

Lewis & Clark College
Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy Program
(COVID-19) Contingency Plan for Clinical Training - Student Interns Graduating August 2020

The circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic has evolved with rapid speed, and as of March 16, 2020, Lewis & Clark College, has ceased all in-person class meetings and moved campus-based classes fully online. In addition, to public health concerns and Governor State Brown's orders for social distancing, student interns are not able to provide services or receive supervision in their usual face-to-face formats at the Lewis & Clark Community Counseling Center (L&C CCC - our interdisciplinary departmental training clinic) or externship sites. Furthermore, on March 19, 2020, the Graduate School implemented a policy that prohibits student interns from providing face-to-face services in their clinical training contexts.

Therefore, we anticipate that student interns who graduate in August 2020 are likely to experience significant impacts in their ability to meet the 500 total client contact hour and 200 relational hour requirements. Because we do not know how long or the extent to which the current pandemic will impact student interns' ability to accrue their clinical hours, and in efforts to ensure that we can help them graduate, we have reduced their clinical hour requirements.

While the MCFT Program will still strongly encourage their student interns to reach as close as they can to accruing the standard 500 total client contact hours and 200 relational contact hours, the reduced hour requirements still meet the Oregon Board's 400 hour minimum requirements for licensure as a registered intern. In addition, students should be aware that the reduced clinical hours requirement may affect the portability of their degree because there are a number of states which require 500 hours in order to become a registered MFT intern or a licensed associate MFT.

The purpose of this document is to outline the MCFT Program's contingency plan that has been activated for clinical training related to the COVID-19 impact on our internship and externship activities.

***Accommodations and Reduction in Clinical Hours Requirements for Current Interns
 Graduating in August 2020:***

A. Telemental Health Services as Direct Client Contact Hours:

- Student interns will count all telemental health services as direct client contact hours.
- Student interns will use telemental health (phone or video) to provide all individual, couple, and family therapy at both the L&C CCC and their externship sites. Student interns will provide these services remotely or from their training sites if proper social distancing guidelines can be followed.
- **L&C CCC:** Student interns will use phones and HIPAA compliant zoom accounts to provide services.

- **Externships:** Student interns will defer to the guidance and protocols of their respective externship agencies regarding the platforms they use to conduct telemental health services.
 - o If student interns need assistance or support with identifying or accessing viable platforms, they will contact the MCFT Clinical Coordinator.
 - o If student interns struggle to access a confidential space to provide telemental health services outside of their externship agencies, they will consult with the MCFT Clinical Coordinator.

B. Reduced Clinical Hours Requirement:

- The MCFT Program has reduced the total client contact hours and relational hours requirements by 20% (= reduce total client contact hours from 500 to 400 and relational hours from 200 to 160).
- This reduction in clinical hours still requires students to honor the terms of their externship contracts. To negotiate a revision of terms, students should work with their externship supervisors/administrators, MCFT Clinical Coordinator, and CPSY Placement Coordinator.
- Relational hours: Students should count any session where the therapist engaged with more than one member of a relational unit.
- Evaluating clinical competencies: Students are required to demonstrate that they have achieved a level of clinical competency commensurate with the MCFT Program's standard 500 clinical hour requirement. To document and assess this, both internship and externship supervisors will complete the existing LC MCFT Supervisee Evaluation at the end of MCFT 582 Internship III, and MCFT 582 Internship IV (if applicable). Students will demonstrate adequate achievement of clinical competency by: (1) Scoring a minimum of "meets expectation", which translates to a score of "3" on each item of our 4-point scale, on 83% (10 out of 12) of the clinical competencies listed on the Supervisee Evaluation; (2) Not scoring a "1" on our 4-point scale, which translates to "unacceptable", on any clinical competency; and (3) Not being on an Academic Review Committee for issues related to their clinical practice. In addition to the Supervisee Evaluations, students will achieve a passing score of 70% on their practice national MFT exam.

C. Supervision:

- Supervision will shift from face-to-face to telesupervision formats in all training contexts.

D. Plans for Continued Program Monitoring and Revisions to Contingency Plan

- The MCFT Program Director and Clinical Coordinator will maintain close communication with externship partners, supervisors, and student interns to monitor needs and offer consultation about ways to engage families in the continuation of clinical services.
- The MCFT Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, and Program Faculty will make additional revisions clinical training as needed.

E. Technology Requirements:

- Students need to have access to stable, password protected internet in order to conduct telemental health services and receive supervision.
- Students need to use an Ironkey encrypted usb drive for storing and transferring confidential clinical documents.