

**A Guide for Marriage and Family Therapy Post Master's Certificate Students Department of  
Human Development**

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## WELCOME LETTER

Dear Student:

Welcome to the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Virginia Tech's Northern Virginia Center. You are entering what we believe is an exciting and challenging program.

The purpose of the Student Guide is to inform you of the policies and procedures of the master's degree program and to guide you through the many details involved in going through the program. We hope that you will not feel overwhelmed by this information, but will become familiar with the policies and procedures involved. We have included an overview of the post-master's certificate program, which we hope will assist you in viewing the program from a larger perspective.

Please feel free to ask any questions you may have concerning these procedures. Faculty and staff will be happy to assist you in any way that we can. It is our goal to support and assist you as you pursue your master's degree in marriage and family therapy.

Sincerely,

Ashley Landers, Ph.D.  
Program Director  
Assistant Professor

Jeff Jackson, Ph.D.  
Clinical Director  
Assistant Professor

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

### **VT Marriage and Family Therapy Program Mission Statement**

*The mission of the Virginia Tech Marriage and Family Therapy Program is to provide the training necessary for our graduates to become competent, research-informed clinicians, able to work systemically in varied settings with individuals, couples and families from diverse populations, and to become active contributing members to the MFT field.*

## **AFFIRMATION OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIVERSITY**

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Virginia Tech in Falls Church is committed to respect for human diversity. This is not just a statement but is a foundational belief at the core of our program. We believe that all individuals are entitled to compassion, respect, understanding and equal treatment. Family therapists must learn to understand and support individuals whose age, race, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and physical ability or other characteristics may be different from their own. This goal cannot be achieved solely through reading textbooks and class work. Befitting our location in a widely diverse and multicultural metropolitan area, and as part of a public university, we expect students to be open to encountering and working respectfully with clients, fellow students, staff, and faculty whose backgrounds, beliefs and life choices may not mirror their own. As a program, we expect that all of us will support each other as we encounter others who challenge us and that we will each work to create a safe environment in which different views can be shared and discussed.

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program in Falls Church affirms and upholds Virginia Tech's policies and philosophy concerning equal opportunity and affirmative action. As per the university's [statement](#), Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, relationship status, health status or veteran status, or otherwise discriminate against employees or applicants who inquire about, discuss, or disclose their compensation or the compensation of other employees or applicants, or on any other basis protected by law.

## INTRODUCTION

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Virginia Tech's Northern Virginia Center consists of the Master of Science Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and the Post Master's Certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy. The Center for Family Services is the program's clinical training facility and provides family therapy for the Northern Virginia area. The program is a component of the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences: College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences located at the main Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg, VA.

This guide outlines the program and describes the related policies and procedures of the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences. It is available to all students in the program and is updated periodically. Changes will be distributed and you should keep this guide up to date.

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THIS INFORMATION, SO YOU CAN FOLLOW DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES IN PROPER SEQUENCE WITHIN THE REQUIRED TIME LIMITS.**

For information not contained in this Guide, contact your advisor or Patricia Meneely, MFT Program Coordinator, Department of Human Development, Northern Virginia Center, Virginia Tech, Room 202F, 7054 Haycock Road, Falls Church, VA 22043-2311. Telephone: (703) 538-8460. Email: [pmeneely@vt.edu](mailto:pmeneely@vt.edu). Web address: [www.mft.nvc.vt.edu](http://www.mft.nvc.vt.edu).

## **OVERVIEW OF THE POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY**

Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) is a discipline for people who are interested in providing mental health services to individuals and families from a systems or relational perspective. This program prepares students to be family therapists who are well grounded in systems theory and research methods and who are competent to diagnose and treat mental illness. Students have the opportunity to receive intensive supervision of their clinical work with a broad range of individuals, couples and families at the Department's Center for Family Services. The post-master's certificate program is designed for students who already have a clinical master's degree. Students have the opportunity to take courses to prepare them for clinical membership in AAMFT and for professional licensure. While the program consists of a structured group of courses, each student will determine his or her own needs in order to supplement previous master's degree programs or to receive AAMFT Clinical Membership or licensure. This program is not accredited by the COAMFTE as is the master's degree program because we want to allow students flexibility in coursework. It is your responsibility to contact appropriate parties regarding licensure. For more information on AAMFT Clinical Membership contact the Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and for information on LPC and LMFT contact the state licensing board. For additional information, please see our website at [www.mft.nvc.vt.edu](http://www.mft.nvc.vt.edu)

### **Coursework**

The program consists of advanced courses in marriage and family therapy and a supervised clinical practicum. A total of 21-24 post-master's credits must be earned for completion of the program. The program may be pursued on a part-time or full-time basis.

There are 5-7 academic courses (15-21 hours) required for the post-master's certificate program.

The required academic courses are:

HD 5404 Systems Theory and Family Therapy

HD 5434 Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy I (Structural and Strategic Approaches) HD 5474 Professional Seminar in Marriage and Family Therapy (Ethics)

(this course may be waived if the student has taken a course in professional ethics in previous graduate work)

HD 5734 Marriage and Family Therapy Techniques

(this course may be waived if the student has had significant clinical experience) Choose three of the following courses depending on areas of interest:

HD 5724 Couples Therapy

HD 5344 Perspectives on Human Sexuality HD 5414 Life-Span Human Development

HD 5444 Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy II (Constructivist Approaches) HD 5454 Clinical MFT III (Diagnosis and Treatment in the Family Context)

HD 5477 Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy IV (Special Topics in MFT)

Additional department courses may also be available.

Clinical and theoretical courses cover a range of approaches to systems therapy including structural, strategic, constructivist, brief and solution focused, intergenerational, emotion focused, and cognitive-behavioral. We include explicit examination of gender and ethnicity issues in our teaching, and encourage students to explore clinical ideas that go beyond areas of our own expertise.

We also draw heavily on the skill and knowledge of our colleagues in the surrounding community. Adjunct faculty include clinical psychologists, social workers, licensed professional counselors, psychiatric nurses and other MFTs who specialize in the practice of marriage and family therapy in the Northern Virginia area. In addition, students have the opportunity to gain supplemental training at a variety of agencies in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

### **Clinical Training**

After successful completion of several academic courses, students are eligible to apply for the clinical program. Once accepted into the clinical program (See "Screening Process" in Section 6), post-master's certificate students are required to complete 6 credit hours (1 calendar year) of practicum. The certificate is awarded upon satisfactory completion of the clinical experience and required courses

Students receive all of their clinical training at the on-site clinic, The Center for Family Services at Virginia Tech (CFS). All students must see clients for a minimum of one clinic slot per week for one year at CFS. Student therapists at CFS work with a variety of clients from the surrounding area. These clients come from a broad spectrum of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds and have a wide array of presenting problems including divorce and marital conflict, domestic violence, child custody disputes, chronic illness, school problems, child behavior problems, drug and alcohol abuse, and court ordered therapy. Interns may use a variety of theoretical orientations to these cases,

including structural, strategic, competency-based, constructivist, and solution-oriented approaches.

### **Supervision**

The Clinical Director of the Center for Family Services (CFS) is Dr. Jeffrey Jackson. Dr. Jackson oversees the operation of the clinic and all supervision provided there. Students will also have the opportunity to receive supervision of their clinical work from several adjunct supervisors.

The Center for Family Services is equipped with one-way mirrors and video equipment so that supervisors can provide live supervision to therapist interns as they work with families. Supervision is provided by COAMFTE approved supervisors or supervisors in training. Supervision is conducted in small group format, live, video, and through case notes. Additional supervision can be requested if a student feels s/he needs additional guidance. All therapist interns receive at least one, and frequently more, hour of supervision for every five hours of client contact.

### **Research**

Students and faculty engage in a wide range of clinical and theoretical research projects, from traditional quantitative studies to qualitative and cross-disciplinary research. Faculty and students have collaborated on presentations and papers, and some students have pursued their own topics of interest with the active guidance and support of department and adjunct faculty.

Program students and faculty have had numerous sole and first author publications in flagship journals within the fields of family therapy, human development, and family science. Further, program students have frequently presented their research at national conferences of AAMFT and the National Council on Family Relations, in addition to other statewide organizations.

### **Careers of Program Graduates**

Most of our post-master's certificate students come into the program already employed in the mental health field. They frequently use the program to enhance their credentials and upgrade their positions at their current work setting or to enable them to enter private practice. Most of our graduates have found rewarding careers in a variety of family related settings, including community mental health services, private agencies, non-profits, psychiatric hospitals, and private practices. Several have pursued doctoral study in Marriage and Family Therapy or related areas.

Most program graduates go on to pursue Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in the state of Virginia. Students interested in being licensed in states other than VA are responsible for looking at the academic and clinical requirements for licensure in those states at AAMFT [MFT Licensing Boards](#). Many students also pursue Licensure as a Professional Counselor (LPC).

## FACULTY AND STAFF

### Program Faculty



**Dr. Ashley Landers** is the Program Director and an Assistant Professor in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at the Northern Virginia Center. She completed her master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at St. Cloud State University and her doctoral degree in Family Science with a specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy at the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Landers is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in Minnesota and an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Approved Supervisor. She has extensive experience providing individual, group, and family therapy to children, adolescents, and adults.

As a systems thinker, Dr. Landers believes in the importance and role of the family in mental health. Her specialized training areas include serious and persistent mental illnesses, sexual abuse, trauma treatment, and reunification.

Dr. Landers program of research focuses on families in child welfare, more specifically marginalized underserved minority families such as First Nations/American Indian families involved with the child welfare system. Most of her research has been at the intersection of secondary data analyses and community-based participatory research (CBPR) methods. Dr. Landers works collaboratively with community partners at the First Nations Repatriation Institute (FNRI) in Minnesota. Her research examines child welfare-related outcomes (e.g., reunification, adoption, placement instability) and mental health outcomes (e.g., internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, mental health service use) of children involved in the child welfare system.

**Research interests:** Families in child welfare, First Nation/American Indian families involved with child welfare, interventions for child welfare involved families

Dr. Landers is in room 202C and can be reached at 703-539-3796 or by email at [land0552@vt.edu](mailto:land0552@vt.edu)



**Dr. Jeff Jackson** is the Clinical Director of the Center for Family Services and an Assistant Professor in the Virginia Tech Department of Human Development and Family Science at the Northern Virginia Center in Falls Church. He joined the Virginia Tech faculty in the Fall of 2015. From 2010 until 2015, Dr. Jackson was faculty in the California School of Professional Psychology Couple and Family Therapy Program at Alliant International University, Irvine. He periodically directs a study abroad program to Italy that focuses on clinical training and self-of-the-therapist work.

Dr. Jackson is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in Virginia, California, and Utah, and an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Approved Supervisor. He has experience working with individuals, couples, families, and groups from all life stages and backgrounds in a wide range of areas. He has also worked in a variety of clinical settings. His clinical specializations include marital distress, premarital counseling, adolescents and parent-child relationships, reactive attachment, abuse, ambiguous loss, disability, eating disorders, and depression. Dr. Jackson frequently presents on therapy approaches for couples and families, couple relationship enrichment, eating disorder treatment, clinical therapy approaches, ambiguous loss, and families of children with developmental disabilities.

Dr. Jackson's primary program of research centers on improving couple relationship quality and partner wellbeing through predicting relationship factors such as conflict, satisfaction, and stability. He examines predictors of couple relationship quality through both original quantitative and qualitative research, as well as systematic reviews of existing research (predominantly meta-analysis), with an increasing focus on intervention research. As a researcher-practitioner with a translational and applied clinical focus, Dr. Jackson's research provides clinical implications of findings to help therapists help couples improve their relationships. He also researches empirically supported relational treatments for specific diagnoses, brief strategic therapy clinical outcomes, and couples who have children with developmental disabilities.

Add this to the very end: Dr. Jackson and Mallory, his wife who is also an LMFT, are the parents of three little girls.

**Research Interests:** couple relationship quality and stability, clinical outcome research, brief strategic therapy, eating disorders, disability, meta-analysis.

Dr. Jackson is in Room 202G and can be reached at 703 538-3787 or by email at [jjax@vt.edu](mailto:jjax@vt.edu)



**Ms. Erica R. Turner, MS** is the Associate Clinical Director in the Virginia Tech Marriage and Family Therapy Program in Falls Church, VA. She is an alumna of the program, having completed her master's degree in August 2013.

Ms. Turner is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a Clinical Fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and an AAMFT Supervisor Candidate. She supervises therapist interns in the Center for Family Services, the program's onsite clinic, and also provides supervision for interns in offsite placements.

Her clinical interests include working with couples who want to improve their connection and communication; adults who want to heal from highly difficult or abusive relationships; and providing tools to children and adults to manage anxiety. Ms. Turner is the owner of Rosewater Therapy, a private psychotherapy practice in Northern Virginia. She is passionate about advancing the mental health field and increasing public engagement in mental health and relationship topics. To that end, she is the co-founder of *Therapy is Not a Dirty Word*, an events and advocacy program that works to bridge the gap between therapists and the public.

Ms. Turner lives in Washington, DC with her husband, their two cats and dog.

Erica Turner is in Room 2021 and can be reached by email at [erturner@vt.edu](mailto:erturner@vt.edu).



**Dr. Jasmine Ferrill** is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Virginia Tech Marriage and Family Therapy Masters Program at the Northern Virginia Center. She completed her master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Northwestern University and doctoral degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Florida State University.

Dr. Ferrill is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in Illinois and Georgia and an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapist (AAMFT) Supervisor. She has over 8 years of clinical experience working with couples, individuals, and families in traditional outpatient and community settings throughout Chicago, Washington DC, Tallahassee, and Middle Georgia. Serving a diverse population of clients throughout her training and professional experience has deepened Dr. Ferrill's sensitivity to the unique challenges underserved populations face and the resiliency with which they strive to overcome them. As a result, her approaches to therapy and supervision are driven by systemic perspectives that are inherently culturally responsive and strength based.

Dr. Ferrill's program of research is congruent with the socioculturally attuned lens that informs her clinical practice and supervision philosophies. Her research focuses on informing best practices with racial minority populations within the field of marriage and family therapy in the areas of research methods, clinical work, and clinical supervision. More specifically, Dr. Ferrill's primary areas of research include relational consequences of race-based stress, best clinical practices with African American couples, and cross-cultural supervision.

**Research Interests:** Racial Stressors / Trauma, Cultural Coping Resources, Couple Functioning, Cross-Cultural Supervision.

Dr. Ferrill is in Room 202G and can be reached by email at [jferrill@vt.edu](mailto:jferrill@vt.edu)

## ADJUNCT FACULTY

**Esther Boykin**, LMFT, is a graduate of Virginia Tech and she specializes in Marriage and Family Therapy. She has been working as a private practitioner in Northern Virginia for almost a decade. She has presented and published on a variety of topics including teen marriage, child abuse, and domestic violence. She has led multi-couple groups as well as conducted pre-marital workshops for military couples at Fort Belvoir. Her areas of interest are couple dynamics, pre-marital counseling, relationship maintenance, and helping people manage anxiety and trauma reactions. Her work is rooted in the belief that good mental health begins with compassion. Her therapy approach incorporates a variety of theoretical perspectives in an effort to fully understand each person's unique struggles. She will be teaching HD 5744 Special Topic in MFT: The Business of Therapy.

**Edward L. Hendrickson**, MS, LMFT, LSATP, Adjunct Professor. Ed graduated from Virginia Tech's Marriage and Family Therapy Program. He and has provided treatment, supervision, training and consultation in the area of substance abuse, mental health and family treatment since 1971. He worked in the public sector until 2004 and in private practice since. His publications include numerous articles, reports, and two books concerning substance abuse, mental health and family treatment. He supervised at Tech's Family Therapy Clinic since 1998 and has taught classes on group treatment and working with families who have members with mental health disorders. Mr. Hendrickson teaches HD 5744 Family Therapy Perspectives on Group Counseling.

**Neil McNerney**, LPC, M.Ed., Adjunct Professor. Neil graduated from James Madison University with a Master's Degree in School Counseling and Virginia Tech's Post-Master's Marriage and Family Therapy program. He has been in private practice since 1994 and works primarily with families and couples with a special emphasis on parenting issues. He has served as clinical supervisor at Virginia Tech and has guest lectured at various universities. Neil's work with parenting issues has led him to become the Director of Leadership Development for The ScreamFree Institute, where he conducts training on Bowen-based parenting nationally and internationally. His clinical interests include family differentiation issues and emotional regulation in systems work. Neil has developed a graduate course for our department: Psychotherapy with Children and Adolescents in a Systems Context. Mr. McNerney teaches HD 5744 Psychotherapy with Children & Adolescents.

**Sheri Mitschelen**, MSW, LCSW, RPT-S. Sheri attended Ohio University from 1983-1987 and earned her degree in Psychology. She then attended the University of Pittsburgh from 1987-1989 and earned her master's degree in Social Work with a Health and Mental Health Specialty. She earned her license in Clinical Social Work in Virginia in 1992 and also become a Registered Play Therapy Supervisor (RPT-S) in 2000. Sheri also attended the Alexandria Family Therapy Training Program for 2 years as well as the Adoption Competency Program for 2 years. For a year, she participated in the Early Childhood Mental Health Program at the Washington School of Psychiatry. She has two years of Play Therapy training and supervision and provides supervision, training, and consultation for Play Therapy. At our campus, she teaches a Play Therapy Course. She is actively involved in the Virginia Play Therapy Association where she also

serves as the President Elect. Sheri currently works in her own private practice Crossroads Family Counseling Center, LLC. She has worked in the past at inpatient psychiatric hospitals, Day Treatment Programs and a Special Education School. Sheri has interests and advanced training in attachment issues.

**John Millikin**, Ph.D., LMFT, Adjunct Professor. John graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill, Appalachian State's Marriage and Family Therapy program and Virginia Tech's doctoral Marriage and Family Therapy program. He completed his internship with Susan Johnson in Canada, where he conducted research on Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) and couple relationships. Dr. Millikin co-authored publications on basic principles in family therapy, as well as attachment injuries and therapy interventions in EFT. He served as guest lecturer and clinical supervisor at two universities in Iran. He has enjoyed teaching Systems Theory for non-majors, Family Stress and Crisis Intervention, and Human Lifespan Development, and has recently begun to serve on VAMFT. His clinical interests include adult and child bonding processes, anger management, and cross-cultural comparisons on therapy practice. Dr. Millikin is in private practice in Reston, Virginia.

**Carl Mojta**, MS, LMFT, CAC I, CST, Carl graduated from Virginia Tech's Marriage & Family Therapy Program in 2011. Before transitioning into the mental health field, he spent the past two decades working and traveling in the United States as well as in Europe, Africa and Asia. As a result of his education and training, he has worked for a variety of organizations such as the U.S. Army (active duty), The Washington Times, The World Bank, Central Texas College and the U.S. Federal Government. Since 2013, he has been working full-time as a family therapist at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, DC Vet Center. He also has a part-time private practice in downtown DC where he provides individual and couples therapy. Carl is a Clinical Fellow of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). He is also a certified sex therapist and professional member of the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists (AASECT) as well as a full member of the Society for Sex Therapy and Research (SSTAR). His clinical areas of interest are: sexual health, military mental health care, substance abuse addiction, couple relationships and self-of-the-therapist. He also has specialized training in Internal Family Systems (IFS), an advanced mindfulness based approach to improve emotional intelligence and is a graduate of the University of Michigan's School of Social Work's post graduate Sexual Health Certificate Program/Sex Therapy Track.

**Marjorie Nightingale**, JD, MFT, graduated from LaSalle University with a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. She also holds a post Masters certificate in Sex Therapy. She completed advanced training in Emotionally Focused Therapy for Couples at NYCEFT, and is currently completing a doctoral research fellowship at Drexel University where she adapted Emotionally Focused Therapy for an African American couple population. Marjorie's clinical and research interests focus on increasing the effectiveness of systemic and attachment based interventions with couples of Color. She works in a private practice in Washington, D.C. where she sees primarily couples and sex therapy clients. Before transitioning into the mental health field, Marjorie spent 17 years as a child welfare and family law attorney in Baltimore. She enjoys being on the healing side of relational and couple distress.

Additional Professional Adjunct Faculty from the metropolitan area also teach HD courses.

## **Center for Family Services**

Student therapist interns are supervised by program faculty and AAMFT approved supervisors.

### **CLINICAL SUPERVISORS**

#### **Claire Dutrow, LMFT**

Claire Dutrow first studied at Virginia Tech in 1986. After earning her masters in Marriage and Family Therapy, she worked as a family therapist at a residential treatment center for substance abuse treatment. While there, she focused on clients in crises as well as those diagnosed as severely mentally ill, specifically Central American immigrants. In 1989, Claire first starting working as a family therapist at Second Genesis, where she remained for 5 years. In 1998, she started practicing at Prince William County Community Services, where she is still employed today. She has also worked as a couples and individual therapist at The Women's Center from 2009-2015. She is currently seeing clients as a therapist at Vienna Behavioral Health and also supervises at the Center for Family Services at Virginia Tech. Claire was born and raised on a cattle ranch in New Mexico. She has been married for 32 years and has a son, daughter, and two cats.

Claire can be reached by e mail at [rwdmcd84@msn.com](mailto:rwdmcd84@msn.com)

#### **Olya Walker, LMFT**

Olya is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist who practices in Falls Church, VA working with adults, couples and teens. Olya's first degree is in Law from Duke University. She earned her Master's degree in Marriage & Family Therapy from Virginia Tech. She has an advanced training in an evidence-based trauma treatment modality - Internal Family Systems model. Using this model, Olya helps adults, teens and couples access their innate capacity for healing. Before moving into private practice, she has worked in Fairfax and Loudoun Counties helping adults, teens and their families struggling with trauma. Having grown up with physicians' parents, both in the field of oncology, she has a special interest in helping the helper. She has done presentations for doctors and mental health professionals on Compassion Fatigue and Burnout.

Olya can be reached by email at [OlyaMFT@gmail.com](mailto:OlyaMFT@gmail.com)

#### **Annette Kielkopf , LMFT**

Annette Kielkopf, LPC, LMFT is currently an adjunct supervisor-in-training at the Virginia Tech, Center for Family Services, Northern Virginia campus. She received a bachelor's degree in elementary and special education from Capital University, completed a masters degree in clinical counseling from Boston University and a post-masters certificate in marriage and family therapy from Virginia Tech. She has a keen interest in the developing child, parent-child relationships, couples conflict, trauma and loss. Annette owns a marriage and family therapy

business dedicated to guiding clients to live satisfying and connected lives. With true insight into child development and family dynamics, she uses solution-focused, cognitive-behavioral, mindfulness meditation, image work, play therapy and other expressive techniques to provide high-quality therapeutic services. She enjoys working with couples and individuals to help them resolve conflict, communication issues and decision-making while addressing anxiety, depression, trauma and loss. Annette has lived, worked, and studied internationally, gaining a depth of experience that enhances her work today. She has worked in university settings, special education classrooms, hospitals and day treatment programs, giving her a rich understanding of people: what makes them click and the broad spectrum of mental health. She is grateful for her diverse and unique educational opportunities, fully devoting her professional time to marriage and family therapy.

Annette can be reached by email at [annettekielkopf@me.com](mailto:annettekielkopf@me.com)

### **Erica Turner, LMFT**

Ms. Turner is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a Clinical Fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and an AAMFT Supervisor Candidate. She supervises therapist interns in the Center for Family Services, the program's onsite clinic, and also provides supervision for interns in offsite placements. Her clinical interests include working with couples who want to improve their connection and communication; adults who want to heal from highly difficult or abusive relationships; and providing tools to children and adults to manage anxiety. Ms. Turner is the owner of Rosewater Therapy, a private psychotherapy practice in Northern Virginia. She is passionate about advancing the mental health field and increasing public engagement in mental health and relationship topics. To that end, she is the co-founder of *Therapy is Not a Dirty Word*, an events and advocacy program that works to bridge the gap between therapists and the public.

Erica can be reached by email at [erturner@vt.edu](mailto:erturner@vt.edu)

### **Jasmine Ferrill, PhD, LMFT**

Dr. Jasmine Ferrill is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Virginia Tech Marriage and Family Therapy Masters Program at the Northern Virginia Center. She received her master's degree from Northwestern University and doctorate degree from Florida State University both in Marriage and Family Therapy. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapist (AAMFT) Supervisor. Dr. Ferrill has served couples, families, and individuals from diverse backgrounds in both outpatient and community settings. She has also presented and published on a variety of topics including relational and mental health consequences of racial stressors, trans-racial adoption, parenting behaviors, cultural coping resources, and best practices in cross-cultural supervision.

Dr. Ferrill can be reached by email at [jferrill@vt.edu](mailto:jferrill@vt.edu)

**STAFF**

**Patricia Meneely**, is the Coordinator of the Marriage and Family Therapy program. Pat is available in Room 202F and may be reached at (703) 538-8460 or by e-mail at [pmeneely@vt.edu](mailto:pmeneely@vt.edu). The Graduate Assistant Office is located in Room 203

## **VIRGINIA TECH FACILITIES**

Resource Service Center/NVC Library - The Resource Service Center (RSC) is located on the first floor and is responsible for questions regarding library services. The Service Center contains a variety of books. The Resource Service Center is backed by the extensive collection of the Newman Library on campus, which can be accessed via computer through the Virginia Tech Library Catalog, Addison. Items can be requested from Newman Library or through interlibrary loan by faculty and students by using the ILLiad request form. Database literature services are available on-line. The Resource Service Center can help you set up at home database services. Study rooms and a photocopier machine are also available in the Center. The Resource Service Center hours are available on the web at [www.mft.nvc.vt.edu/library](http://www.mft.nvc.vt.edu/library), and are posted on the front door of the RSC, or by calling (703) 538-8340.

Computer Facilities – Computer workstations and other office equipment are available in the Resource Service Center when the library is open. Rooms may also be reserved for study groups or other activities with the Resource Service Center front desk attendant.

IT Team – The Northern Virginia Center has a full time IT team which is available for technical assistance. They are available by telephone at (703)-538-8394 or at [computerhelp@vt.edu](mailto:computerhelp@vt.edu).

Graduate Student Services – The GSSO is in Room 407, 409, and 411. All registration for Virginia Tech classes is done on the web through the Hokie Spa student system. However, student support personnel are available to assist you with first time registration, if needed, and with any registration problems that you might have. The Student Support Office may be reached at (703) 538-8326 or 538-8322.

Bookstore – The Northern Virginia Bookstore is now online. Textbooks can be purchased at <https://www.bkstr.com/virginiatechstore> or through other online platforms.

Hokie Spa – Your Hokie Spa account allows you to view your academic records, change your address, print an unofficial transcript, view financial and academic holds, and most importantly, register and pay for courses on-line. You should look on your Hokie Spa account before contacting the University. It can answer many of the academic and financial questions that you might have. This interactive website includes the Timetable of Classes and allows you to submit your course request, drop and add courses, view your exam schedule, and see your grades. It is also the web interface with the university's information network. It allows you to view and update your personal information and access your Student Accounts information. You must activate your Virginia Tech PID before you can access this site. You are responsible for providing address updates through Hokie Spa, a billing address (if different than your mailing address), change of name or identification number, etc.

## Your Virginia Tech PID (Personal Identifier)

Once you have received your official acceptance from the graduate school, you will need to create your Personal Identifier or PID. You will use your PID and password to access your VT email account (your e-mail will be in the form of: [yourPID@vt.edu](mailto:yourPID@vt.edu)), Hokie Spa, My VT, the university's library databases, and more. Please visit the VT Computing ([www.4help.vt.edu](http://www.4help.vt.edu)) website for more information on creating your PID and password and to learn more about the online services to which your PID will grant you access.

## Additional Useful Website Addresses

[www.nvc.vt.edu](http://www.nvc.vt.edu) - Northern Virginia Center website. Through this site, you may access registration, tuition information, academic schedules, research information and other useful information for the Northern Virginia Center. You will access this site to register through Hokie Spa and to print out any needed forms. You may also access the Graduate School web site and the Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual through this web site.

[www.ncr.vt.edu](http://www.ncr.vt.edu) – National Capital Region website.

[www.mft.nvc.vt.edu](http://www.mft.nvc.vt.edu) - Our Marriage & Family Therapy program website.

[www.4help.vt.edu](http://www.4help.vt.edu) - this site is useful for accessing information regarding your p.i.d. If you forget your password, call 540-234-HELP for assistance. The department cannot help you with finding out your password.

[www.registrar.vt.edu](http://www.registrar.vt.edu) - this site contains student information, academic calendars, and instructions on how to request transcripts, change your address, and other helpful information.

[www.finaid.vt.edu](http://www.finaid.vt.edu) - this web site provides information and forms regarding financial aid.

[www.bursar.vt.edu](http://www.bursar.vt.edu) - this site should be used for questions or problems regarding billing information. You may also call the Bursar's Office at 540-231-6277 for assistance with billing questions. The department is unable to assist students' with individual billing problems.

[www.dhp.state.va.us/counseling](http://www.dhp.state.va.us/counseling) - Virginia Board of Counseling Website. This site provides current requirements for licensure in Virginia as an MFT or LPC.

[www.vamft.org](http://www.vamft.org) – Virginia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy is an excellent recourse for information regarding licensure in the state of Virginia.

[www.lib.vt.edu/spaces/writing-center](http://www.lib.vt.edu/spaces/writing-center) - The Virginia Tech Writing Center is located in the Newman Library on campus. One-on-one writing assistance is available to Northern Virginia graduate students. To set up an appointment, call (540) 231-5436 or follow instructions on the webpage.

## SCREENING PROCESS

PHILOSOPHY: The Marriage and Family Therapy program faculty at Virginia Tech take responsibility to insure the quality and competence of graduates to practice as Marriage and Family Therapists. We take pride in our graduates and make every effort to insure that they are well prepared to enter the profession. While we recognize the subjective nature of the ongoing screening process, we believe that this intensive process serves the student, the community, and the field of marriage and family therapy. The screening process for admission into the academic program and into the clinical practicum includes several steps:

### 1. Application Process:

Prospective students submit an application for admission into the Marriage and Family Therapy Program along with scores from the Graduate Record Exam, personal letters of recommendation and transcripts. Faculty review the application material and select students for further consideration on the basis of several factors: 1) potential for academic success; 2) previous academic majors; 3) professional and/or volunteer experience; and 4) quality of personal recommendations. Applicants who are selected, are invited to attend a day long interview held in the spring of each year.

### 2. Preadmission Interview:

The day-long interview is a mutual screening process. Faculty attempt to gain more knowledge about the applicants in order to select students who will both contribute to the program and are most ready to benefit from the program. We also try to thoroughly inform candidates about our program and the field of family therapy to assist them in their decision regarding the fit between our program and their needs. No one type of student is preferred. We attempt to attain ethnic, age, and gender diversity in selecting the most qualified applicants. Students who are invited to interview are screened into the MFT program on the basis of several factors: 1) interpersonal skills, as observed during informal and formal interactions throughout the day; 2) personal characteristics, including such factors as sense of humor, intelligence, and curiosity; 3) personal history, including significant life experiences; and 4) professional history. Students who are selected are invited to enter the Department of Human Development and begin coursework in the Marriage and Family Therapy program.

### 3. Clinical Screening (See Attachment "Requirements for Entering the Clinical Program" for more detail:

After completing at least 12 hours of academic coursework including HD5404 "Systems Theory and Family Therapy", HD5434 "Structural and Strategic Family Therapy", HD5514 "Research Methods", HD6514 "Advanced Research Methods", and having scheduled their Comprehensive Examinations, students may be screened for admission into the clinical practicum. Students must have passed their Comprehensive Exams and earned a least a 3.0 grade point average in all MFT

courses before beginning practicum. The screening process for admission into the clinical practicum includes several steps:

- Attend a mandatory group orientation meeting presented by the Clinical Director to be scheduled during the spring semester of the student's first year. During this meeting, the Clinical Director will outline and explain the expectations and responsibilities of therapist interns.
  - Submit a letter requesting admission to the Clinic to the Clinical Director no later than April 1. This letter will be shared with the faculty and the supervisor assigned to the student during their first semester in the clinic. The letter should include the following:
    1. Reflect on his/her level of readiness to begin clinical work (i.e., emotional, interpersonal, academic, professionalism).
    2. Articulate the strengths and areas for growth he/she will bring to his/her work.
    3. Speculate what approach he/she will use for specific cases.
    4. Discuss how best he/she receives feedback and what would be indications that he/she is in need of help from a supervisor.
    5. How he/she has demonstrated in classes and other environments his/her ability to accept feedback and work effectively in a team setting.
    6. How he/she has demonstrated professionalism in classes and other environments, which includes but it is not limited to exceptional attendance record, adherence to deadlines, timeliness, and commitment to work.
  - Students may be asked to attend an individual meeting with the Clinical Director and faculty following submission of his/her letter.
  - Based on the above criteria, a student may receive the following outcomes for the clinical practicum:
    1. Full admission into the clinical practicum.
    2. Conditional admission with expectation that candidate will be closely monitored for progress in areas of concern which will be delineated in the letter.
    3. Conditional denial of admission until readiness is demonstrated.
    4. Deny admission.
- 4. Procedure for Students Given a Conditional Denial:**  
Students who are given a conditional denial of admission to the practicum may request another meeting with their advisor and the clinical faculty to clarify the faculty decision and the steps that need to be taken to gain admission. It is incumbent upon the student to demonstrate readiness to begin practicum and to schedule a meeting with the clinical faculty for a review of their readiness to enter practicum.
- 5. Procedure for Students Denied Admission:**

Students who are not admitted to the practicum may also request a meeting with their advisor and the clinical faculty to clarify the faculty decision.

#### 6. Ongoing Monitoring:

Severe deficiencies exist when students are unable to appropriately apply theoretical material in the clinical setting. This relates to being unable to engage clients in therapy, diagnose existing problems, and design and implement intervention strategies.

Severe deficiencies also exist when students consistently fail to work cooperatively and professionally with faculty, supervisors, and fellow students. Severe deficiencies also exist when students' own personal issues have a negative effect on their ability to effectively conduct therapy and they either make no effort to resolve these problems or, after engaging in therapy, have made insufficient gains to continue in the practice of marriage and family therapy.

Students' strengths and growth areas are discussed with students at their end of semester evaluations. This is done with their practicum supervisor. These issues also are discussed as a part of a student's ongoing supervision. When a growth area is identified, specific goals and strategies will be implemented to help students develop in specific areas. This is a common and desired occurrence in supervision. However, if the faculty member believes that the problem fits within the category of severe deficiency and it is not alleviated through initial goal setting and strategizing procedures, steps will be taken to dismiss the student from the program.

Counseling a student out of the program is a difficult situation for both faculty and students. Because of this, faculty will work with those students who exhibit severe deficiencies. Counseling a student out of the program is a very rare situation.

#### 7. Mechanisms Used:

To insure that all program requirements have been met before graduating from the program, each month students are expected to have all their clinical contact and supervision hours signed off by their clinical supervisors. Students will not be allowed to graduate until they have met all clinical and supervision hour requirements (500 face to face client contact hours, at least 50 hours of raw data supervision and at least 100 hours of supervision). Before graduating, each student and the clinical director will sign a document verifying that the student has completed all clinical requirements.

Each student's Program of Study is reviewed annually by the MFT faculty to determine if the student is making satisfactory progress in the program. Section 19 of this Masters Student Guide details the Criteria for Remaining in Good Standing.

In addition, the graduate school thoroughly examines the student's Program of Study and their completed courses to verify that the student has completed all course work requirements and all clinical requirements.

## PROGRAM OF STUDY

Though a formal program of study is not required by the Graduate School for students enrolled in the post-master's certificate program, the MFT Department requests that each student meet with his/her advisor and fill out a Program of Study form. A copy of your Program of Study form will be kept on file in the departmental office. (See Attachment A, Program of Study Form). Each year students are reviewed by faculty to check the status of their Program of Study.

Please note that Post-Master's students will be dropped from the program if they remain inactive (e.g. no registration for classes, no communication with advisor) for one calendar year. In order to reinstate their student status, these students must reapply to the graduate school and the MFT program.

The post-master's certificate program consists of advanced courses in marriage and family therapy and a supervised clinical practicum. A total of 21-24 credits must be earned for completion of the program.

The following are course requirements for the post-master's certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy:

### **Recommended prerequisite course:**

Abnormal Psychology (undergraduate or graduate level)

### **Required Courses**

|         |  |   |
|---------|--|---|
| HD 5404 | Systems Theory and Family Therapy  | 3 |
| HD 5434 | Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy I:<br>Structural and Strategic Approaches   | 3 |
| HD 5474 | Professional Seminar in Marriage and<br>Family Therapy: (Professional Ethics)<br>(May not be required if previously taken) | 3 |

HD 5734 Marriage and Family Therapy Techniques 3  
(May not be required if previously taken)

HD 5964 Practicum in Marriage and Family 6  
Therapy (1 calendar year with a minimum of 100 hours of client contact)

### Electives

Choose three of the following depending on area of interest:

|         |  |   |
|---------|--|---|
| HD 5724 | Couples Therapy  | 3 |
| HD 5344 | Perspectives on Human Sexuality  | 3 |
| HD 5414 | Life-Span Human Development  |   |
| HD 5444 | Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy II<br>(Constructivist Approaches) | 3 |
| HD 5454 | Clinical MFT III<br>(Diagnosis and Treatment in the Family Context)    | 3 |
| HD 5477 | Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy IV<br>(Special Topics in MFT)     | 3 |

Or additional courses available:

Students with an adequate academic background may qualify for exemption from certain courses and select alternative approved electives with permission of their advisory committee.

Students in the post-master's certificate program may take additional courses to satisfy educational requirements for professional licensure or for AAMFT Clinical Membership.

## PRACTICUM

Note: The Center for Family Services Policies & Procedures manual has detailed information about the practicum requirements.

After completing at least six hours of academic coursework including HD 5404: Systems Theory and Family Therapy and HD 5434: Structural and Strategic Family Therapy, students may request admission into the clinical program and begin practicum (See Screening Process)

Early each spring a meeting is held to explain the requirements for practicum. Students will be given information concerning their responsibilities for locating and securing a practicum placement. All post-master's students will see clients at the Center for Family Services (CFS). At the end of each semester, the practicum student and his/her supervisor are to complete Evaluation Forms regarding the student's clinical work during the semester.

The Virginia Tech Marriage and Family Therapy Program's philosophy regarding the clinical training component is as follows:

We see our goal in clinical training as helping students develop their own model and approach to therapy within a systemic framework. It is our contention that there are many paths to problem-solution. However, there are some basic principles that underlie the work we do at the Center for Family Services, and we train students in models that are based on these principles.

While we are aware of pathology, our primary goal is to support the strengths and work with the competencies of our clients to arrive at solutions to their problems.

As systems thinkers, we agree that interventions on a variety of levels may be needed. In this program, however, we emphasize intervention at the interpersonal level that attempts primarily to change. This can be done even when meeting with a client individually.

Our approach tends to be present- and future-oriented balanced with appropriate in-depth exploration of the past.

Our goal is to help clients receive "enough" therapy based on their goals and wishes. To that end, we may see clients for a few sessions or for several months. We try not to be constrained by preconceived notions that therapy should be either "long-term" or "brief."

Finally, personal development is an important part of learning to be a therapist. Supervision is not, and should not be, therapy but it may involve looking at aspects of oneself and one's experiences that impact on how one is as a therapist. To this end, we also see clinical training as a time to "stretch" oneself. Clients come to the Center for Family Services seeking help for a variety of life situations which students may find challenge their own life experiences and values. We encourage students to work with clients whose views diverge from their own and we will do our best as supervisors to support students in this work. Of course, the client's welfare is always the primary concern and both student and supervisor must be on guard to make sure that the student's training and professional development issues, as well as any personal issues, do not interfere with the client receiving the best services available to them.

### **Clinic Schedule**

The Center for Family Services works on the calendar year, not the academic calendar. Post-master's therapist interns are expected to have one clinic slot for one calendar year, beginning May and concluding the following May, one year later. When students enroll for each semester in the clinic, it is expected and required that the students commit to working in the clinic the entire semester. Students are also expected to continue in the clinic without disruption for the full year. Post-master's students begin Practicum in May of each calendar year.

## POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATES

University Governance awards Graduate Certificates through the Graduate School and the recording of this achievement on the Graduate Transcript. Units awarding certificates are able to have data scored in the VT computer system for reporting and analysis purposes. The Marriage and Family Therapy Post-Master's Certificate is included in this process.

Students planning on completing certificates should submit an "application for degree or certificate conferral (AFDC)." This ensures that the Graduate School orders the certificate and that the names are listed in the commencement bulletin. Students that are receiving a certificate and not a degree will be charged an "application for degree" fee. Students that are receiving a degree plus a certificate for the same term will only be charged one "application for degree" fee.

The Department will notify the Graduate School as soon as a student completes a certificate, so that their transcripts will show the certificate as being conferred. The transcript will not show this designation before the end of the semester in which the certificate is rewarded, or if an "application for degree" is not filed. A certificate completion verification form can be found at <http://www.grads.vt.edu/>.

Certificate awardees will be recognized at commencement as a group, by being asked to stand. The commencement bulletin will also contain the names of those students that have "applied for degree" (in this case actually certificate) by the stated deadline. Certificates will be mailed in February, June, and August depending on completion term.

Post-master's students will also be receiving a certificate from the Marriage and Family Therapy program in Northern Virginia.

## CRITERIA FOR REMAINING IN GOOD STANDING

In order to retain good standing as a Post-Master's student, an individual must, on a continuing basis, be judged by the Departmental faculty as making satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements. The more important criteria by which this judgment is made are:

- Students must maintain a 3.0 Quality Credit Average (QCA). Students placed on academic probation have one semester to raise their QCA to 3.0. Grades of "C" or better must be earned in each of the courses on the student's program of study.
- Students should be able to complete individual course requirements within the semester in which the course is taken. Incomplete grades are expected only under circumstances, which justifiably hinder the student's progress. A pattern of incomplete grades may be viewed as inadequate progress. Incomplete grades are calculated as an "F" for QCA purposes until they are changed by the instructor. Incompletes not removed during the designated time are automatically changed to an "F."
- Grades of "C" or better must be earned in each of the courses on the student's program of study.
- The student must meet all of the other stated expectations of the Graduate School, including examinations and time limits. The decision to deny permission to continue for failure to make satisfactory progress may be reached by the Advisory Committee, a committee in the Department, or recommended to the Graduate School.
- Admission to the clinical program is a formal process which occurs after completion of the screening process. (See Screening Process)
- Clinical supervisors can conclude that the clinical proficiency of a student is not progressing at the rate needed for the student to continue practicum experiences at that time. The clinical supervisors have the professional responsibility to protect clients from harm. Should a student's behavior be deemed detrimental to clients' welfare, the student may be required to discontinue practicum until a specified time, during which therapy may be required along with a specified training program. A student may be deemed clinically not proficient. Such a student will not be allowed to complete the clinical contact hours required to receive the certificate. The student will be apprised of this possibility as early as detected and will work closely with program faculty and clinical supervisors to correct deficiencies. The student may also be given the opportunity to complete additional hours to achieve clinical proficiency before receiving the certificate.
- Marriage and Family Therapy students who violate the Code of Ethics for the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy may be excluded from this program.

- All HD classes are covered by the Virginia Tech graduate student honor code. (See Attachment B, Virginia Tech Graduate Honor System)
- Post-Master's students will be dropped from the program if they remain inactive (e.g. no registration for classes, no communication with advisor) for one calendar year. In order to reinstate their student status, these students must reapply to the graduate school and the MFT program.

## REFUND POLICY

Students are entitled to a refund of tuition under the following conditions:

**DROPS** (reduced course load): A full refund of tuition will be made if the course or courses are dropped by the drop deadline. There will be an adjusted refund for courses or thesis hours dropped after the deadline (see the Graduate Catalog). There is no refund for any transaction made after the semester is over.

**WITHDRAWALS:** A student may withdraw (drop all courses) without academic penalty prior to the midpoint of the semester. Students wishing to withdraw with any kind of refund must follow the prescribed deadlines provided on the refund schedule (See the Graduate Catalog). Students must inform the office (in person or by letter) of their intention to withdraw. The official and effective date of withdrawal is the date on which the Registration Office receives written notification of the decision, not the date on which a student ceases to attend classes. The official date of withdrawal will determine the amount of refund the student is entitled to receive. In all instances involving refunds, only tuition is refundable. No fees or other charges will be refunded. Students should allow 6- 8 weeks for the receipt of any refund payment.

## **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, relationship status, health status or veteran status. The university is subject to Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Age Discrimination in Employee Act, The Vietnam Era Veteran Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Federal Executive Order 11246, Governor Gilmore's State Executive Order Number Two, and all other rules and regulations that are applicable. Anyone having questions concerning any of those regulations should contact the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office, 336 Burruss Hall, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061, 540/2317500, TDD 540/231-9460.

Individuals with disabilities desiring accommodations in the application process should contact the Dean of Students Office, 540/231-3787; TDD/PC 1-800-828-1120; Voice 1-800/828-1140 by the application deadline.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

### A. Departmental Program Grievance Issues:

- This includes issues that reflect policy idiosyncratic to the program itself, issues involving supervision of clinical students, and both required and supplemental course work.
- Introductory Stage:
  - Students have an opportunity to express their concerns, complaints, and grievances to their cohort student representative (See section 25). Before program area concerns develop into problems, students are encouraged to present these issues in the form of constructive suggestions and give them to the appropriate faculty for discussion and resolution of the problem. If this stage of communication does not produce reasonable satisfaction, movement to level 1 is appropriate.
  - Level 1. Student may request a meeting with the individual faculty/supervisor involved to present and discuss their concerns. (If the Program Director happens to be the individual involved in the student's grievance, the student's request to meet with him/her would follow the same procedure as level 1). If satisfactory resolution is not forthcoming at this level, the student may move to the next level.
  - Level 2. Student may request a meeting with the Program Director and provide in writing their concerns. (If the Program Director happens to be the individual involved in the student's grievance, the student should request a meeting with another full-time faculty member in the program.) If satisfactory resolution is not forthcoming at this level, the student may move to the next level.
  - Level 3. The student may request a meeting with the individual faculty member and the Department Head to try to resolve the issue. The Department Head will act as arbitrator of options after hearing the grievance and the faculty position.

### B. Department-Wide Grievance Issues:

- I.e., issues that reflect policy for students across programs, e.g., departmental requirements, assistantships, fee waiver issues assignments.
- Level 1. Student should request meeting with department administrator directly involved with implementing policy. If satisfactory resolution of the grievances is not forthcoming at this level, move to level 2. Do not proceed to level 2 until level 1 has been attempted.

- Level 2. Student may request meeting with all department administrators (currently, Head and Assistant Head) to hear the student's grievance. If satisfactory reconciliation of grievance is not forthcoming at this level, move to level 3. Do not proceed to level 3 until level 2 has been attempted.
- Level 3. See Graduate Student Appeals, Appendix II, page 262 in the Graduate Catalog.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

The following information is taken from the 2001-2003 Graduate Catalog. For additional information, please contact the program office.

Sexual harassment is considered to be a form of discrimination based on sex and falls within the statutory prohibitions against sex discrimination. The university is committed to maintaining a working and a study environment free of sexual harassment. Accordingly, in compliance with Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is the university's policy not to tolerate any verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior which constitutes sexual harassment. Personnel with supervisory responsibilities are required to take immediate and appropriate action when incidents of alleged sexual harassment are brought to their attention. Violations of the policy prohibiting sexual harassment may lead to disciplinary actions, including reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment or academic status.

Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: 1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic decisions; or 2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions; or 3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Faculty, staff, students, and applicants for employment or admission with complaints of sexual harassment should contact the Virginia Tech Office for Equity and Inclusion on a confidential basis and request an informal investigation. The phone number is (540) 231- 7500.

Faculty, staff, and students may file formal complaints outside the university. Students may file formal complaints with the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education. Faculty may file formal complaints with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Staff may contact the State EEO Office or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Each year, a student is elected from each cohort and meets with the faculty once each semester during a faculty meeting to share concerns, issues, or requests that the students wish the faculty to hear about the program in general – clinical and academic. Either the student representatives or the faculty can ask for more meetings if they deem it necessary. There will be 3 student representatives at any given time – one each representing the 1<sup>st</sup> year cohort, the 2<sup>nd</sup> year cohort, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year cohort and beyond. No student will serve as a student representative past the end of their 3<sup>rd</sup> academic year after admission to the program. Student representatives will be selected by the classes at the beginning of the fall semester. New representatives will be chosen each year. Student representatives may be re-elected to multiple terms if their cohort chooses to do so.

## The Virginia Tech Graduate Honor Code

### Requirements for Entering the Clinical Program

Students in the Marriage and Family Therapy program must meet certain requirements before they can enter the clinical portion of the program. While we expect most students to be ready after their first academic year, we realize some may not be ready to make this step. The following are the criteria that students must meet to proceed into gaining direct client contact:

- A. Must have a minimum 3.0 grade point average in all core MFT courses completed.
- B. Master's students must pass the Comprehensive Exams.
- C. Attend a **mandatory** group orientation meeting presented by the Clinical Director to be scheduled during the spring semester of the student's first year. During this meeting, the Clinical Director will outline and explain the expectations and responsibilities of therapist interns.
- D. Submit a letter requesting admission to the Clinic to the Clinical Director no later than April 1. This letter will be shared with the faculty and the supervisor assigned to the student during their first semester in the clinic. The letter should include the following:
  1. Reflect on his/her level of readiness to begin clinical work (i.e., emotional, interpersonal, academic, professionalism).
  2. Articulate the strengths and areas for growth he/she will bring to his/her work.
  3. Speculate what approach he/she will use for specific cases.
  4. Discuss how best he/she receives feedback and what would be indications that he/she is in need of help from a supervisor.
  5. How he/she has demonstrated in classes and other environments his/her ability to accept feedback and work effectively in a team setting.
  6. How he/she has demonstrated professionalism in classes and other environments, which includes but it is not limited to exceptional attendance record, adherence to deadlines, timeliness, and commitment to work.
- E. Students may be asked to attend an individual meeting with the Clinical Director following submission of his/her letter.
- F. Based on the above criteria, a student may receive the following outcomes for the clinical practicum:
  1. Admission to the Clinical Program – No Restrictions: The student will begin clinical program as scheduled.
  2. Admission to the Clinical Program with Restrictions – The student will develop and write a plan to remediate any problems that are identified with consultation from the Clinical Director.

3. Conditional denial of admission until readiness is demonstrated.
4. No Admission to the Clinical Program – Student will not be admitted to the clinical program.