



# MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY HANDBOOK

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*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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**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 of 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. Graduates are prepared to provide individual, group, and family counseling in community and social service organizations. The curriculum is comprised of sixty (60) graduate hours and includes a minimum of 300 practicum hours. *No student may enroll in a practicum course without completing all other degree requirements.*\*\* This degree will also provide the academic credentials for persons interested in becoming a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (L.M.F.T.) in the State of Texas\*. *The PROGRAM is offered in the campus-based, classroom, lecture mode only; however, some classes are offered via distance learning.*

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

- 48 semester hours applicable to the degree must be completed at Amberton University.
- 60 semester hours are required 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. 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.bhec.texas.gov/index.html>*

\*\* 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.

## 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

**Total: 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
<b>TIER ONE</b>		
RGS6035 Research Methods	✓	✓
CSL6740 Counseling Ethics	✓	✓
CSL6825 Marriage & Family Therapy	✓	
CSL6801 Life Span Development	✓	✓

<b>TIER TWO</b>		
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)		

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

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

<b>CSL Elective List (will be updated as new courses are developed)</b>		
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**

<https://www.amberton.edu/current-students/forms/index.html>

### **WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?**

Becoming a licensed marriage and family therapist requires a significant educational commitment. A master's or doctorate degree in counseling from an accredited university and state licensure are required to practice professionally in the state of Texas. Amberton University's Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy meets the education requirements set forth by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists.

## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Students desiring to be admitted to the Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy must meet the graduate admission requirements as stated in the current Amberton University Catalog in addition to any specific program admission standards.

## **EFFECT OF CRIMINAL HISTORY LICENSURE**

Having a criminal history may prevent individuals from becoming licensed. If you have reason to believe that you may be ineligible for licensure in the state of Texas as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist due to a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense, you are strongly encouraged to request a Criminal History Evaluation. Visit the Texas Department of Health Services Criminal History page for more information:

<https://dshs.texas.gov/emstraumasystems/qicriminal.shtm>

## **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PORTFOLIO**

Students will also find documentation regarding the Marriage and Family Therapy portfolio. The necessary paperwork for Practicum I, II, and III can also be found in the CSLInfo 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 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 webcam, 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)

<b>Practicum III</b>	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.bhec.texas.gov/index.html>

### **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](http://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](http://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, <http://www.bhec.texas.gov/index.html>
- 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, <http://www.bhec.texas.gov/index.html>

**TEXAS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**  
**TEXAS STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**  
**Practicum Documentation Form**



**PRACTICUM/GRADUATE INTERNSHIP**  
**DOCUMENTATION**

*Please type or print legibly.*

**Name of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (M.I.)

Applicant's Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ — \_\_\_\_\_ — \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of agency or organization where practicum was completed: (One form per site)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Course number of practicum/internship [as it appears on the graduate transcript] \_\_\_\_\_

University arranging practicum: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of counseling practicum/internship: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_  
(mm/dd/yyyy) (mm/dd/yyyy)

1. Number of clock-hours of direct client counseling contact during practicum/internship:  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Number of clock-hours of indirect client counseling contact during practicum/internship:  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Total number of clock-hours awarded for referenced practicum/internship:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Type(s) of counseling: (check all appropriate types)**

General \_\_\_ Marriage & Family \_\_\_ Group \_\_\_ Individual \_\_\_ Drug & Alcohol Abuse \_\_\_  
Career & Vocational \_\_\_ Rehabilitation \_\_\_ Academic \_\_\_ Child & Adolescent \_\_\_

**Setting(s): (check all appropriate settings)**

Private Practice \_\_\_ School \_\_\_ Hospital \_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_ Univ. Counseling Center \_\_\_  
Non-profit organization \_\_\_

Practicum/Internship Supervisor Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Credentials/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State: \_\_\_\_\_

I CERTIFY THE APPLICANT ABOVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE COUNSELING PRACTICUM LISTED ABOVE, AND I AFFIRM THE INFORMATION GIVEN ON THIS FORM IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

**Practicum/Internship Supervisor or School Official Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Credentials, Title** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: TX BHEC TSBEP, 333 Guadalupe, Ste. 3-900, Austin, TX 78701**

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum Documentation Form**

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