

# MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY (MRFM)

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## **MRFM 501 Marriage and Family Theory I 3**

This course will provide students with a foundation of family systems theory and promote an understanding of family dynamics from a generational perspective. Students will study Bowenian Family Therapy and begin learning foundational counseling techniques as well as techniques specific to this leading theoretical model. Students will also be encouraged to apply cultural humility to their understanding of family systems.

## **MRFM 502 Marriage and Family Theory II 3**

This course will introduce Eco-systemic Structural Family Therapy (ESFT). Students will continue to build on their foundational clinical skills and will learn to use ESFT techniques in working with families. Students will be expected to identify how issues of social injustice, marginalization and limited access to resources can impact a family's ability to sustain positive changes post therapy.

**Prerequisites:** MRFM 501

## **MRFM 503 Marriage and Family Theory III 3**

In this course, students will study two post-modern family therapy models: Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) and Narrative Therapy. Students will continue to build on foundational counseling techniques and will learn how these evidenced-based trauma-informed treatment models can promote healing and change for individuals, couples, and families.

**Prerequisites:** MRFM 501 and MRFM 502

## **MRFM 505 Treatment and Assessment of Families in Therapy 3**

This course will introduce students to theories, concepts, and treatment modalities used when working with families in therapy. Students will also engage in personal reflection of their own families to gain a deeper understanding of marriage and family dynamics.

## **MRFM 510 Human Development: Working With Families and Individuals Across the Lifespan 3**

This course will review current research in human development across the lifespan. It is a study of the developmental changes that occur from conception to death. Special emphasis is given to significant developmental milestones that impact marriage and family dynamics from a family systems perspective.

## **MRFM 515 Assessment and Diagnosis in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course will introduce students to assessment tools to be used for diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment planning in professional marriage and family practice. Students will learn about and practice using assessment techniques, diagnostic tools, and outcome-based treatment planning, emphasis is placed on conducting wholistic assessments that cover all areas of individual, couple, or family dynamics. Issues of diversity, equity and belonging as well as ethical issues in assessment are also explored.

## **MRFM 520 Diversity, Equity, and Belonging in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

In this course, students will explore areas of cultural diversity including race, ethnicity, gender, and social-economic status with emphasis on how these issues influence the practice of marriage and family therapy. This course will also place a strong emphasis on developing cultural humility, and embracing equity, inclusion, belonging and social justice. Students will be encouraged to explore how conscious and unconscious bias impact the therapeutic process.

## **MRFM 525 Systemic Approaches in the Treatment of Children and Adolescents 3**

This course will introduce students to theories and treatment interventions focused on work with children and adolescents. Students will deepen their understanding of clinical and ethical issues unique to working with minors.

## **MRFM 535 Professional Ethics in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course will provide a thorough study of ethics for marriage and family therapists and includes exploration of multicultural and social justice considerations in clinical practice. Students will be introduced to the AAMFT Code of Ethics along with other legal and ethical standards that govern the field of marriage and family therapy. Attention will be given to upholding ethical standards in both traditional in-person practice and telehealth therapy.

## **MRFM 540 Trauma-Informed Care in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course will examine various aspects of trauma including physiological, psychological, spiritual, and relational functioning. Particular emphasis will be placed on the inter-relational impact that trauma has on individuals, couples, and family systems. This course will also examine evidenced-based approaches for treating traumatized clients and will explore ethical practices and self-care strategies for therapists, who are often at risk for vicarious trauma.

## **MRFM 545 Pre-Practicum 3**

This course prepares students for their upcoming practicum experience by training students in practical aspects of doing systemic therapy with individuals, couples, and families. Students will learn to conduct interviews, complete initial assessments, and manage other aspects of professional practice. Students will deepen their awareness of personal values, beliefs, and family backgrounds and how these elements have shaped their perspectives and impact their clinical thinking. Students will practice cultural humility as they continue to build on their professional skills.

## **MRFM 605 Practicum 1-4**

Students work at an approved clinical practicum site under the supervision of clinical supervision faculty. Students provide therapy services to individuals, couples or families using systemic treatment modalities. Clinical faculty provide group and individual supervision weekly through video tape/ audio tape observation, written case formulations, case presentations and case discussions. Students will take three semesters of practicum. Each semester of practicum runs for 14-weeks.

**Prerequisites:** MRFM 545

**MRFM 610 Psychopathology, Psychopharmacology, and Integrated Care for the Mental Health Professional 3**

The focus of this course is to assist the advanced level student and the practicing mental health clinician to better collaborate with the healthcare team to improve the care of the client/patient. Students of this course will gain a better understanding of the basics of psychopathology, psychopharmacology, and integrated care from a mental health perspective. Completion of this course will develop and improve the skills necessary to stay well-informed of the latest developments in the field of medicine as it applies to mental health.

**MRFM 615 Treatment and Assessment of Couples in Therapy 3**

This course will introduce students to theories and treatment interventions focused on work with couples. Students will deepen their understanding of clinical and ethical issues unique to working with couples.

**MRFM 620 Contemporary Issues and Collaboration in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This seminar course will explore the intersection of contemporary problems, and recent clinical developments with the practice of marriage and family therapy. Students will be encouraged to think of therapy practices in a broader context that explores how societal, global, and systemic issues impact the mission to champion faith, reason, and justice through clinical work. Particular emphasis will be placed on nontraditional marriage and family professional practices that promote social justice and collaborative work across professional disciplines.

**MRFM 625 Human Sexuality 3**

This course will provide students with a developmental model of human sexuality and will explore how various concepts related to sexuality intersect in marriage and family counseling settings.

**MRFM 635 Research Methods in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course will introduce students to major types of social science research. The course will familiarize students with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research methods, as well as provide opportunities for students to critically examine research studies relevant to the work of marriage and family therapy.

**MRFM 640 Capstone 3**

In this course students will apply knowledge from previous MMFT courses, and clinical experiences in marriage and family therapy to develop an evidenced-based case conceptualization that is consistent with the mission, goals and learning outcomes of the MMFT program. In their final project for this course, students will produce a written paper, presentation slides, and an oral presentation demonstrating their ability to organize information within a systemic clinical framework. This final case conceptualization project will be evaluated by a committee of MMFT faculty.

**MRFM 671 Spirituality in Marriage and Family Therapy 1.5**

This course focuses on the integration of spirituality, issues of faith and the practice of marriage and family therapy. In this course, students will be encouraged to apply cultural humility when assessing client needs and providing therapeutic services to clients from diverse backgrounds. Students will also be challenged to explore their own spiritual journeys and how they impact their practice of marriage and family therapy.

**MRFM 672 Systemic Assessment and Treatment of Addictions in Marriage and Family Therapy 1.5**

This course focuses on the systemic assessment and treatment of individuals, couples and families who have been impacted by chemical dependency and/or process addictions. Theories and relevant treatment models will be discussed including individual, couple, group and family counseling interventions. Special consideration will be given to how issues of addiction impact family systems and interpersonal relationships within those systems.

**MRFM 673 Building a Private Practice in Marriage and Family Therapy 1.5**

This course will provide students with practical information regarding setting up and maintaining a private practice as a marriage and family therapist. Legal, ethical, and financial implications will be addressed. Students will also be encouraged to consider how issues of diversity, equity and belonging integrate with clinical practice.

**MRFM 674 Systemic Treatment of Adoptive and Foster Families 1.5**

This course focuses on the unique make-up and specific needs of families created through adoption and foster care. Specific emphasis is placed on issues pertaining to attachment and bonding, adverse childhood experiences, trauma, belonging, grief and loss and other issues that impact the dynamics and relational patterns within adoptive and foster families. Emphasis will be placed on the use of trauma-informed evidenced-based interventions to address client needs from a systemic perspective.

**MRFM 801 Marriage and Family Theory I 3**

This course will provide students with a foundation of family systems theory and promote an understanding of family dynamics from a generational perspective. Students will study Bowenian Family Therapy and begin learning foundational counseling techniques as well as techniques specific to this leading theoretical model. Students will also be encouraged to apply cultural humility to their understanding of family systems.

**MRFM 802 Marriage and Family Theory II 3**

This course will introduce Eco-systemic Structural Family Therapy (ESFT). Students will continue to build on their foundational clinical skills and will learn to use ESFT techniques in working with families. Students will be expected to identify how issues of social injustice, marginalization and limited access to resources can impact a family's ability to sustain positive changes post therapy.

**Prerequisites:** MRFM 801

**MRFM 803 Marriage and Family Theory III 3**

In this course, students will study two post-modern family therapy models: Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) and Narrative Therapy. Students will continue to build on foundational counseling techniques and will learn how these evidenced-based trauma-informed treatment models can promote healing and change for individuals, couples, and families.

**Prerequisites:** MRFM 801 and MRFM 802

**MRFM 810 Theology of Marriage and Family 3**

This course introduces the student to theological consideration in the study of Marriage and Family Systems theory and practice. An authentically Christian understanding of marriage and family must be informed by Scripture and the Christian tradition. Students will explore these theological resources as they develop a confessionally informed and academically rigorous perspective on marriage and family.

**MRFM 815 Introduction to Systems Theory 3**

This course will introduce the student to the foundational theories and concepts in the field of family therapy. Readings in current family and marriage theories, assigned personal reflection and interactions with aspects of one's own family experiences, as well as lectures, class discussions, and video presentations will be employed to foster a deeper understanding of family and marriage dynamics at both the personal and professional levels.

**MRFM 820 Human Development and Family Systems 3**

This course reviews human development across the lifespan and explores developmental processes from a family systems perspective. A special emphasis will be given to the understanding of the parent-child relationship in one's own family of origin and the construction of the self.

**MRFM 825 Adult Personality and Character Development 3**

This course will provide students with a comprehensive framework for understanding adult personality/character organization, considering the individual within the family system. Assessment of adult personality with psychopathological and functional dynamics will be explored. Biblical and theological insights, as well as cultural issues that affect adult personality development and function will be integrated into readings, lectures, and class projects/discussions.

**MRFM 830B Special Topics: Foundations of Assessment and Interventions in Marriage And Family Therapy 3****MRFM 830C Special Topics: Supervision Practicum 3**

This course is designed to assist students in becoming relational supervisors, in conjunction with the AAMFT Approved Supervisor training provided by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Utilizing online discussions and faculty feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to submit components of their AAMFT didactic training in partial fulfillment of the course requirements. This course will promote students' ability to conduct supervision on their own, under the mentorship of an AAMFT Approved Supervisor Mentor. By the conclusion of the course, each student will submit a draft of their supervision contract and philosophy of supervision paper. This course is pass/no credit.

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 835 Human Sexuality 3**

This course will provide students with a developmental model of sexuality and investigate the following topics: developmental impacts on sexuality, intimacy, sexual desire, sexual dysfunction, sexual trauma and sexual identity. Current secular concepts will be explored and compared with Christian concepts related to human sexuality and how these intersect in marriage and family counseling settings.

**MRFM 840 Theology of Marriage and Family Professional Paper 3**

This course directs the student in the formulation of a theological and theoretical framework for counseling to marriage and family based upon reading, course work, and continuing research in the field of family systems. The paper length is 40-50 pages. The formulation of a theology of marriage and family must consider biblical exegesis, biblical theology, and the history of Christian thought with reference to marriage and family and integrate these with perspectives and insights from systems theorists on these issues.

**MRFM 845 Advanced Family Therapy Practice 3**

This course builds upon the theoretical base of Marriage and Family systems through exposure to the process and techniques of counseling couples, individuals and families. Therapeutic interventions based on multigenerational systems orientations will be emphasized. Opportunity is provided for clinical involvement through simulated family and marriage configurations.

**Prerequisites:** Take MRFM-501, MRFM-502, and MRFM-503

**MRFM 850 Advanced Couples Therapy 3**

This course will examine theories, models and processes of couples counseling and assessment. Students will develop skills through interactions with practice clients and exploration of case studies.

**MRFM 855 Holistic Approaches to Prevention and Enrichment in Family Systems 3**

This course trains students in prevention models and enrichment methodologies with special emphasis on the pedagogy of psychoeducational interventions.

**MRFM 860 Trauma and Family Systems 3**

This course examines the psychological impact of trauma on children, teens, adults, and family systems. Topics include: emotional regulation, cognitive processing, psychopharmacological treatments and strategies to engage a family in counseling.

**MRFM 865 Assessment and Treatment of Addictions & Co-Occurring Disorders 3**

This course provides students with an analysis of the various definitions of addiction and considers etiological theories and models in the addiction treatment field. Topics include: the impact of addictions, the medical model, the self-medication hypothesis, family collaborations, behavioral family therapy modalities, the influence of environment, spirituality and addition, the biopsychosocial/spiritual approach, Motivational Interviewing, functional analysis and treatment planning, and substance abuse and severe mental illness.

**MRFM 870 Diversity Issues in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course identifies the foundational concepts of race, culture, and gender in family therapy. Topics include: gender roles, family structures, class, spirituality, race, migration, oppression, cultural identity, grief and loss within cultural contexts, sexuality within cultural contexts, and white privilege.

**MRFM 875 Professional Standards and Ethics 3**

This course describes the ethical principles of the AAMFT Code of Ethics and their application. Topics include: professionalism, ethical decision making, multiple relationships, competency, integrity, dangerousness, abuse, neglect, moral values, spirituality issues in counseling, and ethical practice management.

**MRFM 880 Systems Theory and Group Dynamics 3**

This course examines Group Therapy theories, dynamics and ethical standards. Students will be given a framework drawn from systems theory for applying group theory to intervention strategies. Topics include: treatment factors, interpersonal learning, group cohesion, process dynamics, stages of group formation/function and others.

**MRFM 881 Research in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This research methodology course introduces students to a variety of qualitative and quantitative research topics. This class connects research with the practice of family therapy through learning about evidence-based interventions. Writing skills are needed for constructing research and reviewing existing research and these are developed through readings and instruction. Students will gain knowledge in family therapy research, such as measurement and validity, methodology, bridging research and practice, academic writing, and ethics in research including navigating the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

**MRFM 882 Professional Writing in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course introduces students to the rigors of academic writing. This class explores how to appropriately integrate APA citations, acceptable use of AI, synthesizing peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly literature, and engaging in the revision process.

**MRFM 883 Professional Development in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course introduces students to engaging in professional development opportunities available in the field of marriage and family therapy. Three areas of emphasis within the class include 1) developing presentation proposals, 2) beginning drafts for peer-reviewed and non-peer reviewed journal publications, and 3) curriculum development.

**MRFM 885 Qualitative Research Methodology 3**

This advanced graduate research methodology course introduces doctoral students to a variety of qualitative research methods and the qualitative research process of creating suitable research questions, doing fieldwork, analyzing and interpreting data, and the procedures for writing a report. Students will gain knowledge in qualitative research approaches, such as narrative study, grounded theory, phenomenology, and case study; develop a workable research design pertaining to an area of interest, and write a prototype research report.

**MRFM 886 Quantitative Research Methodology 3**

This course introduces students to the process of quantitative research and basic statistics, including an exploration of designing, conducting, and reporting quantitative research studies. The course examines alternative approaches to experimental, quasi-experimental, and field studies using quantitative measurement. It includes formulating testable hypotheses, assessment of measurement reliability and validity, and use of descriptive and inferential data analysis. Additionally the evaluation of quantitative research studies published in various journals will be conducted. Finally, students will develop appropriate research proposals demonstrating their mastery of the course content.

**MRFM 887 Mixed Methods Research 3**

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of mixed methods research studies. Students will explore the types of research problems that are uniquely suited for mixed methods research, mixed methods purpose statements and research questions, types of mixed methods designs, and reporting mixed methods studies. Students will develop an appropriate mixed methods research proposal demonstrating their mastery of the course content.

**MRFM 900 Doctoral Project Proposal 3**

This course guides students through the process of creating their doctoral project proposal and identifying their doctoral project chair. Utilizing online discussions, student evaluations, and faculty feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in previous courses to develop their doctoral project proposal and to critically evaluate their peers' proposals. By the conclusion of the course, each student will identify their doctoral project chair and complete their doctoral project proposal. This course is pass/no credit.

**MRFM 901 Doctoral Project 1 3**

This course is a continuation of MRFM900 and guides students through the composition of their comprehensive literature review and specific sub-components of their chosen doctoral project design. Utilizing online discussions, student evaluations, and faculty feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in previous doctoral project courses and MRFM900, to complete their literature review and to critically evaluate the relevant sub-components of their work and their peers' work. By the conclusion of the course, each student will obtain approval of their literature review and submit drafts of the relevant sub-components. This course is pass/no credit.

**Prerequisites:** Take MRFM 900

**Instructor consent required**

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 902 Doctoral Project 2 3**

This course is a continuation of MRFM901 and guides students through the completion of their proposal, including execution of their chosen doctoral project design and presentation at the symposium. Utilizing online discussions and faculty feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in previous courses and MRFM900 and 901 to complete the full proposal. By the conclusion of the course, each student will present at the symposium and complete the archival process. This course is pass/no credit.

**Prerequisites:** Take MRFM 900 and MRFM 901

**Instructor consent required**

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 904 Pre-Practicum in Marriage and Family Therapy 3**

This course prepares students for their upcoming practicum experience in one of the following: 1) training students in practical aspects of doing systemic therapy with individuals, couples, and families; 2) training students in practical aspects of conducting systemic supervision (to be completed with an AAMFT Approved Supervisor course); or 3) training students in practical aspects of engaging in systemic teaching.

**Instructor consent required**

**MRFM 905 Practicum in Marriage and Family Therapy 1-4**

Building on the MRFM904 Pre-Practicum course, this Practicum course is offered in every full semester, Fall, Spring, and Summer and must be completed at least three times. Students must accrue a minimum of 100 supervised hours of direct service to clients in an approved clinical setting each semester for a total of 300 supervised hours of direct client contact. The course covers topics of professional roles and functions in clinical settings, ethical decision making, and strategies for providing marriage and family therapy with diverse populations. This course is graded pass/fail.

**Instructor consent required**

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 906 MFT Practicum Continuation 0**

This Field Supervision course requirements include the completion of MRFM905 requirements, which include a minimum of 100 hours of supervised direct client service in an approved clinical setting. The other assignments, which may be similar to MRFM905, are required for this course as well, even if the student has already completed some of the assignments in MRFM905. This course covers topics of professional roles and functions, ethical and legal practice standards, and strategies for providing marriage and family therapy with diverse populations, as well as examining issues of pedagogy for the Marriage and Family practitioner.

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 910 Dissertation Proposal 3**

This course guides students through the process of creating their dissertation proposal and gathering their dissertation committee. Utilizing online discussions, student evaluations, and faculty feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in previous research courses to develop their dissertation proposal and to critically evaluate their peers' research proposals. By the conclusion of the course, each student will gather his/her dissertation committee and complete his/her dissertation proposal. This course is pass/no credit.

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 920 Thesis/Dissertation I 3**

This course is a continuation of MRFM910 and guides students through the Proposal Defense, IRB approval process and data collection phase of the dissertation process. Utilizing online discussions, student evaluations, and faculty/committee feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in previous research courses and MRFM910, to complete the Proposal Defense, IRB Approval and data collection of their dissertation and to critically evaluate their peers' research data collection work. By the conclusion of the course, each student will defend their proposal, achieve IRB approval and begin the data collection for their dissertation. This course is pass/no credit.

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 921 Dissertation II 3**

This course is a continuation of MRFM920 and guides students through the completion of data collection, data analysis and the writing phase of the dissertation process. Utilizing online discussions and faculty/committee feedback, this course will provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in previous research courses and MRFM910 and 920 to complete the data collection, data analysis and Dissertation Defense process. By the conclusion of the course, each student will defend their dissertation and complete the archival process. This course is pass/no credit.

**Course is Pass/Fail**

**MRFM 922 Thesis/Dissertation Continuation 2**

Students who have not successfully defended their thesis/dissertation by the end of MRFM921 must register for MRFM922 until the project is completed. Grading is pass/no credit. No credits accrue if a continuation semester is needed.

**Course is Pass/Fail**