

FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

**GRADUATION FINAL EXAM WRITING OPTIONS**

1. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OPTION** As the student moves through the Family Therapy MS program learning the philosophies, theories, and practice of family therapy, she/he will be developing a personal model of family therapy and change based on one of the models studied. As a final examination project before graduating, the student who chooses this writing option will write, guided by the advisor, a scholarly paper including her/his philosophy and systemic framework, integrated theory of family therapy and change, its application, and a self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses as a family therapist. The student will also prepare an edited videotape of her/his work with clients to accompany the paper. The student will work closely with the advisor in revising the drafts of the paper and editing the videotape, until the advisor agrees that the paper is ready for submission to the advisory committee. The student will then give two more copies of the paper to the advisor who will distribute the copies to the advisory committee members for their approval. The members will be allowed ten working days to read the paper.

After approval by the advisor and with the agreement of the student's other two advisory committee members, the student will set a time and reserve a place for the presentation of the paper, illustrated with the videotape. The student will post an approved invitation to an audience of the committee, the graduate students in the Family Sciences Department clinical programs, and all interested faculty members. After the presentation, the student's committee will confer to determine that the project is complete. The Certificate of Final Examination for the student's graduation can be signed by the members of the advisory committee **only** when all elements of this writing option are complete.

The student is expected to complete at least two semesters of family therapy practicum before writing the paper and scheduling the presentation. During the first semester of practicum, the practicum instructor may offer guidance to the student in beginning to identify her/his personal approach to a model, her/his strengths and weaknesses, etc. The instructor may also aid in selecting videotaped segments for possible use in the project. This process will continue with the instructor of the student's second semester of practicum. The student and her/his advisor will continue to work together each semester as the student completes the paper and videotape for presentation during the student's final semester. Students accepted into the MS program Spring 2007 and after must enroll in FS 5911 Individual Study with their advisor during the final semester of this project. Graduation will be delayed for students not completing this project in a timely manner.

2. **PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATION OPTION** The student will propose to write a journal article based on a review of literature she/he conducts on a family therapy topic approved by the advisor. Alternatively, the student and the advisor may agree on the writing of a book chapter or other professional manuscript for publication. The advisor will assist the student in selecting an appropriate journal for submission of the manuscript of the article and will guide the student in

the writing of the manuscript. As is customary, the advisor, as a significant contributor to the work, may be listed as second author on the manuscript. If other members of the student's advisory committee make meaningful contributions, one or both of them may also be listed as co-authors.

The student will complete an outline of the journal article for approval by the advisor, and then a first draft to be reviewed and revised until the advisor agrees that the manuscript is ready for submission to the advisory committee for approval. The student will then give two more copies of the manuscript of the proposed journal article to the advisor who will distribute the copies to the advisory committee members for their approval. The members will be allowed ten working days for reading the manuscript.

When committee approval has been secured, the advisor will approve the student to submit the manuscript to the agreed upon journal. The student will bring evidence of the completed submission (e.g., email acceptance of submission from the journal editor, postal return receipt from registered mailing of the manuscript, etc.) to the advisor. The members of the student's advisory committee may sign the student's Certificate of Completion for graduation **only** when all elements of this writing option are completed.

The student should complete FS 5693 Research Methods, and FS 5193 Statistics for Research in Family Sciences before beginning to write the journal article. It is expected that the student will work at least two semesters with the advisor on this project. Students accepted into the MS program Spring 2007 and after must enroll in FS 5911 Individual Study with their advisor during the semester when they complete most of the work on this project. Graduation will be delayed for students not completing this writing option in a timely manner.

3. **THESIS OPTION** The student choosing the thesis writing option will propose to conduct original research on a family therapy topic approved by the advisor. The student will have completed FS 5693 Research Methods, and FS 5193 Statistics for Research in Family Sciences before enrolling in Thesis.

The student will enroll in FS 5983 Thesis with the advisor during the semester of the proposal and FS 5993 Thesis with the advisor during the semester of the thesis defense. If the thesis cannot be completed in two semesters, the student will enroll with the advisor in additional semesters of Thesis as needed.

The student, guided by the advisor, will follow the protocol of the Family Sciences Department Thesis Proposal Process and Thesis Defense Process. The process includes writing a formal proposal of the planned research, including the cover page, table of contents, introduction, review of relevant literature, and methodology for the study, a reference list, and all relevant appendices. After advisor approval, the student will present the proposal at a formal meeting with her/his research committee.

After approval by the research committee, the student, with the advisor's assistance, will complete and submit an application for approval of the study to the TWU Institutional Review

Board. After the IRB has approved the research, the student will, with the advisor's assistance, complete the Prospectus and submit it to the Graduate School. After Graduate School approval, the student, guided by the advisor and research committee members, will conduct the study and write the thesis, including a revision of the first three chapters, and chapters reporting the results and conclusions of the research. Finally, with advisor approval, the student will submit the thesis to the research committee members and meet with them for a formal defense of the thesis research. After the successful defense of the thesis, the Family Therapy faculty will complete the IE rubric for evaluation of a thesis and the student will give an electronic copy of the final approved thesis to the department. The Certificate of Final Examination can be signed by the student's research committee members **only** after all the elements of this writing option have been completed.