. In this case, these students will repeat Internship III. The student will be provided with a meeting time prior to the first week of class, and the instructor will go over the details of the class structure, which will include student presentations and case analysis.

A Term Weekly Synchronous Online Format (MMFT 692, MMFT 693, and MMFT 694)
This 14–16-week course is delivered using a video-based classroom format. Students attend 2.5 hours of synchronous online instruction each week. In addition to the weekly class time, students are expected to complete additional work online over the duration of the term.

2.7 Dual Degrees

Students seeking to obtain a second degree through Liberty may do so, but due to the extent of overlap between required courses in the DCCC Department programs, dual degrees will not be awarded within the department.

For students pursuing a second degree outside of the DCCC department, the number of credits that can be applied toward the second degree may not exceed the maximum amount of transfer credit allowed for that degree. If two degrees share required courses exceeding the maximum allowable transfer credit for the second degree, the student must take additional courses as substitutes for the shared courses.

2.8 Academic Advising

LUO Academic Advising

Liberty's **online students** work with a team of Academic Advisors throughout their program. The academic advisors will guide students through the logistics of course advising, such as registering for classes and adding/dropping courses. Online advisors can be contacted through: https://www.liberty.edu/online/academic-advisors/ 1-800-424-9596 or macoun@liberty.edu

It is always the responsibility of the student to be aware of University policies and regulations and state licensing requirements affecting his or her program. Advisors cannot advise on matters pertaining to the regulations of state licensure boards.

2.9 Internship

Visit the Internship website for full details.

Succeeding in Internship

Since most, if not all, course work has been completed by the time of the internship experience; students contribute to the cooperating site by assisting staff in carrying out many clinical activities. For students to successfully pass the internship course, the student must demonstrate the ability to:

- Establish rapport and effective working relationships with client(s).
- Conduct a psychosocial history that includes client background information, behavioral observations, current functioning, quality of relationships, and resources and challenges.
- Develop client case conceptualizations that lead to accurate diagnosis using the DSM.
- Develop treatment plans that will motivate clients through the use of evidence- based strategies for clients' identified problem(s).
- Present case studies in scheduled supervision sessions.
- Maintain an effective therapy process and relationship until the client(s)' problem(s) have been resolved.
- Utilize feedback, direction, and constructive criticism from supervision and consultation in order to enhance professionalism in therapy
- Document clinical work in a way that meets the standards of the site, insurance companies, and the state in which the student is working.
- Work cooperatively and effectively within an agency setting and initiate appropriate professional relationships with mental health professionals outside that agency as needed.
- Telemental health may be utilized only if it is a routine service offered by the approved site.

**To begin internship, the student's site and supervisor must be approved by DCCC Internship staff, under the direction of the Director of Clinical Training and Operations. Because students cannot register for the Internship until the approval process has been completed, all documents must be submitted by the posted application deadline on the MMFT 692: Internship I website. Once the site and supervisor have been approved, the student will receive approval from the Internship Department to register for the course*.

Approval Process

Students will submit an online application through the SharePoint submission portal by using a link posted on the Internship website. Students will attach their approval documents to the online application. Students will attach their approval documents to the online application. The online application with attached approval documents must be submitted by the application deadline that is displayed on the internship webpage. Blank copies of the approval documents are available for download on the internship webpage. Registration for the MMFT 692

Internship I and the subsequent internship courses occur three times each year: approximately mid-term during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

*To begin internship, the student's site and supervisor must be approved by the DCCC Internship staff, under the direction of the Director of Clinical Training. Because students cannot register for the Internship until the approval process has been completed, all documents must be submitted by the posted application deadline. Once the site and supervisor have been approved, the student will receive approval from the Internship Department to register for the course.

Preparation

Because of university and state requirements for placing students in internship courses, it is essential that students begin preparing for their internship early in their program. Students are encouraged to read the Internship Manual posted on the Internship website. Please carefully review the Internship Field Manual for additional information.

Complete Background Checks

Be aware that state boards review an applicant's criminal history to determine if he/she is eligible to hold a license. If you have a criminal history, you will need to contact your state board of counseling/therapy to determine if you are eligible for a marriage and family therapy license in that state. Due to these varying licensure requirements, our programs require you, as an MFT in training, to complete background checks. Clearance of the background checks will be required for application to the internship.

Finding a Site

Students are responsible for finding their internship site and their site-supervisor. Students are advised to allow a minimum of three to four months for the process. The internship webpages provide some suggestions for potential clinical sites. Marriage and Family Therapy students seeking licensure need to be aware of state requirements for total internship hours and how many of those hours must be relational.

State Licensure Requirements

Students intending to seek Marriage and Family Therapy licensure in any state after graduation are required to know their state(s) licensure requirements where they will seek licensure because a state's fieldwork course hours and supervisory requirements may differ from state to state. When there is a difference, students must complete the greater amount: Liberty University or the State. More information about state licensure board regulations can be found at MFT Licensing Boards.

International Internship Policy

DCCC is aware of many challenges that students living abroad face regarding the completion of the internship requirements. Therefore, the Internship Office has created the following policy to help our students living abroad succeed in completing their internship experience.

Specific states may require internships to be taken at a site location in the state where you plan to seek licensure. If this is the case, an international internship may not be eligible towards licensure. Before identifying an international internship site, please check with your state regarding any potential residency requirements pertaining to the actual physical location of internship sites. Additionally, students are encouraged to visit their state licensure board to further familiarize themselves with the process, requirements, and post-graduation policies and procedures.

In addition to the standard application process, students looking to complete an international internship must also meet the following criteria:

- Submit required documents
    - Informed consent
    - Treatment plans
    - Recordkeeping

International internship sites and supervisors must meet the following criteria for students seeking eventual licensure in the United States:

- **Site must be sponsored by an American organization.**
- **Site must follow the general guidelines established by the marriage and family therapy profession in the U.S.** (e.g. AAMFT, AAMFT Codes of Ethics; state board regulations; etc.).
- Supervisor must be licensed in the United States.
- Supervisor must hold a valid state license in marriage and family therapy and have a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and/or hold a PhD or EdD in Marriage and Family Therapy from a regionally accredited university.
- The site and supervisor approval will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Internship office.

Students not seeking licensure in the United States:

- **Must provide Internship Office with a written statement of their intent to not pursue licensure in the United States.**

2.10 Break in Enrollment

A student breaks enrollment if he/she does not matriculate in a course at least once every academic year. Admission status is subject to the terms of any previous academic or disciplinary probation, suspension, or dismissal. Students may be required to provide official transcripts from all educational institutions attended since enrollment at Liberty. Admission decisions for re-applicants will be based on the current admission criteria of the respective degree program at the time the new application is submitted. Students who break enrollment and apply for readmission will be required to follow the current degree completion plan in

effect at the time of re-entry to the University. Any military student wishing to be readmitted who broke enrollment due to deployment must contact the Office of Military Affairs.

2.11 Time Limit for Degree Completion

The time limit for completing the Master's degree from the enrollment date of the first course taken is ten years. Any MFT courses taken at Liberty, which are over ten years old will need to be repeated for a student to graduate with the MFT degree.

2.12 Course Repeat and Grade Replacement Policy

To graduate from the Marriage and Family Therapy program, a student must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. A course grade of "D" or "F" cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of the program. A maximum of two courses (6 hours) with a grade of "C+/C/C-" can count toward graduation, but the student must maintain a GPA of 3.0. Students who receive a grade less than B- may repeat a course and replace the initial grade; however, students can only replace a maximum of two courses (6 credits). Both grades will appear on their transcripts, but the replaced grade will not count towards their GPA. The grades of any courses repeated beyond the six credits will apply to their GPA. There is a maximum of two total course repeats. In other words, students may repeat and replace a course in which a grade below B- was received two times, keeping in mind grade replacement can only be used a maximum of two times in the program. Once the grade replacement limit has been met (i.e., two courses have been repeated and initial grades replaced), any additional course repeats will apply to the student's overall GPA. If a student exceeds the course repeat and grade replacement policy and is unable to maintain a 3.0 GPA **or** has not satisfactorily completed pre-requisite courses to continue with degree completion course progression, the administrative dismissal policy may be enacted. Students **should be aware that some state licensure boards do not accept any course work with a grade below B-.**

2.13 Administrative Dismissal

Students will be eligible for Administrative Dismissal from the Master of Marriage and Family Therapy if any of the following are true:

- It will be mathematically impossible for them to raise their cumulative Graduate GPA to 3.00 with their remaining required courses;
- They do not have a cumulative Graduate GPA of at least 2.7 after completion of early core MMFT courses and/or a 3.0 at Internship.
- They have three (3) grades or three (3) courses of C+/C/C- applying to their degree and they have applied the repeat policy for the maximum allowed nine (9) hours or three (3) courses, and they earn two (2) or more additional grades or courses of C+ or lower.
- They earn two (2) grades of D+ or lower.

2.14 Attendance

Regular attendance in courses is expected throughout the length of the term/semester. The U.S. Department of Education requires that every university monitor the attendance of their students.

Online Attendance Policy

Intensive Attendance Policy

2.15 American Psychological Association (APA) Format

The Graduate MMFT Program requires students to use the most current version of the APA writing style guide for all submitted coursework. The most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association is required for every student. It is imperative that all graduate students become familiar with and use this writing format.

2.16 Graduation

All degree completion requirements must be fulfilled before the university will confer the MMFT degree. Students who wish to participate in the yearly Spring Commencement program must file an Application for Graduation in accordance with the calendar deadlines listed on ASIST and posted by the Registrar on the Graduation Requirements webpage. Students are advised to submit their applications well in advance of the deadline date.

Student Expectations

3.1 Professional Organizations

A significant arena in which marriage and family therapists can make an impact is within the field through involvement with professional organizations. Students are encouraged to join the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Students may also consider joining the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC) – a division of ACA, and/or the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC). These organizations also have national, regional, state, and local divisions that allow students higher levels of involvement in more specific areas of interest. Most professional organizations and divisions offer reduced membership rates to students as well as:

- benefits such as access to their professional journals and newsletters,
- reduced registration fees for professional seminars, conferences, and workshops
- eligibility for member services (ethics consultation, liability insurance)
- involvement in activities and issues which are directly or indirectly pertain to the profession (legislation and professional credentialing, licensure, certification)
- affiliation with other professionals having similar interests and areas of expertise.

3.2 Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Liberty University holds its students to high standards of ethics. One significant area of integrity in academics is honesty. Students are expected to submit only their own work. Furthermore, students are expected not to give nor receive assistance of any kind specifically regarding assignments or examinations. Furthermore, students are expected not to give nor receive assistance of any kind specifically regarding assignments or examinations. For more information on the *Academic Code of Honor* and *Personal Code of Honor*, see the *Liberty Way*.

3.3 Academic Appeal Policy

In circumstances where a student disagrees with either a course final grade or a sanction due to an Honor Code violation, students have the right to appeal the grade or sanction through the Office of Student Affairs. The procedures followed for academic misconduct, personal misconduct, or grade appeals are outlined at the Graduate Student Affairs website.

3.4 Department Faculty-Student Interaction

The faculty is responsible to interact with MFT students in a supervisory capacity/role. As such, faculty may provide students with professional principles, guidance, and recommendations as it relates to the context of the student-client setting. The faculty are responsible for avoiding dual relationships with students such as entering a student-therapist relationship. Thus, faculty do not provide personal therapy addressing student personal problems. If a faculty member perceives that a student needs personal or professional therapy, then that faculty member will recommend that the student pursue either pastoral or professional assistance from a counselor or psychotherapist in their community.

In the event of a student's disclosure, either verbally, or in writing, of either threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator or supervisor, will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of appropriate state law enforcement or social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the program director or department chair. The incident and action taken will become part of the student's permanent record.

3.5 Professional Development, Student Support, & Administrative Review

Ethical Conduct:

All students in the MMFT program are responsible for behaving in an ethical manner throughout their training, as well as in clinical and professional settings. Violations of the AAMFT Code of Ethics and/or the Student Honor Code/Liberty Way and/or failure to take steps to rectify violations are considered extremely serious and may result in termination from the program.

Although students are expected to adhere to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and the Student Honor Code/Liberty Way as a guide to their behavior throughout their program, reading is just the beginning of understanding professional ethics. Being an ethical MFT- in-training involves understanding the underlying principles and values associated with professional Code of Ethics that are built upon a strong commitment to biblical principles, developing a set of beliefs that guide one's everyday practice, being able to discern potential as well as realized ethical problematic situations, and having the character to stand by these when faced with challenging situations. This is an essential component of your professional development.

Professional Development:

To successfully complete the MMFT program at Liberty University and be eligible for graduation, a student must be able demonstrate proficiency in five areas:

1. Attainment of scholastic competency in all coursework as evaluated through the assessment of marriage and family therapy standards and by maintaining an overall GPA of 3.0.
2. Acquisition of, and ability to, apply marriage and family therapy skills with a diverse population and to a standard acceptable by licensed marriage and family therapists. This ability is evaluated by faculty and site supervisors using the Basic Skills Evaluation Device (BSED) (MMFT 692, 693, 694) during the internship.
3. Demonstration of emotional and mental stability and maturity in interaction with others, including the ability to maintain healthy boundaries, communicate appropriately, successfully manage personal anxiety or uncomfortable feelings, work collaboratively with others, and resolve interpersonal conflict. This proficiency is evaluated throughout the program in all interactions with faculty, staff,

administrators, supervisors, adjuncts, and fellow students and includes both verbal and written communications.

4. Adherence to the Professional Identity and Standards as outlined by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Code of Ethics and the Student Honor Code/Liberty Way. This proficiency is evaluated across the program in all interactions with faculty, staff, administrators, supervisors, adjuncts, and fellow students and includes both verbal and written communications.
5. Demonstration of the ability to integrate faith and spirituality into marriage and family therapy where appropriate in an ethically competent manner

The MMFT faculty will develop and evaluate students on the above areas of proficiency on an ongoing and consistent manner in all settings in which faculty and students interact. This interaction can include formal and informal settings such as classroom, online communication, advising and personal conversations.

3.6 Remediation

Student Support and Development

Our department is committed to helping students be successful in their academic and professional endeavors. The student support and development committee serves to assist in this process. This committee will support students in their professional development and serve as a secondary mentor in this process. The SSD committee will connect the student with appropriate referrals and resources as needed. A referral to this committee will be made, if a student is noted to have deficiencies in any of the following areas:

- MFT Skill Development
- Academic Integrity
- Student Support and Care (prayer, encouragement, etc)
- Student Professional/Dispositional Development

This committee exists to come alongside students and assist in student development.

Administrative Review

In keeping with the AAMFT Code of Ethics (AAMFT, 2026) and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) requirements, faculty in MMFT education programs are required to assess the knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions of students in their programs and take action if issues arise that could compromise the well-being of present or future clients. The following summarizes the School of Behavioral Sciences procedures for assessing these competencies.

Administrative Hold

A student's account may be placed on administrative hold by the program director for the following reasons:

- Dispositional concerns
- Refusal to meet via an audio and video platform to discuss dispositional concerns
- As part of an administrative review
- As part of the remediation process
- As part of the disciplinary process
- As part of the grade appeals process

A hold may prevent the candidate from registering for courses, including internship, which would prevent them from progressing in the program until the issue has been resolved. Students will be notified of any hold placed on their account by the program director. Once initiated, the student will remain on administrative hold in the program pending the outcome of ongoing processes. As part of Administrative Review, the program director will review all of the available and relevant evidence to determine an appropriate interim action to address dispositional issues or other concerns, which may include an interim suspension of the candidate from courses, internships, or clinical placements. The program director may, in his or her discretion, also apply a registration hold to prevent the candidate from progressing in the program pending resolution of the issue.

Behavioral Concerns at Internship Sites

If during the Internship, a student fails to successfully demonstrate the required skills, professional behaviors, or personal or professional dispositions in this course and/or receives failing evaluations, is dismissed from the site, or is found practicing at a site without having received approval by the department for the site, the site supervisor will notify the student's professor. The professor will write an incident report and send it to the Program Director and the department's Internship Office. The Program Director, the Director of Clinical Training, and the Leadership Team will examine the nature and reason for the skills deficit, professional behaviors, or dispositions and/or site dismissal and recommend a course of action, which could include Administrative Review for Behavioral Intervention and/or referral to Remediation and/or the Office of Community Life. Administrative Review is appropriate when a student's behavior is so concerning and/or non-professional that prompt protective action is required (see below section, "Administrative Review for Behavioral Intervention").

Note: The steps within this section are specifically designed to address the unique aspects of internships, and certain steps in this section may overlap with those of other processes. For instance, the internship professor's submission of an incident report to the Program Director and Internship Office and their examination of the incident report will satisfy the early and secondary stages of the remediation process (i.e., remediation stages 1-3). Also note that remediation can be engaged at any step, as the School of Behavioral Sciences deems appropriate.

If a failing evaluation or dismissal from the site involves a violation of the University's Honor Code, the professor will fill out an Honor Code Violation form, which will be investigated by the Program Director and the Office of Community Life. At any point in this process, the student may receive a grade of "F" based on the skills deficit, professional behaviors, or personal or professional dispositions, dismissal from their site, and/or failure to follow approval policies. The student will

be placed on hold in the program pending the outcome of any ongoing process(es) (e.g., Administrative Review, the remediation process, the disciplinary process, and/or grade appeals process).

For violations that do not result in dismissal from the program, the remediation process can include requiring the student to retake certain courses, seek personal therapy, etc. If, after remediation, the student is unable to correct the deficits, the Remediation Committee will meet to decide the best course of action for the student, up to and including an "F" for the course and dismissal from the program. The final decision regarding whether the student is eligible to retake the Internship and disposition of the hours accrued during the Internship are at the discretion of the Leadership Team and based on a thorough evaluation of the incident.

Note: When necessary, the Department may immediately remove a student from the site upon notification of concerning behavior by the supervisor. During the remediation process, the student has an opportunity to appeal interim actions following Administrative Review, grades, honor code violations, and dismissals in accordance with the procedures outlined for the applicable process(es). See, for example, Appeals Policy (Section 6.3) and the appeal sections below for information on the appeal process. Please consult the Internship Field Manual for additional information.

Administrative Review for Behavioral Intervention

There may be times when the School of Behavioral Sciences faculty determines that a student's behavior is so concerning and/or non-professional, regardless of whether the student is making satisfactory academic progress, that prompt protective action is required. This is especially true when students are interacting with clients in a clinical setting. In such situations, the program director will place the student on Administrative Review. As part of Administrative Review, the program director will review all of the available and relevant evidence to determine an appropriate interim action to address the concerning behavior, which may include an interim suspension of the student from courses, internships, or clinical placements. The program director may, in his or her discretion, also apply a registration hold to prevent the student from registering for courses, internships, or clinical placements (and potentially, therefore, from progressing in the program) until the behavior at issue has been resolved. The interim action should be narrowly tailored to address the concerning behavior such that it places as few restrictions as possible on the student and only as determined necessary to address the concerning behavior. Interim actions should also balance the School of Behavioral Sciences' gatekeeping function of protecting others by promoting the student's best interest. Administrative Review is protective, not disciplinary, in nature. Interim actions will remain in place until the program director (in consultation with the student and faculty) determines both that the concerning behavior has been resolved and that any pending processes to address the student's behavior are complete (e.g., the remediation process or a disciplinary matter in the Office of Community Life or the Office of Equity and Compliance).

Within 48 hours of the program director's decision to initiate the Administrative Review, the program director will notify the student in writing, which may include email, of (1) the initiation of the Administrative Review, (2) the interim action(s) imposed, and (3) the reason(s) for the Administrative Review. The program director will also notify the Registrar's Office of the interim action(s), including any registration hold. The student will have an opportunity to review all the evidence that formed the basis for the interim action(s) and to respond (including the opportunity to present any relevant evidence) to the program director. Once the program director has an opportunity to review all the available and relevant evidence, the program director will either reverse the interim action(s) or keep the interim action(s) in place, pending the outcome of any other processes (e.g., remediation). The program director may refer the student to the Office of Community Life and/or the Remediation Committee. If the student's behavior cannot be remedied to a point such that the student is qualified to continue in the program, the student may ultimately be dismissed from the program. Should the student decide to appeal the interim action(s) imposed by the program director, the student must follow the appeal procedures below.

Appeal of Interim Action(s) Following Administrative Review

Students who disagree with the interim action(s) imposed by the program director following Administrative Review have an opportunity to appeal. Students must submit the appeal in writing to the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences within seven (7) days of receiving the notice of the program director's decision. The appeal should clearly state the reason(s) the student believes the interim action(s) should be reversed. Once received, the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee) will review all available and relevant evidence and, if determined necessary, speak with the student, the program director, and/or any other person with relevant information. The Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee) will endeavor to make a determination within ten (10) days of receiving the appeal. The determination to uphold or reverse the interim action(s) will be sent to the student in writing, and the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee)'s determination concerning the interim action(s) will be final, pending the outcome of any other processes.

Remediation

If during the course of a student's studies, a faculty, staff, administrator or supervisor believes a student lacks required skills, professional behaviors and dispositions to progress in the program, that person will begin remediation procedures aimed to provide the student with information and actions to correct the impairment/deficiency. The purpose of the remediation process is to assist the student in correcting any deficits in therapy knowledge and skills, as well as problematic personal, interpersonal, or ethical behaviors so the student may successfully continue in the program. As such, remedial instruction or interventions are closely linked to the students' developmental growth, recognizing the relationship between the alleviation of deficiencies and the development of new competencies.

We conceptualize remediation in terms of a response continuum based upon the type and severity of students' limitations, with the need to distinguish between deficient, lacks competence, and impaired:

- *Deficient:* Requires skill-based and/or academic approach
- *Lacks competence:* Requires additional ethical practice-based / conceptual approach
- *Impaired:* Requires additional intervention-based and/or therapeutic approach

The problematic behavior continuum can also be considered along the lines of Academic, Clinical, and Personal, with Academic being more related to deficiencies and Personal more related to impairments. Clinical limitations may likely have both Academic and Personal involvement. Additionally, the program response can be considered along a continuum of education, formal remediation, and termination.

Deficient describes those behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics that need to be the focus of attention and change but are not considered excessive or inappropriate. Rather, they may be important components of the student's learning experience. At this level, remediation likely involves instruction and feedback to address the deficit.

Lacks Competence describes a deficit in developmentally appropriate clinical competencies that are needed for ethical practice. These would include areas such as performance of therapy skills and/or professional behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics, response to supervision, and/or ability application of ethics into practice. These behaviors are considered to be excessive or inappropriate, requiring remedial action beyond the course instructor or supervisor.

Impairment describes those behaviors that result in a significant negative impact on professional functioning. Impairment is demonstrated by one or more of the following behaviors: (a) an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into their repertoire of professional behavior; (b) an inability to acquire professional skills to reach an acceptable level of competency; (c) an inability to control personal stress, psychological dysfunction and/or excessive emotional reactions that interfere with professional functioning.

The Type and Severity of Limitation are considered when determining the need, if any, for remediation.

Students Determined to be Deficient

- Inadequate knowledge base commensurate with status in the program
- Inadequate, but improving therapy skills
- Rudimentary ethical processing
- Simplistic, narrow, or disjointed case conceptualization
- Insufficient interpersonal skills and awareness, but willingness to develop
-

Students Determined to Lack Competence

- Lack of awareness of ethical principles and obligations
- Failure in responsibilities to site and/or supervisor
- Unwillingness/inability to be effective in basic therapy techniques
- Unwillingness/inability to complete appropriate documentation

- Failure to function as an effective member of the treatment team

Students Determined to be Impaired (not inclusive)

Four Themes:

I. Interpersonal and Personal Problems

1. Inappropriate interpersonal skills
2. Lacks self-control (anger, impulse control) in relationships
3. Inappropriate boundaries
4. Misleads or exploits others
5. Lacks awareness of the impact they have on others
6. Unwilling to receive feedback in supervision
7. Does not take responsibility for deficiencies and/or problems

II. Professional Competence

1. Lacks foundational therapy skills
2. Inappropriate affect in response to clients
3. Does not recognize the limitations of expertise and competence
4. Does not apply ethical and/or legal standards to practice
5. Lacks awareness of how their beliefs and values influence practice
6. Does not demonstrate a respect individual differences and culture

III. Professional Behaviors

1. Deficits in punctuality, professional appearance, attendance, dependability
2. Does not complete appropriate paperwork and documentation
3. Does not adhere to the department's or their clinical site's policies

IV. Professional and Personal Integrity and Maturity

1. Makes false, misleading or deceptive statements
2. Displayed academic dishonesty
3. Problems with alcohol/drug use or illegal activities
4. Inappropriate sexual behavior

5. Refused to consider personal therapy when recommended

Once the Type and Severity of Limitation are determined, there are several avenues that may be pursued when determining the need, if any, for remediation. Faculty are encouraged to consult with the program director, faculty remediation committee members, and other faculty when deciding the level of severity and which stage to engage the remediation process. Please note that the remediation process is not always linear or sequential. Faculty reserve the right to initiate remediation at whatever stage they deem appropriate for the student.

Early Remediation Process (Stages 1 and 2)

- Faculty or advisor meets with the student
- Determine an action plan for addressing deficits
- Follow-up

Secondary Remediation Process (Stage 3)

- Student Support and Development
- Notification of meeting with the director
- Assessment of problematic behavior
- Review and development of a plan
- Acceptance or appeal

Remediation Committee Referral (Stages 4-6)

- Notification
- Assessment of Problematic Behavior
    - Problems concerning attendance and approach to assignment completion
- Development of a Plan
- Acceptance or Appeal
- Provision if Unsuccessful

Possible Remediation Committee Recommendations for a Remediation Plan

- Psychological or evaluation by a mental health professional
- Increased supervision
- Reduced internship
- Leave of absence
- Formal reprimand
- Formal probation
- Therapy out of the program
- Dismissal from the program

- Or any other information gathering deemed necessary in order to properly support student growth

Immediate Interventions

In the event of a student's disclosure, either verbally, or in writing, of either threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator or supervisor, will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of Liberty University Police Department, appropriate state law enforcement, social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the appropriate program chair or associate dean. The incident and action taken will become part of the student's permanent record.

Remediation Process for the Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Program

Note: The remediation plan is designed to protect the student's rights under University policies and a fair process**.** In addition, we stress the importance of ***engaging the student*** in the remediation process. These principles are infused throughout the School of Behavioral Sciences program's response continuum. Once a remediation plan is initiated, student response to remediation efforts is considered when deciding student status in the program. All phases of this remediation process will become a part of the student's record. The description of the stages below does not necessarily reflect a sequential process. Instead, the faculty reserve the right to initiate remediation at any Stage 1, 2, 3, or 4-6, based on their assessment of the level of deficit and/or impairment.

Stage 1: Notification. When a determination is made by a faculty member that problematic behavior of an academic, clinical, or personal nature exists, and could not be resolved on an informal basis, the faculty member discusses this with the student and the program director. If problematic student behavior is brought to the attention of the department through other means (e.g., from another student, a report from university staff, evaluation from a supervisor, etc.), the student's advisor will notify the student and discuss the concerns.

The student and program director will meet to discuss the problem and collaboratively outline a ***remedial action plan*** to address the concerns. This interactive process should allow the student ample opportunity to react to the information presented regarding the problem area. If the problem is resolved, no further action is needed. The advisor will document the meeting, the remedial action plan, and the outcome into the student's personal record. The advisor will follow up with the faculty to ensure that the agreed-to remedial action plan was completed and the behavioral issue was successfully resolved.

If the problem is not resolved at this stage because the student does not engage in the process, disagrees with the validity of the concerns, or does not agree with the remedial action plan, a meeting will then be scheduled with the program director, the student, and the concerned faculty member as appropriate. This meeting will be considered a Phase 3 remediation.

Stage 2: Primary Assessment of Problematic Behavior: If the behaviors addressed by the program faculty and the advisor persist, the advisor will again meet with the student and outline, verbally and in writing, the continued nature and extent of problematic behavior. Informal (e.g., interview with student and faculty) and formal (e.g., instruments) may be utilized as a part of the assessment process. This includes feedback from the student concerning the outcome of any remedial actions taken by the student in response to the concerns raised during the notification session. When it is apparent that the student is engaged in the process but has not met the goal of the initial remedial action, a collaborative approach involving student engagement will be used to evaluate and refine the ***remedial action plan***. If the problem is successfully resolved, no further formal action is needed. The advisor will document the meeting; outline the agreed adaptations to the remedial action plan, and the outcome. The advisor will follow up with the faculty to ensure that the behavioral issues were successfully resolved and all agreed-to remedial mandates were implemented.

Stage 3: Secondary Assessment of Problematic Behavior: If the program director or core faculty determines that the student's behaviors are at a level that requires a formal remediation process (Stage 4) or the student rejects or appeals a ***remedial action plan***, a meeting will be held with the student, his or her advisor, the program director, and referring faculty member (if appropriate). The meeting date will be set to allow the student the opportunity to provide additional evidence to the group for consideration at the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to either 1) collaboratively re-assess the problem behavior and develop a ***remedial action plan*** or 2) determine that the problem needs to be addressed by the program core faculty through a remediation plan. The program director will document the meeting and outcome. The program director will report the meeting outcome to the faculty Remediation Committee.

Stage 4: Referral to the Remediation Committee:

In cases when the outcome of the meeting of the student, advisor(s) and program director results in a decision that the situation should be brought to the Remediation Committee, a meeting of the committee will be scheduled. Once all information has been presented, the Remediation Committee will decide the level and scope of remediation required to assist the student and develop a formal Remediation Plan.

Stage 5: Development of a Remediation Plan: The Remediation Committee will review the presented information, examine the ***remedial action plan*** developed by the student and advisor, evaluate the progress made towards remediating problem behaviors, and develop a formal Remediation Plan. The purpose of the remediation plan is to assist the student in correcting any deficits in therapy skills or personal, interpersonal, or ethical problems so that the student may successfully continue in the program. The elements of the plan will be congruent with the extent of the correction needed. Remediation Plans can include such actions as repeating particular courses, obtaining personal counseling, completing additional assignments, reviewing the ethics code, transferring to a non-licensure program, or academic dismissal from the DCCC or Liberty University.

The program director and/or other designated persons will inform the student of the decision both orally and in writing. The student will have five working days to respond in writing (and orally, if desired) to the recommendation. The committee will review the student's response to the action decided and will make a final decision regarding the disposition of the case. Should the student file no response to the action, the decision of the committee will be considered as final. The student's advisor will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the meeting.

Stage 6: Acceptance or Appeal: The student will be given the opportunity to accept the plan of correction or to appeal it. If accepted, the student will follow the plan as developed and regularly report progress to the program director. If not fully resolved, additions, amendments, or extensions to the plan may be implemented. If the problematic behavior is corrected, no further action is needed. Four options are available to faculty when reevaluating the student: (1) continuation in the program, (2) continued probation and remediation, (3) counsel the student out of the program, and (4) dismissal from the program.

Provision if Unsuccessful: If the Remediation Committee determines that remediation is unsuccessful or that the student refuses to comply with the Remediation Plan, the Remediation Committee may recommend to the program director that the student be dismissed from the program.

Final Determination Following Recommendation of Dismissal: Based on the Remediation Committee's recommendation of dismissal, the program director will either dismiss the student from the program or allow the student to remain in the program until the concerning behavior has been fully addressed to the satisfaction of both the program director and the Remediation Committee. If the student is dismissed from the program, the program director will provide a notice of dismissal to the student in writing. If any interim action(s) were put into place following Administrative Review (e.g., interim suspension or registration hold), those interim action(s) will remain in place. If the program director allows the student to remain in the program, the student must continue to work with the Remediation Committee to address its concerns. Any interim action(s) from Administrative Review will remain in effect, and accordingly, the student should be aware that, if he or she does not re-enroll in courses within a certain period of time, he or she may break enrollment and need to re-apply to the program. In those situations, admission is not guaranteed. The student may appeal to the program director's final determination of dismissal. Should the student decide to appeal his or her dismissal, he or she must follow the appeal procedures outlined below.

Appeal of Dismissal: Students who disagree with the program director's final determination have an opportunity to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences within seven (7) days of notification of receiving the notice of the program director's decision. The appeal should clearly state the reason(s) the student believes the final determination should be overturned. Once received, the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee) will review all relevant evidence and, if necessary, speak with the student, the program director, and any others who have relevant information (e.g., members of the Remediation Committee). The Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee) will

endeavor to make a determination within ten (10) days of receiving the appeal. The determination to uphold or overturn the final determination will be sent to the student in writing, and the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee)'s determination concerning the interim action(s) will be final, pending the outcome of any separate processes. If the Dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences (or designee) overturns a dismissal, the student will have the option either to remain in the program and continue work with the Remediation Committee to fully address its concerns, or to withdraw from the program.

3.7 Harassment

Sexual harassment and/or any harassment on the basis of color, race, religion, or national origin has long been recognized as a violation of Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Such behavior does not befit a committed Christian. Accordingly, Liberty University will not tolerate sexual harassment and intimidation of its employees.

3.8 Sexual Violence Consultation & Therapy Policy

Liberty University is committed to providing a safe place for learning. As such, Liberty adheres to the Title IX directive of not tolerating any form of sex-based discrimination, which can include: acts of sexual violence, sexual misconduct and disrespect for one another including non-consensual sexual intercourse, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, childhood sexual abuse, and stalking.

Additionally, Liberty University is committed to supporting and coming along-side students who may be victims of sexual discrimination and/or violence, currently, or in the past. Under Title IX, faculty are obligated to disclose to the university's Title IX office any student disclosure of current or past experience of sex-based discrimination, physical violence and/or sexual violence. For additional information and up to date policy, please reference the Title IX information page.

Thus, **if a student discloses to a faculty member, verbally or in writing, that he/she has experienced sex-based discrimination, physical violence and/ or sexual violence, presently or in the past, then the faculty member will make a referral to the Title IX office.** This process is in place so that the university can help ensure that students are offered both the support and resources needed to help them succeed in their educational endeavors. An employee from the Title IX Office will reach out to the student and offer support, resources, and information. Though faculty are required to report incidents of sex-based discrimination and/or violence to the Title IX office, students are not required to accept any offers of support, resources or information.

3.9 Personal Therapy

Students are strongly encouraged to seek group and individual therapy as a part of the educational experience. As MFT-trainees who are in the process of developing the skills, professional behaviors, and dispositions needed to become a licensed marriage and family therapist, it is imperative that we deal with our own personal issues that may interfere with our ability to work with clients in competent and ethical ways. Moreover, experiences as a client will help the therapist better understand the client's experience in therapy.

3.10 Faculty Endorsement

Upon successful completion of the program of studies and demonstration of the requisite competencies, faculty members endorse students for certification and licensure. Upon request, the faculty will write letters of recommendation for employment in the student's specified area of specialization or for advanced studies (e.g., Doctoral programs). Endorsement only occurs when faculty believe students are qualified to perform the duties associated with credentialing or employment.

In addition to credentialing and employment, faculty members endorse students for internship. Endorsement occurs only when students have successfully completed the prerequisite courses and if faculty members believe students are qualified to perform the duties associated with the internship. In compliance with the AAMFT Code of Ethics, regardless of academic qualifications, faculty do not endorse students whom they believe to be impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of the duties associated with the endorsement.

3.11 Student Record Keeping

Copies of all class syllabi and course schedules should be kept by students for future use. Students should also keep copies of all clinical and supervision hours accrued in internship classes. Examination boards for therapy or therapy licensure, insurance companies, and other organizations may require proof of course content and/or clinical work by evidence of the course syllabus, course schedule, or official clinical hours spreadsheets. Do not discard old syllabi and other academic records but save them (electronic, print, or both) in a secure location. It is difficult, and sometimes impossible, for faculty or program administration to locate old syllabi. Keeping copies of your course syllabi, schedules, and clinical hours is the student's responsibility.

3.12 Computer Needs

Each student at Liberty University is expected to demonstrate computer literacy prior to admission to the program. Each course in the MMFT online program requires the student to have a reliable internet connection and computer software programs. Because these are essential for your interactions and completion of the course, students **must** have access to the following:

- Microsoft Office® (Note: Microsoft Office 365® is available for free to Liberty University students at Microsoft 365 | Information Services | Liberty University)
- Internet that can access Canvas and Liberty University's website
- A computer that meets the hardware/software specifications to access Canvas
- Send and receive emails via their Liberty Webmail address.

For information on recommended hardware, software, operating systems and student discounts on computers, see the Liberty Information Technology website.

3.13 Email Account and Communication

Upon admission, each student is assigned a Liberty University username and email account (username@liberty.edu). **All correspondence from the university, therapy department, and your course instructor will be delivered via this email address. Students are strongly urged to check their Liberty University email accounts daily for communication from the university and faculty.**

Students are expected to practice professionalism in all email communications. We live in a fast-paced world with text messaging, which encourages short and abbreviated communication. However, since you are in a marriage and family therapy program, you are encouraged and expected to use full sentences and good grammar when communicating with other students and faculty. It is also an expectation that your electronic communication is pleasing to God. Being courteous and polite to peers and professors demonstrates dignity and respect, "And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them" (Luke 6:31, ESV).

Communicate complaints directly to the individual involved. Do not send a blanket email to everyone in the class or to administrative personnel until you have communicated your concerns directly to the person involved and allowed them time to respond. Do not post a message to the class on Canvas that is more appropriate for an individual. Avoid offensive language of any kind. Because students are responsible for behaving in an ethical manner throughout the course of the program, continual unprofessional, discourteous communication cannot be tolerated and may result in remediation procedures up to and including dismissal from the program.

3.14 Dress Code

When on campus or in a class (in person or virtual), students are expected to comply with the dress code outlined in the Liberty Way. See also Intensive Dress Code.

Appendix A – Marriage and Family Therapy Resources

State Boards

State Licensure Information

Computer and Technology Requirements

IT Helpdesk Homepage

Graduate Catalog

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255

National Mental Health Hotline | 866-903-3787

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

Course Descriptions