Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling
Marriage, Couple and Family Therapy
MS track Application

Due April 1 of first year

Name:

Year you entered the program:

Topic of interest:

Have you discussed your interests with CPSY faculty who do research in this area?

Yes   No

If yes, with whom?

Please submit the following documentation with this application to the CPSY office:

- Updated resume
- Samples of prior research work or samples of your work as a research assistant
- Two major papers submitted as requirements in CPSY/MCFT courses and graded by the course instructors
- A one page statement of the relevance of your thesis research to your future and current academic goals
- A description of the time available that you have to complete a thesis

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MS Track Guidelines

This document provides general guidance for students interested in conducting a thesis to pursue a MS Degree. Please read the guidelines carefully and consult with your advisor concerning any questions you have about your readiness to conduct thesis.

Readiness to pursue a thesis in the MCFT program involves a faculty evaluation of performance in the following areas:

Transcript review
Evaluation of syllabi and content of research courses taken; grades

Working knowledge of APA Style
Demonstrated knowledge of the APA writing manual or be willing to learn its guidelines independently, and commit to implementing APA guidelines in the thesis process and its writing.

Previous research work
Documented prior involvement as a research assistant and/or examples of research writing.

Writing
Assessment of writing level (grammatical consistency, vocabulary, sentence structure, quality of expression, punctuation) based on sample papers submitted to various courses in the MCFT program. The Graduate School does not provide technical assistance in writing or formatting your document. Students are responsible for submitting documents that are grammatically correct and that follow the APA guidelines to faculty mentors.

Potential for working independently
Must be a self-directed learner, demonstrate a high level of comfort and skill in learning new material without requiring substantial feedback and follow-up support, and be able to deal well with ambiguity. Demonstrate outstanding time management skills while participating in a variety of courses and program related activities.

Relevance to future professional and academic goals
Topic is well-focused with well supported arguments.

Availability
Demonstrate time available to complete an intensive research project; i.e., full time student with limited additional time demands.

Fit with faculty research interests
Faculty in the MCFT program will mentor students interested in conducting a thesis only within their established lines of research or current research interests. Exceptions can be considered at the discretion of each faculty member's interests. Only a limited number of thesis proposals will be accepted by faculty per year.

TIMELINE AND STEPS FOR COMPLETING A THESIS

April 1, First Year: Submit application—if accepted, a thesis chair will be assigned

Summer/2nd Fall: Take research courses and complete literature review

Jan. 10, 2nd Spring: Submit completed literature review to program director for faculty approval. If approved proceed to developing the complete thesis proposal.

Second Spring: Complete and defend thesis proposal. Submit application to IRB

Summer & 3rd Fall: Collect and analyze data

3rd Spring: Write and defend thesis

YEAR ONE FALL AND SPRING
1) Familiarize yourself with the research agendas of the MCFT faculty
2) Begin considering research topics within areas of faculty interests
3) Talk with faculty about your ideas; confirm that your interests are within at least one faculty research agenda for the year in which you will be completing your thesis
4) Notify MCFT faculty that you are planning on completing the MS track
5) Provide application and the following to the program director **by April 1:**
   o Grades for prior research courses (highlighted unofficial copy of transcript)
   o A statement indicating your knowledge of APA Style and a sample paper illustrating its application
   o Documentation of previous research work
   o Two writing samples from scholarly papers submitted to courses in the MCFT program
   o Description of your availability to conduct a research project
   o Statement of relevance of your thesis research to future professional and academic goals
6) If your application is accepted, you will be assigned a thesis chair. Meet with your chair to develop a mentorship plan. Each faculty mentor will develop their own preferred process.

YEAR ONE SUMMER
1) If you are planning on using qualitative research methods, with MCFT faculty approval, you may be able to take CPSY 537: Qualitative Methods offered only in summer
3) Re-confirm that your interests are within at least one faculty research agenda
4) The program director will notify interested students if they have been accepted into the thesis track and who their faculty mentor will be.

YEAR TWO FALL
1) Complete CPSY 538: Advanced Research Methods
2) Explore your topic and methodology/methods further through course assignments

3) Meet with your thesis chair to develop topic, consult on literature review, and identify possible thesis committee members.
4) **Submit completed literature review and names of possible committee members to Program Director by January 10.**

YEAR TWO SPRING
1) Complete Research Methods & Statistics unless you have already taken the summer qualitative research course which can substitute for this spring research course. Make sure you get advise about this before the summer of your first year.
2) Enroll for 1 credit of CPSY 594: Proposal Writing
3) Work with your thesis chair to complete and defend your thesis proposal
4) Complete application for approval from the Human Subjects Research Committee

YEAR THREE SUMMER & FALL
1) Enroll in 1 credit of CPSY 595: Master's Thesis Research
2) Collect data with support of thesis chair
3) Analyze data with support of thesis chair

YEAR THREE SPRING
1) Enroll in at 1 credit of CPSY 595: Master's Thesis Research
2) Complete and depend thesis with chair and committee guidance and approval

YEAR THREE SUMMER
1) Make corrections to final version
2) Submit electronic and bound versions for thesis completion and graduation

RESEARCH TRACK EVALUATION RUBRIC (acceptance into the thesis track involves an integrated assessment of all the elements listed)

	Needs significant improvement	Needs improvement	Good	Excellent	
Transcripts: grades in research courses	C or no courses taken	B+ or less	A-	A or A+	
Writing	The paper has grammatical errors or issues with spelling & punctuation that substantially detract from comprehensibility of the paper.	The paper has some grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors that interfere with reading the paper; some problems (e.g. in the level of formality; consistent errors in certain areas of grammar)	The paper has rare grammatical errors or issues with spelling that do not detract from the paper; no major difficulties in appropriate language use; follows the main discourse conventions of the family therapy field.	The paper is free of grammatical errors and spelling & punctuation, vocabulary, and style are appropriate to the topic and intended audience; closely follows the main discourse conventions of the family therapy field.	
Working knowledge of APA Style	Errors in APA style detract substantially from the paper. Word choice is informal in tone. Writing is choppy, with many awkward or unclear passages.	Errors in APA style are noticeable. Occasional inappropriate word choices. Writing has a few awkward or unclear passages.	Rare errors in APA style that do not detract from the paper. Scholarly style. Writing has minimal awkward of unclear passages	No errors in APA style. Scholarly style. Writing flows and is easy to follow.	
Previous research	No experience as a graduate assistant and no participation in prior research	Minimal work as graduate assistant (e.g., data collection only)	Graduate assistant experience (e.g., collection & analysis)	Completed research work and there is a writing sample of it.	
Potential for working independently	Student sometimes needs reminder and assistance in completing routine assignments.	Student is beginning to demonstrate self-directed learning and sometimes requires feedback	Student is a self-directed learner and demonstrates a high level of comfort and skill in learning new material,	Student is a self-directed learner and demonstrates a high level of comfort and skill in learning new material	

		regarding basic directions and follow up support	but still depends on feedback and follow-up support; needs improvement in dealing with ambiguity	without requiring real-time feedback and follow-up support, and deals well with ambiguity	
	Student has not demonstrated good time management skills while participating in a variety of courses and program related activities.	Student has demonstrated some time management skills while participating in a variety of courses and program related activities	Student has demonstrated good time management skills while participating in a variety of courses and program related activities.	Student has demonstrated outstanding time management skills while participating in a variety of courses and program related activities.	
Availability	Full time student with more than ½ part time job	Full time student with part time job	Full time student with minimal part time jobs	Full time student with no part time jobs	
Relevance to professional goals	Unclear relative to topic; too short and unfocussed, lacking any form of clear argument.	Difficulty in focusing and dealing with the topic; narrow scope; needs elaboration	Appears focused and relevant to topic and task; thorough coverage with only minor aspects missing.	Appears well focused and relevant to topic and task; thorough coverage; well supported arguments	