



PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

MA PROGRAM, COUPLE AND FAMILY THERAPY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT
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MA Program in Couple and Family Therapy (CFT)
Practicum and Internship Handbook

Contents

OVERVIEW OF PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP IN CFT 2

CLINICAL HOURS REQUIREMENTS 3

TELETHERAPY 5

PRACTICUM..... 6

 Practicum site..... 6

 Practicum expectations..... 6

 Documentation of clinical hours 7

 Practicum evaluation and grading 7

 Remediation plan 7

 Practicum FAQs 7

INTERNSHIP 8

 Applying for an Internship site 9

 Clinical Supervision requirements..... 9

 Documentation of clinical hours 9

 Expectations of students in Internship 10

 Internship evaluation process 10

 Internship FAQs 10

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES 11

APPENDICES 12

OVERVIEW OF PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP IN CFT

In accordance with the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy (COAMFTE) standards version 12.5, students in the CFT program must complete 300 **direct contact clinical hours** over the course of at least 12 months in Practicum and Internship classes. Of the 300 direct client contact hours required, 100 of those hours must be **relational**, that is, must include members in a partner and/or family relationship.

Direct contact hours are defined by COAMFTE as *therapeutic meeting of a therapist and client (individual, relational, or group) occurring in-person synchronously, either physically in the same location or mediated by technology. Assessments may be counted if they are in-person processes that are more than clerical in nature and focus. Also, therapy services delivered through interactive team modalities may provide direct client contact for specific team members who have in-person interaction with the client/system during the session. Therapy team members who engage the therapeutic process only behind the mirror may not count the experience as direct client contact. Activities such as telephone contact, case planning, observation of therapy, record keeping, trainings, role-playing, travel, administrative activities, consultation with community members or professionals, and/or MFT relational/systemic supervision are not considered direct client contact. (COAMFTE, v 12.5)*

Relational hours are defined as a *category of direct clinical contact hours in which a clinician delivers therapeutic services with two or more individuals conjointly, who share an ongoing relationship beyond that which occurs in the therapeutic experience itself. Examples include family subsystems, intimate couple subsystems, enduring friendship/community support subsystems, and residential, treatment, or situationally connected subsystems.*

- *Relational hours also may be counted with relational subsystems that include a person whose only available means to participate in the in-person therapeutic meeting is telephonic or electronic (e.g., incarcerated, deployed or out-of-town subsystem members.)*
- *Group therapy can be counted as relational hours if those in the group therapy have a relationship outside of (above and beyond) the group itself. Conversely, group therapy sessions of otherwise non-related individuals are not considered as relational hours. (COAMFTE, v 12.5)*

These hours must be supervised by a qualified **Program Clinical Supervisor** in both Practicum and Internship.

COAMFTE v 12.5 Program Clinical Supervisor qualifications *include the following: a) demonstration of professional identity as a marriage and family therapist, and b) demonstration of training in MFT relational/systemic supervision by one of the following:*

- *A graduate course in MFT relational/systemic supervision equivalent to three semester-credit hours.*
- *Postgraduate professional education in MFT relational/systemic supervision of at least 30 clock hours.*

- *A state established MFT supervisor designation that includes relational/systemic supervision training.*
- *Designation as an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Approved Supervisor Candidate, ([COAMFTE, v 12.5](#))*

CLINICAL HOURS REQUIREMENTS

Students must receive 100 hours of clinical supervision over the course of 12 months, including internship and practicum. Clinical supervision may be in the form of individual, dyadic, or group supervision. Out of the 100 hours, 50 hours of supervision must use raw data in the form of video or audio recorded sessions or live, real-time observation.

Summary of Clinical hours and Supervision requirements for graduation from CFT program:

Total Direct Clinical Contact Hours	300 hours over at least 12 months.
Relational Hours	100 of the total 300 hours.
Total Clinical Supervision Hours received	100 hours with a Program Clinical Supervisor.
Supervision with observable or video/audio recorded data	50 hours of the total 100 hours of supervision

Clinical hours comparison table:

HOURS/TIME FRAME	CACREP (for Dual COUN/CFT students)	COAMFTE (CFT students)	NOTES
How to distinguish practicum vs. internship hours	Counts hours for practicum and internship separately	Clinical hours are counted in the 12 months prior to graduation. No distinction between practicum and internship.	N/A
Total hours (includes direct client contact and other hours such as training, case management, etc.)	Practicum-150 Internship-600	COAMFTE only tracks direct client contact. Total Clinical Hours-300	N/A

Clinical Hours (Direct Client Contact Hours)	<p>Practicum- minimum of 40 hours.</p> <p>21(minimum) of those 40 hours must be relational</p> <p>Internship-240 hours. 121 of the 240 must be relational</p>	300 Client contact hours over 12-month period, i.e., practicum and two internship semesters. 100 of the 300 must be relational	N/A
Group Facilitation*	10 hours	N/A	N/A
Total Client Contact Hours Required to Graduate	<p>Practicum-40</p> <p>Internship-240 (10 hours of group facilitation included)</p> <p>Total Direct Clinical Hours-40 + 240=280</p> <p>Practicum Relational-21</p> <p>Internship Relational-121</p> <p>Total Direct Relational Clinical Hours- 21 + 121=142</p> <p>*142 of your total 280 direct clinical hours must be relational.</p>	<p>300 Client contact hours over 12-month period, i.e., practicum and two internship semesters.</p> <p>100 of the 300 must be relational</p>	<p>CACREP requires more RELATIONAL hours (142 vs. 100). COAMFTE requires more Total clinical hours (300 vs 280).</p> <p>Remember COAMFTE does NOT track nonclinical hours.</p> <p>For CACREP, beyond the 10 hours required for group facilitation, groups may count towards relational hours. For example: Parenting groups, multi-family groups, sibling groups count towards Relational hours up to 60 hours AFTER you have completed the required 10 group hours.</p>
Supervision		100 hours – built into program via individual supervision and Practicum and Internship classes (CMFT 5910, 5911, and 5930).	

TELETHERAPY

Both Practicum and Internship experiences provide training in **teletherapy practices**.

COAMFTE defined Teletherapy as *“the process of delivering synchronous therapeutic services using a secure video platform according to relevant state, federal, and provincial regulatory requirements or guidelines. The online therapeutic interaction is consistent with state or provincial regulations for the location in which the clinical student therapist and participant(s) are physically located.”*

Couple & Family Therapy Program Telehealth Policy Statement:

In accordance with AAMFT Best Practices for Online MFT, AAMFT Code of Ethics, and the State of Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies, the Couple and Family Therapy Program at UC Denver implements the following requirements to ensure the confidentiality of telehealth clients to the best of our abilities:

In order to assure confidential services, the following guidelines must be in place:

- o Telehealth services will be provided only using a secure platform that meets HIPPA requirements and provides a Business Associate Agreement.
- o According to Colorado State regulations, MFTs will provide services to clients residing in the state in which the MFT and supervisor are licensed.
- o All technological communications must only transpire using encrypted technology. This includes phones, texts, and video-based communications (Must have end to end encryption. The advanced encryption standard (AES) is 256 bit).
- o Must use a secure network.
- o Make sure that the technology hardware is functional and secure.
- o Regularly evaluate the functionality, security, and reliability of the software being used.
- o MFTs separate their personal social media profiles from professional profiles or pages.
- o Telehealth informed consent- All telehealth clients will receive a telehealth informed consent providing information on the security measures taken to protect their confidentiality and the inherent limitations with the use of technology to provide services.
- o Have a crisis management plan in place.
- o Failures and breaches Notifications-if more than 500 files are breached, the media must be notified; when less than 500 are breached, a breach notification must be sent to each person whose information was breached.

PRACTICUM

Students in the CFT MA program begin their Practicum experiences after completion of all required core skills classes. Students may enroll in one course concurrently (either CMFT 6000 or CMFT 6140) with Practicum (CMFT 5910 and CMFT 5911). All other courses must be completed satisfactorily before students can begin their Practicum. Students must submit an application to register for Practicum classes by the following deadlines:

For Spring Semester - September 15

For Summer Semester - February 15

For Fall Semester - April 15

The link to apply can be found here:

https://forms.ucdenver.edu/secure/sehd_practicum_application

Upon submission, the program academic advisor will review student course history to ensure they are eligible to start Practicum. Once approved, students must register for both CMFT 5910 (3 credits) and CMFT 5911 (3 credits) to receive individual/dyadic and group supervision.

Practicum site

Students begin their Practicum at the CU Denver Counseling Center

(<https://www.ucdenver.edu/counseling-center>) and will receive an additional manual with policies and procedures related to clinical practice for Practicum students at the Center.

Note: The CU Denver Counseling Center Practicum manual includes information from multiple MA programs in the SEHD. Please follow clinical requirements listed in this handbook for the MA in CFT program. Other policies related to the Practicum experience is the same and are listed below.

Practicum experiences at the CU Denver Counseling Center include both in-person and teletherapy sessions, and use of live supervision with supervisors and students observing sessions in real time either Behind The Glass (BTG) or virtually.

Additionally, interested students may be able to supplement their clinical experiences at another site in the community. You will be informed about these opportunities by the program clinical coordinator, Dr. Randolph, as well as in the Practicum class (CMFT 5910).

Practicum expectations

Students should be prepared to spend AT LEAST 15-20 hours per week over a 15-week period in Practicum activities (Summer Practicum students should be prepared to spend at least 20-25 hours per week over a 10 week period). Due to the varied availability of clients, students should be prepared to spend more hours in one-on-one sessions as the semester progresses.

Documentation of clinical hours

Students must record their clinical hours with individual and relational clients using the biweekly log (see Appendix A below) and submit them on time. Any delays in recording hours or obtaining signatures must be communicated to the instructor in a timely manner. Please see CMFT 5910/5911 and CMFT 5930 for course specific guidelines.

Beginning February, 2024 documentation of clinical hours will be on Tevera.

Practicum evaluation and grading

In addition to informal evaluations during individual supervisory sessions, Practicum students will be formally evaluated by their supervisors on a variety of skills and activities at midterm and again at the end of the semester.

Letter grades will be given based on the following considerations:

- Attendance at class meetings.
- Professional/ethical behavior.
- Evaluation of skills and performance on Practicum Student Midterm and Final evaluations.
- Timely completion of all paperwork.
- Accurate note taking and record keeping.
- Arranging and attending individual supervision on a weekly basis.
- Following through with clinic policies & requirements.
- Openness to, and incorporation of Supervisor feedback.

Student evaluations are based on AAMFT core competencies for clinical practice. The final grade reflects the level of performance at the end of practicum.

Remediation plan

The individual supervisor evaluates students' progress bi-monthly and conducts formal evaluations at midterm and at the end of the semester. The supervisory team may identify students who are not meeting Practicum objectives at the midterm evaluation. In these cases, a formal remediation plan will be designed by individual supervisor and the practicum student. Both will sign the document and track progress. These students may be required to continue in Practicum for a second semester unless they have proven themselves to be proficient by the final evaluation at the end of the semester.

Practicum FAQs

- How long should I be enrolled in Practicum?

Students enroll for one semester in CMFT 5910 and CMFT 5911 for a total of 6 credit hours. Students who successfully complete all requirements and receive a suitable grade move on to their internship experience.

- Should I complete 40 hours of clinical contact for a grade in Practicum?

This applies only to students in the COUN/CFT dual track. Students in the MA in CFT program do not have a minimum required hours for receiving a grade.

It is, however, recommended that you make every effort to build an active case load of about 4-6 hours of direct clinical contact per week.

- What are ways in which I can increase my relational cases?

The best way to increase access to couples and family therapy at the counseling center is to conduct outreach work in the community and on campus where couples and families are likely to frequent. Some examples would be schools, community events centered around parents and children, community spaces on campus, and community or campus events where relationships are the focus. You may use your outreach hours as a way of spreading information about services available at the Counseling center for those who are not students at CU Denver.

Another way to gain relational hours during practicum is to volunteer with the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation to co-facilitate groups. The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation conducts relational groups for children whose parents or caregivers struggle with alcohol and/or drug misuse. Practicum students can volunteer for weekly groups that last a couple hours or weekend intensives that span across 3-4 days. More information on Hazelden Betty Ford will be provided from a representative of the organization during practicum orientation or the first week of practicum class.

- What technology requirements are needed for Practicum?

Technology requirements: Instructions for setting up remote access are available in the Practicum course CANVAS page. If you do not have a laptop you can use for practicum, please email sehdhcp@ucdenver.edu to borrow one of theirs.

INTERNSHIP

Students begin their Internship in CMFT 5930 after successful completion of Practicum (CMFT 5910 & CMFT 5911). The internship experience is designed to provide students with an opportunity to practice and expand their couple and family therapy skills in a field setting. These vary from community-based treatment centers to private practice settings serving a large population of clients from diverse backgrounds seeking services for psychological and relational distress. A current list of approved sites is available on the CFT program CANVAS page.

Students must enroll in *at least two semesters* of internship. However, in some cases, internship sites may require a longer commitment. Please check with your sites when you interview with them and contact Dr. Randolph if you have questions. At times students may have to enroll in a *third semester* of internship if they are unable to complete the 300-hour client contact requirement for graduation.

Note: If you are receiving financial aid and need to register for a certain number of credits to maintain qualification, please contact the program advisor, Dr. Geneva Sarcedo (Geneva.sarcedo@ucdenver.edu) for guidance.

Application to enroll in Internship (CMFT 5930)

Students must complete this internship application form before every semester they intend to register for Internship (CMFT 5930) : <https://sehd.ucdenver.edu/cpce-internships/internship-application/>

The due dates are as follows:

For starting Internship in Fall Semester – June 15th

For starting Internship in Spring Semester – September 15th

For starting Internship in Summer Semester – April 15th

Applying for an Internship site

Students typically begin exploring internship sites **one semester before they start practicum**. For example, if you are on track to enroll in Practicum (CMFT 5910 and CMFT 5911) in Spring semester, you will begin looking for an appropriate site in the Fall semester. You may begin the process earlier. Please email the program clinical coordinator, Dr. Randolph, if you have questions about existing or new internship sites.

Secondary sites

Students can have a maximum of **two** internship sites. Students can participate in these two sites on either a concurrent or contiguous basis. All application materials must be completed for both sites, including the collection of license and vita/resume from the on-site supervisor, prior to the end of the semester before the start of internship.

Clinical Supervision requirements

On-site supervision

On-site supervision must be provided by the internship site's on-site supervisor at least once a week while the student is in internship. Students who have two sites will need to have on-site supervision by both their primary and secondary site supervisors or have an agreement in place with their primary site supervisor to supervise the hours they receive at their secondary site.

Video or audio recording for supervision

Students need at least 50 hours of raw data supervision (of the total 100 hours of supervision in Practicum and Internship). Supervision of raw data includes live supervision and reviewing audio and/or video recordings of sessions. All approved internship sites allow sessions to be recorded.

Documentation of clinical hours

Students must record their clinical hours with individual and relational clients using the biweekly log (see Appendix B below). Clinical hours must be verified and signed by the on-site supervisor and the instructor for Internship (CMFT 5930) and must be submitted to the Internship instructor

on time. Any delays in recording hours or obtaining signatures must be communicated to the instructor in a timely manner.

Expectations of students in Internship

During the internship, students will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to implementing and expanding the following internship specific skills:

- Establishing and maintaining an ongoing client caseload.
- Demonstration and application of appropriate family systemic theories and skills.
- Development of specialized skills relevant to the requirements of the host site.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with staff, supervisors, and colleagues.
- Demonstration of willingness to meet professional obligations.
- Demonstration of enthusiasm and commitment to the Couple and Family Therapy profession.
- Demonstrating a willingness to learn and sensitivity to feedback.
- Demonstration of personal traits conducive to effective family systems therapy, learning, and professional development.
- Perform all family systems therapy and related activities in an ethical and legal manner.
- Demonstration of willingness to explore and use community resources for referrals.
- AAMFT student membership and liability insurance

Internship evaluation process

Evaluation of student

Students will be evaluated by their on-site supervisors at mid-term and at the end of each semester. The evaluations will be sent directly to on-site supervisors through Tevera.

Student evaluations are based on AAMFT core competencies for clinical practice. The final grade reflects the level of performance at the end of practicum.

Evaluation of site supervisor

At the end of each semester students will complete an evaluation of their on-site supervisor via Tevera. These evaluations are not accessible to the on-site supervisor until after the student's placement is complete.

Evaluation of Internship instructors

Students will evaluate their internship instructors at the end of each semester via Tevera.

Internship FAQs

- **What is the minimum length of internship?**

All students must participate in at least two semesters of internship to meet graduation requirements. Including practicum, it is a yearlong commitment.

- **How many hours per week is spent on Internship?**

Students are expected to spend at least 20 hours per week engaging in internship activities. These activities include direct client contact hours, weekly team meetings, on-site supervision, group supervision, and clinical documentation.

- **How many clients should I average per Internship semester to complete clinical requirements for graduation?**

Students should aim to complete an average of 10 direct client contact hours a week with half of those being relational hours.

- **What do I do if an internship site is no longer suitable for training?**

If you are having problems with your internship site first let your internship instructor know. They will work with you and your on-site supervisor to get an idea of what the problems are and collaborate on a solution that will work for all parties. If the problems at the internship site continue after that initial meeting, the program clinical coordinator will step in and try to resolve the issue with the student, internship instructor, and the on-site supervisor.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources provide more information about licensing in Colorado and across the country:

MFT licensing requirements in Colorado

- DORA requirements for licensure in Colorado:
<https://dpo.colorado.gov/MarriageFamilyTherapy>
- DORA license eligibility and policies
<https://dpo.colorado.gov/MarriageFamilyTherapy/LawsRulesPolicies>

Licensing requirements across states in the United States

- AAMFT resource:
https://www.aamft.org/AAMFT/BUILD_Your_Career/MFT_State_Provincial_Resources/Advocacy/State_Resources/MFT_State_Resources.aspx?hkey=261d7879-9d5b-4aa0-b60c-c15e82b8b095

Teletherapy regulations

- AAMFT updates (https://www.aamft.org/Events/State_Guide_for_Telehealth.aspx)
- AMFTRB guidelines for MFT teletherapy and telesupervision (<https://amftrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/AMFTRB-Teletherapy-Guidelines-9-21.pdf>)

APPENDICES

CU Denver MA in CFT Program

Practicum Hour Log Template*

Dates							Weekly Total	Last week's Cumulative total	Cumulative total (Add this week + last week's cumulative)
Client contact									
Individual sessions									
Couple/Family sessions									
Group therapy sessions (non-relational)									
Group therapy sessions (relational)									
<i>Direct Clinical contact hours (Add the above)</i>									
Observations at UCD Counseling Center									
Supervision									
Individual supervision									
Case report									
Video/audio recording									
Practicum class (group supervision)									
Case report									

Video/audio recording									
Behind The Glass supervision (Record only if BTG supervisor is CFT program supervisor)									
<i>Total Supervision (Add all the above)</i>									
<i>Total supervision with Observable data (All Video/Audio + BTG with CFT program supervisor)</i>									
Outreach (record hours and project)									
Other Hours (record hours and tasks)									

Case report: Any time spent on topics related to clinical work or case conceptualization.

Video/audio recording: Supervision based on recorded sessions of anyone in your dyadic pair or group.

*Clinical hours will be tracked on Tevera from February, 2024.

Appendix B: Internship Hourly Log**

Student Name	Week of:
Host Organization:	
On-Site Supervisor:	University Supervisor:
For each activity listed, list the total number of hours engaged in that activity for each day. For special activities (i.e. seminars, workshops, etc.), list the title as well as the hours spent. Your On-Site Supervisor must sign off on each weekly log.	

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	WEEKLY TOTAL	LAST WEEK TOTAL	CUMULATIVE TOTAL
Date										
Client(s)--Family										
Client(s)--Group										
Client(s)--Individual										
Record keeping										
Individual Supervision										
Group Supervision										
Consultation										
Staff Meetings										
Seminars/Workshops										
Other										
Daily Totals										

COMMENTS:

Supervisor's Signature _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

** *Clinical hours will be tracked on Tevera from February, 2024.