

Texas Woman's University
College of Professional Education
Department of Family Sciences

MS in Family Therapy

Admissions Process

The admissions procedure begins with making application to the Graduate School of TWU (details on TWU website). The student must have completed a bachelor's degree with at least a 3.25 GPA on the last 60 hours of work. Once Graduate Admissions has approved the application and forwarded it to the Department of Family Sciences by our deadline (Feb. 15 or Sept. 15), the student is assigned an appointment for the Applicant Interview Day. This day includes writing an essay, a therapist-client role play, and a small group interview with faculty. Acceptance into the program may be unconditional or provisional for the next long semester following this Applicant Interview Day.

Philosophy of the Family Therapy Programs

The Family Therapy Programs use a systemic approach that conceptualizes problems as located within the relationships and interactions between people rather than only within the individual(s). We are interested in the multiple systems within which all people live and the recursive connections between them. Our program is committed to providing an open context that promotes equality, social tolerance, and the right to express different points of view. We actively seek enrichment through the strength, power, and wisdom of diversity.

Master's Program Course Requirements

The program requires either 61 semester hours of coursework (for the non-thesis option) or 66 hours (for the thesis option.) Clinical coursework includes at least 3 semesters of Practicum (totaling 300 hours of therapy, 150 hours of which is with couples and families), a time commitment of at least 20 hours per week each semester. The student must apply in advance each semester for a practicum assignment. For the first semester of practicum, the student is usually assigned to the Counseling and Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC) on campus and the remaining semesters the student works with clients at an approved community agency or other approved site she/he selects and interviews with in the area. The student may choose *one* of the 3 areas of emphasis in his/her degree: LPC, Medical Family Therapy, or Children in Family Therapy.

Master of Science Writing Requirement – Thesis or Non-thesis Option

As a part of the Family Therapy master's degree program, the student must demonstrate an ability to synthesize family therapy concepts, an understanding of research, and proficiency in academic writing. Each student may choose *one* of the three options below:

- design, conduct, write, and defend a thesis under the direction of the major advisor;
- conduct a literature search and write a review of literature article (or a book chapter) on a relevant family therapy topic and submit it for publication;
- complete the Professional Development Project which includes writing and presenting orally a formal paper, with accompanying videotaped segments, which demonstrate the theoretical orientation and professional approach of the student therapist.

The major advisor directs the student in her/his writing option and the other advisory committee members read and approve of the final product. Graduation is dependent on the successful completion of the Master's Writing Requirement.

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor

The master's program contains the coursework needed to apply to take the exam in Texas for licensing as a Marriage and Family Therapist. After passing the exam, the graduate may be licensed as an LMFT-Associate and will be required to complete 3000 hours of family therapy under supervision by a state-approved supervisor before being fully licensed as an LMFT. The website for the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage & Family Therapists details the requirements. Our master's program also contains the LPC area of emphasis with the three additional courses required to take the exam in Texas for licensing as a LPC-Intern. This designation also requires working under supervision before becoming fully licensed. Details are available at the website of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors.

The Advisory Committee

A major advisor, one of the 4 family therapy faculty members, will be assigned to the student when she or he is accepted for admission into the program. The advisor helps the student plan coursework each semester and answers questions the student may have. If at any point the student wishes to change advisors, another faculty member may be asked to serve and a Change of Advisor Form completed and submitted to the FS office. The student's committee, composed of the major advisor and 2 other professors (at least one of whom must be from the family therapy faculty) is selected by the student in consultation with the major advisor. Before completion of 12 semester hours of coursework, the student works with the major advisor to prepare the degree plan, a form setting forth the coursework for the degree. All the committee members must approve and sign the degree plan, which is submitted to the FS office.

Department of Family Sciences

Our Department of Family Sciences includes the Counseling & Development, Family Studies, Early Childhood Development & Education, and Family Therapy components, providing a variety of faculty disciplines and perspectives to our students. Texas Woman's University truly celebrates diversity as we are enriched by students of differing physical ability, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, and socioeconomic status, among other differences. Our department offers opportunities for students to enhance professionalism through membership in a variety of student organizations. Family Therapy students are expected to become student members in our campus organization Student Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and to join the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy <www.aamft.org> as student members. We also encourage student attendance at AAMFT Annual Conference and other family therapy and family sciences workshops and seminars.

Additional information can be found in the TWU Catalog and TWU Student Handbook.