MASTER OF ARTS IN MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY
CLINICAL HANDBOOK
2025 / 2026

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INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts (MA) in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program at the University of Massachusetts Global is designed to prepare students to become Marriage and Family Therapists. Grounded in both foundational and advanced structures of systems theory, the program fosters the development of a comprehensive understanding of applying various theoretical orientations and interventions. This prepares students to effectively serve clients from diverse and marginalized backgrounds.

This Clinical Handbook serves as an introduction to the intricate nature of the Advancement and Practicum processes. It is imperative for students to thoroughly review this Handbook to familiarize themselves with the comprehensive array of policies and procedures provided. This understanding is crucial for a successful navigation through the clinical component of the MFT program.

The MA MFT program adheres to the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy Code of Ethics. Students are expected to abide by the AAMFT Code of Ethics guidelines and regulations. It is the primary responsibility of the students to familiarize themselves with the code of ethics. Violation of the Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the program.

Diversity statement

Students in practicum are required to provide clinical services to diverse, marginalized, and/or underserved communities from non-majority populations currently discriminated against and underrepresented in regard to their race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religious and spiritual practices, nation of origin or other social categories, immigration status, and/or language.

The program contracts with agencies that serve diverse, marginalized, and/or underserved communities. At the time of contracting, agencies complete a survey identifying the populations with whom the students may work that meet the categorization of diverse, marginalized, and/or underserved. In addition, the program requires students and supervisors to complete three practicum evaluations, and each survey includes questions asking students and supervisors to identify the types of populations with whom the student has worked that meet the categorization of diverse, marginalized, and/or underserved. This is all done with the intent to ensure that students gain experience working with diverse populations.

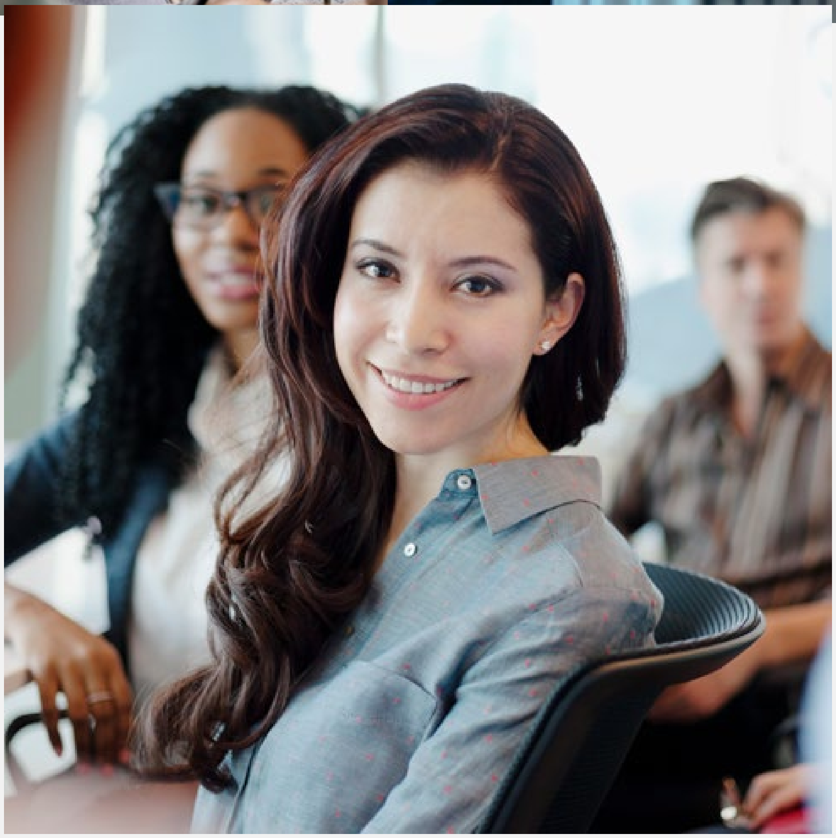
Clinical Support Team

The Clinical Support Team (CST) welcomes our MA MFT students as they embark on their clinical journey! The clinical aspect of the MA MFT program consists of two elements: 1)

Advancement, & 2) Practicum. Together, these constitute a pivotal milestone in the development of our students as future MFTs. The CST is eager to provide guidance and work collaboratively with you throughout your advancement and practicum experience.

The CST is a centralized remote team that consists of the Clinical Faculty Representatives (CFR) and the Clinical Specialists (CS). Upon the submission of the advancement application, each student is assigned a CFR, who collaborates with them for approximately 14-16 months throughout their advancement and practicum process. The CS team collaborates with the CFR to assist the student throughout the practicum process. The following outlines the responsibilities of both CFR and CS members.

CFR Responsibilities	CS Responsibilities
Advancements Review Advancement application with students Discuss advancement examination process Conduct Group Preparation Sessions Facilitate Advancements Practicum Vet and approve clinical agencies Discuss the student file creation process Review & approve the following documents: (Responsibility & Commitment form, Copy of Supervisor's License, Liability Insurance Certificate) Support and mentor students through practicum Address clinical and logistic concerns related to agencies Manage practicum course concerns All CFRs can be reached at: mftpccclinical@umassglobal.edu	Send students the Advancement and practicum notification email. Collaborate with CFR's on completing Agency Agreements Create Sonia login information Lift Dean's Hold for students Manage technological problems related to Sonia for tracking clinical hours and evaluations A CS member can be reached at: psychalerts@umassglobal.edu



ADVANCEMENT OVERVIEW

Advancement Definition

Advancement is an oral clinical standardized examination wherein students' clinical skills and knowledge undergo evaluation by a member of the CST alongside at least one other UMass Global MA MFT faculty member. Serving as one of the initial opportunities for students, this examination allows them to integrate information acquired from core courses and demonstrate their comprehension of the clinical process. This examination serves as a simulation of what students can expect in a clinical setting, emphasizing the significance of the student learning outcomes (SLOs) within the program. Through the advancement, students apply and demonstrate their acquired knowledge to a vignette presented. Students must pass the examination prior to entering the clinical setting. The outcomes of the advancement examination not only indicate students' readiness to serve in the community but also serve as an assessment tool, providing valuable insights for the students' PCS regarding their clinical baseline and progress in the clinical setting.

Students' primary objectives during this examination are assessed through the following:

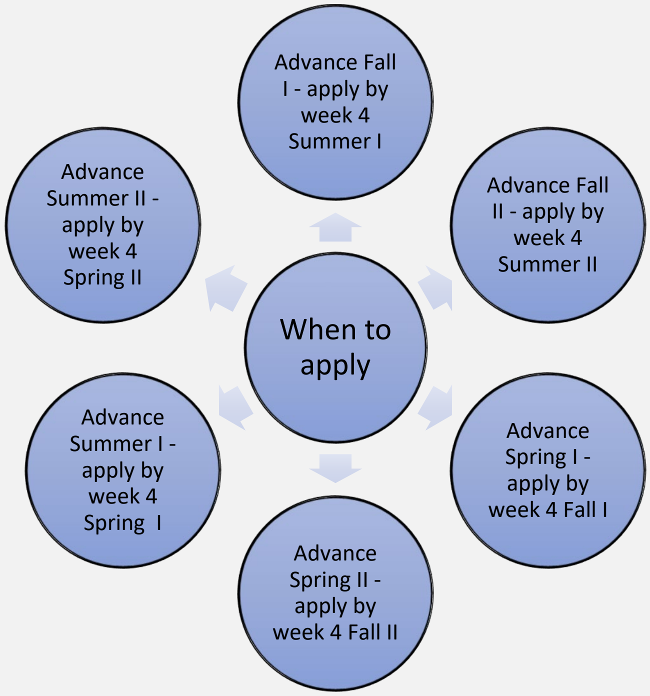
- Identify and address any legal and ethical dilemmas or concerns
- Identify and address red flags or crisis circumstances
- Construct and provide a thorough clinical conceptualization
- Provide concrete, relational, and rule out diagnosis(es) with a plausible rationale for the selected diagnosis(es)
- Formulate a relevant treatment plan using systemic theoretical modalities, addressing all stages of treatment.

Application Process

Once students have completed 18 units, they will receive an email from the CS team titled "MA MFT Advancement Notification."

1. If students do not have their advancement term on their educational plan, they are required to schedule a meeting with their academic advisor to determine their advancement term.

2. Students must fully complete the advancement application based on their program that is found on the [MA MFT/PCC information page]() **two** sessions prior to advancing (by week **four** of that session).

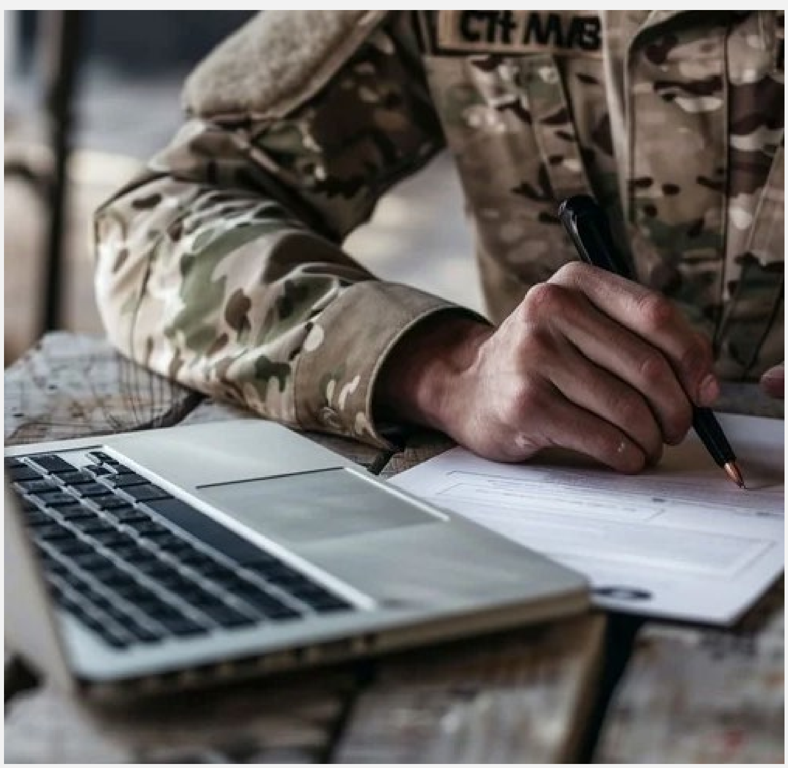


3. Upon receiving the application, students will be assigned a CFR.
4. The CFR will schedule a meeting with the student to provide guidance, necessary information for advancement, and determine the date for the advancement examination.

Required Courses for Advancement

To be eligible for advancement, students are required to complete and pass the **eight** specified advancement readiness courses (with an average grade of B- or better) listed below.

Course Number	Course Title	Units
PSYU 502	History and Foundations of Therapeutic Practices	3
PSYU 506	Ethical & Professional Issues	3
PSYU 510	Psychopathology & Diagnosis	3
PSYU 512	Family Therapy Theories and Techniques: A Modern Emphasis	3
PSYU 514	Couples Therapy	3
PSYU 516	Assessment and Treatment of Substance Abuse	3
PSYU 518	Child/Adolescent Psychopathology and Child Abuse Reporting	3
PSYU 520	Advanced Individual Therapy I	3
Total Credit		**24**



ADVANCEMENT EXAMINATION

Advancement Preparation session

Advancement preparation session is a required 1-hour group meeting, facilitated by the CFRs. The purpose of these sessions is to:

1. Review detailed information found in the Advancement Study Guide.
2. Clarify and answer any questions related to the examination.

Students will be provided with the registration link for the Advancement Prep Sessions during their initial meeting with their CFR. These prep sessions are offered during weeks two and three of each session, and students may choose to attend more than one session.

Please note*, these sessions* ***are not recorded*** *by the CFRs, and students are* ***not allowed*** *to record the session in progress.*

Additional tips for advancement preparations:

- Complete all assigned readings and assignments.
- Ask clarification questions in the synchronous classroom.
- Engage in discussions inside and outside the classroom related to the course material.
- In theory specific courses, practice applying interventions.

- Attend Advancement Preparation Sessions
- Utilize the Advancement Study Guide to prepare for the advancement examination.

ADA Accommodations

Students requiring ADA accommodations for the advancement exam can initiate the accommodation request process by contacting the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) via email at oae@umassglobal.edu or by submitting the OAE Accommodations Request form. Upon connecting with OAE, a meeting will be arranged with the student to assess and determine the specific accommodations needed for the advancement examination.

Note: If a student is currently receiving accommodations and would like to utilize their accommodation for the examination, they should contact the OAE office to review accommodations tailored specifically for their advancement.

Examination Procedures

The advancement process is facilitated by a two or three-person panel. Each member of the panel teaches within the MFT program. The CFR will lead the panel and no other university personnel or students are permitted to participate in the advancement process.

The advancement examination will be conducted remotely via Zoom; a link will be provided during the initial meeting with a CFR. Students are required to log into Zoom utilizing the link provided to access their examination meeting.

Students must have access to a computer, a webcam, and a headset/microphone to participate in the examination process. Students are not allowed to use any virtual backgrounds during the examination. Please keep in mind that students must operate from **1** screen during the duration of the entire exam.

- During the examination, students are required to comply with the program's Virtual Space Behavioral Policy.

At the beginning of the examination, the CFR will ask the student to utilize their camera to show their workspace. Students are expected to remain on camera and have their audio on throughout the exam. Below is a list of items allowed and not allowed during the exam.

Allowed	Not allowed
• Blank pieces of paper • Writing tools • Non-alcoholic drink • One screen to participate in the exam	• Supporting documents such as textbooks, notes from classes, or the DSM 5, etc. • Cellphones or voice-activated devices • Multiple screens • Artificial intelligence technology

The duration of the advancement exam will be approximately 60 minutes.

- Students will have 15 minutes to review and prepare their responses for the vignette provided on the screen.
- Students will have 40 minutes to answer questions, and their overall performance will be evaluated by the facilitators.
- The last 5 minutes is dedicated for the evaluators to discuss the examination outcome
    - Students will be notified of their results at the end of the examination.

Examination Grading Rubric

Facilitators utilize a standardized rubric to assess student responses during the advancement process. In order to maintain the authenticity of the examination, the rubric is not disclosed to the students.

Examination Outcome

Students will be notified of their evaluation outcome at the end of the exam. There are three possible outcomes for the examination: Pass, Pass with Stipulation, and No Pass.

Pass	Pass with Stipulation	No Pass
• 80% or better • Student fullfilled requirement	• 70-79% • Areas of improvement needed	• 69% or less • Student needs further development

1. **Pass**
   A "Pass" outcome (80% or better) indicates that the student has successfully fulfilled the requirements for advancement.

2. **Pass with Stipulation**

   A "Pass with Stipulation" (70%-79%) indicates that there are areas of improvement the student will need to focus on. The panel will communicate the stipulation at the end of the exam.
   a. The student can only register for their first practicum course until satisfactory completion of the stipulation.
      - The Deans' hold will remain on the students' file until they complete the required stipulation.
3. **No Pass**
   An outcome of a "No Pass" (69% and below) indicates that there are significant areas the student needs to further develop.
   a. If a student fails their **first** examination, they will be eligible to take the exam the following session. For example, if a student takes the examination during the Fall I session that results in failure, they are eligible to retake the exam during the Fall II session.

   b. If the outcome of the **second** examination results in failure, the student will be eligible to retake the exam during the next session. Following the same examples above, if the second attempt occurs during the Fall II session and results in failure, the student is eligible for a retake in the Spring I session.

      - The retesting will be conducted by the same faculty members who administered the first exam, and students will be assigned a mandatory mentorship process to guide them through areas of improvement.

c. Should the student fail the **third** attempt, a **one-session** waiting period is mandated before being eligible for a retake. Using the example, if the third attempt is during the Spring I session and results in failure, the student can retake the exam in the Summer I session.

- The third attempt involves a different set of panel members, including the CFR and two new faculty members.
- The mandatory mentorship process continues to guide students through improvement areas, and their readiness for advancement is determined by their mentor before scheduling an exam date.

d. If the outcome of the student's advancement examination results in failure on all three attempts, a professional review is scheduled. This review is conducted by the Clinical Director (CD) and the Program Director (PD) to assess the student's ongoing program eligibility.

Students that receive an outcome of a "No Pass" will not be able to register for their practicum course.

- Students must notify their practicum agency of any delays to their practicum start date (if applicable).
- Students must meet with their academic advisor to revise their Ed-plan.

Advancement Policies

Late Attendance

Students are expected to attend the advancement examination on time, as scheduled and arranged by their CFR. If a student is **10 minutes late,** the exam will be rescheduled. The rescheduling of the advancement for the same term is contingent upon the availability of the Clinical Support Team.

Cancellation

Please be advised that advancement cancellations require one-week notice prior to the examination date. For students to cancel their advancement they must immediately contact their CFR. The rescheduling of the advancement for the same term is contingent upon the availability of the Clinical Support Team.

No Show

A student who fails to attend the advancement examination will be eligible for advancement the following term.

Re-Examination

Students who complete their Advancement Examination and do not enter practicum within four (4) academic terms following the examination, will be required to retake the Advancement Examination prior to beginning practicum.

Students who take a leave of absence from the program and return after two (2) years or more will be required to retake the Advancement Examination prior to starting practicum.

PRACTICUM OVERVIEW

The Practicum Development and Expectations at UMass Global for MFT students emphasize the acquisition of comprehensive clinical skills and theoretical knowledge. Students are expected to demonstrate competency in applying systemic theoretical interventions and diagnostic skills, particularly tailored for clients from diverse backgrounds. The core of the MFT program centers on a systemic approach, focusing on understanding relationships through interactional patterns.

Key aspects include:

- Students apply clinical knowledge to diagnose and treat clients systemically.
- Emphasis on acquiring an immersion implementation acquiring in-depth knowledge of at least one systemic theoretical orientation to broaden clinical skills.
- Reflection and growth as integral to the trainee development process, challenging personal biases and perspectives.
- Adherence to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and state-regulated policies, aligning with Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) clinical training requirements.

This framework guides students through the practicum process, supporting their professional and ethical development in marriage and family therapy.

Practicum Definition

Practicum is defined as the “clinical training” component of the UMass Global MA MFT program. The clinical training segment includes two distinct categories:

1. Courses
2. Clinical Experience

Courses

The Clinical Practicum courses are tailored to offer students diverse learning opportunities. Within these courses, students engage in discussions about cases, formulate interventions and strategies, meet observational supervision requirements, and share resources. The overarching objective is to ensure the successful acquisition, integration, and application of essential clinical skills, enabling students to become effective clinicians, educators, and advocates in the field of MFT. Students must complete six practicum courses (MFT/PSYU 660-665).

Clinical Experience

The clinical experience involves the application of a student's knowledge in providing systemic clinical services to community-based clients. During practicum, the student assumes the role of a trainee, gaining hands-on experience to develop their clinical competencies.

Time Frame

Students must complete six practicum courses (MFT/PSYU 660-665) consecutively within a **12-month** timeframe while concurrently delivering clinical services at an agency in their community.

Securing a Practicum Site

A practicum site refers to a community-based agency. Students may only provide therapy at a site that has been fully vetted and approved by the university. All students must secure a site to fulfill the program's clinical experience requirements to include supervision and direct client contact hour completion.

Steps for Securing a Site

- Meet with the CFR and discuss the process for securing a clinical site.
- Search for a clinical site from the approved site list or identify an alternative non-approved agency in the community.
    - The program approved site lists.
        - Approved site list
    - Upon identifying the site on the approved list, complete the approved clinical site research form and submit it to the CFR.
    - Students interested in non-approved agencies, must complete the non-approved Clinical Research Form and submit it to the CFR
        - Students are required to consult with their CFR prior to interviewing at a non-approved site.
            - Approvals are contingent and not guaranteed as agencies must meet state requirements.
            - Please note, the approval process may take 1-2 months or longer.

Students are responsible for securing a practicum site while actively collaborating with their CFR and are encouraged to seek guidance and support from their CFR as needed throughout the process.

The chart below demonstrates the process of securing a clinical site.

Discuss securing a practicum site with your CFR

- CFR reviews program approved site list
- CFR discusses process for non-approved sites
- CFR will meet with agency for potential partnership

Student search for clinical site within the community

- Identify approved or non-approved clinical sites
- Fill out the Non- and Approved Clinical Site Research From
- Submit form to your CFR for review
- CFR will provide update on status of partnership

Secure an interview with an approved site

- Student interviews at their protential site(s)
- Ensure site meets the practicum requirements
  - Relational hours
  - Recording Session (audio/video)
  - Weekly Supervision

Upon securing a site, student must submit all the required practicum documents

- Responsibility & Commitment form
- Current copy of supervisor's license
- Certificate of Insurance for Student Professional Liability Insurance
- Complete the Waiver

Eligibility for Practicum Registration

Dean’s Hold

All students have a Dean’s Hold prerequisite on their registration account, preventing them from registering for practicum courses. This hold can only be lifted by a member of the CS team. To lift this hold, students must fulfill the following criteria:

1. Pass the Advancement Examination
2. Submit Practicum Documentation (outlined below)
   a. Complete Responsibility and Commitment form found on the [MA MFT PCC Clinical Information Page]()
      i. The Responsibility and Commitment form is an agreement between the clinical supervisor, the student, and the university that outlines the responsibility of each party involved while the student is actively providing services at the agency.
   b. A current copy of the student's Agency Supervisor’s license

c. A current copy of the student's Certificate of Professional Liability Insurance
    i. Professional liability insurance provides individual coverage for students while they practice at their clinical agency. Students must obtain their own professional liability insurance coverage before the commencement of services at the agency. The student coverage plan is $1,000,000.
    ii. Students may obtain a certificate of liability insurance through the following affiliations:
        - AAMFT
            - Students receive the benefit of liability coverage through their annual membership dues at no cost.
        - CPH Insurance
        - HPSO

d. A Waiver of Liability & Assumption of Risk Agreement
    i. This document will be located in Sonia.

Uploading Practicum Documents

The university utilizes an online platform called Sonia for submitting documents for lifting the Dean's Hold. Students will receive a login to Sonia following their initial meeting with their CFR. All practicum documentation must be uploaded to Sonia by Week 5 of the session prior to the start of the practicum course.

- For instance, if a student is scheduled to start practicum in the Summer 1 session, they must submit their documents for review and approval no later than the fifth week of the Spring 2 term

Note: Failure to submit these documents on time may result in a delay of practicum registration by a session(s) or more. If the documents are submitted late and a delay occurs, it is the responsibility of the student to communicate this **delay** and change to their academic advisor and have their educational plan updated accordingly.

If you have any questions regarding the Sonia platform, please reach out to psychalerts@umassglobal.edu

ADA Accommodations for Practicum

Students requiring ADA accommodations for their practicum clinical placement can initiate the accommodation request process by contacting the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) via email at oae@umassglobal.edu or by submitting the OAE Internship, Field Placement and Practicum Request Form. Upon connecting with OAE, a meeting will be arranged with the student to assess and determine the specific accommodations needed for the clinical placement.

PRACTICUM COURSES

Course Enrollment

Once enrolled in practicum, students are required to attend, participate, and complete all required assignments related to the practicum course. To remain enrolled in practicum, students must be placed and actively engaged at a clinical agency, working with clients, and routinely meeting with their assigned agency clinical supervisor. If a student is not actively seeing clients (for any reason), the student must either drop the practicum course or will receive a grade of No Pass “NP” which will require the student to retake the practicum course.

Students are required to communicate any changes in their status at a practicum location, to include but not limited to termination from the agency, challenges with supervision, or concerns that necessitate a break, to both their practicum instructor and the CFR via email.

Course Requirements

Practicum courses are conducted via Zoom, with classes scheduled on specific days of the week.

Note: Students should not anticipate working with the same Program Clinical Supervisor (PCS) throughout the practicum experience. In essence, each practicum course will involve a different program clinical supervisor.

Within a 12-month period, students are required to complete six practicum courses consecutively throughout a period of 12 months. Below is the list of the practicum courses:

1. PSYU 660 MFT Practicum I: A Systemic Lens of the Developing Therapist
2. PSYU 661 MFT Practicum II: Contextualizing the Content of Therapy
3. PSYU 662 MFT Practicum III: Exploring the Therapeutic Process
4. PSYU 663 MFT Practicum IV: Theoretical Application and Capstone 1
5. PSYU 664 MFT Practicum V: Social Context and Capstone 2
6. PSYU 665 MFT Practicum VI: Beyond the Classroom and Capstone 3

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

The core foundation of the UMass Global MA MFT program is built on its Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). These SLOs provide essential metrics for evaluating the knowledge and skills students acquire throughout the program. The program's five SLOs form the basis for the two primary assessment components used to measure student knowledge and skills during the practicum process:

Student Learning Outcomes	
SLO 1: Knowledge	Students will analyze therapeutic problems and challenges of clients using systemic theories and models.
SLO 2: Practice	Students and graduates will apply systemic/relational clinical interventions in their work as Marriage and Family Therapists.
SLO 3: Diversity	Students will demonstrate awareness, understanding, sensitivity, and respect for diversity and inclusion.
SLO 4: Ethics	Students will apply ethical and professional decision making to issues in psychotherapy.
SLO 5: Research	Students will employ research knowledge to enhance clinical practice.

Completion of Course Requirements

To fulfill practicum requirements, students must satisfy the categories listed below.

1. Course assignments
2. Clinical Hours

Course Assignment Requirements

Recorded Presentations

In each practicum course (PSYU 660-665), students are required to record and present a minimum of two therapy sessions per term, demonstrating their ability to implement clinical interventions.

a. The recording requirement is dependent on the number of enrollees in the practicum course.

Discussion Boards

Discussion board assignments are used to create a space for students to engage in clinical discussion relevant to the weekly assignments and their clinical process.

Case Synopsis

A Case Synopsis is a clinical conceptualization demonstrating students' proficiency in identifying presenting problems, formulating diagnosis, creating treatment plans, implementing culturally appropriate interventions, and addressing legal, ethical, and management of crisis-related matters.

Capstone Project

The Capstone is a comprehensive summative assessment project that will assess a student's mastery of the programs SLOs. The project is based on an active client that is currently in treatment during the students' practicum experience.
For more information regarding the Capstone Project requirements, review the [Capstone Guide.]

Capstone Presentation

Students will deliver a final clinical case PowerPoint presentation in PSYU 665, featuring cumulative excerpts from their capstone client recordings completed during PSY 660–664. This presentation will offer a concise summary of their capstone work.

Clinical Hours

Each term, students are required to log their clinical hours in Sonia and obtain approval from their agency clinical supervisor.

******Please note*** *that guidelines for all assignments can be found in the course shell. ***

UMASS GLOBAL SUPERVISION OVERVIEW

Students **must** complete 100 hours of UMass Global practicum supervision, achieved by participating in a series of 6 practicum courses spread across a 12-month period. Each practicum course spans a duration of 2.5 hours.

UMass Global supervision consists of two components: 1) Observational Supervision, and 2) UMass Global Group Supervision. Out of the100 UMass Global program supervision hours, a minimum of 50 hours **must** be observable supervision (presentation of recordings). The remaining 50 hours may be observational or Umass Global Group supervision hours.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Umass Global Supervision Hours

100 Hours</th></tr>
<tr><th>Observational Supervision</th><th>Umass Global Group Supervision</th></tr>
<tr><td>50 Hours</td><td>50 Hours</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">To fulfill the observational supervision requirements, students must present their recorded sessions and engage in observing their colleagues' recorded presentations.</td></tr>
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Observational Supervision Definition

Observational supervision is the process in which a student records (video or audio) a clinical session with a client and presents that excerpt recordings in their practicum courses. The program clinical supervisors and other practicum student's peers will observe and provide feedback.

Observational Supervision Recorded Presentation

Students are required to show a minimum of 6 up to 12 pre-recorded cases representing their ability to integrate systemic constructs within their clinical work. Students can illustrate their development and progress by demonstrating how they integrate system concepts and theory into practice.

Observation of Classmate's Recorded Presentation

Students are required to actively engage in their classmates' presentations across all practicum courses, as this is a valuable opportunity for collaborative learning and professional growth. By offering constructive and respectful feedback, students contribute to a supportive learning environment while sharpening their own clinical skills. Thoughtful participation allows students to practice critical thinking by generating ideas, suggesting clinical interventions, considering diagnoses, exploring cultural factors, and addressing important legal and ethical considerations relevant to each case.

UMass Global Group Supervision Definition

UMass Global group supervision refers to the time spent in practicum courses where students engage in discussions related to clinical topics, course readings, and the cases they are working on. Any time spent in the classroom that does not involve observing a recording is considered part of UMass Global group supervision.

Interruption of Program Clinical Supervision

In the case where a PCS is unavailable (planned or unplanned) the university will ensure a replacement immediately.

PRACTICUM POLICIES

Grading System

Students' grades in each practicum course are determined based on two key assessment categories:

1. Course Assignments (A)
2. Clinical Hours and Evaluations (B)

A: Course Assignments	
Percentage for total Course Assignment	**70%**
B: Clinical Hours and Evaluations	
Percentage for total Clinical Hours and Evaluations	**30%**
A&B=100%	

There are two grade outcomes a student can earn in practicum:

1. Pass (P)
    a. A student will earn a grade of a "P" if they complete all course requirements in each session.
        i. **A student must earn 80% or more in each course to receive a grade of a "P".**
2. No Pass (NP)
    a. A student will earn the grade of an "NP" if they do not complete the course requirements. Students who earn an "NP" will be required to retake the course.

The practicum grading outcomes do not impact grade point average. For further detail on grading symbols please refer to the university catalog.

Note: If a student fails to complete the clinical presentation in each of their courses, they will receive a grade of a no pass (NP). As a result, they will have to retake the course.

Attendance

Weekly participation in practicum courses is mandatory for MA MFT program students. In the event of an emergency, students are required to promptly notify the instructor as soon as the situation is resolved. The MA MFT program aligns with the university's attendance policy, and additional details about this policy can be found in the university academic catalog.

Note: Attendance is an imperative component to completing the UMass Global Supervision hours. Students who miss class and have a deficit for supervision hours towards the end of their practicum courses, must plan to make-up the required hours in a continuation course.

Add/Drop of Course

The deadline to **add** a course is by the end of the first week of each session. If the student is not registered by the end of the first week, they must wait until the start of the next session to begin their practicum course.

The deadline to **drop** a course is by the end of the second week of that session. If a student drops the practicum course, they must notify the instructor, CFR, clinical agency, and academic advisor of the change. In addition, the student must drop their clinical site. In other words, enrollment in a practicum course is mandatory for students to provide clinical services at an agency. Please refer to the university academic catalog for further information about the add/drop policy

Consecutive Enrollment

Practicum consists of six consecutive courses over 12 months. Each practicum course is eight weeks long. Students are expected to consecutively enroll in their practicum courses while simultaneously providing services at a designated agency to obtain their clinical hours.

Students may continue to accrue clinical hours at their clinical site during days designated on the academic calendar as '**administrative offices closed**.' Additionally, during 'Winter Break' and the week between the Summer II and Fall I sessions, students may continue accruing clinical hours, provided they are enrolled in a practicum course for the following session.

Practicum Leave of Absence

In case of emergency, students are permitted to take a leave to attend to their needs. Any student requiring a break from the program must complete the Practicum Leave of Absence Form and submit it to their CFR via email. For a detailed copy refer to Appendix D.

Students requesting a leave of absence from their practicum, while on leave are prohibited from offering clinical services at their site and must drop their practicum course(s). The Dean's hold will be placed on the student's account until they return to the program and go through the process of lifting the Dean's Hold.

Should a student decide to discontinue their practicum and fail to resume their practicum requirements at the University within **two** years from the last day of the session in which they were most recently enrolled, they will be obligated to retake the advancement examination and the entire practicum series of courses upon their return. The previously accumulated practicum hours will no longer be considered valid, and any grades earned in practicum courses will be converted to "NP" (No Pass).

Practicum Continuation Course

Students who are unable to complete their required clinical hours within the designated 12-month period will be automatically enrolled in the practicum continuation course (PSYU 696), which allows them to continue accruing hours as needed. Enrollment in this course is mandatory for each session until clinical hour requirements are met or the student reaches the seven-year program completion limit. Students cannot self-enroll but will receive notification of their enrollment status and are expected to actively participate. PSYU 696 is a zero-credit course with a fee of $300 per session, which is not covered by financial aid. Students are encouraged to review the cost with their One Stop worker to plan accordingly.

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

The clinical experience for practicum students is an essential component of their training, providing them with invaluable hands-on learning experiences to gain their clinical hours. Through direct engagement with clients under the supervision of a licensed clinical supervisor, students are able to apply theoretical knowledge to real-life situations, honing their skills in assessment, diagnosis, and intervention within the context of relationships and family dynamics. This experiential learning allows students to participate in conducting therapeutic sessions understanding complexities of interpersonal relationships, while utilizing systemic modalities, and implementing the nuances of therapeutic techniques. Moreover, clinical experience fosters the development of essential clinical competencies, such as empathy, cultural sensitivity & humility, and ethical decision-making, preparing students for the multifaceted challenges they will encounter in their future careers as marriage and family therapists.

Practicum Agencies

To fulfill the practicum requirements of the program, students must complete their clinical hours at an approved clinical site with a valid agreement on file between the university and the agency of interest. Before a student can begin their practicum, the agency must be vetted by the student's CFR to assess its qualifications and discuss a potential partnership. This evaluation ensures the site meets essential criteria, including opportunities for clinical development within the student's scope of practice and competence, ongoing clinical supervision, availability of clinical hours, and the ability to record sessions (video or audio) as required.

Students are responsible for verifying that their chosen site is approved by the university through checking the clinical site list or receiving communication through their CFR before beginning any clinical work. Practicing at an unapproved site, or one without a formal university agreement, may be considered unethical, and any hours accrued at such a location will not count toward graduation. This policy applies to all students currently enrolled in practicum, including those seeking to add an additional practicum site.

Student Practicum Guidelines

1. The use of any form of federally illegal substances such as alcohol or prescribed or non-prescribed medication is prohibited while functioning as a trainee and student at a clinical site or during classes.
2. Attend and participate in agency clinical supervision on a weekly basis.
3. Record and have the agency clinical supervisor sign clinical hours on state regulated forms on a weekly basis.

4. Students must input their clinical hours into Sonia by the eighth week of each term, and have the hours approved by the agency supervisor.

5. Must remind the agency clinical supervisor to complete the supervisee evaluation in Sonia based on communication received from the program.

6. Students must complete the supervisor evaluation in Sonia based on communication received from the program.

7. At all times students must demonstrate professionalism (respectful mannerisms, use of language and vocabulary, professional attire/appearance, respectful and professional interactions, etc.) with clients, peers, and agency personnel.

8. Students must use appropriate self-disclosure when interacting with clients, classmates, and agency personnel both in a written and verbal format.

9. Students must communicate in a professional manner in both written and verbal formats.

10. Students must communicate If an emergency occurs be sure to their clients and agency personnel in a timely manner.

11. Students must be punctual at all times.

12. Students must adhere to agency guidelines and the supervisor guidance at all times.

13. Without prior approval, students are not allowed to bring pets to the agency.

Place of Employment

Students may be eligible to complete their clinical experience at their place of employment, provided the employer meets all program requirements and grants prior approval. However, employment at an agency does not guarantee an approved agreement with UMass Global; the site must still undergo the university's formal approval process. To qualify, the student (employee) must:

1. Be placed in a role that directly supports the development and practice of Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) skills.

2. Receive consistent clinical supervision from a qualified internal or external supervisor.

Students are responsible for ensuring their workplace meets these criteria and that an official agreement is in place before beginning their practicum hours.

CLINICAL HOURS REQUIREMENTS

As part of the clinical experience each student must complete a total of **400** hours to fulfill their practicum experience requirements. Out of the 400 hours, **300 are Direct Client Contact** (DCC) and **100 hours are spent in supervision**. The total hours are accumulated over a 12-month period.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Required Program Clinical Experience Hours

400 total Hours</th></tr>
<tr><td>Direct Client Contact Hours: 300 Hours</td><td>Supervision Hours: 100</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Description of Clinical Experience Hours</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Direct Client Contact</td><td>Practicum students may only count face-to-face or telehealth sessions which involves direct interaction with clients and includes the application of interventions applicable to the following systems: Individuals, Couples, Families, and Group Therapy.
Clinical tasks such as consultation, staff meetings, documentation, etc. do not count as direct client contact hours.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Relational Hours
Services provided to two or more individuals within the system that have some type of relationship. Examples of relational hours include but are not limited to family units, couples, friendships, residential treatments, children etc.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Supervision</td><td>Agency Clinical Supervision
A student must attend weekly supervision facilitated by the agency clinical supervisor to meet the program (100 hours) and comply with stated regulated requirements. Students can receive supervision in individual, triadic, and group formats. Students must receive a minimum of 1 hour of individual or 2 hours of group supervision on a weekly basis.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Clinical hours may differ from program clinical hours requirements based on the student's state of residence.</td></tr>
</table>

Direct Client Contact Hours

As part of the practicum requirements, students must complete a total of **300** total DCC hours. Direct Client contact hours consist of two categories that must be fulfilled to meet the practicum requirements:

1. Relational Hours
2. Individual Hours

Categories	Total Clinical Hours	Breakdown of Total DCC Hours
Direct Client Contact hours	300	**A minimum of 100** hours DCC hours **must** be relational (couples, families, children, residential treatment groups, etc.). The remaining **200** hours may be individual or relational hours.

To complete the program's direct client contact hour requirement within the 12-month time period, students should be prepared to devote approximately 8-10 hours per week; however, a clinical site may require additional hours to fulfill agency obligations.

Students may complete as many hours as possible throughout their practicum courses contingent upon their clinical caseload each session and dependent upon their state requirements and hour accrual allowance.

Students attendance and completion of all 6 practicum courses are **mandatory** regardless of early completion of their clinical hours. Students should not leave their sites until their hours are verified by the program designee.

Supervision Hours Requirement

Students are required to simultaneously receive **100** hours (while completing their DCC) of supervision as part of their practicum hour requirements throughout a series of six practicum courses over a period of 12 months. To complete these requirements, students must attend a minimum of 2 hours of supervision on a weekly basis.

Please note supervision requirements may differ based on your state of residence.

***Students **must** attend weekly supervision while providing services regardless of early completion of their required supervision hours. ***

Continuation of Clinical Hours

Pre-degree conferral students seeking to accumulate additional hours beyond the conclusion of their practicum series and program-required clinical hours must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Enrollment Requirement:
   Students must enroll in a practicum continuation course (PSYU 696) to continue gaining additional hours.

2. Supervision:
   During their tenure at a clinical site, students must work under the supervision of the university.

3. Site Approval:
   The clinical site where students work must meet the program requirements to qualify as an approved clinical site.

CLINICAL SITE SUPERVISION OVERVIEW

Clinical supervision is a formal, collaborative, and an essential aspect of professional development that helps ensure that student trainees deliver high-quality care while advancing their skills and knowledge. During supervision, trainees discuss cases, seek advice on challenging situations, enhance their strengths, and receive feedback on their approach and techniques. Supervision also serves as a space for reflection, where trainees can evaluate their own performance, recognize areas for improvement, and develop effective strategies for addressing client needs. By promoting continuous learning and adherence to ethical standards, clinical supervision plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity and efficacy of the profession.

Supervisor Qualifications
A clinical supervisor must meet one of the following guidelines:

- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
- Approved to supervise MFT trainees by their state

Types of Supervisors

Agency Clinical Supervisor

An Agency Clinical Supervisor is a qualified individual who has been licensed in the field for a specific period of time and has met the criteria to provide supervision based on their state board regulations. Agency clinical supervisors provide consistent ongoing supervision, overseeing the students' progress throughout the duration of their clinical experience at the agency, and can either be employed or contracted through the agency.

An agency clinical supervisor can provide individual, triadic, and/or group supervision.

- **Individual Supervision:** Consists of the student and the supervisor reviewing clinical cases on a one-on-one basis.
- **Triadic Supervision:** Consists of 2 students and a supervisor where clinical cases are reviewed.
- **Group Supervision:** consists of more than two students and is no more than eight students in the group setting. The format of the session can either be broken down into:
    - Full two hours session
    - One-hour sessions twice a week

Agency with No Supervisor

If an agency has no supervisor, students must review their state regulations specific to contracting a clinical supervisor in consultation with their CFR. If permitted by their state of residence, students may individually contract with a supervisor.

Students considering employing a supervisor must verify and obtain approval from agency management indicating that the employed supervisor will be granted access to client records and information.

The program requires students to upload the documents below to Sonia.

1. Copy of the supervisors' credentials (license)

2. Copy of the signed contract between the agency and supervisor

Please note, students who employ a supervisor are responsible for financially reimbursing the supervisor for their supervision session(s).

Interruption of Agency Supervision

Alternative supervision must be arranged when a student's supervision session is interrupted (supervisor on vacation, resigns, retirees, etc.).

The steps below must be followed to ensure continuous supervision within the agency:

1. Refer to state board regulations and guidelines for state-specific requirements regarding alternative/interruption of supervision plan.
2. Collaboration with the clinical agency to develop an alternative supervision plan
3. Informing the CFR of the developed plan and the changes put in place
4. Submitting copy of the supervisor's license

Tracking Clinical Experience Hours

The MA MFT program requires students to track their clinical hours utilizing an online software system called 'Sonia'. Students will gain access to Sonia prior to the start of practicum. It is the responsibility of the student to track their clinical hours every session. Students must submit all accrued hours to be reviewed and approved by the clinical supervisor and student's agency clinical supervisor by the end of each session.

In addition, students must also keep track of their clinical hours on a state-required form (s); these form(s) do not need to be submitted to the university.

If you need assistance with Sonia, please contact the clinical support team at psychalerts@umassglobal.edu.

Supervisor Clinical Evaluation

The clinical evaluation is a comprehensive assessment used by each agency supervisor to measure a student's clinical aptitude. The evaluation is utilized to assess a student's progress and further support the development of the student's clinical skill set. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their supervisor completes their evaluation at the end of each session. If the student's supervisor needs assistance with Sonia, please contact the clinical support team at psychalerts@umassglobal.edu.

Procedures for Managing Site Problems

Supervision and Administrative Concerns

Umass Global is dedicated to ensuring that students are treated in an equitable and ethical manner. When facing a concern, students are encouraged to initially attempt to resolve any challenges with their supervisor or agency administrative representative. Students should also submit and communicate all concerns to their CFR via email in a timely manner (within 72 hours).

If the concern is related directly to the supervisor, communicate with the agency administration. If the concern is not resolved through the aforementioned process, students should utilize the MA MFT practicum program Grievance Form in order to file a complaint.

The purpose of the practicum 'grievance form' is to document any challenges students experience at their practicum site. These challenges include but are not limited to agency loss of operating license, changes in supervisors, supervision practices, changes in management, discrimination, etc. as well as any challenge that may affect either the quality or the student experience at the agency. Students must submit the grievance form to CST at mftpccclinical@umassglobal.edu.

Please note the CST will respond to all forms received within 2-4 business days.

Termination

During a student's practicum experience, unexpected situations may arise that could lead to the termination of the practicum. This may be due to the student's choice to resign from the agency or a decision by the agency to terminate the student's placement. In either case, the student must promptly inform their Clinical Faculty Representative (CFR) to create an action plan. The CFR's role in the meeting is to offer guidance and support to the student. Below are the detailed steps for managing such circumstances.

Agency Termination

Agencies have the right to terminate a student from their clinical site at their discretion, citing reasons including but not limited to behavioral concerns deemed unethical or inappropriate at the clinical agency. The program treats all terminations with utmost seriousness, and consequently students terminated from their clinical agency will be subjected to a professional conduct (See Appendix A) review meeting. Based upon the outcome of the professional conduct meeting, an action plan will be set in place to further support the progression of the student's practicum experience. Students terminated from their agency must inform their CFR within 24 hours of their site status change. Students terminated from the clinical site are strictly prohibited from seeking out and securing an alternative site prior to meeting with their CFR. It should be noted that a termination will result in withdrawal from the student's practicum course as the student must be actively providing services at a site to remain enrolled in practicum.

Agency Investigation

Students who are actively under investigation by their clinical site or placed on temporary leave by their agency, must immediately notify their CFR via email. Notification must include the reason for the investigation or leave, its duration (if known), and any relevant details about the situation.

- Any interruption in attendance at the agency due to investigation or temporary leave will result in the student's withdrawal from practicum courses.
- Upon receiving notification from a student, the CFR will assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action in alignment with the academic program's requirements. The CFR will provide guidance to the student regarding next steps
- Students must initiate communication with their academic advisor and One Stop representative to discuss disruptions in their practicum enrollment after communicating with their CFR.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The use of technology is defined as the utilization of all and any electronic devices, including but not limited to video conferencing, emails, personal or agency telephone, and instant/text messages to discuss client related content or provide therapeutic services.

Synchronous Virtual Setting

The UMass Global MA MFT program conducts practicum courses through Zoom, a secure and encrypted video conferencing platform. These sessions are led by Program Clinical Supervisors (PCS), who facilitate discussions on course content and provide observational supervision. Through this process, students receive valuable guidance on their clinical cases, engage in meaningful dialogue, and present recorded sessions to enhance their clinical skills and professional development.

Synchronous virtual spaces (the Zoom room) are to be treated as equivalent to in-person classrooms or professional meetings with the same level of behavioral expectation and decorum.

The following are the university expectations for students who participate in a synchronous space.

1. Students must login to all virtual spaces using their name and not a pseudonym, nickname, or phone number.
2. Students must be fully dressed (clothes that you would wear to attend an in-person class session or meeting) before turning on the camera.
    a. Remind others in your immediate environment that your camera is on, and you are in a virtual learning space.
3. Students' cameras must be turned on and a student's full face must be in view during the entire class session.
    a. Students must receive prior approval (in writing) from their instructors to be off camera.
    b. Students are not permitted to record/film or take/share pictures (screenshots) of others.
4. Students must actively engage and participate in discussions.
    a. Students are expected to model respect, inclusion, civility, and a desire to learn.
    b. Practice courteous and respectful non-verbal communication with all members of the meeting/class.

    c. Students must follow the university code of conduct guidelines in all virtual environments including the chat feature of any applicable virtual space.

5. Students must treat the virtual space as a professional setting and at all times should avoid distracting activities such as driving, lying down, or reclining in bed (sitting or standing is acceptable).
    a. Do not multitask during class time. Some examples include cooking, holding multiple meetings, scrolling on other screens, or walking your dog.
6. Microphones should be muted at all times except for when participating in the discussion.
    a. Students should make every effort to minimize background noises.
7. Students must utilize a Zoom non-animated background to maintain privacy and professionalism, except during advancement.
8. Students are prohibited from using avatars and filters while in a virtual space.
9. Students must attend virtual meetings including classes in a private area where privacy and confidentiality is maintained and protected at all times.
    a. In cases where students do not have access to a private area, the student must utilize headphones to protect the meeting privacy and confidentiality.
    b. When discussing **clinical cases students must ensure that there are no breaches of confidentiality.**
10. Any behavior perceived as cyberbullying (sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, mean, or other content about someone else that can cause them to feel uncomfortable, targeted, or harmed) will not be tolerated.
11. Students must refrain from using drugs and alcohol while in the virtual space.
12. The use of e-cigarettes, vaping, smoking, or smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco, chew, dipping tobacco, dip, oral tobacco, spit, spitting tobacco, and snuff) are prohibited while in the virtual space.
13. Students are prohibited from making any consensual or non-consensual sexual interactions, gestures, or requests in the virtual space.

Non-compliance with the guidelines below may lead to a behavioral conduct report or a professional conduct meeting.

Technology in Agency Setting

While therapeutic services are conducted in person, they can also be provided using electronic methods. Students can conduct telehealth services based on the guidelines and regulations of their state's governing boards and the agency policies.

Students using any form of technological devices must comply with the HIPAA guidelines to ensure clients' confidentiality. HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) is a federal law that enforces privacy and security standards that protect the confidentiality of patient health information when using electronic methods of communication.

When students utilize technology in their practicum setting, they must adhere to the following technology guidelines to ensure client confidentiality is maintained throughout the process.

Technology Guidelines

1. When storing a client's personal information on electronic devices, it must be password protected and stored in a safe location.
2. All students must adhere to their agency guidelines regarding communication with clients via phone.
    a. If the agency does not have any policy/guidelines, students are prohibited from using their cell phone numbers. Students are encouraged to block their number before making calls to clients with their cell phones or find alternative methods.
3. Students must utilize an encrypted platform when communicating with clients through electronic systems such as emails.

Telehealth policy

According to the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), telehealth is defined as the therapist's ability to provide clinical services and treatment such as assessment, diagnosis, evaluation, clinical interventions, and consultation through technology in two formats.

1. Live video conferencing
2. Telephone

UMass Global MA MFT program permits students the option to accumulate their clinical practicum hours by conducting telehealth services. However, due to the program adhering to state governing board regulations regarding telehealth services, students in states that prohibit the use of telehealth in this context may not accumulate clinical hours utilizing telehealth. In addition to adhering to state board regulations, students must follow agency telehealth protocols at all times. The university reserves the right to deny students' ability to conduct telehealth services if the agency does not have sufficient telehealth protocols and policies set in place. In addition, we reserve the right to prohibit a student from conducting telehealth service if the agency does not comply with the state telehealth regulations.

The following are university requirements for students conducting telehealth services:

1. Students must obtain approval from their agency supervisor to conduct telehealth services.
2. Obtain consent from the client to conduct telehealth services.
3. Discuss the risks and benefits of providing telehealth services to clients.
4. Inform clients they have the right to end telehealth services at any time.
5. Clients' confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
6. Students can **ONLY** provide therapy sessions to clients within their state of residence.
    a. Military students deployed overseas should consult with their clinical faculty representative on applicable protocols.
    b. Students who change their state of residence while in practicum should consult with their clinical faculty representative on applicable protocols.
7. All therapy sessions must be conducted over a HIPAA compliant platform such as Thera-link, Zoom, doxy.me, etc.

If an agency does not have a telehealth informed consent form, students must use the MA MFT program form with approval from their clinical supervisor (See Appendix B).

Recording of Practicum Courses

Recording of practicum courses according to program guidelines students must adhere to the following protocols regarding recording of practicum courses while engaging in virtual classroom settings.

1. Client confidentiality must be maintained at all times
    a. All students are prohibited from recording the practicum courses.
    b. Only instructors are authorized to record class sessions using the university's designated platform for recording.
2. Students who have recording accommodations through OAE, must coordinate with their PCS to request the recording of specific class sessions.

University Protocols for Recordings

The MA MFT program requires all students, faculty, and staff to uphold and adhere to policies and guidelines set forth by the AAMFT code of ethics and relevant state laws to ensure client confidentiality is maintained during the use of recording on devices.

Below are the program guidelines regarding recording devices:

Electronic Recording	Videotape Recording
• Students are prohibited from recording any sessions utilizing their university Zoom login information. • When utilizing a recording platform, students must avoid saving the recordings to the Cloud as it could cause a potential breach in client's confidentiality. • All recordings must be stored on an encrypted and password-protected device. • The video file should be password protected. • Students must adhere to confidentiality policies put forth by their agency and Site Supervisor.	• Videotapes and other recordings must be safely secured and stored. • The therapy videotapes and audiotapes must be kept in a locked place on the site where the therapy was conducted and any other locations to ensure appropriate storage. ○ If students' recording is stored on a camera, that camera should be stored behind two locks, which means that it must be in a locked box, in a locked drawer, or in a locked cabinet behind a locked door. • While transporting a tape from the clinical site for the practicum course, all precautions must be taken to transport and guard client information safely. • Tapes should not be labeled with any client identifying information. • Refrain from storing the recordings in a vehicle and in an open space that does not securely protect client identity.

Ethics of Recording

Students are expected to complete recording (audio or video) of clinical sessions for observational supervision and fulfill their practicum assignment requirements. Students must follow HIPAA and AAMFT Code of Ethics, the agency policy, and procedures and adhere to their state board regulations privacy and client confidentiality when recording videos. It is the responsibility of the student to follow the guidelines mentioned above to ensure the proper disposal of recordings.

As part of the practicum requirements, students will share the recordings of their therapy sessions during class. The information shared in class is considered highly confidential. It is a student's legal and ethical obligation to safeguard client's confidentiality by being physically located in a private area where client confidentiality is maintained.

Students must follow the below-recording guidelines:

1. Obtain a "Recording Consent form" from their client(s) before the commencement of the recording. A copy of a program recording consent form can be found on Appendix C and on the MA MFT/PCC Clinical Information page.
2. The use of shared personal devices is prohibited.
    a. If a computer is shared, the recording cannot be stored on this device.
    b. Students are prohibited from utilizing their cellphone to record or store recordings.
3. If a client does not consent to be visible on camera, the recording equipment should be positioned in a manner in which the student is the only person visible on camera.
4. Be sure no confidential client information is visible on camera.
5. Record a minimum of 2 therapy sessions per practicum course.
6. Each recorded session must be a full session.
7. Prepare the recording equipment prior to the commencement of the therapy session.
8. All recordings conducted in an agency setting or through telehealth services must be secured and safely stored to protect clients' confidentiality; please follow agency guidelines and procedures regarding recording storage.
9. Recordings should never be uploaded to Blackboard or sent through the email system.
10. Students must utilize an encrypted storage device to store all recorded sessions.
11. Recordings must be deleted after the completion of the practicum series.
12. Ensure the recordings are completely deleted and not merely moved to the device's trash can or the cloud. Keep in mind that when students delete a file on their computer, they will need to use the secure delete function to ensure that the file is not recoverable. If the student's computer does not have this feature, they may need to purchase the appropriate software. For assistance with this please reach out to the university helpdesk at help@umassglobal.edu.
    a. If a student exchanges, sells, or donates their computer, they must delete their hard drive of any recordings.

Please note: If a clinical agency does not allow the recording of therapy sessions, students **must** locate a secondary site that will permit the recording of sessions.

Conclusion

Students are expected to follow the [AAMFT Code of Ethics] and their specific state board regulations when practicing in a clinical setting. Students are always required to uphold the most restrictive form of guidelines and protocols as established by regulatory institutions.

The Clinical Support Team verifies the completion of the practicum requirements which includes advancement, clinical experience, and the practicum course requirements. Upon verification students become eligible for degree conferral and applying to their state board for Associate/Intern status.

If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please email mftpccclinical@umassglobal.edu.

GLOSSARY

Clinical Terminology	
Advancement	An oral clinical standardized examination in which students' clinical skills and knowledge are evaluated by a member of the CST and at least one other UMass Global MA MFT faculty member.
Agency/Clinical Site	A clinical site is defined as a designated agency approved by Umass Global to serve as a training entity for students to obtain their clinical experience.
Agency Clinical Supervisor	Agency Clinical Supervisors provide ongoing supervision overseeing students' progress throughout the duration of their clinical experience. A supervisor can either be employed by the agency or contracted through the agency
Agency on Site Supervisor	Administrative supervisor that takes care of the day-to-day tasks related to agency functioning.
Agency Vetting	The process of approving a clinical site by the student CFR.
Clinical Hours	Clinical hours are categorized as direct client contact services & supervision hours.
Clinical Faculty Representative (CFR)	A member of the Clinical Support Team that works directly with students throughout the process of Advancement and Practicum.
Clinical Specialist (CS)	Members of the Clinical Support Team that collaborate with the CFRs throughout the Advancement and Practicum process.
Clinical Supervisor	A qualified individual who has been licensed in the field for a specific period of time and has met the criteria to provide supervision based on their state board regulations.
Clinical Support Team	A centralized remote team that consists of Clinical Faculty Representatives (CFR) and Clinical Specialists (CS).

Collateral hours	Any third party involved in the treatment of the client (e.g., teachers, counselors, interdisciplinary treatment team, etc.)
Consecutive session	Students must be enrolled in practicum consecutively (one after the other).
Direct Client Contact	Direct interaction with clients that includes the application of interventions applicable to the following systems: **Individuals, Couples, Families, and Group Therapy.**
Group therapy	Direct contact client services provided to more than one individual in a group setting. One hour of group therapy counts as one hour of direct client contact, whether there are two clients or many clients in the group.
Practicum	The “clinical training” component of the Umass Global MA MFT program.
Professional Liability Insurance	Insurance coverage for mental health professionals that provides protection to defend professionals against negligence claimed by clients and damages awarded in civil lawsuits.
Program Clinical Supervisor	Program Clinical Supervisors are individuals hired by the university to provide clinical supervision while teaching practicum courses. The PCS provides supervision and guidance for students throughout the practicum course and their clinical experience. They evaluate student's growth and determine if the student is able to demonstrate mastery of clinical competencies and skillsets necessary to serve a diverse community. They also provide observational supervision during each practicum class, and students will account for those hours as part of their program supervision hour requirements.
Relational Hours	Services provided to two or more individuals within the system that have some type of relationship. Examples of relational hours include but are not limited to family units, couples, friendships, residential treatments, etc.

	For Group therapy hours to be considered relational hours, the services provided must meet one of the following criteria: 1. Group therapy with family members 2. Residential Facilities where clients reside within the same facility a. Pending clinical supervisor approval
Supervision	Oversight provided by the clinical supervisor to assess a student's level of performance, functioning, and clinical competencies developed throughout their practicum experience.
Supervision Hour	Students are required to simultaneously receive 100 hours of supervision as part of their practicum hour requirements throughout a series of six practicum courses over a period of 12 months.
Total hours	The accumulation of all clinical experience hours**.**
Trainee	Students are referred to as "Student Trainees" by the program throughout the duration of their training and practicum courses.
UMass Global Supervision	UMass Global supervision consists of two components: 1) Observational Supervision , and 2) UMass Global Group Supervision. Students must have 100 hours of this format of supervision.

Clinical Acronyms	
Terms	**Acronyms**
American Association of Marriage and family Therapist	AAMFT
Clinical Faculty Representative	CFR
Clinical Support Team	CST
Clinical Specialist	CS
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy	LMFT
Master of Arts	MA
Marriage and Family Therapy	MFT
Program Clinical Supervisor	PCS

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Student Professional Conduct Process

The MA MFT professional conduct policy applies both to current and graduated students. UMass Global is committed to providing an accessible educational experience for all learners. If a student requires accommodations for a disability to fully participate in the professional conduct process below, please contact the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) at oae@umassglobal.edu or at (949) 341-9976 to request disability accommodations. Advance notice is necessary to arrange for some accessibility needs.

Please note that students or graduates of the program are expected to be in a quiet and private area during professional conduct meetings. They are required to have a working webcam which must be turned on for the duration of the meeting.

For **current** MA MFT students, the professional conduct procedures are as follows:

Step One Meeting: When a MA MFT program faculty member observes or becomes aware of behavior that brings into question a student's ability to maintain appropriate professional, ethical, or personal standards, the faculty member shall meet with the student to discuss the behavior and to advise as to appropriate means of remediating such behavioral concerns. This meeting may be attended by a staff member. A second faculty member may also attend. A staff member will attend the meeting silently for the purpose of documenting the meeting's proceedings. The meeting shall be held in Zoom or on a similar virtual conference platform. Subject to written approval from all participants, the meeting shall be recorded with the URL for the recording provided to the student, the presiding faculty, and the program director.

With advance written approval from the Program Director/designee, the student may choose to have a silent observer attend the meeting. This does not include attorneys. The presence of attorneys at the meeting is not permitted as the meeting is not meant to function as a court of law. The silent observer may not participate directly in the meeting. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the removal of the silent observer or the termination of the meeting. One five-minute recess may be requested during the course of the meeting if the student wishes to consult with the silent observer.

During the meeting, the faculty member(s) will identify the behaviors of concern, discuss the behavioral concerns with the student, solicit the student's response to the behavioral concerns in question, and advise the student as to appropriate means of remediating the behavioral concerns. The staff member will document the meeting's proceedings. After the meeting, the Program Director will provide a written summary of the meeting to the student, including the identified behaviors of concern, the advisement provided by faculty, the student's response during the meeting, and any additional advisement for remediating the behavioral concerns warranted by the meeting's proceedings.

The faculty member may, at their discretion, proceed to conduct a Step One Meeting in the absence of a student who fails to appear despite having been provided advance notice of the meeting. The student will be considered to have waived their opportunity to participate in the meeting. After the meeting, the Program Director will provide a written summary of the meeting to the student, including the identified behaviors of concern, the advisement provided by faculty, and the student's failure to attend the meeting.

The following conditions automatically require a Step One meeting if the student has not yet had a Step One meeting, or a Step Two meeting if the student has previously had a Step One meeting but not a Step Two meeting:

- Termination of a student's practicum placement by placement site personnel
- Failure of the student to secure a practicum placement after interviewing at 7 sites

Step Two Meeting: At any time after the Step One Meeting, if the MA MFT Program Director deems that, a student's ability to maintain appropriate professional, ethical, or personal standards remains in question and behavioral concerns remain unresolved, a second meeting shall be convened. This second meeting shall be attended by the Program Director or designee, Clinical Director or designee, and student. All responsibilities in this policy assigned to the Program Director may instead be fulfilled by the Vice Chair. If the faculty member who met with the student in step 1 was the Program Director or Vice Chair, the Dean will appoint a different psychology faculty member to substitute for the Program Director or Vice Chair in steps 2 and 3 of this process. A staff member will also attend the meeting silently for the purpose of documenting the meeting's proceedings. The meeting shall be held in Zoom or on a similar virtual conference platform. Subject to written approval from all participants, the meeting shall be recorded with the URL for the recording provided to the student, Program Director/designee, and Field Director/designee.

With advance written approval from the Program Director/designee, the student may choose to have a silent observer attend the meeting. This does not include attorneys. The presence of attorneys at the meeting is not permitted as the meeting is not meant to function as a court of law. The silent observer may not participate directly in the meeting. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the removal of the silent observer or the termination of the meeting. One five-minute recess may be requested during the course of the meeting if the student wishes to consult with the silent observer.

During the meeting, the Program Director/designee and Clinical Director/designee will identify the behaviors of concern, discuss the behavioral concerns with the student, solicit the student's response to the behavioral concerns in question, and advise the student as to appropriate means of remediating the behavioral concerns. The staff member will document the meeting's proceedings. After the meeting, the Program Director/designee will provide a written summary of the meeting to the student, including the identified behaviors of concern, the advisement provided by the Program Director/designee and Clinical Director/designee, the student's response, and any additional advisement for remediating the behavioral concerns warranted by the meeting's proceedings.

The Program Director/designee and Clinical Director/designee may, at their discretion, proceed to conduct a Step Two Meeting in the absence of a student who fails to appear despite having been provided advance notice of the meeting. The student will be considered to have waived their opportunity to participate in the meeting. After the meeting, the Program Director/designee will provide a written summary of the meeting to the student, including the identified behaviors of concern, the advisement provided by the Program Director/designee and Clinical Director/designee, and the student's failure to attend the meeting.

Step Three: At any time after the Step Two Meeting, if the MA MFT Program Director and Clinical Director deem that the student’s ability to maintain appropriate professional, ethical, and/or personal standards remains in question and the behavioral concerns remain unresolved, they may recommend to the Dean that the student be suspended or dismissed from the MA MFT program. The Dean may suspend or dismiss the student from the program, with written notice provided to the student. The suspension or dismissal takes effect upon the Dean's issuance of the official letter of suspension or dismissal. A student dismissed from the program under the professional conduct policy is not eligible for readmission to the MA MFT or the MA PCC program.

A notice of suspension will specify (a) the earliest date at which the Dean will consider lifting the suspension; (b) the steps that the student must take in order for the Dean to consider lifting the suspension; and (c) the deadline by which the student must complete those steps and request that the suspension be lifted. If, by that deadline, the student has not submitted a request that in the Dean's assessment is sufficient to warrant lifting the suspension, the suspension will convert to dismissal from the program, with written notice provided to the student. That dismissal takes effect upon the Dean's issuance of the official letter of dismissal.

Step Four: A student who is dismissed or suspended from the program may, within 30 calendar days of receipt of the dismissal or suspension notification, petition the Dean’s ruling to a professional review committee. The petition process is documentation-based and does not include a synchronous hearing. To file a petition, the student must submit to the Dean a written petition with supporting documentation appended. The Dean will forward the written petition and supporting documentation to the professional review committee. After review, the professional review committee will issue a final ruling within 30 calendar days of the Dean's receipt of the student's petition. The committee’s ruling is not subject to appeal.

Appendix B - UMass Global Telehealth Consent Information

The purpose of this document is to serve as an acknowledgment between the client and the student-trainee, specifying terms and conditions, ethical and legal guidelines related to telehealth services. Client's written or verbal consent must be obtained before the commencement of telehealth therapy services.

The provision of telehealth allows for clients to obtain therapeutic services remotely. Therapy services can be provided by telephone or an encrypted online video conferencing platform.

The online platforms utilized for telehealth must be Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) compliant. HIPAA is a federal law that requires the creation of national standards to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge (CDC, 2018).

Student-trainees may use the below informed consent for agencies that allow for telehealth services but do not have a telehealth consent form.

Please note prior supervisor approval is needed before the utilization of the UMass Global Telehealth Informed Consent form.

UMass Global Telehealth Informed Consent

Client Name: ________________________ Therapist name: ______________________

Supervisors' name and License #: ____

I, ____________________ (Name of client) hereby consent to engage in Telehealth services with_________________________________ (Student/trainee name, title).

I understand that Telehealth is a practice of delivering mental health services via technology-assisted media or other electronic means. (e.g., Telephone, Internet) between a therapist-trainee and a client who is located in two different settings. Services such as consultation, intake, assessments, diagnosis, treatment planning, psychoeducation, referrals, and psychotherapy sessions are provided via telehealth.

By signing this form, I understand and agree to the following:

1. I have the right to withhold or withdraw consent at any time during treatment without it affecting my rights to future care, services, or program benefits to which otherwise be entitled.
2. The laws that protect the confidentiality of the client's personal information and clinical treatment record also apply to telehealth counseling. As such, the client understands that the information disclosed by them during the course of telehealth counseling sessions is generally confidential/privileged. However, there are general exceptions to confidentiality, including
    a. Child abuse, Elder Abuse, Dependent-adult abuse, Harm to self, harm to others, Court Subpoenas, Patriot's Act (Act of terrorism)
    b. Refer to your state-specific regulations regarding exceptions to confidentiality.
3. I understand that there are risks associated with participating in telehealth including, but not limited to, the possibility, despite reasonable efforts and safeguards on the part of my therapist, that my psychotherapy sessions and transmission of my treatment information could be disrupted or distorted by technical failures and/or interrupted or accessed by unauthorized persons, and that the electronic storage of my treatment information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.
4. I understand that miscommunication between myself and my therapist may occur via telehealth.
5. I understand that there is a risk of being overheard by persons near me and that I am responsible for using a location that is private and free from distractions or intrusions.
6. I understand that at the beginning of each telehealth session my therapist is required to verify my full name and current location.

7. I understand that in some instances telehealth may not be as effective or provide the same results as in-person therapy.

8. I understand that if my therapist believes I would be better served by in-person therapy, my therapist will discuss this with me and refer me to in-person services as needed.

9. If such services are not possible because of distance or hardship, I will be referred to other therapists who can provide such services.

10. I have discussed the fees charged for telehealth with my therapist and agree to them [or for insurance patients: I have discussed with my therapist and agree that my therapist will bill my insurance plan for telehealth and that I will be billed for any portion that is the patient's responsibility (e.g. co-payments)], and I have been provided with this information in the [Informed Consent Form or Name of Payment Agreement Form]

11. I understand that my therapist will make reasonable efforts to ascertain and provide me with emergency resources in my geographic area. I further understand that my therapist may not be able to assist me in an emergency situation. If I require emergency care, I understand that I may call 911 or proceed to the nearest hospital emergency room for immediate assistance

I have read and understood the information provided above, have discussed it with my therapist (student-trainee), and understand that I have the right to have all my questions regarding this information answered to my satisfaction.

[For conjoint or family therapy, patients may sign individual consent forms or sign the same form.]

____

Client's Name (please print)   Client's Signature   Date

____

Therapist (Student/Trainee) Print & Signature   Date

Verbal Consent Obtained
Therapist (student-trainee) reviewed Telehealth Consent Form with Patient, Patient understands and agrees to the above advisements, and Patient has verbally consented to receiving psychotherapy services from Therapist via Telehealth.

____

Therapist (Student/Trainee) Print & Signature   Date

(This form has been adapted from CAMFT, 2022)

Appendix C - Recording Informed Consent

As part of the requirements for the UMass Global Master of Arts (MA) Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program, students must present a series of pre-recorded sessions during their practicum class to fulfill the program's clinical and educational requirements.

The purpose of this consent form is to receive authorization from clients for participation in recorded sessions. Please note, at any time during therapy, you may choose to rescind your authorization for recording. Your participation in this process is strictly voluntary, and refusal to sign this authorization will not affect your ability to receive therapeutic services or access your clinical records. If at any time during a session you decide not to move forward with the recording for that day, you may ask the student-trainee to stop recording and delete the recorded session.

All viewers of the recordings are bound by law and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy Code of Ethics standards. The records will be managed with confidentiality by being stored on a password protected device and an encrypted file. Your recorded sessions will not be discussed or shared outside of the context of supervision and the practicum courses.

These pre-recorded sessions may be viewed and shared with the following individuals:

1. Student's supervisor:
   a. During group or individual supervision
2. Student's practicum class
   a. MA MFT faculty
   b. Students in class

Risks

Students are committed to protecting your confidentiality by following the steps necessary to ensure proper storage, transportation, and the discarding of your recorded sessions. There may be potential risks involved outside of a student's control when recording sessions, such as theft or the possibility of another practicum student recognizing you.

By signing below, I ________________________________ (Client's name) am permitting ______________________________ (Trainee name) to record our session(s) and review the recording file(s) with the aforementioned individuals for purposes of supervision and practicum requirement. I also acknowledge that there are potential risks to engaging in recorded sessions.

____

Client's Signature Date

____

*Guardian's Signature Date

____

Student/Trainee Signature Date

Consent for a minor by their caregiver to receive treatment.

Appendix D - Practicum Leave of Absence Form

The purpose of the 'Practicum Leave of Absence' form is for students to notify their program of their decision to take a leave between practicum sessions. This form must be completed on an emergency and non-emergency basis. This form requires a signature by the agency supervisor and the student. In addition, it requires program approval by the Clinical Director or designee. The form will be submitted to mftpccclinical@umassglobal.edu. Once the leave is approved by the Clinical Director or designee the student is required to upload the form to their student file.

Date:

Student Name: Agency Name:

Current Practicum session: Session(s) Requested Off:

Return to Practicum Session:

Reasons for requesting leave of absence:

____
____
____

Arrangements made with Agency/supervisor while on a leave of absence:

____
____

Other Information:

____
____

Student signature: ____

Supervisor signature:____

Clinical Support Team member signature: ______________________________

Appendix E - Clinical Site Qualification Checklist

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Clinical Site Qualification Checklist</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td><u>Yes/No</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>Does your agency fall under any of these settings?</td><td>Government entity, a school, college, university, a nonprofit and charitable corporation, a licensed health facility, a community treatment facility, a licensed alcohol or drug abuse recovery facility.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Do you have a licensed supervisor on staff with the following qualifications?</td><td>Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
Licensed Clinical Social Worker
Licensed Mental Health Counselor
Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor
Psychologist
Psychiatrist
Board or AAMFT approved Supervisor</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Are you able to meet the state regulated supervision requirements on a weekly basis?</td><td>Provide the required ratio of supervision per week based on state regulations
1 hour of individual supervision
2 hours of group supervision
Requirements may differ depending on different states</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Does your agency allow audio or video recordings of students' sessions?</td><td>The purpose of the recordings is for students to demonstrate their ability to provide clinical services to clients (individual, couple, family, etc.), hence the focus will be on the student only and not the client.</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Does your agency provide psychosocial and emotional therapy services?	• Children, adults, or older Adults	
Does your agency offer Relational Hours?	• Couple, Children, Family, & In-patient Group therapy	
Does your agency allow students to provide telehealth services?	• Students can conduct therapy services through the use of HIPPA approved platforms.	
The MA MFT program vets (interviews) every clinical agency based on specific qualifications to explore if the agency meets the university and state requirements to qualify as a training site for students. Above is the checklist of qualifications CST utilizes to assess and approve clinical agencies.