Marriage and Family Therapy
Program Handbook

Doctor of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy (PhD MFT)

Doctorate of Marriage and Family Therapy (DMFT)

May 2016

This handbook is neither a contract nor an offer of a contract. The material contained herein is not intended to substitute for or otherwise modify the regulations that are contained in the current Northcentral University Catalog or any other official documents. This handbook was designed to document requirements specific to the Marriage and Family Therapy degree programs. The University reserves the right to change any provision or requirement, including fees, at any time with or without notice. The University further reserves the right to require a student to withdraw from the University for cause at any time. Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described herein.

Northcentral University welcomes all qualified adult students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability. This applies to all Northcentral University policies, practices, or procedures involving applicants, students, faculty members, employees, and the public. Northcentral reserves the right to refuse admission to anyone the University believes does not meet Northcentral University academic standards or demonstrates actions or behaviors not aligned with Northcentral University policy.

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School of Marriage and Family Sciences
Welcome to the Northcentral University MFT Doctoral Programs Handbook

- You may use this online Help System to locate policy information and print individual Handbook sections.

- To navigate using the sidebar to the left:
  - Click one of the Chapter titles (1 through 7) or an Appendix (A through D) to see topics in that portion of the manual.
  - Click a topic title to display that portion of the Handbook.

- You may also use the Search function to locate the topic you are looking for.

- To print an individual topic, click the Print button while the topic is displayed.

- If you wish to print the entire Handbook click on "Table of Contents/Print Version".

- To return to the MFT Home Page, click on "Back to MFT Site".

- Direct any questions about the Handbook to the Office of the Chair, Department of Marriage and Family Sciences.
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Dear Northcentral Marriage and Family Therapy Student,

Welcome to Northcentral University’s Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) doctoral programs. We are pleased to welcome you as a student and colleague in the pursuit of knowledge in the field of MFT. The Northcentral University MFT Program is one of only a handful of online graduate MFT training programs that exist today and our MAMFT and PhDMFT programs were the first such programs to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). Both of our MFT programs have seen considerable growth within the past several years. The NCU Department of Marriage and Family Sciences is still the only online program that offers COAMFTE accredited master and doctoral degree programs in MFT. This Program Handbook has been developed to assist you as you begin and progress through your studies. We wish you the best and look forward to your participation in, and contribution to, the Marriage and Family Therapy Doctoral Programs at Northcentral University.

Sincerely,

Dr. Darren Adamson, LMFT
Chair, Department of Marriage and Family Sciences
dadamson@ncu.edu
(928) 771-6847

Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to serve as a guide for students enrolled in the MFT doctoral programs at Northcentral University. University-wide rules and regulations can be found in the Northcentral University Catalog. The policies of this handbook are consistent with university policies and are intended to supplement, not replace, university policies and procedures. In addition, the educational and training protocols of the program are designed to conform to the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) standards of training and practice, including the AAMFT Code of Ethics Conduct.

Please read this handbook carefully, as you are expected to know this information. If you have any questions, please contact the Chair of the Department of Marriage and Family Sciences or the Director of the MFT Doctoral Programs (you can e-mail either of them at mfs@ncu.edu). This document will be revised periodically to reflect necessary programmatic changes that may occur due to changes in the profession, the University, or other relevant contexts. All policies, and any changes to these policies, shall be reviewed and approved by appropriate administrative personnel and will be communicated to students as needed.

This handbook shall be distributed to the following named persons or groups of persons: 1) All faculty members and staff associated with the Department of Marriage and Family Sciences; 2) All graduate students in the Department of Marriage and Family Sciences; and 3) the Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.
The Profession of Marriage and Family Therapy

The profession began as a number of psychologists and psychiatrists began to see limitations in treating many mental health issues using treatment approaches focused on individuals. It became apparent to these women and men that treating whole families and combinations of family members (e.g., parents, couples) yielded positive results. From these initial observations and efforts, the field of marriage and family therapy (MFT) was born. The MFT field has now become a distinct mental health discipline with its own body of theory, research, clinical techniques, and code of ethics. All fifty (50) states and the District of Columbia currently have active legislation that governs the practice of MFT. Marriage and family therapists diagnose and treat problems from a systemic perspective. They work with individuals, couples, families, and/or larger systems in a variety of contexts. The work of MFT focuses on interactional and relational processes and seeks to build on the clients’ strengths and resources. Marriage and family therapists help families address and change relationships and patterns of communication so those families can find reasonable solutions to problems for themselves. There are many models of practice in MFT, and individual practitioners may vary greatly in their methods and techniques of clinical work.

Overview of the PhDMFT Program

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Marriage and Family Therapy program at Northcentral University is designed to provide a high quality and rigorous education and training experience for students who wish to prepare for professional life as marriage and family therapists. A high standard of excellence is expected. In support of this, program faculty are selected for their expertise and ability to support students and facilitate exceptional educational attainment. The program is focused on developing research capabilities, advanced skills, and personal and professional growth for effective contributions to the field of marriage and family therapy. The doctoral program offers advanced clinical education and training, research coursework and opportunities, and supervision training and experience. Graduates of the doctoral program will be prepared to carry out advanced clinical work and supervision and/or education and research in the field of marriage and family therapy.

There are five specializations within the Doctor of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy degree program. The program website provides further detail about each specialization (Click Here) to learn more about each specialization below:

- Child and Adolescent Therapy
- Couple Therapy
- General Family Therapy
- Medical Family Therapy
- Therapy with Military Families

University Vision, Mission, and Values

Please visit the Northcentral University Catalog for our current Vision, Mission, and Values, which can be located in Chapter 1: Introduction.
Department of Marriage and Family Sciences (SMFS) Mission, Vision, and Goals

Department Mission

The mission of the Northcentral University Department of Marriage and Family Sciences is to provide personalized educational opportunities to students throughout the world that will allow them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values integral to professional practice within the marriage and family sciences.

Department Vision

The vision of the Northcentral University Department of Marriage and Family Sciences is to unite a diverse community of faculty, staff, and students to improve the human condition through research and practice.

Department Goals

The Northcentral University Department of Marriage and Family Sciences promotes the development of:

- Expertise in discipline-specific models and theories
- Ethical professionals
- Commitment to affirm and advance diversity
- Research competency
- Practical skills that positively impact individuals, families, and communities

Program Mission

The mission of Northcentral's Marriage and Family Therapy Programs is to prepare competent, ethical, culturally sensitive Marriage and Family Therapists. The program emphasizes a family systems perspective so that client processes, whether these clients are individuals, couples, or families, are contextually conceptualized. Faculty engage students in a one-on-one process that invites students to grow both professionally and personally through the development of critical thinking skills, information literacy, important clinical skills, an appreciation for and knowledge of research through the scholar-practitioner model, a valuing of diversity, and a lifelong commitment to learning and service.

The broad goals of the MFT programs are to:

1. Provide the essential academic training needed to effectively practice marriage and family therapy, including training in marriage and family therapy theory, research, major clinical models, professional ethics, standards of best practice, and related issues with purposeful application of family systems theory across the curriculum.
2. Train program participants in the scholar-practitioner model, including the ability to evaluate existing research and implement existing research into professional practice.

3. Promote in students the application of critical thinking skills, including respect for and use of critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to solving problems related to behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and relational processes.

4. Evaluate the readiness, professionalism, maturity, ethical adherence, skills, clinical insight, and competence of program participants, provide the coursework and clinical experience requirements necessary for provisional licensure as a marriage and family therapist in most states or clinical membership in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), and prepare and encourage individuals to continue their education in marriage and family therapy as a lifelong learner and/or at the doctoral level.

5. Prepare students to be successful when taking any required licensing examination to obtain a license to practice marriage and family therapy.

6. Encourage personal growth, intellectual accomplishment, global awareness, and respect and appreciation for diversity.

7. Prepare students to practice informed, respectful, and scholarly communication skills in print and electronic media in clinical and academic venues.

8. Provide and facilitate clinical training needed for competent and effective practice as a professional marriage and family therapist, including the ability to assess, diagnose, and treat individuals, couples and families with a wide variety of presenting issues including mental illness as defined by the DSM-5.

**Educational Outcomes: PhD Marriage and Family Therapy**

The specific goals and related student learning outcomes of the MFTPhD program are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Diversity Goal ➔</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome #1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program will demonstrate a clear commitment to diversity through curriculum content, student and faculty composition, and demonstrated ability of graduates to work with diverse populations</td>
<td>Students will learn how to interact professionally with diverse populations in academic, clinical, supervision and research settings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Knowledge Goal ➔</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program will prepare students/graduates to develop systemic knowledge and skills that positively impact individuals, families, and communities.</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate an advanced knowledge of and application of clinical skills in systemic therapy and supervision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Research Goal ➔</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program will foster the development of scholar-practitioners in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy.</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate a doctoral-level knowledge of and skill in conducting research within the field of Marriage and Family Therapy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Educational Outcomes: Doctorate of Marriage and Family Therapy**

**Student Learning Outcomes (DMFT)**

The assessment plan for the DMFT program is currently in preparation and will be included in a future Handbook.

1. Develop competence in working with *diverse populations* in academic, clinical, supervision and research settings. (SLO #1)
2. Appraise *clinical skills* and *ethical behaviors* in systemic therapy and supervision. (SLO #2)
3. Produce applied *research* in the field of marriage and family therapy through independent research. (SLO #3)
4. Develop professional expertise in an *area of specialization* related to the field of marriage and family therapy. (SLO #4)

**Evaluation and Assessment Policies and Procedures**

The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SSBS) utilizes an assessment cycle as part of an ongoing strategic plan of continuous improvement. The assessment cycles includes the following: 1) Gather data, 2) Analyze and interpret data, 3) Develop action plans based on the data, and 4) Measure success of action plans and start the cycle again. Educational outcome data are reviewed twice a year at the SSBS faculty semi-annual retreats in order to adjust and revise outcomes as needed to reflect MFT core competencies, educational guidelines and evidence based trends. Specifically, action plans are created to improve educational outcomes, curriculum and overall program quality based on outcome data and faculty feedback. Action plans are also reviewed at each semi-annual retreat. The aggregated data and analysis are provided to various Communities of Interest (COI) including but not limited to faculty, students, Student Advisory Board (SAB), Program Advisory Council (PAC), Adjunct Faculty Council, University administration, and others as appropriate. Feedback is requested from each community of interest which is then used to implement change and improvement in the program.
Educational outcomes and other metrics are measured and reviewed annually (See Table 1). Student learning outcomes are measured and reviewed based on data generated by rubrics tied to specific key activities across courses. Rubrics are used by faculty and clinical supervisors to evaluate coursework and clinical practice during practicum and internship. Rubric scoring and analysis occurs within Taskstream, a cloud-based software system designed to measure outcomes across courses. Student self-report and faculty observation regarding Student Learning outcomes are captured and aggregated using JotForm, a cloud-based software system.

Program outcome data are reviewed annually during one of our semi-annual faculty retreats to ensure program effectiveness and continuous improvement. Program outcome data stems from rubric data, alumni survey data and an annual student survey. Specifically, the annual alumni survey measures the following:

- Graduation rates
- Graduate trends and achievements
- Employer trends and satisfaction
- Licensing rates
- National exam pass rates
- Job placement trends

Specifically, the annual student survey measures the following areas:

- Fiscal and physical resources
- Academic support services
- Program Director effectiveness & satisfaction
- Curriculum teaching and learning practices
- Student perceptions of student learning outcomes
- Student perceptions of curriculum
- Student satisfaction of outcomes, faculty, curriculum and overall program

### Program Outcomes Review Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>December Retreat</th>
<th>June Retreat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Student Survey Report</td>
<td>Student Satisfaction</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Course Surveys</td>
<td>Student Satisfaction</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Analysis</td>
<td>Student Performance</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO Analysis</td>
<td>Student Performance</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPE Report</td>
<td>Student Performance</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Rubric Analysis</td>
<td>Student Knowledge</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Quantitative Study</td>
<td>Faculty Performance</td>
<td>Special Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Qualitative Study</td>
<td>Faculty Satisfaction</td>
<td>Special Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre &amp; Post Quiz Analysis Report</td>
<td>Student Knowledge</td>
<td>Future Reviewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Program Policies and Procedures

The following program policies are reviewed and revised as necessary. Policies have been developed to be fair and equitable. All program policies are designed to be supportive of the program and university mission and values. If students have questions regarding any policies or any other information found in this handbook they are encouraged to contact their program director to seek clarification.

Anti-Discrimination Policy
The MFT Programs abide by the University’s Non-Discrimination Policy, as found in the current Northcentral University Catalog. In addition, faculty are invested in the personal and professional growth of students, and developing an understanding and appreciation for diversity is an important element of this growth. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, academic and professional background, race, color, religion, spiritual values, gender, sexual orientation, SES, learning disabilities, physical limitations, age, veteran status, and belief systems. Respect for diversity is embedded in the nature of the MFT Programs at Northcentral University, and the Programs are committed to acknowledging and discussing issues of diversity. Due to the online nature of the program, students and faculty members come from a wide variety of contexts. As such, the importance of diversity is seen in the actual diversity of our students, faculty, and supervisors, as well as being evident throughout our curriculum, clinical training, and educational outcomes.

Admission Policy
Admission to a Northcentral Doctoral program requires a conferred master’s degree from an accredited institution. In addition, a current resume or curriculum vita and a copy of degree transcripts are required. Additionally, PhD-MFT and DMFT applicants must participate in a one-on-one synchronous interview with current MFT faculty. Applicants will also complete an application packet that reviews the program requirements and expectations. The packet requires applicants to
review the MFT Program website, the Northcentral University Catalog, regarding the requirements
for pursuing licensure, and program/graduation requirements for MFT training. Applicants are
expected to compose a plan to obtain licensure, including exploring the requirements of finding a
clinical practicum site and supervisor, as well as post-master’s degree requirements for licensure.
Applicants are also required to respond to a series of questions referred to as a “Statement of
Intent” so that MFT program faculty may evaluate the applicant’s interest in and readiness for the
MFT program, as well as to see a brief sample of their writing. Applicants complete a Statement of
Professional Ethics and Conduct, in which they are required to report any previous ethical and/or
criminal behavior that may be relevant to training and practicing as a marriage and family therapist.
Because state laws require licensed marriage and family therapists to be of good moral character, any
prospective student who has been convicted of a felony prior to or subsequent to admission is
required to immediately inform the Chair of the School of Marriage and Family Sciences of this
conviction in order to determine the best course of action. In addition, a felony conviction may also
disqualify a student from some clinical internship placement sites, thereby making it likely the
student will be unable to complete the requirements of the MFT degree programs. After submitting
all required materials and completing a one-on-one interview with program faculty, student will
complete a background check prior to enrollment.

What follows is an outline of what to expect once the student is accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Provides the student access to the NCU Course Room and works with the student to schedule courses for at least one year in the Course Scheduler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Stays in contact with her or his Academic Advisor (AA) in order to adjust the timing of courses, ask questions, or request information or assistance regarding any matter related to the educational aspects of the program. The most common ways of maintaining contact are email, phone calls, or the University message system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Utilizes the NCU Course Room as the primary means for completing coursework and degree requirements, serving as the gateway to courses, the NCU Bookstore, communication with faculty, staff, and other students, University resources such as the Northcentral Library, the Writing Center, the Commons, and the IT Help Desk. Using the NCU Course Room, the student can review her or his degree plan, request/register for specific courses, manage educational finances, and setup or edit personal information found in the NCU Course Room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Begins courses and also begins to submit assignments in a timely manner. No “bulk uploading” is accepted. The student must receive a grade on the current assignment before submitting the next assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Member</td>
<td>When assignments are completed and submitted for grading, the faculty member reviews, evaluates, offers detailed feedback, and submits the feedback and grades for students’ completed work. University requirements are such that faculty must respond to questions in messages or email within 24-48 hours and they must grade and submit detailed feedback for all work submitted within four calendar days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Takes advantage of this asynchronous model to work at his or her convenience, within allowable time frames for course participation and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minimum Technology Requirements
Students in an online program must have the technological resources necessary for them to be successful. The following link explains the minimum technical requirements for NCU students:

http://www.ncu.edu/tuition-and-admissions/admissions-requirements/technical-requirements

University Orientation

University enrollment specialists and students’ academic advisors orient students to the learning environment. This link provides information on what students can expect as they begin their studies at NCU:


Academic Integrity
All students will be expected to complete the Academic Integrity Questionnaire, usually during their first course. All work submitted in each course must be the student’s own work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by the Faculty. The submission of another person’s work represented as that of the student’s without properly citing the source of the work will be considered plagiarism and will result in an Academic Integrity Violation Notice being filed by the Faculty Member. The result of this could be unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course, and may result in academic dismissal. Faculty Members are expected to regularly submit student assignments to TurnItIn.com for originality evaluation.

Code of Conduct Policy
Northcentral University has established a Code of Conduct for all students and faculty in the University community, including applicants, and alumni. Student in the MFT programs are expected to abide by this code at all times. This code can be found in Section 7 of the Northcentral University Catalog (Ethical Conduct). In addition MFT students and faculty are expected to follow the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Those found to have committed a violation or to have attempted to violate either of these Codes will be subject to disciplinary sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the University.

Grading Policy
See Section 5 – Academic Policies > Grading Policies of the Northcentral University Catalog for information about the NCU Grading Policies.

Licensure Information
While each state board is the ultimate authority on its own rules and regulations governing the practice of marriage and family therapy in their state, sometimes it is difficult to know where to start or what to ask. Licensure information and important links to other sites can be found on the NCU
MFT Programs Portability Policy: State Licensure Limitations

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that applicants are aware of any issues that may affect their professional goals. The PhDMFT and DMFT degrees are not designed to provide students with the coursework required to typical state educational requirements for licensure. However, students who are not yet licensed MFTs should determine what courses they lack for licensure and explore with their academic advisor and/or the Director of the MFT Doctoral Programs if these classes can be incorporated into their program of study at NCU.

A few state regulatory boards do not accept degrees earned in an online environment as meeting the educational requirements for licensure. Other states may have requirements for specialized accreditations or other unique course/credit requirements above and beyond the standard degree plan that would prevent clinical practice as a student and/or successful application for licensure. Although licensure laws are governed by individual states and can change frequently, the MFT program administration seeks to identify these states and notify applicants in those states with any known limitations. However, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all licensure requirements are met. This policy outlines the process of notification and verification for situations where these limitations apply.

Responsibilities
Notification will be given to unlicensed applicants to NCU MFT doctoral programs who live in an identified state that may not currently accept Northcentral University’s (NCU) Marriage and Family Therapy degree for licensure.

Any applicants from an identified state or expecting to practice in an identified state are expected to comply with the verification process outlined in the procedure below.

Scope of the Notification Process
Because there are some states that have regulations that prohibit the use of a degree from the Northcentral University MFT Program as meeting licensure requirements, the MFT program administration will notify applicants who live in, or express interest in practicing within, one of those identified states.

Continued Requirements after Admission
Once enrolled, students are required to work with the state in which they wish to practice as a MFT to ensure that they are in compliance with all licensure requirements. The program will provide information when possible to support those efforts, but it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all licensure requirements are met. Completion of the program does not guarantee the opportunity to sit for licensure.

PROCEDURE: APPLICANTS WITH KNOWN LICENSURE LIMITATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MFT Program</td>
<td>1. Provide the Licensure Limitation Acknowledgement Letter to all students/applicants who live in or express an interest in practicing in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, faculty and local clinical supervisors work collaboratively for the benefit of the students as stated in this program handbook. Applicants have agreed to the Confidentiality Policy and Student Acknowledgement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>2. Complete the <strong>Licensure Limitation Acknowledgement Letter</strong>, which requires initials and a signature acknowledging the following:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. NCU’s PhDMFT and DMFT programs are not designed for individuals desiring to pursue clinical licensure in their respective state or province. NCU staff and/or faculty have informed me that at this time my home state or the state in which I have indicated a desire to practice may not accept my degree for licensure (if relevant).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. To graduate with a PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy from NCU I must complete all clinical requirements (i.e., 1000 client contact hours and 200 hours of supervision) even though I may decide not to pursue a license and/or employment as a MFT. There is no minimum clinical hour requirement for the DMFT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFT Program</td>
<td>3. Address in a timely manner any questions or concerns that are raised by the applicant related to this issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>4. Print, initial, sign, scan and submit the form to <a href="mailto:mft@ncu.edu">mft@ncu.edu</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Confidentiality Policy and Student Acknowledgement**

Students are required to sign the **Student Acknowledgement Form** as part of the first course, MFT7101 or DMFT7101, and as part of this acknowledge that they have read, understood, and have agreed to abide by all confidentiality policies required by the Program and they have reviewed this program handbook. MFT Training at Northcentral University can be both personally and professionally challenging. Students seek to acquire the knowledge and develop the practical skills needed to be successful as a systemically trained mental health professional. In this process, students are expected to engage in a high level of self-reflection, personal application, and self-disclosure. As a general rule, students should only share what they are comfortable sharing about themselves. Faculty, staff, and supervisors are expected to handle student disclosures with respect and will only share information with other Northcentral University MFT faculty, Northcentral University administrators, clinical supervisors, NCU staff, or student employers for the purpose of assisting in the student's development as a clinician.

In addition, faculty and local clinical supervisors work collaboratively for the benefit of the students and the MFT program. Therefore, the MFT faculty, supervisors, and staff may discuss and disclose
information concerning performance as a student and as a therapist-in-training. This information, including information a student may share in courses or in supervision, will only be disclosed to other MFT clinical faculty, supervisors, and staff as needed (deemed pertinent for students’ and/or the MFT program's benefit by faculty, supervisors, and staff). No information will be shared outside of those listed above without consent of the student or without prior notification to the student of the disclosure, except in cases of emergency or litigation.

**Tracking Student Progress**
As a student completes each course, the Faculty Member will post a grade and complete the [Student Progress Evaluation](#) form regarding the student’s performance. These forms are reviewed by the MFT Administrative Faculty during the Clinical Readiness Evaluation Process. When issues arise, a remediation plan and behavioral contract may be created that will be signed by the student as well as the respective Program Director. Students are free to withdraw from the program any time they determine that they do not wish to comply with faculty recommendations.

Once students enter the practicum/internship course sequence, a student’s progress collecting necessary client contact hours, relational client contact hours, and required supervision hours is monitored throughout the practicum and internship experience. Sometimes a student may not be able to complete all 1000 client contact hours (500 relational hours) or all 200 hours of required clinical supervision within the required four-course window (PhDMFT only; this does not apply to DMFT students). Accordingly, PhDMFT students who have not completed all 1000 hours of client contact (including 500 hours of relational client contact) and 200 supervision hours by the end of the program, will be required to continue under supervision of local clinical supervisor and submit regular updates and documentation regarding their hours before being permitted to graduate.

**University Course Polices**
Please consult the current version of the Northcentral University Catalog for information regarding the following policies. Please note this section focuses on specific course policies relevant to the MFT program, but is not a comprehensive (and may not be the most current) summary of all course policies.

Course Participation
Assignment Submissions
Recommended Schedule for Course Completion
Submittal Turn-Around Schedule
Course Learning Assessment/Course Grade
Ethical Conduct: Academic Integrity

**Graduation Policy**
Upon completion of all program requirements, students will contact their Academic Advisor to begin the process of petitioning for graduation. To assure that all requirements of the program, degree, and specialization, as well as those of the University, are met prior to conferring the degree, a Graduation Audit will be performed in response to a student's Graduation Request. The student submits the request to graduate electronically which sets an alarm for the Academic Advisor. The advisor then verifies that all general requirements have been met to earn the degree. An additional audit is performed by the Chair of the School of Marriage and Family Sciences to ensure that program specific requirements have been met.
For all students, degree requirements include:

- 3.0 (letter grade of "B") or higher GPA
- Official documents on file for basis of admission from an appropriately accredited academic institution
- Official transcripts on file for all transfer credit hours accepted by the University
- All financial obligations to the University paid in full

For doctoral students, degree requirements include:

- A minimum of 48 credit hours of graduate instruction must be completed through Northcentral
- Satisfactory completion of a Comprehensive Exam
- University Approval of Dissertation Manuscript and successful completion of the Oral Examination
- Submission of the approved final dissertation manuscript to the University, including the original unbound dissertation manuscript and an electronic copy

Program Specific Requirements include:

- Completion of all coursework
- Completion of all clinical training requirements
  - Evidence of completion includes a signed (by student and supervisors) Clinical Experience Report Form (CERF)
  - Approval by the Director of Clinical Training

Once the Academic Advisor and Assistant Dean have approved the request, an alarm is set for the Accounting Department which then verifies that all fees are paid. When approved by Accounting, the Registrar receives an alarm to issue the diploma.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the standard by which Northcentral University measures students’ progress toward completion of a degree or certificate program. The three components of SAP are Grade Point Average (GPA), Course Completion Rate (pace), and Maximum Timeframe.

If, at any time, a student is not meeting the minimum requirements for SAP, he/she receives an email notification in NCU Course Room as well as an email to the personal address on file. However, it is ultimately the student’s responsibility to know these requirements, and failure to receive notification does not nullify the SAP status.

Additional information regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy can be found in the NCU Catalog.

**Program Probation**

Occasionally students experience difficulty in their graduate program that may lead to being placed on probation or other corrective actions. A student may be placed on program probation by the University or administrative MFT faculty for unsatisfactory academic progress or for unsatisfactory performance in other training domains. These include, but are not limited to, practicum placements, internship placements, professional or ethical violations or concerns and/or other reasons identified by faculty.
A student placed on probation will, in consultation with the MFT faculty, develop a remediation plan. Remediation plans are structured to assist students in working through whatever difficulties they are experiencing with the ultimate goal of achieving their professional goals. These plans will specify, in writing, the basis for the probation, the term of the probationary period, and the conditions that must be met in order to be removed from probationary status. Students placed on probation will remain on probation for a minimum of twelve weeks. Students placed on probation for unacceptable grades must successfully remediate the unacceptable grade and meet the requirements of their remediation plan, without incurring any additional complaints or problems, in order for probationary status to be removed. Removal from probation requires satisfactory progress of the remediation plan as determined by faculty consensus. Failure to meet the conditions of probation will result in dismissal from the program. If a student believes that the probationary status is not justified, or that the conditions of the probation are unreasonable, the student may appeal in writing to the Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences within 10 (ten) working days. A student who has formerly been on probationary status may be terminated from the program for future inappropriate conduct or subsequent academic difficulties.

Resources Available to Students When Experiencing Difficulties: When a student is placed on probation, several steps may be taken as a part of his or her remediation plan. This plan may include, but is not limited to, the following: (a) reducing the student's course load, (b) referring students to the Northcentral University academic assistance resources, (c) considering a possible leave-of-absence, (d) suggesting a referral of a student for therapy services or medical intervention in his or her local community, (e) creating a behavioral contract to outline the necessary changes and steps that must be taken for successful completion of the program, (f) requiring additional sections of practicum or internship beyond the minimum normally required by the program, and (g) providing additional faculty mentoring and encouragement. All recommendations are designed with the goal of helping students to succeed. However, the MFT faculty’s primary concern must first be the welfare of the clients seeking assistance. If, during a student's program, the clinical faculty determines that a student does not have the personal and professional health and maturity needed to be an effective marriage and family therapy practitioner, the student will be advised of this and counseled to seek another area of study.

Dismissal from the Program
A student's dismissal from the program may be a student decision or faculty decision. Students with a history of legal difficulties, or with legal charges or issues pending at the time of enrollment, are expected to make full disclosure of said charges during the enrollment and interview process. Failure to disclose information or students convicted of a felony during the program may be dismissed from the program. Students who violate the University’s Code of Conduct and/or Academic Integrity policy while enrolled in the program may be subject to immediate administrative dismissal. Students who have been dismissed due to a violation of the Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity policy, or due to any other legal or ethical matter, do not qualify for readmission to Northcentral University. Students in violation of the University’s Attendance policy may be withdrawn. Dismissal of students who fail to meet their financial obligations to the University is handled by the Accounting department. The Code of Conduct, Attendance policy, and a summary of the Academic Integrity policy are published in the Catalog. Complete information concerning Academic Integrity is provided in the NCU Course Room to students. For additional information regarding Dismissal Policies students can reference the NCU Catalog.
Student Grievance Procedures
Part of the process of becoming a professional is learning to deal appropriately with disagreements or grievances. If students experience a problem with a Faculty Member related to an academic issue, they should first attempt to address the issues directly with the Faculty Member as a first step. If there is no satisfactory resolution, then students should contact their Academic Advisor for instructions for filing a grade appeal or refer to the University Catalog for the current appeal procedure (current University policy states students must file a grade appeal no more than 10 (ten) calendar days after receiving the final course grade – Chapter 8 of the University Catalog).

Appeals, Grievances and Concerns
Students who believe they have mitigating circumstances and wish to appeal their administrative dismissal must initiate the appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the dismissal. Students appealing an administrative dismissal must follow the process outlined in the university Catalog found in Chapter 8- Student Rights and Responsibilities.

The Administration and University Documents sections in the NCU Course Room is where students will find links for Grade Appeals, Grievances, the SAP Appeal form, and a link for students to register "Concerns" (e.g. regarding Accounting, Faculty Services, Technical Support, Registrar, Financial Aid, and "All Others"). Students who register a concern may check back to see if the concern was resolved, is in progress, or has been passed by the Office of the Ombudsman Office to another, appropriate office of the University for resolution (i.e., "escalated").

As indicated in the university catalog (Chapter 8: Student Rights and Responsibilities/Subsection: Student Grievances), in the event that a student has a complaint or dispute with the University regarding the University's application of policies and procedures, its decisions, or judgments, the student has a right to seek a satisfactory resolution through the formal avenues of appeal and/or grievance. A grievance may not be filed if other avenues such as filing a “Concern” or an “Appeal” are available to the student.

Escalation Procedures
Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve all concerns informally and at the lowest institutional levels possible prior to escalation. Escalation procedures support timeliness, quality, accountability, and ensure that the appropriate institutional levels listen and resolve matters in an efficient and effective manner. Additionally, it allows those closest to the problem the ability extend the highest levels of support services.

Support services include but are not limited to the coordination and collaboration with required team members in pursuit of a student’s required response. Students who escalate matters prematurely will see that their concerns are re-routed through the escalation process in accordance with this policy unless it is determined through review that the matter is best addressed at higher institutional levels.

Expected Escalation Levels for Resolution

1. Academic Advisor/ Financial Services Advisor/ Faculty
2. Academic Liaison Associate Director of Student Services

(Note: Dissertation Students are required to work through problems and concerns with their Committee Chair. See the Doctoral Candidacy Resource Guide (DCRG) for guidance in these matters. If a student is unable to resolve an issue with the Chair regarding dissertation protocols, then the student may use these resolution methods.)

3. Student Submission of Electronic Concern: Auto-routed to Functional Team Leaders for resolution. (Note: Simultaneously, the Concern is routed to the Office of Compliance Management for review and alternate routing if necessary including the escalation of a concern to a grievance level complaint.)

4. Grievance: A grievance is a formal complaint that has not been resolved at other levels within the University. Note: Being adequately addressed does not mean that the decision was necessarily made in the student's favor. It means that the matter is afforded due diligence and is adjudicated in accordance with ethics, academic integrity, policies, regulations, and laws.

5. Appeals of final grades must use the appeal process defined in “Appealing a Final Grade” in the Northcentral University Catalog. Review carefully the directives on appeals as often the decisions of Deans in these matters are not grieve-able. (Note: Other Appeals include but are not limited to: SAP, academic dismissal, administrative dismissal, and re-admission. Students should refer to the catalog for details on advancing these types of appeals.)

Adjudication

Formal grievances are reviewed by the appropriate senior leader (i.e., the Chief Academic Officer and Provost for all academic decisions) and are considered final. Students can locate the Concerns link on the Student Portal.

Students may not grieve the stated or published policy of Northcentral University.

Students may file a complaint with the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education. The student must contact the State Board for further details.

Exit Interview, Alumni, and Employer Evaluation Surveys

Graduating students are asked to participate in an online Exit Interview Survey immediately after graduation, and an Alumni Survey and a Survey of Employers of graduates one year after graduation. The primary purpose of the exit interview is to give students an opportunity to share with the MFT faculty their overall evaluation of the MFT program, including ways that it can be improved. The primary purpose of the alumni survey is to gather information about alumni views of how well the program prepared them for success in various areas (e.g., for entry employment as an MFT, to practice systemically, to take the national examination, to advance understanding of cultural diversity issues, to practice ethically, for future education) and current employment. The purpose the employer evaluation survey is to gather information about their views of how well our graduates are doing, what competencies may be lacking, and, in general, how satisfied they are with
the graduate’s performance. Students are asked to please be sure to provide contact information (email, phone, etc.) when they graduate so they or their employers can be provided links to these various surveys.

**Faculty and Student Governance**

**Faculty Governance**

Faculty governance is an extremely important part of the NCU model, both within the program and across the university to ensure the program is able to achieve its educational outcomes. Faculty Governance is defined as faculty (core and adjunct) working collaboratively with administration and engaging meaningfully and substantively in the life of the university beyond teaching and research. For more information regarding Faculty Governance refer to the university Policy and Procedures manual section 202-3 Faculty Role in Governance.

In part because of the larger size of the MFT faculty and to ensure faculty have sufficient time and opportunity to share ideas and influence the direction of the program, rather than having single monthly faculty meeting, like many traditional programs, a variety of smaller more focused faculty meetings are held on a regular basis. For example those teaching the first three courses in the program meet weekly (i.e., Student Success Summit) with senior program faculty to discuss the needs of students and any changes needed in the program to better support new students. Faculty teaching later courses or core courses meet weekly with administrative faculty to discuss students at this stage of the program as well as program needs. Faculty teaching practicum/internship courses meet with the Director Clinical Training and the Director of Clinical Field Placement each week to discuss program needs and student needs in regard to the clinical training stage of the program. The Program Director attends these meetings on a regular basis. The entire teaching faculty meet together monthly during a Faculty Focus meeting with the Department Chair, Program Director and other administrative faculty to further discuss program updates, changes, and ideas for improvement across the entire program. MFT senior faculty in director positions meet regularly with the Dean, Department Chair, and Program Director to discuss and review program procedure and policies topics. In all of these meetings faculty are encouraged to bring up any topics, ideas, feedback, or opinions that may help improve the program. In addition to these weekly, biweekly, and monthly faculty meetings, twice a year the entire faculty including all directors, staff, the Dean, and Department Chair meet for a multi-day department retreat to review outcome data, conduct strategic planning, discuss recent changes in the program and explore ideas for continuous improvement. In addition to all the above outlined formal methods of faculty governance the MFT faculty participate on a variety of program and university level committees and taskforce. Current formal meetings/committees that support faculty governance in the MFT program include but not limited to:

- DMFS Adjunct Faculty Council
- Weekly Administration MFT Faculty Meetings
- Monthly MFT Faculty Focus Meeting
- Weekly MFT Student Success Summits
- Weekly Clinical MFT Faculty Meeting
- MFT Diversity Committee
- Biweekly University Academic Affairs Committee
- University Assessment Committee
- University IT Committee
- Faculty Search Committee
• Scholarship Committee
• Foundations Course Revision Committee
• Ad hoc Accreditation Support Committees

**Student Governance**

Student governance is a critical part of the NCU model, both within the program and across the university. The university Policy and Procedures manual, section 208-7 *Role of Student in Governance*, indicates that students, as consumers, have a valuable perspective on the educational services they receive. Therefore, the University can benefit from their perceptions and input, especially on academic and administrative matters.

Students in the MFT programs are encouraged to participate in governance through the following methods:

• MFT Diversity and Community Committee
• Student Advisory Board
• MFT Student Association
• General Discussion Forum on the student website
• Post-Course Survey
• School/Department conference calls or Town-hall Meetings
• Appeal and Grievance procedure

**Faculty**

The faculty in the Department of Marriage and Family Sciences are made up of professionals who have all been trained in systemic theory and practice. Currently 100% of the faculty hold doctorate degrees with over 85% of those coming from COAMFTE accredited programs. All faculty are licensed marriage and family therapists with the majority of faculty clinically active (seeing clients or supervising clinicians). All faculty teaching the practicum courses are AAMFT Approved Supervisors or Supervisor Candidates. As a group the faculty have over 250 years of experience teaching in the field of family therapy with over 400 years of clinical experience. The faculty is made up of diverse professionals with a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds. The Department is made up of full-time and part-time (adjunct) faculty, with the majority of students being taught by the full-time faculty. Faculty are encouraged to participate in teaching, scholarship, service, and practice activities that enable the program to achieve its educational outcomes.

To see where in the world NCU MFT students and faculty reside [Click Here](#), or paste the following URL into your browser [http://www.ncu.edu/school-of-marriage-and-family-sciences/students-and-faculty-worldwide](http://www.ncu.edu/school-of-marriage-and-family-sciences/students-and-faculty-worldwide). Please [click here](#) to see the most recent SSBS organization chart.

**Staff**

**Janine DuBach**, Department Manager, SBSS
Janine serves as the department manager to the school facilitating and overseeing communication and school level projects to support the MFT programs. She reports directly to the school dean, Dr. James Billings.
Dr. Barbara Scherzer, Academic Operations Manager, SBSS
Barb serves as the academic operations manager to the school facilitating and overseeing academic communication and school level academic projects to support the MFT programs. She reports directly to the school dean, Dr. James Billings

Rachel Butterfras, Internship Coordinator
Rachel serves as the Internship Coordinator for the school. She assists students through the clinical process of the MFT programs and tracks clinical data. She manages multiple projects related to the maintenance and growth of the MFT Programs. She reports to the Dean, Dr. James Billings.

Academic Advisors
The Academic Advisors work with assigned students to support and facilitate their engagement and progress through their degree program; communicates with applicants as needed to answer MFT program specific questions; sets up and monitors the degree plan for students; communicates with students to facilitate course scheduling/enrollment; and serves as an advocate for students with questions or concerns relating to their studies. They report to the Director of Student Services.

Notice: Please consult the current version of the Northcentral University Catalog for information regarding curriculum, academic requirements, fees, deadlines, academic policies (including requirements regarding English proficiency and degrees awarded by non-U.S. Institutions), and application and admission requirements. All students in the MFT program are expected to be familiar with the appropriate MFT Program Manual and the policies outlined in the current University Catalog, as well as agree to abide by all key policies and procedures. In addition, students are expected to agree to and abide by the professional and ethical behavior outlined in the AAMFT Code of Ethics, and failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.

Credit Hour Requirements

PhDMFT
The PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy degree requires a minimum of 69 credit hours at the graduate level beyond the master’s degree. Northcentral University may accept a maximum of 12 semester credit hours in transfer toward the doctoral degree for graduate coursework completed toward a non-conferred doctoral degree at an accredited college or university with a grade of “B” or better. Transfer credit is only awarded for course work that is evaluated to be substantially equivalent in content to the required coursework for the MFT program.

DMFT
The DMFT degree requires a minimum of 60 credit hours at the graduate level beyond the master’s degree. Northcentral University may accept a maximum of 12 semester credit hours in transfer toward the doctoral degree for graduate coursework completed toward a non-conferred doctoral degree at an accredited college or university with a grade of “B” or better. Transfer credit is only awarded for course work that is evaluated to be substantially equivalent in content with the required course work for the DMFT program.
Time Limits for Degree Completion

PhDMFT
Northcentral University allows 8 years to complete PhD programs requiring more than 60 credit hours. Students who are unable to complete a degree program within the stated time limits are dismissed. Students who believe they have extenuating circumstances may document the circumstances and send a request for consideration to their respective School Dean or designee. Exceptions to the policy are determined on a case-by-case basis and, if granted, are granted only once.

DMFT
Northcentral University allows 7 years to complete doctoral programs requiring 60 credit hours. Students who are unable to complete a degree program within the stated time limits are dismissed. Students who believe they have extenuating circumstances may document the circumstances and send a request for consideration to their respective School Dean or designee. Exceptions to the policy are determined on a case-by-case basis and, if granted, are granted only once.

Notification to International Students
While the field of marriage and family therapy is an increasingly international phenomenon, it continues to have strong historical and contextual roots in western cultures (e.g., the United States). Therefore, much of the practice, literature, and research in the field continues to be conducted in contexts common in western cultures. One of the benefits of online education is the expansion of the practice of marriage and family therapy into international contexts, thus expanding the field’s knowledge base and applicability. While all students are encouraged to read broadly in the professional literature, international students are specifically encouraged to seek out literature and experiences that will help them to practice ethically and sensitively in their local contexts. In addition, international students are strongly encouraged to work closely with their local supervisors to practice in a culturally sensitive and ethical manner that is appropriate to their local contexts.

Licensure and Accreditation
Students intending to seek licensure must take full responsibility for ensuring that their degree program at Northcentral meets the licensing requirements of their local state licensing board. Northcentral cannot provide assistance to students regarding the interpretation or understanding of a state’s licensure requirements.

Students are responsible for keeping all clinical demographic data and supervision records for presentation to state boards. Northcentral is not responsible for maintaining these records and is not able to provide this information for you when you apply for licensure.

If a student wishes to pursue licensure, it is important to know that some states require that graduates have a degree from a program that carries a particular accreditation, such as the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), the American Psychological Association (APA), or the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The PhDMFT program at Northcentral is accredited by COAMFTE, but the DMFT is not COAMFTE accredited. In addition, Northcentral does not have a residency requirement and does not meet the residency requirement of any state. Students should
check with the licensing body in the state(s) in which they intend to practice to determine if a particular accreditation or residency is required. A directory for Marriage and Family Therapy licensure boards can be found here as well as at amftrb.org. Once applicants have researched their state requirements, they should be able to make an informed decision regarding their professional objectives and determine if a Northcentral program meets their educational needs.

**Membership in the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy**
All students in the PhD and DMFT programs are required to join the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapist (CAMFT), the International Family Therapy Association (IFTA) or other national professional association representing the profession of MFT in the student’s home country. Part of training to be a Marriage and Family Therapist is investing in one’s professional development. Being involved with relevant professional associations such as the AAMFT is an important part of the learning process and of establishing a professional identity as a MFT. Visit aamft.org, CAMFT, or IFTA-familytherapy.org and browse the resources that are available. Also, look into the requirements and benefits of joining. For example, among other things, AAMFT members receive copies of the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, six annual issues of Family Therapy Magazine, access to AAMFT Job Connection, free access to most of the resources that are available through Family Therapy Resources and a liability insurance policy is included with the student membership. MFT Students at Northcentral University normally qualify for the Student Membership (the exception to this is if you are already licensed as a MFT, which would then qualify you for a Clinical Membership).

**AAMFT Ethical Code Policy**
All faculty, local clinical supervisors, and students will conduct their practices and professional relationships in accordance with the most current edition of the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Care will be taken to "...do no harm" through treatment decisions, practice, and personal relationships. When practicing, supervising, or observing therapy, all students, faculty, and on-site supervisors must follow the AAMFT Code of Ethics. These guidelines will be presented to students in various courses and places throughout the program. However, it is each student’s responsibility to know the provisions of the code prior to conducting therapy sessions. Please read and follow ethical guidelines carefully. All students are strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment with the Director of Clinical Training to ask any questions regarding MFT ethics.

**Liability Insurance**
When enrolled in Practicum or Internship, each student is required to obtain student level liability insurance. Students can buy this through CPH & Associates (www.cphins.com). AAMFT Student Members in good standing can receive free professional liability insurance through AAMFT. Students must have liability insurance before they can begin seeing clients.

**SSBS Diversity and Community Committee**
The SMFS welcomes students and faculty who are diverse in age, nation of origin, ethnicity, culture, ability, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. The SSBS Diversity and Community Committee consists of students, faculty, and administrative personnel. Our primary mission is to promote equity and social justice as we collaborate to strengthen our NCU community. Our primary objectives at this time are to improve the breadth and depth of diversity considerations within our curriculum, to
promote equity in education, and to communicate respect for the unique identity of each of our SSBS community members.

If there is a way that the committee can support you in terms of diversity and community building, please contact us at mfs@ncu.edu.

Department of Marriage and Family Sciences Program Advisory Council
The Department of Marriage and Family Sciences’ (DMFS) Program Advisory Committees (PAC) consists of faculty and program administrators from other COAMFTE accredited MFT Masters and PhD programs, alumni from both the PhD and MA MFT programs, and community-based supervisors and/or directors working in mental health agencies that employ MFTs. Similar PACs exist in each school throughout Northcentral University. The primary purpose of the DMFS PAC is to provide industry expertise to the Department, acting as a sounding board to ensure that our students are learning relevant discipline knowledge and skills that align with the needs of external stakeholders. PPAC members are asked to participate in various evaluation activities. These activities provide the DMFS with valuable information to help support the continuous improvement of our academic programs.

Northcentral MFT Student Association and Student Advisory Board
The MFT Student Advisory Board (SAB) and the MFT Student Association (MFTSA) have been established. The SAB was instrumental in establishing the MFT Student Association (MFTSA). Membership in these groups is open to graduate students in the Marriage and Family Therapy Programs at Northcentral.

The SAB serves as a liaison between students, faculty, and administration. SAB members work together to evaluate and provide recommendations to MFT policy and programs, as well as work toward increasing student awareness and participation with MFT opportunities. More specifically, this board is expected to identify issues important to the future of the University and the MFT program, as well as provide feedback and recommendations regarding the program.

The MFT Student Association is committed to creating opportunities for connection among the students and between the students and faculty. The organization accomplishes its mission by: 1) Sponsoring opportunities for interaction and connection via virtual venues; 2) Sponsoring opportunities for interaction and connection via local events; 3) Innovating methods of community creation and maintenance for the MFT Program; 4) Peer orientation into the program (to welcome new students and answer questions); 5) Peer Mentoring program (seasoned students being available to assist newer students); and 6) Sponsoring the MFT honor society.
Marriage and Family Therapy Honor Society

DELTA KAPPA, the name for the International Marriage and Family Therapy Honor Society, has symbolic and historical significance within the field of marriage and family therapy. The purpose of Delta Kappa is to provide marriage and family therapy professionals an ongoing scholarly forum for the exchange of ideas related to the development of research, theory, and clinical practice. The Greek letters, Delta Kappa, have symbolic and historical significance within the field of marriage and family therapy. DELTA represents the triangle. The points of the triangle represent the three corners of the therapeutic relationship - the client/family present in the room, the therapists and therapeutic treatment team, and the external influences intertwined between lives of clients and professionals. KAPPA is the universal symbol for knowledge. The shape of the KAPPA symbol has a single long vertical line representing the intervention that occurs in the therapeutic process. The two lines meeting at the midpoint of the vertical line create a point of confluence with the therapist and the client system - joining together for change.

Northcentral’s SSBS hosts the Iota chapter of Delta Kappa. Student in the MFT doctoral programs can qualify for the honor society if they have a 3.75 cumulative GPA or higher and have completed 12 semester hours in the program. To apply students most complete the application form and submit a $75 one-time membership fee. **Click Here** to complete the application form.

**Student Support Services**

Northcentral University offers an array of student support services. Contact information for all student support services can be found in the current [Northcentral University Catalog](#). The NCU Course Room is where students will find links for Disability Services, a link for students to register "Concerns" (e.g., regarding Accounting, Faculty Services, Technical Support, Registrar, Financial Aid, and "All Others"), and other important information. With the use of a web-survey ([Click Here](#)) the program evaluates student support services annual to ensure the quality of these services are meeting the program and student needs. Please consult the [Northcentral University Catalog](#) for specific information pertaining to the following services:

- Enrollment Services
- The Student Success Tour
- Academic Advising
- Disability Services Office
- Educational Materials and Resources
- Northcentral University Library Services
- Academic Success Center
- Alumni Services
- Student Financial Services
- Registrar

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**PhD Program Clinical Training**

The PhDMFT and DMFT degree programs are not designed to meet licensure requirements. However, the PhDMFT program requires students to show completion of the foundational curriculum, which is the basis for licensure in most states. When needed, additional courses can be selected and used as electives or added to the degree program for licensure purposes. Students with questions about pursuing licensure should consult with NCU faculty about this matter by emailing mftlicensure@ncu.edu.

Many of our doctoral students are already LMFTs or licensed in another mental health discipline. Other students have completed a master’s degree and are working on completing the post-degree experience for licensure. Whatever the specific situation, clinical training at the PhD level requires that the student grows both in skill competence and in theoretical analysis and synthesis. PhDMFT students will be required to complete 1000 hours of direct client contact, which includes conducting face-to-face therapy with individuals, couples, families, and groups. At least 500 hours of client contact must be relational (i.e., couple or family). In conjunction with client contact, doctoral students must receive a total of 200 hours of supervision. Supervision of students will occur at the rate of one (1) hour of supervision per every five hours of client contact and will be face-to-face or live supervision conducted by AAMFT Approved Supervisors, Supervisor Candidates, or equivalent state approved supervisors. In some cases, students may be required to pay for local clinical supervision. This will depend on the placement location, and/or the local supervisor they contract with. For more information, please read through the practicum and internship course descriptions. The decision to pay for local supervision is entirely up to the student and not a requirement of Northcentral University. Students who obtain their full license as an MFT will by default have met the requirement of 1000 hours of client contact and the 200 hours of supervision. However, these students will still participate in the doctoral practicum course and will be expected to continue to see clients while enrolled in this course. In addition all doctoral students are required to complete a 9 month internship, see below for more information regarding the internship.

**Supervision Coursework** – In addition to advanced coursework in marriage and family therapy, students in the doctoral programs must complete a course in MFT supervision methodology. The supervision course will be conducted in connection with the requirements established by AAMFT for students to become Approved Supervisors. Not all requirements will be completed for the students to achieve the designation while in the program at Northcentral University. For students in the MFT PhD program, the supervision coursework is pre-approved by the AAMFT to count for the 30-hour supervision course requirement. Students will have to complete the direct supervision and supervision mentoring requirements outside of the program in order to qualify for the Approved Supervisor designation. For DMFT students, the course can count for the 15-hour didactic portion of the Fundamentals of Supervision course. However, DMFT students will be required to complete the remaining 15-hour interactive portion of the Fundamentals of Supervision course from another AAMFT-approved provider.

**Please note that students are responsible to ensure that their length of Practicum and Internship, along with the required number of clinical hours, meets their states regulations for licensure, if they intend to use this degree or experience for licensure purposes.**
In addition to these courses, all doctoral students will, as part of the doctoral Comprehensive Examination course (PhD: CMP9500MFT; DMFT: CMP9502DMFT), make a final case presentation of their clinical work. This final case presentation will include video of the students’ actual clinical work (PhDMFT program only), and a formal analysis of their work.

**Doctoral Practicum**

The Practicum course is 12 weeks in length, and consists of a series of assignments that students must complete and upload to the NCU Course Room, as well as accruing their direct client contact hours in their practicum sites (doing approximately 8-10 hours of direct therapy per week). This must occur while receiving oversight from a Northcentral Faculty Member and supervision from a local clinical supervisor on a weekly basis. Local supervision is not required if the student is enrolled in the doctoral program and is fully and independently licensed as an MFT in their state. Licensure in other mental health professions (e.g., psychology, social work, professional counseling) does not satisfy this requirement. Doctoral practicum can be completed any time after the first four three doctoral courses and any outstanding Standard Curriculum requirements are met (the first four doctoral courses for DMFT students).

**Doctoral Internship**

**Internship Purpose.** The purpose of the MFT doctoral internship is to provide students with a full-time (~30 hours/week), 9-month professional supervised experience where they can hone their recently developed competencies emphasizing relationally-focused practice, research, teaching, supervision, and/or administration.

**Internship Expectations.** It is expected that students will find an internship site that has been in existence for at least 2 years; provides the requisite occupational experiences relative to the students’ chosen clinical specialization; has published policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status; and where students can receive at least one (1) hour of face-to-face supervision per week. For clinically-focused internships students must be supervised by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, State Approved Supervisor, or the equivalent, and provide documentation of professional liability insurance. For other types of internships (e.g., teaching, research, administrative) the supervisor must clearly be senior in experience to the student intern. PhD MFT students who have not completed their 1000 hours of client contact should take this into consideration when selecting an internship site. All internships should involve three key components. 1) **Knowledge Base:** read books, articles, and other materials related to your identified professional goal. Knowledge base milestones should include a variety of materials that are new to the intern. 2) **Professional Training:** participates in some form of interactive training relating to your goal. Training should involve direct interaction with other professionals with expertise relating to the intern’s goals. This may be done one-on-one with the intern’s supervisor. Where possible, training milestones should occur in a face-to-face format rather than online training; in either case, the training must be interactive and live rather than asynchronous. 3) **Interactive Experience:** establish goals to complete a reasonable amount of interactive experience relating to your goals. Experience milestones must include direct interaction with clients, students, or research participants.
Pre-Requisites. Because the internship is a capstone experience in the doctoral program, and in keeping in line with the COAMFTE Educational Guidelines for doctoral education, MFT PhD students cannot begin internship until the following courses have been completed:

- MFT7101 Foundations for Doctoral Study in MFT
- MFT7102 Scholarly Literature Review in MFT
- MFT8101 Advanced Theories in MFT
- All Standard Curriculum Leveling Courses
- MFT8951 MFT Doctoral Practicum I
- MFT7103 Research Methods in MFT
- MFT8102 Dynamics of Family Interaction (Specialization Course #1)
- MFT7104 Statistical Design for MFT Research
- MFT7105 Assessment in MFT Research and Intervention
- MFT7106 or MFT7107 Quantitative or Qualitative Research Design in MFT
- Any 2 of the 4 remaining specialization courses

DMFT students cannot begin the internship until the following courses have been completed:

- DMFT7101 Foundations for Doctoral Study in MFT
- DMFT7102 Scholarly Literature Review in MFT
- DMFT7201 Program Development for MFTs
- DMFT7202 Grant Writing Concepts and Approaches for MFTs
- CMP9500DMFT DMFT Portfolio I
- CMP9501DMFT DMFT Portfolio II
- **DMFT8951 MFT Doctoral Practicum I
- MFT8970 MFT Supervision Methods
- **DMFT8971 DMFT Supervision Practicum
- MFT7103 Research Methods in MFT
- DMFT7110 Quantitative Research Design and Statistical Analysis in MFT
- Any 2 of the 4 specialization courses

**Students take only one of these practicums

Internship Plan. Students will meet with the Director of MFT Doctoral Programs (DMFT) or Director of Clinical Training (PhDMFT) to develop an Internship Plan. The internship should align with the student’s specialization and professional aspirations. The plan should include the (a) general focus of the internship (i.e., advanced clinical, research, teaching, supervision, or administration), (b) expected competencies to be developed or enhanced, (c) activities in which the student will engage, and (d) evaluation processes to be utilized to assess competency development during the internship experience. The following items may be used to help develop and present this plan.

1. Number of hours per week will you spend on each activity. Do these activities add up to 30 hours per week?
2. How do these activities directly relate to your area of specialization?
3. Are these activities something more than what you are currently doing or know?
4. Who will be your supervisor and what type of experience or license does this person need to have in order to supervise you?
5. What competencies will be developed or increased while participating in this activity?
6. What evaluation processes will be utilized to assess competency development during this activity?
7. How many of your 1000 client contact hours have you collected? Do I need to collect client contact hours as part of my internship to reach my 1000 client contact hours? If yes, does your supervisor have the appropriate credentials required by your state?

**Formative Evaluation.** Students must submit a written evaluation of the progress made towards achieving the competencies outlined in the Internship Plan at the end of DMFT8961 and DMFT8962. The evaluation should include:

- A summary of the types of professional experiences in which they participated and their overall usefulness to the student.
- An evaluation of the training and supervisory experiences received by the student.
- An evaluative summary by the internship supervisor who has mentored the student.

**Summative Evaluation.** At the end of the internship and DMFT8965, students must submit the following:

- A summary of the types of professional experiences in which they participated and their overall usefulness to the student.
- An evaluation of the training and supervisory experiences received by the student.
- An evaluative summary by the internship supervisor who has mentored the student.
- Supervisor Evaluation of the Intern
  - The types of professional experiences in which the intern engaged
  - Assessment of the student’s strengths and needs for further professional development.
  - For clinical internship experience, supervisors must confirm:
    - The number of client contact hours (relational, individual) completed.
    - Number of hours of supervision provided (group, individual).

Number of hours of each type of supervision provided (live observation, video recording, case discussion). **Addressing Problems, Concerns, and Issues:** If, at any time, the internship supervisor feels that the student is not working satisfactorily, the agency supervisor should (after first attempting to resolve these concerns directly with the student) contact the Program Director to discuss the concerns. In consultation with the Program Director, internship supervisors may terminate a student's placement.

**Clinical Requirements and Definitions – PhDMFT**

1. MFT students must know and follow the clinical experience regulations for the location where they are currently seeing clients (even if they do not intend to pursue licensure in that location after graduation). Students who intend to seek licensure in a different location/state than their current location are encouraged to know and follow the requirements of that licensure location as well.
2. To meet the clinical requirements for the MFT PhD degree, students who are not fully and independently licensed MFTs must complete a total of 1000 hours of direct client contact (therapy) as a primary or co-therapist with individuals, couples, families, or groups prior to graduation. At least 500 hours of direct client contact must be completed with relational cases, meaning two or more clients who are in a relationship with each other actually present for the session (i.e., couple or family therapy). If a student is working in a location/state that requires more client contact than 1000 hours for licensure, the student is allowed to complete additional hours as needed while in the program. Students who live in locations with fewer hours of required client contact must still complete the required 1000 total hours and 500 relational hours.

3. Students who completed a master’s degree in MFT may be able to transfer in some or all of their MA/MS clinical hours towards the 1000 hour requirement. Students will have to submit documentation to the Director of Clinical Training that their experience, during and after their master’s degree, was substantially equivalent to the clinical experience requirements of the NCU MAMFT requirements to receive credit for those hours. Students who are already licensed as LMFTs, are assumed to have met the full hour requirements for this degree and the requirement is waived; however, while practicum, students who are LMFTs are still expected to see 4-5 clients per week in order to have clinical material, and video excerpts of their clinical work, to present in the practicum group.

Clinical Requirements and Definitions – DMFT

1. MFT students must know and follow the clinical experience regulations for the location where they are currently seeing clients (even if they do not intend to pursue licensure in that location after graduation). Students who intend to seek licensure in a different location/state than their current location are encouraged to know and follow the requirements of that licensure location as well.

2. To meet the clinical requirements for the DMFT degree, students must complete the requirements for DMFT8951.

Process to Determine Clinical Readiness

The MFT programs at Northcentral University have devised a process by which students preparing to enter the clinical training for their degree program demonstrate their knowledge of MFT theory, therapy models and their knowledge of the AAMFT Code of Ethics and its application to a real world scenario. Students admitted into the MFT programs must be approved to begin the clinical phase of the program before seeing clients. This is done by demonstrating clinical readiness as evaluated by academic achievements and professional/ethical behavior. Acceptance into the MFT program does not imply acceptance into the clinical component of the MFT programs. What follows is an overview of the Practicum Preparation Process for the MFT programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

33
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>The student completes all academic requirements necessary to begin the Practicum Preparation Process, including the Clinical Readiness Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MFT Clinical Coordinator</td>
<td>Student enrolled in Taskstream Practicum Preparation DRF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Student completes all of the elements of the Practicum Preparation Process DRF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Students will find an appropriate clinical site in their local area where they can work as an employee, intern, trainee, or volunteer and see clients as the clients’ primary therapist. Students can complete their practicum and/or internship in any behavioral health setting provided they can work from a systemic perspective, see a variety of clients, see people in conjoint sessions for required relational hours, have adequate supervision, and are able to video record sessions. This can be a community agency, family and children’s counseling center, working with a qualified supervisor in her/his private practice, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Clinical Field Placements</td>
<td>Approval of site and local clinical supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Clinical Training</td>
<td>Reviews and approves Clinical Readiness Activities, conducts Clinical Readiness Interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Enrolls in the practicum course (MFT8951 or DMFT8971).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students begin the Practicum Preparation Process when they complete the Clinical Readiness Interview. The Academic Advisor will work with students to determine the best time to begin clinical training.

There are four primary components to the Practicum Preparation Process, which are discussed in the MFT Program Clinical Training Handbook. Students must familiar with that Handbook as well.

**Securing an Appropriate Placement Site**

For the Practicum course students are primarily responsible for locating and securing a clinical placement and local clinical supervisor. Students need to find a site in their local area where they can work as an employee, intern, trainee, or volunteer and see clients as their primary therapist. In some cases, students may be required to pay for local supervision and in other cases paying for supervision may be prohibited (e.g., California) so students are expected to check their individual state’s requirements. Paying or not paying for supervision will depend on the clinical placement location, local clinical placement and/or local clinical supervisor they contract with to complete their practicum requirements. In states where it is legal to pay for practicum or post-graduate supervision, the decision to pay for local supervision is entirely up to the student and is not a requirement of Northcentral University. Acceptable practicum sites must meet the following criteria:

- Students must be allowed to do actual face-to-face therapy with clients.
• Students must have the opportunity to see couples and families for at least half of all of their client contact hours. Students can work with individuals, couples, families, and/or groups, but half of their hours need to be “relational” meaning conjoint therapy with 2 or more people in a committed relationship with each other (e.g., couples, whole families, parents and children, etc.).

• Students must be able to see at least 10 clients per week for a 50-minute hour.

• Students must be able to video record at least one client session per week.

• The site must meet any state licensure board requirements for an acceptable site (e.g., some states do not allow students to work in private practice settings before becoming fully licensed).

If students believe they have extenuating circumstances that may make it impossible to meet this requirement, they may document the circumstances and send a request for consideration to the Director of Clinical Training. Exceptions to the policy are determined on a case-by-case basis. However, there are NO exceptions to the following three requirements:

• For any placement site and/or supervisor approved, we would still need to ensure that those hours or practicum will be accepted by the state the student is pursuing licensure.
• The supervision is conducted face-to-face, in the same geographical location. (COAMFTE requirement).
• The supervisor approved must be able to demonstrate that he or she has the experience and/or training that would qualify him or her to supervise a MFT student.

NCU Faculty Members

Practicum or Internship Faculty within the MFT program at Northcentral University will meet the following qualifications:

1. Hold a doctoral level degree in MFT.
2. Hold an active state MFT license in their state, province or country.
   o The license must be a full license which allows the faculty member to practice Marriage & Family Therapy independently.
3. Complete or be enrolled in a pre-approved 30-hour AAMFT Supervision Fundamentals training course.
4. Be an AAMFT Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate.

Local Clinical Supervisors

During the Practicum and Internship portion of the PhD MFT and DMFT degree programs, students must be under the direct supervision of a qualified supervisor who meets or exceeds the requirements stated below (students with a full MFT license do not need a local supervisor during Practicum). They must also meet or exceed the qualifications put forth by the state, province or country in which therapeutic services are being provided. An AAMFT Approved Supervisor who
also meets the requirements set forth by the state, province or country in which the student is
providing therapeutic services will automatically meet all requirements for Northcentral University.

1. Within the US the supervisor must meet or exceed the state's requirements to supervise an
individual (i.e., trainee or intern) that is pursuing an MFT license.

2. Due to the large variability with international students’ licensing requirements, local clinical
supervisors in international locations are considered on a case-by-case basis to determine the
best possible fit. The following list includes examples of qualifications considered when
choosing and approving an international clinical supervisor:

   a. Licensure or credential to independently practice as a mental health practitioner in the
      same jurisdiction as the student.
   b. Evidence of some form of MFT focused training, including ANY of the following:
      o nine or more graduate credits of MFT focused coursework
      o ten or more years of direct clinical experience with couples and/or families
      o Licensure in MFT
      o AAMFT Clinical Membership
      o AAMFT Approved Supervisor
      o State or international jurisdiction approval to supervise MFT interns

**NCU MFT Faculty Local Clinical Supervisor Policy**

In an effort to provide students high quality MFT clinical experiences, it is the policy of the
Department of Marriage and Family Science (DMFS) that NCU faculty may serve as local clinical
supervisors to NCU MFT students. DMFS faculty should be aware that providing local clinical
supervision to MFT students is not expected nor a part of their teaching or administrative
responsibilities at NCU. Further, as in any supervisory relationship, NCU faculty agree to
acknowledge and manage the dual relationship issues inherent in such a professional relationship.
Those faculty who wish to serve as local clinical supervisors can request to be included in the
Clinical Field Placement Supervisors database or become engaged in the process via a NCU MFT
student seeking clinical supervision directly from the faculty member. The supervision contract,
including but not limited to remuneration for supervision services, is exclusively between the DMFS
faculty and NCU MFT student and expected to conform to extant legal, professional, and ethical
standards.

**Northcentral Online Practicum Sessions**
The actual content of the Practicum courses very closely resemble traditional group supervision,
except that they are conducted through online web conferencing with a Northcentral University
Faculty Member. This clinical instruction is designed to supplement and broaden the supervision of
the local clinical supervisor, not replace the local clinical supervisor. This requires students to have
an internal or external web cam.

Students are encouraged to acquire a noise-cancelling headset with microphone. The interactive,
online group practicum sessions last for 2 hours. In the sessions, we will discuss specific cases,
assessment, treatment planning, models of therapy, clinical intervention, documentation, professional development and self-of-the-therapist issues.

**Recording**

Students are required to record some of their client sessions (using a digital video camera) to share during online and local clinical supervision sessions. By using a digital recording device, students can play their recordings on their computer and share them during Northcentral web-based supervision sessions as well as use them for local supervision (as requested by the local site supervisor). There are a number of reliable and relatively inexpensive digital recording devices a student can purchase.

**Informed Consent**

Students are required to have all of their clients sign a standard informed consent document that discloses the video recording of sessions and requests permission for recording, transmission, and supervision of the sessions with the Northcentral Faculty Member. This NCU informed consent document is available in the Books and Resources area for the Practicum and Internship courses.

Note that the NCU informed consent is designed to supplement and not replace the informed consent document that the student’s site normally provides all clients. Using the NCU informed consent document in addition to site-specific informed consent forms is important, however, because the NCU document provides information about the student’s status as a student that most probably the site’s normal informed consent does not contain.

**Technology Requirements**

In practicum and internship class sessions, students will meet in a secure online forum for live web conferencing. Before meeting for the first time a trial run can be scheduled to test and run the technical components of the process, such as making sure webcams work, learning to capture and share video clips, sharing a presentation, etc. A few minutes prior to meeting online the supervisor will email the student a link to the web conferencing session. Prior to clicking to open the link, it is best to have closed all other applications that may be open on the student’s computer as these may interfere with the operation of the web session (bandwidth issues).

**Logging Hours**

Students are required to log their therapy and supervision hours. At the end of each Practicum or Internship course, students must post their hours to the appropriate assignment in the NCU Course Room. The student’s NCU Clinical Supervisor will review hours and if there are logging errors or concerns will provide feedback to the student.

**Pursuing Licensure**

**Overview**

The MFT programs at Northcentral University are designed to help students to become effective, knowledgeable clinicians who are prepared to seek licensure. However, Northcentral cannot guarantee that program graduates will be eligible for licensure, pass licensure exams, or become licensed as marriage and family therapists. **Students have sole responsibility for ensuring that they take the required coursework and complete other activities to prepare for and meet licensure requirements in their own state.** Nevertheless, it is anticipated that program graduates
will seek licensure and the following information may be helpful to students in that regard. Most states in the United States have specific requirements that must be met in order to be licensed as a marriage and family therapist. Typically these requirements are patterned after AAMFT Educational Guidelines, but variance in specific requirements exists from state to state. For example, some states require a specific course in addictions while others do not. Similarly, some states require more hours of direct or indirect clinical services than others. In view of the requirements for state licensure and the variation from state to state, common requirements and the potential for meeting such requirements at Northcentral are discussed below.

Clinical Experience Prerequisites
As part of a graduate or post graduate clinical training, most states require that applicants for licensure complete a practicum and/or internship experience for a certain number of months and/or supervised, direct client contact hours. For example, the State of Arizona requires an internship involving a minimum of 300 hours of direct client contact that must be supervised by a licensed MFT or other clinician who is determined by the state to be a qualified clinical supervisor for MFTs. The clinical experience requirements for the MFT programs at Northcentral exceed the requirement for the State of Arizona. We require 1000 hours for the PhDMFT program. Nevertheless, in Arizona and all other states, students are responsible for determining if clinical experience in the MFT program at Northcentral will meet the requirements for their state.

Licensure Application, Fees, and Exams
The licensing process in most states involves completion of an in-depth application process and often involves multiple associated fees. Students are responsible for completing all licensing requirements, applications, fees, etc. for their own state.

Most states require licensure applicants to complete and pass a licensing examination after graduation and before becoming fully licensed. Often the required examination is the national MFT exam (with one major exception being CA which requires applicants to pass a state licensing exam in place of the national exam), offered by the Professional Examination Service. Students should determine the required licensure examination process for their own state developed by the Association for Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB), and they are solely responsible for preparing for, paying for, taking and passing the examination. Northcentral does not guarantee that any graduate will qualify for or pass the licensing exam.

Post-graduate Clinical Experience Requirements
Upon completion of a graduate degree in marriage and family therapy and all other state licensing requirements, most states require a substantial amount of additional supervised clinical experience (typically two years of full time work) prior to awarding full licensure as a marriage and family therapist. Students should determine the specific requirements for their state and make plans to complete the clinical experience requirements in order to qualify for licensure.

Meeting Curriculum Requirements
Licensure requirements vary from state to state, including the required coursework that is needed to prepare for licensure. Students are responsible for determining whether the given state will accept coursework from Northcentral University to meet those requirements.

As an example, the curriculum requirements for the State of Arizona are outlined below, along with lists of potential Northcentral courses that may meet the stated requirements. If PhDMFT students
are lacking any of the Standard Curriculum that is covered in the Master’s program they will be required to complete this as part of their degree plan. The state of Arizona requires coursework in six categories as well as a supervised internship experience. The number of required courses for each category, a description of the category, and a list of potentially relevant Northcentral courses is offered for each category.

**Marriage and Family Studies (3 courses)**
Studies of introductory systems theory, family development, family systems, including marital, sibling, and individual subsystems, special family issues, and gender and cultural issues, all with a major focus on a systems theory orientation.

MFT5101 – Foundations for Graduate Study in MFT
MFT5103 – Systemic Evaluation and Case Management
MFT6103 – Cultural Diversity, Gender, and Family Therapy

**Marriage and Family Therapy (3 courses)**
Studies of advanced systems theory and interventions, major systemic marriage and treatment approaches, structural, strategic, nonanalytic, group therapy, behavioral marriage and family therapy, communications, and sex therapy.

MFT5104 – Treatment Planning and traditional Family Therapy
MFT5105 – Recovery-Oriented Care and Postmodern Family Therapy
MFT6104 – Family Therapy with Children
MFT6105 – Couple and Sex Therapy

**Human Development (3 courses)**
Studies of normal and abnormal human development, personality theory, human sexuality, and psychopathology and abnormal behavior, which may be integrated with systems theory.

MFT6101 – Lifespan individual and Family Development
MFT6102 – Psychopathology, Diagnosis and Systemic Intervention
MFT6105 – Families in Crisis (Trauma/Addictions/Violence/Infidelity)

**Professional Studies (1 course)**
Studies of professional ethics as a therapist, including legal and ethical responsibilities, liabilities, and family law.

MFT5102 – Legal, Ethical and Professional Development in MFT

**Research (1 course)**
Studies of research design, methodology, and statistics in marriage and family therapy.

MFT5106 – Research Methods and Evidence Based Practice

**Practicum (2 courses)**
Studies that are limited to the provision of marriage and family therapy services to individuals, couples and families within an educational or professional setting under the direction of a faculty member or supervisor designated by the college or university.
MFT6951 – MFT Practicum I
MFT6952 – MFT Practicum II

Internship
An applicant for licensure as an associate marriage and family therapist or a marriage and family therapist shall complete a supervised internship as part of the master or higher degree curriculum.

MFT6991 – MFT Internship I (1 credit)
MFT6992 – MFT Internship II (1 credit)
MFT6995 – MFT Internship and Capstone Presentation (1 credit)

Appendix A – Additional Program Documents

Application Process Forms

- DMFT in Marriage and Family Therapy Application Packet
- PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy Application Packet

Assessment/Evaluation Measures

- Student Annual Survey
- Student Progress Evaluation (SPE)
- Student Progress Evaluation-Student Report (SPE-SR)
- Theory of Therapy Final Case Presentation Grading Rubric
- Student Initial Review Summary Worksheet
- MFT Exit Interview
- MFT Student Alumni Survey
- Employer Satisfaction Survey

Practicum and Internship Forms

- Site Information Form
- Supervisor Information Form
- Practicum Informed Consent
- MFT Practicum Participation Form
- Student Evaluation of On-Site Clinical Supervisor
- Practicum/Internship Site Evaluation
- Clinical Supervisor Evaluation of MFT Student
- PhD Practicum Supervisor Agreement
- PhD Internship Supervisor Agreement
- PhD Practicum Site Agreement
- DMFT Practicum Supervisor Agreement
- DMFT Internship Supervisor Agreement
- DMFT Practicum Site Agreement
General Program Forms

- Student Acknowledgement Form- PhDMFT
- Student Acknowledgement Form- DMFT
- Licensure Limitation Acknowledgement Letter- Graduation Request
- Licensure Limitation Acknowledgement Letter- Applicants
- MFT Student Withdraw Survey

AAMFT Code of Ethics

- Click Here to access the most recent version of the AAMFT Code of Ethics.

Appendix B - Practicum Preparation Process

Summary of Documents & Forms

All of the Practicum Preparation Forms are contained in the Taskstream DRF. The DRF is organized into 3 sections: Introduction, Clinical Readiness Activities, and Site and Supervisor Vetting and Contracting (SASVAS).

Introduction

- NCU MFT Clinical Training Handbook
- Tips for Finding a Clinical Placement
- Tips for Acing your Practicum Placement Interview

Clinical Readiness Activities

- Ethics Essay
- Clinical Readiness Quiz
- Proof of Insurance
- Technology Checklist
- Clinical Readiness Interview

Site & Supervisor Vetting & Contracting

- Agency & Supervisor Vetting Information Form
- Confirmation of Agency Information
- Confirmation of Supervisor Information and Credentials
- Supervisor Documents Upload
- Confirmation of Agency Agreement
- Confirmation of Supervisor Agreement
- Student-Supervisor-Site Agreement
- Site Video Walkthrough
Appendix C - Frequently Asked Questions

1. How can I learn more about the profession of Marriage and Family Therapy?

Marriage and family therapy (MFT) is a profession that uses a systems theory orientation to treat individuals, couples, families and groups that struggle with mental and emotional disorders as well as a wide range of behavioral and relationship problems. Marriage and family therapy is a distinct profession from that of psychology, counseling, social work, and other mental health professions. More detailed information about marriage and family therapy can be found in the links below.

- AAMFT responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the profession: [http://www.aamft.org/imis15/Content/About_AAMFT/Qualifications.aspx](http://www.aamft.org/imis15/Content/About_AAMFT/Qualifications.aspx)
- Information about MFT as a career, including salary information: [http://www.allpsychologyschools.com/psychology-careers/career/marriage-family-therapist](http://www.allpsychologyschools.com/psychology-careers/career/marriage-family-therapist)
- Interesting information about a variety of topics in MFT education, licensure, etc.: [http://mftprogress.blogspot.com/](http://mftprogress.blogspot.com/)
- To apply for a student membership with AAMFT click on the following link, and as a Northcentral Student your application fee will be waived: [www.aamft.org/northcentral.asp](http://www.aamft.org/northcentral.asp)

2. Can you describe the structure of a typical Northcentral University MFT course?

Our MFT coursework is designed to be highly practical, allowing you to gain knowledge and experience that is both professionally beneficial and personally relevant.

- Each course includes a variety of learning activities and assignments, and incorporates multiple study materials including required textbooks, journal articles and scholarly online information.
- Most courses require participation in online discussion forums in which students and Faculty write and respond to questions and comment on given topics related to the course. Discussions are asynchronous.
- Faculty and students work together in completing, submitting and receiving grades and feedback for course assignments -- including reflection and research papers, case studies, literature reviews, presentations, and experiential exercises.
- Class discussions, assignments and other learning activities can be completed online, asynchronously, each week within the 12-week course period.
- For Group Practicum, Faculty coordinate a time for groups to meet together weekly online (through video conferencing) throughout the course.

3. When are MFT students in the PhDMFT program expected to begin the clinical portion of the program?
Though not required, students in the PhDMFT program can begin seeing clients as soon as they have completed the three Foundation courses (MFT7101, MFT7102, and MFT7103) and any Standard Curriculum courses. However, before students can begin counting clinical hours, students must have completed the Practicum Preparation Process (which should be completed at least one month prior to when they plan to begin their clinical work).

4. When are MFT students in the DMFT program expected to begin the clinical portion of the program?

Though not required, students in the DMFT program can begin seeing clients as soon as they have completed the two Foundation courses (DMFT7101 and DMFT7102) and two Core courses (DMFT7201 & DMFT7202). However, before students can begin counting clinical hours, students must have completed the Practicum Preparation Process (which should be completed at least one month prior to when they plan to begin their clinical work).

5. How is the practicum process completed online?

Students participate in direct client contact and supervision in their local area. During the Practicum course, students also participate in weekly group practicum sessions with a qualified faculty member and other students in the program. These practicum sessions are conducted online via secure Internet video conferencing, in order to maintain confidentiality and security of client records and meet HIPAA regulations.

- With guidance from Northcentral Faculty, students establish a local practicum site with a qualified supervisor that meets regulations outlined by students’ local licensure boards. The local supervisor must be trained in MFT and state requirements to supervise MFT students.
- In addition to working with a local supervisor, clinical work is reviewed during the group practicum sessions by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor Candidate on the MFT faculty at Northcentral University.

6. Can Faculty help students find a place to do practicum hours near where they live?

Yes, the MFT Director of Clinical Field Placements at Northcentral University can assist students, but each student is ultimately responsible for finding a local practicum/internship site and a qualified local supervisor. We have a list of sites where current and past students have completed their clinical training. This list may include specific locations in a specific student’s area or may serve as an example of types of sites one could consider in finding a placement.

7. During Practicum and Internship, can I work in a paid placement or do I need to volunteer?

Some of our students volunteer and some are paid for their time. Either is acceptable. Whether a student is paid or not depends on opportunities available in her or his local area. Some states may specifically require volunteer work while enrolled as a student rather than a paid placement.

8. Does the supervisor for the practicum and internship in the DMFT and PhDMFT programs have to be an AAMFT Approved Supervisor?
No (although an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate is preferred). However, the specific minimum requirement is that local supervisors must be licensed and trained as MFTs and must meet any additional requirements that are established by the local licensure board for supervisors of MFT applicants. Students can check local licensing regulations to determine the supervisor requirements. These requirements are typically outlined in the licensure rules about post-degree clinical experience. We require that students work with a supervisor that meets the regulations to supervise post degree hours so that if the student decides to stay in your internship site following graduation the hours will count toward full licensure.

9. How do I find a qualified supervisor in my area?

The AAMFT website has an “Online Directories” section that includes a list of Approved Supervisors: Approved Supervisor Directory. Also, you can search the AAMFT Therapist Locator service which will show people that are licensed/trained MFTs in your area: http://www.therapistlocator.net. Many of the local divisions of AAMFT (e.g. the state association) offer assistance in finding supervisors and some even have lists of local supervisors available on their websites. You can find information about your local division by visiting the Directory of Divisions: http://www.aamft.org/cgi-shl/twserver.exe?run:DIVSR. Finally, many states post a list of licensees (and sometimes supervisors) on their websites. The directory of state licensure boards gives you a link to each board’s website and also offers email and phone contact information for each board: http://www.aamft.org/imis15/content/directories/MFT_licensing_boards.aspx.

10. How long does it take to complete the MFT degree online at Northcentral University?

The MFT PhD program requires completion of 69 credits of coursework and clinical experience, in addition to any Standard Curriculum credit hours required.

- All of the courses in the program are three credits except for the internship and latter dissertation courses.
- We encourage our students to complete 6-8 courses in a year. At that rate, it takes approximately 4-5 years to complete the PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy degree program. Some students find it necessary to complete the program at a slower pace due to other responsibilities and time constraints. In any case, students must complete the PhD program within eight years.

The DMFT program requires completion of 60 credits of coursework and clinical experience.

- All of the courses in the program are three credits except for the internship and latter dissertation courses.
- We encourage our students to complete 6-8 courses in a year. At that rate, it takes approximately 4-5 years to complete the DMFT program. Some students find it necessary to complete the program at a slower pace due to other responsibilities and time constraints. In any case, students must complete the DMFT program within seven years.

11. What is COAMFTE accreditation?
Northcentral University is regionally accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. Beyond this regional accreditation, many professions have specific accrediting bodies for individual programs that train those people who will enter the profession. COAMFTE accreditation is one such specialized or professional accreditation. The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) is the accrediting body for the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). For more information on COAMFTE accreditation, visit their website.

12. Are the MFT programs at Northcentral University COAMFTE accredited?

Both the PhD and DMFT programs at Northcentral were developed following COAMFTE Marriage and Family Therapy Educational Guidelines and the PhDMFT program was designed to meet COAMFTE accreditation standards.

- The PhDMFT program was granted COAMFTE accreditation in May of 2015. We are pleased to be the first (and currently only) primarily distance-based doctoral MFT program to be accredited by the COAMFTE.
- The DMFT does not yet have an additional accreditation.

13. After I graduate from the PhDMFT or DMFT program, will I be eligible to pursue state licensure?

Licensure requirements vary from state to state, although most state educational requirements are fairly similar. In order to help you prepare for licensure, please review Northcentral University’s document entitled “Pursuing Licensure in Marriage and Family Therapy.”

- You are responsible for taking the required coursework and preparing for and meeting the licensure requirements in your state.
- You may have to take additional courses beyond what we require for graduation in order to meet your state’s licensure requirements. For example, in North Carolina, licensure applicants are required to take a course in Theories of Personality. Northcentral does not require this course in its MFT program; however, we do offer it as an elective.
- Some states will not accept a degree from Northcentral. Specifically, Kansas, New Hampshire, and the District of Columbia, have specifically indicated that they will not accept online courses to meet their educational requirements for licensure.
- A list of links to various state and other licensure boards is available through the AAMFT website in their Directory of MFT Licensure and Certification Boards.

15. After graduating from the NCU PhDMFT and DMFT programs, will I be qualified to obtain clinical membership in AAMFT?

Clinical Membership in AAMFT is typically obtained by completing the requirements for licensure in your home state.

- Most states use the AAMFT Curriculum Guidelines as the standard for their educational requirements for licensure.
In locations without an approved licensure process (i.e. international Students), individuals may pursue AAMFT Clinical Membership through the Evaluation Track in lieu of licensure. Learn more from the Clinical Membership section of the AAMFT website.

16. What is the tuition cost for Northcentral University’s MFT program?

- Tuition costs for the MFT program can be reviewed on our public website.
- The total cost for the MFT program depends on the number of credits you have to complete after your transfer credits are applied.
- For additional information about tuition and fees, visit http://www.ncu.edu/northcentral-global/tuition.

17. Who can I contact if I have additional questions about Northcentral University?

- For questions can be sent to the MFT@ncu.edu email, and questions will be routed, based on the content of your question, to the most appropriate person.
- For general information call 866-776-0331, or visit www.ncu.edu.