

MEMORANDUM

DATE	January 7, 2026
TO	Workforce Development Committee
FROM	Rosanne Helms, Legislative Manager
SUBJECT	Discussion and Possible Recommendations Regarding Proposed LMFT Education Requirements

Background

In July 2025, the Committee began a discussion regarding streamlining and modernizing the education requirements for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs).

The goal of this effort is to consolidate the multiple pathways to licensure (e.g. in state applicant versus out-of-state applicant) into a single streamlined pathway. Additionally, educational requirements will be examined to determine if modernization of the required content is desired.

Once amendments for LMFTs are developed, the Committee will move on to doing the same for the LPCC and then the LCSW practice acts.

The LMFT education requirements are complex, and many individual requirements need to be examined in depth. Due to this, the Committee determined that it would be best to split this effort into several small pieces. Areas to be examined are as follows:

- 1. Step 1: Qualifying Degree Accreditation, Core Content and Practicum Requirements (*To be discussed today.*)**
Conduct a detailed discussion of the required features a qualifying degree must have, including accreditation, core content, and practicum.
- 2. Step 2: Graduate-Level Course Content and Allowable Remediation**
Define which course content areas should be required at a graduate level, what the coursework should entail, the required unit amounts, and the appropriate limits of remediation. Examples of graduate-level course content include assessment, diagnosis, and lifespan development.
- 3. Step 3: Supplemental Coursework Requirements (Content allowed as Continuing Education)**
Review the Board's supplemental course content areas individually for needed updates or modernization. This is content that must cover specific areas, usually measured in hours instead of units. Instead of being required as graduate level coursework, remediation via continuing education courses is permitted. Examples

include child abuse assessment, substance use disorders, and suicide risk assessment.

4. Step 4: National Attainability and Unintended Consequences

Once all of the above have been determined, the proposed requirements should be reviewed again as a whole to ensure they are reasonably attainable for graduates of programs nationwide and to ensure they do not unintentionally disqualify a significant number of applicants. *Note: Path A (for licensees with at least two years of equivalent licensure in another state) will remain available.*

5. Step 5: Pre-Degree Hours

Examine the requirements for MFT trainees in practicum counting pre-degree hours and explore extending the same allowance to PCC trainees and social work interns.

6. Step 6: Provisional Associate Registration Concept

Explore whether implementation of the new education framework presents an opportunity to formalize the current “90-day rule” by creating a one-year provisional associate registration for applicants who apply within 90 days of degree conferral. This would bring them under the Board’s jurisdiction while they await issuance of their full associate registration.

7. Step 7: Formal Approval of School Programs

Consider implementing a formal process to recognize and approve school programs that meet the Board’s requirements for a qualifying degree.

Course Timing and School Location

It is important to keep in mind that this proposal will depart from existing law in two major ways:

Course Timing: Current law allows remediation of certain coursework at various times throughout the licensing process, with some courses needing remediation prior to licensure and some needing remediation prior to associate registration. Course remediation requirements are inconsistent across license types. In an effort to streamline the law and promote public protection by ensuring competency in all required subjects, this proposal will require all courses that are permitted to be remediated to be remediated prior to associate registration.

School Location: Current law sets licensing requirements based on whether the degree was earned at an “in-state” versus an “out-of-state” school. This is increasingly problematic with the increase of online schools, and schools who may have sites in California but that are headquartered elsewhere.

This proposal will eliminate separate requirements for “in-state” and “out-of-state” schools, instead establishing one uniform set of requirements for all applicants.

Subject Matter Experts

To support the Committee and staff in evaluating current educational needs, practices, and standards, a team of three subject matter experts (SMEs) was assembled to provide ongoing guidance throughout this process. These individuals are highly credentialed licensees and educators in the LMFT and LPCC fields, each bringing extensive experience and expertise in clinical education and professional training. The SME advisory team includes:

- Dr. Leah Brew, LPCC, and Professor in the Department of Counseling at California State University, Fullerton. She is also a subject matter expert to review LMFT and LPCC programs and former BBS LPCC Board member,
- Benjamin E. Caldwell, PsyD, LMFT, adjunct faculty in the MFT program at California State University Northridge.
- Diana Herweck, PsyD, LMFT, LPCC, LPC (CT), NCC, ACS; Director of Clinical Training, Palo Alto University. She is also a former BBS LPCC Board member.

Proposed Amendments: Step 1 – Qualifying Degree Accreditation, Core Content, and Practicum Requirements

The proposed language shown in **Attachment A** represents a draft of Step 1 – amending BPC section 4980.36 to define the core features a qualifying degree for LMFT licensure must have, including accreditation, core content, and practicum requirements. Staff developed the amendments based on discussions with the SMEs. Only the part of BPC section 4980.36 covering these topics is shown; additional subdivisions of that section will be added to the discussion at future meetings as this project progresses.

The proposal defines a qualifying degree as a master's or doctorate degree in marriage and family therapy or a related mental health field that contains at least 60 semester or 90 quarter units of graduate coursework. This is a change from the current requirements, which only allows degrees with specific titles. The qualifying degree must meet the following standards:

Accreditation: The proposal requires the qualifying degree be from an educational institution that is accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education (USDE) or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE). Applicants whose degree program is additionally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Education (COAMFTE) or by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) with the specialization in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling will also be exempt from Board review of certain educational requirements (exactly what those “exempt” requirements will be is not spelled out yet, and will be determined by staff and the SMEs upon further research as this proposal progresses.)

While COAMFTE accredited degrees are already accepted by the Board, the Committee may wish to discuss the new inclusion of CACREP MFT Specialty accredited degrees. A side-by-side overview of the basic degree requirements and the specific foundational coursework requirements of each program are shown in **Attachments C and D**, respectively.

Core Content: The proposal requires the qualifying degree be single, integrated program that meets certain core requirements.

- The degree program must be a planned course of study grounded in systemic theory and approaches primarily designed to train a person to provide direct therapeutic services within the context of marriage and family systems.
- The degree program must specify in its catalogues or program materials that the intent of the program is to educate and train marriage and family therapists. (For example, statements that the program prepares students to pass the national LMFT licensing exam, or that the program prepares students for LMFT state licensure.)
- The degree program must integrate marriage and family therapy principles throughout its curriculum; and
- The degree program must develop its students' abilities to explore and apply culturally responsive skills and interventions.

The requirement for the qualifying degree be a single, integrated program is not new. However, as programs evolve, questions have been raised regarding what constitutes a single, integrated program and what, if any, exceptions can be made. For example, what is allowable in cases of school closures, transfer units, or combined masters and doctoral programs? In an attempt to clarify this further and allow some flexibility while maintaining the law's intent that a degree not be pieced together from multiple degrees or programs, staff proposes a new section that defines an integrated degree and provides some limited exceptions (**Attachment B**). The Committee should discuss the provisions of this section.

Practicum: The qualifying degree must have a practicum component. The practicum requirement has been amended to shift focus away from prescribing specific course content, and instead toward requiring the course to provide and support supervised fieldwork experience that develops psychotherapeutic skills. The unit requirement (6 semester or 9 quarter) remains the same.

Based on a review of other states, the SMEs believe that the required direct counseling hours currently required is very low. Current law requires 150 face-to-face counseling hours, plus an additional 75 hours of either face-to-face direct counseling or client centered advocacy (225 hours total). In contrast, Oregon

requires 280 hours (with allowed remediation), Ohio requires 500 hours, COAMFTE programs must have 300 hours, and CACREP programs must have 240 hours.

The SMEs believe it would be reasonable to require practicum to contain a minimum of 240 face-to-face counseling experience hours, for applicants beginning their qualifying degree program on or after January 1, 2030. This would give schools time to adjust and would not adversely affect individuals currently earning their degrees. Additionally, instead of prescribing course content, the law has been changed for these practicum programs to focus on ensuring they utilize certain quality control measurements such as having supervisory staff with a master's degree in the program emphasis, having provisions for faculty to monitor program operations, having a mechanism to ensure the required practicum hours are met, having a written agreement specifying learning objectives, and having a mechanism for evaluating the practicum placement.

Under this proposal, the practicum requirements for those with older degrees (degrees begun before January 1, 2030 or degrees begun before August 1, 2012 and completed before December 31, 2018) would remain unchanged.

Recommended Next Steps

Conduct an open discussion regarding the proposed language in **Attachments A and B**. Direct staff to make any discussed changes and any nonsubstantive changes. Determine whether the Committee would like staff to continue work on this piece of the proposal and bring it back to the next Committee meeting for further discussion, and/or if the Committee would like staff to begin work on Step 2 of the project: **Graduate-level course content and allowable remediation**.

Attachments

Attachment A: Proposed Language: Draft LMFT Education Requirements - BPC §4980.36 (Partial)

Attachment B: Additional Section – Definition of Integrated Degree and Allowance of Transfer Units

Attachment C: Comparison of BBS, COAMFTE, and CACREP Degree Requirements

Attachment D: Comparison of Foundational Coursework Requirements: COAMFTE vs CACREP with MFT Specialty

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ATTACHMENT A
DRAFT LMFT EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE (BPC) §4980.36 (PARTIAL)

(NOTE: THE TEXT SHOWN BELOW DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL SUBDIVISIONS OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE SECTION 4980.36. IT ONLY INCLUDES SUBDIVISIONS PERTAINING TO QUALIFYING DEGREE ACCREDITATION, CORE CONTENT, AND PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS, WHICH IS WHAT THE COMMITTEE IS DISCUSSING TODAY. ADDITIONAL PORTIONS OF SECTION 4980.36 WILL BE INCLUDED AT FUTURE MEETINGS.)

Business and Professions Code (BPC) § 4980.36. QUALIFYING DEGREE PROGRAM FOR LICENSURE OR REGISTRATION; GRADUATE STUDY BEGAN ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 2012 OR COMPLETED AFTER DECEMBER 31, 2018
REQUIRED EDUCATION FOR LICENSURE OR REGISTRATION

(a) This section shall apply to the following:

- ~~(1) Applicants for licensure or registration who begin graduate study before August 1, 2012, and do not complete that study on or before December 31, 2018.~~
- ~~(2) Applicants for licensure or registration who begin graduate study before August 1, 2012, and who graduate from a degree program that meets the requirements of this section.~~
- ~~(3) Applicants for licensure or registration who begin graduate study on or after August 1, 2012.~~

This section shall apply to all applicants for registration or licensure as a marriage and family therapist in California. Qualifying applicants shall possess a master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy or in a related mental health field that contains no less than 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of graduate level instruction, and that meets the requirements of subsections (b) through (d).

- ~~(b) To qualify for a license or registration, applicants shall possess a doctoral or master's degree meeting the requirements of this section in marriage, family, and child counseling, marriage and family therapy, couple and family therapy, psychology, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, or either counseling or clinical mental health counseling with an emphasis in either marriage, family, and child counseling or marriage and family therapy. The degree shall be obtained from a school, college, or university approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, or accredited by either the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education, or a regional or national institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education. The board has the authority to make the final determination as to whether a degree meets all~~

~~requirements, including, but not limited to, course requirements, regardless of accreditation or approval.~~

(b) **Accreditation.** The qualifying degree required by subdivision (a) shall be from an educational institution that is accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education. If the qualifying degree program is additionally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Education or by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs with the specialization in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling, then Board shall accept that it meets all requirements of subdivisions (c) and (xx)

(c) **Program Structure.** A doctoral or master's degree program that qualifies for licensure or registration shall be a single, integrated program that does the following: The qualifying degree required by subdivision (a) shall be a single, integrated program that meets all of the following criteria:

- 1) Shall be a planned course of study grounded in systemic theory and systemic approaches that is primarily designed to train a person to provide direct therapeutic services to assist individuals, families, and intimate or romantic partners in resolving cognitive, affective, behavioral, or relational dysfunctions within the context of marriage and family systems.
- 2) Shall specify in institutional catalogues, brochures, or official program descriptions that the intent of the degree program is to educate and train marriage and family therapists. This includes but is not limited to, statements indicating that the program prepares students to pass the national marriage and family therapy examination, or statements that the program prepares students for marriage and family therapy state licensure.

~~(1) Integrate all of the following throughout its curriculum:~~

- ~~(A) Marriage and family therapy principles.~~
- ~~(B) The principles of mental health recovery-oriented care and methods of service delivery in recovery-oriented practice environments, among others.~~
- ~~(C) An understanding of various cultures and the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position, and an understanding of how poverty and social stress impact an individual's mental health and recovery.~~

3) Shall integrate marriage and family therapy principals throughout its curriculum.

4) Shall develop its students' abilities to explore and apply culturally responsive skills and interventions.

- ~~(2) Allow for innovation and individuality in the education of marriage and family therapists.~~
- ~~(3) Encourage students to develop the personal qualities that are intimately related to effective practice, including, but not limited to, integrity, sensitivity, flexibility, insight, compassion, and personal presence.~~
- ~~(4) Permit an emphasis or specialization that may address any one or more of the unique and complex array of human problems, symptoms, and needs of Californians served by marriage and family therapists.~~
- ~~(5) Provide students with the opportunity to meet with various consumers and family members of consumers of mental health services to enhance understanding of their experience of mental illness, treatment, and recovery.~~
- ~~(d) The degree described in subdivision (b) shall contain no less than 60 semester or 90 quarter units of instruction that includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:~~
 - ~~(1) Both of the following:~~
 - ~~(A) No less than 12 semester or 18 quarter units of coursework in theories, principles, and methods of a variety of psychotherapeutic orientations directly related to marriage and family therapy and marital and family systems approaches to treatment and how these theories can be applied therapeutically with individuals, couples, families, adults, including elder adults, children, adolescents, and groups to improve, restore, or maintain healthy relationships.~~
 - (d) Practicum.** ~~(B) Practicum that involves direct client contact, as follows:~~
 - ~~(i) A minimum of six semester or nine quarter units of practicum in a supervised clinical placement that provides supervised fieldwork experience.~~
 - ~~(ii) A minimum of 150 hours of face-to-face experience counseling individuals, couples, families, or groups.~~
 - ~~(iii) A student must be enrolled in a practicum course while counseling clients, except as specified in subdivision (c) of Section 4980.42.~~
 - ~~(iv) The practicum shall provide training in all of the following areas:~~
 - ~~(I) Applied use of theory and psychotherapeutic techniques.~~
 - ~~(II) Assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment planning.~~
 - ~~(III) Treatment of individuals and premarital, couple, family, and child relationships, including trauma and abuse, dysfunctions, healthy functioning, health promotion, illness prevention, and working with families.~~

~~(IV) Professional writing, including documentation of services, treatment plans, and progress notes.~~

~~(V) How to connect people with resources that deliver the quality of services and support needed in the community.~~

~~(v) Educational institutions are encouraged to design the practicum required by this subparagraph to include marriage and family therapy experience in low income and multicultural mental health settings.~~

~~(vi) In addition to the 150 hours required in clause (ii), 75 hours of either of the following, or a combination thereof:~~

~~(I) Client centered advocacy, as defined in Section 4980.03.~~

~~(II) Face-to-face experience counseling individuals, couples, families, or groups.~~

The qualifying degree shall include a minimum of six semester or nine quarter units of supervised clinical practicum that provides and supports supervised fieldwork experience in order to develop psychotherapeutic skills, as follows:

(1) For applicants who begin their qualifying degree program on or after January 1, 2030, the practicum shall meet all of the following:

(A) Provide a minimum of 240 hours of direct face-to-face experience counseling individuals, intimate or romantic partners, families or groups.

(B) Had supervisory staff with a minimum of a master's degree in the program emphasis and with pertinent professional experience.

(C) Made provisions for faculty monitoring of operations.

(D) Had a mechanism to confirm that the student met the practicum hours requirement.

(E) Had a written agreement with the program and student specifying learning objectives.

(F) Had a mechanism for evaluating the practicum placement.

(2) For applicants who begin their qualifying degree program before January 1, 2030 but who do not fall within the timeline specified in paragraph (3), the qualifying degree shall include a minimum of 150 hours of face-to-face experience counseling individuals, intimate or romantic partners, families or groups, plus an additional 75 hours of either client centered advocacy, as defined in section 4980.03, or face-to-face experience counseling individuals, intimate or

romantic partners, families or groups, or a combination thereof. The practicum shall provide training in applied use of theory and psychotherapeutic techniques, assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment planning, treatment of clients, professional writing, and connecting clients with community resources.

(3) For applicants who began graduate study before August 1, 2012, and completed that study on or before December 31, 2018, the qualifying degree shall meet the practicum requirements specified in section 4980.37.

(4) Trainees subject to paragraphs (1) or (2) above shall be enrolled in a practicum course while counseling clients who are located in California, except as specified in subdivision (c) of section 4980.42.

**ADDITIONAL SUBDIVISIONS OF BPC §4980.36 TO BE
DISCUSSED AT FUTURE MEETINGS**

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Attachment B

Additional Section – Definition of Integrated Degree and Allowance of Transfer Units

4980.xx Degree Integration and Transfer Units

For the purposes of section 4980.36, a “single, integrated degree” means a graduate program that is designed, delivered, and awarded by one institution as a cohesive course of study. The program shall be structured to meet the educational requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist, rather than assembled from unrelated or separately awarded degrees or coursework. The completed qualifying graduate degree shall be reflected on a single transcript which shall total no fewer than 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of graduate-level coursework. Coursework may only be brought from another program under the following limited exceptions:

(a) (1) **School Closure Exception.** Applicants who were enrolled in a qualifying graduate degree program at an institution that permanently closed may transfer coursework to a new educational institution, provided that:

- A. The receiving institution accepts the transferred coursework as equivalent and integrates it into the qualifying degree program.
- B. The official transcript from the degree-granting institution reflects a completed degree that meets all requirements of subsections (a) through (xx), and that totals no fewer than 60 semester units or 90 quarter units.

There is no limit on the number of transfer units for this exception, however, the required practicum coursework shall not be transferred and must be completed as part of the qualifying degree program from the degree-granting institution.

(2) **Combined Master’s/Doctoral Program Exception.** In the case of formally structured combined master’s and doctoral programs offered by the same institution, the 60 semester-unit or 90 quarter unit requirement may be met across both degrees, provided that:

- A. The degree-granting institution certifies that the coursework meets all requirements of subsections (a) through (xx).
- B. The coursework is part of a continuous, planned program of study in marriage and family therapy or a related mental health field and the applicant provides documentation from the institution verifying the integrated nature of the program.

(3) **Master’s-Level Transfer Credit Exception.** For applicants not qualifying for an exception under paragraphs (1) or (2), no more than 12 semester units or 18 quarter

units of graduate-level coursework may be transferred from another graduate degree program, provided that:

- A. The receiving institution accepts the transferred coursework as equivalent and integrates it into the qualifying degree program.
- B. The official transcript from the degree-granting institution reflects a completed degree that meets all requirements of subsections (a) through (xx), and that totals no fewer than 60 semester units or 90 quarter units.
- C. Practicum coursework shall not be transferred and must be completed as part of the qualifying degree program from the degree-granting institution.

(4) Undergraduate-Level Transfer Credit Exception. The Board shall not accept undergraduate courses as meeting any coursework requirement unless the applicant's official transcript clearly shows that the course was awarded graduate credit by the qualifying degree program. The following limits apply to graduate-level coursework taken as an undergraduate:

- A. If the coursework was taken from the same institution that issues the qualifying degree, the board will accept up to 12 semester units or 18 quarter units.
- B. If the coursework was taken from an institution other than the one that issues the qualifying degree, the board will accept up to 6 semester units or 9 quarter units.
- C. Practicum coursework shall not be transferred and must be completed as part of the qualifying degree program from the degree-granting institution.

(b) Institutional Certification Requirement. In all cases described above, the degree-granting institution shall certify that:

- 1. The content of the transferred coursework is in marriage and family therapy or in related areas directly supporting the development of the applicant's professional marriage and family, individual, or group therapy skills.
- 2. The completed degree program meets all educational requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist as outlined in subsections (a) through (xx).

Attachment C

Comparison of BBS, COAMFTE, and CACREP Degree Requirements

Measure	BBS Requirements	COAMFTE Accredited [1])	CACREP Accredited Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Specialty [2]
Units	60 semester/90 quarter units	Unspecified	60 semester/90 quarter units
Subject Matter		Required foundational curriculum covers 10 areas to cover the knowledge and skills to practice as an MFT.	Requires coursework in 8 foundational curriculum areas which provide the essential knowledge and skills to function effectively as a professional counselor.
Specialized Units	Planned course of study to in MFT systems.		
	12 semester/18 quarter units in theories/systems/methods of MFT psychotherapeutic orientations	Minimum 27 semester/ 36 quarter credits of specified foundational curriculum in areas 1-7.	Must enroll in at least one specialized practice area. The Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Specialty contains 14 areas that must be covered. (Units appear unspecified here.)
Practicum	6 semester/9 quarter units of practicum with 150 face-to-face counseling hours and 75 additional hours of that or client centered advocacy (225 hours total)	300 direct clinical contact hours. 100 hours of this must be relational hours. Required to have 100 hours of supervision, including 50 hours relational/systemic supervision.	100 hours of supervised practicum over at least 8 weeks, including at least 40 hours of direct client service. After practicum, completion of 600 hours of a supervised counseling internship in roles/settings and with clients relevant to their CACREP specialized practice area, including 240 hours with actual clients.

[1] Source: COAMFTE Accreditation Standards Version 12.5, Effective January 1, 2022.

[2] 2024 CACREP Standards

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Attachment D

Comparison of Foundational Coursework Requirements: COAMFTE vs CACREP with MFT Specialty

COAMFTE Foundational Curriculum Areas	CACREP With Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Specialized Practice Area
1) Foundations of Relational/Systemic Practice, Theories & Models (6 sem/8qtr): Includes foundations and critical epistemological issues of MFT, including history of MFT relational philosophy.	1) Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice: Includes history and philosophies, roles and responsibilities, advocacy, law and ethics.
2) Clinical Treatment with Individuals, Couples and Families (6 sem/8 qtr): Includes competencies in treatment approaches used in diverse individuals, couples, and families. Must include crisis intervention.	2) Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences: Includes theories of multicultural counseling, social justice, advocacy, and influence and effects of various socio-cultural influences.
3) Diverse, Multicultural and/or Underserved Communities (3 sem/4 qtr): Understanding and applying knowledge of diversity, privilege and oppression as related to a variety of factors including race, age, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other relevant social identities. Includes practice with these communities.	3) Lifespan Development: Includes individual and family development across the lifespan, theories of cultural identity development, personality, psychological adjustment, sexual development, and crisis, stress, grief, and trauma effects across the lifespan.
4) Research & Evaluation (3 sem/4 qtr): Develops competencies in MFT research and evaluation methods, evidence-based practice.	4) Career Development: Includes theories and models of career development and counseling, interrelationships between work, socioeconomic status and other life roles and factors, and strategies for assessing abilities, interests and other factors that contribute to career development.
5) Professional Identity, Law, Ethics, & Social Responsibility (3 sem/4 qtr): MFT identity and socialization, develop ethics competency, AAMFT code of ethics and legal responsibilities.	5) Counseling Practice and Relationships: Includes skills for clinical judgement in the counseling process, conceptualization skills using a variety of models and approaches, applying technology and law/ethics across delivery modalities, adaptation and accommodating to client culture/abilities, collaborative decision making, record keeping, caseload management, psychopharmacological effects, suicide prevention models, and crisis/trauma strategies.

CACREP**With Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling
Specialized Practice Area**

COAMFTE**Foundational Curriculum Areas**

6) Biopsychosocial Health & Development Across the Life Span (3 sem/4 qtr): Includes individual and family development, human sexuality, and health across lifespan.

7) Systemic/Relational Assessment & Mental Health Diagnosis and Treatment (3 sem/4 qtr): Includes competencies in psychopharmacology, assessment, diagnosis and treatment of major mental health issues as well as common problems including addiction, suicide, trauma, abuse, intra-family violence, and therapy for those managing acute chronic medical conditions. Uses an MFT relational/systemic philosophy.

8) Contemporary Issues (Required but no min.): Emerging challenges at the interface of MFT practice and the broader local/regional/global context. Examples: immigration, same-sex marriage, violence in schools.

9) Community Intersections & Collaboration (Required but no min.): Develops competencies in practice with defined context, such as schools, military, or private practice settings. Includes developing competency in multidisciplinary collaboration.

10) Preparation for Teletherapy Practice (Required but no min.): Develops competencies in teletherapy, including emerging legal/ethical requirements, documentation, response to crises, appropriate interventions.

6) Group Counseling and Group Work: Includes group dynamics and development, therapeutic factors of group work, and ethics and legal considerations of group counseling.

7) Assessment and Diagnostic Processes: Includes historical perspectives of assessment/testing in counseling, basics of standardized and non-standardized testing, statistical concepts, reliability and validity, cultural and developmental considerations, ethical and legal considerations. Also includes diagnostic process, differential diagnosis, diagnostic classification systems, procedures for identifying substances use, addiction, cooccurring disorders, suicide risk, trauma, abuse, and neglect.

8) Research and Program Evaluation: Includes research in advancing the counseling profession, evaluating evidence base for theories/interventions/practices, research designs, statistical tests, ethical and legal considerations for research and program evaluation.

MFT Specialization

M1) Family sociology and family of origin theories

M2) Aging and intergenerational influences

COAMFTE Foundational Curriculum Areas	CACREP With Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Specialized Practice Area
	M3) Impact of interpersonal violence on marriage/couples/families
	M4) Career, life and gender roles in marriage/couples/families
	M5) Impact of changes in socioeconomic standing/unemployment on marriage/couples/families
	M6) Migration impact on family functioning
	M7) Theories and models of marriage, couple, and family counseling
	M8) Assessment and case conceptualization from a systems perspective
	M9) Family assessments
	M10) Techniques and interventions of marriage, couple and family counseling
	M11) Conceptualizing and implementing treatment, planning and intervention strategies in marriage, couple, and family counseling
	M12) Service delivery modalities and networks in the continuum of care
	M13) Legal system strategies relevant to marriage, couple, and family counseling
	M14) Third party reimbursement and other practice/management issues in marriage, couple and family counseling.

[1] Source: COAMFTE Accreditation Standards Version 12.5, Effective January 1, 2022.

[2] 2024 CACREP Standards