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**Master of Science in Counseling  
Option in Marriage & Family Therapy**

**INFORMATION AND APPLICATION PACKET FOR FALL 2009 ADMISSION**

**(Degree Code ED\_PMS04)**

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**California State University, Long Beach  
College of Education  
Department of Advanced Studies in Education & Counseling**

Revised: 8/08

***For information, contact the program coordinator:***

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**I. Program Approaches**

The Counselor Education programs in the Department of Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling (ASEC) at California State University, Long Beach, offers a graduate Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Option in the Master of Science in Counseling degree that is also approved by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS).

The **MFT program goals** are:

***Practitioner Focus*** Provide training in traditional and managed-care approaches noting DSM IV and family systems assessment/diagnosis which should result in effective, cost effective treatment plans and service delivery.

***Integration*** Integrate research, theory, and practice in a cohesive manner that comprehensively and appropriately addresses the social, emotional, and developmental aspects of diverse populations with sensitivity and skill.

**II. The Field and Program Characteristics**

**Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT)** constitute a significant proportion of the mental health providers in California, e.g. LCSWs, psychologists, and psychiatrists. The majority of MFTs work in non-profit organizations (community mental health services) as well as in schools, colleges, hospitals, clinics, and government agencies, and private practice. A survey conducted by the California Association for Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) indicated that MFTs worked approximately 20-25 hours per week, and their average income was \$65 per 50-minute hour. In addition to their "general practice" in marriage, family, and child counseling, many MFTs have also acquired additional areas of specialized training in, but not limited to, substance abuse, child abuse, hypnotherapy, and working with school-community organizations. The MFT students in the program represent a demographic mix: the average age is 30-35 years; the majority are from a variety of undergraduate and graduate fields ranging from art and history to engineering and health-related fields; the vast majority are currently employed in various occupations; and most have chosen the field of MFT as a career change. **Social Work** programs often emphasize an ecological perspective which focuses on "the fit and interactions of a person or system in relation to the various environments..." (CSULB Catalog, 2008). In this respect, many social work graduates work with agencies to provide environmental support and external resources as well as counseling individuals and families. However, a **licensed clinical social worker**

(LCSW), is specifically trained to perform clinical psychotherapy and many are involved in private practice as well as working with various agencies. **MFTs, like psychologists and LCSWs**, provide psychotherapy with individuals and families/couples and generally do not assist clients with external resources. **School counselors and school psychologists can only work** with children and school personnel in school settings and require a school credential. MFTs, LCSWs, and psychologists require passing written examinations to earn their licenses and can practice in the community outside of a school setting.

**Masters degree versus doctoral study:** Some applicants question whether they should apply to a masters degree such as our MFT program or apply to a doctoral program. If you are wondering about this, it may indicate that you should consider postponing this application and give both types of programs more exploration to arrive at a proper conclusion for yourself. If you believe that you meet the qualifications for a doctoral program, that course of study should be pursued to avoid performing 3,000 hours for the MFT license then an additional 3,000 hours for the psychology license. Approximately one out of four or five of our graduates go on for a Ph.D. The majority of doctoral programs do not require a masters degree. The majority of our students want to become a therapist as soon as possible, and the difference in remuneration between MFTs, LCSWs and psychologists is no longer that great due to the effects of managed care and HMOs.

**Career Opportunities, Work & Work Settings, and Other Concerns:** A survey in the California Association of Marriage & Family Therapist journal, the *California Therapist*, indicates there is a severe shortage of mental health personnel in California, particularly in certain counties. Most MFTs work in agencies or independent practice. The average fee ranges from \$65 to \$78 per 50 minute hour, and they see approximately 20-25 clients per week. Managed care and HMOs have not seriously impacted MFT fees and work as California laws do not generally permit discrimination by insurance companies against MFTs. Contrary to popular belief, MFTs can and do bill and collect insurance reimbursement from insurance companies that cover various mental health services without a physician's approval. The majority of our MFT graduates often work for an organization (Dep. of Public Social Services, Children's Protective Services, colleges, schools, hospitals, clinics, etc.) while developing their independent practice. Many colleges and other agencies are hiring MFTs to provide counseling, advisement, and teaching service as it is more cost effective than hiring PhDs.

**Student Characteristics:** The average age of the students in the program is approximately 30-35. The majority are changing careers, work full or part-time, and have a variety of undergraduate degrees ranging from art, history, music and business as well as law, engineering, MBAs and doctorates. There are approximately two males out of ten, and students representing different languages and cultures constitute approximately 50 percent of our student body. Most of the students desire late afternoon or evening classes (4-7pm or 7-10pm) and several of the courses are on weekends only (Saturday & Sunday). The student variety brings a richness to class and peer interactions which enhances the program.

### **III. Application and Admission Process: University and Program**

The deadlines for applying to the MFT program and the University is March 1. *You should apply to the University, which is separate from the MFT program before the March 1 deadline.* Please refer to "MFT Admission and Application Criteria" section at the end of this document for information regarding the application process.

**Admission:** The MFT program is highly selective based on the criteria stated in "MFT Admission and Application Criteria" and emphasizes diversity, academic, and maturity factors. **Please note, many students apply to the MFT program each year; however, only approximately half of the applicants will be invited for an on-campus interview, and only half of the interviewees will ultimately be offered admission to the program.** Subsequently, the program may select fewer or more applicants with specific criteria in mind

with each group of applicants. [Note: The program does not require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).] Applicants will be notified if they are conditionally accepted, assuming acceptance by the University, after a mandatory screening interview and e-mail notification of acceptance by the MFT program. A bachelor's degree in any major must be earned from a regionally accredited college or university prior to beginning the MFT program.

#### IV. MFT Program and Extension Services

Budget considerations have affected all programs in the California State University system. Consequently, the program offers a number of MFT courses through CSULB's University College & Extension Services (UCES), summer and winter sessions. Courses are offered in the fall or spring semesters in the evening, on weekends, or through summer or winter sessions. Most courses, whether they are offered in the regular curriculum or through UCES, are scheduled in the evening (4-6:45 or 7-9:45pm) or on weekends through UCES to accommodate the majority of students who work during the day. Weekend courses are indicated in the schedule as "SU" which means Saturday and Sunday. About seventy percent of students take three courses per semester and the remainder take three or more courses per semester, depending on their extracurricular work load. Applicants should also note that the vast majority of practicum and fieldwork positions are unpaid so students should plan on this.

The fees for special session courses are approximately \$500 plus for a 3-unit class. Students must plan on this **extra expense beyond the regular tuition fees**. This will accomplish some financial savings to the University and allow the program to be more self-supporting. These fees translate into a higher expense for students. However, this expense is still much lower than that charged by many of the private colleges for an equivalent Board of Behavioral Science (BBS) approved counseling program. This does not affect the quality, teaching, and relevance of the program and the program enjoys an excellent reputation in the professional community.

**CLASS MEETINGS:** All classes usually meet once a week from either 4:00pm-6:45pm or 7:00pm-9:45pm. Currently two of the MFT courses (COUN 511, 512) and some electives are held on weekends, Saturday and Sunday from 9-5pm during the summer and winter sessions. *Occasionally, some courses may be taught during daytime hours or at other times (During the Summer, COUN 643D and 644D may be offered at 9:00-10:30 and 10:30-12:00, respectively).*

#### V. Prerequisites, Course Equivalencies, and Transferred Credit

Applicants interested in the MFT program are encouraged to apply to the program as soon as possible. Only **courses taken post-baccalaureate are accepted by the BBS. All degrees must be earned from a regionally accredited college or university. It should also be noted that it is the University policy not to accept more than 6 units of transfer credit.**

Applicants who have taken equivalent coursework should contact the MFT advisors, Dr. Bill Saltzman (email: [wsaltzman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wsaltzman@sbcglobal.net)), Dr. Paul Ratanasiripong (email: [pratanas@csulb.edu](mailto:pratanas@csulb.edu)) or Dr. Bitra Ghafoori (email: [bghafoor@csulb.edu](mailto:bghafoor@csulb.edu)), to *unofficially* evaluate the course content. An **official evaluation** of the equivalent coursework is conducted by submitting a "Course Equivalency" form after acceptance into the program. Typically, an "upper division" course in statistics (if there is an accompanying Lab) and psychological assessment might be accepted for "content" credit. However, the units (versus content) are not generally accepted and one must take approved elective courses after acceptance into the program to make up the units required to complete the MFT program. If a course has been taken at another campus, it must be initially evaluated the University Admissions Office and later by the MFT program for equivalency.

#### VI. Prior Experience

Some applicants have experiences in mental health professions. However, BBS regulations do not recognize or accept such experience as credit for supervised field experience hours. **The BBS requires a student to be formally admitted in an approved California MFT program and to have completed at least 12 semester units after admission in that program to be considered as a formal MFT trainee.**

#### **VII. Student Status as described in the BBS Regulations**

**TRAINEE:** A student who is formally admitted into the MFT Option and who has completed at least 12 semester units in the program will possess MFT trainee status. A trainee is permitted to perform counseling services in a non-profit agency under the direct supervision of a licensed MFT, licensed LCSW, licensed psychologist, or board certified psychiatrist who is employed at the trainee's work site, has a current California license, and has had the license for over two years.

Trainees are required to complete a total of 500 Practicum and Fieldwork hours in the MFT Option program (150 Practicum hours and 350 Fieldwork hours which are applicable toward the 3000 hours) after completion of the required prerequisites (400, 510, 511, 512, 513, 522). Trainees generally perform the Practicum and Fieldwork experience hours in a non-profit setting. Few of the non-profit settings have paid positions.

**INTERN:** An intern is an MFT graduate who has completed all the educational requirements for MFT licensure eligibility, possesses an appropriate master's degree, and has received the BBS intern license number. An intern may perform fieldwork in a for-profit or not-for-profit agency, and/or work with a private practice person who has had two or more years of appropriate experience. The intern may also be paid a salary (not a percentage) for work performed in this capacity.

#### **VIII. MFT Coursework and the California BBS General Educational Requirements.**

The overall goal of the M.S. in Counseling-MFT Option is to provide an integrated course of study and appropriate professional training. The BBS requirements includes all of the following sections" (a-g). The corresponding MFT program courses are indicated in brackets [ ] at the end of each appropriate section.

- a. Provide an integrated course of study that trains students generally in the diagnosis, assessment, prognosis, and treatment of mental disorders. [COUN 511, 512, 513, 522, 601, 608, 609]
- b. Prepare students to be familiar with the broad range of matters that may arise within marriage and family relationships. [COUN 543, 557, 608, 634]
- c. Train students specifically in the application of marriage and family relationship counseling principles and methods. [COUN 556, 557, 608, 609, 634]
- d. Encourage students to develop those personal qualities that are intimately related to the counseling situation such as integrity, sensitivity, flexibility, insight, compassion, and personal presence. [COUN 510, 608]
- e. Teach students a variety of effective psychotherapeutic techniques and modalities that may be utilized to improve, restore, or maintain healthy individual, couple, and family relationships. [COUN 511, 512, 514, 522, 543, 556, 557, 601, 608, 609, 634, 638]
- f. Permit an emphasis or specialization that may address any one or more of the unique and complex array of human problems, symptoms, and needs of Californians served by marriage, family, and child counselors. [COUN 601, 608, 609, 643D, 644D]

- g. Prepare students to be familiar with cross-cultural mores and values including a familiarity with the wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds common among California's population. [COUN 555]

## **IX. MFT Option Curriculum**

**PROGRAM PREREQUISITE:** COUN 400 Introduction to Ed. Measurement & Statistics [or equivalent]

**The equivalents of COUN 400 are: upper division coursework in Statistics and upper division course in Psychological Assessment.**

**COUN 510, 513, and 515 are prerequisites for almost all courses in the MFT Program.**

**TOTAL PROGRAM REQUIRED UNITS = 62**

	<u>Units</u>
COUN 508A Family Systems Therapy Applied to Lifespan Development	3
COUN 508B Family Systems Methods	3
COUN 510 Laws and Ethics for Counseling	3
COUN 511 Counseling the Alcohol/Chemical Depend. Person	2
COUN 512 Child and Spousal/Partner Abuse	1
COUN 513 Intro Clinical Interviewing (Summer)	3
COUN 514 Medications and Counseling	2
COUN 515 Counseling Theory	3
COUN 520 Educational Research	3
COUN 522 Counseling Methods and Techniques (Winter only)	3
COUN 543 Human Sexuality Counseling	3
COUN 555 Cross Cultural Counseling	3
COUN 556 Counseling Children & Adolescents	3
COUN 557 Counseling Couples	3
COUN 601 Trauma & Grief Counseling	3
COUN 608 Seminar in MFT	3
COUN 609 Practicum in MFT	3
COUN 638 Group Counseling	3
COUN 643D Fieldwork in Counseling	3
COUN 644D Advanced Fieldworks in Counseling	3
COUN 559 Art & Play Therapy for Children/Adolescents [ <b>Strongly Recommended elective</b> ]	3

### **One of the following:**

Thesis Option : COUN 698 (6 units) OR

Comprehensive Exam Option : (6 elective units)

### **Practicum and Fieldwork**

MFT students are required to complete 150 hours of off-site Practicum (COUN 609) experiences **in addition to** 350 off-site Fieldwork hours (COUN 643D & 644D) under the direct supervision of an approved licensed, counseling professional for a total of 500 experience hours.

### **Advancement to Candidacy Requirements:**

1. Evidence of passing the Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE)

2. Complete all of the following: COUN 508A, 510, and 513.

Students are required to file an Application for Advancement to Candidacy with the Office of Graduate Studies and

Research (ED 1, Rm 7) in the College of Education after all tests and prescribed courses (9 units) have been completed. Advancement to Candidacy provides the student with "catalog rights." Read the CSULB Catalog "Graduate Degrees" and College of Education section regarding policies and procedures for advancement to candidacy.

**General Outline of suggested clinical course/sequence** (for explanation, see section XIII)

COUN 510\*  
COUN 511\*  
COUN 512\* ==> COUN 634 ==> COUN 643D ==> COUN 644D (FW)  
COUN 513\* COUN 609\*\*  
COUN 515\* COUN 638  
COUN 522\* \* Prerequisites for Practicum  
COUN 608\* \*\* Prerequisites for Fieldwork

**X. Clinical Course Sequence**

The following courses are designed to provide a student with a sequence of training that will ensure clinical knowledge to conduct Fieldwork with couples, families, and individual cases. In Practicum or Fieldwork, a trainee will definitely encounter legal and ethical problems (COUN 510), substance abuse (COUN 511), and child abuse situations (COUN 512). Therefore, the student should take these courses as early as possible in the program. COUN 511 and COUN 512 are weekend courses offered during the winter intersession.

Students must also be acquainted with clinical interviewing methods (COUN 513), counseling theories (COUN 515), and counseling methods and techniques (COUN 522). The assessment, diagnosis, and treatment methods using DSM approaches (COUN 608) and Human Development/family systems (COUN 508A & 508B) are critical courses prior to fieldwork. All of these courses are necessary to function effectively in the field.

The remaining coursework for MFT may be taken prior to or concurrent with the above sequence depending on the number of courses a student is able to take each semester.

**Thesis/Comprehensive Examination Degree Requirement:** Candidates for the Master of Science in Counseling Degree must submit either a written thesis, COUN 698 (2 semesters, 3 units each semester), or complete a written comprehensive examination (0 unit credit, administered at the end of the fall and spring semesters) after completion of all coursework.

**Thesis:** Students who choose thesis should plan to assemble their thesis committee and a tentative statement of the problem before they are Advanced to Candidacy, and preferably **at least three semesters prior to their target COUN** program completion date. It takes time to assemble a committee, define the thesis proposal, and conduct research. Thesis students enrolled in COUN 698-Thesis meet independently with the thesis chair and committee periodically (thesis is not an attendance class). The student must complete 6 units of COUN 698, and have the approval page signed by the committee and the dean before the final grade is assigned. In the interim, a student receives an 'SP' (satisfactory progress) grade for the course. Permission to enroll must be granted **each semester** by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. The permit to enroll will be put on the computer when the application is filed by the appropriate deadlines.

**Comprehensive Examination:** Applications for the examination are due in the Graduate Office (Ed 1, room 7) by the appropriate deadlines.

**XI. Suggested Full (4 courses per semester) and Part-time (3 courses) Course Schedule**

**COUN 400 - Intro to Ed. measurement & Statistics is a program prerequisite. It's equivalent is an upper division course in Psych. Testing/Assessment and an upper division course in statistics.** It may be taken prior to the program or during the summer before the program begins.

**Marriage and Family Therapy Program**

**A. 4 Course Per Semester Recommended Schedule**

**YEAR 1**

<b>SUMMER</b>	<b>FALL</b>	<b>WINTER</b>	<b>SPRING</b>
ED P 400 (Prerequisite Stat/Assessment course, take if needed)	COUN 510 COUN 513 COUN 515 COUN 508A	COUN 511 COUN 512	COUN 522 COUN 556 COUN 508B COUN 557

**YEAR 2**

<b>SUMMER</b>	<b>FALL</b>	<b>WINTER</b>	<b>SPRING</b>
COUN 608  ED P 520	COUN 609 COUN 638 COUN 601 COUN 514  <i>COUN 698 (Thesis) or COUN 692 (Elective)</i>		COUN 643D COUN 543 COUN 555  <i>COUN 698 (Thesis) or COUN 692 (Elective)</i>

**YEAR 3**

<b>SUMMER</b>	<b>FALL</b>	<b>SPRING</b>
COUN 644D		

**B. 3 Course Per Semester Recommended Schedule**

**YEAR 1**

SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
ED P 400 (Prerequisite Stat/Assessment course, take if needed)	COUN 510 COUN 513 COUN 515	COUN 511 COUN 512	COUN 522 COUN 556 COUN 638

**YEAR 2**

SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
COUN 608	COUN 508A COUN 601 EDP 520		COUN 508B COUN 609 COUN 557

**YEAR 3**

SUMMER	FALL	SPRING
COUN 643D	COUN 514 COUN 644d  <i>COUN 698 (Thesis) or COUN 692 (Elective)</i>	COUN 555 COUN 543  <i>COUN 698 (Thesis) or COUN 692 (Elective)</i>

**XIII. MFT Practicum COUN 609 and Fieldwork COUN 643D and 644D: Applications and Enrollment** Practicum & Field work placement experiences **are generally unpaid positions and generally require a 12 month commitment** by agencies. **Please plan on this aspect.** Students should indicate on the Practicum or Fieldwork application if they have an approved site. Each site and site supervisor must be approved and if a student does not have a site, the MFT program will assist but **NOT guarantee placement.** The BBS does not permit field experience at for profit or private practice settings for trainees. COUN 609, 643D, and 644D require a seminar meeting generally every two or three weeks after class for approximately 90 minutes. The meetings typically review agency procedures and case reviews. Beginning Fall 2006, COUN 609 requires weekly meetings (3 hours total) and includes field experience at the Educational Psychology Clinic at CSULB as well as field experience at approved agencies.

**Practicum:** COUN 609-MFT Practicum is the first of three field experience courses. The field experiences are differentiated by knowledge and experience levels. COUN 609-Practicum is at the Novice level. COUN 643D represents the Intermediate level and COUN 644D represents the Advanced level. The Practicum (COUN 609) requires 150-hours of experience. Beginning Fall 2006 students may not enroll in COUN 608 (Sem. In MFT – the Treatment class) concurrently (COUN 608 will be a prerequisite for COUN 609). Students must plan on 5-7 hours with clients, 2-4 hours of clinical supervision, **and** a 60-90-minute staff meeting per week. **STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE AT LEAST 113 HOURS (75%) OF PRACTICUM TO be considered for enrollment in COUN 643D**

Intermediate level fieldwork. COUN 609 is only offered during Fall and Spring semesters. If a student is unable to complete more than 112 Practicum hours in COUN 609, an Incomplete grade will be awarded and the experience must be continued until 150 hours are successfully completed with no less than "Average" ratings on their Evaluation.

**Practicum Application:** Enrollment in COUN 609 will require a Practicum application with two faculty recommendations to the Graduate Office. The **deadline dates for either Practicum or Fieldwork (COUN 643D/644D) are: March 1** for fall and **October 1** for the following spring. Indicate on the Fieldwork form that you are enrolling for COUN 609 OR 1st or 2nd semester fieldwork, COUN 643D or 644D, respectively. COUN 609 is a prerequisite for COUN 643D and COUN 643D is a prerequisite for COUN 644D. The prerequisites for COUN 609 are: COUN 510, 511, 512, 513, 515, 522, and 608. Practicum is not offered in the summer; however, fieldwork is offered in the summer.

**Site Agreement:** A site agreement is required by the BBS between the trainee, the agency, and the program for Practicum and Fieldwork experiences as well as a mid-semester evaluation and end of semester evaluation. Students must earn, at minimum, an average rating on ALL evaluation items. A below average rating on 2 or more items will earn a No Credit grade. Students who earn an Incomplete grade or No Credit in either COUN 609, 643D or 644D will not be permitted to enroll in COUN 643D or COUN 644D until the below average rating(s) are improved to at least an average rating.

Each Fieldwork course (COUN 643D- Intermediate level & COUN 644D- Advanced level) **requires a minimum of 175 hours per semester**. Students should plan on **12 or more hours per week**. Group supervision of 2 hours can be counted for these hours. The majority of community agencies are open days, evenings, and weekends which should facilitate student placement. **HOWEVER**, students should note that the majority of community agencies typically require a 12-month commitment and additional time for weekly staff meetings.

"Experience (as specified in B & PC Section 4980.40) may be gained as a trainee in the following settings: a governmental entity, school, college or university, non-profit and charitable corporation, or licensed health facility, if the experience is gained by the trainee solely as part of the position for which he or she is employed." [B & PC 4980.43 (b)]

#### **XIV. Ethical Behavior**

Graduate students admitted into the MFT program will be involved in training which will lead toward professional licensure in the MFT profession. As such, it is expected that student conduct will reflect professional, mature, ethical, thoughtful, and considerate behavior in class, Practicum, Fieldwork and other professional activities that exemplifies the MFT profession as described by the California Association for Marital and Family Therapy (CAMFT) Code of Ethics (available in the Department office). This includes attendance, promptness, courtesy and interpersonal consideration for the class. Students may be evaluated in each class.

#### **MFT ADMISSION AND APPLICATION CRITERIA**

For information contact the program coordinator, Bita Ghafouri, Ph.D. (email: [bghafoor@csulb.edu](mailto:bghafoor@csulb.edu) or call 562-985-7864)

Admission to the M.S. in Counseling program-MFT Option is **highly selective** and competitive. It is essential for applicants to follow and adhere to the guidelines. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in not being considered for the program. There are 3 admission points in the following order and **2 separate application forms (CSULB AND the MFT program)**.

## **1. CSU Application**

Submit a 2009 CSU Application for Graduate Admission and one (1) set of official transcripts for all colleges and universities attended to the University to the Office of Enrollment Services (*not the College of Education Graduate Office*) by March 1, 2009, along with the application fee and any other documents required. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply online by visiting CSUMentor. To apply online, go to <http://www.csumentor.edu/> and select "Apply online." Follow the instructions to create an account and complete the graduate application online. Be sure to select the correct term to apply for (Fall 2009) then click on the box "Select a Campus and Major." Select "Long Beach Campus" then click "Set Campus." The intended major box will appear. Be sure to select "Couns-Marriage Family Ther MS" from the pull down menu. Click submit when the application is completed. Remember to print a copy of the application confirmation number, and print out a copy of the application for your records.

**Transcripts:** The CSU application indicates that "most campuses require 2 sets of transcripts." **You must submit one set of official transcripts for all colleges and universities attended to the Office of Enrollment Services to complete your university application. The second official set of transcripts must be sent to the College of Education Graduate Studies Office with your MFT program application (p. 14 of this packet)**

Enrollment Services will acknowledge receipt of your application and begin the review process after all official transcripts are received. It is strongly recommended that the University application be submitted early in the appropriate application period, since the Enrollment Services evaluation and acceptance may take several weeks.

Please note: The College of Education requires a minimum GPA of 2.85 on the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units versus the University requirement of 2.50. **Please note that this is the MINIMUM requirement, and many qualified applicants apply to the CSULB MFT program each year. Having the minimum GPA requirement does not guarantee an interview or acceptance to the program.**

Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE)/ Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR): All students seeking a graduate degree must pass the Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE). The WPE must be taken during the first semester in residence. For more information on the WPE, you may call the CSULB Testing Office at 562/985-4007. If your undergraduate degree was completed at a CSU, please provide proof of passing the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (names vary by campus) to the Graduate Office during the first semester of enrollment if admitted to the MFT program.

## **2. MFT Program Application**

Submit a separate MFT Program Application (see page 14), with the materials listed below. **Submit materials as ONE COMPLETE packet to the College of Education Graduate Studies Office in ED 1 - 7 [(562) 985-8476].** Please note that all **MFT Program applications must be RECEIVED in the office no later than March 1.**

- a. Three (3) letters of recommendation (see attached, pp. 15-16, make two additional copies): Provide written statements from 3 references. The recommender should preferably be someone in the mental health profession and/or professors or at least a professional who has observed you in a professional capacity interaction with people. Each recommendation is evaluated on the basis of substantive, specific, recommender observations regarding different factors about you in various interactive and/or academic settings. They are also evaluated with regard to the recommender's proximity to the profession from minimally related (a neighbor or friend) to highly related (a mental health professional, professor in a related field, a health/education provider, etc.). The form (letter is optional) should clearly indicate their professional position and be as current as possible. Your recommender should describe the items on the

attached recommendation form.

- b. One set of official transcripts for all colleges and universities attended (CSULB students may submit an unofficial CSULB transcript for CSULB work, but must also provide all other college transcripts).
- c. **Personal Statement:** Provide a 5-6 page, double-spaced, **focused**, narrative about yourself as a prospective professional counselor resulting in a clear and comprehensive profile which indicates: focus and coherency, writing skills, personal and social insight, perspective, and commitment regarding your graduate study in the MFT field. It should describe these areas in relation to the following topics. Use the following topics as subheadings. This is a formal paper so do not write a “chatty,” conversational statement. **Use the following item headings as subheadings in your personal statement.**

**1. Background:** Describe how your experiences with family, friends, education, work, and leisure have contributed to your being a desirable candidate for entrance into the MFT profession.

**2. Experiences:** Describe your educational, work, and volunteer experiences, including those interpersonal relations, interests, and special skills you possess that you believe are necessary to enter and practice in the counseling profession.

**3. Career Perceptions and Goals:** Describe your perceptions and knowledge of the MFT roles and functions. Include the setting, relationships with other disciplines, and activities you expect to be doing in this career area.

**4. Strengths and Areas to Improve:** Describe yourself candidly in terms of your strengths and improvement areas regarding emotional, social, intellectual, and productive activities.

**5. Influential Factors:** What experiences, people, and information have influenced your decision to select the counseling profession?

**6. CSULB decision:** How did you hear about the CSULB MFT program and what made you decide on this particular MFT program?

4. Your completed application and requested materials will be reviewed by Counseling program faculty soon after the admission deadline date to select applicants for a **mandatory screening interview**. **You will be notified by email 3-4 weeks after the March 1 deadline regarding the status of your application. You will either be invited for an interview or receive formal notification that you were not accepted to the program.**

### 3. INTERVIEW

MFT is a highly interactive, personal helping profession and perspective, insight regarding oneself and others, developmental maturity and emotional stability, responsibility, empathy, and commitment are very important assets. In addition, good communication-social-interpersonal skills and conceptual abilities are significant factors in the counseling field. As such, the program believes that it is important to meet with prospective applicants. The evaluation of the interview consists of two integrated aspects.

The **first aspect** is your informational content regarding your educational, social, familial, work or volunteer experiences/background **and your insight and perspective** about these areas; how you became interested in the MFT field (versus social work, teaching, etc.); how you differentiate counseling from other activities (advising, mentoring, community services, etc.); and your future expectations/plans in the field.

The **second aspect**, in relation to this information, will note how you convey this information regarding insight of your experiences, thoughts, feelings, and conduct; examples (where appropriate) of commitment, responsibility, personal and career perspectives; the coherency of your information, and your demeanor. Our field clinicians-interviewers (MFTs, LCSWs, psychologists, clinical supervisors, etc.) are taking the time and effort for the interviews. It does take time and we hope the interview will be worthwhile. Aside from this, there are usually several questions applicants ask and the following are brief responses to many of those questions.

**Admission Qualities:** The MFT program does not have a quota. However, it is the consensus of our faculty, students, graduates, and field supervisors that it is better to be **highly selective** and have fewer candidates who can demonstrate in the interview, as well as the other required applicant materials, the following qualities. Applicants who do well in the interview are able to express their thoughts AND feelings with insight; are seriously committed to learning and being the best possible therapist in the MFT profession that they can be; are willing to sacrifice the time, finances, and effort to enthusiastically accomplish this goal; will strive to take the utmost responsibility for their own depth of learning beyond just getting by; and will take the initiative which will enable them to become highly competent practitioners. They have also talked with practitioners in the field, are specifically acquainted with the roles and functions of an MFT (versus social work, psychologist, etc.), have researched information regarding the MFT field, opportunities and drawbacks in the profession, and in short, are able to express specifics about why one chooses MFT.

5. Applicants who are considered for admission will be notified by email or phone to participate in person for the screening interview conducted on campus within three to four weeks after the application deadline.

6. Final applicant selections and notices will be sent two to three weeks after the interview. Acceptance to the program is subject to meeting all program and University requirements.

\* \* \* \* \*

To avoid possible delays during the University processing of your application, it is highly recommended that you:

- Ensure that your University Application to the Admissions Office is submitted. Keep a copy for your file and note date sent.

- Send your MFT program application (not University Application) AND required materials to the Graduate Studies Office, College of Education (ED 1, Room 7).

- If you want assurance that your program application materials have been received, please enclose a self-addressed postcard. When the Graduate Office staff have reviewed your application materials, they will return the postcard to you.





Empathetic capacity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maturity of judgment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conscientiousness & persistence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capacity to handle stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open-mindedness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment to professional growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear interpersonal boundaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receptivity to criticism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appreciation of diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please comment below or in an accompanying letter on any of these categories or other areas that you think would be helpful in assessing the applicant's qualifications for the program.

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Do you have any information related to the applicant's personal characteristics that should be considered by the Admissions Committee in assessing the student's capacity to succeed in graduate study and professional work?

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**Overall Recommendation**

Recommend most highly     Strongly recommend     Recommend     Recommend with some reservations     Do not recommend

Recommender's Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender's Professional Position \_\_\_\_\_