



USC MFT Practicum/Fieldwork Orientation—Fall 2016

Practicum/Fieldwork Hours Requirements

- **Graduation Requirement:** *240 face-to-face clinical hours*
 - These hours are spread out over the 3 semesters that you are in practicum/fieldwork. Your 240 hours must be completed by the last day of finals in the spring.
 - You must be enrolled in practicum class to collect hours. If your site has a fall start date, you must obtain a summer placement where you can accrue hours.
- **BBS Requirements for Licensure:** *3,000 total hours*
 - There is a minimum requirement of 500 child/family/couples face-to-face hours. As you are looking for a site, consider whether you would prefer to work toward this minimum right away or save the hours for later.
 - You have the option to “double count” the first 150 hours of conjoint therapy (families/couples) for the BBS but **NOT for graduation**. (*You may ONLY “double count” if you finish your 3,000 and apply for the licensing exam by December 31, 2020*).

BBS Resources

- **Navigating the MFT Licensing Process**
 - http://www.bbs.ca.gov/app-reg/mft_presentation.shtml - A guide to the process of getting licensed from your master’s program to examinations
- **MFT Supervisor Information**
 - http://www.bbs.ca.gov/licensees/imf_supervision.shtml - Explains the necessary qualifications of a clinical supervisor. Make sure your prospective supervisor is qualified to supervise MFT trainees!
- **FAQs for MFT Interns and Trainees**
 - http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/publications/mft_faq.pdf
- **Online License Verification**
 - http://www.bbs.ca.gov/app-reg/mft_presentation.shtml - Check to make sure your supervisor’s license is valid/active...and stays that way!

BBS Forms

These are the BBS forms you will use to document your experience as a trainee in anticipation of applying for MFT licensure. It is very important that you understand how to use them.

- **Supervisor Responsibility Statement**

- <http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/mft/mfrespon.pdf> - This form needs to be signed by your supervisor before you can begin seeing clients. Please note that anytime you have a change in supervisors, a new form needs to be completed.

- **MFT Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience—OPTION 1**

- http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/mft/mfwkylog_37a-525_option1.pdf - If you choose to pursue licensure through OPTION 1, you will use this form to document weekly hours logged at your site.

- **MFT Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience—OPTION 2**

- http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/mft/mfwkylog_37a-527_option2.pdf - If you choose to pursue licensure through OPTION 2, you will use this form to document weekly hours logged at your site. ***(Remember, in order to be eligible for OPTION 2, you must apply for licensure by December 31, 2020.)***

- **MFT Experience Verification Form—OPTION 1**

- http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/mft/lmft_expver_37a-301_option1.pdf - If you choose to pursue licensure through OPTION 1, you will use this form to document the total hours you logged under each supervisor. It is submitted to the BBS with the MFT intern's *Application for Examination Eligibility*.

- **MFT Experience Verification Form—OPTION 2**

- http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/mft/lmft_expver_37a-302_option2.pdf - If you choose to pursue licensure through OPTION 2, you will use this form to document the total hours you logged under each supervisor. It is submitted to the BBS with the MFT intern's *Application for Examination Eligibility*. ***(Remember, in order to be eligible for OPTION 2, you must apply for licensure by December 31, 2020.)***

USC Paperwork*

- **Letter of Affiliation**

- A USC document that establishes affiliation with an outside agency. It must be signed by the clinical director and submitted to your practicum instructor before you begin volunteering/working at your site.

- **MFT 4-Way Agreement**

- A USC document that establishes agreement between site, site supervisor, university supervisor/practicum instructor, and university administration. It must be submitted to your practicum instructor before you begin volunteering/working at your site.

**To download and print these forms, go to: <http://rossiermpo.wordpress.com>. Click on "Resources & Tools." Scroll down to "Marriage and Family Therapy Practicum/Fieldwork." Click on "Required Paperwork."*

Finding a Practicum/Fieldwork Site

- **Identifying Possible Search Criteria:**

- Population, location, work environment, scheduling needs, supervisory style and theoretical orientation, possible training opportunities, public or community mental health, compatibility with your long-term goals, etc.

- **Resources Available**

- **Site Lists** - See where 2nd year MFT students are placed and what they have to say about their sites. You will also find last year's site list and student reviews. Go to <http://rossiermpo.wordpress.com>. Click on "Resources & Tools." Scroll down to "Marriage and Family Therapy Practicum/Fieldwork." Click on "Site Search."
- **Placement Fair Booklet** – Take a peek at descriptions of sites that were represented at last year's placement fair.
- **List of Additional USC-Affiliated Sites** – A list of over 70 agencies that USC has partnered with 2 or more years ago. *(Also found in the "Site Search" folder.)*
- **USC MFT Students & Alumni Facebook Page** – Post your questions about sites you are interested in, are deciding between, want to know more about, etc. Or, write a post about your preferences and inquire about what's out there.
- **CSUN List** – See where other universities are sending their students. <http://csunmft.net/page18.html>

- **Additional Considerations**

- **Quality of site** – Don't shortchange yourself. Weigh the costs and benefits of each site. What is the quality of supervision and what will you be learning in supervision? How might the supervisor's areas of expertise impact what you take away from the experience? Does the supervisor's approach fit with your values and view of therapy?
- **Availability of clients** – Make sure the site is busy enough that you can accrue enough hours. *Is there a waiting list? What is the no-show rate?*
- **Level of challenge** – Think about what level of challenge you're up for. Only you can decide, but consider venturing beyond what is comfortable or close to home. Look for the right fit that is a logical step in the career path that you have envisioned for yourself.

- **Selecting a Site**

- **Be selective** – Explore all of your options and don't be too flattered when you're offered a site. The selection process is more about you finding what is right for you than it is about the site finding who is right for them. Try to resist jumping at the first bite if you are harboring reservations.

- **Consider 3-5 sites** – And aim to interview with at least three
- **Get ready to sell yourself** – Make them see your motivation, skill set, trustworthiness, openness to learning, etc.
- **Work on your resume** – No site is expecting you to have extensive MH experience at this point in your career. Extrapolate relevant skills from previous non-MH jobs. Be sure to include any service or volunteer work that you have done. Be specific and clear about any multilingual capacity or multicultural capacity. Bilingual therapists have an edge in securing positions based on the high need in this area.
- **Distinguish yourself on a resume** – Try to distinguish yourself from other applicants. Have others review your resume. State level of language competence no matter what level. If you are learning a language, say so. If you can comprehend but cannot express, say so.

- **Committing to and Communicating with Sites**

- **Etiquette** – Once you have committed to a site, you CANNOT back out of it if you hear from your first choice. This practice is highly unprofessional and causes a ripple effect throughout all of the other training sites and programs. If you haven't heard from your first choice site, your options are to:
 1. Wait (and politely ask for time to think about the decision)
 2. Decline the offer (hoping to hear from your first choice)
 3. Take the offer and decline all subsequent offers, including from your first choice.

If you have questions about how to navigate your particular situation, please discuss with Mary and/or Laurie.
- **Summer Start** – If your site does not start until the fall, you must find a second placement just for summer—see Laurie for possibilities. Keep in mind that you cannot back out of a fall start site just because you are having a positive experience at your summer site and want to stay there for the year. This is highly unprofessional and can cause a ripple effect throughout all of the training sites and programs. The only acceptable reason for switching sites is when a site is out of compliance with the 4-Way Agreement and after all attempts to remedy the situation, including consultation meetings with faculty, have failed. Please do not make the switch on your own beneath the radar. When this happens, we always hear from the sites, and it reflects very poorly on students.
- **Your Responsibility** – It is important that you understand the requirement that all trainees must have 1 hour of individual supervision (not required by the BBS but by USC—part of high quality education), and 2 hours of group supervision. This will cover 10 clinical hours. If the site wants you to see more clients and is willing to provide additional supervision, they must include the program and the student in a special agreement where the impact of this work schedule is understood by all.

You are also responsible for reading and understanding all BBS requirements for supervision and clinical hours, so that you can identify potential problems in your site, should any arise. You cannot rely on university personnel (faculty or Laurie) to give you every detail. It is important that you share the responsibility for knowing.

Liability Insurance

- **Professional Organizations** - Before you see clients, you MUST obtain liability insurance. The easiest way to do this is through a professional organization for MFTs. All of these organizations provide members with call support and legal/ethical consultations.
 - **AAMFT** (www.aamft.org) – An annual student membership is \$58.00 (+ \$25.00 processing fee) for a total cost of \$83.00. This membership includes professional liability insurance as long as the student remains enrolled in a graduate level MFT program and a member in good standing. For more information and application, go to: [https://www.aamft.org/iMIS15/AAMFT/Content/membership/Student liability FAQs.aspx](https://www.aamft.org/iMIS15/AAMFT/Content/membership/Student%20liability%20FAQs.aspx).
 - **CAMFT** (www.camft.org) – An annual student membership is \$70.00 and includes professional liability insurance. There is no application fee for first time pre-licensed applicants, however, if there is a lapse in membership, a \$50 application fee will be charged to rejoin. For more information and application, go to: [https://www.camft.org/COS/Membership/Student Insurance FAQs.aspx](https://www.camft.org/COS/Membership/Student%20Insurance%20FAQs.aspx).
 - **ACA** (www.counseling.org) – An annual student membership is \$96.00 and includes professional liability insurance. There is no application fee. For more information and application, go to: <http://www.counseling.org/news/news-release-archives/by-year/2009/2009/01/14/student-liability-insurance-now-available-to-aca-master-s-level-students>.

For a chart that compares the benefits of membership with each organization, please visit the "Required Paperwork" section of our website: <http://rossiermpo.wordpress.com>.