

Pursuing licensure in Marriage and Family Therapy

The MFT programs at North central University are designed to help learners train 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. **The learner has sole responsibility for ensuring that s/he takes the required coursework and fulfills the requirements to prepare for and meet licensure requirements in her/his own state.** Nevertheless, it is anticipated that program graduates will seek licensure and the following information may be helpful to learners 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.

Education Requirements. Most state licensure requirements include the need for an accredited master's degree in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, along with completion of a specific set of related courses. Often these courses are consistent with national standards for licensure. An example of state program requirements for the State of Arizona is provided below, along with a list of Northcentral courses that could be taken to potentially meet the state requirements. As is the case with most states, the proposed Northcentral courses are likely to meet the didactic requirements for the State of Arizona, but the actual approval of such courses is entirely determined by the state, and it remains the responsibility of individual learners to ascertain the appropriateness of courses for individual state requirements.

Clinical Experience Prerequisites. As part of a master's degree program or post graduate clinical training, most states require that applicants complete a practicum and/or internship experience for a certain number of 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. The clinical experience requirements for the MFT programs at Northcentral exceed the requirement for the State of Arizona (we require 500 hours of direct client contact). Nevertheless, in Arizona and all other states, Learners 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. Learners are responsible for completing all licensing requirements, applications, fee, 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, offered by the Professional Examination Service. Learners 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. However, the required coursework in the MFT master's program at Northcentral is designed to substantially cover the licensing exam content.

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 or more years of full time work) prior to awarding full licensure as a marriage and family therapist. Learners 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 Requirement for Licensure in Arizona

Licensure requirements vary from state to state, including the required coursework that is needed to prepare for licensure. Learners 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. 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)

MFT6991 – MFT Internship II (1 credit)

MFT6991 – MFT Internship and Capstone Presentation (1 credit)