

Lewis & Clark College
Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy Program
(COVID-19) Contingency Plan for Clinical Training - Student Interns Graduating August 2021

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.

We anticipate the current crisis to affect the clinical training process of student interns who will begin their clinical training May 1, 2020. We will implement temporary accommodations for these students to attain their clinical hours via telemental health. While the MCFT Program will strongly encourage student interns to reach as close as they can to accruing the standard 500 total client contact hours and 200 relational contact hours, we do not know how long or the extent to which the current COVID-19 pandemic will impact interns' ability to meet these requirements. Therefore, we will closely monitor the situation and make decisions about reducing their hour requirements as needed.

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 Interns Beginning Clinical Practice in May 2020 and Graduating August 2021:

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.

- 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 will closely monitor the number of hours that interns are able to accrue towards the standard 500 hours of direct client contact and 200 relational hour requirements. We will be flexible and responsive to the constraints interns may experience in their respective training contexts. We will reassess the situation and provide further accommodations and recommendations at the end of Summer 2020.
- For relational hours: Students should count any session where the therapist engaged with more than one member of a relational unit.

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 to instructional delivery and 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.