

## MEMORANDUM

<b>DATE</b>	April 1, 2026
<b>TO</b>	Workforce Development Committee
<b>FROM</b>	Rosanne Helms, Legislative Manager
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Discussion and Possible Recommendations Regarding Proposed LMFT Education Requirements: Graduate-Level Course Content and Allowable Remediation</b>

The next phase (Step 2) of the MFT education review project focuses on defining the graduate-level course content required for licensure. This includes identifying the core content areas, clarifying what the coursework should encompass, establishing unit requirements, and determining the appropriate scope and limits of remediation. Examples of graduate-level content areas include assessment, diagnosis, and developmental issues.

To support this effort, staff reviewed the existing LMFT degree program requirements for current in-state applicants, in-state applicants with older degrees, and out-of-state applicants. Using these requirements, staff created a preliminary outline of proposed graduate-level content areas, presented in **Chart 1**. This outline is intended solely as a starting point for discussion. Following today's conversation, staff will collaborate with subject matter experts to further refine and develop the content.

Additionally, staff compiled the current supplemental coursework requirements, which may be completed at the graduate level or separately through continuing education (CE) (**Chart 2**). Although these supplemental requirements correspond to the next project phase (Step 3), they are closely related to today's topic and are included here for context. Examples of these types of courses include California-specific child abuse assessment, substance use disorders, and suicide risk assessment.

Staff anticipates that graduate-level coursework will be focused on broad, foundational MFT principles. More narrowly defined or California-specific topic areas would instead be addressed as supplemental coursework that could be remediated by completing a specified number of hours of coursework, either at a graduate level or from a CE provider.

### **Coursework Requirements for Accrediting Agencies and Other States**

COAMFTE and CACREP (with MFT specialty) both lay out foundational coursework requirements for their programs. **Attachment A** summarizes the requirements for each one.

Coursework requirements in other states are spelled out in varying levels of detail. **Attachment B** shows the requirements for Oregon, Ohio, and Texas.

**Recommended Next Steps**

Conduct an open discussion regarding the possible graduate-level course content requirements shown in **Chart 1**.

**Attachments**

**Chart 1:** Graduate-Level Course Content Requirements

**Chart 2:** Supplemental Coursework Requirements (Allowable as Continuing Education)

**Attachment A:** Foundational Coursework Requirements (COAMFTE and CACREP w/ MFT Specialty)

**Attachment B:** Coursework Requirements in Other States (Oregon, Ohio, and Texas)

**Relevant Code Sections:** Existing CA Law - BPC §§[4980.36](#), [4980.37](#), [4980.41](#), [4980.78](#), and [4980.81](#)

**Chart 1**  
**Graduate-Level Course Content Requirements**

Content Area	Units Sem./Qtr.	Notes
Family Systems		Covering family systems theory to prepare MFTs to work from a systems framework in a culturally responsive way.
Intimate & Romantic Partners		Covering theories and treatments that are specific to working with intimate and romantic partners in a culturally responsive way.
Children		Covering theories and treatments for providing services to children in a culturally responsive way. Include discussion of consultation with parents, teachers, and others.
Diagnosis		Diagnosis, prognosis, treatment planning, and treatment of mental disorders, including severe mental disorders, evidence-based practices, and promising mental health practices that are evidence based.
Assessment and Psychological Testing		Methods of assessment, types of assessment instruments, and practice administering assessments. Cover validity, reliability, and administration methods, and cultural considerations for choosing and interpreting instruments.
Psychopharmacology		Discuss whether or not this should be a full graduate level course.
Crisis and Trauma		Include elder abuse, CANRA, suicide risk assessment, and case management
Developmental Issues - Infancy to Old Age		Human development, human behavior and the effect of developmental issues on individuals/couples/families. Include cultural identity and forms of oppression and privilege. May include coursework that includes aging, maternal mental health, menopausal mental health, Alzheimer's/caregiving; w/ cultural context. (See BPC 4980.36(d)(2)(B), 4980.37(b)(3), 4980.81(a)(3) for current content requirements)
Life Events/Relationships		See BPC 4980.36(d)(2)(C), 4980.81(a)(4) for current content requirements. Possibly include as part of another course.

CA Law & Ethics		See BPC 4980.36(d)(2)(J), 4980.41(a)(1), 4980.81(a)(8) for current content requirements
Multicultural Development & CA Cultural Competency		Cultural competency & sensitivity. See BPC 4980.36(d)(2)(D) - (G)
Human Sexuality		Discuss whether or not this should be a full graduate level course.
Addictions		Substance use disorders, other addictions (such as online), co-occurring disorders biopsychosociocultural understanding of addictions, including potential etiologies, intervention, treatment modalities, and relapse prevention.
Research		With focus on critical review of research/how to appropriately use research for client treatments.

**Chart 2**  
**Supplemental Coursework Requirements (Allowable as Continuing Education)**

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<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Current Hour Requirement</b>
Suicide Risk Assessment/Intervention	6 hours
Telehealth	3 hours
CA Cultures	15 hours
CA-specific Child Abuse Assessment	7 hours
CA Law and Ethics	12 hours
Spousal/Partner Abuse Assessment	15 hours
Aging & Long Term Care (Inc. Elder Abuse)	10 hours
Human Sexuality	10 hours
Alcoholism & Other Chemical Substance Depo	15 hours
HIV/AIDS	7 hours
<b><u>Discuss Inclusion</u></b>	
Maternal mental health	
Caregiving/Alzheimer's	
Menopausal mental health	

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## Attachment A

### Foundational Coursework Requirements: COAMFTE and CACREP with MFT Specialty

<b>COAMFTE</b> <b>Foundational Curriculum Areas</b>	<b>CACREP</b> <b>With Marriage, Couple &amp; Family Counseling</b> <b>Specialized Practice Area</b>
<b>1) Foundations of Relational/Systemic Practice, Theories &amp; Models (6 sem/8qtr):</b> Includes foundations and critical epistemological issues of MFT, including history of MFT relational philosophy.	<b>1) Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice:</b> Includes history and philosophies, roles and responsibilities, advocacy, law and ethics.
<b>2) Clinical Treatment with Individuals, Couples and Families (6 sem/8 qtr):</b> Includes competencies in treatment approaches used in diverse individuals, couples, and families. Must include crisis intervention.	<b>2) Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences:</b> Includes theories of multicultural counseling, social justice, advocacy, and influence and effects of various socio-cultural influences.
<b>3) Diverse, Multicultural and/or Underserved Communities (3 sem/4 qtr):</b> 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.	<b>3) Lifespan Development:</b> 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.
<b>4) Research &amp; Evaluation (3 sem/4 qtr):</b> Develops competencies in MFT research and evaluation methods, evidence-based practice.	<b>4) Career Development:</b> 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.
<b>5) Professional Identity, Law, Ethics, &amp; Social Responsibility (3 sem/4 qtr):</b> MFT identity and socialization, develop ethics competency, AAMFT code of ethics and legal responsibilities.	<b>5) Counseling Practice and Relationships:</b> 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.
<b>6) Biopsychosocial Health &amp; Development Across the Life Span (3 sem/4 qtr):</b> Includes individual and family development, human sexuality, and health across lifespan.	<b>6) Group Counseling and Group Work:</b> Includes group dynamics and development, therapeutic factors of group work, and ethics and legal considerations of group counseling.

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**COAMFTE**  
**Foundational Curriculum Areas**

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

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**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.

**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

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COAMFTE</b> <b>Foundational Curriculum Areas</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CACREP</b> <b>With Marriage, Couple &amp; Family Counseling</b> <b>Specialized Practice Area</b></p>
	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](#)

## **Attachment B**

### **Coursework Requirements in Other States**

#### **Oregon Education Requirements**

[Oregon Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists - Chapter 833](#)

Division 40: REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

#### **Educational Requirements for Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist**

To qualify for licensure as a marriage and family therapist under ORS 675.715(1)(b), an applicant must hold a graduate degree from one of the following:

- (1) A marriage and family therapy program approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) or a marital and family therapy program fully accredited by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP);
- (2) A program at an institution of higher learning that was accredited by a regional accrediting agency as of the date the degree was conferred; or
- (3) A foreign program that has been evaluated by a credentialing body recognized by the Board. Submission of foreign degree evaluation and cost of the foreign degree qualification determination are the responsibility of the applicant.
- (4) A graduate degree under section (1) must have included at least two semester credit hours or three credit quarter hours of coursework in the diagnosis of mental disorders.
- (5) A graduate degree under sections (2) or (3) must have included all of the following requirements:
  - (a) For graduate degrees granted before October 1, 2014:
    - (A) At least two years in duration, including at least 48 semester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours;
    - (B) At minimum, the following coursework:
      - (i) Human Development- four semester hours or six quarter hours;
      - (ii) Marital and Family Theoretical Foundation Studies- two semester hours or three quarter hours;

- (iii) Marital and Family Therapy Diagnosis and Assessment, Treatment, Principles and Techniques Studies- eight semester hours or 12 quarter hours;
  - (iv) Professional Studies- two semester hours or three quarter hours;
  - (v) Research Methods or Statistics- two semester hours or three quarter hours;
  - (vi) Supporting Coursework Focusing on the Systems Paradigm for Specialty Areas- 16 semester hours or 24 quarter hours; and
- (C) A supervised clinical practicum or internship experience of at least 240 direct client contact clock hours.

(b) For graduate degrees granted on or after October 1, 2014:

(A) At least two years in duration, including at least 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of graduate-level credit;

(B) At minimum, the following graduate-level coursework:

(i) Individual and Family Development- four semester hours or six quarter hours;

(ii) Couple and Family Theoretical Foundation Studies- six semester hours or nine quarter hours;

(iii) Couple and Family Therapy, Treatment, and Techniques Studies- six semester hours or nine quarter hours;

(iv) Diagnosis of mental disorders- two semester hours or three quarter hours;

(v) Diversity studies that include issues related to diversity, power and privilege- two semester hours or three quarter hours;

(vi) Ethical and Professional Studies- two semester hours or three quarter hours;

(vii) Research Methods or Statistics- two semester hours or three quarter hours;

(viii) Supporting coursework focusing on counseling and/or systems approaches- 36 semester hours or 54 quarter hours; and

(C) A supervised clinical practicum or internship experience of at least 280 hours of direct client contact.

(c) The program's clinical practicum or internship experience must have:

- (A) Had supervisory staff with a minimum of a master's degree in the program emphasis and with pertinent professional experience;
- (B) Made provision for faculty monitoring of operations;
- (C) Kept records of student-client contact hours including summary of student progress by the supervisor;
- (D) Had a written agreement with the program and student specifying learning objectives; and
- (E) Had a mechanism for program evaluation.

(d) Deficiencies in the credit hour requirements of sections (a) or (b) may be remedied by completing graduate level coursework in the deficient area(s) at a regionally accredited institution.

(e) Deficiencies in the supervised experience requirement of section (c) may be remedied by completion of:

(A) Post-degree clinical experience completed in a Board-approved associate registration pursuant to OAR Chapter 833, Division 50, credited on an hour-for-hour basis for up to the full 280 required hours of direct client contact, with at least 40% of the deficient hours working with couples and families in the same session. This remedial experience is in addition to, and not a substitute for, the experience requirements (clock hours and duration) set forth in OAR 833-040-0021 or OAR 833-050-0071; or

(B) At least five years of active licensure issued by another state credentialing entity to practice marriage and family therapy.

(f) For reciprocity applicants only, three years or more of active licensure to practice marriage and family therapy in another U.S. state may substitute for the requirements of Sections (a) through (c) above.

## Ohio Education Requirements

### **RULE 475-25-01 Education requirements for admission to the examination for marriage and family therapist.**

The requirements for licensure are generally set forth in section [4757.30](#) of the Revised Code.

- (A) Pertaining to the educational requirements, the board further prescribes that: a "graduate degree in marriage and family therapy" is defined as a degree that meets all of the following criteria:
- (1) The program or concentration shall clearly be identified as marriage and family therapy (also referred to as "MFT"), shall include a minimum of ninety quarter hours or sixty semester hours of graduate level course work in marriage and family therapy training grounded in systemic theory and systemic approaches that is acceptable to the committee. Such a program shall specify in pertinent institutional catalogues and brochures its intent to educate and train marriage and family therapists. Examples of this include statements explaining the distinction between MFT and other human service areas, statements that the program prepares students to pass the national MFT examination, or statements that the program prepares students for MFT state licensure.
  - (2) The marriage and family therapy curriculum shall stand as a recognized entity within the institution and have a marriage and family therapy faculty. Marriage and family therapy faculty identify with the MFT profession by having a doctoral degree in "Marriage and Family Therapy," holding a state license in MFT, being clinical members of the AAMFT, and/or being AAMFT approved supervisors.
  - (3) The marriage and family therapy coursework shall have a major focus on marital and family systems and systemic therapeutic interventions. Program coursework must include content on crisis intervention. Marriage and family therapy coursework shall include at least two graduate courses in paragraph (A)(3)(a) and paragraph (A)(3)(b) of this rule and at least one graduate course in paragraphs (A)(3)(c) to (A)(3)(g) of this rule of the following areas of marriage and family therapy :
    - (a) Marriage and family therapy theory studies: Courses in this area should present a fundamental introduction to marriage and family studies, including the historical development of the relational/systemic perspective and empirical foundations of the field of marriage and family therapy. This area facilitates students developing knowledge of the early and contemporary theories of MFT. It should provide a substantive understanding of the major theories of systems change and the applied practices evolving from each theoretical orientation. Major MFT theories include but are not limited to:

strategic, structural, contextual, Bowenian, narrative, solution-focused, object relations, experiential, emotion focused, and internal family.

- (b) Clinical treatment of individuals, couples and families: Courses in this area facilitate students developing competencies in systemic hypotheses, treatment planning and interventions specifically designed for use with a wide range of diverse individuals, couples, and families, and includes a focus on evidence-based practice and empirically supported treatment modalities. The courses in this category may focus on areas such as:
  - (i) Couples therapy: theories and skills in providing therapy with couples, including family of origin issues, new marriages, marriage preparation, multi-cultural issues, partnerships, and divorce.
  - (ii) Family therapy with children, adolescents, or young adults: training in unique diagnostic and treatment considerations in working with children, adolescents, or young adults, including collaboration with medical providers and educational systems.
  - (iii) Sexuality and family therapy: the physiological, psychological, and sociocultural variables associated with sexual identity and sexual behavior including sexual dysfunctions.
  - (iv) Substance abuse and addictive disorders in marriage and family therapy: This course covers the physical and psychological aspects of psychotropic medication, alcohol, and other substances on relationships and behavior as well as systemic treatment approaches to substance use disorders.
- (c) Research: This course facilitates students developing competencies in marriage and family therapy research and evaluation methods and in evidence-based practice, including becoming an informed consumer of couple, marriage, and family therapy research.
- (d) Professional ethics: Courses in this area shall include the "American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy" (AAMFT) code of ethics, confidentiality and liabilities of clinical practice and research, professional ethics as a marriage and family therapist, professional socialization, and the role of the professional organization, licensure, state and federal legislation, independent practice and inter professional cooperation. Religious ethics courses and moral theology courses do not meet this requirement.
- (e) Individual and family development: This course shall address individual and family development and biopsychosocial health across the lifespan from a systemic perspective.

- (f) Appraisal of individuals and families: Course content shall address from a relational/systemic perspective, psychopharmacology, physical health and illness, traditional psycho diagnostic categories, and the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of major mental and emotional disorders, including the appropriate use of the current edition of the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders."
- (g) Family therapy with diverse, multicultural and/or underserved communities: This course facilitates students developing competencies in understanding and applying knowledge of diversity, power, privilege and oppression as these relate to race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religious, spiritual and/or beliefs, nation of origin, immigration status, housing status, or other relevant social categories, in the practice of marriage and family therapy. This includes developing competencies in working with sexual and gender minorities and their families as well as anti-oppressive practices.
- (h) Practicum: Includes a supervised training experience consisting of the provision of marriage and family therapy to clients and is acceptable to the board as defined in paragraphs (A)(3)(f)(i) to (A)(3)(f)(v) of this rule.
- (i) Applicants, who begin their program after January 2015, shall have a minimum of two semesters or three quarters of qualified supervised clinical practicum and/or qualified internship with five hundred hours of direct face-to-face client contact with individuals, couples, and families and one hundred hours of supervision. Applicants, who begin their program before January 2015, shall have a minimum of two semesters or three quarters of qualified supervised clinical practicum and/or qualified internship with three hundred hours of direct face-to-face client contact with individuals, couples, and families and sixty hours of supervision.
- (ii) Applicants, who begin their program after January 2015, shall have two hundred fifty hours of the five hundred hours of direct client contact with couples and/or families present. Applicants, who begin their program before January 2015, shall have one hundred fifty hours of the three hundred hours of direct client contact with couples and/or families present.
- (iii) The clinical practicum and internship experience must be under the supervision of an independently licensed marriage and family therapist with supervision designation, an AAMFT approved supervisor, an AAMFT supervisor candidate, or an independently licensed mental health practitioner who shall have demonstrated competence in the area in which he/she is supervising and have training in legal and ethical issues relevant to marriage and family therapy.

- (iv) Applicants from non-COAMFTE accredited programs shall document their practicum and internship experience on a form prescribed by the board. The form shall be completed by the supervisor or supervisors and shall document the student's competency, client contact hours, and supervision hours in all areas designated on the form. The form shall be completed and submitted by the student at the time of examination request.
  - (4) Programs accredited by the "Commission On Accreditation Of Marriage And Family Therapy Education" (COAMFTE) at the time of applicant's degree conferral are recognized as meeting the requirements for a graduate degree in marriage and family therapy.
  - (5) Applicants who possess a degree from a program not accredited by the "Commission On Accreditation Of Marriage And Family Therapy Education" (COAMFTE) shall submit a request to this board for approval in meeting the educational requirements for admission to the examination for the marriage and family therapy license. Program approval may be obtained by the applicant submitting to the board written evidence that the degree meets the requirements set forth in paragraphs (A)(1) to (A)(3) of this rule.
- (B) Supplemental coursework, including supplemental clinical practicum/internship experience, taken after the completion of the degree program may be acceptable if the applicant meets either of the following:
- (1) Holds a conferred degree in marriage and family therapy as defined in paragraphs (A)(1) and (A)(2) of this rule, acceptable to the board, and achieved both of the following:
    - (a) Completes the necessary coursework and/or clinical practicum/internship experience from a marriage and family therapy program as defined in this rule,
    - (b) Obtains written permission for each supplemented course and/or practicum/internship experience from the board prior to the beginning of the course and/or practicum/internship experience and completes said course(s) and/or practicum/internship experience within five years of approval.
  - (2) Applicants, who possess a master's degree and are enrolled in a COAMFTE accredited doctoral program having completed all coursework except for dissertation.
- (C) Post-graduate supervised direct client contact hours obtained out of state may satisfy a deficit in the number of practicum/internship hours as specified in paragraph (A)(3)(f)(v) of this rule. These substituted hours shall not be counted toward the two years of required supervised practice for IMFT licensure.

(D) Applicants who are denied admission to the examination shall be afforded an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.

## **Texas Education Requirements**

### **TEXAS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RULES**

### **TEXAS STATE BOARD OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**

#### Subchapter C. Applications and Licensing

#### **801.112. General Academic Requirements.**

(a) An applicant must submit an official transcript showing:

- (1) a master's or doctorate degree in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE);
- (2) a master's degree from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling (MCFC) specialization which meets the requirements of §801.114(b)(8) of this title (relating to Academic Course Content) and starts on or after January 1, 2017, (the earliest class reported on one of an applicant's official transcripts denotes the start of a program); or
- (3) a master's or doctorate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education in marriage and family therapy or in a related mental health field with a planned course of study in marriage and family therapy as described in §801.113(b), (c), and (d) of this title (relating to Academic Requirements) with the required minimum course content as described in §801.114 of this title.

(b) An applicant with foreign degree or coursework must comply with council rules, 22 Texas Administrative Code §882.11, (relating to Applicants with Foreign Degrees).

(c) An applicant must submit a course description from an official school catalog or syllabus for any course listed on the transcript with a title not self-explanatory or apparently relevant to academic requirements.

(d) The council will not accept any undergraduate courses as meeting any academic requirements unless the applicant's official transcript clearly shows that the course was awarded graduate credit by the school.

**(e) The council will accept as meeting academic requirements only those courses shown on the applicant's transcript as:**

(1) part of the applicant's program of studies and as completed with a passing grade or for credit; or

(2) taken outside the applicant's program of studies and completed with at least a "B" or "pass."

(f) The council will consider a quarter hour of academic credit as two-thirds of a semester hour.

#### **801.113. Academic Requirements.**

(a) An applicant for the licensure examination must have completed or be enrolled in a council-approved marriage and family therapy graduate internship.

(b) An applicant for LMFT Associate or LMFT must have a master's or doctorate degree in marriage and family therapy or a master's or doctorate degree in a related mental health field with course work and training determined by the council to be substantially equivalent to a graduate degree in marriage and family therapy from a regionally accredited institution of higher education or an institution of higher education approved by the council with (the earliest class reported on one of an applicant's official transcripts denotes the start of a program):

(1) at least 45 semester hours for an applicant who started a program before August 1, 2017; or

(2) at least 60 semester hours for an applicant who started a program on or after August 1, 2017.

(c) A degree or course work in a related mental health field must have been a planned course of study designed to train a person to provide direct services to assist individuals, families or couples in a therapeutic relationship in the resolution of cognitive, affective, behavioral or relational dysfunctions within the context of marriage or family systems.

(d) Examples of degrees in a related mental health field may include counseling, psychology, social work, or family studies with an emphasis on Marriage and Family Therapy. Degrees in fields other than those listed may be reviewed for eligibility toward course equivalency in accordance with council rules, 22 Texas Administrative Code, §882.1 (relating to Application Process).

#### **801.114. Academic Course Content.**

(a) An applicant who holds a graduate degree in a mental health-related field must have course work in each of the following areas:

- (1) theoretical foundations of marriage and family therapy--three semester hours;
- (2) assessment and treatment in marriage and family therapy--12 semester hours;
- (3) human development, gender, multicultural issues and family studies--six semester hours;
- (4) psychopathology--three semester hours;
- (5) professional ethics--three semester hours;
- (6) applied professional research--three semester hours; and
- (7) supervised clinical internship--12 months or nine semester hours.

(b) An applicant who begins a graduate degree program in marriage and family therapy or a mental health-related field on or after August 1, 2017, must complete course work and the minimum required semester hours in each of the following areas (the earliest class reported on one of an applicant's official transcripts denotes the start of a program):

- (1) theoretical knowledge and foundations of marriage and family therapy--three semester hours--including the historical development, theoretical and empirical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions of the field of marriage and family therapy;
- (2) assessment and treatment in marriage and family therapy--12 semester hours--including but is not limited to treatment approaches specifically designed for use with a wide range of diverse couples, families, and children, including sex therapy, same sex couples, young children, adolescents, interfaith couples, crisis intervention, and elderly;
- (3) human development, gender, multicultural issues and family studies--six semester hours;
- (4) psychopathology--three semester hours--including traditional psychodiagnostic categories including knowledge and use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders;
- (5) professional ethics--three semester hours--including professional identity of the marriage, couple, and family therapist, including professional socialization, scope of practice, professional organizations, licensure and certification; and ethical issues related to the profession of marriage, couple, and family therapy as well as the practice of individual therapy;
- (g) applied professional research--three semester hours-- including research evidence related to MFT, becoming an informed consumer of research, and research and evaluation methods;

- (h) treatment of addictions and management of crisis situations--no minimum requirements;
- (i) supervised clinical internship--12 months or nine semester hours. During the supervised clinical internship, the applicant must have 300 hours of experience, of which:
  - (1) at least 150 hours must be direct client contact hours; and
  - (2) of the 150 direct client contact hours, at least 75 hours must be direct client contact with couples and families.
- (c) The remaining courses needed to meet the 45 or 60 graduate semester hour requirement must be marriage and family therapy or related course work in areas directly supporting the development of an applicant's professional marriage and family, individual, or group therapy skills.