Master of Science in Family Therapy
Family Therapy Program
Department of Counseling and School Psychology
College of Education and Human Development
University of Massachusetts Boston
Fall 2013

Program Director:
Gonzalo Bacigalupe
gonzalo.bacigalupe@umb.edu
Online Program Coordinator:
Kiran Arora
Kiran.Arora@umb.edu
frequently asked QUESTIONS
BE AWARE

Your responsibility
An internship is a supervised field experience in an organization (e.g., community agency, hospital, outpatient clinic, school clinic) serving families, couples, or human systems from a relational perspective.

All students who intend to graduate from the Family Therapy Program must have this supervised field experience, which is accompanied by a weekly seminar with a UMB Family Therapy Program Faculty member.

To fulfill the requirements of an internship, students must work in a supervised field placement 900-hours spread evenly over one continuous academic year, three semesters: beginning in June and ending on May).
The amount of time a student spends at a supervised field placement is +/- 25 hours a week; often more hours are required in order to obtain all of the necessary clinical hours. Hours will vary over the course of the internship, with fewer hours at the beginning, more than the average as the intern proceeds.

Students and field placement supervisors are informed that students may have to complete more than 900 hours in order to meet the requirement of 300 direct client contact hours.

Included in the 900 hours, a minimum of 300 direct client contact hours are required.
The 14 plus 14 weeks rhythm does not apply to the internship year.

Interns are expected to be available June through May.

Only the seminar meets during the academic year.

Each agency has their own expectations about daily and weekly schedules and the times in which work is not expected.

What is the priority of the internship sites? Patients. (not students)
WILL I BE ABLE TO OBTAIN LICENSURE IN OTHER STATES?

- LMFT is regulated in every one of the 50 states. You cannot practice or call yourself a marriage and family therapist if you don’t have licensure.

- Check with licensing boards of the states you want licensing from about the necessary number of hours. Some states require 500 hours. You will need to negotiate obtaining the needed number of hours with your site. Our program ensures completion of pre-degree requirement in Massachusetts.

- Other states may require additional courses.

- Portability regulations are evolving, states slowly moving towards LMFT 5 Years of Experience portability.
In order to begin the internship, you must have completed a minimum of 18 credits AND the following courses:

- COU 608,
- COU 616,
- COU 621,
- COU 622,
- COU 620 and/or 617,
- and a course of your choice from the family therapy curriculum.

In addition, COU 625 must be taken prior to or concurrently with the start of the internship (Summer or Fall).

Your advisor must give approval before you apply for an internship placement.

By the time you apply, you must have completed 18 credits (no exceptions)
CAN I APPLY TO THE INTERNSHIP ON MY OWN WITHOUT CONSULTING WITH MY ADVISOR?

NO

- Your advisor, the Family Therapy Program Director, and the core program faculty will evaluate if you are ready to apply for an internship.
- No students should apply for an internship without written approval from the advisor and the program director.
- Students will attend an internship orientation in the middle of the fall semester preceding the application year to gather information and the forms that they need to complete.
- Readiness will be evaluated by faculty based on course performance, clear personal and professional goals, and demonstrated competencies and commitments.
HOW DO I FIND AN INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT SITE?

- The Family Therapy Program assists students in finding an appropriate internship site. Internship sites are located in the Greater Boston Area and other areas.

- On site supervisors are AAMFT Approved Supervisors or the equivalent, and must meet state licensing board regulations.

- A workshop to inform students about internship sites, and the process of applying to a site, is offered each fall for students who plan to begin their internship the following year.

- An updated list of Boston area internship sites is published yearly.

- If you are planning your internship in a different state than Massachusetts, you will need to secure an internship site that fulfills the same requirements.
Often, sites can be found through professional and other connections of both faculty and students.

In addition, AAMFT Approved Supervisor listings provide numerous possibilities to explore.

Sites should be community health agencies and not private practices to ensure a sufficient client base.
WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN INTERN?

- The intern is responsible for regular attendance and provision of professionally sound services to clients.

- The university does not provide professional liability to student interns. **Student interns must obtain professional liability through an insurance company**, most often recommended by professional organizations such as AAMFT. [www.aamft.org/imis15/content/membership/Student_liability_FAQS.aspx](http://www.aamft.org/imis15/content/membership/Student_liability_FAQS.aspx)

- Family therapy students are required to join AAMFT as a student member immediately after they begin their studies. Proof of membership is required to apply for an internship. Joining AAMFT will automatically make you a member of the Massachusetts Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Student members are also eligible for liability insurance through AAMFT. [www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org)
WHAT DOES THE INTERNSHIP SITE HAVE TO OFFER?

- A qualified supervisor (trained in family therapy, appropriately licensed) who works at the agency or acts as a consultant.

- A supervisor able to provide live supervision (videotape some sessions, supervisor in session)

- A safe, ethical, and secure work environment

- Ability to comply with internship requirements (i.e., clinical hours)

- Agency facilitates visits by the university program director and internship faculty
Contact Hours

- Students will complete a minimum of 300 supervised, direct client contact hours. Up to 100 hours of the required 300 may be team practice. All the hours should be completed at an internship site approved by the Program Director.
- At least 200 (of the required 300) direct client contact hours will be with couples or families physically present in the therapy room.
- Students will work with a wide variety of presenting problems.
- The program will publish and adhere to criteria for determining when students are prepared for clinical practice.
- Published promotional materials will inform incoming students that they must complete 300 direct client contact hours.
- Students will have the opportunity to work with clients who are diverse in terms of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. Compliance will be judged in the context of program size and location.
Supervision

• Students will receive at least 100 hours of supervision.
• Students will receive at least one hour of supervision for every five hours of direct clinical contact.
• Individual or dyadic supervision will occur at least once every week in which students have direct client contact hours.
• At least 50 hours of supervision will be based on direct observation, videotape or audiotape.
• Students should be given opportunities to observe their supervisors' clinical work. In this context, "clinical work" includes therapy in progress, clinical evaluation in progress, role-playing and other demonstrations of clinical performance.
• Group supervision is required.
• Students should register and comply with the requirements of the COU 698 Family Therapy Internship Seminar for the internship to be approved.
• Students should start the internship in the summer and complete three consecutive internship semesters. Students who interrupt their internship seminar should start a new internship cycle and approval process prior to rejoining the internship.
AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor in training who is being supervised by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor.

For Massachusetts licensure, the supervisor could also be a licensed marriage and family therapist, rehabilitation counselor, educational psychologist, mental health counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, all of whom holds a masters degree in either social work, marriage and family therapy, rehabilitation counseling, educational psychology, counseling or an equivalent field, or holds a doctorate degree in psychology, or a medical degree with a sub-specialization in psychiatry, and who:

- has had primary supervisory responsibility for two practitioners providing marriage and family therapy for a period of two years or the equivalent; or
- holds either a teaching or supervisory position in a recognized educational institution, institute or agency which trains marriage and family therapists, provides clinical services to individuals, couples and families on a regular basis, or offers graduate degrees in marriage and family therapy or a related field.

Licensure as an MFT in the state they are practicing
WHAT DO I SUBMIT TO MY ADVISOR?

- A Narrative Statement (See next slide)
- UMASS Boston Unofficial Transcript
- Courses to complete in the 2014 to 2015 period
- Resume (to submit to potential site)
- Sample letter to internship site
- A statement acknowledging knowledge of the licensing requirements in Massachusetts and of the states you intend to obtain a license. How are these licensing requirements aligned with the UMASS Boston requirements?
WHAT IS THE NARRATIVE STATEMENT?

- A written narrative statement outlining internship readiness, be transparent.
  - How are you academically prepared?
  - How will you organize your life, work/financial, and study commitments during the internship?
  - What issues will you need to resolve for a successful completion of your internship?
  - What internship site may fit with your qualifications and learning needs?
Submit all your materials in one digital file (label it accurately) and also submit a printed document.

Make it easy for your advisor and GPD to review.

Do it as soon as possible! Don’t wait until after Thanksgiving. Don’t submit after classes are over. We may not be available during the Winter break.

We will take up to two weeks to make a decision. Urgency is in the eye of the beholder.

We may recommend not to apply for internship.
ONCE YOU ARE APPROVED TO APPLY

- Send approved application materials to selected sites:
  - Letter of application to site
  - Resume
- Wait for an invitation for an interview
- Follow up with a call within 1 – 1.5 weeks.
- If you have not had a response, **do not hound the site.**
  - Document site-finding process
Professional (and comfortable) attire

On time

Individual and/or group interview

You are competing with potential interns from other disciplines

Highlight what skills you can offer as well as what they can offer you

Articulate your interests (population, therapeutic frameworks, etc.) and your openness to learning

Explore the fit of you with the agency
PROTOCOL: YOU ARE US

- If you are sure a site is your first choice, let them know ASAP.

- If they offer you an internship position and you are sure that you want this site, do accept. You should cancel any other interviews you have.

- If you are not sure, let them know you have other interviews and will need some time to make a decision.

- Under no circumstances should you ever accept a site, continue interviewing, and then change your mind about the acceptance. This is a violation of our standards and may mean a reversal of our decision to support you in the internship search.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER YOU SECURE AN INTERNSHIP?

- Congratulations!
  - Let your advisor know!
  - Student, Seminar Instructor, Program Director, Agency Director and Site Supervisor Sign Initial Contract
  - Register for University COU 698 Seminar
  - Reorganize your life
THE INTERNSHIP YEAR

- Fulfill internship site hours and supervision
- Internship Seminar
- Prepare Capstone Portfolio

  - a collection of papers representative of your work in the program (save syllabi, papers and comments from instructors)

  - a narrative about your learning process integrating personal, professional and academic development, and a narrative of future plans and development. **Great emphasis is placed on self-of-the-therapist development, including examination of family of origin issues.**

  - a case analysis with video, transcript and your written analysis of the session, attending to the session, the case as a whole, and the larger socio cultural context, integrating theoretical/methodological, self-of-the-therapist, and isomorphic (parallel processing) analysis.
WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM
Educational Goals

- Family therapy theoretical and methodological frameworks
- Social justice in practice
- Self-reflective process to integrate personal, academic and professional development (isomorphism/parallel process)
Capstone components will be explained in detail during the Internship Seminar.

A draft of the narrative portion of the Capstone is required at the end of the 2nd semester of University Seminar.

The Completed Capstone is due on or around April 1st of the final semester.
INTERNERSHIP IS OFTEN STRESSFUL

- Don’t plan large life transitions during this period.

- Plan ahead financially. Make use of all your resources (loans, childcare, etc.). A flexible part-time job might work at the same time, but not an inflexible full-time job.

- Plan stress reduction activities and build them into your schedule.

- Be ready to be vulnerable, to engage in self-examination, to challenge yourself and be challenged by others, to try on new ways of interacting even if you might not agree with them.
There are no guarantees about many things:
- that clients will show up,
- that supervisors won’t leave or be fired from their jobs,
- that agencies won’t have significant financial difficulties
- that you find you and your supervisor have irreconcilable differences, etc.,
- that some life event will disrupt your plans

If something like this happens during your internship, as happens in most peoples’ lives, you will need to cope, to ride with the punches, and to persevere, hopefully with some grace.

This is a time when you also have to surrender a degree of control and power to the site supervisor. You have to be available, open, and humble.
If you are unable to meet the needed clinical hours at your site:
- You may need to continue at the same site long enough to obtain the needed hours (must be negotiated with the site), or you may need to secure a secondary site (with appropriate supervision).

If you extend your clinical hours over a second summer:
- You will have to pay a 1 credit fee for an independent study which will be used to pay for the university-based supervision.

If you lose your site or supervisor (through no fault of your own):
- You may need to find a new site and/or a new supervisor.
- If you continue at a site that no longer has an appropriate supervisor, you will be responsible for the cost of paying for private supervision by an approved supervisor.

If you must drop out of the internship:
- You will have to reapply (acceptance is not guaranteed) for the following year and start over.
You all have the capabilities to be successful in this endeavor or we would not have admitted you to the program.

You will discover things about yourself you did not know that hopefully will make you a better therapist.

This process begins a lifelong process of self-development that will be continued in your post-graduate experience. Most states require 2 years of supervised clinical experience prior to licensure. Continuing Education requirements for renewal of licensure continue the process of self-development.

We hope that your relationship to Umass Boston will continue beyond graduation as alumni who can offer guidance to those who come after you, and as future approved supervisors in training.
I have read and understand the information presented in this document regarding the internship in family therapy at the Family Therapy Program, Department of Counseling and School Psychology, College of Education and Human Development, University of Massachusetts Boston.

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Name               Signature          Date

Please submit hard copy of this page with signature to Family Therapy Director or the Online Program Coordinator, Department of Counseling and School Psychology, College of Education and Human Development, University of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA 02125
 CONTACT INFORMATION

- Gonzalo Bacigalupe  
  Graduate Program Director  
gonzalo.bacigalupe@umb.edu

- Kiran Arora,  
  Online Program Coordinator  
kiran.arora@umb.edu