

Psychology (B.A.)

Marriage and Family Psychology Track

This document has been created for advising purposes only. Please contact the department for major and/or graduation requirements.

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Potential Career Paths

- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (M.A., PhD)

Potential Graduate Programs

- Marriage and Family Therapy (MA, , PhD)
- Counseling Psychology (MA, PhD)

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What is Marriage and Family Therapy?

Marriage and family therapists (MFTs) are trained mental health professionals who evaluate and treat mental and emotional disorders, as well as other health and behavioral problems with a family orientation. MFTs address a variety of relationship issues within the context of the family system. MFTs take a solution-focused, family-centered approach to therapy. The set of relationships in which a person is imbedded is the unit of treatment rather than the single individual.

MFTs treat families facing severe mental illnesses and emotional disorders, substance abusers and their families, sexual abuse victims, foster care families, juvenile offenders and others in the criminal justice system, couples in crisis and young children and their parents. Marriage and family therapists may work in a variety of settings including inpatient facilities, employee assistance programs, community mental health centers, social service agencies, schools, universities, and prisons.

MFTs are licensed or certified. There are two options for those interested in becoming a MFT. First, one may earn either a master's degree or doctoral degree in an accredited

program in marriage and family therapy. Second, an individual who already has earned a graduate degree in another mental health field may study MFT at one of the accredited post-graduate degree clinical training programs.

The purpose of the marriage and family therapy track is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of psychology while introducing students to the dynamics of the family system.



Additional Resources

To become more involved in marriage and family therapy or to learn about the profession, here is what you can do.

- 1 Visit the website of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, www.aamft.org, and the website for Division 43 (Family Psychology) of the American Psychological Association, www.apa.org.
- 2 Gain clinical experience by completing an internship or volunteering in shelters, mental health centers, teen homes, or with crisis hotlines.
- 3 Schedule a meeting with a marriage and family therapist to discuss their profession.

If you are interested in pursuing a career in marriage and family therapy be sure to work with an advisor to develop an academic plan that is tailored to your interests. Your plan should lead to the completion of coursework that is useful for employment in an entry-level job working with families in a mental health setting or for admission to a graduate program specializing in marriage and family therapy.

University and College Requirements

In addition to the requirements for the marriage and family therapy track, which are listed below, be sure to complete all other university and college requirements, including the foreign language requirement.

If you are planning to start college-level foreign language with a course beyond 111, you are advised to begin foreign language in your first year. If you are starting foreign language with 111, begin language courses no later than the junior year.

Required Courses in Psychology

PSY 101 **General Psychology (5)**
PSY 221 **Statistics (5)**
PSY 226 **Research Methods (4)**
PSY 321 *Advanced Statistics (5)*

Biological—at least one of the following:

PSY 201 Sensation & Perception (4)
 PSY 203 Learning (4)
 PSY 312 Physiological Psy (4)
 PSY 314 Comparative Psych (5)
 PSY 327 Human Psychophys (4)
PSY 380 *Psy of Health & Illness (4)*

Cognitive—at least one of the following:

PSY 304 *Learning & Cog Proc (4)*
 PSY 305 Human Memory (4)
 PSY 307 Psycholinguistics (4)
 PSY 308 Human Judgment (4)

Developmental—at least two of the following:

PSY 273 *Child & Adolescent (4)*
 PSY 315 Behavior Genetics (5)
PSY 374 *Adulthood & Aging (4)*
PSY 376 *Disorders of Childhood (4)*
PSY 378 **Psychology of Gender (4)**
 PSY 470 Prenatal Infl on Dev (4)

Clinical—at least two of the following:

PSY 233 *Psych of Personality (4)*
PSY 332 **Abnormal Psych (4)**
 PSY 341 Tests & Measurements (4)
PSY 351 **Intro to Clin & Couns (4)**
 PSY 430 Psychoactive Drugs (4)

Social/Organizational—at least two of the following:

PSY 261 Industrial and Org (4)
 PSY 310 Motivation (4)
PSY 336 *Social Psychology (4)*
 PSY 337 Social Psych of Justice (4)
 PSY 361 Adv Org Psychology (4)
 PSY 362 Personnel Psychology (4)

Note: Courses in **bold** are required for the marriage and family therapy track and courses in *italics* are recommended

Extra-Departmental Required Courses

Psychology majors in the marriage and family therapy track must complete three courses in ONE of the following natural science areas: Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Environmental and Plant Biology, Geography, Geology, or Physics. Courses that fulfill this requirement are listed under the Natural Sciences Area Requirement in the College of Arts and Sciences section of the catalog. The three courses that you choose must have the same departmental prefix, with the following exception: BIOL 101 may be combined with either two Environmental/Plant Biology (PBIO) courses or two Biological Sciences (BIOS) courses. Psychology majors in the marriage and family therapy track must complete two courses in either mathematics or computer science. Students may select any two courses in Mathematics (MATH) 113 or above except (251) OR any two courses in Computer Science (CS) 200 or above. You may choose MATH 250, but only if completed BEFORE you take PSY 221.

The following courses are required of students in the marriage and family therapy track:

SOC 220 Intro to the Family (4)
 HCCF 270 Family Living (3)
 COMS 206 Communication in Interpersonal Relationships (4)
 COMS 422 Communication in the Family (4)

Students in the marriage and family track are encouraged to complete the three courses in the Biological Sciences.

Additional Recommended Courses

HCCF 360 Human Sexualities (4)
 HCCF 380 Death and Dying (3)
 HCCF 462A Diversity in Families (4)
 HCCF 462B Parenthood (4)
 HCCF 462F Family Ties and Aging (4)
 COMS 420 Gender & Communication (4)

Note: Be sure to check prerequisites for coursework.

Fieldwork and Research

PSY 489 (1-5, 5 max)—Credit for volunteer work in a mental health or health care setting.
 PSY 390 (1-5, 15 max)—Credit for participating in research under the supervision of a faculty member.

If you are interested in attending graduate school, it is strongly recommended that you gain fieldwork and research experience.