



# **Touro University Worldwide**

## **Marriage and Family Therapy Handbook**

**2017-2018**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Touro University Worldwide (TUW) and to the Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) degree program. In this professional program you will have an opportunity to learn Marriage and Family Therapy and counseling. With a Master's degree in MFT, followed by supervised clinical experience, you will be eligible to sit for the license exam to practice independently as a **Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)** in California, and most other states in the United States. We also have the option for students to pursue a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) Track in addition to the MFT Clinical Track. Students who choose to also pursue LPCC licensure in addition to the MFT licensure can enroll in the Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) Track. The **LPCC Track** (with 25 courses and 73 credits) allows the students the opportunity to pursue dual licensure in his/her state after completion of our program.

### Introduction

Marriage and Family Therapists are mental health practitioners who are specifically trained to help individuals, couples and families improve and maintain healthy relationships. With the LMFT license, you can help children, adolescents and adults with a variety of problems. You can treat individuals, couples, families, groups and larger systems; work in private practice by yourself or with a group; work in community clinics, residential treatment centers and hospitals or you can consult, develop and manage programs. As an LMFT, you will be a psychotherapist by law and may be paid for your services directly or by Insurance as appropriate.

This **MFT Handbook** contains the policies and procedures for the Master's Degree program in MFT and is a contract for your performance in the program. It will also guide you through the academic and experiential requirements for the MFT license and will address questions you may have about the exam process. **READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY** and become familiar with its contents, consult it every time you have any questions.

In addition, please read these publications that contain useful information for your success in the graduate program:

1. The TUW Catalog for your year of entry to the MFT Program (available on the TUW website);
2. Please read and participate in the online Orientation.
3. *Laws and Regulations Relating to the Licensure Process of the Marriage and Family Therapy*, published by the Board of Behavioral Sciences (see BBS [http://www.bbs.ca.gov/app-reg/mft\\_presentation.shtml](http://www.bbs.ca.gov/app-reg/mft_presentation.shtml) ).
4. AAMFT Code of Ethics [aamft.org/imis15/Content/Legal\\_Ethics/Code\\_of\\_Ethics.aspx](http://aamft.org/imis15/Content/Legal_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics.aspx)

## LEGAL NOTIFICATION

Applicants seeking the MFT license must graduate with a *qualifying degree* that has been approved by the BBS for the MFT. At TUW, that program is the M.A. in MFT degree. **We are required by law to notify you that:**

The Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) degree is designed to meet the education requirements of Sections 4980.36 of the Business and Professions Code of the State of California, leading to licensure as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. In addition, the MFT degree is designed to meet the education requirements of Sections 4999.33, 34, 36 of the Business and Professions Code of the State of California for licensure as a Licensed Professional. Additional States are substantially similar and most states accept the BBS of California requirements. TUW MFT Program is approved by the BBS of California.

The TUW MFT Program is also approved by The State Education Department / The University of the State of New York / Albany, NY 12234 - Division of Professional Education - Professional Education Program Review - Education Building - 89 Washington Avenue, 2nd Floor, West Wing - Albany, NY 12234 - Tel. (518) 486-2967 - Fax (518) 473-0114.

**Please note:** The MFT Handbook is designed to supplement the information distributed by the BBS handbook. As licensing requirements change, academic requirements follow suit. TUW makes every effort to inform students of changes that impact their programs. However, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to understand the effects of legal and regulatory changes on license eligibility as well as to keep original BBS and Practicum documents safe and secure after graduation.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MFT DEGREE AND LICENSURE

The MFT licensure consists of three phases:

Phase 1: Obtain a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT). The MFT curriculum is composed of 20 required courses for a total of 60 semester credits which includes two required Practicum Courses. Each Practicum Course is 3 semester credits and requires students to complete a minimum of 150 hours. By the end of completing both Practicum Courses, students must have completed a total of 225 Direct Client Contact Hours out of the 300 total Practicum Hours in order to meet TUW graduation requirements (280 direct contact hours and 450 total hours for LPCC emphasis). The practicum hours are acceptable and counted ONLY if you are registered for the Practicum course.

Phase 2: Obtain a temporary license (i.e., MFT Intern) from the state that you are planning to seek Licensure from, and continue accruing hours required by your state.

Phase 3: Obtain a Licensure from your State following post master's Internship by passing the Licensure Exam in the state you are planning to practice psychotherapy.

Obtain your Master's Degree from Touro University Worldwide (TUW)

This is the first step towards the path of becoming a Licensed MFT (LMFT). The degree requires 60 semester credits that include Practicum credit hours as well, and it is part of the master's Degree requirement for the MFT program. The courses that TUW offers for the degree are aligned with the course requirements for an MFT who can apply for a licensure in California and most other States.

The Program of Study Curriculum is as follows:

### MFT CORE-REQUIRED COURSES (60 semester credit hours\*)

Course Number	Course Title	Semester Credit Hours
MFT 610	Contemporary Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy	3
MFT 611	Foundations of Psychopathology	3
MFT 612	Couples Counseling	3
MFT 613	Child-Focused Family Therapy	3
MFT 614	Development Within the Family Life Cycle	3
MFT 615	Psychopharmacology	3

Course Number	Course Title	Semester Credit Hours
MFT 616	Society, Culture and Gender: A Multi-cultural Perspective	3
MFT 617	Research Methodology	3
MFT 618	Group Counseling	3
MFT 619	Assessment & Testing for the Marriage & Family Therapist	3
MFT 620	Human Sexuality	3
MFT 626	Substance Abuse & Recovery	3
MFT 627	Studies in Human Communication	3
MFT 628	Adolescent-Focused Family Therapy	3
MFT 629	Aging, Illness & Long Term Care Concerns	3
MFT 630	Ethics & Law for Marriage & Family Therapy	3
MFT 635	Treatment of Trauma in Families	3
MFT 641*	Clinical Practicum Part I- 150 Hours	3
MFT 643*	Clinical Practicum Part II -150 Hours	3
MFT 645*	Clinical Practicum Part III -150 Hours – (As needed)	3
MFT 642*	Practicum Part 1-Continuation I – (As needed)	0
MFT 644*	Practicum Part 2- Continuation II – (As needed)	0
MFT 699	Capstone	3
<b><u>Elective Courses</u></b>	<b>Taken only if the Student's State Requires these specific Courses</b>	
MFT 650	Counseling Theory	3
MFT 651	Advanced Counseling Theory & Techniques	3
MFT 653	Lifestyle and Career Development Counseling	3
MFT 698	Spousal/Partner Abuse Detection and Intervention	1

### LICENSED PROFESSIONAL CLINICAL COUNSELOR (LPCC) TRACK REQUIRED COURSES

The LPCC Track is comprised of 25 required courses for a total of 73 semester credits which includes three practicum courses. In addition to the MFT core requirements above, students in the LPCC Track must take 5 additional courses:

Course Number	Course Title	Semester Credit Hours
MFT 650	Counseling Theory	3
MFT 651	Advanced Counseling Theory & Techniques	3
MFT 653	Lifestyle and Career Development Counseling	3
MFT 698	Spousal/Partner Abuse Detection and Intervention	1
MFT 645	Clinical Practicum Part III -150 Hours	3

### CLINICAL PRACTICUM COURSES AND REQUIREMENTS

In addition to earning a qualifying master's degree, applicants for the MFT program and the LPCC emphasis must have field experience and learn how to do therapy. This training occurs when pre-licensed individuals that are called trainees see clients and receive supervision on therapy performed with those clients. For MFTs a complete list of requirements may be found in BPC Section 4980.36.

#### Collecting BBS MFT Hours: Required and Allowed Activities

**Note: Pay particular attention to "Changes to MFT Experience Requirements effective January 1, 2012".**

#### Collecting BBS/MFT Hours: Overview of the Process of Practicum

You enroll to your first practicum course following an approved Practicum site and Practicum supervisor by TUW Coordinator of Practicum Training, Professor Kaleena Prate.

**Please see forms:** <http://www.tuw.edu/marriage-family-therapy/>

TUW MFT Program requires minimum of **300 total hours** (including **225 face-to-face client contact hours**) to fulfill the Master's Degree Requirements for the MFT (This requirement is aligned with the Requirements of the BBS in California). This phase is called supervised practicum.

The Practicum consists of 2 courses (Practicum I - MFT 641 and Practicum II - MFT 643). By the end of Practicum, students will have completed 300 total hours. Students must register for the 2 practicum courses consecutively (back-to-back terms) in order for the practicum to be considered as completed hours. Each practicum course is 150-total hours and 3 credits. Regular tuition costs apply. If students do not complete the 150 total hours by the end of Practicum I, they will need to take Practicum I continuation (MFT 642) in the following term. Continuation courses are taken until they complete the 150 total hours. The Practicum continuation courses are 0 credits. Each continuation course after completion of Practicum I cost a flat fee of \$500. The same process is for Practicum II (MFT 643)-150 total hours at 3 credits regular tuition. In order to complete the MFT practicum training requirements at TUW, the student must complete at least 300 total hours (including 225 face-to-face client contact hours) by the end of MFT 643. If the student is not able to complete the required total and face-to-face client

contact hours by the end of MFT 643, the student will take practicum II continuation (MFT 644) and it is 0 credits and flat fee of \$500.

During practicum, you must gain a minimum of 300 total supervised hours of which 225 **must be** direct client contact hours. During the Practicum courses you must plan to be in the practicum site minimum of 16 hours per week (two days of 8 hours or any other configuration as the agency for your practicum determines).

- Practicum class time is NOT counted as part of your supervised experience; it is counted as part of your 6 academic credit units.
- You may count no more than 40 hours of experience for any week. This includes categories: client contact, supervision, workshops, and progress notes.
- For any week in which you wish to count experience, you must have at least one (1) hour of individual or two (2) hours of group supervision. No supervision, no hours! You must be enrolled in the class during your Practicum, and you are not to get paid or pay for practicum supervision.
- For every five (5) hours of client contact you gain as a trainee in Practicum, you need either one hour of individual or two hours of group supervision.
- Personal psychotherapy cannot be counted towards your 300 required total practicum hours.
- You must enroll in one of the practicum courses or practicum continuation courses in order for your practicum hours to count.
- If you have completed all the hours required by TUW and wish to collect additional hours at the practicum site, you must enroll in MFT 645. If you do not wish to pay for the additional practicum course, you can wait until after graduation to collect additional hours.
- During Practicum, you will have to upload the forms and weekly hours signed by your supervisor to the Integrated Campus system. This repository will assist you and the school to collect the information for submission to the State so you can receive the MFT Intern number to start your post-graduation MFT internship.

**Additional practicum training requirements for LPCC Track include:**

- 280 face-to-face clinical hours (instead of 225 face-to-face clinical hours); and
- 450 total practicum hours (instead of 300 total practicum hours).

### **No Private Practice for Trainees in Practicum**

The regulations that restrict MFT Trainees from working in private practice were adopted to protect Trainees. It is believed that a private practice is vulnerable to economic and other pressures that a public, non-profit agency is not. Although it is an obvious generalization, private practitioners are responsible only to themselves and have the freedom to move about more or less at will. The Board is concerned that a Trainee in private practice could be left “high and dry” if the supervisor were to suddenly abandon his or her office.

In addition, the Board (BBS) is concerned that the economic pressures upon a private, for-profit venture might be placed upon the Trainee, who would then be required to perform duties beyond those, appropriate for his or her level of education and ability.

Once you completed your master’s degree, you send a request for degree audit to the office of the registrar online. You collect all your forms and contact the Provost Office for auditing all your forms and courses, sign and send it to the appropriate state for temporary licensure.

## Post Master's Degree –The process to obtain licensure as an LMFT

Applicants to their respective states must fulfill specific educational and experiential requirements. In general, applicants must have completed an appropriate graduate degree (see previous section) and 3,000 hours of experience under the direct supervision of qualified supervisors. This part is called supervised Internship.

- Applicants are eligible to take the written exams when all academic and experiential requirements have been completed.
- You may earn up to 1,300 supervised hours before graduation (depends on specific states), or after graduation during the waiting period for temporary licensure.
- After graduation you must gain at least 1,700 hours (depends on specific states).
- To earn ANY hours in private practice, one must have already graduated and registered with the BBS or your State as an MFT Intern and have received an Intern Registration Number from the State Board.
- While working on intern hours, you must renew your registration with the BBS or other states annually. Five renewals are allowed, for a total of six years in which to gain hours as an Intern.
- You must furnish your new supervisor with your previous supervisor's name and address, if your supervisor changed.

## Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence (LOA)

Students who temporarily drop out of school may find that degree requirements have changed during their absence. To keep curricular modifications to a minimum, it is a good idea to remain continuously enrolled until you graduate. This means that you must enroll in at least one course during each of the Fall and Spring and Summer terms. Students who are *absent for two or more years* must reapply to the program and comply with admissions and program requirements in effect at the time. The above notwithstanding, we understand that choice and chance do not always create manageable situations. If there are circumstances in your life that require you to suspend your academic progress temporarily, please do not hesitate to contact us. We want you to succeed and will do our best to assist you in maintaining continuity in your program.

**Note: During the time of LOA or temporary drop out, student cannot continue with practicum. If not enrolled in a practicum course, student's practicum hours will not count.**

## Behavioral Standards

The TUW *Catalog* addresses nonacademic matters, thus:

In addition to meeting academic standards for graduation, students are expected to meet generally accepted behavioral criteria for a mental health professional. Relevant areas include following appropriate ethical-legal standards, demonstrating reasonable maturity in professional interpersonal contacts, and remaining relatively free of personal-emotional behaviors that could constitute a potential threat to the welfare of the public to be served. A faculty panel will review feedback from professors and Educational Advisors concerning individual students and initiate remedial interventions where deemed necessary. Whereas every attempt will be made to resolve problems, it is possible that these procedures could lead to dismissal from the program.

## Evaluation of Students' Suitability to Become Therapists

The BBS has given the educational institutions the responsibility to ensure that their graduates demonstrate personal characteristics and interpersonal skills appropriate to the practice of psychotherapy. Supervisors, agency



directors and the BBS strongly request that the schools screen their students for obvious psychopathology, severe emotional immaturity or questionable ethics and they not send these students on to clinical sites.

Please note that on an ongoing basis or by request of the MFT Program Director, faculty who teach MFT students are asked to communicate with the MFT Program Director and Coordinator of Practicum Training about any student whose behavior in or around class or practicum sites may lead them to question the student's suitability to work with the public as a psychotherapist. Program and staff personnel are also asked to provide their impressions of students based on their interactions with them.

Because it is the goal of the Program faculty and staff to maintain the integrity of the program, aspire to ensure the well-being of mental health consumers receiving services from their students and facilitate students' successful completion of the their program, evaluations of student conduct and academic performance are taken very seriously. The MFT Program Director, in concert with faculty and appropriate staff, may require discussions with a student who has presented significant behavioral or academic concerns to the faculty and staff. These discussions may result in requirements of student remediation to include faculty or peer-mentoring and specific evidence of remediation in order for the student to continue in the program. There may also be requirements for ongoing monitoring of the student's remediation to ensure the successful resolution of the problems.

The student may choose to concur with these requirements or decide that they do not agree with the decisions. If there is no consensus between the Program Director, staff and faculty and the student, the matter can be referred to the Academic Council Panel (sub-committee of the Academic Council).

### Personal Therapy

The California BBS encourages those who apply for an LMFT to undergo their own personal therapy. Currently, for California, you may accrue psychotherapy hours towards licensure, but your therapist must be a qualified, licensed therapist. Hours of therapy received either as a student trainee and/or registered intern in California are currently *triple-counted*, up to a 300-hour maximum at the time of licensure application. You can receive individual, couple, family and/or group therapy. Personal psychotherapy hours cannot be counted towards your 300 required total practicum hours.

TUW does not require its MFT students to undergo personal therapy, but we solidly recommend it.

*The MFT faculty and administration recommend personal therapy for all students training to be LMFT since it is believed that personal therapy is a vital component of the training and growth of the person, and that it is the professional responsibility of every therapist to identify, address and work through personal and relational issues which may have an impact on clinical interactions with future clients.*

Personal therapy may increase your chances of securing a practicum site when it comes time to find a site for practicum and/or your post-degree internship.

### When to Receive Therapy

Some states allow you to count personal therapy hours towards your required MFT hours. To count personal therapy hours toward your 3,000 MFT hours, you must be enrolled in a qualifying degree program; in this case, the MFT degree. You may enter therapy and count hours as soon as you are enrolled, but be aware that the hours will only count towards licensing if they fall within the six-year window of time preceding your application for licensure. Also, please be aware that the regulations specify that the trainee must be *enrolled* in the qualifying degree program for any hours to be eligible for evaluation. **Thus, therapy received during a Leave of Absence would not count. Also, personal therapy hours will not count towards the required 300 total practicum hours.**

All hours that you wish the board to evaluate for license requirements must have been earned within the six (6) years preceding the date you apply for the exam. However, the Board will evaluate up to 500 hours gained during practicum (excluding personal therapy), even if they were earned more than six years before filing for the exam. ***MFT student Trainees can fulfill practicum requirements for training at sites only after TUV Coordinator of the Practicum Training has approved the site and signed an MOA Agreement with the site.***

## CLINICAL PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE: TUV LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students are often curious about how soon they can begin to earn their 3,000 hours. For clinical hours to count, the MFT student must have TUV's *formal approval* of the supervised experience, as follows:

On and after **January 1, 1995**, all hours of experience gained as a trainee shall be coordinated between the school and the site where the hours are being accrued. **The school shall approve each site** and shall have a *written agreement* with each site that details each party's responsibilities, including the methods by which supervision shall be provided. The agreement shall provide for regular process reports and evaluations of the student's performance at the site.

—Section 4980.42 (b) of Business and Professions Code

- All practicum and field study hours gained as a trainee shall be coordinated between the school and the site where hours are being accrued. The school shall approve each site and shall have a written agreement with each site that details each party's responsibilities, including the methods by which supervision shall be provided. The agreement shall provide for regular progress reports and evaluations of the student's performance at the site.
- If an applicant has gained practicum and field study hours while enrolled in an institution other than the one that confers the qualifying degree, it shall be the applicant's responsibility to provide to the board satisfactory evidence that those practicum and field study hours were gained in compliance with this section.
- A clinical trainee shall inform each client or patient, prior to performing any professional services, that he or she is unlicensed and under supervision.
- A clinical trainee shall receive an average of at least one hour of direct supervisor contact for every five hours of client contact in each setting. For purposes of this subdivision, "one hour of direct supervisor contact" means one hour of face-to-face contact on an individual basis or two hours of face-to-face contact in a group of not more than eight persons in segments lasting no less than one continuous hour.
- 4999.40. (a) Each educational institution preparing applicants to qualify for licensure shall notify each of its students by means of its public documents or otherwise in writing that its degree program is designed to meet the requirements of Section 4999.32 or 4999.33 and shall certify to the board that it has so notified its students.
- An applicant trained at an educational institution outside the United States shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board that he or she possesses a qualifying degree that is equivalent to a degree earned from an institution of higher education that is accredited or approved. These applicants shall provide the board with a comprehensive evaluation of the degree performed by a foreign credential evaluation service that is a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services and shall provide any other documentation the board deems necessary.
- Before these laws were passed, Trainees were pretty much on their own in finding good supervision and reputable sites. MFT programs could either take a great deal of interest in their students' training or none

at all. Although most agencies employed conscientious supervisors, there were far too many examples of trainees with considerable responsibility for client welfare working under inadequate supervision. Understandably, Trainees may be reluctant to challenge the *status quo* with their sites or supervisors; the schools are in a far better position to ensure quality training by approving the practicum experience of each student. Clearly, this law benefits both student and consumer alike.

- As of August 1, 2012, the BBS requires that LMFT students are concurrently enrolled in Clinical Practicum (MFT 641, 642 and continuation if you have not completed the practicum hours) while earning clinical hours. Therefore, if you have additional practicum requirements to complete beyond your practicum class, you need to enroll in Practicum continuation classes until you complete the 300 total required hours (including 225 face-to-face client contact hours).
- Most malpractice insurance carriers will enroll pre-licensed persons only when their work in clinical settings is part of their educational requirements. You are not required to work in a clinical setting until you take Clinical Practicum. Thus, you may not be able to get insurance if you are not formally enrolled in the practicum course.
- By law, only the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) has the authority to approve hours and does so at the time you file your application for the license exam. However, the board has given considerable responsibility to both supervisors and schools for guiding and evaluating students' clinical experience. Supervisors verify the hours of their interns and trainees by signing both weekly logs and Experience Verification forms. Schools attempt to ensure that their students' clinical sites will provide supervision and clinical experience that is consistent with statutes and regulations. Note: The completion of the Master's Program in MFT at TUV requires a completion of 300 total hours (including 225 face-to-face client contact hours) and 6 credits as required by the BBS.
- Thus, TUV approves each trainee's clinical experience in general, but not his or her hours per se. However, only those hours gained in an approved site with a written agreement between the school and the site will count toward LMFT licensing requirements and/or practicum class. It is imperative that your MOA is uploaded in the IC site, for hours to begin accruing.

## WHEN TO TAKE PRACTICUM

Students who wait until the last year of their program to take Practicum may be better prepared academically. Given these considerations, we recommend that students take practicum after completing 10 courses or 30 credits. Securing a practicum site is important and can take at least 6 months to a year prior to starting the practicum.

As a reminder, the MFT requirement for pre-degree practicum hours is a minimum of 300 total hours, of which 225 hours must be client contact hours. For those interested in the additional LPCC track, the requirement is 450 total hours, of which 280 must be clinical client contact hours.

### Before taking Practicum, students must have completed the following courses:

MFT 610	Contemporary Issues in Marriage & Family Therapy	3
MFT 611	Foundations of Psychopathology	3
MFT 612	Couples Counseling	3
MFT 613	Child-Focused Family Therapy	3

MFT 614	Development Within the Family Life Cycle	3
MFT 615	Psychopharmacology	3
MFT 616	Society, Culture and Gender: A Multi-cultural Perspective	3
MFT 617	Research Methodology	3
MFT 618	Group Counseling	3
MFT 619	Assessment & Testing for Marriage & Family Therapist	3
MFT 630	Ethics & Law for Marriage & Family Therapy	3
**MFT 626	Substance Abuse & Recovery	3

The above courses considered to be the basis for preparation for the Practicum courses.

**\*\* For Students who will be conducting their Practicum at a Drug and Substance Abuse Treatment site, MFT 626 Substance Abuse & Recovery is very highly recommended prior to beginning the Practicum.**

## Practicum Site Resources

Students are eligible for Practicum credit and TUV approval of hours when they are conducting their practicum in sites that have been evaluated and approved by the Coordinator of the Practicum Training.

## Out-Of-State Sites

Out of state sites need to be approved by the university, each state has its procedures for approval. In the past the students that conducted their practicum out of state had to apply for the licensure in the state that they conducted their practicum. Recently the BBS has cleared the way for students to gain their **practicum experience** outside of California. But challenges remain. The BBS will evaluate hours earned out of state.

## How to Use the Written Agreement

To comply with the BBS requirement for a written agreement (MOA) between the school and the site, TUV uses a document called the **MOA**, posted on our web site for your convenience. Additional forms are in TUV web site as well for approval of the student's clinical experience are described and those responsible for the student's training sign the agreement to indicate their willingness to meet the provisions therein. Those signing are:

- (1) The Supervisor(s),
- (2) The representative of the clinical site (frequently the Agency Director),
- (3) The Provost

Because we want to be sure that your clinical experience meets BBS specifications, the MOA *must signed before your hours will count.*

## How to Locate an Appropriate Practicum Site

TUW will provide assistance in finding the practicum site, but **TUW cannot guarantee a practicum site to the student**. It is part of the professional growth and development of graduate students to try to obtain a practicum site (similar to finding employment in the MFT field after graduation).

Although the prospect of locating a practicum site may seem intimidating, in actuality the steps to follow are relatively straight-forward. They are as follows:

#### **STEP 1: Learn about the process**

- Begin your search for a site *before* enrolling in MFT 641- Clinical Practicum I, by researching possible practicum sites on the internet in the area of your residence, seeking volunteer experience, or trainees. Review your state requirement for supervised practicum. What is good supervision, what documentation - if lacking - will cause the BBS to reject your hours, what kinds of clinical experiences to seek, and other essential information, including sites that have current openings for MFT Trainees. Contact TUW Practicum Coordinator. ***Students must have secured an MFT practicum site and have an MOA Agreement signed and submitted to the school prior to the first week of their practicum class.***

Students are eligible for Practicum credit and TUW approval of hours when they are working in sites that have been evaluated and approved by the university Coordinator of the Practicum.

CAUTION: If you are interested in a particular site but do not know if we know about it, do not assume that we do not know about it and go for an interview! ***Before contacting a site that is not recommended by TUW Coordinator of the Practicum, please consult the Coordinator of the Practicum first!***

To continue your search for a practicum site you will need the name of the contact person and the telephone number of the agency. You will find that the initial steps for almost all of the sites are to telephone the contact person, send a résumé, and arrange an interview. It also helps expedite the possible approval of a new setting when the student facilitates the paperwork process with the Coordinator of the Practicum and the prospective site.

#### **STEP 2: Prepare a résumé and cover letter that are personalized for each site**

A résumé is a summary of your professional and educational history. The headings suggested on the next page represent a composite from a sample résumé. If you need assistance with your resume or cover letter,

**REMEMBER TO EDIT YOUR WORK! CHECK FOR MISTAKES IN SPELLING, TYPING AND GRAMMAR! GIVE YOUR WORK A PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE! NEATNESS IS PARAMOUNT!**

#### **STEP 3: Create a cover letter**

Taking the time to craft a cover letter now will definitely pay off. A cover letter shows the agency directors and employers that you have the skills and characteristics they are looking for. The cover letter should have the same heading as the résumé and reference page and should be about 3/4 of a page long. Guidelines in creating a cover letter follow:

- In the first paragraph, you should let the director of the agency know specifically for which traineeship you are applying (Supervised practicum as part of the MFT program). Also, it is helpful to the employer if you reveal how you heard about this traineeship. You need to provide information about Touro University Worldwide. Also attach the letter from the Coordinator of the Practicum.

- In the second paragraph, you should detail your skills, qualifications and responsibilities that are directly related to the MFT practicum traineeship you are seeking.
- In the third paragraph, respectfully and cautiously show your appreciation for the opportunity to interview and let the employer know that you are flexible in your schedule and are available to meet him or her at his or her convenience. Also, include your phone number before closing.
- It helps the prospective employer if your résumé, cover letter and reference match in color, style and heading. Remember to use a clear printing font that is easily transmittable by facsimile transfer (FAX), in case you need to send your résumé package by FAX.

#### **STEP 4: Arrange for an interview.**

Telephone the contact person listed on the site information form and arrange for an interview. Ask this person what you should bring to the interview and follow her or his instructions *exactly*. Be aware that some agencies conduct the initial interview over the phone. FAX or email your résumé to the contact person, if requested.

#### **STEP 5: Follow-up with your contacts.**

Be diligent and follow through after your first contact. After sending your résumé, call sites back and make and keep your appointment for an interview, as needed.

#### **STEP 6: Go to your interview.**

During the interview, the agency contact person will attempt to assess your potential as a trainee therapist and to determine the match between your interests and abilities and those needed by the agency. Some agencies need Trainees with some prior clinical experience; others are quite satisfied to use therapists who are just starting out. In addition to seeing clients, some sites want Trainees to work the desk and help with clinic management. Others want Trainees to have had personal therapy; still others require Trainees to pay for supervision (Please note it is not allowed by the BBS to pay for supervision!!). Look at the agency websites to find out what an agency requires and/or prefers in terms of Trainee skills, availability and requirements. Whenever possible, demonstrate your interest in a particular site by showing your knowledge of its requirements for Trainees, its clinical orientations, populations served, and so forth. Be prepared to describe a therapeutic approach you would use in a clinical setting. Feel free to ask the Coordinator of the Practicum about agency interviews. After each interview, follow up with a "Thank You" note.

#### ***Questions to Ask During Your Interview:***

- **Inquire about PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE.**

Insurance companies who underwrite professional liability coverage to mental health agencies usually sell an umbrella policy that covers both licensed and unlicensed personnel. Ask your potential supervisor or the director of the agency about its coverage of trainees.

In addition to agency coverage, students in practicum should obtain their own professional liability policies. An application for such coverage can be obtained online. Note that the professional liability carriers only cover students who are required to complete practicum hours as part of their university programs. This refers only to MFT students who are formally enrolled in the practicum course. The coverage requires membership in either CAMFT or AAMFT and costs as low as \$45.00 a year for a one-million-dollar policy.

- Inquire about your supervisor's **experience** and **approach to supervision**. Good clinical supervision is of the utmost importance for your clinical training experience. We ask that you meet with your clinical supervisor prior to accepting a Traineeship. (Please review the requirements from the supervisor and forms to be filled out at the BBS site).
- Excellent articles on clinical supervision can be found on our professional associations' websites: [www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org) and [www.camft.org](http://www.camft.org).
- Inquire about your supervisor's completion of **mandated training in supervision**.
- Inquire about matching your personal weekly schedule with their weekly training schedule in the best interest of the agency and their clientele.

#### **STEP 7. You did it-Good job!**

As soon as you have secured an appropriate practicum site, take all completed documents (Acknowledgement Statement, MOA signed Agreement and Supervisor Responsibility Statement) and upload them to the IC system. Practicum hours towards graduation do not begin accruing until the start of practicum class and your registration.

#### **LEGAL NOTICE:**

*Be aware that if TUV, in good faith, has approved you to earn clinical hours at a site in which hours counted by the Trainee and signed by the supervisor are subsequently denied by the Board due to misrepresentation of qualifications on the part of the supervisor and/or agency director, or the trainee, TUV cannot be held liable for loss of hours or income or for expenses incurred by the student or in any other way held liable. This makes it especially important that you consult with your Practicum Coordinator and/or the Provost Office staff if you have any questions about your site, your supervision, or issues regarding the earning of hours.*

\*Please note: TUV is not responsible to find the Practicum site and /or agency for students. The student is responsible to identify the practicum site and connect the Program Director or Coordinator of the Practicum with the site to arrange for an MOA and a formal interview for the student.

### **Legal Definition of Practicum**

The scope of clinical experience sanctioned by the BBS for MFT pre-graduation is quite broad. According to Section 4980.37(c) of the BPC, the master's degree must contain "not less than six semester credit units...of supervised practicum...in applied psychotherapeutic techniques, assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of premarital, couple, family, and child relationships, including dysfunctions, healthy functioning, health promotion, and illness prevention, in a supervised clinical placement that provides supervised fieldwork experience within the scope of practice of a marriage and family therapist."

### **Training in Diversity Encouraged by BBS**

As you can see, the law permits Trainees to learn, under supervision, a wide variety of skills with a wide variety of client populations and issues. MFT students are to become familiar with the "wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds common among California's population". Educational institutions are required by the BBS to design practical that will "include marriage and family therapy experience in low-income and multicultural mental health settings". Practicum provides an ideal opportunity for students to appreciate, first-hand, how factors of diversity such as age, gender, culture, ethnicity, racial background, religion, sexual orientation, SES and other similar factors contribute to an individual's uniqueness and identity.

## What is Practicum at TUW?

First and foremost, **Practicum is a COURSE –in the MFT program (MFT 641 Practicum I, MFT 643 Practicum II, and MFT 643 Practicum III (as needed))**. It has credit unit value (3 credits per course taken over two or three terms), an instructor, required attendance, requirements for number of hours worked at the practicum site under supervision, in-class activities and homework assignments. Students may have assigned and/or recommended readings and present their work in the Integrated Campus course site. Students are evaluated both by their supervisors and their practicum instructors.

Students receive dual credits of the Practicum course: academic and experiential. The Practicum courses count for 6 of the total credits needed for the graduation with the MFT degree (and for 9 of the credits needed for LPCC emphasis); for post master's LMFT licensure, the hours earned in sites count toward the 3,000 hours needed for the license (this is the decision of the state and not the school). Consistent attendance and participation are key in receiving a credit in each section of practicum.

### Practicum Course Goals

The primary goals of the Practicum course are twofold: (1) to help students learn to integrate theory and practice, and (2) to develop interpersonal skills that are associated with effective therapy. At the clinical practicum sites, student trainees provide therapeutic services under supervision. In the Practicum class, students post their moment to moment experience, the self reflection, the weekly hours signed by the supervisor, and case write-ups. Students are encouraged to reflect upon their preferred therapeutic models and modalities and the rationale for their use, and to develop the skills of critical thinking. In addition, the instructor for the practicum course will contact your site supervisor at least once per term to ensure that you continue to receive quality training. The Board of Behavioral Sciences [B & P Code, Section 4980.37(4)] expects degree programs to “*encourage students to develop those personal qualities that are intimately related to the counseling situation such as integrity, sensitivity, flexibility, insight, compassion, and personal presence.*” The two-term Practicum course sequence at TUW gives us the opportunity to assist students in the development of these personal qualities through feedback from fieldwork supervisors and practicum faculty.

### Requirements for Practicum Course Credit

#### Overview of Requirements for Hours

- When it is time to apply for the LMFT license exam, you may submit to the Board for evaluation ALL of the hours that you gained while enrolled in Practicum, including direct client contact, supervision, workshops, paperwork hours, and personal psychotherapy.

For **Practicum course credit at TUW towards the Master's Degree**, the minimum hours required for 6 units of practicum is **300 hours** of which a minimum of **225** hours must be direct client contact. The minimum hours required for 9 units of practicum required for the LPCC track is **450 hours** of which a minimum of **280 hours** must be direct client contact.

Trainees are required to complete a minimum of **225** hours of direct client contact (**280** for LPCC track). These hours must be supervised during the week they are gained and must fall within the dates and times of enrollment to the practicum courses.

- **WEEKS OF SUPERVISION:** The minimum number of weeks of supervision is **8 weeks** per session.



## Grades for Practicum

Practicum is graded on a “A/F” basis.

“**Credit**” is given if **ALL** of the following criteria are met.

The student:

- attended class regularly (posted weekly activity as required),
- earned the minimum number of direct client contact hours for the term,
- students in their final practicum are required to have earned at least 300 total hours (including 225 direct client contact hours) for MFT trainees practicum. For those on the LPCC track, students in their final practicum are required to have earned at least 450 total hours (including 280 direct client contact hours).
- received the minimum number of weeks of supervision for the term (8 weeks),
- received a satisfactory evaluation from the clinical supervisor,
- received a satisfactory evaluation from the Practicum Coordinator,
- demonstrated competence as a training therapist,
- did not show any signs of behavioral or emotional issues that would affect his or her clinical judgment and performance,
- showed understanding of and compliance with legal and ethical issues, and
- *was directly observed (“live”-supervision or video or audio-tape) by the supervisor at least **twice** during the Practicum I, Practicum II, and Practicum III (as needed).*
- **Reminder: you will need to enroll in Practicum continuation courses if you have not completed the minimum clinical hour requirements for graduation.**

“**A grade of F**” may be given if **ANY** of the following conditions occur.

The student:

- did not file an approved “MOA” with the Coordinator of the Practicum.
- failed to comply with the terms of the “MOA.”
- attended training sporadically with unexplained or unexcused absences.
- performed in poorly or did not meet MFT trainee standards for adequate performance.
- saw no clients.
- received an unsatisfactory evaluation from the clinical supervisor.
- received an unsatisfactory evaluation from the Practicum Coordinator.
- demonstrated gross incompetence as a training therapist.
- showed behavioral or emotional issues that raised questions about his or her clinical judgment and performance and/or violated ethical principles or legal standards in work with clients.
- was dismissed from the practicum site.
- failed to complete requirements of a previous semester’s number of hours.

**Again, as a reminder, you must be enrolled in a practicum course to count your clinical hours!**

## FORMS!

Each time a student takes Clinical Practicum, changes sites, changes supervisors or changes status from Trainee to Intern, his or her progress is accompanied by a paper trail of substantial proportions. Some forms keep track of clinical hours and supervision; others are used to evaluate the student’s progress as a therapist in training. Some forms go directly to the BBS once 3,000 hours are accrued, others are completed and returned to the Practicum

Coordinator by uploading them in the IC site. The grade for the Practicum course is based, in part, upon the data contained in these forms.

An application to join CAMFT can be found on their website: [www.camft.org](http://www.camft.org) and AAMFT website:

Excellent articles on clinical supervision can be found on our professional associations' websites: [www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org) and [www.camft.org](http://www.camft.org)

You may purchase your student liability insurance on the AAMFT web site.

BBS and TUW forms are available on TUW web site.

Here is a partial list of the forms and documents that we provide for our students' convenience:

- BBS Responsibility Statement for Supervisor of an LMFT Trainee or Intern
- BBS Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience
- BBS Experience Verification
- BBS Intern Registration Application and Instructions
- BBS Program Certification and Instructions
- TUW MOA
- TUW BBS Handbook
- TUW Minute to Minute experiential report
- TUW Self Reflection form
- TUW weekly Logs
- TUW Student Learning Goal Evaluation from Supervisor [BPC, Section 4980.42(b)]. Toward the end of each term, practicum students receive a **"Supervisor's Evaluation of MFT Trainee"** to give to their supervisors and an **"MFT Student's Evaluation of Supervision and Agency"**

**Note:** Students should maintain their own BBS files, including their Weekly Logs, MFT Experience Verifications and *original* Supervisor Responsibility Statements. Also, it is a good idea to make a copy of your "Supervisor's Evaluation of the Student". ***TUW is not required by the BBS to hold onto MFT/Practicum student forms post-graduation. You are responsible for the safe-keeping of all your BBS forms!***

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEIVING SUPERVISION

You, the supervisee, must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- For every week you claim hours and at each setting you work (if more than one at a time), you must have a *minimum* of one (1) hour of individual or two (2) hours of group supervision.
- No more than eight (8) supervisees may attend group supervision.
- A SUPERVISION UNIT is either one (1) hour of individual or two (2) hours of group supervision.
- 1 hour of supervision must be 60 minutes of supervision.
- For every five (5) hours of client contact, Trainees must receive on average over the length of time at the site ONE UNIT of supervision. This is called the "five-to-one ratio".

- No more than 5 total clock hours of supervision may be counted in any one week (Be sure to record all supervision hours on your logs for ratio purposes).

Your supervisor at the clinical practicum site decides whether or not workshops, seminars and other training may be counted on the weekly logs.

- **No supervision during a particular week? *No hours may be counted for that week!***

*After Graduation you need to become an MFT Intern instead of a Trainee. You will request from the BBS the temporary license to do your Internship.*

***Important: Should you register as an Intern if you don't want to gain hours immediately?***

Don't start your intern clock until you are ready. If, after graduation, you plan to step temporarily away from your career path for whatever reason, we suggest that you delay your Intern registration until you can be reasonably sure that you can earn the required number of hours within six years.

To count hours gained after you finish your degree, you must register with the BBS as an MFT and/or Intern. The Board requests that you allow up to 60 days for your application to be processed. (Instructions for completing the LiveScan fingerprinting will be included in the MFT Intern Registration Packet found on the BBS website). You may count hours worked during the time period between graduation and receiving your Intern Registration number as long as you:

- Apply for an Intern Registration number within 90 days the date the degree was posted on transcript, *and*
- Work in a setting defined by law for Trainees. To work in private practice, even as a volunteer, you must have your Intern Number *in hand*.

NOTE: If you miss the 90-day window, don't panic. The only result is that you won't be able to count post-MA hours until you receive your Intern Registration number.

## **Master Degree in Marriage and Family (non-licensure track)**

The non-licensure track for the MFT program is available for students who are residing in countries or states that they do not need the MFT licensure.

The Non-Licensure Track follows the same curriculum distribution as the Licensure track in the MFT, excluding the Practicum classes. Those students who do not want to pursue licensure for the MFT may complete all the course requirements and opt out of the Practicum course requirement with the Non-licensure Track, but this degree will not qualify them for licensure.

A student may choose the non-licensure track at start of their program, or change the track during the program. Students who are interested in this track will submit a signed form requesting to move to the non-licensure track. The form should be signed by the student and the MFT Program Director. The form will be submitted to the office of the registrar.

Note: Students will not be able to complete the practicum courses and apply for licensure after completion of the Master Degree with a non-licensure track.

## **Academic Policy for Practicum and MFT Program Requirements**

The MFT program is a professional program that leads to Licensure in the profession. The program consists of several steps in order to complete the curriculum approved by the BBS and other states.

The number of courses is totaling 20 each course is 3 credits and this includes the practicum credits and hours required to be completed, for a total of 60 credits.

Students must complete a minimum of 30 credits (required courses outlined in the MFT handbook) in order to be eligible to register for the first practicum course, MFT 641 Clinical Practicum I.

If a student completed 45 credits he/she MUST register for practicum MFT 641. If a student is not able to obtain a practicum site and enroll in MFT 641 by the third session after reaching 45 units, the student must choose between the M.A. in Marriage and Family (non-licensure track) or leave TUW's MFT program.

Prior to registering to the Practicum course it is imperative that the student contacts the MFT program to ensure that the pre-practicum process is completed as well as the student propose sites in their area of residence.

A student who is not able start the practicum while registered in the MFT 641 must drop the course within two weeks and register for another course.

TUW allows three (3) attempts to start the practicum and drop MFT 641. After the third attempt the student will have a choice to continue the program without practicum, and complete the Master's degree without licensure, or leave the university.