

## MFT Program Policy on Program Evaluation of Supervisor Sufficiency

### Policy Availability

This policy is available to the public via the [Program Handbook and Policies](#) link on the [MFT website](#).

### MFT Program Required MFT Supervisor Qualifications

The MFT program requires fulltime, clinical supervisors to have the following qualifications:

1. a post-graduate degree in MFT from a COAMFTE accredited program
2. Georgia state MFT license (LMFT) (or on track to achieving same)
3. AAMFT Clinical Fellow membership
4. AAMFT Approved Supervisor designation (preferred) (or on track toward earning the designation by having completed or enrolled in a pre-approved 30-hour AAMFT Supervision Fundamentals course through AAMFT.
5. conducts clinical practice according to the AAMFT code of ethics
6. self-identifies as an MFT by profession and academic training
7. submit annual proof of continuous liability insurance (see Faculty & Staff Liability Insurance binder)

When a supervisor has the above required qualifications, this means that he or she has conducted or is in the process of conducting the following:

1. a minimum of 1500 hours of face-to-face systemically-informed therapy (required for Georgia state licensure)
2. a minimum of 180 hours of face-to-face systemically-informed supervision (required for Approved Supervisor credential)

Therefore, the program can be assured that such a supervisor is qualified to supervise students.

### Process for Review of Supervisory Sufficiency

The process of evaluation of supervisor sufficiency occurs once a year in the Spring. At this time, a faculty course scheduler calculates the number of seats that will be required for the upcoming Fall, Spring, and Summer practica. This calculation is based on

- 1.) the preferred 1:6 supervisor-to-student ratio
- 2.) the number of students needing practicum seats
- 3.) the number of available supervisors.

These numbers inform the program of the quantitative sufficiency of supervisors in advance of any given semester.

The program will routinely maintain practica of six students. However, should projections of supervisory sufficiency show that one or two practica need to accommodate a seventh student, the scheduler will bring this to a faculty meeting where the full faculty can look at the numbers, discuss the need, and reach a decision about how to proceed.

1. A supervisor may need to accommodate seven or eight students.
2. Should projections show that the supervisor-to-student ratio will exceed the COAMFTE maximum of 1:8 and one or more of the five core faculty is unable to teach (due to faculty illness, family leave, etc.), an additional adjunct supervisor should be hired.

3. Should a qualified supervisor be unavailable for hire, a current faculty member would teach an overload. This is highly unlikely, however, since our Clinic Director is also a AAMFT Approved supervisor and would likely teach the practicum.

## Quantity and Quality Determine Supervisory Sufficiency

### Quantity

Since its formation, the MFT program has conducted practica with a 6:1 student/supervisor ratio. By policy, the program will continue this practice for the following reasons:

1. **Empirical evidence of small class learning:** It is the view of the MFT faculty that students learn best in small classes where direct, face-to-face contact with the instructor is assured, a view confirmed by a large body of research concluding that smaller class size translates to increased student achievement.
2. **Consultation room size:** Our consultation rooms vary in size. Only the largest is able to accommodate up to 10 people. The two smaller rooms can accommodate 8 or 9, at best. However, students and faculty are more comfortable for the long duration of a 7-hour practicum with six students. Again, the empirical evidence is clear that for the best learning to occur, it must be in an environment that is comfortable and safe, both of which are best assured with fewer learners. Furthermore, with only six students, there remains room for one or two observing 1<sup>st</sup> year students, especially in the larger consultation rooms.
3. **Faculty size:** The VSU MFT program has a dedicated faculty for MFT students. With the exception of an undergraduate course taught each Spring by our non-tenure track faculty, MFT faculty members do not teach in other programs. Given this, our team of 5 faculty supervisors remains stable from year to year.
4. **Student Advantage:** The COAMFTE standard for practica is a maximum of 8 students. For the above listed reasons, we prefer to have practica of six students. Additionally, faculty and students feel that faculty-to-student ratio of 1 to 6 permits optimizes the possibility that each student is assured of the following:
  - a. maximum possible amount of individual supervisor-to-student time
  - b. seeing at least one or two clients each semester

### Quality

All MFT supervisors, whether core or adjunct, are evaluated through the following means and according to the following timelines:

1. Department Head annual faculty review - annual
2. Semester *Student Opinion of Instruction* (SOI)
3. Peer review – every 2 years for non-tenure track, assistant, and associate rank
4. *Student Evaluation of Supervisor* questionnaire, which speaks directly to the achievement of MFT supervision and program PGs and SLOs – each semester.
5. Additionally, core faculty are reviewed through the university promotion and tenure process – per COEHS tenure track policy.

The results of the above evaluations become public at some point, usually through the P & T process. As long as evaluation results remain satisfactory, the program can be assured of

supervisor sufficiency. If evaluation result(s) are not satisfactory, the Department Head institutes university faculty performance review procedures until the supervisory difficulty is resolved.

### Adjunct Supervisors

Whenever it is necessary to hire a non-core supervisor because one or more of the six core faculty is unable to teach due to prolonged absence (sabbatical, family leave, emergency, illness, etc.), a qualified adjunct supervisor(s) will be hired.

1. The best, most immediate, least disruptive, and therefore most expedient, choice will be to hire the clinic director for the following reasons:
  - a. CD employment qualifications require a Georgia MFT license and AAMFT Approved Supervisor certification or AAMFT Approved Supervisor certification track
  - b. CD job description includes the possibility of facilitating practica
  - c. CD has an established relationship with students
  - d. CD can make the timeliest transition
2. When hiring the Clinic Director is not possible, outside supervisor(s) with a Georgia MFT license must also have the following qualifications:
  - a. post-graduate degree in MFT
  - b. AAMFT Clinical Fellow
  - c. Hold a current or be on track toward an active, full (LMFT) Georgia state MFT license
  - d. AAMFT Approved Supervisor designation or have completed or be enrolled in a pre-approved 30-hour AAMFT Supervision Fundamentals course through AAMFT
  - e. conducts clinical practice according to the AAMFT code of ethics
  - f. self-identifies as an MFT by profession and academic training
  - g. submit annual proof of continuous liability insurance (see Faculty & Staff Liability Insurance binder)