

## MFT Program Policy on Retention, Dismissal, and Readmission

### Policy Availability

The **Policy on Retention, Dismissal, and Readmission** is available to the public via the [MFT Homepage > Accreditation > Policies and Handbook](#).

### MFT Program Policy on Retention

The MFT Program policy on retention, dismissal, and readmission is consistent with the [University](#) and [MFT Program missions, Non-Discrimination policy](#) as well as [MFT program goals and SLOs](#). Through student support services, academic advising, and safe, respectful, and appreciative person-to-person faculty/student relations, the MFT Program is committed to providing an educational opportunity that culminates in successful graduation while adhering to appropriate, fair, and non-discriminatory limitations imposed by ethics, a rigorous curriculum, clinical competence, and program requirements.

### Dismissal

The MFT faculty has a gate-keeping responsibility to assure that graduates of the MFT Program who move on to work with the public are ethical and competent practitioners. The delivery of therapeutic services to the public requires that practitioners meet both academic and professional standards of behavior and therapeutic competence. Academic progress is determined by grades in didactic and clinical courses as well as performance on comprehensive examinations. Accordingly, MFT Program maintains the following retention requirements:

1. Students are screened for personal and academic readiness prior to enrollment in clinical work with the public. Students must demonstrate consistent, professionally appropriate behavior and can be dismissed for either or both academic and non-academic reasons.
2. If a student wishes to withdraw from a class with a grade of “WP,” it is the candidate’s responsibility to initiate and complete the withdrawal process prior to the midterm deadline. “WP” grades do not affect academic deficiency points or grade point average.
3. Students will be dismissed from the program if they accumulate three or more academic deficiency points. A grade of “C,” while credited toward the degree, equals one deficiency point. A grade of “D,” which is not credited toward the degree, equals two deficiency points. Grades of “F” or “WF,” neither of which are credited toward the M.S. degree, each equal three deficiency points.
4. If dismissed from the program, a student must sit out for two semesters before applying for readmission. Readmission is not guaranteed and prior academic performance and/or conduct in the program will be considered. If readmitted, the student must retake only courses with deficiencies until the number of deficiency points is less than or equal to two. A

This policy addresses KE II-B: Program Climate of Safety, Respect, and Appreciation, Eligibility Criterion G: Establishment and Accessibility of Policies and Eligibility Criterion E: Accuracy and Program Transparency in Policies and Publications. Updated Fall 20. Scheduled for update Fall 2021.

student cannot take a class more than twice or apply for readmission more than once. The academic program reserves the right to place specific conditions and contingencies on any offer of readmission.

5. No course grade below “C” can be credited toward the M.S. in MFT degree.
6. The MFT program is traditionally completed in 2 years of full-time graduate work. In consultation with an advisor, however, students can work out a Plan of Study that can take up to but no longer than 7 years to complete. No work completed more than seven years prior to degree completion will be accepted toward the degree, except with special permission from the student’s major professor, Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, and approval from the Dean of the Graduate School.

### Readmission

1. After admission, courses taken more than seven years prior to the semester of degree completion cannot be used to meet graduate degree requirements or admission to doctoral candidacy requirements unless otherwise indicated by individual program requirements.
2. No more than 6 semester hours of academic work may be transferred into the MFT program from another program or institution. Credit considered for transfer must be no more than seven years old at the time of admission unless otherwise approved by the program. Transfer credit will be evaluated by the academic department after the student is admitted.
3. Students are screened for personal and academic readiness prior to enrollment in clinical work with the public. Students must demonstrate professionally appropriate behavior and can be dismissed for non-academic reasons.
4. If dismissed from the program, a student must sit out two semesters before applying for readmission. Readmission is not guaranteed and prior academic performance and/or conduct in the program will be considered. If readmitted, the student must retake only courses with deficiencies until the number of deficiency points is less than or equal to two. A student cannot take a class more than twice or apply for readmission more than once. The academic program reserves the right to place specific conditions and contingencies on any offer of readmission.
5. If readmitted, the student must retake courses with deficiencies until the number of deficiency points is less than or equal to two. A student cannot take a class more than twice or apply for readmission more than once. The academic program reserves the right to place specific conditions and contingencies on any offer of readmission.

Students may be terminated from the MFT Program for either or both non-academic and academic reasons. A student may be dismissed for violation of the AAMFT Code of Ethics or the Code of Ethics of the State of Georgia Composite Board.

Students are responsible for being familiar with the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Content from the code is infused throughout the curriculum. The [Code of Ethics can be found on the AAMFT website](#).

## Remediation

Even though students are ultimately responsible for their coursework and grades, the program has an interest in supporting students who have academic difficulties where assistance is possible.

- I. When a student may be having academic difficulties, as demonstrated by consistent classroom interactions that indicate poor understanding or course assignments that consistently earn grades below “B”, instructors may do the following:
  - Consult with faculty during periodic faculty reviews of student progress
  - Refer student to his or her advisor to discuss the extant Plan of Study and explore whether progress in the program needs to be slowed
  - Encourage the student to meet with the relevant faculty member advisor or course instructor to discuss academic difficulties
  
- II. When a student is having academic difficulties, as demonstrated by a final course grade below “B,” in a graduate course(s), this results in a [deficiency point\(s\)](#). The Graduate School sends a warning letter to the student for each earned deficiency point until enough points are accumulated to warrant dismissal, at which point a dismissal letter is sent. Students may be dismissed from the MFT Program if they accumulate *three or more academic deficiency points*.
  - A “C” = one deficiency point. “C” can be credited toward the degree.
  - A “D” = two deficiency points. “D” cannot be credited toward the M.S. degree, and the course must be repeated.
  - An “F” or “WF” = 3 deficiency points. Neither “F” nor “WF” can be credited toward the M.S. degree.

When students earn one or more deficiency points, instructors may do the following:

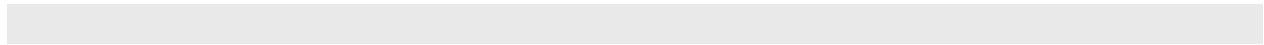
- Consult with faculty during the monthly faculty review of student progress
- Refer student to his or her advisor to discuss the extant Plan of Study and explore whether progress in the program needs to be slowed
- Encourage student to meet with the instructor to discuss the nature of the academic difficulties
- Encourage student to visit the [Academic Support Center](#) and [explore writing resources for graduate students](#)
- Encourage student to identify a fellow classmate(s) who might be able/willing to sit with them and discuss the academic area(s) of difficulty

**Clinical Work.** If a supervisor feels that mental, physical, or personal matters are interfering with the student's assessment and/or treatment of clients, the supervisor will bring the concern(s) to the attention of the student and may suggest that the student seek professional services (mental

or medical) to resolve the issue(s).

However, supervisors will not conduct personal therapy with student supervisees, nor will the program require a student to purchase personal therapy. If personal issues, whether physical or mental, generate ethical and/or legal issues with clients or appear to faculty supervisors to interfere with the student's interpersonal relationships with faculty or students, the student's clinical relationship with clients, and/or the student's ability to successfully complete program requirements such as service learning, outreach, practicum, or coursework, such difficulties will be reflected in the student's grade and in the student's progress through the program. In all cases, the instructor of record will do the following:

- Consult with faculty during the monthly review of student progress.
- Refer the student to her or his advisor to discuss the extant Plan of Study and explore whether the student needs to slow progress through the curriculum.



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