PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

MFT Handbook 2007-2008

Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology
with an Emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy
(MACLP Degree)

Evening Format Program

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Pepperdine University

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology
with an Emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy
(MACLP Degree or MFT Program)

MFT Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Pepperdine and to the Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an Emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy (MACLP) degree program, also known as the MFT Program. Here you will have an opportunity to learn both clinical psychology and marriage and family therapy. With the MACLP degree, a 7-hour workshop in Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting, and 3,000 hours of approved supervised clinical experience, you will be eligible to sit for the license exam to practice independently as a **Marriage and Family Therapist** (MFT) in California.

What Do MFT's Do?

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 MFT 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; you can consult, develop and manage programs. As a licensed MFT, you will be a psychotherapist by law and may be paid for your services directly.

The MFT Program at Pepperdine

In the MACLP program, you will learn how to use systemic/relational models in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of individuals and their relationships. You will also learn models of individual psychotherapy. A variety of approaches to marriage and family therapy will be covered including, but not limited to, psychodynamic, object-relations, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, strategic, structural, narrative, and brief solution-focused. Courses will be didactic, experiential and practical, including both theory and technique. In your three-term Clinical Practicum Traineeship, you will see clients under supervision at clinical practicum sites while concurrently enrolled in a Clinical Practicum class (PSY 662). The clinical practicum site experience in conjunction with the Clinical Practicum class provides the opportunity to integrate theory and technique, develop therapy skills and earn hours toward the MFT license.

THE MFT HANDBOOK

The **MFT Handbook** contains the policies and procedures for the MACLP degree program 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 THOROUGHLY* and become familiar with its contents. In addition, please read these publications that contain useful information for your success in the graduate program:

1. The GSEP Catalog for your year of entry or transfer to the MACLP Program;
2. *Psychology Division Policies & Procedures* handbook;
3. *Focus on Clinical Training*, a newsletter published by the Clinical Training and Professional Development Department distributed in class;
4. *Laws and Regulations Relating to the Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy*, published by the Board of Behavioral Sciences. (See page 5.)

Program Administration

The MACLP/MFT Program is administered by the MFT Committee. This committee is chaired by the MFT Program Director and consists of faculty, the Directors of the Irvine Graduate Campus and Encino Graduate Campus Community Counseling Centers, the clinical training staff and the program administrators. The Associate Dean of Psychology sits *ex officio*.

Where Do Program Requirements Originate?

Some of the requirements for your master's degree have been designed by Pepperdine Graduate School of Education and Psychology; others originate in state law. The Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS), a division of the California Department of Consumer Affairs, regulates the MFT license. The Board provides forms, verifies applicants' educational and clinical experience, administers the written exams and issues the MFT license.

MFT Program Accreditation Status

Pepperdine University is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the regional accrediting agency for higher education. The PsyD program is accredited by the American Psychological Association; APA does not accredit master's degrees. The MFT Program (MACLP degree) is NOT accredited by AAMFT through its Commission on Accreditation of Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE).

LEGAL NOTIFICATION

Applicants to the MFT license must graduate with a *qualifying degree* that has been approved by the state for the MFT academic preparation. At Pepperdine, that program is the MACLP degree. **We are required by law to notify you that:**

> The Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy is designed to meet the requirements of Sections 4980.37, 4980.40, and subdivisions (a) and (d) of Section 4980.41 of the Business and Professions Code of the State of California for the Marriage and Family Therapist license.

Please note: The MFT Handbook is designed to supplement the information distributed by the BBS. As licensing requirements change, academic requirements follow suit. Pepperdine 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 (to stay informed, join CAMFT - see pg 6.).

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE

To obtain licensure as an MFT, applicants must fulfill specific educational and experiential requirements, in addition to passing written exams. In general, applicants must have completed an appropriate graduate degree and 3,000 hours of experience under the direct supervision of authorized supervisors. Up to 1,300 hours may be completed while enrolled in the master's program. All 3,000 hours must be completed in the six years immediately preceding the filing date for the exam, although up to 500 hours gained during Practicum are exempt from this time limit.

Applicants are eligible to take the written exams when all academic and experiential requirements have been completed, including a 7 contact-hour workshop in Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting. In order for hours to be counted as supervised experience, students in master's programs must comply with the specifications of their educational institutions for appropriate experience. To earn ANY hours in private practice, one must have already graduated and registered with the BBS as an MFT Intern and have received an Intern Registration Number from the Board (the **MFT Handbook** provides a full discussion of these and other requirements).

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT: RESOURCES

The MFT Handbook was written for the specific purpose of providing information about the MFT program. We are happy to answer questions, but we have a favor to ask: ***PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK BEFORE YOU CONTACT US*!** When students call and ask questions, many times the answers are right here in this document, suggesting that *the caller has not read it*, a behavior that (we hope you'll agree) is not in keeping with responsible graduate student performance! ☺ So, after you have read everything that is applicable to your question, the following people can help:

M.A. Clinical Training and Professional Development (CTPD) Staff

Your first resource! - **Kathleen Wenger**, **Manager of Clinical Training and Professional Development**, oversees the clinical training and professional development of students in the MACLP program. She also plans, develops and implements special services and events for students such as the Email Blast of Internship Opportunities, Clinical Connections and alumni private practice tours. Her office is at the Irvine Graduate Campus.

Rebecca Reed is the CT Coordinator for students at the West Los Angeles Graduate Campus and **Carla Haberman** is the CT Coordinator for students at the Encino Graduate Campus. Kathleen, Rebecca and Carla provide program assistance to the MFT Program Director and can answer questions about practicum, counting hours, supervision, practicum sites, obtaining an MFT Intern number, and much, much more. They conduct New MFT Student meetings, meetings to help students prepare for practicum, and meetings to assist prospective graduates in registering for their intern numbers; they organize practicum fairs and other MACLP student events.

Kathleen Wenger	(Irvine Grad. Campus)	(949) 223-2580	kathleen.wenger@pepperdine.edu
Rebecca Reed	(WLA Grad. Campus)	(310) 568-5776	rebecca.reed@pepperdine.edu
Carla Haberman	(SFV Grad. Campus)	(818) 501-1619	carla.haberman@pepperdine.edu

Note: For the sake of simplicity, Kathleen, Rebecca and Carla are referred to as “Clinical Training Staff.”

Program Administrators

The MACLP Program has *two* Program Administrators: **Deanna Lazaro** and **Tinnie Taylor**. Deanna works with prospective students and handles the initial transcript evaluation for course waivers and transfers. She conducts information meetings for prospective students and assists the MFT Committee faculty regarding admissions to the master’s programs. Tinnie works with enrolled students and handles questions about classes, enrollment, registration, add/drop, challenge exams, enrolled student course waivers and other academic matters, including transfers between the MAP and MACLP programs. Tinnie also has office hours at the Irvine Graduate Campus, usually on Wednesdays. You may contact them by phone or email:

Deanna Lazaro	(310) 568-5605	deanna.lazaro@pepperdine.edu
Tinnie Taylor	(310) 568-5618	tinnie.taylor@pepperdine.edu

For questions about Program Certifications (not transcripts) please contact Rebecca Reed. For questions about academic verifications (not transcripts), please contact Tinnie Taylor. For questions about transcripts, please call Ms. Yee-Man Leung, Registration and Records Supervisor, at (310) 258-2328 or yee-man.leung@pepperdine.edu.

Program Director

The Clinical Training/Professional Development staff and Program Administrators work directly with **Duncan Wigg, PhD**, MACLP Program Director. If further consultation is needed, you may reach him at (949) 223-2522, or duncan.wigg@pepperdine.edu.

Deviation from Policy

Even if they’d like to, the friendly staff of the BBS has no discretionary authority to deviate from

the statutes and regulations governing the MFT license. Therefore, they can make no exceptions to MFT requirements. We have a bit more flexibility at Pepperdine, but would like to request that you follow the policies and procedures for successful completion of your degree program. We hold firmly to the MACLP Clinical Training procedures as these adhere to state regulations and have been refined over time to ensure to the best of our ability the most meaningful practicum experience for our MACLP students.

LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL BOARDS & ASSOCIATIONS

Statutes and Regulations

As therapists licensed to practice independently, MFT's must know the legal parameters of their profession. **Statutes** typically originate with the legislators or their lobbyists and go through the standard legislative channels. The legal code most relevant to the MFT license is the Business and Professions Code. **Regulations** carry out the law and, in the case of the MFT license, are written by the Board of Behavioral Sciences and adopted after public hearing. The Board of Behavioral Sciences issues the "Laws and Regulations Relating to the Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy, Licensed Clinical Social Work, and Licensed Educational Psychology." Instructions of the laws and regulations are distributed to students enrolled in PSY 623, *Professional Ethics and the Law.*

Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS)

The Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) is a group of licensed professionals and members of the public who are charged by the Department of Consumer Affairs to protect the consumer by carrying out the statutes and regulations which assure minimum standards for education and training as well as ethical practice by the professionals under its jurisdiction. Members of the Board are appointed by the governor to represent the licenses that it regulates: Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT's), Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW's), and Licensed Educational Psychologists (LEP's). Two public members also serve on the Board. (For more Board history, visit the BBS web site; the address follows.)

The Executive Officer of the BBS assists the Board and helps to carry out its motions, as well as oversees the evaluative and research functions of the license analysts (BBS staff members who determine eligibility for the various licenses and registered positions). Board meetings are held in both Northern and Southern California and are attended regularly by a few hardy souls from the academic community as well as by members of CAMFT, AAMFT and other organizations. We encourage you to attend a meeting—you'll learn about the legislative body that oversees your professional activities and you may even have an opportunity to influence the direction of the MFT profession through your testimony.

The BBS's voicemail system handles many questions. For recorded messages, call (916) 445-4933. To talk with a receptionist, call (916) 574-7830 and press "0". The Board may also be reached through e-mail (BBSWebMaster@bbs.ca.gov) or on its homepage (http//www.bbs.ca.gov). **BBS forms** are available through the BBS homepage forms and publications link, although you will receive most of what you need from the Clinical Training Coordinators when you go through the process of enrolling in practicum.

There are TWO state professional organizations that licensed MFT's frequently join. One is CAMFT, the *California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists*, a free-standing organization that claims a membership of about 28,300 combined licensed and pre-licensed MFT's and functions more or less as a "professional union" for MFT's in the state. AAMFT-CA, the state division of the *American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy*, is smaller, but is nationally affiliated.

Each of these organizations offers student members the opportunity to learn about the field of marriage and family therapy and to receive certain professional benefits. Both CAMFT and AAMFT offer impressive annual conferences and have an active interest in the training and professional development of their membership.

The California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT)

CAMFT has been a staunch and long-standing advocate for MFT's in California, working tirelessly with legislators and with the BBS to ensure a "level playing field" for MFT's. We highly recommend that you join CAMFT now, as a pre-licensed member. You will receive CAMFT's bimonthly magazine, **The Therapist**, the pages of which are full of information about such topics as the latest BBS actions, new statutes and regulations and their effects upon MFT's, ethical and practice issues, insurance information, workshops on professional issues and exam preparation, a classified section, who has had disciplinary actions and why, job listings and much, much more. CAMFT members get an added bonus—the advice of CAMFT's legal counsel. If you ever have legal or ethical professional concerns while a student/intern or a licensed MFT, CAMFT legal staff is available for consultation. To be able to speak with them, however, you'll need to be a CAMFT member.

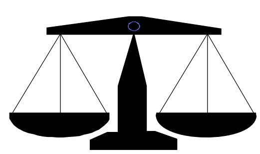
CAMFT publishes a two-part pamphlet on professional ethics for MFT's that is required reading for students in PSY 623, *Professional Ethics and the Law*. Students enrolled in PSY 623 will need to acquire this free pamphlet through CAMFT.

While you're in school, we will inform you of changes in BBS requirements. Once you graduate, however, it will be more difficult to stay informed. Joining CAMFT is an excellent way to learn about changes in the statutes or regulations that might affect your practice as both an intern and a licensed MFT. You may request an application for membership from CAMFT by calling and requesting an application packet or use the application on CAMFT's homepage. You are a *Pre-licensed Member* and your current status is "Student enrolled in a degree program leading toward licensure." CAMFT's address is:

California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists
7901 Raytheon Road
San Diego, CA 92111-1606
(858) 29-CAMFT (292-2638)
http://www.camft.org

CAMFT has a number of local chapters that welcome student members. By affiliating with established professionals in your geographical area, you can develop valuable contacts and learn from those who are more experienced. For information on local chapters and their contact persons, email or call CAMFT.

IMPORTANT: ***Those who work in clinical settings should carry professional liability insurance – student Trainees, MFT Interns and licensed MFT's!***



By joining CAMFT, you can purchase a policy at student rates. Contact CAMFT directly for information on insurance policies. Again, CAMFT's discounts are for its members (CAMFT and AAMFT-CA have joined forces to offer professional liability insurance as a group.)

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)

AAMFT is the national professional organization for marriage and family therapists, equivalent to the American Psychological Association for psychologists, except that it is multidisciplinary in membership. AAMFT puts on an excellent annual conference and provides its members with considerable information on the practice of marriage and family therapy as well as the research upon which it is based. AAMFT is also working to create parity for MFT's with other mental health professionals on the national level, as well as to educate the public about the value of marriage and family therapy. Its publications and the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy are excellent; we encourage you to join this excellent organization for both professional benefits and continuing knowledge about the practice of therapy.

Once you are a member of AAMFT, you are eligible to join AAMFT-CA. To request an application for AAMFT membership, write or call AAMFT at:

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
112 S. Alfred St.
Alexandria, VA 22134
Tel: (703) 838-9808
Fax: (703) 838-9805
1-800-66AAMFT (Toll Free)
Website: http://www.aamft.org

QUESTIONS ABOUT MFT'S

What's in a Name? - "Marriage and Family Therapist"

As used by family therapists, the term "family" is generic: it includes individuals, couples (unmarried, married or divorced), children, adolescents, siblings, single parents and children, adults and older parents, blended families, step-families or any social unit where there is a relationship by blood, marriage or domestic partnership.

Where does helping children fit in? To an MFT, it is understood that family therapy includes children. And if a child is presented as the troubled member of the family, it is understood that the parents, guardians or caretakers will be somehow involved in the assessment and treatment of the child's problems. In fact, most family therapists believe that the best way to help troubled children is to increase the competence of their parents. This is often best accomplished by seeing parents and children together, whenever possible.

Why "therapist?" Family therapists have an eclectic heritage that includes psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, social workers, engineers and anthropologists. Because they work with clinical populations and are required to be trained in the assessment and diagnosis of mental disorders, it is appropriate that MFT's refer to their work as therapy. MFT's are defined in the California Evidence Code as "psychotherapists" and are governed by the same laws as psychologists and other mental health professionals in the state.

Are MFT's Psychologists?

Only those who have passed the licensing exam for psychology may call themselves psychologists. MFT's may NOT call themselves "psychologists," may not refer to their services in any form as “psychological,” nor advertise in the Yellow Pages in the section that lists “psychologists”.

You may refer to your practice as “psychotherapy” and to yourself as a “psychotherapist” on business cards and written materials as long as you also write out the full name of your license status—Marriage and Family Therapist Trainee, Intern or Therapist—at the same time. (See also the discussion about the use of psychological tests, page 17.) The Board of Behavioral Science’s main interest is the protection of the consumer, and in this case, the consumer must not be confused into thinking that the MFT holds a different license.

Becoming Licensed in Another State

According to the CAMFT, currently 47 states regulate marriage and family therapists, either by license or certification. Requirements are not identical across states, but there is some similarity in requirements for education and training.

Historically, Pepperdine University MFT graduates have been very successful in acquiring licensure in other states. MACLP program administrators will be glad to assist those who desire to seek out-of-state licensure.

To find out about out-of-state requirements for licensure or certification, contact the appropriate state licensing board for the requirements to practice at the master’s level. Although you will need to complete the required forms on your own, we will do our best to help you in your efforts.

SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS

Review of the terms:

- The title of my **profession** is Marriage and Family Therapy.
- The title of my **license** is Marriage and Family Therapist.
- The title of my **degree** is Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy.

Have I done the following?:

1. ____ Read the remainder of the **MFT Handbook**.
2. ____ Read the **GSEP Catalog**.
3. ____ Read the Psychology Division “**Policies & Procedures.”**
4. ____ Send completed membership application to **CAMFT** and/or **AAMFT**
5. ____ Consider joining other professional organizations.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

MFT Trainee, MFT Intern, Licensed MFT

The following definitions are taken from the California Business and Professions Code, Chapter 13, Sections 4980.02, 4980.03 and 4980.43. They define the legal parameters or scope of practice of your work, both before and after licensure.

"MFT Trainee"

An unlicensed person who is currently enrolled in a state-approved graduate degree program, has completed at least 12 semester units of coursework in that program, fulfilled practicum course prerequisites and who performs MFT services under supervision. (See pg. 24 for details about gaining hours.)

What this means:

- You are still in school and have completed 12 units of coursework at Pepperdine.
- You have signed the "Acknowledgment of BBS Requirements."
- You may NOT gain any hours in private practice, *even as a volunteer* (see pgs. 9-10).
- You may be paid a salary by a non-profit or charitable corporation, school, college or university, government entity or licensed health facility but you may NOT be paid directly by your clients.
- You may also work in additional settings in the manner defined by law and as defined in *Business and Professions Code 4980.40(f):*
    - A. Lawfully and regularly provides mental health counseling or psychotherapy.
    - B. Provides oversight to ensure that the trainee's work at the setting meets the experience and supervision requirements set forth in this chapter and is within the scope of practice for the profession as defined in Section 4980.02.
    - C. Is not a private practice owned by a licensed marriage and family therapist, a licensed psychologist, a licensed clinical social worker, a licensed physician and surgeon, or a professional corporation of any of those licensed professions.
- You must inform your clients before starting therapy that you are unlicensed and are working under the supervision of (your supervisor's name).
- You may count up to 1,300 hours of pre-degree experience.
- Pre-degree experience may include up to 750 hours of counseling and supervision + 250 hours of workshops and seminars + 300 hours of personal therapy = 1,300 possible hours
- ***The office of Clinical Training must approve the practicum experience for every MACLP student.***

"MFT Intern"

An unlicensed person who has earned a qualifying master's or doctor's degree, is registered with the BBS and performs MFT services under supervision.

What this means:

- You have graduated with your M.A. in Clinical Psychology (MACLP degree).
- You have registered with the BBS as an **MFT Intern** (see pg. 51 for instructions).
- You may work, *under supervision,* either in private practice or in a non-profit venue.
- You may be paid by your supervisor or employer, but NOT paid directly by your clients.
- You must inform your clients before starting therapy that you are "unlicensed and are working under the supervision of (your supervisor's name)".
- You must earn at least 1,700 hours post-M.A.
- While working on intern hours, you must renew your registration 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.

“Marriage and Family Therapist” (MFT)

A licensed person who performs services with individuals, couples, or groups wherein interpersonal relationships are examined for the purpose of achieving more adequate, satisfying, and productive marriage and family adjustments. This practice includes relationship and pre-marital counseling. The application of marriage, family and child counseling principles and methods includes, but is not limited to, the use of applied psychotherapeutic techniques, to enable individuals to mature and grow within marriage and the family, and the provision of explanations and interpretations of the psychosexual and psychosocial aspects of relationships.

What it means to be a licensed MFT:

1. You have fulfilled all of the academic and experiential requirements for the license, and have passed the written exams.
2. You may work independently in private practice.
3. You may get paid directly by your clients or their health care providers.
4. You may call yourself a Marriage and Family Therapist.
5. After two years of practice, you may begin to supervise your own Trainees and Interns, following the requirements for supervisors in effect at the time, and
6. You are eligible to join CAMFT and AAMFT as full Clinical Members.

No Private Practice for Trainees?

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

In addition, the Board was concerned that the economic pressures upon a private, for-profit venture might be transferred to the Trainee, who would then be required to perform duties beyond those appropriate for his or her level of education and ability. Interns, with their MA degrees and practicum experience were thought to be more “savvy” about exploitation that, although rare, was known to exist.

SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS

MFT TRAINEE:
- still in school
- no private practice
- must be supervised

REGISTERED INTERN:
- completed MA
- can work in private practice
- must be supervised

LICENSED MFT:
- completed M.A. + 3,000 hours + passed licensing exams
- can work independently

1.____Read, sign and file “Acknowledgment of BBS Requirements” with your CTC staff.
2.____Follow your academic degree program.

(Space For Personal Notes)

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

When you apply for the MFT license exam, you will need to document successful completion of the following educational requirements:

1. A degree named in law as meeting state requirements and
2. A workshop in child abuse assessment and reporting.

The Qualifying Degree

The master's degree that prepares applicants for the MFT license must contain a minimum of 48 semester units. It must contain specified content areas covered in specified number of units, and its title must be specified in law. *All courses must be taken in a single integrated degree program.* (Courses transferred from other schools become part of the integrated Pepperdine degree program.) The MACLP degree meets these requirements.

Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting Requirement

In addition to the master's degree, applicants to the MFT exam must complete a 7-hour workshop in child abuse assessment and reporting. Pepperdine offers this training through our Continuing Education Workshops. Students may look in **The California Therapist** and check the school bulletin boards for the names of workshops available through institutes and professional associations.

Before you register for a workshop, check the information given by the provider to make sure that it meets state license requirements and that you will receive 7 hours of BBS continuing education credits. You are not required to document completion of this workshop until you send in your application for the MFT licensing exam. Since it is an educational requirement, the child abuse assessment and reporting workshop may not be included as part of the 250 hours allotted for workshops, seminars, training sessions or conferences. The workshop may be taken either while you are in school or while you are an Intern. The Office of Professional Development (OPD) at GSEP offers this and other BBS-approved workshops that you may take at student rates. For more information call (310) 568-2343 or visit the OPD website at http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/gsep/as/workshops.

Continuing Education

MFT's have joined the ranks of physicians, psychologists, nurses and other health professionals who are required to update their knowledge for license renewal. Every two years, an MFT licensee must accrue at least 36 hours of continuing education. Supervision training will count toward this total. Pepperdine provides workshops on relevant clinical areas, as do local schools and universities. Look for the BBS-approved provider number listed in the printed material for the workshop.

*Currently, the Board of Behavioral Sciences requires that all licensed MFT's must take the following one-time courses for licensure **renewal**:*

1. *Spousal or Partner Abuse – 7 hour continuing education*
2. *Aging and Long Term Care – 3 hour continuing education*
3. *HIV/AIDS – 7 hour continuing education*

THE MACLP CURRICULUM: 48-63 UNITS

Program Levels

The MACLP curriculum has **two** levels: **foundation** and **core**. Since many of our students have not had academic backgrounds in psychology, we offer courses at the graduate level that are usually part of an undergraduate degree in Psychology. These *foundation courses* prepare you for advanced study and should be taken first in your program. However, you are encouraged to enroll in a *core* course, PSY 606 *Interpersonal Skills and Group Therapy*, early in your course of study. The experiential nature of this course can provide a good introduction to your graduate program.

Some students delay the inevitable by waiting until the end of their programs to take courses that they think will be difficult (statistics and physiological psychology come to mind...or, perhaps they are saving the best for last!). Don't be tempted; take the foundation courses first, as they will prepare you for the core courses.

Length of Time to Complete the Program

How long it takes to complete the master's degree depends on a variety of factors. Even with an undergraduate background in psychology, students rarely finish the required 48 units in fewer than two years. To complete all foundation, core, and practicum courses, a total of 63 units, will obviously take more than two years. This may seem long for a master's program, but when you consider that the foundation courses replace an undergraduate psychology major, the extra time and effort might not seem so bad.

The BBS doesn't care how long you take to complete your degree, but Pepperdine does: the GSEP Catalog gives a *seven-year limit* for finishing a master's degree. If you need an extension on this limit, please put your request in writing to Robert deMayo, PhD, Associate Dean, Psychology.

Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence

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 semesters. (Enrollment in the Summer Sessions is optional, although students in practicum settings may need to take Practicum during the summer.) 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 consult us. We want you to succeed and will do our best to assist you in maintaining continuity in your program.

IMPORTANT: If you are going to take a temporary break from school, including the summer sessions, please call or email Tinnie Taylor at (310) 568-5618. She needs to make sure that you receive the necessary paperwork for pre-registration upon your return.

THE MACLP CURRICULUM: REQUIRED COURSES

FOUNDATION LEVEL *(eligible for waiver or transfer):*

PSY	TITLE	UNITS
610	Theories of Personality	3
626	Psychological Research and Statistics	3
656	Physiological Psychology	3
657	Psychopathology	3
659	Principles and Theories of Learning	3

MAXIMUM UNITS = 15

(IMPORTANT: Foundation courses should be completed before core courses.)

CORE CURRICULUM *(eligible for transfer only):*

PSY	TITLE	UNITS	PREREQUISITES
600	Clinical Management of Psychopathology	3	657
603*	Assessment for Marriage and Family Therapists	3	626
606**	Interpersonal Skills and Group Therapy	3	
612	Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy	3	610
622	Cross-Cultural Counseling	3	
623	Professional Ethics and the Law	3	**606, 610, 612 *** **
624	Substance Abuse Evaluation and Treatment	3	**600, 606, 610, 612 *** **
627	Psychopharmacology	2	656
628	Human Sexuality	1	
637	Techniques of Counseling and Psychotherapy	3	612
639	Marriage and Family Therapy: I	3	**600, 606, 610, 612 *** **
640	Marriage and Family Therapy: II	3	639
642	Professional Issues and Mental Health Systems	3	622, 639, 640+1 sem 662
658	Individual & Family Development: Life Cycle Approach	3	
662	Clinical Practicum	2	600, 606, 612, 623, 637, 639
662	Clinical Practicum	2	same as above + 662
662	Clinical Practicum	2	same as above + 662
668	Clinical Interventions with Children & Adolescents	3	658

MINIMUM UNITS = 48

*Although they are not prerequisites, PSY 600, 612 and 639 are useful courses to take before PSY 603.
**PSY 606 may be taken before completing Foundation Level coursework.
****These prerequisites apply to students who first enroll in the MACLP program beginning Fall, 2007.***
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Prerequisites and Course Scheduling

Prerequisites represent the faculty's attempts to ensure student readiness for new course content. In planning your schedule, ***you must attend to prerequisites***. Attempts to enroll in a class without having taken its prerequisite will be blocked by the computer voice registration system. (Please note that concurrent enrollment in a course and its prerequisite is not allowed.)

PREVIOUS COURSEWORK

If you have taken psychology courses *before* entering Pepperdine, you may be able to waive, transfer, or challenge a required course.

Waiving a Course

If you have taken one or more courses at the undergraduate or graduate level that are equivalent to courses in the foundation level, you may be able to use them *in lieu of* foundation courses. Courses used as waivers must be recent (taken within the past seven years), must have been earned at an accredited college or university and must have a grade of “B” or better on transcript.

The curriculum sheet that you received at admission will inform you of any foundation courses that have been waived. If it is not clear whether or not a course is equivalent, you will be asked to provide supporting documentation such as syllabi, texts, exams, and class notes. Only foundation level courses can be waived; in the MACLP program these are: PSY 610, 626, 656, 657 and 659.

<u>VERY IMPORTANT!!</u>: If you plan to practice outside of California, please find out if the courses that you intend to waive are required at the graduate level for out-of-state certification or license. In many cases, you will need to take PSY 626, as a course in research required by COAMFTE.

Transferring a Course

If you have previously taken a *graduate-level* course that is equivalent to either a foundation level or core course, you may petition to have that course transferred, rather than take the equivalent course at Pepperdine. Up to six (6) semester units may be transferred and/or challenged. (See discussion under “Total Unit Limits,” below.) Courses eligible for transfer credit must be recent (taken within the past seven years), must have been earned at an accredited college or university, and must have a grade of “B” or better on transcript.

If you believe that a previous graduate course is equivalent to an existing MACLP course, you may file a “Petition to Transfer Coursework” with the Program Administrator for Admissions and provide supporting documentation as requested. A transferred course becomes part of your Pepperdine transcript and counts toward degree requirements. The grade recorded on the transcript will be “CR” for credit; letter grades are not awarded for transfers.

Before going to the trouble and expense of taking a course at another institution, please determine whether or not it is equivalent to the appropriate Pepperdine course. Enrolled students should consult Deanna Lazaro, the Program Administrator for Admissions.

Again, whenever possible, verify with specific out-of-state licensing boards that a transferred course will be acceptable to them.

Semester vs. Quarter Units

Schools offer courses in semester or quarter units, depending on contact hours and number of weeks of class. A semester is 15 weeks long and a quarter is 10 weeks long. The difference in course length means that the units differ in value: 5 quarter units = 3 semester units. Pepperdine courses are offered in semester units. Courses that are used for waiver or transfer must not only be equivalent in content, but they must also have equivalent unit value.

Challenging a Course

If previous coursework is unsuitable for waiver or transfer but you think that you know the subject matter well enough to take an exam, you might want to *challenge* the Pepperdine course in question. To challenge a course, file a petition with Tinnie Taylor, who will forward it to the appropriate faculty. If the petition is approved and if the exam is passed, credit for that course ("CR") appears on the Pepperdine transcript. Please note that there must be evidence of prior study; challenge exams and course credits are NOT given for life experience.

Transfer/Challenge Limits

Although you may waive as many of the foundation courses for which you are eligible, the number of units you may challenge and/or transfer is limited to six (6) units *total*. Limits on transfers and challenges function as a residency requirement, in which schools maintain control of the quality of most of the academic experience required for their degrees. (Accrediting bodies prefer this.) Please refer to the Psychology Division's **Policies and Procedures** for more information.

Need Additional Units for the Degree?

The master's degree must contain at least 48 units. Foundation and transferred/challenged courses (see above) count toward this total. If additional units are needed to fulfill the 48-unit requirement for graduation, students may enroll in seminars, electives or independent study. Check the course schedules or see Tinnie Taylor, Program Administrator, for assistance.

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY (MAP DEGREE) AND THE MFT LICENSE

MACLP Degree Needed for the MFT License

Students in the Master of Arts in Psychology (MAP) program often plan to enter a doctoral program or work in the field when they graduate. If these plans don't work out, MAP program graduates may decide to pursue the MFT license instead. Unfortunately, it is not possible to add MFT courses to the MAP degree. California law specifies that all coursework must be taken *within a single degree program* that is approved by the BBS and meets state regulation for licensure. The MAP degree is not acceptable for the MFT license.

MAP Program Graduates

MAP graduates may *transfer up to 15 units of common coursework* toward the MACLP degree, as long as the MAP degree was awarded within the seven years preceding application to the MACLP program. (The common courses are PSY 600, 606, 612, 637 and 658.)

By transferring these 15 units, the student may complete the 48-unit MACLP degree with 33 units of new coursework, 6 units of which are practicum. Essentially, an additional master's degree can be earned with nine courses and a year of practicum. By taking PSY 623 and PSY 639 the first semester or term, a student may enroll in practicum the second term, making it possible to earn the second MA in *a little over one year*.

MAP Student Transfers to the MACLP Program

Students in the Master of Arts in Psychology (MAP) program who wish to transfer to the MACLP program must file a formal request. The application will be evaluated by the MFT Admissions Committee; admission is not guaranteed. Here is the procedure to follow:

1. Submit a "Change of Program Request," available from Tinnie Taylor. Include the fee.
2. Follow the admission procedures described on the form. (An updated personal statement describing the applicant's reasons for changing programs is required.)

3. Upon acceptance into the MACLP program, read the **MFT Handbook** in its entirety.
4. Complete and sign an “Acknowledgment of BBS Requirements.” (See page 9.)
5. Follow the curriculum listed for the MACLP program, page 14. (See also the discussion of PSY 603, Assessment for Marriage and Family Therapists, below.)
6. Be sure NOT to graduate until you have completed all MACLP degree requirements. If you have already applied to graduate, notify Ms. Yee-Man Leung at the West Los Angeles Campus that you have changed programs and wish to postpone graduation. ***Once issued, a degree cannot be rescinded***.

THE ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT

MAP Transfer Students DO take PSY 603

The instruments covered in PSY 601, *Assessment of Intelligence*, and PSY 602*, Personality Assessment*, focus on the individual, not the relationship. The focus of PSY 603 is on the assessment of *relationships*, although individual testing is covered as well. (See description that follows.) To avoid repetition of material already studied (and to save money), students who have already taken both PSY 601 and 602 may, with program approval and consent of the instructor, enroll in PSY 680, a one-unit Independent Study in “Assessment of Relationships.” The student fulfills this course by attending the PSY 603 classes that cover relationship assessment and by completing required class assignments and exams. The combination of PSY 601, 602 and PSY 680 fulfills the requirement for PSY 603. For further information, please consult Tinnie Taylor.

Can MFT’s Conduct Psychological Testing?

This is a controversial and often misunderstood area involving arguments of restriction of trade, scope of practice, competence, and similar issues. Under the licensing act, an MFT may administer, score and interpret tests of *intelligence, aptitude, and personality* (traditionally referred to as “psychological tests”) ONLY if <u>each</u> of the following conditions are met:

- The MFT has received adequate training in the instruments used for assessment and is competent in their use. (Competence is defined by general standards for the profession, based on education and supervised training.)
- The tests are used *for the purpose of assessing and treating relationship dysfunction of the licensee’s **own** clients.* MFT’s cannot hire out their services to test people who are not their clients.
- The activity is **not** called psychological testing.

With appropriate education, training and supervision, MFT’s may use tests and inventories designed to assess relationships and relationship dysfunction. Students study this material in PSY 603, *Assessment for Marriage and Family Therapists*.

CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

Do you have questions regarding your future as a professional and the opportunities that exist in professional practice? (Who doesn’t??) Do you wonder how to work within the current health services environment? Are you concerned about the pessimism regarding managed care that you may have picked up from instructors or supervisors? Do jobs for MFT’s really exist? These and similar questions are addressed in **PSY 642, Professional Practice and Mental Health Systems**.

The results of CAMFT’s **2006 Member Practice Demographic Survey** lend empirical support for a more optimistic view of practice patterns. Here are a few highlights: about 18% of MFT’s have gross annual incomes of $80,000 or more (the average was about $55,000); nearly 71% of the respondents indicated that their practices had increased or maintained over the last two years (Appendix II of this MFT Handbook and the July/August 2006 issue of **The Therapist** lists additional findings of the CAMFT survey).

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS

The office of Career Development offers support services and resources to help students and alumni of the Graduate School of Education and Psychology (GSEP) explore career possibilities, develop skills for successful employment searches and secure full-time employment. The focus of the Career Development staff is on individual consultation and interactive workshops designed to provide the student and alumnus with the strategies necessary to market their skills in a competitive environment and establish themselves as competent professionals. Career services include career counseling and assessment, resume and curriculum vitae writing, job search tips, interview preparation, and employment listings on monstertrak.com. For an overview of services offered, please visit the Career Services website at http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/careerservices/.

If you would like additional information or would like to set up an individual appointment, please contact Adriana Estrada, Career Services – at (310) 568-5634 or adriana.estrada@pepperdine.edu.

CONTINUATION IN THE PROGRAM

The MACLP program is designed to prepare students to become entry-level psychotherapists who are licensed as MFT's. The assessment, diagnosis and treatment of people in crisis or with ongoing problems require considerable knowledge and skill. But in addition to competence, the practice of psychotherapy (as well as BBS regulations!) requires the personal qualities of maturity, integrity, judgment, compassion and flexibility on the part of the therapist. Thus, there are two sets of criteria for continuation in the MACLP program: academic and behavioral.

Grade Point Average

Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average. If the G.P.A. falls below 3.0, the student has only <u>one</u> term to raise it to 3.0. Grades of "C" or lower will lead to a review of the student's academic record and possible remediation.

Incomplete (I) and In Progress (IP)

Life's emergencies do not respect final exams; at times, they seem perversely drawn to the end of the term! A grade of **"Incomplete"** is a temporary grade that is given to a student who is passing the course and who, at the end of the term, cannot complete all course requirements due to an emergency. A grade of **"In Progress"** is used for students enrolled in PSY 662, Clinical Practicum, who cannot complete all course requirements by the end of the term. "Incompletes" are not to be used to "buy" extra time to bring up a low grade. **Please be aware that if it is not completed by the end of the *following* term, an "Incomplete" grade will automatically convert to an "F".** If you are having difficulty in your academic program and/or personal life and cannot finish your coursework on time, please speak with your instructor. If you find that you must temporarily suspend your education, you may apply for a temporary withdrawal (Leave of Absence). In most cases, if you re-enroll within six months, your financial aid repayment schedule will not be affected. Call Financial Aid for details.

Academic/Grading Standards

Many students feel that they MUST get an “A” in each course. For these students, an “A-” will not do and a grade of “B” or “B+” is considered “failing.” We wish to encourage you to do excellent work, to study very hard and to learn all that you can — the profession of marriage and family therapy is difficult and demands your level best. *Your clients, however, are not going to see your transcript!* Please don’t let the pursuit of a letter grade become more important than the level of knowledge that it implies.

The GSEP *Faculty Handbook* speaks to grading practices, thus:

A grade of “A” should indicate exemplary accomplishment in a course. A grade of “B” should indicate satisfactory class work. A grade of “C” should indicate substandard work, and is to alert the student to deficiencies in academic performance. Plus and minus grades may be assigned for intermediate grade achievement.

Behavioral Standards

The *GSEP 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 which could constitute a potential threat to the welfare of the public to be served. A faculty panel will review feedback from professors 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 in the interests of protecting the public (GSEP Catalog, 2006-2007, p. 138).

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 suspected or obvious psychopathology, severe emotional immaturity or questionable ethics and that they not send these students on to clinical sites.

Please note that on an ongoing basis or by request of the Program Director, faculty who teach MACLP students are asked to communicate with the MFT Program Director and Clinical Training staff 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 GSEP staff are also asked to provide their impressions of students based on their interactions with them.

As it is the goal of the MACLP Program faculty and staff to maintain the integrity of the program, aspire to ensure the well-being of mental health consumers receiving services from students and seek to 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 Clinical Training staff and/or faculty members 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 rehabilitation to include faculty or peer-mentoring, and specific evidence of rehabilitation in order for the student to continue in the program. There may also be a requirement for on-going monitoring of the student’s rehabilitation to ensure the successful resolution of the problems.

The student may choose to concur with these requirements and decisions or appeal the decisions to the Ombudsperson (Fiona Chalom, PhD). If mediation efforts with the Ombudsperson are not successful in resolving the issues, the Ombudsperson may refer the matter on to the MFT Faculty Panel.

MFT Faculty Panel

The MFT Faculty Panel, a sub-committee of the MFT Committee, will request information about the situation from faculty, staff, clinical supervisors and other professionals, where relevant. The student will also be invited to share his or her own experience. The Faculty Panel will assess the situation and make its recommendations to the Associate Dean and to the student. If it is decided that there is a problem that should be addressed, a variety of remediation plans are possible. In extreme cases of an ethical or legal violation, a student may be put on probation or dismissed from school.

Note: Information disclosed during the "group therapy" portion of **PSY 606, Interpersonal Skills and Group Therapy**, is *confidential*. Faculty who teach this course may not reveal this information to the MFT Program, but are encouraged to discuss their concerns directly with the student.

Personal Therapy: Should *You* Become a Client?

The BBS encourages those who apply for an MFT license to undergo their own personal therapy. Your therapist must be licensed (i.e., not an MFT Intern or Psychological Assistant). Hours of therapy received either as a student and/or intern are *triple-counted, up* to a 300-hour maximum. You can receive individual, couple, family and/or group therapy. Pepperdine does not require its MFT students to undergo personal therapy, but we solidly recommend it. Page 129 of the 2007-2008 GSEP Catalog states:

> *The psychology faculty and administration recommend personal therapy for all students training to be psychotherapists since it is believed that personal therapy is a vital component of the training and growth of the psychotherapist, 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 an experience for practicum and/or your post-degree Internship. There are some top-notch agencies that will only consider applicants of their trainee or intern positions who have already been in therapy or who are currently involved in psychotherapy. If you are planning on continued study in a doctoral program, or even if you are not, personal therapy may demonstrate your sensitivity to the issues of being a client in therapy.

The Clinical Training staff have a list that contains names and locations of Pepperdine graduates who are licensed therapists and offering to see students at lower fees. Or, ask your fellow students for referrals. Just remember that your therapist cannot be your clinical supervisor— now, in the past, or in the future.

When to Receive Therapy

To count personal therapy hours toward your 3,000 MFT hours, you must be enrolled in a qualifying degree program, in this case, the MACLP 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 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. (For additional detail, please read the information under "Marriage and Family Therapist Psychotherapy Verification, see pg.44).

CLINICAL PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

In addition to earning a qualifying master's degree, applicants to the MFT license must learn how to do therapy. This training occurs when pre-licensed individuals, both trainees and interns, see clients and receive supervision on therapy performed with those clients. A complete list of requirements may be found in Section 1833 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Division 18. What follows is a synopsis to use as a guideline for getting your hours.

Collecting BBS Hours: Required and Allowed Activities

Throughout your 3,000 hours, including both pre-degree and post degree experience,

- You need at least 52 weeks of individual, face-to-face supervision. Weeks do not have to be consecutive.
- You must have at least 500 hours in diagnosing and treating couples, families and children. Remember that a "child" is any person under 18 years of age. These clinical hours may be recorded on your Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience under the category, "Couples, Families and Children".
- Up to 500 hours may be credited for providing group therapy.
- Up to 250 hours may be credited for telephone counseling.
- Up to 300 hours may be credited for group, marital or conjoint, family or individual psychotherapy received (1 hour received = 3 hours credited).
- Up to 250 hours may be credited for workshops, seminars and training activities that your supervisor has pre-approved and at which your attendance has been verified.
- The TOTAL for supervision and professional enrichment activities (personal therapy, attendance at workshops and conferences) cannot exceed 1,000 hours.
- This means that by the time you are ready to sit for your license exam, you will have had 2,000 hours of direct client contact, more than enough to give you the experience of competence!
- **For MFT Interns only (post-degree):** Up to 250 hours may be credited for administering and evaluating psychological tests of clients, writing clinical reports and process/progress notes. (Remember the caveat about using tests, discussed on page 17.) Trainees may perform and receive supervision in these activities but their hours may not be counted toward experience requirements. (See p. 10 for the reasoning behind this.)

Collecting BBS Hours: Overview of the Process

- You must take at least two years (104 weeks) to gain your hours; 52 weeks must be post degree.
- You may credit no more than 40 hours of experience for any week. This includes categories: client contact, supervision, workshops, progress notes (for Interns), and personal therapy (Note: "workshop" hours can exceed the 40-hour maximum).
- For any week in which you wish to count experience (other than personal therapy), you must have at least one (1) hour of individual or two (2) hours of group supervision. *No supervision, no hours!*
- For every five (5) hours of client contact you gain as a trainee, you need either one hour of individual or two hours of group supervision. (As an intern, you may work ten client hours for the same amount of supervision). Note: see "How to Calculate Supervision Ratios" on page 46.
- During practicum, you must gain at least 150 supervised hours of direct client contact, spread over three terms and six units.
- Practicum class time is NOT counted as part of your supervised experience; it is counted as part of your 48 academic units.
- You may count up to 1,300 hours before graduation.
- After graduation you must gain at least 1,700 hours.
- All hours that you wish the board to evaluate for license requirements must have been earned within the six (6) years proceeding the date you apply for the exam. (See "MFT Clock," page 49.) However, the board will evaluate up to 500 hours gained during practicum (excluding personal therapy), even if they were earned more than six years of filing for the exam.
- ***Trainees can work at sites only after Pepperdine GSEP, Office of Clinical Training and Professional Development, has signed a 4-Way Agreement for that specific site.***

Note: Approving Your Clinical Placement: Pepperdine's Legal Responsibility

Students are often curious about how soon they can begin to earn their 3,000 hours. Personal therapy may be started and counted as soon as the student has enrolled in the master's program, but for clinical hours to count, the student must have Pepperdine'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

Before this law was 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 placement of each student. Clearly, this new law benefits both student and consumer alike.

Get the "scoop" on your hours with our "journalist's questions":

WHO?	Students in the MACLP program,
WHAT?	Gain supervised hours,
WHEN?	While enrolled in Clinical Practicum (PSY 662),
WHERE?	At a site which has been approved for you
HOW?	With a written agreement (the "4-Way Agreement"),
WHY?	To comply with state law.

What is Clinical Practicum?

Clinical Practicum is a structured **three-course sequence** in which students gain clinical hours by working under supervision in approved clinical settings, attending practicum class concurrently. Students have on-site supervisors who assume both legal and ethical responsibility for students' clinical work; the practicum class is similar to a case management seminar during which students discuss their clinical cases and receive feedback from both the practicum instructor and classmates regarding clinical issues and treatment.

Practicum also allows us 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." —Business & Professions Code, Section 4980.37 (a)(4).

Why Must You Be Enrolled in PSY 662 – Clinical Practicum, to Have Your Experience Approved?

Students are legally defined as "Trainees" after completing 12 semester units in the M. A. program. Pepperdine does not sanction the gaining of clinical experience until students have enrolled in PSY 662 – Clinical Practicum. The MFT Committee believes that the most effective way to carry out the coordination and approval function mandated by state law is to use the Clinical Practicum class to monitor the clinical training experience of our students and to encourage their growth as therapists. The course structure also allows us to collect evaluations from supervisors, students and practicum instructors, the "regular progress reports" required by law.

Furthermore, there are several benefits to waiting to gain your hours until Practicum. 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 this course (see pg. 6 and pg. 31 for additional details on insurance.)

Does Pepperdine Actually Approve Hours?

By law, only the Board of Behavioral Sciences 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 summaries of experience. Schools attempt to ensure that their students' clinical sites will provide supervision and clinical experience that is consistent with statute and regulation.

Thus, Pepperdine approves each Trainee's clinical experience, not 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 MFT licensing requirements.

NOTE: For a detailed discussion of Practicum, please see pg. 35.

When to Take Practicum: It Depends

Students may receive conflicting advice about when to take Practicum—as soon as humanly possible or during their final three terms. Each plan has its relative merits. Students who first take all practicum prerequisites may start gaining hours sooner but they will probably have "leftover" academic classes. In addition, if they wish to keep working at their clinical sites, they must continue to meet with the Clinical Training staff to monitor their progress with written reports.

On the other hand, students who wait until the last year of their program to take Practicum may be better prepared academically but they won't get exposure to clinical issues as soon. Given these considerations, we recommend that students take practicum during their final three terms. ***One very important consideration is that when beginning your practicum, you may only enroll in your first term of Practicum during the Fall or Spring semester. New Practicum students cannot begin in Summer Session I (Clinical Practicum, PSY 662, is not offered in Summer Session II).*** Consult your CT Staff for additional details.

Practicum Prerequisites

We also want to give our students a head start when they go out into the field. Prerequisite courses for Practicum help make the first clinical experience a positive one. From most reports, Pepperdine MFT Trainees have a very good reputation among the training sites and are academically well prepared when they go out into the field. Competence at the student level is important, not only to the maintenance of good professional relationships with our supervisors and agency directors, but also to client welfare.

Before taking Practicum, students must have completed the following prerequisite courses in assessment, diagnosis, case management, law and ethics, interpersonal

communication and therapy with individuals, couples and families that provide the foundation for competent practice as a training therapist:

PSY 600	**(Clinical Management of Psychopathology)**
PSY 606	**(Interpersonal Skills and Group Therapy)**
PSY 612	**(Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy)**
PSY 623	**(Professional Ethics and the Law)**
PSY 637	**(Techniques of Counseling and Psychotherapy)**
PSY 639	**(Marriage and Family Therapy I)**

Where to Find a Clinical Practicum Site

To gain countable hours, students must be approved work in sites that have been screened by the MFT Clinical Training staff. Sites where students have earned MFT Trainee hours are listed in the **Practicum Site Directory**, a resource file that describes well over 190 sites throughout Pepperdine's four campuses – WLA, IGC, EGC and Malibu. Sites listed in the Practicum Site Directory have been visited by phone and/or in person by the Clinical Training staff who have judged that the agency and its supervisors provide an experience consistent with Pepperdine's philosophy of training, BBS law, and level of student skills.

THE PRACTICUM SITE DIRECTORY

For a clear explanation of what the Office of MACLP Clinical Training and Professional Development can do for you, visit:
http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/academics/psychology/mftpracticum/. You will find links to the required Clinical Practicum paperwork and the Practicum Site Directory, as well as a list of important meetings that you will need to attend throughout the program.

The Practicum Site Directory is organized according to geographical area. Listings include information about the structure of the agency, the services provided, the types of clients seen and the types and number of professionals on staff. There is information on supervision (individual and/or group) and the method(s) used to monitor trainee performance. The reader may find information on the level of experience expected of trainees, the number of hours required, the days/nights and times trainees must be present and the duration of the training experience. The agency's application process and remuneration (if any) are described.

The Directory is regularly updated as we receive new information regarding the various agencies and supervisors. The Practicum site Directory is available online and hard copies are available at your MACLP Clinical Training Office. You may access it from the comforts of your own home and begin reviewing the settings early in the program to become familiar with what each site offers. Please note that from time to time we remove or add site information – So, review this information frequently for the most current information about practicum sites

Students are eligible for Practicum credit and *Pepperdine* approval of hours when they are working in sites that have been evaluated and approved by the Clinical Training staff. It is possible to gain hours in a setting that is <u>not</u> listed in the Practicum Directory, but the site must first be approved.

"Un-approved" Sites — How To Get Them Approved

To gain hours at an agency that is not listed in the Practicum Site Directory, you will first need to get it "approved". Before going through the time and trouble to fill out the necessary forms, interview at the site or accept a position, *please discuss the potential site with the Clinical Training staff!* There may be a good reason why the site does not appear in the FPD. It may have never been included because of some aspect of the site that would make it ineligible for our trainees.

If there are no problems with the potential site that we are aware of, you will be given the following forms with instructions:

- **"Petition to Gain Approval for a Site"**
- **"Checklist for an Appropriate Practicum Setting"**
- **"Agency Information Sheet"**

To allow for adequate time to review the site, return the completed forms to your CT staff no later than **2- 4 weeks** before the start of the term in which you wish to enroll in practicum. The process of approving a site may take several weeks and does not guarantee that the site will be approved. Hours worked at a non-approved site will not count toward BBS requirements, nor will they fulfill the requirement for Practicum course credit.

Out-Of-State Sites

To date, our attempts to accommodate students who have moved out of state <u>before</u> finishing their degrees have largely failed. The problem is finding a practicum course. The BBS will evaluate hours earned out of state, but it has been difficult for students to find approved sites as well as supervisors who would agree to supervise them and sign the required paperwork for both California and Pepperdine. To date, however, it has been impossible to find a university that would allow an out-of-state student to enroll in a practicum class. Unless you are willing to commute to Pepperdine from another state, it's probably wiser to wait until you have completed your practicum requirement to relocate.

How to Use The Written Agreement

To comply with the BBS requirement for a written agreement between the school and the site, Pepperdine uses a document called the **"4-Way Agreement."** In it, the criteria 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 student/Trainee,
(2) The supervisor(s),
(3) The representative of the clinical site (frequently the agency director), and
(4) The Pepperdine Clinical Training staff for the site.

The Clinical Training staff will give you a "4-Way Agreement" and explain its use during the information meeting that is held each semester called "Preparing for Practicum." Because we want to be sure that your clinical experience meets BBS specifications, *your Clinical Training staff (Kathleen Wenger, Rebecca Reed, or Carla Haberman) must sign your "4-Way Agreement" before your hours will count.*

HOW TO LOCATE AN APPROPRIATE PRACTICUM SITE

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

STEP 1: Learn about the process

- Begin your search for a site *before* enrolling in PSY 662, Clinical Practicum by attending one of the "Preparing for Practicum" information meetings that are held each term. ***(Remember that all prerequisites must be completed before enrolling in PSY 662).***

- **The "Preparing for Practicum" information meeting** is given mid-term by the Clinical Training staff at your educational center. This meeting is an exceptional opportunity to discover the intricacies and details about gaining clinical hours, including such topics as: 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. Many students have benefited from attending this meeting at the beginning of the MACLP Program, instead of waiting until the last minute to understand all of the preparations and requirements for Clinical Practicum. ***Please note that we do not "place" you at a clinical site, rather, as a graduate student, you are expected to research the information about clinical settings and consider which sites may be the "best fit" for your clinical interests.***

  The CT staff will discuss important steps you should take to secure your practicum site and will answer questions on meeting practicum and BBS requirements. At this event, you will receive up-to-date BBS forms that you will need during your practicum experience. You will be using these forms to document your 3,000 hours, so make multiple copies.

  > Students who attend the **"Preparing for Practicum"** meeting get a head start on their practicum and licensing requirements. Watch for announcements of this meeting on PepExpress, in classes, on bulletin boards, in confirmation to register packets and via your Pepperdine email. Also attend the guest speaker events, Practicum Fairs, Practicum Information Meetings, Alumni Panels and Clinical Training Orientations as offered. These events are useful to identify clinical training interest areas and available agencies. Network with your fellow students, as they are often the best sources of feedback on the Clinical Practicum settings.

STEP 2: Select and gather data on practicum sites.

- Look through the Practicum Site Directory at any Pepperdine GSEP graduate campus and select at least five (5) potential sites. It is often useful to hear what other students have said about a particular site. Drawing from our database of site-specific evaluative comments made by Pepperdine Trainees over the years, we can suggest placements that are a good match for your personal training needs. For example, sites that offer considerable structure may be ideal for beginning Trainees, while sites that tend to "turn Trainees loose" may be better for Trainees in their third term of practicum. (Keep in mind, however, that the majority of students stay at the same site throughout their Traineeship.)

- To review our database of strengths and weaknesses of various training sites, make an appointment with Kathleen, Rebecca, or Carla depending on the geographical area in which the sites are located. Find out how students have reviewed the sites that interest you, as well as hear the recommendations of the CT staff for your practicum experience.

- Many sites have a web page, so you can learn more about a site by reviewing the internet information.

CAUTION: If you are interested in a particular site but don't see it listed in the directory, don't assume that we don't know about it and go for an interview! Our CT staff are aware of just about every site in the greater Southern California area. ***Before contacting a site that is not listed in the Practicum Site Directory, please consult the CT staff 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.

STEP 3: 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, please contact our Psychology Career Services Department at (310) 568-5780 or psycareer@pepperdine.edu. As a person entering the mental health field, your background should indicate interpersonal skills and potential strengths as a therapist. **(On to the next page for a "sample" outline of a resume…)**

NAME
ADDRESS, CITY/STATE
PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL ADDRESS

CAREER PROFILE: One sentence stating your skills and what you want. Start with attributes that describe your skills, such as the ability to multitask and/or experience working with a diverse population.
Example: "Experienced professional with strong communication skills and an understanding *of* conflict resolution seeks to obtain supervised experience in marriage and family therapy that will meet BBS requirements for MFT licensure".

EDUCATION: List educational degrees in reverse chronological order, most recent first. Write out degree. Example:
"Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education & Psychology, Los Angeles, CA.
Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an Emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy, Anticipated date of graduation (month/year).
Any University, Los Angeles, CA
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, (date is optional – month/year)
Graduated with Honors"

LANGUAGE: If bilingual…also include Sign-Language (if applicable)

EXPERIENCE: (can be full-time, part-time, research, or volunteer)…include title, agency name, city/state and dates of employment (month/year)
Example:
"MFT Trainee
ABC Agency, Los Angeles, CA"

- Use bullets to describe your job responsibilities
- Write each in the "**Action+Results" format** (for description, see below)
- Write current position in present tense and former positions in past tense
- Under recent or related position, list 4-5 bullets. Use 2-3 bullets for older jobs and jobs not related to the position you are seeking
- Be concise and to the point
- Write a paraphrase; do not end each with a period.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:
Related to job you are seeking (such as CAMFT or Psi Chi)

SKILLS:
Computer skills or other special skills (such as CPR or PART Trained)

References available upon request
(Optional, list references on a separate sheet of paper)

"Action+Results" format

- Begin with an action verb to describe the type of work you did. Include a word that describes the results or intended results of your work.
  Example:
  "Coach parents on discipline techniques, communication, and boundary setting to foster responsibility in home, academic and social settings"
- Sample "results" words – "resulting in", "to foster", "in order to…", "to ensure"

- “Action” words – (go to the Career Services website: http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/careerservices/psychology/)

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

STEP 4: 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 employer know specifically for which job/traineeship you are applying. Also, it is helpful to the employer if you reveal how you heard about this traineeship.
- In the second paragraph, you should detail your skills, qualifications and responsibilities that are directly related to the MFT traineeship you are seeking. In a modest, yet assertive way, you may continue to point out the reasons why you are qualified for this agency’s traineeship.
- 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 5: 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 6: Follow-up with your contacts.

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

STEP 7: 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.

Look in the Practicum Site Directory 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 your knowledge of its requirements for Trainees, 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 CT staff about agency interviews: we have excellent resource material and can share with you our experiences—for example, some agencies screen their applicants more intensely than others. 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 may obtain their own professional liability policies. An application for such coverage can be obtained from the CT staff. CAMFT's publication, *"The Therapist,"* also contains advertisements for insurance. 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 MACLP students who are formally enrolled in the practicum course. The coverage requires membership in either CAMFT or AAMFT and costs as low as $15.00 a year for a one- million-dollar policy.

- Inquire about your supervisor's **experience** and **approach to supervision.**

  For a fascinating and informative article on the topic of trainee site interviews, the reader is urged to read "MFT Traineeship: The Secrets of Success," an interview of Dr. Robert Hohenstein by Greg VanArsdall in the Clinical Training Department's *Focus on Clinical Training*, July, 1998, Volume 1, Number 1 and "Interview Questions for an Internship" by Laurel J. Cox. Reprints of these articles are available from your CT staff. For additional information about supervisors and supervision, please see page 45 of this handbook.

- Inquire about your supervisor's **mandated training in supervision**. (See discussion, page 47.)

STEP 8: Considerations in deciding to work at a site.

By offering a large number of sites, we hope to provide a variety of experiences for our students. But each site is different in its ability to match your interests and needs. If you get an offer from a site, you might want to consider these factors in your decision to accept:

- **Don't Limit Your Experience Too Much.** Ideally, the 3,000 hours of pre-licensed experience should contain both breadth and depth. Even if you plan to specialize, learning to work with a variety of clients and problems and using a variety of therapeutic modalities may enhance your versatility and your therapeutic effectiveness. If your caseload is restricted by the specificity of one site, we encourage you to find additional sites before taking the license exam, as long as you are not breaking any contractual agreements by so doing.

One of the more common reasons why people may not do well on the MFT Clinical Written Vignette Exam is that their pre-licensed clinical experience has been too narrowly focused. The MFT license is a generalist license, and the BBS needs to know that your knowledge, skills and abilities apply to a general clinical population, not just to people with one particular clinical problem or syndrome.

- **Don't Do Therapy in the Dark.** Another thing to consider prior to accepting a position is whether or not you will have access to enough information about your clients. In the Practicum course, students are encouraged to conceptualize clients systemically, considering biological psychological, relationship, social, cultural and other systems in which clients are living and which give meaning to their experience. Clearly, this contextual information is relevant even for clients who present individually.

  Gathering this information may be a difficult task if your contact with a client's family is either limited or forbidden or occurs outside the therapeutic context. Assessing relationships may be difficult or impossible if you are not allowed to interview the couple or family and observe their interaction. Before you agree to work at a site, find out if you will have the freedom and flexibility to work with the members of the relationship conjointly. Can you see children and parents together? Can you see spouses or domestic partners together? And how about adults— can you invite their families to therapy?

- **And You Gotta Do <u>Therapy</u>.** Please keep in mind that the hours countable as "counseling performed by you" refers to the use of applied psychotherapeutic techniques to achieve therapeutic goals. A site that only allows you to do intakes, for example, would not be an appropriate practicum site for Practicum. (Please let us know if this is all that you are being offered from a prospective site.)

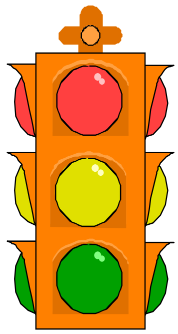
- **With Family Members in the Same Room.** Before you apply for the license exam, you will need a minimum of 500 hours counseling couples, families, and children. These hours can be gained either as a trainee or intern or both. A Trainee who works at an agency that restricts the practice of Trainees to individuals (adults or children) would need an internship that would *guarantee* work with couples and families. To keep your options open, discuss whether or not you can treat couples, families, and children at your potential site.

- **Countertransference?** Please also consider the population with whom you would be working and its problems. A therapist's life experiences can greatly influence her or his ability to be objective with certain clients. Students may find themselves drawn to clients who present similar problems to those of their parents or families of origin. However, unless they have also had the opportunity to resolve their family of origin issues, students may find it difficult to view these clients impartially.

  What to do? Be very honest with yourself about your motivation for selecting a particular site and clientele. Be honest with your potential supervisor about your motivation. Most importantly, consider entering therapy yourself, so that you can use the "training" you received growing up in your family of origin to *help*, rather than hinder your abilities as a therapist.

STEP 9. You did it!

As soon as you have secured a placement, take all of the necessary documents to Kathleen Wenger, Rebecca Reed, or Carla Haberman for signature. You may now begin to earn hours toward licensure.



PROBLEMS AT THE SITE?

Note: Most students will sail through their practicum sequence with relatively few, if any, problems. The selection below is provided FYI, in the unlikely event that problems do arise.

Pepperdine's initial approval of your clinical practicum site is based on both verbal and written information provided to us by the site's director and/or the prospective supervisor(s) during the site screening process. The continuing approval students at practicum sites is largely based on the end-of-term site evaluations that we receive from students at the sites, as well as our own ongoing assessment.

Although we do our best to select sites that meet BBS and Pepperdine requirements, problems occasionally occur. Changes at the site, such as changes in management, loss of operating license, changes in supervisors, supervision practices, clients and operating policies may affect either the quality of training or the legality of trainee hours. Although we may notice problems ourselves, we often rely upon student feedback to identify problematic situations.

If you have concerns about your placement, supervisor or site, please let us know sooner rather than later. If we can get involved early on, the chances of correcting the situation are usually much better. Please discuss the situation with your practicum instructor and with your CT staff.

Please note that you may not terminate at a site without seeking consultation with your PSY662 – Clinical Practicum instructor and the Clinical Training staff. You must have a Supervisor's Evaluation completed by your clinical supervisor, whenever you terminate at a practicum site. <u>If you are asked to leave a site or choose to leave a site, you cannot begin earning hours at another site until you have received approval from your Training Clinical Coordinator.</u> You must also be mindful of ethical considerations to ensure that there are no issues of client abandonment.

Procedure for Investigating Problem Sites

We attempt to conduct a fair and evenhanded inquiry into the situation, making a preliminary assessment of its nature and severity from the trainee(s) involved. Depending upon the circumstances, the Clinical Training staff may recommend one of the following actions:

1. If the problem appears to be one of a minor misunderstanding or miscommunication between the Trainee and the supervisor or site director, we may encourage the Trainee to go to the person(s) in question and attempt to resolve the problem *without* the direct intervention of the Practicum Instructor. If requested, we can help the Trainee identify relevant interpersonal issues and provide coaching on how to approach the situation. This procedure can be useful for enhancing students' sense of personal competence and often resolves the problem.

2. If the above procedure fails, or if the problem appears to be one that is seriously questionable in terms of legal or ethical practice, we may contact the supervisor or site director ourselves with the assistance of the student, who will provide data on the situation. This is sometimes a deterrent to students, since they believe that if they remain anonymous, the problem will be handled and they won't need to get involved. However, it is very difficult to promise anonymity to students—even if we don't mention names, supervisors usually can figure out which trainee raised the concern. More important, anonymous complaints tend to be disrespectful to all parties concerned. We will support Trainees who have legitimate complaints but in the spirit of fairness, will seek to determine the facts on all sides before taking action, and will share those facts with those who need to know.

"Losing Hours": The Trainee's Nightmare

Although schools approve students at practicum sites, the persons legally responsible for the practice of pre-licensed therapists are the *supervisors*. Under penalty of perjury, supervisors attest that they are both suitable to supervise MFT Trainees and that they will ensure that their Trainees practice within the law. The supervisor is responsible for making sure all of the conditions are met that would allow the Trainee's hours to be approved by the Board.

Supervisors now are required to take training in their legal and ethical responsibilities to Trainees and Interns. Even so, we want to empower our students to take responsibility for becoming informed about the elements of both the site and their supervisors that are critical to legal practice and to the acceptability of hours by the Board. These elements are spelled out in considerable detail in the "4-Way Agreement" that we use to coordinate students' clinical experience.

Given the large number of students that have gained clinical experience in training sites over the years, we have had surprisingly few situations in which supervisors or agency directors have not been in compliance with the law and Trainee hours have been lost. We do our best to make sure that all aspects of the practicum site are appropriate for our students.

LEGAL NOTICE:

Be aware that if Pepperdine, 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, Pepperdine 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 Clinical Practicum instructor and/or the Clinical Training staff if you have any questions about your site, your supervision, or issues regarding the earning of hours.

PSY 662 – CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Legal Definition of Practicum

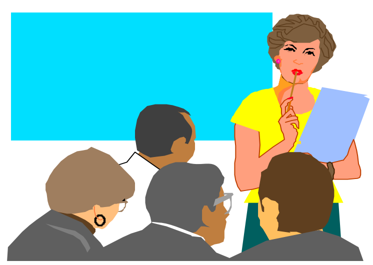
The scope of experience allowed by the board is quite broad. According to Section 4980.40 (4)(b)(1) of Chapter 13 of the Business and Professions Code, the master's degree must contain at least 6 semester units of "supervised practicum in applied psychotherapeutic techniques, assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, 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 [B & P Code, Section 4980.37 (a)(7)]." Educational institutions are encouraged to design practica that will "include marriage and family therapy experience in low-income and multicultural mental health settings [B & P Code, Section 4980.37 (b)]." 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 Pepperdine?

First and foremost**, *Practicum is a COURSE* – PSY 662**. It has unit value (2 units per course taken over three terms), an instructor, required attendance, requirements for number of hours worked at the practicum site, in-class activities and "homework" (seeing clients). Students may have assigned and/or recommended readings and present their cases orally in class. Some instructors require written reports and many require client genograms. Students are evaluated both by their supervisors and their practicum instructors.



Students receive *dual* credit for their practicum activities: academic and experiential. The Practicum courses count for 6 of the total units needed for the MACLP degree; the hours earned in sites count toward both Practicum credit and the 3,000 hours needed for the license. (See discussion of how many hours will count, to follow.)

Practicum Course Objectives

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 present cases, share assessment and treatment strategies, and discuss problems and issues relevant to case management.
In their presentation of cases, students are expected to examine and evaluate clients using models of family (systems) therapy, working conjointly with couples and family members together, where possible. When it is not possible or advisable to treat members of the relationship together, the instructor assists students in conceptualizing the problems from both individual and relational points of view. 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.

The Board of Behavioral Sciences [B & P Code, Section 4980.37 (a)(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 three-term Practicum course sequence at Pepperdine gives us the opportunity to assist students in the development of these personal qualities through feedback from fieldwork supervisors, practicum instructors, the Clinical Training staff, and the MFT faculty.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICUM COURSE CREDIT

Overview of Requirements for Hours

- When it is time to apply for the 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 and personal psychotherapy.

- For **Practicum course credit at Pepperdine**, we will evaluate only HOURS of DIRECT CLIENT CONTACT and WEEKS OF SUPERVISION.

- HOURS of DIRECT CLIENT CONTACT: The <u>total</u> hours of **direct client contact** required for 6 units of practicum is **150**. These hours must be supervised during the week they are gained and must average to the 5:1 ratio over the duration of the trainee's site.

- MINIMUM CLIENT CONTACT PER COURSE: Students need cases to present. The <u>minimum</u> number of client contact hours for both the Fall and Spring terms is **30**; the <u>minimum</u> number for the Summer term is **14**. Both minimums average out to *2 client contact hours per week*.

- FLEXIBLE HOURS: As long as 150 hours are gained by the end of the three practicum courses, and as long as the course minimums for client contact and supervision are met, students may accumulate hours in a flexible pattern that suits both their experience and the specifics of their sites. For example, client contact hours may be earned in roughly equal installments, such as **50-50-50**, or they may be gained in a **60-60-30** split. (This latter distribution might better fit the schedules of students in school settings.) A **30-90-30** division might be helpful, allowing trainees to work up to a full caseload and to "wind down" as they leave a site. These are examples: our intent is to provide a better fit between academic requirements and the facts of scheduling clients in the real world. (Be sure to have also the *supervision* hours that you need in order to count those 150 hours!)

- WEEKS OF SUPERVISION: The <u>minimum</u> number of weeks of supervision is **10** weeks for the Fall and Spring semesters and **5** weeks for the Summer Session. These new limits allow for a variety of nonscheduled events involving supervisor vacations, client no-shows, illnesses, and so forth. (Even though these are fairly relaxed standards, please recall that no hours will count during any week in which there was no supervision.)

Grades for Practicum

Practicum is graded on a "Credit/No Credit" basis.

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

The student:

- attended class regularly and to the standards of the instructor,
- performed in class satisfactorily (for example: made accurate and effective case presentations, contributed to discussions, showed knowledge and understanding of MFT theory and techniques, demonstrated critical thinking, was flexible and open to instructor feedback, showed knowledge of clinical issues, interacted appropriately with peers),
- earned the minimum number of direct client contact hours for the term (30/14)
- received the minimum number of weeks of supervision for the term (10/5)
- received a satisfactory evaluation from the clinical supervisor,
- received a satisfactory evaluation from the Practicum instructor,
- 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 term (once during the summer term).*

"No Credit" may be given if **ANY** of the following conditions occur.

The student:

- did not file an approved "4-Way Agreement" with the Clinical Training staff.
- failed to comply with the terms of the "4-Way Agreement."
- attended class sporadically with unexplained or unexcused absences.
- performed in class poorly or did not meet instructor standards for adequate performance.
- saw no clients.
- received an unsatisfactory evaluation from the clinical supervisor.
- received an unsatisfactory evaluation from the Practicum instructor.
- 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 "In-Progress" grade.

"In Progress" Grade in Practicum:

A grade of **"In Progress" (IP)** is given to a student who successfully meets all of the requirements for credit but does not have enough hours of direct client contact, enough weeks of supervision or direct observations for credit at the end of the term. IP's are also given to students who have gained enough hours but who fail to turn in the required documentation (Weekly Logs, Supervisor and Student Evaluations) by the last session of class. In either of these circumstances, the student must discuss plans for submitting paperwork or making up missing hours with both the Practicum instructor and the Clinical Training staff. **Otherwise, a student is at-risk for receiving a "No-Credit" grade for that semester.** *Just a reminder that a grade of "IP" is not a permanent "stain" on your record.*

Were you at your site faithfully every week but still didn't get enough hours?

MAKING UP HOURS

The student who does not have enough direct client contact or weeks of supervision may use those gained during breaks in the academic schedule to count for the previous term's IP. If there is not sufficient time during the break to clear the IP, the student applies the clinical experience of the next Practicum course toward the IP grade. If, after enrolling in Practicum for three terms the student lacks hours toward the 150 client contact requirement to graduate, the degree will be posted at the end of the following semester, once the student shows completion of the hours.

Earning Hours During Academic Breaks:

Once a student has enrolled in and started Practicum, hours earned during semester and summer breaks will count toward the 150-hour Practicum requirement, but minimum client contact hours are still required for each Practicum course. *The student should check the box on the Weekly Logs that says "Trainee in Practicum." These hours must be earned during breaks between Practicum courses.*

Note: If you wish to count your hours in the Summer Session, you must enroll in Summer Session I Practicum to keep your status as a "Trainee in Practicum" during Summer Session II.

Hours Earned Before Enrolling in Practicum

In certain circumstances, for example, an agency that wants to train its Trainees before allowing them to see clients, students may be allowed to work at agencies **before the actual start of their first Practicum class**. To count these hours, the "4-Way Agreement" must be signed. *The student should check the box on the Weekly Logs that says "Trainee." These hours do NOT count toward the 150 hours of direct client contact required for Practicum credit, but MAY be submitted toward the 3,000 total hours required for the license.*

Planning to Graduate? A Word of Caution

Students in their final term of the program should be aware that an Incomplete ("I" or "IP") received in **any** course will not be changed on transcript until the end of the following term, even if a grade change has been submitted early in the term. This delay in the posting of the degree may *delay the student's application for the MFT Intern registration number*. (See page 51.) If this situation applies to you, consult your CT staff.

Policy on Summer Sessions

In Fall, 2001, changeovers to a University-wide academic calendar have created a schedule of course offerings and a policy for taking PSY 662/Clinical Practicum during the Summer Sessions. Due to the high probability that most students would not be able to gain enough hours toward the required 150 during two 7-week sessions (or 14 weeks), it was decided that ***practicum students may enroll in only one Summer Session which is offered during Summer Session I. Only second or third term practicum students may enroll in Practicum during the Summer Session.***

HELPFUL HINTS

Terminology: What's in a Name?

The term "practicum" is used in several ways. One usage refers to the *course* or courses taken by the MACLP students, as in "I'm in my second term of practicum." Another use refers to the *experience* gained, as in "How many practicum hours do I need to get credit for the course?" Still another use refers to the *site* itself, as in, "I'm doing my practicum at the Community Counseling Clinic at the graduate campus in Irvine. How about you?" Each of these uses is acceptable.

A student will sometimes refer to his or her practicum experience as an "Internship," which legally, it is not. Some agencies, however, may refer to Trainees as Interns and to their work there as internships. Don't worry about it – you know who you are! Students are "Trainees" while in school; they become Interns after graduation, but only if they register with the BBS. (See discussion, page 51.)

Consecutive Terms

We recommend that you gain your practicum hours over three consecutive terms. If this is not possible, you may skip a term of PSY 662/Clinical Practicum and resume the following term, as long as all other requirements are met and it is acceptable with the agency. Recall that students sign an agreement that delineates the time commitment of the student to the agency. Breaking this commitment should only be done for serious reasons. It is imperative that you consult your CT staff if you want to skip a term of school.

Sequential Terms

Practicum courses are to be taken one at a time, in sequence, allowing for a learning experience of nine months to a year. They may not be taken simultaneously.

Number of Sites

The majority of our Clinical Practicum students gain all their required experience at one practicum site. However, some students gain hours at additional sites. *Remember that you cannot count more than 750 hours of client contact and supervision as an MFT Trainee*. Consult your CT staff for recommendations. ***However, to change practicum sites, you must first gain approval of the Clinical Training Coordinator at your campus.***

How Many Practicum Instructors to Take?

We strongly encourage a varied Practicum course experience. What occurs in class is more or less standardized, but each instructor offers something unique to the process. To take advantage of our faculty's diversity, consider taking at least two different instructors for your three courses.

Practicum and Financial Aid

Financial Aid views Practicum as an Internship, a special status in the academic program. Students whose only course is a 2-unit practicum are therefore considered to be half-time and may continue to defer payment on student loans and remain eligible for certain types of financial support.

Reminder—Practicum Requires Two Activities

To get credit for the Practicum course, students must both attend class for the entire length of the course AND must work concurrently at an approved clinical site, doing psychotherapy under supervision. During the period of time that the student is enrolled in PSY 662, *class attendance without client hours will not earn Practicum credit, nor will client hours without class attendance.*

Working at a Site After Completing 6 Units

Some students have successfully completed 6 units of practicum and wish to continue working at their approved clinical sites while they take the final courses needed for the degree. These students need to keep in touch with the CT staff for oversight of their practicum experience. If this applies to you, consult your CT staff for details. A **4-Way Agreement** is still necessary, as is the written feedback to the school.

Concerns? See your Clinical Practicum Instructor First

Your faculty instructor has the responsibility to monitor the academic course in which you are enrolled. For Clinical Practicum, this includes not only case conceptualization and training but also those elements of the practicum experience that may be problematic or potentially so. If you think that you may not earn enough hours or if you have any practicum-related concerns regarding your supervisor, site, or other training matters, *please consult your Clinical Practicum instructor as soon as possible.* If you need further assistance, your instructor will refer you to the CT staff. Please don't wait for problems to get out of hand, especially those that may involve ethical or legal issues – consult your instructor, ASAP

SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS FOR PRACTICUM

Take ALL prerequisites for PSY 662, Clinical Practicum:

_____ PSY 600 (Clinical Management of Psychopathology),
_____ PSY 606 (Interpersonal Skills and Group Therapy)
_____ PSY 612 (Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy),
_____ PSY 623 (Professional Ethics and the Law),
_____ PSY 637 (Techniques of Counseling and Psychotherapy)
_____ PSY 639 (Marriage and Family Therapy I)

_____ 1. Attend the "Preparing for Practicum" meeting at your center.

_____ 2. Examine the MFT Agency Information online (http://pegasus.pepperdine.edu/fmi/xsl/mftfpwla)

_____ 3. **Consult your Clinical Training staff for suggestions about** the match between your interests and abilities and the training experience offered by the site you have selected.

_____ 4. Prepare your résumé (including cover letter) for interviews.

_____ 5. Telephone the contact person at each site and FAX/send your résumé.

_____ 6. Be diligent about follow-through after sending your résumé.

_____ 7. Be prepared for interviews by knowing the site information and reviewing

_____ 8. Review the considerations listed on pp. 31-32 in agreeing to work at a site.

_____ 9. Plan to take THREE FULL TERMS of Practicum:

_____ Term #1: From____/___/________________ to ______/___/____
_____ Term #2: From____/___/________________ to ______/___/____
_____ Term #3: From____/___/________________ to ______/___/____

Notes:

FORMS, FORMS, FORMS!

Overview

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 instructor to be subsequently evaluated by and filed with the Clinical Training staff. The grade for the Practicum course is based, in part, upon the data contained on these forms.

An application to join CAMFT can be found on their website: www.camft.org. BBS and Pepperdine forms are distributed at MFT program information meetings, in Practicum and other classes and by the CT staff. BBS and Practicum forms are also available from the Practicum Prep website (http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/academics/psychology/mftpracticum/).

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

- BBS Responsibility Statement for Supervisor of an MFT Trainee or Intern
- BBS Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience
- BBS Experience Verification
- BBS Intern Registration Application and Instructions
- BBS Program Certification and Instructions
- Pepperdine 4-Way Agreement
- Pepperdine Acknowledgment of BBS Requirements
- Pepperdine Practicum Evaluation Forms (Student, Supervisor, Practicum Instructor)

Pepperdine Forms Used in Practicum

Pepperdine is required by law to oversee the evaluation of students enrolled in Practicum and to "provide for regular progress reports and evaluations of the student's performance at the site [B & P Code, Section 4980.42 (b)]." Toward the end of each term, practicum students receive a **"Supervisor's Evaluation of MFT Student"** to give to their supervisors and an **"MFT Student's Evaluation of Supervision"** to fill out themselves.

The clinical supervisor's evaluation is discussed with the student and is signed by the student. The student's evaluation of supervision/site is reviewed by the practicum instructor and by the CT staff. The Practicum instructor provides feedback to each student regarding class performance.

All evaluations are to be returned to the Practicum instructor during the last week of classes. Evaluations of Trainees are kept in students' clinical training files. Evaluations of supervision and sites are kept in site files and are used to make recommendations about the appropriateness of practicum settings for potential trainees.

Reminder: Both evaluations of you and your supervisor are required for a grade. If they are not completed and turned in at the appropriate time, the student will receive an "In Progress" (IP) until the evaluations are received.

BBS FORMS: DESCRIPTION AND GUIDELINES FOR USE

Most of the forms that you'll need are available through Pepperdine. You may also download BBS forms from the BBS homepage. Or, you may request them in writing from the BBS, and include a self-addressed, UN-stamped, postcard with your request. The Board will use your postcard as a mailing label, so be sure that your name and address are legible.

> CAUTION: All forms that accompany applications (Intern Number and license exam) must have original signatures, **with no erasures or corrections. *This means no "whiteout."*** If you make a mistake on a form, you'll need to have your supervisor re-sign it. You are allowed to photocopy any form used by the Board. Make plenty of copies of blank forms.

The following forms are required to document your experience. They are distributed to students during the "Preparing for Practicum" meeting and are also available from the CT staff.

1. "Responsibility Statement for Supervisors of a Marriage and Family Therapist Trainee or Intern" also known as the **"Supervisor's Responsibility Statement"** (SRS):

According to the B & P Code Section 1833.1 (a), any person who supervises a Trainee or Intern is required to sign under penalty of perjury the "Responsibility Statement for Supervisors of a Marriage and Family Therapist Trainee or Intern," prior to the commencement of such supervision. This form specifies the conditions that must be met for a person to supervise according to regulation and for a Trainee's or Intern's hours to count.

<u>How to use the SRS form</u>: Ask your supervisor to sign the SRS *before* supervision begins. If you have more than one supervisor, each must sign a separate SRS. At this time, you can request that your supervisor read and sign the "4-Way Agreement". You may verify the status of his/her license through Online License Verification on the BBS homepage: www.bbsca.gov or by calling the BBS at (916) 574-8625.

Write down the supervisor's license expiration date in your appointment book so that you will have a reminder to check on whether or not the supervisor renewed her/his license. Do this for your own protection; any hours you earn under a supervisor whose license has expired will not count.

File a *copy* of the SRS for each of your supervisors with your Clinical Training staff. Send your *originals* to the BBS with your application for the license exam.

2. "Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience," a.k.a. the **"Weekly Log":**

You are required by law to maintain weekly logs of all experience gained toward licensure. Although some supervisors prefer to sign several weeks at a time, the regulations specify that the logs *"shall be signed by the supervisor on a weekly basis."* [B & P Code Section 1833 (e)]. This requirement is for your best interest. If a supervisor leaves or becomes otherwise unavailable, weekly signatures can prevent the loss of hard-earned hours. When you terminate at a clinical facility, change supervisors, or become an Intern at the same site, your *supervisor* will transfer the hours from your weekly logs to the "MFT Experience Verification" form (described in #3, below).

<u>How to use the Weekly Logs</u>: Enter into each week the number of hours - not minutes - of supervised experience that you gained at your clinical site. Also enter the number of hours of supervision: group and/or individual. After the first unit of supervision, partial hours may be entered. Client hours may be partial numbers. Total your hours each week. If you have questions,

please ask the Clinical Training staff. Ask your supervisor to sign your log each week. If you make a mistake, have your supervisor initial the correction.

At the final class session of each term, Practicum students bring to class their *original* weekly logs (or copies) with totals entered and supervisor signatures. Students show their logs to their instructors and to the Clinical Training staff person, who may attend the class. The logs are examined for clerical accuracy and to verify that the student has completed the required number of hours for practicum credit. Original weekly logs are not handed in but are kept by the student for the supervisor's use, as described next.

Retain all weekly logs until you are licensed. The BBS may require you to submit all or portions of your logs to verify hours of experience. *Do NOT send your weekly logs to the BBS unless requested to do so.*

3. "Marriage and Family Therapist Experience Verification," (or Experience Verification Form):

This form is used to document your supervised clinical experience. No corrections or erasures are allowed. You may need to make many photocopies of this form.

How to use the Experience Verification form: Bring this form and your Weekly Logs to your **supervisor** when you:

- get ready to leave a practicum site,
- change supervisors at the same site,
- graduate and change your status from Trainee to Intern (even if you stay at a site and have the same supervisor)

Your supervisor transfers the total hours in each category from the Weekly Logs to the Experience Verification form, completes the appropriate sections, and signs the form. Keep your signed verification forms until you have collected your 3,000 hours. When you apply for the license exam, submit all Experience Verifications to document your 3,000 hours.

Don't Forget This! Experience Verification forms call for certain documentation to be attached. The BBS tells us that this item is most often overlooked.

> For volunteer supervisors who are not employed by the agency at which you work, a **Volunteer Letter of Agreement** completed by the agency must be attached. (See sample in the Appendix.)

Workshops Attended are documented both on the Weekly Logs and the Experience Verification form. With the prior approval of your supervisor, you may count as Professional Enrichment a maximum of 250 hours for attendance at workshops, seminars, training sessions or conferences directly related to marriage, family and child counseling. To count these hours while you are in your master's program, you need to be enrolled in Practicum or have a 4-Way Agreement signed and on file at the CT Department.

How to count workshops: On your Weekly Logs, enter the number of hours spent at approved workshops on the date(s) you attended them.

Note: The Board does NOT require that you submit flyers, brochures or notices of workshops. Many students find it helpful to keep an ongoing list of all workshops they attend. This list then becomes a valuable attachment to the resume!

4. "Marriage and Family Therapist Psychotherapy Verification":

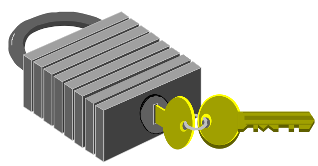
Although the Board no longer requires them, we recommend that you complete the two forms that are used to document psychotherapy received: a psychotherapy weekly log and a psychotherapy summary form, both signed by the treating therapist. Students may begin counting personal therapy received toward their 3,000 hours as soon as they enter the master's program—it is not necessary to be in practicum.

If you want to apply your personal therapy hours toward the 3,000 required for licensure, please be aware of the six-year rule (See page 50.) However, you don't have to submit these hours if you need a later start date, and you can always get more therapy closer to your exam filing date. The message: to count therapy hours, be sure that you have received them within 6 years of filing for the license exam.

<u>How to use the Psychotherapy Verification</u>: Keep track of your *ongoing* therapy hours on the weekly log, just as you would hours at a practicum site. When you have *finished* therapy or used your 100 hours allotted by the board, use the Psychotherapy Verification form. Complete "Section I" of this form and have your therapist complete "Section II."

The license application includes a section in which to record personal psychotherapy hours. You will need to include the name and license number of the therapist, together with the total hours of therapy received.

Your BBS Files: Who Maintains Them?



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". The documents that are regularly filed by the CTC include:

- Acknowledgements of BBS Requirements
- 4-Way Agreements
- *Photocopies* of Supervisor Responsibility Statements
- Supervisor, student, and instructor evaluations from the practicum course.

Practicum instructors verify hours differently: some request to see your original weekly logs while others require that you make copies to be submitted. ***<u>Do not leave original weekly logs with your practicum instructor or with CT staff.</u>***

SUPERVISION AND SUPERVISORS

Supervision Defined

Section 1833 (b) of the California Code of Regulations defines supervision as "ensuring that the extent, kind and quality of counseling performed is consistent with the education, training and experience of the person being supervised; reviewing client/patient records, monitoring and evaluating assessment, diagnosis and treatment decisions of the intern or trainee; monitoring and evaluating the ability of the intern or trainee to provide services at the site(s) where he or she will be practicing and to the particular clientele being served; and ensuring compliance with laws and regulations governing the practice of marriage and family therapy. Supervision shall include that amount of direct observation or review of audio or video tapes of therapy, as deemed appropriate by the supervisor."

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.
- 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" and is discussed in greater detail below.
- The ratio for MFT Interns is 10 client hours per 1 unit of supervision.
- 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).
- You must receive *individual*, face-to-face supervision for at least 52 weeks of your total pre-licensed experience. Weeks do not have to be consecutive.
- Your supervisor at the clinical placement, ***not*** the Pepperdine Clinical Training staff, 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!***

How to Calculate Supervision Ratios

Both supervised experience and supervision itself are recorded on the Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience, also known as the "Weekly Logs." However, when you document your hours to the BBS with your license application, you will submit your Experience Verification forms. These forms contain a summary of all hours recorded on the "Weekly Logs." On these forms, Trainees must be able to show at least one hour of individual supervision or two hours of group supervision for every **five** hours of direct client counseling.

The BBS calculates allowable hours of client contact based on the total supervision received *at each setting* in which the Trainee or Intern gained hours. The time period involved could be as little as one week or as long as six years. For Pepperdine's purposes, the ratio of client contact to supervision will be calculated after 6 units of practicum <u>and</u> when the student has earned a minimum of 150 hours of direct client contact with appropriate supervision. To determine your allowable client contact hours per setting, first look to see that you have at least the minimum "unit" of supervision each week (one hour of individual or two hours of group). Add any partial units of supervision to the sum. Then, multiply the number of "supervision units" by five. (Use

“10” when you’re an Intern). The product is the maximum number of client contact hours the BBS will count for that particular setting.

This system is not so bad, once you understand the principles involved. Study these examples to see how the ratios work in practice:

> **Example1**: If you have 6 weeks of individual supervision (one hour) and 9 weeks of group supervision (two hours), you have 15 “units” of supervision. Multiply 15 times 5 and you get how many hours of client contact the board will allow, in this case 75 hours. If you had recorded 80 hours of client contact on your experience verification form, the BBS would “lop off” 5 of those hours.
>
> **Example 2**: If you have 15 weeks of individual supervision (one hour) and 15 weeks of group supervision (2 hours), you have 30 units of supervision and are allowed to count up to 150 hours of client contact (30 X 5) for that setting. If you had recorded 120 hours, of client contact on your experience verification form, the BBS would count them all.
>
> **Example 3**: If you have 15 weeks of individual supervision and during the same period of time receive 30 hours of group supervision (2 hours/week), then you would have 30 units of supervision, but still only 15 weeks. This distinction is important on the Experience Verification form, where Item #11 asks how many weeks of supervised experience are being claimed.

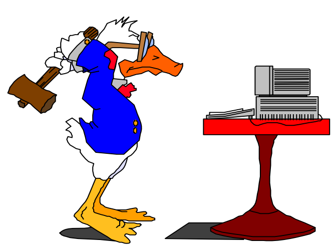
As you can see, the actual number of countable client hours is limited by the maximum number of allowable supervision hours. **A maximum of five (5) clock hours of supervision may be credited during any one week.** Note that this is not “units” of supervision, but actual time spent, in either individual or group supervision. If you need *more* than five hours of supervision to cover your hours of client contact using the 5:1 ratio, be sure to obtain and record it. Otherwise, both you and your supervisor will be acting in noncompliance with the regulations.

Calculating Partial Supervision Hours

As long as you have a minimum of one hour individual or two hours group supervision for each week that you are claiming experience, you may record additional hours or fractions of hours on your logs. These partial supervision units may be used toward supervision ratios.

> **Example 4**: If you have 15 weeks of individual supervision (one hour) and 15 weeks of group supervision (one hour) you have 15 + 7.5 supervision units (a one-hour group is only .5 supervision units). Similarly, if you have 15 weeks of individual supervision at one and a half hours each, you also have 15 + 7.5 supervision units. You can then multiply 22.5 times 5 for the number of allowable client contact hours. Clients are not divisible into fractions: 112.5 becomes 112. (Or 113, depending on the round-up rule used by the MFT evaluators.)

…Confused?



Don’t worry. These calculations become much clearer when you actually begin to record hours. In addition, your Clinical Training staff will be happy to assist you in the learning process.

Specific Requirements of Supervisors

The BBS requires that supervisors sign a **"Responsibility Statement for Supervisors of a Marriage and Family Therapist Trainee or Intern"** before beginning supervision with a Trainee or Intern. This form assures the Board, the school, and the Trainee/Intern that the supervisor meets certain standards of experience, knows, and will follow BBS laws and regulations.

For Trainee hours to count toward BBS and practicum requirements, each supervisor:

- must sign the "4-Way Agreement" and be approved to supervise the student by the CT staff.
- must be a California-licensed MFT, Clinical Psychologist, LCSW, or Board Certified Psychiatrist who has held a valid, *unexpired* license for at least two years (Note that Educational Psychologists do not qualify as clinical supervisors).

> *Make sure that the supervisor's license is current.* To verify that your MFT or LCSW supervisor's license is current, you may visit the BBS website at www.bbs.ca.gov. Click on "Online License Verification". For supervisors who are Psychologists, you may call (916) 263-2699 or check on the Board of Psychology website at www.psychboard.ca.gov/. Licensed Educational Psychologists (LEP's) do not qualify as supervisors for pre-licensed MFT's.

- may not be your spouse or relative by blood, marriage, domestic partnership or anyone with whom you have or had a personal or business relationship that undermines the authority or effectiveness of the supervisor.
- must keep informed of developments in marriage, family and child counseling, as well as the California laws and regulations governing Trainees and Interns.
- shall ensure that the extent, kind, and quality of counseling performed is consistent with the education, training and experience of the Intern or Trainee.
- shall evaluate the site where an Intern or Trainee will be gaining hours and shall make sure that the site provides experience that is within the scope of marriage and family therapy and in compliance with the specific regulations for supervision.
- must notify the Trainee immediately of any event that affects the supervisor's ability to supervise.
- must give at least one (1) week's written notice to an Intern or Trainee of the intent not to certify any further hours of experience.
- shall obtain from a future Trainee or Intern the name, address and phone number of the Trainee's/Intern's most recent supervisor and employer.
- Additional requirements may be found in Pepperdine's "4-Way Agreement" and in Section 1833.1 of the BBS regulations.

Supervisor Training

BBS-licensed supervisors (LMFT or LCSW) must complete 6 hours of training in supervision methods every two years. This training may be included in the 36 hours of continuing education required for license renewal every two years. Both AAMFT and CAMFT offer courses in supervision.

The regulations allow the supervisor to begin a supervisory relationship as long as the supervisor meets the training requirement within 60 days of starting supervision. Please ask

your supervisor if he or she has taken this mandated training or plans to take it in the time allotted—otherwise, your hours won't count.

“Interim” Supervisor

If your regular supervisor is on vacation, ill or cannot supervise you during a particular week, you will need a substitute in order to count your hours for that week. According to the BBS, if the interim supervisor is supervising *you less than 3 weeks*, this interim supervisor must:

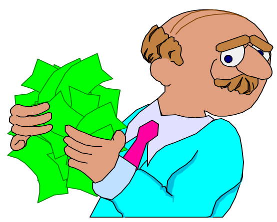
- sign a separate Supervisor Responsibility Statement prior to supervising you, and
- sign your weekly log..

If the interim supervisor is supervising you for *more than 3 weeks*, the interim supervisor must:

- sign a separate Supervisor Responsibility Statement prior to supervising you,
- sign a separate weekly log, and
- sign a separate Experience Verification form for the number of hours they supervised.

Paying for Supervision

BBS regulations apply to both Trainees and Interns—paying for supervision is allowable.



Interns who work in nonprofit settings follow the same recommendation as that described for Trainees. Interns working in private practice may pay for supervision, and may contribute to overhead, including, utilities, billing and receptionist. Be careful how the accounting is set up. You need a W-2 from your supervisor, who is your employer. Please be aware that if the accounting is set up so that you give your supervisor/ agency a percentage of your “fees,” this arrangement is actually illegal, since Interns cannot be paid directly for their services.

Problems with Sites/Supervisors

We do our best to cultivate sites and supervisors who are competent and effective and have found that problems with sites and supervisors are, fortunately, few and far between. Those that do occur can usually be resolved fairly easily.

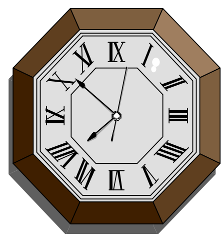
In general, unless it is one of those rare situations which require our immediate intervention, we encourage students to talk with their supervisors directly and honestly about problems and to find solutions together. Most complaints are remediable with open and respectful discussion.

Students may use the Practicum class to discuss the situation with the instructor and even role-play ways in which to approach the supervisor. Students with site or supervisor problems should also consult the CT staff, who may have background information on the site that would change the course of action required (for more information, see the section entitled, **Problems at the Site?**, pg. 33).

TIME LIMITS FOR GAINING HOURS

The "Six-Year" Rule

Two different regulations provide parameters for pre-licensed experience. The first ensures that applicants' hours are **recent** and the second limits the length of time one may work as an **Intern**. In actuality, the time period affected by these regulations may overlap.
1. Recent hours: Spreading supervised experience over too long a period of time dilutes the learning experience; with the exception of up to 500 hours gained during practicum, all hours must be gained during the six (6) years immediately preceding the date of filing for the license exam. When you send in your application for the license exam, send the BBS your Experience Verifications for **all 3,000 hours**. The MFT analyst counts back six years from the date your application is received and evaluates only those hours gained during that time, as well as the maximum of 500 practicum hours, which may be older than six years.



2. The "MFT Clock" starts whenever you log your first countable hour. This includes therapy received. However, you are not required to submit to the board all of the hours that you have actually logged. You can simply hold back your earliest hours, thus delaying the start of the "clock."

3. Intern Renewal: An Intern may renew five times. This gives Interns six (6) years in which to gain all of the hours they need for the exam, excluding up to 500 hours gained during Practicum. Interns who have not gained all of their hours (less practicum) within six years need to apply for a new registration number. Only hours beyond the "six year maximum" will be deducted. The Intern *may not* work in private practice and will need to qualify under the academic requirements in effect at the time. Clearly, the Board wants Interns to finish their hours within the allotted six years!

The story behind the time limits is this: as usual, some people were abusing the system. It came to the attention of the Board that Interns working in private practice would renew their registrations year after year, either never taking the exam or taking and failing it repeatedly. But that didn't matter: before supervision ratios, Interns could see up to 39 clients per week with only one hour of supervision and could renew their intern numbers indefinitely. It was a decent living for Interns and their unscrupulous supervisors, but it wasn't the intent of the law. This evasion of the license exam not only took away income for legitimately licensed practitioners, but it also put clients at risk.

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 that ocean cruise or to have a family, 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.

INTERN REGISTRATION NUMBER: HOW TO APPLY

To count hours gained after you finish your degree, you must register with the BBS as an MFT 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 (IR) number as long as you:

- Apply for an IR 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 IR 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 IR number.

Steps to Register as an Intern

1. Midway through your final term in school, you will receive a letter ("Dear Prospective Graduate") from the MFT Program Director to remind you to apply for an Intern Registration number. This letter will include an application packet, information about ordering an **official transcript** to include with your application and instructions for completing these forms.

2. Attend the **Intern Registration Meeting** held by the Clinical Training staff during the latter part of the school term. (Dates for these meetings may be found in flyers that are included in school registration packets and/or on the internet at: http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/academics/psychology/mftpracticum/InfoMtgFlier.pdf.

3. About 4 - 6 weeks *after* the end of the term, you will receive another letter ("Dear Recent Graduate") that includes your personalized **Program Certification**. This document is a required part of your Intern application and is completed by the MFT Program Director to verify to the BBS that you have fulfilled the academic requirements stipulated by law.

4. Complete the Intern application. Include a 2"x2" passport quality photo of yourself, the second copy of the Request for Live Scan Service Applicant Submission form, the fee and the two sealed envelopes (your official transcript and your Program Certification) and send them to the Board. For additional instructions, refer to "How to submit documents to the BBS", on the next page.

5. Be patient. The BBS takes from one to three months to issue an Intern number. As long as you have applied for your IR number within 90 days of your degree posting date and are working in a nonprofit or agency otherwise approvable for *Trainees*, these hours will count as post-degree hours and your supervision ratio is 10:1.

How to Submit Documents to the BBS:

The Board requires TWO applications—one for the Intern registration and the other for the licensing exam. Each of these applications requires additional paperwork, such as transcripts, program certifications, experience verification forms, documentation of sites and copies of forms related to tax status. We recommend that you:

- Always make photocopies of anything you send. Also, it's a good idea to make your application packet appear neat and professional: if possible, *type* the information required.
- Never send any back-up materials such as transcripts by themselves to the BBS.
- Whether you apply for an Intern Registration number or for the exam, send everything required in the same application packet. DO NOT submit materials under separate cover.
- Any document for which no application has been filed will be returned to the sender *after 90 days of its receipt.*

The Board requests that you use the following procedure to verify that your documents have been received:

Whenever you send documents to the BBS, include a self-addressed, stamped postcard with the names of the documents identified in writing. When BBS staff open the daily mail, they will note the documents received, date-stamp your postcard, and mail it back to you. This can be especially helpful if you are applying for a position (post degree) that requires you to be a registered Intern. You can show your potential employer that the Board has received your registration information and application by showing the postcard that the BBS has verified for you.

THE MFT LICENSE EXAM

Test Ethics Disclaimer: The following information has been drawn from general knowledge of licensing exams for psychotherapists, together with information about the MFT exam published by the BBS. Nothing written here has been gained from direct or indirect knowledge of any actual exam used for the MFT license.

Currently, the license exam has two written parts – Standard Written Exam and the Written Clinical Vignette Exam – and is designed to assess the candidate's readiness to practice *independently* as a marriage and family therapist. This means that on her/his own, the therapist can be expected to handle critical situations and emergencies – those "red flags" you learn about in your law and ethic class. It also means that the therapist can be relied upon to be generally helpful to clients, with sufficient skills in the diagnosis, assessment and treatment of problems.

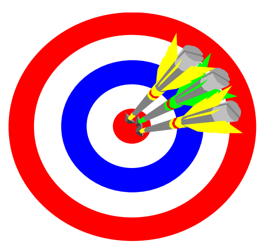
The content of the exams is based upon an occupational analysis that was conducted by the Board in 2002 (an occupational analysis is conducted every five years). In an occupational analysis, a survey is constructed and sent out to a random sample of those in the occupation. Items on the survey typically ask the respondent to indicate the frequency with which a certain activity is performed and to rate the activity's importance. (For example, a therapist may not need to arrange for the hospitalization of clients very often, but it is essential that she or he know how to do so.)

The survey that went out to the sample of licensed MFT's contained many items of a generic nature and a minority of items specific to marriage and family therapy. Not surprisingly, the picture that emerged was that MFT's have a generic practice and do not do much work with couples and families. (This is actually more true than not.) As a result, the newly-standardized and revised MFT license exam tests for a generic, master's-level psychotherapist, who may or may not necessarily use systemic models of conceptualizing and treating clients. However, since the regulations specify that the academic degree must contain at least 12 semester units in marriage and family therapy, one would expect that the Board would examine this area in some fashion.

The BBS will send you instructions when you apply for the exam. But, why wait??? Request it be sent to you now or download it from their website. In our opinion, those who use the BBS Handbook throughout their Internships will be better prepared for the exams!

The **Standard Written Exam** contains objective items that are drawn from both the content areas mandated by law and from the occupational analysis. Computerized written exams are given on a continuous basis throughout the year in five Southern California locations. Allow a maximum of 90 days for your application to be processed. Once you receive clearance from the BBS, you have a period of one year in which to take the written exam.

The **Written Clinical Vignette Exam** consists of a vignette and a series of multiple-choice questions related to the vignette. Each multiple-choice question requires the candidate to select the correct answer from among the four options provided. The possible answers are longer and more complex than a standard multiple-choice question and list a sequence of actions or describe a process of clinically applying knowledge. For more information and a sample vignette, go to the BBS website: www.bbs.ca.gov.



Apply for the exam after you have completed your academic requirements and your 3,000 hours of supervised experience. You do not need another Program Certification if one is already on file with the BBS (presumably with your Intern application), unless the form has been changed while you were an Intern. In this case, you will be instructed by the board to submit a new Program Certification. If this situation applies to you, call Rebecca Reed for assistance.

ACTION ITEMS

How to Determine When to Apply for the Exam

Use the following guide to determine when you should aim to have your hours completed and when you should file for the MFT licensing exam:

Write down here the date you logged your first hour of experience: _____/_____/_____.

If this experience was personal therapy, your 6-year clock has started, if you want it to.
Assuming you want to count these hours, you have six years from this date* to file for the exam.
(Note to myself: *I must file for the license exam by:* _____/_____/_____.)

If you need more time, you can start your clock when you see clients as an Intern, although you may lose those personal psychotherapy hours.

OR, if this experience was gained as part of your practicum experience, your 6-year clock has not yet started. Wait until after you graduate, then:

Write down the date you logged your first **Intern** hour: _____/_____/_____.
You have six years from this date* to file for the MFT licensing exam.
(Note to myself: *I must file for the licensing exam by:* _____/_____/_____.)

Write the date you received your Intern Registration Number: _____/_____/_____.

Mark off each time you have *renewed* your Intern Registration: 01 02 03 04 05

***Computerized written exams are given year-round. As soon as you have all of your 3,000 hours completed, you should file your exam application (see pg. 52).**

Dear Student:

We hope that this handbook has been helpful to you. If you have any comments or questions about the handbook or about the program, please let us know — we would enjoy hearing from you. Thank you very much for your attention and diligence in reading this document completely.

We wish you the best in both your academic program and in your professional career.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Wigg, Kathleen Wenger, Rebecca Reed and Carla Haberman
August, 2007

Appendix I

QUIZ: LMFT'S, LCSW'S, PSYCHOLOGISTS - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Sometimes students are curious about the differences between Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and Psychologists (licensed generically, not as Clinical Psychologists). Can you match the definition with the license? The following are from the California Business and Professions Code:

1. "The practice of _____________ is defined as a service in which a special knowledge of social resources, human capabilities, and the part that unconscious motivation plays in determining behavior, is directed at helping people to achieve more adequate, satisfying, and productive social adjustments.

The application of _________ principles and methods includes, but is not restricted to, counseling and using applied psychotherapy of a non-medical nature with individuals, families or groups; providing information and referral services; providing or arranging for the provision of social services; explaining or interpreting the psychosocial aspects in the situations of individuals, families, or groups; helping communities to organize, to provide, or to improve social or health services, or doing research related to ___________." **—Section 4996.9**

2. "The practice of __________ is defined as rendering or offering to render for a fee to individuals, groups, organizations or the public any __________ service involving the application of ___________ principles, methods, and procedures of understanding, predicting, and influencing behavior, such as the principles pertaining to learning, perception, motivation, emotions, and interpersonal relationships; and the methods and procedures of interviewing, counseling, psychotherapy, behavior modification and hypnosis; and of constructing, administering, and interpreting tests of mental abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, personality characteristics, emotions, and motivations.

The application of such principles and methods includes, but is not restricted to: diagnosis, prevention, treatment and amelioration of _______ problems and emotional and mental disorders of individuals and groups. Psychotherapy . . . means the use of ___________ methods in a professional relationship to assist a person or persons to acquire greater human effectiveness or to modify feelings, conditions, attitudes and behavior which are emotionally, intellectually, or socially ineffectual or maladjusted." **—Section 2903**

3. "The practice of ___________ shall mean that service performed with individuals, couples or groups wherein interpersonal relationships are examined for the purpose of achieving more adequate, satisfying, and productive marriage and family adjustments. This practice includes relationship and pre-marriage counseling.

The applications of_____________ principles and methods includes, but is not limited to, the use of applied psychotherapeutic techniques, to enable individuals to mature and grow within marriage and the family, and the provision of explanations and interpretations of the psychosexual and psychosocial aspects of relationships." **—Section 4980.02**

Answers, *end of Appendix II*

Appendix II

MFT'S IN CALIFORNIA: DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2006, CAMFT conducted a survey to compile demographic data on its licensed clinical members. Of approximately 4,030 surveys mailed, 912 surveys were returned, for a response rate of approximately 23%. The following generalizations can be made from their results:

The typical MFT in California:

- Practices in Los Angeles County (25%), Orange County (8%)
- Is female
- Is Caucasian
- Is self-employed in full time or part time practice
- Regularly participates in professional activities not related to counseling or therapy
- Is 55.6 years old
- Sees, on average, 15 patients each week
- Has a master's degree granted by an accredited school in marriage, family, and child counseling or marital and family therapy
- Has been licensed for 10 or more years
- Participates in slightly more than 22 hours of continuing education each year and
- Carries a professional liability insurance policy with coverage of at least $1,000,000 per occurrence
- Does some pro bono work
- Has an annual average income before taxes of $54,719 (18% earn more than $80,000)
- Uses a computer for some purposes
- Has access to email
- Uses a fax machine
- Has a usual and customary fee of approximately $96 per hour (in reality, however, collects $79 per hour)
- Provides patients with a written, informed consent/disclosure statement they are required to sign
- Has a 24-hour cancellation policy
- Retains patient records seven or more years beyond termination

In order of priority, MFT's work primarily with the following **client issues**:

> Depression; anxiety, self-esteem/personal growth, couples/relationship issues, stress/post-traumatic stress, life transitions, children/adolescents/parenting, families, child abuse, domestic violence, job satisfaction, affective disorders, personality disorders, suicide/crisis, gay/lesbian issues, cultural/social problems, serious emotional disturbances of children, aggression, catastrophic/chronic illness, and eating disorders.

In order of priority, **client referrals** come to MFT's primarily from the following sources:

> Patients/clients, colleagues, managed care companies, families/friends/neighbors, EAP's, psychiatrists, other physicians, schools, advertising/marketing, community agencies, courts/probation, government entities, attorneys, clergy and Victims of Crime Program.

*For further details, please see **THE THERAPIST**, July/August 2006.

Answers to definitions, Appendix I (in order of appearance):

1. *Clinical Social Worker*
2. *Psychologist*
3. *Marriage and Family Therapist*

Appendix III

SUMMARY OF HOURS OF EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

<table>
<tr><td>Supervision</td><td>Maximum
936</td><td rowspan="3">Maximum
1,000</td></tr>
<tr><td>Workshops, training sessions, seminars, conferences</td><td>Maximum
250</td></tr>
<tr><td>Psychotherapy received</td><td>Maximum
300</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Administering and evaluating psychological tests, clinical report writing, process/progress notes*</td><td>Maximum
250</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Group psychotherapy performed</td><td>Maximum
500</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Telephone counseling/crisis counseling</td><td>Maximum
250</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Counseling couples, families and children</td><td>Minimum
500</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">If maximum hours gained in all areas above, then the minimum clinical hours with individuals, couples, families and children are:</td><td>Minimum
1,000</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED</td><td>MINIMUM
3,000</td></tr>
</table>

*Interns only