

MFT Program Policy on Program Leadership and Faculty and Student Governance

Policy Availability

The **Policy on Program Leadership and Faculty and Student Governance** is available to the public via the [MFT Homepage > Accreditation > Policies and Handbook](#).

MFT Position on the Importance of Faculty and Student Participation in Program Governance

The MFT Program is administered and operated on an ongoing basis by its MFT faculty, with support from students and graduate assistants. The program's mission, goals, and student learning outcomes are realized through the active engagement of both faculty and students; accordingly, shared governance is a foundational component of the MFT Program. Core and adjunct faculty collaborate with one another, with faculty from other programs and departments, and with university administrators, and they engage meaningfully and substantively in the broader life of the university beyond their roles in teaching and research.

This commitment to shared governance extends to students as essential stakeholders in the program. Student feedback—including surveys, reflections, ideas, observations, and willingness to verbally describe their experiences in the program's academic, clinical, and professional components—is critical to the program's ability to fulfill its mission, goals, and student learning outcomes. Without systematic student input, the program would be diminished in both quality and effectiveness. Therefore, the MFT Program intentionally and continuously seeks to encourage and create meaningful opportunities for student participation in program governance and continuous improvement efforts.

I. MFT Policy on Program Leadership

Core Faculty

The MFT Program defines core faculty as any faculty member employed by VSU and having full-time (40 hours) responsibility for any teaching, supervision, program or clinic management, or training activities.

Program Director

The program director is a core faculty member who has ultimate program responsibility and who meets the following criteria:

- ◆ is a member of the core faculty
- ◆ a minimum of 50% of PD's duties/time is dedicated to the MFT Program. 100% participation is preferred.
- ◆ directs the program throughout the 12-month year
- ◆ is vested with responsibility for and has qualifications that enable her/him/them to provide full leadership for accreditation matters, academic quality, which include the OBE framework, assessment, the foundational curriculum, resources, clinical training, facilities, and student services. Overarchingly, the Program Director is responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of the program's quality (program improvement) consistent with the program's clinical training mission.

- ◆ must be an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or an AAMFT Supervision Candidate with supervision experience and training. If an AAMFT Supervision Candidate, he or she must become an AAMFT Approved Supervisor within three years of assuming the directorship role.

MFT Program Director Position Description

The MFT Program Director will provide year-round overall direction and administration of a master's degree program in Marriage and Family Therapy that is committed to a multi-culturally informed education and an inclusive and diverse learning environment. The Program Director is responsible for oversight of the curriculum, clinical training program, facilities, and services. The Director will teach, participate in professional and scholarly development, and provide service to the university, community, and profession. Specific duties include but are not limited to the following:

- Maintain and enhance program quality, including
 - A. Lead program through COAMFTE accreditation processes
 - Oversee compliance with accreditation standards
 - Serve as primary writer and organizer for re-accreditation self-study
 - Serve as primary writer and prepare the COAMFTE Annual Report
 - Assure the timely payment of COAMFTE fees
 - B. Maintain and enhance program visibility and transparency
 - C. Maintain and enhance program quality, including the direction and oversight of
 - Faculty
 - Clinic observation/recording system (maintenance, repair, and adherence to policy and procedures related to use by students and faculty, periodic update and improvement of access.
 - Other technology and equipment (classroom, computers, etc.)
 - Physical facilities, structure, and spaces
 - D. Maintain and enhance program transparency
 - E. Provide direction and oversight of the MFT curriculum and clinical training including evaluation, maintenance, and enhancement of educational experiences, assuring congruence with the program's mission, goals, and outcomes, and COAMFTE foundational curricular areas and practice components.
 - F. Oversee program clinical training
 - provide clinical supervision to junior faculty who are AAMFT Supervisors-in-Training (per accreditation)
 - supervise Clinic Director
 - direct and oversee the review of all work products related to clients, attorneys, and court subpoenas
 - prepare interns for court appearances
 - direct and oversee the review of requests for clinical records or summaries by other allied health professionals.
 - direct and oversee review of all finalized requests for clinical records and SSI, SSDI reports
 - direct and oversee the weekly/daily staffing review of high-risk cases

- direct and oversee follow-ups for all involuntary and voluntary hospital admissions
- direct and oversee the monitoring of new, continuing, and discontinuing FamilyWorks support groups
- direct and oversee the review and maintain of HIPPA compliance standards, as necessary
- Teach year-round MFT didactic courses
- Teach year-round *MFTH 7600 Clinical Practicum* course (three semesters each year)
- Seek and maintain tenure and promotion, providing quality scholarship, teaching, and service to the field, the university, and the community
- Maintain and manage evaluations and data bases, including but not limited to
 - *Alumni Survey*
 - *Advising Survey*
 - *Comprehensive Exam I Evaluation*
 - *Employer Satisfaction Survey*
 - *Internship Satisfaction Survey*
 - *MFT Graduate Exit Survey*
 - *Client Satisfaction Survey*
 - *Clinic Director Evaluation*
 - *Program Director Evaluation*
 - *Why VSU? Survey*
- Oversee student advising policies, procedures, and facilitation
- Direct/oversee the recruitment and admissions of students
- Maintain a current license, liability insurance, and the Approved Supervisor credential
- Primary writer (with MFT faculty input and support) of MFT Program Policies & Procedures
 - Update & review on schedule
- Maintain, review, and update handbooks and policy and procedure manuals
- Direct or oversee the planning and facilitation of New Student Orientation
- Prepare, or oversee the preparation of, annual Institutional Effectiveness Plans (IEPs) and Reports (IERs), as well as Comprehensive Program Review (CPR) reports.
- Monitor Association of Marital and Family Regulatory Board (AMFRB) test specifications for curricular, licensure test preparation, and accreditation implications
- Direct/oversee management of student files, final review, and graduation sign-off
- Direct/oversee student recruitment and new admissions
 - Collaborate with the Graduate School
 - Correspond with prospective students
 - Coordinate campus visits
 - Applicant review
 - Conduct interviews
- Oversee Strategic Planning as necessary
 - Write, maintain, & update strategic plan
- Organize and facilitate regular faculty meetings
 - Oversee program committees
- As necessary, hire and direct or designate the mentoring of adjunct instructors
- Hire and direct or designate the hiring/dismissal, evaluation, scheduling of graduate assistants
- Direct and oversee the approval of swipe card access.

- Advise, mentor, and supervise MFT graduate students
- Follow university/college/program policies in the direction and oversight of student concerns, grievances, and appeals.
- Direct/or oversee the completion/approval of student licensure applications (Associate and 2-years later, full licensure)
- Oversee annual program-wide service efforts: Lobby Day, South Georgia Farmworkers Health Clinic (SGFHP), Hospice grief camps for children (Camp Good Grief, Camp Hope), Pride event, etc.

II. MFT Policy on Program Governance

Shared governance and faculty freedom to structure and govern their own programs according to best practices and current research is an important aspect of VSU university. At VSU, Faculty Senate serves as the mechanism for shared governance. At the program level, the permanent, full-time faculty serves as the mechanism for conducting and assuring shared governance. With input from communities of interest—COAMFTE, students, etc.—the program is operated year-to-year by the faculty, which works collaboratively with administration within the policy structure of the university, bringing its collective skills, knowledges, experiences, and perceptions to bear on every aspect of the program.

The primary means of communication between MFT faculty members is face-to-face weekly faculty meetings and informal (unscheduled) discussions. Informal exchanges that occur frequently in offices and through email and meetings are frequently the source of solutions to small issues. Larger issues (structural, policy, curricular, program-level decisions, etc.) are scheduled, discussed, finalized, and documented in faculty meetings.

When decisions or policy revisions impact students, these are communicated to Communities of Interest such as students, alumni, and faculty via email, faculty meetings, community meetings, and/or individual in-person meetings (with the Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, and/or student representatives). As needed, program-level changes are communicated to, and approved by, administrators at the departmental, college, and graduate studies levels. Formal policy changes are also published on the [Program Handbook & Policies link](#) of the [MFT website](#). The program [Policy on Course and Curriculum Changes](#) dictates that curricular changes follow university policy and procedure.

Faculty meetings are dedicated to the review, analysis, and discussion of data generated through the program's surveys and evaluations. Findings from these analyses are shared with students, alumni, and faculty, and their feedback is actively solicited. This feedback is then reviewed and, when appropriate, used to inform programmatic changes. When data or feedback identify concerns, barriers, or opportunities for program improvement, faculty collaboratively discuss potential responses and reach consensus prior to implementation.

Implemented changes are again reported to Communities of Interest and responses invited. Data generated responses is again entered into the evaluative loop.

III. MFT Faculty Role in Program Governance

Shared governance and faculty freedom to structure and govern their own programs according to best practices and current research is an important aspect of VSU university. At VSU, the Faculty Senate serves as the mechanism for shared governance. At the program level, the permanent, full-time faculty serves as the mechanism for conducting and assuring shared governance. With input from communities of interest—COAMFTE, students, etc.—the program is operated year-to-year by the faculty, which works collaboratively with administration within the policy structure of the university, bringing its collective skills, knowledges, experiences, and perceptions to bear on every aspect of the program.

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When decisions or policy revisions impact students, these are communicated to students via email, community meetings, newsletters, and/or in-person meetings (with the program director, clinic manager, and/or student representatives). When necessary, program-level changes are communicated to, and approved by, administrators at the departmental, college, and graduate school levels. Formal policy changes are also published on the [Program Handbook & Policies link](#) of the [MFT website](#). The program [Policy on Course and Curriculum Changes](#) dictates that curricular changes follow university policy and procedure.

MFT faculty play a central role in the governance of the program, ensuring that all aspects of teaching, clinical training, and program development meet COAMFTE standards. Faculty participation in governance occurs through multiple, ongoing avenues:

- **Weekly Faculty Meetings:** Faculty meetings are held regularly across all semesters, with additional meetings as needed. Full-time faculty are expected to attend; part-time (adjunct) faculty are invited to attend. These meetings serve as a forum for monitoring program operations, reviewing student progress, and addressing issues related to curriculum, clinical training, and overall program quality.
- **Extended Faculty Meetings:** As needed, extended faculty meetings are convened to review program outcomes, analyze assessment data, and discuss feedback from communities of interest, including students, graduates, supervisors, and faculty. This practice aligns with COAMFTE expectations for ongoing program evaluation and data-informed decision-making to ensure continuous improvement.
- **Admissions Decisions:** All MFT faculty share responsibility for the admissions process, including reviewing applications and interviewing qualified candidates. This collective participation ensures that admission decisions reflect program standards, mission alignment, and the preparation of students for successful academic and clinical outcomes.

- **Evaluation of Students:** Faculty continually assess student performance across academic, clinical, behavioral, professional, and work-related domains. Evaluation is multi-level and systematic, supporting COAMFTE standards for monitoring student development, ensuring clinical competence, and fostering professional growth.
- **Participation in Program Activities and Community Engagement:** Faculty extend governance beyond formal meetings through involvement in program-related activities, such as Lobby Day and the Emory Farmworkers Project. These activities provide experiential oversight of field experiences, reinforce community engagement, and ensure that students' applied learning aligns with program outcomes and accreditation standards.

Through these structured and ongoing governance activities, MFT faculty ensure that program operations, student development, and community partnerships consistently meet both the program's mission and COAMFTE standards.