

COUPLE AND FAMILY THERAPY (FCFT)

Graduate Degree Program
College: Public Health

Abstract

The mission of the M.S. in Couple and Family Therapy (CFT) program is to prepare competent, effective therapists for clinical practice and advancement of the marriage and family therapy discipline. The program seeks to train professionals who demonstrate superior therapeutic skills, ethical integrity, intellectual curiosity, and a sincere commitment to working with families from diverse populations.

The Couple and Family Therapy M.S. program provides students with the coursework and supervised clinical training typically required in states with Marriage and Family Therapy licensure. The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). The CFT program requires 48 credits for the non-thesis option and 51 credits for the thesis option. Completion of the program, which includes the 2-year internship, generally requires 2 years.

The Department of Family Science prepares students to describe, explain, and improve the quality of life through applied research, education, therapy, human services, policy analysis, and advocacy. The approach is interdisciplinary, emphasizing individual, interpersonal, and social change. The program of study is based on a system or ecological paradigm, combining the perspectives of interrelated professional fields of family science, maternal and child health, couple and family therapy, family policy, behavioral science, and human services. Graduates are prepared for careers in the public, non-profit and private sectors, including university teaching, research, family policy analysis, and administrative positions in human services and public health programs.

Financial Assistance

Graduate Assistantships are available to students admitted into the CFT program.

Contact

For additional information, please contact the Department of Family Science at fmsc@umd.edu (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/couple-family-therapy-fcft/fmsc@umd.edu>).

Dr. Sherri-Chanelle Brighthaupt
Director of Graduate Studies
Department of Family Science
1142 School of Public Health Building
4200 Valley Drive
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
Phone: 301.405.3672
Fax: 301.314.9161

Email: fmscgrapapp@umd.edu (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/couple-family-therapy-fcft/fmscgrapapp@umd.edu>)
Department Email: fmsc@umd.edu (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/couple-family-therapy-fcft/fmsc@umd.edu>)

Mariana K. Falconier, Ph.D.

Program Director
Associate Professor
Department of Family Science
1142CC School of Public Health Building
4200 Valley Drive
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
Phone: 301.405.4004
Fax: 301.314.9161

Email: marianak@umd.edu (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/couple-family-therapy-fcft/marianak@umd.edu>)

Website: www.sph.umd.edu/fmsc (<http://www.sph.umd.edu/fmsc/>)

Courses: FMSC (<https://umd-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/courses/fmsc/>)

ADMISSIONS

The **Master of Science in Couple and Family Therapy** accepts applications through the TerpEngage Graduate Admissions System (<https://terpengage.force.com/community/CustomLoginPage/?GradApp=True>).

General Requirements

- A Bachelor's degree
- Minimum 3.0 undergraduate GPA
- Transcripts from all previous coursework
- English proficiency test score (TOEFL, IELTS or PTE) (international applicants (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements/>))
- Statement of purpose and objectives, including career and educational goals, professional experience, areas of interest, and faculty you are interested in working with
- Response to personal experiences question(s)

Program-Specific Requirements

- Prior coursework in family studies, human development, abnormal psychology, introduction to therapy or counseling, and statistics courses are useful in preparation for graduate CFT work. In addition, computer literacy is essential
- Three letters of recommendation
- Resume or curriculum vitae
- One writing sample is required (up to 1 more optional)
- GRE scores are **not required** for this program. Please do not submit GRE test scores

Note for applicants with foreign credentials:

- The UMD graduate application requires the upload of unofficial transcripts issued in the original language along with a literal English translation. Visit the Graduate School website for additional information (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/international-admissions/>)
- Evidence of English Language proficiency is required if the applicant does not hold a degree from a U.S. institution or one of the English-speaking countries listed on the Graduate School website (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements/>)

Application Deadlines

Type of Applicant	Fall Deadline
Domestic Applicants	
US Citizens and Permanent Residents	December 5, 2025
International Applicants	
F (student) or J (exchange visitor) visas; A, E, G, H, I and L visas and immigrants	December 5, 2025

RESOURCES AND LINKS

Program website: sph.umd.edu/ms-couple-and-family-therapy (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/masters-degrees/ms-couple-and-family-therapy/>)

Program Requirements: sph.umd.edu/fcft-program-requirements (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/masters-degrees/ms-couple-and-family-therapy/program-requirements-ms-couple-and-family-therapy/>)

Application Process: sph.umd.edu/graduate-application-process (<https://sph.umd.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/graduate-application-process/>)

Application Process FAQ: sph.umd.edu/graduate-application-faqs (<https://sph.umd.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/graduate-application-faqs/>)

CFT FAQ: sph.umd.edu/ms-couple-and-family-therapy-faqs (<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/masters-degrees/ms-couple-and-family-therapy/faqs-ms-couple-and-family-therapy/>)

REQUIREMENTS

- Couple and Family Therapy, Master of Science (M.S.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/couple-family-therapy-fcft/couple-family-therapy-ms/>)

FACILITIES AND SPECIAL RESOURCES

Center is the training and research arm of the Couple and Family Therapy Program in the Department of Family Science. Departmental graduate students and faculty provide clinical and educational services to families from surrounding communities in this state-of-the-art facility. Master's and doctoral students use data collected at the Center for research projects.

The University's close proximity to the nation's capital, the state capital in Annapolis, federal executive departments, and headquarters of national professional and public interest associations provide research and internship placements for studying family policy unmatched by any other graduate program in the discipline. The Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area offers rich opportunities for research on culturally and socioeconomically diverse families. The campus and department have excellent computer facilities. Students have ready access to the University's extensive library systems, as well as holdings from the Library of Congress, the National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine, National Archives, and many other library collections.