

Department of Marriage and Family Therapy

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy (<https://www.apu.edu/bas/marriage-family-therapy/>) offers the Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-behavioral-applied-sciences/marriage-family-therapy/marriage-family-therapy-ma/>) program, which is intended for individuals who seek to develop a solid foundation in the theoretical and applied practice of professional counseling with individuals, couples, and families. Also included in the program are interdisciplinary studies in theology, ethics, and psychotherapy. For those planning to practice at the master's level, this program meets the current education requirements for California licensure as a marriage and family therapist.

The Department of Marriage and Family Therapy also offers a Substance Use Disorders Certificate (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-behavioral-applied-sciences/marriage-family-therapy/sud-certificate/>) that is designed for students and alumni of the clinical psychology program but which is open to anyone interested in gaining competency in the substance use disorders field.

Programs

Master's

- Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology: Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-behavioral-applied-sciences/marriage-family-therapy/marriage-family-therapy-ma/>)

Certificate

- Substance Use Disorders (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-behavioral-applied-sciences/marriage-family-therapy/sud-certificate/>)

Courses

PPSY 510, Psychotherapy and Cultural Diversity, 3 Units

An awareness of divergent cultural values, assumptions, and family dynamics is essential to the contemporary practice of psychotherapy. Students are encouraged to begin the process of garnering multicultural competency by examining their own attitudes and biases, increasing their knowledge of diverse populations, and developing skills related to service provision. Through experiential exercises and assignments, this course examines the conceptual and theoretical foundations of cross-cultural psychotherapy and encourages students to evaluate their readiness to engage in a process of developing competency in this arena. An introduction to the distinctives of several cultural groups is provided.

PPSY 511, Addictions, Assessment, and Interventions, 3 Units

This course introduces students to the field of addictions and compulsive behaviors, including substance abuse and substance abuse treatment. Emphasis is on assessment and intervention skills and processes, and evidence-based research relevant to treatment. Coursework also covers the nature and scope of addictions, DSM-5 criteria for disorders, and unique issues relative to faith, special populations such as children/adolescents and persons with disabilities, and other issues of diversity. If this course is used as a prerequisite course for the optional Substance Use Disorder concentration, students must achieve a grade of B- or higher.

PPSY 512, Legal, Ethical, and Moral Issues in Therapy, 3 Units

This course introduces and develops student competency in the legal, ethical, and moral issues related to the practice of marriage and family therapy in California. Consideration is given to the student practitioner's values, behaviors, and culture in relationship to becoming a licensed marriage and family therapist. Professional legal and ethical codes, as well as moral decisions, are studied and applied in clinical scenarios. Areas of focus include, but are not limited to, the requirements of mandated reporting, suicide assessment and interventions, and the limits of confidentiality. Additionally, students review statutory, regulatory, and decisional laws related to the MFT's scope of practice, including privilege, family law, and the treatment of minors.

PPSY 513, Substance Use Disorders II: History, Support, and Promising Practices, 3 Units

This course reviews the history of addiction and drugs in society from prohibition to the 21st century, including America's war on drugs. Students study mutual support groups such as 12-step programs, Rational Recovery, and Celebrate Recovery. Also included is the study of psychopharmacology (illicit drugs, abuse of prescription drugs, and medication-assisted treatment). New and emerging trends and promising practices are considered.

Prerequisite: PPSY 511

PPSY 514, Substance Use Disorders III: Co-Occurring Disorders, Co-Morbidity, and Integrated Treatment, 3 Units

This course introduces co-occurring disorders, co-morbidity, and integrated treatment including mental health treatment, substance abuse, and primary health. Students learn the distinction between mental health disorders and substance-induced disorders and how to differentiate between the two.

Behavioral addictions such as gambling, nicotine, and gaming, and the physiological impact of such disorders, are studied.

Prerequisite: PPSY 511 and PPSY 513

PPSY 515, SUD IV: Families and Other Special Populations; Confidentiality and Evidence Based Practices, 3 Units

This course focuses on substance abuse in the family system from adolescents to the elderly. Special populations are examined, such as high-risk groups, perspectives of women, and chronic pain. Special attention is paid to culturally and linguistically appropriate services. The ethical considerations of dual relationships and confidentiality are addressed. Evidence-based practices (motivational interviewing) and core concepts of relapse prevention techniques are major focuses.

Prerequisite: PPSY 511, PPSY 513 and PPSY 514

PPSY 516, Legal and Ethical Issues in Substance Use Disorders, 1 Unit

This course is designed to enhance the substance use disorders concentration and certificate, giving students further education and an opportunity to review, discuss, and apply the legal and ethical issues specific to the field of substance use disorders.

Corequisite: PPSY 513

PPSY 517, Motivational Interviewing with the SUD Population, 1 Unit

This course is designed to enhance the Substance Use Disorders concentration and certificate, equipping students with theories and techniques of motivational interviewing as it applies to the assessment and treatment of substance use disorders.

Corequisite: PPSY 514

PPSY 525, Crisis and Trauma in Community Mental Health, 3 Units

This course prepares students in the understanding and treatment of child abuse, domestic violence, and trauma. Content includes detection, assessment, and intervention strategies. Awareness of resiliency factors and their application to client recovery is addressed. Target populations include survivors, perpetrators, and those experiencing co-morbid disorders. Attention is paid to understanding the issues of diversity and its impact on client welfare, including elder abuse, same-gender abuse, and ethnic differences. This course also presents the challenges of accessing resources in community mental health. Guest speakers/consumers are invited. This course meets the domestic violence and child abuse requirements for MFT and LCSW licensure in California. This course also includes training (6+ hours) in suicide assessment and intervention.

PPSY 533, Christian Spiritual Formation and Psychotherapy, 3 Units

This course will provide an historical overview of Christian Spirituality, which is understood as ways of expressing devotion to God. As background for discussion of Christian Spiritual Formation, a holistic philosophical/theological model of persons will be presented along with an overview of spiritual disciplines as methods utilized to actively engage the Christian formation process. Examples of psychotherapy models that integrate Christian theology, spirituality with existing psychology theoretical and clinical models will be presented and discussed. Opportunities for synthesis, application, and creative development of ideas are all part of the course content and process.

PPSY 551, Theories of Psychotherapy, 3 Units

This course develops an understanding of the major theoretical orientations used by current practitioners, focusing on systemic approaches. Established schools of thought, the recovery model, evidence-based and promising practices and their immediate descendants are presented through lectures, videotapes, reflection, application via clinical case presentations, and experiential learning. The course also highlights cultural and spiritual diversity as it applies to the therapeutic process and awareness of the self, interpersonal issues, and spiritual values as they impact the use of theoretical frameworks.

PPSY 552, Human Sexuality and Sex Therapy, 3 Units

This course reviews human sexuality as a basis for sex therapy. Students examine and evaluate biological, psychological, social, and moral perspectives of the theories of sexual development and functioning, including issues of heterosexuality, homosexuality, gender identity, and transgender. In addition, students survey literature on sexual dysfunction, develop diagnostic skills for assessing the nature and extent of sexual dysfunction, and learn treatment strategies utilized in the various systems of marriage and sex therapy.

PPSY 555, Career Development Theories and Techniques, 3 Units

This course provides a comprehensive review of career development theory, as well as resources and techniques utilized in assisting individuals to make informed educational and career choices. An exploration of changing concepts of work and careers and their implications for career counseling is emphasized. A focus on the relationship of career to other issues in counseling is addressed.

PPSY 557, Couples Therapy, 3 Units

This course provides instruction on current theories and methods of couples/marriage therapy. Students gain basic knowledge in the application, assessment, and interventions of several theoretical models and are introduced to psychological instruments used in couples therapy. Emphasis is placed on how couples therapy attends to diversity issues such as domestic violence, ethnicity, spirituality, and cultural considerations within the clinical setting. Legal and ethical issues pertaining to couples therapy are integrated into treatment considerations.

PPSY 558, Advanced Developmental Psychology, 3 Units

The purpose of this course is to help students learn to utilize a lifespan perspective in their work as marriage and family therapists. The course focuses on the important developmental issues and milestones for each stage of the lifespan, paying particular attention to the aspects of context, culture, and environmental issues. Students are encouraged to consider how development occurs within a specific social context and learn how social stress, poverty, low educational attainment, abuse and neglect, and inadequate housing impact development. Biological, social, and psychological aspects of aging and long-term care are included in this course. Models of psychological development are presented and the processes of change and adaptation are examined, including clinical issues such as grief and loss. The clinical application of the material is highlighted through case examples, group discussion, and hands-on application during class activities.

Prerequisite: Human Development or equivalent

PPSY 561, Child and Adolescent Therapy, 3 Units

This course equips students with an understanding of the broad range of childhood and adolescent problems and disorders. A variety of psychotherapeutic modalities is presented, giving students an opportunity to develop knowledge of basic child and adolescent therapy skills, assessments, and treatment strategies. The impact of developmental aspects, family dynamics, social environments, and multicultural issues is addressed. In addition, legal and ethical issues, including child abuse reporting, suicide assessment and intervention, and the role of hospitalization, are considered.

PPSY 563, Psychopathology, 3 Units

This course reviews the role and categories of psychopathology utilized in the assessment and treatment of individual, marriage, and family dysfunction. Students develop diagnostic skills through a master of the concepts in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 5), and review available community resources for those with severe mental disorders.

PPSY 571, Family Therapy, 3 Units

This course is an overview of current theories and methods of family therapy interventions. There is an emphasis on how family therapy integrates diversity issues (e.g., ethnicity, socioeconomic status, spirituality, blended families) during the clinical hour. The major theories, their founding clinicians, and some of their contemporaries are reviewed. Clinical application of the material is emphasized in coursework.

PPSY 572, Research Methodology, 3 Units

This course surveys the major social science research methods, preparing students to read, understand, and evaluate psychological research. This course provides students with the basic knowledge and experience of conducting psychological experiments and how and when to use statistical procedures. Students build skills in how to apply clinical outcome research to clinical treatment planning and interventions. Sensitivity to issues of diversity in psychological research is stressed.

PPSY 577, Psychological Assessment, 3 Units

This course provides students with a broad understanding of the clinical use of psychological tests, including objective personality tests, intelligence tests, and projective testing techniques. Emphasis is on developing skills in administering tests, interpreting test findings, and applying test findings through report writing. Current research regarding psychological testing is also reviewed.

PPSY 580, Introduction to Clinical Practice: Basic Skills, 3 Units

This course introduces the student to basic skills in attending behavior, clinical interviewing, and clinical intervention. It is designed to stimulate self-awareness as related to the therapeutic relationship, as well as the integration of spirituality and the interpersonal process. Coursework includes reading, observation, role-play, and student audio/videotaped clinical practice. A grade of B or better must be achieved in order to advance to PPSY 581.

PPSY 581, Introduction to Clinical Practice: Advanced Skills, 3 Units

This course is designed to further develop the psychotherapeutic skills of students prior to their entry into a clinical placement. Students focus on developing proficiency in the core interviewing qualities, deriving goals for a clinical session, and in making contracts with clients for change. Additionally, students are encouraged to begin developing a theoretical and conceptual understanding of cases, and trained to work with diverse populations. Students are also encouraged to address issues regarding the integration of their faith with the practice of psychotherapy. These goals are addressed through experiential learning, lecture, readings, discussion, and reflection.

Prerequisite: PPSY 580

PPSY 582, Group Skills, 3 Units

This course introduces students to the theories and techniques utilized in group counseling. The course includes information about principles of group dynamics, group process, and developmental stages. Students explore the therapeutic factors of group work and group leadership style. Content also includes current research and literature, methods, and evaluation of effectiveness. Ethical, legal, and professional issues as well as special needs such as multiculturalism, life-span development concerns, and the therapist's personal leadership style are addressed.

Prerequisite: PPSY 580 and PPSY 581

PPSY 585, Psychobiology and Psychopharmacology, 3 Units

This course introduces the biological and neurological bases of human behavior and use of psychotropic medications as an adjunctive therapy to psychotherapy. Current information on the use of medications in the treatment of psychological disorders is provided. Consideration is given to the special needs of certain populations (e.g., the elderly, substance abuse patients) when psychotropic medications are prescribed. Students develop skills in case management when referral to medical doctors or neuropsychologists is part of therapeutic practice.

PPSY 592, Introduction to Clinical Placement, 1 Unit

This course is designed to support and equip students with entry-level practice management skills for clinical placement within community mental health and private practice settings. Students develop knowledge and gain practice in identifying diagnoses, presenting problems, documentation, and treatment planning. This course also provides program oversight of students' clinical placement experiences.

Prerequisite: PPSY 580 and PPSY 581

PPSY 593, Clinical Consultation, 1 Unit

This course is designed as an adjunct to the advanced-level students' clinical placement and supervision experiences. The primary purpose of this course is to provide an opportunity for students to discuss their clinical caseload, and to provide program oversight of clinical placement experience.

Prerequisite: PPSY 597, PPSY 598, and current placement in a clinical site

PPSY 595, Special Topics, 1-6 Units

Special topics courses offer graduate-level content that is typically scheduled in an intensive format. These courses include a range of specialized topics that are of interest to mental health professionals. The unit values of these courses range from 1-6 unit credits, depending upon the specific contact hours and workload involved in the course.

PPSY 597, Clinical Placement I, 3 Units

This course provides oversight of students' clinical placement and supervision experiences, focusing on enhancing students' clinical skills and knowledge of the interpersonal process of psychotherapy. Special attention is given to case management issues, documentation, community-based resources, integration of faith, health promotion, legal and ethical issues, and treatment planning. Treatment planning, utilizing many theoretical approaches including the recovery model, includes instruction and practice in determining the presenting problem, diagnosis, prognosis, client goals, and clinical interventions. Clinical skills and the processes of psychotherapy and supervision are addressed through experiential learning, readings, discussion, reflection, and assignments. This course also provides students with a forum for discussing their clinical caseloads (individuals, children, couples, families, and groups) and their interactions with placement supervisors. Students must be serving at an approved training site to be enrolled in this course.

PPSY 598, Clinical Placement II, 3 Units

This course is an adjunct to students' clinical placement, building on PPSY 597 to provide oversight and consultation for students' clinical placements and the further development of clinical skills. Emphasis is on management of crisis issues, legal/ethical practice, diagnosis, prognosis, multicultural treatment, treatment planning, application of theory to actual clients, integration of faith, and case management services. Clinical work is discussed from a public mental health and private practice perspective. Students must be serving at an APU-approved training site to be enrolled in this course.

Prerequisite: PPSY 597

PPSY 599, Readings in Psychology, 1-4 Units

PPSY 786, Global Psychology, 2 Units

This course provides a systematic overview of existing approaches to working globally. Theory, research, and intervention are highlighted, and the history of globalization, current trends, and common problems and issues are examined. Students are encouraged to develop their clinical skills in applying psychology to significant global concerns in diverse countries and cultures and practically apply their knowledge during an intensive, three-week practicum in Kenya, East Africa.

Faculty

Chair

Danielle Lascano (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/dlascano/>), EdD, LMFT, RPT

Professors

Scott Bledsoe (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/tsbledsoe/>), PsyD

Joy Bustrum (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/jbustrum/>), PsyD

Associate Professors

Jenss Chang (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/jchang/>), PhD

Aimée Vadnais (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/avadnais/>), PsyD, LMFT

Assistant Professors

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