

Marriage and Family Therapy

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

EDGEWOOD COLLEGE • 1255 DEMING WAY • MADISON, WI • 53717 • 800.444.4297

What is Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT)?

Marriage and Family Therapy, also called Family Therapy, or Systems Therapy, is a type of mental health/behavioral health treatment that sees a person's problems in the context of the interactions the person has within the entire system of family, friends, work place and community. Since the cause of the difficulties resides in the interactions within the system, treatment has to take into account those other pulls and influences to achieve successful outcomes.

What is an LMFT (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist)?

The state of Wisconsin licenses three master's level practitioners to do psychotherapy. They are Marriage and Family Therapists, Professional Counselors, and Clinical Social Workers. A Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist is a mental health practitioner who has had specialized training in Systems therapy, has a master's degree, passed both the Wisconsin Statutes exam and the National Board exam, and accrued 3,000 hours of post-degree therapy experience under supervision of an advanced therapist.

What type of therapy do LMFTs do?

LMFTs assess, diagnose, and treat every issue listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) providing therapy or counseling for clients. Additionally, LMFTs are trained to work with couple and family issues. Whatever work they do is always in the context of looking at the entire system and how it is causing the problems or keeping them from being resolved.

How is this different from other mental health practitioners?

Professional Counselors and Clinical Social Workers are also licensed to provide mental health services. Those therapists usually work from a Cognitive and/or Behavioral treatment modality. One distinction for the LMFTs is that, while they can also provide Cognitive/Behavioral therapy, they are the only master's practitioners who can provide Systems Therapy. An LPC or LCSW can provide Systems Therapy if they are dually licensed in Wisconsin as an LMFT.

Do LMFTs only see couples and families?

No. As front-line mental health practitioners, LMFTs see individuals, couples, families, run group therapy, and even do organizational consultation – all from a systemic perspective.

What kind of settings do LMFTs work in?

LMFTs work in all types of settings that psychotherapists operate in. A majority of LMFTs in the country are in private practice, but most new LMFTs start out in county or community agencies. Additionally, some have positions in hospital settings, school districts, pastoral counseling centers, business and organizational settings, veterans' service centers, and VA hospitals.

Are there jobs available for LMFTs?

There is a shortage of mental health workers in Wisconsin; however there is not a shortage in the Madison area. There is a critical need for bi-lingual therapists throughout the state of Wisconsin.

To become an LMFT in Wisconsin, is it necessary to complete a Master's degree program that is accredited?

Wisconsin requires a graduate program to be regionally accredited but does not require professional accreditation by the COAMFTE (Commission on Accreditation for Marriage & Family Therapy Education) to become licensed. The benefit of attending a program with professional accreditation is that each program must meet national standards that exceed regional accreditation standards.

The MFT Program at Edgewood College

Edgewood College's Master's program in Marriage and Family Therapy is accredited by both the regional accrediting body (Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association) and the professional accrediting body (Commission on Accreditation for Marriage & Family Therapy Education).

The MFT program embodies the values of the Dominican mission of the College: truth, justice, compassion, partnership, community. Our pursuit to provide education and training based on scholarship and evidence-based practice is grounded in the mission of truth. In striving for justice we train our graduates to appreciate, work with, and empower disenfranchised populations.

At Edgewood College, you'll find:

- An accessible, qualified and experienced faculty
- Small class sizes
- A nationally accredited curriculum
- Evening and weekend classes, offered year round
- Customizable internship experiences
- A collaborative learning community

For more information about the MFT program at Edgewood College, please contact Jenna Alsteen – jalsteen@edgewood.edu or 608-663-4255.



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