

## 2020 in Review

No one can predict the future and although we may try, there is simply no way to prepare for all that life has in store for us from year-to-year. Two-thousand-twenty has been no different in that regard. However, if someone would have said that in a matter of weeks the world would come to a complete stop and that our entire way of being would be different than anything we have ever experienced, many, if not all of us would have probably thought, "yeah right, there's no way." Between the atrocious acts of racial injustice, social and political upheavals, and a worldwide pandemic, this year has been a year of unrest. A year of uncertainty, division, and unification. There have been so



many unexpected but, profound changes that have taken place this year, it is oftentimes difficult to comprehend or make sense of them all.

Like the rest of the world, the MFT program has felt the effects of 2020. And, while the mission of the program,

to provide students with in-depth knowledge and understanding of the interconnected, interrelated, and systemic nature of the world, remains the same, our methods have changed; the way we teach is different, the way students learn is different, and the way the FamilyWorks clinic operates is different.

This year, we have focused on, "doing our part," as individuals and as a program, to ensure the health and safety of all MFT faculty, staff, students, clients, and the loved ones they go home to; masks are required at all times while in class and in sessions with clients. Classes, including practica, are held either online or in larger socially distanced spaces.

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Students are no longer allowed to congregate together in the break room or other areas of the clinic. All spaces (e.g., classroom, intake office, therapy rooms, etc.) are sanitized after use, including desks, phones, doorknobs, etc. Clients are asked to wait in their vehicles rather than the waiting area of FamilyWorks. Therapists and shift managers take the temperature of every client before sessions begin. And, therapy rooms are sanitized from top-to-bottom at the end of each session.

There is no doubt we have experienced a number of changes this year and that the day-to-day operations of the program are different than they once were, however, in spite of the changes, we remain flexible.

We have taken the changes, some more difficult than others, together and in stride. The faculty and students have adjusted beautifully to new ways of teaching, supervising, learning, and "doing" therapy. The FamilyWorks clinic now offers both face-to-face and telemental health options for clients, practica teams remained full throughout the summer and fall semesters, and on average, each therapist has a caseload of 18-20 clients; we are busier than ever. Two-thousand-twenty may have been the year we never expected, but through the year we have learned together, grown together, and evolved together.

As a program, we are thriving.

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# COVID and the Clinic



While the beginning of the year started off normal, by March, the entire University, including the FamilyWorks Clinic had shut down and things were anything but, normal.

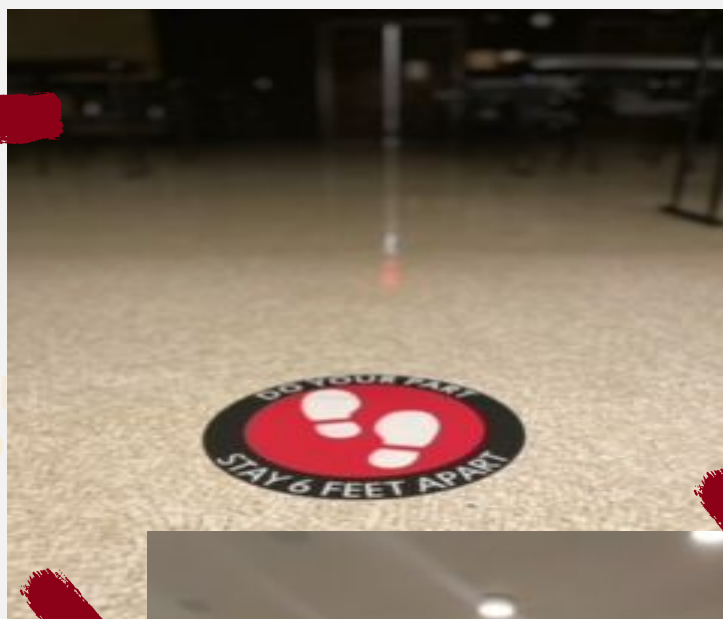
Without access to the clinic, therapists and supervisors had to respond quickly to the pandemic shutdown and in less than two weeks the entire clinic was restructured. Supervisors and therapists transitioned to an online platform and the virtual FamilyWorks clinic launched. And, the transition was well received by clients who continued to fill practical and virtual therapy rooms through the spring, summer, and fall semesters.

Online therapy services are still being offered today and the additional services have allowed therapists to continue developing their clinical skills while providing online therapy to clients all across the state, as FamilyWorks continues to grow, averaging between five-seven new clients per week.

# Doing our Part

The university officially re-opened and students returned to campus in the fall. While we were excited to once again be in the same space physically, changes were necessary to ensure we were doing our part to protect the health and safety of our faculty in students.

While masks must be worn at all times, classes were moved to the auditorium of the Continuing Education building. And, while we hope to be back in our own classroom soon, the larger space allows faculty and students to be together; teaching and learning in a safe and socially distanced environment.



COVID-19

# Resources

Below is a list of COVID-19 related resources. If you have other resources you think we should know about and are willing to share, please let us know. You can email Martha or Tabitha or post to our Facebook page using the hashtag, #vsumftresources

## Background, Research, and Comprehensive Sites Related to COVID-19:

JAMA COVID-19 collection

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/pages/coronavirus-alert#clinical-information>

New England Journal of Medicine

<https://www.nejm.org/coronavirus>

The Lancet COVID-19

<https://www.thelancet.com/coronavirus>

Resource Centre

<https://www.thelancet.com/coronavirus>  
Infectious Diseases Society of America COVID-19 Resource Center

<https://www.idsociety.org/public-health/COVID-19-Resource-Center/>

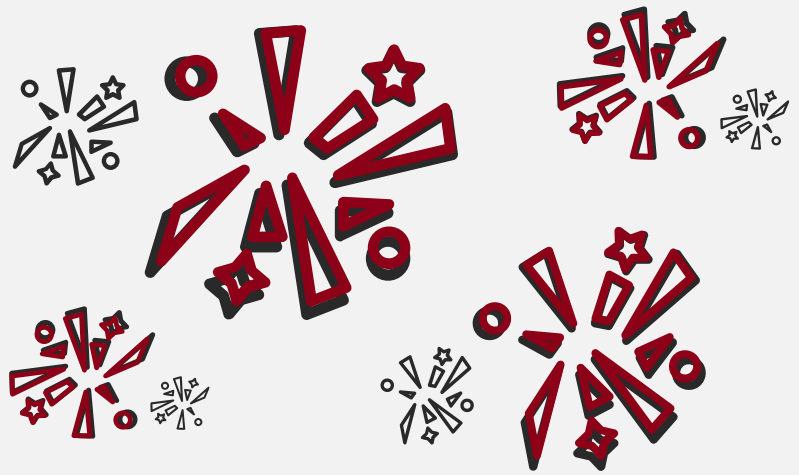
British Medical Journal  
Coronavirus Latest News and Resources

<https://www.bmj.com/coronavirus>

Congratulations

2020

Licensure Recipients



*Daniel Donathan*  
Georgia

*Stephanie Jackson*  
Virginia

*Jenna Rowe*  
Georgia

*Kaitlyn Floyd*  
Georgia

*Abriel Farrow*  
Georgia

*Beverley Joseph*  
New York

*Elizabeth Newton*  
Georgia

*Mason Pacek*  
Georgia

*Vanessa Brown*  
Georgia

*Emily Dow*  
Georgia

*Wendy McLoon*  
Georgia

*Michelle Brooten-Brooks*  
Georgia

Please forgive us if we missed anyone who was recently licensed. If you were licensed in 2020 or will become licensed in 2021, please let us know. You can email Martha at [mjlaughl@valdosta.edu](mailto:mjlaughl@valdosta.edu) or Tabitha at [tlmccoy@valdosta.edu](mailto:tlmccoy@valdosta.edu)

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement and adherence to COAMFTE accreditation standards, the Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Program conducts an annual systematic review to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of its outcome-based educational (OBE) and assessment plan (AP). This evaluative process is designed to determine whether substantial revisions are necessary in light of changes such as accreditation requirements, state regulations, core competencies, the program mission, or institutional structure—such as shifts in program delivery modality or college reorganization. Following the 2023 annual faculty review, the Program has determined that no modifications to the existing OBE framework or AP are currently warranted. The current structure continues to align with COAMFTE’s core competencies and effectively supports the program’s mission and student learning outcomes.

We invite you to review the MFT Program’s current OBE and AP. Feedback and recommendations are welcome and may be submitted via our contact us page, as we remain committed to maintaining excellence through transparency, responsiveness, and collaborative reflection.