Admission Requirements

- Acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE)
- Minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.75
- Submission of statement of personal and professional goals
- A personal interview with the clinical faculty of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program
- Emotional stability and maturity as evidenced through three letters of recommendation from previous professors (minimum of two letters) or employers (maximum of one letter)

For priority consideration, we strongly urge that students submit a completed application by January 15 for interviews to be conducted in January. Depending upon remaining availability, applications will continue to be accepted until all openings are filled.

Applicants to the Marriage and Family Therapy Program are selected and admitted without discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, color, creed, ethnic or national origin, physical disability or sexual orientation. These provisions also apply to handicapped individuals pursuant to current federal and state regulations subject to reasonable standards of admission and employment.

ADMISSION INTO CLINICAL COMPONENT OF THE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM

Clinical readiness is assessed prior to a student having face-to-face client contact. This assessment will include the following:
- faculty feedback related to the student’s readiness to begin the clinical component
- a pen and paper instrument designed to highlight the strengths and challenges of the student’s personality in relation to the student’s development as a helping professional

CONTINUATION IN THE CLINICAL COMPONENT OF THE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM

Faculty and students develop goals for personal and professional growth. Evaluation of students will occur each semester by the faculty prior to moving to the next level of practicum.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Financial aid is available through graduate assistantships, scholarships, clinical externships and grants.
- Assistantships: Indicate interest on application and submit a résumé to the director.
- Clinical Externships: Students in clinical practicum may be eligible for paid assistantships through arrangements with community mental health centers, psychiatric hospitals and other sites.
- Scholarships: The Department of Child and Family Studies has a variety of scholarship opportunities available to students.
- Grants: Faculty often have service and research grants that provide opportunities for students.

“Often the best clinicians received the best supervision early on in their training. The MFT program faculty without question provided excellent training and supervision that prepared me for success in my Ph.D. program and for my career.”

JOHN SAWYER, GRADUATE

“My time in the program has been invaluable to say the least! The support I received and the personal growth I experienced are lifelong gifts that I will take with me.”

MELINDA BOWENS, GRADUATE
Program Overview
The University of Southern Mississippi Marriage and Family Therapy program (M.S.) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education. The program currently offers a full-time track and a part-time track. Both tracks combine academic course work and supervised clinical experiences with individuals, couples and families. They are designed to focus on the integration of theory, research and clinical practice throughout the family life span. Full-time students normally complete their degree requirements in two full calendar years, while part-time students complete degree requirements in three to four calendar years.

Mission Statement
The mission of the Marriage and Family Therapy Master’s Program is to prepare competent and ethical mental health professionals dedicated to improving the human condition through both prevention and intervention. Program faculty emphasize a multilevel, systemic perspective that includes individual internal relationship processes and reflects cultural meanings, constraints and global complexity.

Our Strengths
- On-site MFT clinic serving high-risk children, adolescents, transitional-aged youth, adults and families
- Highly qualified and experienced program faculty
- Strong faculty-student mentoring
- Opportunities for clinical practice in community mental health centers, psychiatric hospitals, schools, and alcohol and drug treatment facilities.
- 97% pass rate on national MFT exam for the past nine years
- 100% of students seeking employment as a marriage and family therapy professional hired following graduation
- Opportunities to work with a diverse client population
- Faculty, staff and students in the marriage and family therapy program value and embrace diversity of people and thought

The University Clinic for Family Therapy
Our campus clinic allows students to develop clinical skills working with individuals, groups, couples and families in a closely supervised supportive environment. Student-therapists see clients from multiple counties in South Mississippi with a wide variety of presenting problems, which include but are not limited to the following:
- Couple distress/conflict
- Communication
- Anxiety and mood disorders
- Family stress
- Parent-child problems
- Life transition adjustments

Curriculum
FIRST YEAR COURSEWORK
- Theories of MFT I
- FAM600 Pre-practicum in MFT
- FAM602 Introduction to the Practice of MFT
- FAM660 Assessment and Diagnosis in Family Therapy I
- FAM655 Introduction to MFT Theories
- FAM661 Assessment and Diagnosis in Family Therapy II
- FAM656 Advanced Studies of MFT II
- FAM650 Individual and Family Life Cycle Development
- FAM790 Practicum in MFT
- FAM659 Ethics and Professional Issues in MFT
- FAM651 Parents and Children: Problem Resolution

SECOND YEAR COURSEWORK
- FAM610 Couples Therapy
- FAM615 Gender/Culture in MFT
- FAM675 Practice of Family Research
- FAM663 Professional Practice of MFT

ADDITIONAL CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS
- 500 hours face-to-face client contact
- 250 contact hours must be relational
- 100 hours of supervision minimum

Minimum Credit Hours in Program – 60

Marriage and Family Therapy Faculty and Staff

Stacie Frey
M.S., LMFT
Clinic Director

Heath Grames
Ph.D., LMFT
Associate Dean

Pat Sims
Ed.D., LMFT
Department Chair

Jamie Williams
Ph.D., LMFT
Adjunct Instructor

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“The Marriage and Family Therapy Master’s Program at Southern Miss truly changed my life. The personal growth I experienced throughout the program not only made me a stronger therapist, but also a better person.”

RYAN LUETHJE, M.S., LMFTA