



Medaille College

Marriage & Family Therapy Handbook

Medaille College
30 Wilson Road Amherst, New York, 14221
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2013

MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE & ADVANCED CERTIFICATION IN MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY

Graduate Department of Psychology & Counseling

This handbook has been prepared as part of and in conjunction with the Medaille College Policy Manuals, Volumes I through VII; detailed or background information on some of the policies and procedures covered in this manual may be found by referencing other volumes. Medaille College has made every effort to provide in this publication accurate, up-to-date information regarding the Programs, policies, personnel, and activities of the College. However, changes are likely to take place during the life of this Handbook which cannot be foreseen, and errors may occur. The College cannot be held responsible for information which becomes outdated or is printed in error.

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Program Mission

The marriage and family therapy program at Medaille College is a clinical program that educates from a multifaceted model. We empower our students to gain insight from research and clinical experience. It is our goal that our students will provide therapy to community to promote overall health. Our students will be well versed in theory, research and clinical skills in the field of marriage & family therapy. We expect our faculty and students to be respectful to both each other and the community in which we serve. Our students will have the ability to assess and address issues from a systemic perspective and assist others no matter race, culture, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, mental and physical health.

This *Program Handbook* serves as the primary source of information, guidelines, and requirements for students in the Marriage & Family Therapy Program. **Rules and guidelines in this Handbook supersede those in the general Medaille College Graduate Catalog.** Students are encouraged to keep a hard copy of this handbook as a reference. Students are required to follow the guidelines and rules set forth in the handbook for the academic year in which they were admitted. Students must be notified in writing of any changes to these policies.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program is designed to prepare students to work with couples and families in a variety of settings, by providing both theoretical and practical skills in this highly specialized field. **The emphasis is to train competent clinicians who conceptualize individual and family issues from a systemic perspective. The program is a 48-credit program meets New York State educational requirements for licensing as an MFT.** Students take a fixed sequence of courses, complete a 500-hour Marriage and Family Practicum and prepare a Capstone Project. Upon completion of the program, graduates seek employment in public and private sectors, where they work under supervision to complete the 1,500 hour NYS experience requirement for licensure. Clinicians have up to 2 years to fulfill the experience requirement and must pass a national qualifying exam in order to be eligible for licensure as an MFT. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists deliver services that focus on inter-actions and systemic issues affecting relationships for an individual, couple or family.

The capstone project will assess students' abilities to integrate and synthesize theoretical and practical knowledge into an effective, professional method of and approach to therapy. The Program is designed to fulfill the goals of: providing students with a thorough grounding in advanced principles of marriage and family therapy at a graduate level, and providing students with an understanding of the assessment tools and therapy skills of MFT suitable for building careers in private and public mental health agencies.

Program Goals:

- MFT Program will have a strong theoretical perspective;
- The MFT Program will have a strong clinical focus;
- The MFT Program will have a research foundation;
- The MFT Program will include multicultural components in therapy;
- The MFT Program will have an understanding of professional and ethical issues relevant to MFT.

Student Goals:

Students will be:

- Well-versed in various MFT theories;
- Able to conceptualize and apply theories to their clinical practice
- Able to critically analyze research regarding the field of MFT.
- Able to write papers contributing to the field of MFT;
- Able to have a solid research based clinical knowledge in the areas of family, group, couples, and individual therapy techniques;
- Culturally competent to work with diverse populations;
- Able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the professional, legal and ethical issues pertaining to the field of marriage & family therapy;
- Able to meet the educational requirements for New York State marriage & family therapy licensure;
- Prepared for the licensure exam;

Faculty Goals:

- Full-time MFT faculty will be competent in theory and practice. Part-time faculty will show competence in the course-work chosen to teach;
- Full-time faculty will be evaluated yearly to demonstrate ongoing scholarly activity;
- Part-time faculty will be evaluated by the Program Director;

Admissions and Financial Aid Requirements

Admission for the Marriage and Family Therapy Program is for the Fall Semester only. Medaille College has a rolling admissions policy. Applicants are encouraged to apply in accordance with the following schedule: *Fall Semester Deadline August 15.*

Admission Requirements:

Successful admissions candidates will generally meet the following selection criteria:

- *An undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0:* The Graduate Admissions Committee reviews the undergraduate record, noting the total GPA, the area of concentration, and the trend of grades. A minimum 3.0 GPA is recommended, although all applications will be reviewed. Students under 3.0 will require convincing evidence of intellectual ability, communications skills, and initiative.
- *A degree from a regionally accredited educational institution.*
- *Three applicant reference forms:* The committee reviews references of applicants as they contribute to an understanding of the applicant's academic ability, leadership skills, and aptitude for graduate study. All applicants are required to have two forms submitted for review.
- *An Interview* – If an application meets the above mentioned requirements, the student will be asked for an interview with the faculty. Admission decisions are only made after the interview.

Probationary Admission

Students may be admitted on a probationary basis. This is done in circumstances where a student's GPA faltered because of life events. In these circumstances, the student should explain why his/her GPA was below the requirement and what s/he will be doing differently in the MFT program to achieve success.

The student will start the academic year on probation. The student will meet with his/her academic advisor to make a plan for achieving academic success. If the student receives a 3.0 or higher in the first term, then the student will be taken off of probation. If the student receives a grade less than a 3.0 then s/he will remain on probation for another semester. There will be another meeting with the academic advisor and the Program Director. If the student receives below a 3.0 for a second consecutive semester, the student will be dismissed from the program. See **Academic Review/Probation/Dismissal**

Tuition

The tuition for the M.A. program for the 2013-14 academic year is \$785 per credit. Please be aware that the first year of the program the student is taking 6 credits per term and the second year and third year of the program the student is taking 9 credits.

Financial Aid

Applicants interested in obtaining financial assistance are encouraged to contact the Medaille College Office of Financial Aid, 18 Agassiz Circle, Buffalo, New York 14214. Financial aid programs include:
New York Tuition Assistance Program
Federal College Work Study Program
Stafford Loans

Courses

Class Format

The MFT program is offered as a fixed sequence of 13 8-week courses, taken one course at a time, plus one Supervised Internship. Each 8-week course will include 30 in-class hours (split between the fourth and eighth weekends of the course), 8 hours of on-line learning and appropriate amounts of independent study. Students will proceed through the Program as a cohort. This delivery method requires students to take two classes per semester, and six classes per calendar year for the first two years. In the second year, students will begin 3 credit hours of internship each semester (for a total of 9 credit hours), until their internship hours are complete. In the student's third year, the student will be finishing his/her capstone project, internship and taking a final course.

Course Breakdown by Year:

<u>Year 1</u>		<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Fall	MFT 620	MFT 680	MFT 760
	MFT 630	MFT 690	MFT 704
		MFT 701	MFT 752
Spring	MFT 640	MFT 720	
	MFT 650	MFT 730	
		MFT 702	
Summer	MFT 660	MFT 740	
	MFT 670	MFT 751	
	MFT 671	MFT 703	

Course Descriptions

MFT 620 - Introduction to Systems Theory

Prerequisites: None

This course is designed to provide students with a foundational understanding of the dynamics of family interaction from a 'systems' perspective. This course is an introduction to the history and systemic foundations of the study and understanding of family life with emphasis on the various theories of family process and development. The development of an understanding of 'systems theory', its application to family interaction, and its evaluation will form the basis of the course content. Topics included: historical and conceptual development of Family Systems Theory, introduction to General Systems Theory, family rules, roles, structure and interaction patterns, functional and dysfunctional family systems, life cycle issues in marriage and family and ethnicity and family therapy.

MFT 630 Theories of Marriage and Family Therapy

Prerequisites: None

This course is an introduction to the history, development, and systemic foundations of marriage and family therapy. This course will survey the various models and theories of family therapy with particular attention paid to the different conceptions of healthy and dysfunctional dynamics, goals in family therapy treatment, and associated therapeutic approaches and techniques. Particular attention will be paid to the development of the major schools of marriage and family therapy, the integration of various approaches in family therapy and the research outcomes of each.

MFT 640 - Psychopathology in the Family System

Prerequisites: None

This course provides students with the most current information regarding the etiologies, and subsequent treatments, of the most prevalent mental illnesses in our society from a systemic perspective.

MFT 650 - Assessment in Family Therapy

Prerequisites: None

This course will explore theoretical perspectives on marital and family assessment, along with a thorough examination of assessment techniques and treatment planning strategies using the Genogram and ecomap, as well as other assessment tools to determine patterns family systems interactions and develop effective treatment planning strategies.

MFT 660 - Group Processes and Techniques

Prerequisites: None

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of group development, process and dynamics within family systems. Students will learn theoretical and practical concepts related to the practice of group psychotherapy in a systemic context. Additionally, students will participate in an ongoing experiential process group throughout the semester.

MFT 670 – Family Law & Ethical Issues in Family Therapy

Prerequisites: None

This course will focus on the ethical principles and professional standards of therapy practice, and survey the ethical and legal issues facing the professional Family and Marital therapists. Students will review professional goals, objectives, roles and functions of Marital and Family Therapists. This course also examines ethical and legal standards, risk management, professional credentialing and standards for professional counselors.

MFT 671 - Child Abuse Workshop

Non-credit (online NYS workshop)

PREREQUISITES: must be co-registered for MFT 670

This online course prepares students who are required by law to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment to the New York State Central Register. It is designed to help students understand the risk factors associated with child abuse, as well as to recognize emotional, physical and sexual abuse of children. Students will learn their roles and responsibilities as mandated child abuse reporters.

This course serves a dual purpose:

- a) Requirement for MFT 670 Legal & Ethical Issues in Family Therapy
- b) Requirement for New York State License for Marriage & Family Therapist

MFT 680 - Treating Diverse Populations

Prerequisites: None

This course is designed to provide students with a general framework for understanding issues related to therapy with diverse populations, different cultures and lifestyles. The influence of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation will be explored.

MFT 690 - Human Development and the Family Life Cycle

Prerequisites: None

This course introduces students to the major theories that have shaped the marriage and family therapists' understanding of human growth and development from conception, childhood and

adolescence, to early, middle and late adulthood. The stages of family-life cycle are examined at three different levels of analysis: individual, systemic, and relational ethical. Major psychological tasks of each stage are presented with an examination of the potential problems. Family dysfunctions at each stage are considered from a systemic point of view as compared to other, more individually oriented theories, such as behaviorism, psychodynamic and developmental theories

MFT 701 – 704 - Practicum I-IV

Prerequisites for MA – MFT 640; MFT 670 & MFT 671. Students must also attend a mandatory meeting prior to practicum to review the policies and procedures for practicum.

Prerequisites for Advanced Certification - Students must also attend a mandatory meeting prior to practicum to review the policies and procedures for practicum.

Through the sequence of MFT 701 Practicum I, MFT 702 Practicum II, MFT 703 Practicum III, and Practicum IV students will accumulate 500 global hours of clinical experience treating couples and families under supervision of a licensed marriage & family therapist. Students will provide at least 300 hours of direct contact with couples, families, and/or individuals with marital or family issues, of those hours 250 must be with families and couples. Students will receive at least 1 hour of direct supervision at their practicum sites, and they will participate in practicum seminar on a weekly basis on campus. Particular emphasis is placed on developing skills to assess and conceptualize cases from a chosen theoretical perspective.

MFT 720 - Research Methods in Marriage and Family Therapy

Prerequisites: None

This course is designed to enable graduate level students to read and understand existing research literature, to understand principal research methods and to apply research principals to the conduct of research projects. This course surveys the major methodologies for conducting research, and focuses on research report development, publication of data, and ethical considerations in conducting research. Students will also be introduced to the statistics necessary for describing and analyzing data. Special emphasis will be placed on reviewing marital, couple and family research.

MFT 730 - Couples and Sex Therapy

Prerequisites: None

This course will provide a foundation for the treatment of couples, by addressing common presenting issues such as child-rearing problems, partner abuse (emotional and physical), jealousy and conflicts regarding affiliation, gender roles, and issues of intimacy and sexuality. It will also present an overview of the field of sex therapy, by introducing students to sexual dysfunction and an overview of treatment techniques.

MFT 740 - Substance Abuse and Violence in the Family System

Prerequisites: None

This course presents a survey of the leading theorists and concepts in the field of family therapy. Students will become better acquainted with this field of therapy and will acquire skills necessary to work with families who are affected by violence and substance abuse.

MFT 751 - Capstone Project I

Prerequisites: Practicum I and II

The Capstone Project is the culmination of a student's training that assesses ability to integrate course work and clinical experience into a unified working approach. The Capstone Experience Portfolio

is evaluated by the student's advisor and one other faculty member. It includes a portfolio collection, a clinical case analysis, and future plan for professional development.

MFT 752 - Capstone Project II

Prerequisites: Capstone Project I

The Capstone Project is the culmination of a student's training that assesses ability to integrate course work and clinical experience into a unified working approach. The Capstone Experience Portfolio is evaluated by the student's advisor and one other faculty member. It includes a portfolio collection, a clinical case analysis, and future plan for professional development.

Capstone Project

Purpose

MFT 760- Trauma and the Family

Prerequisites: None

This course will explore the nature of trauma, and the multitude of ways it can manifest in a client. In addition, various types of treatment modalities will be explored to assist clients with traumatic experiences.

Program Requirements and Procedures

Time Limits

All requirements for the degree of Master of Arts must be completed within five years of the date of admission to the Department of Psychology Graduate Program. All graduate students must be registered for a minimum of six credit hours during each fall, spring and summer semester. Graduate students in good academic standing who cannot maintain continuous registration should apply for a leave of absence by the beginning of the semester in which the leave is to begin.

Scheduling of Courses:

Because students are in a cohort and lockstep format, each person will be taking the same courses and the registrar office registers students for each semester. If a student wants to change his/her schedule, s/he needs to meet with his/her advisor to discuss the reasoning and the potential consequences. After the meeting the advisor will write up a summary of the meeting and both advisor and student will sign, so there is clear understanding of the situation.

Practicum Assignment:

Practicum starts the fall semester of the second year. Students will be assigned their placement at the beginning of the previous semester. There will be a mandatory Practicum Meeting in August to review the Practicum Handbook and answer any questions regarding practicum. However, if a student has a question prior to the meeting, s/he is welcome to contact his/her advisor or program director at any time.

Course Substitutions:

A maximum of six (6) credit hours of graduate level coursework earned from regionally accredited institutions may be applied towards a master's degree or Advanced Certification in Marriage & Family Therapy. A Course Substitution Request must be submitted to the Program Director during the first academic year, and must include a course syllabus. Students are encouraged to include copies of major assignments. This request must be approved by the Registrar, the Program Director and the Dean of the

School of Adult and Graduate Education. Courses must have at least 80% overlap with that offered at Medaille.

All transfer credits must meet the following criteria:

a) Courses must have been offered at the graduate level.

b) Courses must receive approval from the student's advisor, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

c) A grade of "B" or above must have been earned in the requested transfer courses.

* The student may be subject to final examination in all coursework transferred into the Master's degree in Marriage & Family Therapy.

** No credit is granted for correspondence courses or for "credit-by-examination" courses.

Student Advisement:

At orientation, each student will receive an advisor. Each student will meet with his or her faculty advisor every other month during the first year of the program.

Advisement activities will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Assist students with any program questions and providing the best information and counsel on policies and procedures of the College;
- Making students aware of the range of services and education opportunities pertinent to their objectives;
- If the student is struggling academically, the advisor is to create an academic plan with the student
- Assist students in choosing educational, professional, and related life objectives that are well-suited to their interests and abilities;
- Making students aware that they carry the ultimate responsibility for acquainting themselves with academic and other College regulations, as well as planning for their courses;
- Closely monitoring academic and clinical developments during all stages of progress throughout a student's graduate career.

The student is expected to address issues and concerns as they arise, since many items may be time sensitive.

Change of Advisor Procedure:

Requests for change of advisor must be made in writing with an explanation for the change. The request should be submitted to the Program Director. If the program director is the advisor, the request should go to the Chair of the Psychology & Counseling Department.

Student/Faculty Governance Body

The Governance Body will consist of one student member from each cohort and at least one faculty representative. The Governance Body serves as a way for the student representatives to communicate any concerns of the student body. In addition, it is a forum for students and faculty to express ideas they may have for the program. The Governance Body will meet within the first month of each semester or as the faculty or students determine a need. Minutes from the meetings will be taken and distributed by email to the rest of the faculty and student body.

Emergency Notification:

In the event of a campus closing, general class cancellations, or other emergency situations, Medaille has implemented an emergency notification system that sends notifications through text messaging (SMS), email, and messages to cell and home phone numbers. Students are required to keep their [**contact information up-to-date using a web form**](#) that will ask for the student ID number and Medaille email address. The information collected through this site will be used by authorized College personnel in the event of weather-related campus/class cancellations or other situations where time is of the essence. Test messages to all contact numbers within the system will be sent out once each semester. This information will not be used for any other purpose. Specific instructions are available on the Medaille Website: [**Click here to add or to update your text/cell phone/SMS, email, home phone information**](#)

Academics Requirements

Concerns or Questions about a Course or Program Requirement

In the event that a student has a concern or question about a course, the instructor **of the course should be consulted before** bringing concerns to the Department. If the situation is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, concerns and/or questions should be brought to the attention of the advisor and the Program Director. If it is still unresolved then the student should bring the concern to the Department Chair.

Repeating a Failed Course: A student earning a grade lower than a B- in any course or who earns a U in a pass-fail course is required to repeat the course. A student may repeat any course in an effort to earn a higher grade. Both grades will remain on the student's official transcript and the latter grade will be used to compute the student's GPA.

Satisfactory Progress: Students must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0, and complete the program within five (5) years.

Academic Warning: Any student who makes a grade below B- will be issued an academic warning and referred for advisement; any student with borderline GPA, with a second grade below B-, or who is in danger of failing to complete the minimum number of semester hours for each year will be referred to the Student Development Committee (SDC). These referrals will be made in hopes of helping students improve through active mentoring and exploration of options for developing more effectively.

Academic Probation: A student who makes a grade of F in a graduate course or whose grade point average falls below 3.0 after completion of 6 credits will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. Students on probation must maintain a GPA of 3.0 for each probationary term and must qualify for removal of probation by the end of the second fall or Spring term. Students may be placed on probation based on review of the Student Development Committee (SDC) based on the Program Professionalism policy. In these cases, students will be provided with a remediation plan with a time frame for completion. The success of the completion of the plan will be determined by the Student Development Committee (SDC).

Academic Dismissal: A student who receives two grades below B- in one term or three grades below B- throughout his or her studies will be dismissed from graduate studies. Grades of F in Pass/Fail courses or U in Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory courses are considered failing grades. Likewise, failure to come off academic probation within two regular terms, or failure to complete minimum time frame requirements

(without approved of Program Director) will result in dismissal. Students may also be dismissed for failure to fulfill terms of a remediation plan within the allotted time frame. In cases of dismissal, students may petition the admissions committee for readmission after one calendar year. Students will be readmitted to the program only in cases of extenuating circumstance IF they are judged to be able to complete the program successfully.

Grade Formatting:

All 8 week courses are graded on a letter scale. A=93 or above; A- =90-92; B+ =87-89; B =83-86; B- =80-82. Anything below a B- or 80 is considered failing and the student must repeat the course.

Grading for Internship/Capstone Project:

The grading format for Practicum and Capstone Project is done as S- Satisfactory; U-Unsatisfactory; and CP. To earn an S, a student must achieve a B- or higher. Anything below a B- is considered a U and the student must retake the course. A CP is a 30 day extension and is assigned in circumstances where a life event interfered with the student accomplishing the course work. In addition, a CP can be assigned if the work is considered to be 90% completed and the student needs a slight extension. This is done at the discretion of the professor. If the grade is not changed at the end of the 30 days, the grade will be changed to a U.

Absences from Classes:

Because the format of the courses is in a weekend format, missing a class is not acceptable. If a student misses more than 3 hours of a course, s/he will be minimally penalized one letter grade. Missing more than 6 hours of class time is subject to failure of the course. If an emergency happens, the student should immediately contact the professor. If accommodations need to be made, a meeting should be scheduled with the program director and the professor to discuss potential options. If the program director is the professor, then the program director and department chair will discuss potential options. The options will then be shared with the student.

Incompletes:

In extenuating circumstances, students may be given an Incomplete for a class. This is only given if a PORTION of the course work is not completed. In these cases the student should immediately talk to the professor. All Incomplete paperwork needs to be signed by the professor and student. The student has until the end of the following semester to complete the work. Any grade, other than an "F", must be submitted by the instructor through Medaille One no later than the deadline date. If a grade is not submitted by the stated deadline date, a grade of an "F" will be issued. If the work is not completed, the Incomplete is changed to an F. All extensions requests (a maximum of one additional semester) MUST be made by the instructor to the Academic Dean and received by the Registrar's Office before the deadline date. A grade of "F", once issued, CANNOT be changed. A student will have to re-register for the course in order to received credit upon completion of the course requirements.

It is the responsibility of the STUDENT to fulfill the requirements stated, in order to remove the grade of an "I" from his/her record. Students assume the risk of not being able to complete the study if a faculty member is no longer on the staff of Medaille College. Any student on academic probation MUST have prior approval from their advisor to be issued an incomplete grade.

Directed Study:

In rare occasions, a student may be able to take a directed study course for a required course. A detailed explanation of how the student will meet the course requirements must be created by the student and the professor. The student needs the permission of his/her advisor; department chair and graduate dean.

Academic Integrity:

Medaille's faculty and administration expect all students to complete their academic assignments with honesty and integrity. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on a test, forging a signature or an entire college document) will be dealt with severely, with penalties ranging from an F on a given assignment to failing a course or even academic suspension or dismissal from the program. **It is important to note that the Graduate School at Medaille College interprets the submission of the same paper, or substantially the same paper, to more than one instructor to be a violation of this code. Students found guilty of such offenses risk expulsion from the College.**

Procedure for Counseling a Student out of the Program

Most students who enter a graduate program believe they are embarking on their chosen profession. Some discover that this is not what they desire, or that they lack the talent to perform effectively in their field, and drop out of their program. A few students, while lacking the skills to be effective, continue on with their degree program. Because marriage and family therapists continuously intervene in the lives of others, it is important that only competent beginning-level clinicians be allowed to graduate. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the marriage and family therapy faculty to identify those students who are severely lacking in clinical skill and counsel them out of the program.

Counseling a student out of the program is a sad situation for both faculty and students. Because of this, faculty will work with those students who exhibit severe deficiencies. Counseling a student out of the program is a very rare situation that we attempt to avoid at all costs.

Categories of Severe Deficiencies:

Severe deficiencies exist when students are unable to appropriately apply theoretical material in the clinical setting. This relates to being unable to engage clients in therapy, diagnose existing problems, and design and implement intervention strategies.

Severe deficiencies also exist when students consistently fail to work with faculty, site supervisors, and students. Severe deficiencies also exist when students show severe enough emotional problems to have a negative effect on their clients and either make no effort to resolve these problems or, after engaging in therapy, have made insufficient gains to continue in the practice of marriage and family therapy.

Counseling a Student out of the Program:

The following is the procedure used in counseling a student out of the master's program in marriage and family therapy:

1. Students strengths and growth areas are discussed with students at their end of semester evaluations. This is done with their practicum supervisor (The Assessment instructor will do this for first semester students.). These issues also are discussed as a part of a student's ongoing supervision. When a growth area is identified, specific goals and strategies will be implemented to help students develop in specific areas. This is a common and desired, occurrence in supervision. However, if the faculty member believes that the problem fits within the category of severe deficiency and it is not alleviated through initial goal setting and strategizing procedures, step two of the process will be implemented.
2. Any faculty member who believes a student is displaying a severe deficiency, and has attempted unsuccessfully to resolve it through goal setting and strategizing procedures, will discuss the problem with the entire MFT faculty prior to meeting with the student. The faculty will decide if the problem is severe enough to warrant the label "severe deficiency." If the problem

is termed a severe deficiency, the faculty will move to step three. If not, the problem will remain as another growth area for the student to work on. The faculty will discuss alternate strategies for the instructor to use with the student to facilitate growth.

3. Students will be notified of a severe deficiency by their practicum supervisor. The student and faculty member will contract on ways the student can resolve the deficiency and decide on a time schedule for accomplishing this. This contract will be finalized in writing with a copy given to the student, a copy for the student's file, and a copy for all members of the faculty. If the student satisfactorily resolves the severe deficiency, he/she will receive a letter notifying him/her of such with a copy placed in his/her file and a copy for all members of the faculty.
4. Those students who do not satisfactorily resolve their severe deficiencies prior to the agreed upon date will meet with the entire MFT faculty to discuss the deficiency and alternate ways of resolving the problem. A new contract will be drawn up, stating the agreed upon plans for remediation and dates of completion.
5. Those students who still do not resolve their severe deficiency will be asked to leave the program. They will meet with the MFT faculty to discuss the situation and will receive a letter from the program director notifying them of their discontinuation in the program. Copies of the letter will also be sent to all MFT faculty members with one placed in the student's file.

Grounds for Dismissal

The following are grounds for dismissal from the MFT Program:

1. Disobeying your supervisor's orders on practicum cases involving any legal or ethical entanglements, including potentially suicidal or homicidal clients, or cases with duty to warn or mandatory reporting issues.
2. Failure to inform your practicum site OR university supervisor when you have cases which meet the above criteria.
3. Failure to sign up for malpractice insurance and provide documentation to the MFT program of your insured status.
4. Behavior which would cause the student to meet severe deficiency track requirements, IF that student has been assigned to the deficiency track previously, depending upon the nature of the student misconduct.

Disclosure of Student Personal Information

The process of becoming a marriage and family therapist often brings up personal issues for students. This is normal and to be expected. The faculty expects that certain painful experiences from a student's past may get in the way of her/his clinical work. We expect that students will seek faculty advice when these issues arise. Faculty are happy to discuss these issues as they pertain to clinical work and sometimes make referrals to therapy to help students deal further with their problems. We are also aware that sometimes students may feel uncomfortable sharing this information without knowing if this may harm them professionally or academically. We attempt to be supportive of students concerns and present these guidelines for how student personal information is handled.

Student personal information will not be disclosed to outside sources without the permission of the student. Students who wish faculty to serve as references for jobs and doctoral programs must be aware that personal information may be given unless the student specifically discusses this with the faculty.

Faculty members share student clinical and academic progress with each other when evaluating student progress. Personal information specifically related to clinical practice and academic performance may be discussed during these sessions. The faculty does not share personal confidences of students unless these directly impact the personal safety of the student or others, or involve abuse of children. As faculty members evaluate students, they may share that a student is struggling with issues, but will not share the content of these issues unless they relate directly to the above stated areas. Faculty will share relevant student personal information when a student is in various stages of the severe deficiency track for evaluation purposes (See Procedure for Counseling a Student out Of the Program in the previous section). **Students who triangle faculty members about issues with other faculty members will be directed to discuss this with the faculty member of concern and will notify that faculty member that the specific student approached them and was redirected to speak with the faculty member of concern.**

Graduation & Completion of Advanced Certification

Requirements for Graduation:

In order to graduate, students must remain in good academic standing. The student must maintain a 3.0 grade point average or higher with no grade lower than a B-. The student must complete his/her practicum and capstone project with a grade of S.

Applying for Graduation:

Every student is required to apply for graduation. This is done by going online to <http://www.medaille.edu/registrar/apply-for-graduation>
Students apply the semester they plan to graduate.

Requirements for Certification:

In order to receive the Certification in Marriage & Family Therapy, students must remain in good academic standing. The student must maintain a 3.0 grade point average or higher with no grade lower than a B-. The student must complete his/her practicum and capstone project with a grade of S.

Applying for Certification:

Every student is required to apply for graduation. This is done by going online to <http://www.medaille.edu/registrar/apply-for-graduation>
Students apply the semester they plan to graduate in.

Grievance Procedures

Person Grievance:

There are times when students may have an issue or concern with a classmate, faculty member, adjunct faculty, administrator, or staff of Medaille. ***The student is encouraged to first and foremost address the person with whom the conflict or concern is with.*** It is suggested that the student schedule a meeting with the person so the issue and all involved are given proper time. If the issue remains unresolved, the student is advised to schedule a meeting with his/her advisor. If the issue is with the advisor, then the student should schedule a meeting with the Program Director. If the issue is with the Program Director then the student should address the Department Chair. If the issue remains unresolved the student should contact the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is encouraged that students address their concerns as quickly as possible. Some issues may be time sensitive to resolve.

Academic Grievance:

If a student believes that s/he received an unfair grade, the student is to first address the concern with the professor. If after the meeting, the student still believes the grade was unfair, the student is encouraged to address the Program Director and schedule a meeting. The student should bring the syllabus and the graded work to the meeting with the Program Director. If the professor is the Program Director, then the student should schedule a meeting with the Department Chair. During the meeting further action may be decided, which may include a meeting with the professor. If the student is still unsatisfied, s/he may contact the Graduate Dean of Students.

Policy or Procedure Grievance:

If a student has a concern about a policy or procedure, s/he should first discuss the issue with the Program Director. If the student is uncomfortable discussing the issue with the Program Director, s/he can bring it to the Faculty/Student Governance. If the issue is still unresolved, the student can notify the Department Chair. If the student is still unsatisfied, then s/he can contact the Dean of Graduate Students.

Notification of Changes:

Changes may happen to the program formatting or courses for a variety of reasons. Any changes will meet New York State requirements for MFT licensure and to meet or maintain AAMFT accreditation. Changes will be discussed in the Faculty/Student Governance meeting, prior to any changes being implemented. When programmatic or course changes are made, students will be notified in writing by email. As much notice as possible will be given with these changes. If there are any changes to the MFT Student Handbook, students will be notified by email with the specific change(s). The new version of the handbook may be viewed on the website after notification.

Professionalism

The Marriage & Family Therapy Program expects students to maintain their integrity and professionalism as students and prospective therapists. Students are expected to be psychologically sound, interpersonally effective, and able to engage with peers, faculty, colleagues, consumers, and professionals in a healthy and responsible manner. Students are expected to give and receive feedback as a part of their training and growth. Students are not only expected to achieve academically at the graduate level, but also to manage themselves throughout the program as ethical professionals-in-training. Issues of Ethical Misconduct, Behavioral Misconduct, Impairment, and Incompetence will be dealt with swiftly and fairly as they might arise. Students are required to abide by the American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy's Ethical Code of Conduct and will sign an agreement upon admission. Students who behave in a way that is unethical will be dismissed from the program immediately. A 'zero tolerance' policy is in effect to protect the welfare of clients as well as the integrity of the profession.

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, Medaille College does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Medaille College endeavors to assist students on an individual basis with any expressed concerns they have. The Office of Disability Services was created to assist students with disabilities in all aspects of college life. College personnel do as much as is reasonable to ensure that individuals with disabilities achieve independence and fully participate in the mainstream of the educational process in a comprehensively accessible environment.

Students requesting services and/or accommodations must contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) directly at (716) 884-3281, ext. 280.