

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The MFT program at UW-Stout has a number of policies and procedures that support its governance model. These policies guide such decisions as how we determine who is invited to be a part of the program, requirements of students, how students are reviewed, and student rights. They include the following policies and procedures:

### Anti-discrimination

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at the University of Wisconsin-Stout provides equal opportunity to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, relationship status, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religion and spiritual beliefs and/or affiliation, and/or national origin with regard to the recruitment, admission, codes of conduct, hiring, retention, or dismissal of students, faculty, and supervisors or other relevant educators and/or staff.

### Recruitment

The Marriage and Family Therapy program at UW-Stout values diversity. We seek a group of students for each cohort who are diverse based on a number of criteria including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and religion. Although many applicants have degrees in Human Development, Family Science, Psychology, or a related human service field, this is not a requirement for admission to the program. The program values professional experience (both paid and volunteer) as well as life experience in general.

### Admission Procedures

The Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy program works in consort with the UW-Stout Graduate School and abides by all admission policies and procedures required by the Graduate School for admission to graduate study and degree candidacy. Consistent with the Graduate School's policy, candidates seeking admission to this degree program, concentrations, and emphases must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and have an overall grade point average of at least 2.75. Upon recommendation of the program director, applicants may be admitted on probationary status if their overall undergraduate grade point average is less. Graduate level credits and GPA earned by candidates will be evaluated by program faculty as well as the Graduate College as part of the overall degree candidate review process.

The Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy graduate student admission procedures follow in sequence:

1. The prospective candidate makes application to the graduate school for admission into a graduate level program at UW-Stout. The prospective candidate simultaneously completes and submits to the MFT program specific application forms by the published application priority deadline.
2. All applicants' portfolios are then evaluated on the basis of previous academic preparation, forms and letters of recommendation and work experience. No GRE or other entrance exam is

required. Those deemed most appropriate from the pool of applicants are invited to campus for the interview process.

3. Those candidates invited to the interview process complete a morning interview with the MFT Admission Committee and an afternoon interview and role play experience with the second year MFT students. All applicants are independently evaluated by the MFT Admission Committee members and second year students. These evaluations are used to help the committee select the applicants that will be offered admission to the program.
4. The list of applicants offered admission is forwarded to the Graduate School who then notifies all applicants of their status in relation to the MFT Program.
5. Students admitted to the program must complete a criminal background check the results of which do not prevent their entry into the program but could affect their ability to find a suitable practicum site and suitable employment upon graduation.
6. Should an opening occur in the program once the priority deadline has passed, any new or remaining applicants who meet the requirements specified in numbers one and two above are reviewed by a subcommittee of the Admission Committee. At this point, applicants are approached one at a time until the opening is filled, at which time steps four and five are completed.
7. Applicants who are not admitted for enrollment may reapply in a future year.

#### Grading and Assessment

The Marriage and Family Therapy program adheres to grading policies established by the Graduate School. The following grading scheme is used in determining course grades:

|    |              |    |                |
|----|--------------|----|----------------|
| A  | Exceptional  | C  | Marginal       |
| A- |              | D  | Unsatisfactory |
| B+ |              | F  | Failure        |
| B  | Satisfactory | I  | Incomplete     |
| B- |              | IP | In Progress    |
| C+ |              |    |                |

To maintain full academic standing, students must maintain a grade point average of 3.0. Students who fall below that grade point average will be placed on academic probation. A grade of Incomplete may be given in rare circumstances. It requires a contract between the student and instructor regarding completion of course assignments. A grade of Incomplete is good for one year; following this time it becomes an F. An In-Progress grade may be given for courses where the requirements of the class take longer than the length of a semester (e.g., a thesis or Plan B paper). Re-registration is required if the course is not completed within one year. Further information on grade policies can be found in Graduate School policies located on their website

<https://liveuwstout.sharepoint.com/sites/2022/023/SitePages/Forms-and-Policies.aspx>

### Authenticity of Student Work

Assignments turned in by students must represent their own work. Representing the work of another as your own, falsifying data, cheating on exams, and other forms of academic misconduct are not acceptable. These actions are subject to sanctions including reprimands, reduced grades in assignments or classes, or removal from the course or program. The program follows University of Wisconsin System guidelines regarding academic misconduct. Further information can be found at [https://web.archive.org/web/20170911004847/http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/uws/14.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20170911004847/http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14.pdf).

### Student Review/Retention/Dismissal

The Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy review/retention/dismissal policy is designed: (1) To provide students (also known as “degree candidates” once they have filed an approved Degree Plan and have met the residency requirements of the Graduate School) with information related to their progress in acquiring skills and competencies essential to professional practice; and (2) to provide program faculty with the necessary information to evaluate student/degree candidate progress toward achieving the skills and competencies required for professional practice in the specified program.

Program procedures to implement this policy consist of the following:

1. A formal meeting of the clinical supervisors each semester (Summer excluded) to review progress of all second year students enrolled in the Marriage and Family Therapy program. The quality of a student’s academic work and readiness to take on the rigors of clinical work (as it relates to practicum) is considered.
2. Any faculty member or professional field supervisor, at any time, can request faculty review of a student's progress toward meeting degree requirements and acquiring and exhibiting competencies necessary for professional practice. Such requests will be forwarded through the program director.
3. Students receiving notice of unsatisfactory progress will consult with the program director, perhaps with the inclusion of the program’s team of MFT supervisors, regarding their deficiencies and will establish specific written objectives to remediate such deficiencies. The written objectives will become a personal record in the student's file. Failure to remediate deficiencies during the next faculty review period or otherwise agreed upon time frame will result in consideration for dismissal from the program.
4. If during the semester review or by other faculty request the faculty deems that the student's progress is unsatisfactory or his or her behavior constitutes a serious violation of professional practice or ethics, as determined by the faculty, core faculty will investigate. The committee's findings will be presented in timely fashion to the faculty in closed session for recommended action.
5. Any action by the faculty will be conveyed to the student in writing by the program director with specific recommendations for remediation or notice of dismissal.
6. The core faculty reserves the authority to suspend or terminate a student's enrollment in a program at any time for inadequate academic or performance-related reasons as determined by

the faculty in the program. If a student's enrollment is suspended or terminated, they may request a review of the decision by the Dean of the College or their designee. The purposes of a review are to permit a student to challenge (1) the factual information that formed the basis of the decision, and/or (2) the sanction: suspension or termination. Such request must be made in writing to the Dean or designee within 22 working days of notification of suspension or termination and must identify the basis or bases for the review or challenge to the factual basis and/or sanction. A review is not an adversarial proceeding. The student may appear before the Dean or designee personally. A review shall be held within 10 working days of the date the Dean or designee receives the request, except that it may be held at a later date upon mutual agreement or upon order of the Dean or designee. Following the conclusion of the review, the Dean or designee shall advise the student or degree candidate of /their decision in writing within 10 working days. The Dean or designee will notify the Graduate College of the decision within 5 working days. The Dean or designee's decision is final.

7. In extenuating circumstances, such as when a student is considered a risk to themselves or others, appropriate authorities will be involved such as police and the Dean of Student's Office.

The following criteria will be used as evidence of satisfactory progress toward a Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy graduate degree:

1. Meeting all of the UW-Stout Graduate School requirements including grade point and residency.
2. Maintaining progress toward degree completion as agreed upon in the student's or degree candidate's program plan.
3. Maintaining a minimum 3.00 GPA (on a 4.00 scale) in all graduate courses taken as part of a program completion plan.
4. Successful completion of all of the MFT Practicums with a grade of B or higher.
5. Exhibiting adherence to professional Code of Ethics as defined by the American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy and the Code of Conduct as defined by the State of Wisconsin's Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counselor and Social Work Administrative Rules.
6. Program faculty, meeting for purpose of professional review, determine the student (degree candidate's) capability to successfully perform the professional duties and responsibilities as required in professional practice.

### Complaints and Grievances

Students who have concerns or complaints regarding a classroom or supervisory experience are first advised to try to address the concern with the specific instructor/supervisor. If not satisfied, the student is advised to contact that instructor/supervisor's Department Chairperson. If interaction with the Department Chair does not resolve the issue, the student may contact the Dean of the College. If the Dean fails to promote satisfactory resolution, the student can then appeal to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and beyond to the Chancellor. Beyond these suggested guidelines, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with that section of the *UW-Stout Student Manual* titled "Student Complaint Process."

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170828102026/http://www.uwstout.edu/services/dean/assistance/complaint.cfm>. If the concern is about the MFT program in general (rather than a classroom concern), the

student is advised to contact the MFT Program Director. If the student fails to achieve satisfaction at the level of the Program Director or the program faculty committee, or if the concern regards the Program Director and is perceived as too sensitive to address directly, they are encouraged to contact the Dean of the College, and so forth as designated above.

#### Inability to Complete Program as a Full-Time Student.

Because it is based on a cohort model, the program is designed for full-time students who will proceed through the program together as an intact class. Courses are scheduled and sequenced as such. Therefore, any student who for whatever reason drops a course or discontinues the program for a length of time will complicate their path to graduation. *Any student contemplating such action needs to consult ahead of time with the Program Director in order to assess the potential impact on future progress in the program.* While the program will do whatever it can to reasonably accommodate the student's situation, there may be circumstances where it is not possible.

#### Limits of Student/Supervisee Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 protects the privacy of students' educational records. Information may not be given to a third party without the student's written permission. The student should know that it is permissible for persons who share in training responsibilities to consult with one another in order to monitor and advance student/supervisee development. This includes both on and off-campus supervisors/instructors/administrators. However, the content of such consultation will be limited directly to the student's education and no other student/supervisee confidences will be shared with anyone outside of the training context without written authorization, unless to report trainee behavior that appears unethical, unsafe or illegal.

#### Technology Requirements

Completing the Marriage and Family Therapy program at Stout requires access to a computer and basic technological skills:

- Students will need to complete course assignments using word processing and spread sheet programs compatible with those used by faculty (currently, Microsoft 365). They are expected to enter the program with these skills.
- Students will need to navigate the University's web-based platform (currently Canvas) for accessing course materials, turning in assignments, viewing grades, participating in discussion boards, etc.
- Students will need to access data bases housed in the library to complete course assignments.
- During the second year, students working in the Clinical Services Center will be required to record and review sessions using the clinic's digital recording system and the utilize the electronic records program use in the clinic.

#### Technical Training for Students, Faculty, and Supervisors

##### Students:

- Canvas: Students can enroll in a self-paced course on using Canvas at <https://uwsto.instructure.com/enroll/RRTRYT>.

- Library: Students will receive an orientation to library services, including accessing data bases, during a session with a resource librarian arranged by the program. This is generally conducted during the orientation session conducted before the start of classes.
- Digital recording system and electronic records program: Students will be trained in the use of the Clinical Services Center digital recording system and the electronic records program by clinic staff during their orientation to the clinic.

Faculty:

- Faculty can receive support from the Learning and Information Technology department on campus. LIT offers numerous workshops on using web-based platforms to enhance teaching. A consultant is also assigned to the Human Development and Family Science department in which the program is housed. Faculty can contact the consultant for specific issues related to the platform.
- Faculty can consult the Help Desk for help with technical issues related to University issued computers.
- Faculty can consult with a resource librarian for help with accessing data bases housed in the library.

Supervisors:

- On-campus supervisors can receive an orientation to the digital recording system from clinic staff.
- Off-campus supervisors need to be conversant with email and have the ability to respond to online surveys and other queries.

License portability to other states.

Most of the students in the program at Stout are from Wisconsin and Minnesota and intend to practice in these states following graduation. However, not everyone who graduates from this program ends up practicing in Wisconsin or Minnesota. Every state has unique requirements for licensure and there is no guarantee that completing the program at Stout will fulfill all the requirements for licensure in another state. A summary of requirements for each state can be found on the Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards website ([www.amftrb.org](http://www.amftrb.org)). *If you are planning to practice in a different state than Wisconsin or Minnesota following graduation, let the Program Director know as soon as possible.* They can help you access and review requirements for licensure in the state in which you are intending to locate and can assist you in determining if additional coursework will be needed in your program at Stout.