



MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY HANDBOOK

*PREPARING STUDENTS TO BECOME LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY
THERAPISTS*

** All policies & procedures contained in this handbook are subject to change at any time and without prior notice.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to Amberton University	1
Marriage and Family Therapy Program Description	1
Marriage and Family Therapy Degree Plan	3
Course Schedule Recommendations	4
Course Descriptions	5
CSLInfo on the FTP Site	5
Marriage and Family Therapy Portfolio	5
Selecting a Practicum Site	5
Lab Fee for Practicums I/II/III.....	6
Calculating Practicum Hours	7
Preparation for Marriage and Family Therapy	8
Obtaining a Second Degree	8
Amberton University Marriage and Family Therapy Forms.....	8
Sample Marriage and Family Therapy Portfolio	8
References	8



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INTRODUCTION TO AMBERTON UNIVERSITY:

Amberton University is designed exclusively for the mature, working adult who seeks to benefit from the richness of a relevant, educational experience. The adult who attends Amberton University will find the atmosphere similar to that of professional schools – law, medicine, and engineering. At Amberton University, the student is exposed to a diverse group of working adults who share interests and ideas. Amberton University’s desire is to equip its students with the practical knowledge, tools, and character necessary to cope effectively in the situations and challenges that lie ahead. In short, Amberton University educates for lifelong learning.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of the Master of Arts degree in Marriage and Family Therapy is to provide the graduate with a comprehensive knowledge of the functional areas of marriage and family counseling including but not limited to the nature of the counseling profession and an understanding of life span development, as well as cognitive knowledge of counseling theories, concepts and principles of concern to the counseling professional. This degree will also provide the academic credentials for persons interested in becoming Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (L.M.F.T.) in the State of Texas. Graduates are prepared to provide individual, group, and family counseling in community and social service organizations.

The minimum requirements for a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy are:

- 24 semester hours applicable to the degree must be completed at Amberton University.
- 60 semester hours for a degree.***
- A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 is required.

* **PLEASE NOTE:** *Students who complete the Amberton University Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy meet the academic requirements for becoming Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in the State of Texas. However, according to the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists, a graduate degree and graduate coursework that was awarded or earned more than 10 years prior to applying for licensure may not be used to fulfill the requirements. Students should carefully review the current state requirements for changes and updates. The Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists provides clear guidelines and requirements to apply for a new licensure. Questions regarding licensure should be directed to the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists. http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mft/mft_apply.shtm.*

** In preparation for student selection of a practicum site for the practicum field experience, counseling faculty recommends that students begin familiarizing themselves with counseling opportunities available in the mental health community early in the program. Volunteering at a community agency that provides mental health services is an excellent way to learn about services that are offered and sometimes leads to a practicum site later

when the student is ready to make a selection.

*** As of August 1, 2017, the LMFT Board and the state of Texas increased the semester hours required for new Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in the state of Texas to 60 semester hours.

**M.A. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY
DEGREE PLAN**

I. Required Graduate Studies: 3 hours	
RGS6035 Theory & Application of Research Methods	3 hours
II. Major Requirements: 48 hours	
CSL6740 Counseling Ethics	3 hours
CSL6760 Addiction Counseling	3 hours
CSL6782 Theories & Methods in Counseling	3 hours
CSL6792 Couples Therapy	3 hours
CSL6794 Principles and Methods of Sex Therapy	3 hours
CSL6796 Adult/Geriatric Psychopathology & Treatment	3 hours
CSL6798 Child/Adolescent Psychopathology & Treatment	3 hours
CSL6800 Counseling Assessment	3 hours
CSL6801 Life Span Development	3 hours
CSL6825 Marriage & Family Therapy	3 hours
CSL6830 Advanced Counseling Skills & Techniques	3 hours
CSL6832 Multicultural Counseling	3 hours
CSL6839 Pre-Practicum Professional Counseling	3 hours
CSL6840 Practicum I	3 hours
CSL6845 Practicum II	3 hours
CSL6850 Practicum III	3 hours
III. Counseling Elective: 9 hours	

Totals: 60 hours

COURSE SCHEDULE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Students may take courses in any order with the exception of CSL6839, CSL6840, CSL6845, and CSL6850. The counseling faculty of Amberton University recommends the following progression of courses.

Course	Lecture Course	DL Course
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TIER ONE		
RGS6035 Research Methods	✓	✓
CSL6740 Counseling Ethics	✓	✓
CSL6825 Marriage & Family Therapy	✓	
CSL6801 Life Span Development	✓	✓

TIER TWO		
CSL6782 Theories & Methods of Counseling	✓	✓
CSL6760 Addiction Counseling	✓	✓
CSL6832 Multicultural Counseling	✓	✓
CSL6792 Couples Therapy	✓	
CSL6794 Principles and Methods of Sex Therapy	✓	
CSL Counseling Electives (9 hours)		

TIER THREE		
CSL6800 Counseling Assessment	✓	✓
CSL6796 Adult/Geriatric Psychopathology & Treatment	✓	
CSL6798 Child/Adol. Psychopathology & Treatment	✓	
CSL6830 Advanced Counseling Skills & Techniques	✓	

TIER FOUR (all courses must be taken sequentially in TIER FOUR)		
CSL6839 Pre-Practicum	✓	
CSL6840 Practicum I	✓	
CSL6845 Practicum II	✓	
CSL6850 Practicum III	✓	

CSL Elective List (will be updated as new courses are developed)		
CSL6720 Christian Counseling		✓
CSL6730 Family Life Ministry		✓
CSL6805 Group Counseling	✓	
CSL6779 Counseling in Schools	✓	✓
CSL6765 Crisis Counseling	✓	✓
CSL6780 Professional Counseling	✓	✓
CSL6833 Counseling Children and Adolescents	✓	✓
CSL6835 Play Therapy	✓	
CSL6803 Career Counseling & Guidance	✓	✓

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – See Current Catalog
([Amberton University Website Forms and Publications](#))

CSLInfo ON THE AMBERTON UNIVERSITY FTP SITE:

The counseling faculty of Amberton University has provided study guides for the majority of the counseling courses required for a degree in Marriage and Family Therapy on the FTP Site. Students may access the site online through the Student Portal or by going to <ftp://ftp.amberton.edu>.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PORTFOLIO

Students will also find documentation regarding the Marriage and Family Therapy. The necessary paperwork for Practicum I, II, and III can also be found in the csinfo folder on the FTP Site. If any student has difficulty locating or accessing the folder, please contact a member of the Counseling Faculty, Student Services, or Tech Services for assistance.

This course provides an assessment of one's learning in the field of professional counseling. Students complete homework, lead classroom discussions and examine topics designed to prepare them for entrance into the Practicum stage of their preparation. Students prepare for Practicum I, II, and III by completing activities such as making application for Practicum, completing a simulated interview, and developing a thorough case study.

Note: The course will be comprised of both professional counseling and marriage and family therapy degree seeking students. Therefore, learning opportunities and primary issues pertaining to family and couples therapy will also be addressed.

SELECTING A PRACTICUM SITE:

Marriage and Family Therapy Students are responsible for obtaining their own practicum site(s). The Counseling Faculty recommends students begin looking for possible practicum opportunities no later than during their Tier Three courses. A practicum site must be obtained by the end of CSL6839 Pre-Practicum. The practicum site must provide a "professional counseling" opportunity, and therefore, counseling in elementary, junior high (middle), and high schools will not count towards Marriage and Family Therapy Practicum hours. Often students obtain practicum sites by volunteering in organizations that employ mental health professionals prior to the practicum experience. **Students may not meet existing or potential counseling clients on the premises of Amberton University for any reason.**

Students who desire for their practicum experience to occur in a hospital setting should have the hospital submit contract materials to the Amberton University Business Office for review to determine if arrangements can be made between the facility and Amberton University no later than the beginning of the session in which they enroll in CSL6839 Pre-Practicum.

The list below is a sample of previous practicum sites used by Amberton Marriage and Family Therapy students. This list is not inclusive of all practicum sites used by Amberton students and should not be considered a guarantee of a practicum site by the agencies listed below. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure the practicum site has an emphasis on marriages and

families that is appropriate for Marriage and Family Therapy. Applications, vitas, and interviews are generally required when applying for a practicum site.

Allen Counseling Associates Allen, TX	Sigma Counseling Carrollton, TX
Regenesis Counseling Center Cleburne, TX	Family Connections Counseling Colleyville, TX
Christian Works for Children Dallas, TX	Contact Crisis Line Dallas, TX
The Gaston House Dallas, TX	Metrocare Services Dallas, TX
Salvation Army Domestic Violence Dallas, TX	Southwest Behavioral Systems, Inc. Dallas, TX
Suicide Crisis Center Dallas, TX	Timberlawn Mental Hospital Dallas, TX
Soul Care Fort Worth, TX	Sundance Behavioral Healthcare Fort Worth, TX
Frisco Counseling and Wellness Frisco, TX	Galaxy Counseling Garland, TX
New Beginning Center Garland, TX	Zoom Counseling Garland, TX
Children's First Counseling Grand Prairie, TX	Grace Counseling Lewisville, TX
Hope Strategies Lewisville, TX	Hope and a Future Midlothian, TX
Hope's Door Plano, TX	ROCA Counseling Richardson, TX

LAB FEE FOR PRACTICUMS I/II/III:

There is a lab fee for enrollment in Practicum I, Practicum II, and Practicum III. The fee associated with each course can be found in the current edition of the Amberton University Schedule of Classes.

PRACTICUM OVERVIEW:

Supervised clinical practicum--12 months or nine semester hours. During the supervised clinical practicum, the applicant must have 300 hours of experience (direct and non-direct), including a minimum of 75 hours of direct client contact with couples and families out of an overall minimum of 150 hours of direct client contact). The board may count excess practicum hours toward the experience requirements of this subchapter if:

- the hours were part of the applicant's academic practicum or internship accumulated after the commencement of the applicant's planned graduate program;
- the relational, or other direct client contact hours and/or non-direct hours that are in excess of the 300-hour practicum required by this paragraph; and

- no more than 400 hours of the direct plus non-direct hours.

The remaining courses needed to meet the 45/60 graduate semester hour requirement shall be marriage and family therapy or related course work that are in areas directly supporting the development of an applicant's professional marriage and family, or group therapy skills.

CALCULATING PRACTICUM HOURS:

During Practicum I, II, and III all students are required to maintain a log of practicum hours accrued. The hours are divided into three areas: Client Contact, Supervision, and Administrative. Client Contact is the time spent with clients either as the therapist or as a participant/observer of a therapy session and must total a minimum of 150 hours of which 75 must be working directly with families and/or couples. While Client Contact hours can be obtained via telephone or web-cam, at least half of the required hours *must* be face-to-face. Supervision is the time spent with the Supervisor of the practicum experience. Typically, Supervision involves discussing client issues and assisting the practicum student with any questions regarding counseling techniques or problems. Administrative hours involve the completion of paperwork, attendance of counseling CEU courses or lectures, counseling conferences, and Amberton University class time. Hours can only be accrued during the enrollment periods of the session and between sessions if Practicums I, II and III are taken without a break between session enrollments and if the practicum site approves the hours. (i.e.: If a student were enrolled in Practicum I during the spring session, took the summer session off, and enrolled in Practicum II during the fall session, practicum hours would *not* count between the end of the spring session and the beginning of the fall session. However, if a student enrolls in Practicum I for the summer session and Practicum II for the fall, hours acquired between the sessions would count toward practicum hours as long as the practicum site allows such hours.)

Per state licensing requirements, a minimum of 300 total hours must be completed by the end of Practicum III. Below is the recommended breakdown for the minimum amount of hours:

Practicum I

50-60	Client Contact Hours (or more, if possible)
10	Supervision Hours
10	Administrative Hours
+40	<u>Administrative Hours (Amberton Class Time)</u>
100	Total Hours (minimum)

Practicum II

50-60	Client Contact Hours
10	Supervision Hours
10	Administrative Hours
+40	<u>Administrative Hours (Amberton Class Time)</u>
100	Total Hours (minimum)

Practicum III

50-60	Client Contact Hours
10	Supervision Hours

10	Administrative Hours
+ 40	Administrative Hours (Amberton Class Time)
100	Total Hours (minimum)

PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY LICENSURE:

For those students who are interested in obtaining the necessary educational requirements in order to obtain Marriage and Family Therapy licensure through the state of Texas, please direct your *questions regarding licensure to the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapy*. http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mft/mft_apply.shtm.

NOTE: Academic course requirements for MFT licensure changed on August 1, 2017.

GRADUATION:

The fee and Application for Graduation must be submitted no later than the second Saturday of the session in which the student anticipates graduation to occur. The application can be located on the Amberton University website (www.Amberton.edu) or picked up at Student Services. The Graduation Fee can be found in the current Schedule of Classes.

Students who have applied for graduation during the fall and spring sessions should receive a letter by week five of the session in which the application for graduation has been submitted regarding the purchasing of regalia and other key dates to note for the graduation ceremony to be held at the end of those sessions.

OBTAINING A SECOND DEGREE:

Upon completion of your initial degree, students who wish to obtain an additional degree at Amberton should complete the “Request for Second Degree” form found on the Amberton University website and consult the current Academic Catalog for details.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PORTFOLIO:

For Sample Marriage and Family Therapy Portfolio please see the current Marriage and Family Therapy Portfolio Information folder on the ftp found at <ftp://ftp.amberton.edu/csinfo>

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY FORMS:

For Marriage and Family Therapy Forms please see the current Counseling Forms folder on the ftp found at <ftp://ftp.amberton.edu/csinfo>

REFERENCES

- National Board for Certified Counselors, P.O. Box 77699, Greensboro, NC 27417-7699, 336-547-0607, www.nbcc.org
- Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, Texas Department of

State Health Services, Mail Code 1982, P.O. Box 149347, Austin, TX 78714-9347,
512-834-6658, www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor/

- Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists, Texas
Department of State Health Services, Mail Code 1982, P.O. Box 149347, Austin, TX
78714-9347, 512-834-6657, www.dshs.state.tx.us/mft/