Program Overview

The Marriage and Family Therapy concentration in the MS in Counseling Psychology program prepares master-level students to work with clients within the context of marital, family, cultural, community, and work relationships. This concentration is designed for students wishing to develop expertise in providing therapy to individuals, couples, adults, adolescents, children, families, and groups across the lifespan.

Students are specially trained to think systemically, act ethically, assess current problems, and develop effective solutions for complex issues including:
- Anxiety, depression, mood, and eating disorders
- Child and adolescent behavioral and emotional issues
- Couple communication, intimacy, and relationship issues
- Trauma, abuse, grief, and loss
- Family crises, life transitions, and relationship issues
- Self-esteem, stress, and anger management

MFTs help clients change relationship dynamics regardless of how many people are in the therapy room. This concentration fulfills the educational requirements for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and/or licensure as a Professional Counselor (LPC) in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The total degree hours required for this concentration is 61. This concentration requires a 600-hour internship, a 100-hour practicum, and mandatory faculty mentoring/advising meetings.

Students graduating with their MS in Counseling Psychology in the MFT concentration are currently employed in mental health facilities, social service agencies, private practices, hospitals, hospices, addiction treatment centers, schools, and other care facilities.

Post-Master’s Opportunities

Holy Family University’s program also allows those professionals who have completed a Master’s degree in Counseling or related profession and are interested in pursuing a license as a Marriage and Family Therapist to complete as few as 24 credit hours and meet the educational requirements for a Post-Master’s specialization.
Outcomes

• Holy Family University’s Counseling Psychology graduate employment rate in the field has averaged 91% over the past 4 years.
• Holy Family University Counseling Psychology students have an 86% first time pass rate on the licensure exam (NCE) and a 98% first time pass rate on the school counselor exam (Praxis).

The field of Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) currently has an incredible predictable growth pattern:
• MFT voted as one of the Top 50 Best Careers (US News & World Report, Dec, 2010)
• MFT named one of Eight Secure Jobs Worth Landing This Spring and Beyond (Fox Business, March 27, 2013)
• MFT occupation will grow by 30.6% by 2012, which is much faster than the average for all occupations (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012)
• MFT market demand is expected to increase by 14% between 2008 and 2018 (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-2011 Edition)

Marriage and Family Therapy is one of the nation’s fastest growing health care professions, increasing by 50% since 1970. Today, there are more than 50,000 MFTs working with individuals, couples, and families across the lifespan nationwide. Moreover, the federal government, including the Veteran’s Administration and Medicare, has designated MFT as a core mental health profession, along with psychiatry, psychology, social work, and nursing. Currently, all 50 states regulate MFTs with licensing standards and requirements.

Why Marriage and Family Therapy at Holy Family?

The Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) concentration at Holy Family University offers our graduate students some unique and innovative opportunities for learning, leadership, and service. For example, in Fall 2013, the program launched Students for Marriage and Family Therapy (SMFT), a graduate student-led organization designed to promote professional development in MFT through scholarship, service, and social activities. So far, this active group has volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia, provided meals for Aid To Friends, collected warm winter gloves, mittens, and socks for the Salvation Army, as well as enjoyed some relaxing fun together at buffet and bowling nights.

The MFT Program also participates in workshops to promote career development in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (PAMFT). The MFT curriculum provides opportunities for graduate students to contribute knowledge and grow as scholars through presentations at regional and state conferences.

The MFT concentration encourages connections to the community and alumni through service learning projects and panel discussions. Throughout their coursework, students not only practice ethical decision-making by applying the AAMFT Code of Ethics (2015) to complex case studies, they also participate in projects like making fleece baby blankets for the Bucks County Women’s Shelter during an in-class service learning project to demonstrate the code’s principle requiring MFTs to “give back to the community through pro bono activities” in the field. In short, our MFT graduate students learn by “doing, sharing, growing, and caring” both in class and in the community.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must possess the following qualifications for admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology program:
• A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
• An undergraduate cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or better on a four-point scale. Applicants with an undergraduate cumulative grade-point average less than 3.0 must submit results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) prior to being considered for admission.
• Two satisfactory letters of recommendation or recommendation forms from individuals familiar with the applicant’s academic or professional work.
• An application form with a nonrefundable $25 application fee.
• A 250- to 500-word personal statement of applicant’s interests in the field, future professional plans and goals, and reasons for requesting admission. The quality of the applicant’s statement will be of critical importance to the success of the application for admission.
• Official transcripts of all previous college or university work.

Applicants will be considered based on their academic ability, expression of interests and goals, life experience, and personal interview. Admissions are rolling with the majority in the fall semester and a limited number in the spring. Prior to admission, selected applicants will be invited to complete a personal interview with Counseling Psychology faculty. Notification of acceptance into the program usually is completed within two weeks of the personal interview.

Please note that the program is limited in size because of the intensive training requirements. Although many applicants meet the criteria for admission, it may not be possible to admit all qualified students.

Our Non-Discrimination Statement can be found at holyfamily.edu/ndstatement or call 267-341-3479.