

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY, M.A.

Mission

The mission of the Master of Arts – Marriage and Family Therapy degree (<https://www.biola.edu/degrees/g/marriage-and-family-therapy-ma/>) program is to produce marriage and family therapists who can integrate the science and practice of family therapy with Christian theology. Students are equipped with a strong biblical foundation to promote the biopsychosocial, spiritual, and relational well-being of individuals, couples, and families in diverse communities. Students are trained to be ethically and culturally competent. The program accomplishes this mission by embracing a scholar/practitioner model that blends Christian theology and systemic family therapy training with research and clinical practices.

Program Description

The Master of Arts – Marriage and Family Therapy is designed to provide graduate coursework to those seeking to work with individuals, couples and families as a licensed marriage and family therapist. The program integrates Christian theology and professional practice in Marriage and Family Therapy, and emphasizes the development of research-supported counseling skills while encouraging students to grow in relational and spiritual maturity. This program equips students to biblically engage in cultural humility, treat others with dignity, respect, and empathy, and to develop an understanding of different cultural contexts and issues presented in clinical practice. Completion of the MFT program will allow students to pursue licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist in the State of California. Licensure requirements change from time to time, and differ from state to state. Applicants, pursuing licensure outside of California, should become familiar with the requirements in the state they wish to practice.

Accreditation Information

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) and the Association of Theological Studies (ATS). It meets the educational requirements of the Board of Behavioral Science (BBS).

Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Master of Arts – Marriage and Family Therapy, students will be able to:

1. Articulate spiritual theology and how the knowledge of God and knowledge of self are integrated into the clinician's life with the Holy Spirit. (ULO 2)
2. Employ foundational knowledge in systemic and relational theories, treatment techniques, and multiculturalism (ULO 1).
3. Produce therapeutic practices consistent with MFT professional standards in California (ULO 3).

Each Program Learning Outcome (PLO) listed above references at least one of the University Learning Outcomes (ULO 1, 2, 3), which may be found in the General Information section (<https://catalog.biola.edu/general-information/#UniversityLearningOutcomes>) of this catalog.

Admission Requirements

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Education and GPA Requirement

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), unless otherwise noted (see below).

Note: If you do not meet the degree or GPA requirements above, you may still be considered for admission. Please contact the Office of Graduate Admissions office at graduate.admissions@biola.edu.

Applicants who have a GPA lower than 3.0 are required to submit a letter of explanation and viability for entrance into the MFT program. Probationary acceptance may be granted if other factors give evidence of the applicant's ability to successfully complete the program. The probationary status will be removed when the student has successfully completed nine semester credits with a 3.0 GPA or higher.

Official Transcript and Other Test Scores

Applicants must submit an official transcript from their previous academic institution.

- Request official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.
- If enrolled at the time the application is filed, be sure to request transcripts upon completion of your course of study.
- Transcripts must be official, that is, mailed directly from your college or university in a sealed envelope, sent electronically, or physically delivered in an untampered envelope sealed by the institution. Final approval for admission is contingent on receiving an official transcript.

Send transcripts to:

Biola University
Attn: Office of Graduate Admissions
13800 Biola Avenue
La Mirada, CA 90639

Additional Test Scores:

- GRE: A GRE score is not required for admission.
- TOEFL or IELTS: If English is not your first language, you are required to display your English proficiency before admittance into a Biola University graduate program. Please see the "English Proficiency" admissions section (<https://catalog.biola.edu/admissions/english-proficiency-requirements/>) for more information.

References

Three references are required, including:

- One academic reference
- One pastoral reference
- One character reference

Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Essays

Applicants must submit three essays.

1. One Christian testimony (500-700 word count maximum)

- What are the circumstances surrounding your decision to become a follower of Christ?
- What is the scriptural basis for your salvation?
- What is your contribution to a local church community?
- Describe how you display attributes of a mature Christian.

2. One autobiographical statement (1,000 word count maximum), answering the following questions:

- Why do you want to become a Marriage and Family Therapist?
- Why are you seeking to do your MFT training at Talbot?
- How has your family of origin shaped you and informed your vocation? This includes reflections on strengths and challenges in your family of origin, the impact of family-of-origin experiences on your adult relationships, and strengths and growth areas in your current significant relationships (with spouse, children, siblings, parents, etc.).
- What are your professional goals?
- What personal characteristics will contribute to your success as a marriage and family therapist?
- What experience, education, and training do you have with diverse populations?

Graduation Requirements

1. Satisfactorily complete 67 semester credits (plus any co-curricular requirements) as outlined in the curriculum requirements.
2. Obtain a 3.0 average with no grade below a B- in all courses to be credited toward graduation.
3. Complete the online introduction to theological research and writing by the end of the second semester.
4. Pass the Practicum Qualifying Exam (PQE).
5. Complete all clinical training hours and submit a verification of completion via the Director of Clinical Training to the Registrar's Office. A minimum of 300 clinical training hours (225 of which are direct client contact hours) is required. Supervision hours need to meet the BBS requirement for client-to-supervision ratios.
6. Complete the entire program in no more than six years.
7. Meet with a graduate academic records and degree specialist in the Office of the Registrar one year prior to graduation to declare intent to graduate. (See the Graduate Graduation Application section (<https://catalog.biola.edu/academic-policies/graduation-and-degree-conferral/graduate/#GraduateGraduationApplication>)).
8. Complete at least 35 hours of psychotherapy with a program approved licensed clinician. Each MFT student is required to begin their personal didactic psychotherapy prior to enrollment in Practicum I; the requirement is 35 hours of personal psychotherapy with a program approved licensed therapist. The fee structure between therapist and client is to be arranged between the parties and is not the responsibility of the program or university. A list of qualified psychotherapists is provided to the student.

Practicum Qualifying Examination (PQE)

A passing score on the Practicum Qualifying Exam (PQE) is required to move on to the practicum sequence. The PQE consists of 3 parts (live skills evaluation, law and ethics exam, faculty interview) and is given

every Fall semester. Students may not interview for practicum sites until they have successfully passed the PQE. Upon failure of any section of the PQE, a meeting with the Director of Clinical Training and other faculty to develop a remediation plan is required before retaking the PQE; this may delay practicum by an entire year. After failure of the PQE, a student may retake the exam one additional time, a total of two times, before being dismissed from the program.

Program Requirements

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
Program Courses		
TTFT 500	Principles of Counseling	2
TTFT 611	Marriage and Family Therapy Theories I	3
TTFT 612	Marriage and Family Therapy Theories II	3
TTFT 621	Family Life Cycle and Aging	3
TTFT 631	Child and Adolescent Therapy in Family Contexts	3
TTFT 633	Couples and Sex Therapy	3
TTFT 637	Theory and Process of Group Counseling	3
TTFT 641	Clinical Issues in Human Diversity	3
TTFT 643	Community Mental Health	3
TTFT 651	Research Methods and Design in Marriage and Family Therapy	1
TTFT 653	Individual and Family Psychopathology	3
TTFT 655	Assessment of Individuals and Families	2
TTFT 661	Law, Ethics, and Professional Issues	3
TTFT 663	Professional Development Seminar I	1
TTFT 664	Professional Development Seminar II	1
TTFT 667	Professional and Personal Formation of the Therapist I ¹	3
TTFT 668	Professional and Personal Formation of the Therapist II ^{2,3}	3
TTFT 670	Professional and Personal Formation of the Therapist III	1
TTFT 671	Crisis and Trauma Counseling	2
TTFT 673	Psychopharmacology and Psychobiology	2
TTFT 675	Chemical Dependence, Addictions, and Co-Occurring Disorders	2
TTFT 681	Biblical Interpretation and New Testament Psychology	3
TTFT 682	Marriage and Family Therapy Seminar ⁴	4
TTFT 765	Professional Development Seminar III - Capstone	1

TTFT 791	Practicum in Marriage and Family Therapy I	3
TTFT 792	Practicum in Marriage and Family Therapy II	3
TTFT 793	Practicum in Marriage and Family Therapy III	3

Co-Curricular Requirements

Graduate Research and Writing module

Personal psychotherapy with a licensed clinician

Practicum Qualifying Exam (PQE)

Total Credits **67**

- ¹ If TTTSF 501 or TTTSF 521 was taken for fewer than 3 credits, students are required to make up the difference by taking additional credit(s) of TTFT 667 for a grand total of 3 credits. See the department for advising.
- ² If TTTSF 503 was taken for 2 credits, students are required to take TTFT 668 for 1 credit to satisfy the 3 credit requirement. See the department for advising.
- ³ If the "Family" topic of TTTSF 642 was taken for 2 credits, students are required to take TTFT 668 for 1 credit to satisfy the 3 credit requirement. If any other topic of TTTSF 642 was taken, students are required to take TTFT 668 for 3 credits. See the department for advising.
- ⁴ Must be taken for a total of 4 credits.