



Graduate School of Education & Allied Professions
Marriage & Family Therapy Program

Missions, Goals and Outcomes

Fairfield University's Values and Traditions

1. Belief in the inherent worth and dignity of each person
2. Intellectual curiosity, rigor, critical thinking & moral analysis
3. Commitment to greater good through advocacy & service
4. Commitment to research & ethical decision-making

GSEAP's Conceptual Framework

1. Scholar Practitioner Model
2. Developmental human growth and learning
3. Reflective Practitioner
4. Advocacy for all children and families

Program Mission Statement

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at Fairfield University is designed to prepare students for careers as competent professional marriage and family therapists by providing them with a solid conceptual knowledge base and the clinical skills necessary for effective practice. Students are exposed to the broad range of family systems theories and models with a particular emphasis on the utilization of the Structural and Strategic approaches. The program is dedicated to providing a learning context that fundamentally values diversity, nondiscrimination and the promotion of justice. The program seeks to educate students to be socially aware and ethically responsible professionals

Program Diversity Statement

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Fairfield University seeks to promote a learning environment where diversity is welcomed, fostered, taught and honored. *We define diversity in the broadest sense to include not only members of disadvantaged populations and persons of color, but also differences in ethnicity, nationality, culture, lifestyle/sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, socioeconomic status, religion, spiritual beliefs and/or affiliation, national origin, age, gender, health status and disability. We seek to promote diversity among our student body, faculty and supervisors, as well as in the agency settings and clientele served.* Diversity perspectives are infused throughout the curriculum and as well as in specialized courses. The Program provides opportunities for continuing education on diversity issues for the university community and other communities of interest.

Program Philosophy Statement

The philosophy statement of the Marriage and Family Therapy program is an extension of the Mission Statement and incorporates the Conceptual Scholar-Practitioner Framework of the Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions and the Ignatian Jesuit values of the university. The Marriage and Family Therapy program prepares graduates to believe in the inherent worth and dignity of all people and promotes the wellbeing of individuals, couples, families and communities, is committed to serving a diverse society; possesses strong conceptual and clinical knowledge and upholds the highest standards of professional conduct. The program supports the development of intellectual rigor, personal integrity, multidisciplinary collaboration, informed decision-making, self-reflection and social responsibility.

Program Goal 1
Knowledge and Research:
Teach relational/systemic models and theories that are informed by research

Associated Student Learning Outcomes with Benchmarks and Targets

SLO1: Knowledge Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of systems concepts and theories that are foundational to the practice of and field of marriage and family therapy.

- **Benchmark 1**-Students will demonstrate understanding of how systems theory provides a framework for family functioning and symptom maintenance.
- **Target 1**- 80% of students' scores on the Capstone Paper for *FT555 Foundations in Marital and Family Therapy* will be at "Target" or "Above Target."

Program Goal 2
Practice: Prepare students to evidence clinical skills and competencies necessary to provide quality entry-level clinical services

Associated Student Learning Outcomes with Benchmarks and Targets

SLO4: Clinical Skills Graduates will demonstrate clinical skills in all phases of treatment as informed by the MFT Core Competencies (e.g., intake, clinical assessment/diagnosis, treatment planning/case management, and therapeutic interventions).

- **Benchmark 1**- Students will demonstrate how the role and function of the family therapist influences all phases of treatment using the Structural/Strategic models of FT.
- **Target 1:** 80% of students' scores on the Capstone Paper for *FT553 Family Therapy Pre-practicum* will be at "Target" or "Above Target."

Program Goal 3
Ethics: Promote commitment to upholding professional integrity and high ethical standards

Associated Student Learning Outcomes with Benchmarks and Targets

SLO3: Professional integrity and ethical standards Graduates will demonstrate and maintain professional integrity and high ethical standards in interactions with clients, supervisors, colleagues, and faculty within a framework of self-reflection and lifelong learning.

- **Target 1:** 80% Students scores on "Professionalism and Ethics" portion of the *Student Clinical Readiness Evaluation* will fall in the "Target" and "Above Target" range
- **Benchmark 1:** Students will demonstrate professionalism and ethical decision-making throughout simulated role plays and in interactions with instructors and fellow students.

Program Goal 4
Diversity: Create an inclusive environment that supports a diverse body of students, instructors, and supervisors

Associated Student Learning Outcomes with Benchmarks and Targets

SLO5 Diversity Graduates will conceptualize from a social justice framework by attending to power and privilege in their case formulations & articulations, and work with diverse populations, relationships, and presenting problems.

- **Target 1:** 80% of student scores on the Capstone Paper in *FT565 Advanced Interventions* will be at "Target" or "Above Target."
- **Benchmark 1:** Students will demonstrate self-reflection and an awareness of their biases and challenges, identify how these themes influence their clinical work, and develop a plan to address them in supervision

SLO2: Knowledge Students will demonstrate competence in their understanding of the concepts specific to the Structural and Strategic approaches.

- **Benchmark 1:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ways Structural and/or Strategic models of therapy provide a framework for how families develop symptoms and what enables them to change.
- **Target 1:** 80% of students' scores on the Capstone Paper for *FT552 Interventions in Structural and Strategic Family Therapy* will be at "Target" or "Above Target"

SLO6: Research Graduates will demonstrate understanding of how research informs clinical practice.

- **Benchmark 1:** Students will demonstrate conceptually, how to integrate all components of Evidence Based Practice (EBP) to make best use of research in case formulation.
- **Target 1:** 80% of students' scores on the Capstone Paper for *FT556 Research in Family Therapy* will be at "Target" or "Above Target."

SLO4: Clinical Skills (continued)

- **Benchmark 2:** Students will demonstrate readiness in all phases of treatment, to begin seeing clients on campus and at their community sites.
- **Target 2:** 80% of students' scores on the *Clinical Readiness Evaluation* will fall within the "Target" or "Above Target" range.
- **Benchmark 3:** Students will demonstrate the adequate clinical skill necessary to enter the field as entry-level marriage and family therapists.
- **Target 3:** 80% of students' scores on the *Internship II Student Clinical Evaluation* will fall within the "Target" or "Above Target" range.

SLO3: Professional integrity and ethical standards (continued)

- **Target 2:** 80% Students' scores on the "Professionalism, Ethics and Supervision" portion of the *Internship II Student Clinical Evaluation* will fall in the "Target" and "Above Target" range.
- **Benchmark 2:** Students will demonstrate professionalism and uphold high ethical standards with clients and supervisors in the clinical setting.

Contextual Support: How Program Goals and SLOs support the mission and development of MFTs

The mission of the MFT program is to prepare students for careers in the field of marriage and family therapy to become competent, theoretically grounded and skilled clinicians, who provide ethical and professional research-based treatment, through a social justice perspective.

The MFT Program mission is derived from and congruent with the missions of Fairfield University and the Graduate School of Education. In turn, the MFT program mission directly informs the stated Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes. Each benchmark and target is developed to measure the Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes are part of the cycle of assessment for program improvement.

Each Program Goal aligns directly to an element of the mission statement. For example, PG1 provides students foundational knowledge informed by research. Foundational knowledge is based on general systems, cybernetics and communication theories. Prior to beginning their clinical practice, students the theory associated with structural and strategic and postmodern models and how they were interpreted from the three foundational theories taught in the curriculum. Current research informs all of the content presented throughout the curriculum and students learn to become effective and discriminating consumers of research.

When students meet requisite foundational courses, they transition into the clinical training sequence where they learn to practice based on the knowledge they have acquired. During Students demonstrate their skills in all phases of treatment from intake, assessment/diagnosis, treatment planning and therapeutic interventions. Program Goal 2 is concerned with preparing students by providing the clinical skills and competencies to practice effectively. Program Goal 2 is reliant on Program Goal 1 as students are held to formulating their cases and providing treatment in Practicum 1 and 2, to the structural/strategic models of therapy. Later, in Internship 1 and 2, students can formulate and intervene from the postmodern, solution-focused and /or narrative models. This is intentional and aimed at having students become proficient in structural/strategic models prior to applying new learning.

Throughout the program, not exclusive to clinical practice, students are expected to demonstrate and maintain professional integrity and high ethical standards in interactions with clients, supervisors, colleagues, and faculty within a framework of self-reflection and lifelong learning. Program Goal 3 aligns directly to the mission statement's commitment to high ethical and professional standards for treatment. Life-long learning and self-reflection are Jesuit ideals that are infused throughout University and Graduate School of Education and Allied Profession's (GSEAP) levels too.

Program Goal 4 seeks to provide an inclusive environment that supports a diverse body of students, instructors, and supervisors which is foundational to our students' ability to understand issues of inclusion, power and privilege and how it informs treatment from a social justice perspective. This too flows from the University and GSEAP missions.