

## Clarification of Practicum/Supervised Experience

Dear Western MFT Students,

We want to inform students of Western's policies and guidelines regarding their MFT supervised experience. As you probably know, the California State Board of Behavioral Sciences (**BBS**) requires that students accumulate a total of 3000 supervised hours in order to sit for the State's licensing examinations. In order to graduate with an MFT degree, Western Seminary requires a minimum of **250** supervised hours in an approved setting. However, students may accumulate a maximum of 1300 hours prior to graduation. This may include a maximum of 750 hours of clinical experience, 250 hours of workshops, seminars, & trainings, and 300 hours for personal psychotherapy.

The **BBS** requires that students complete at least 12 semester units in their MFT program before they can begin accruing 250 practicum hours. The **BBS** does not designate what those 12 units must cover, leaving that decision up to each school. Western has designated that prior to accruing any supervised hours, students must complete six classes. These courses are felt to be basic; covering the bare minimum requirements to prepare students to begin accruing their supervised hours. These classes are:

**CNS 501** Clinical Foundations

**CNS 502** Psychological Theory & Techniques

**CNS 504** Psychotherapeutic Systems

**CNS 505** Psychopathology

**CNS 506** Legal & Ethical Issues

**CNS 507** Human Development

Western requires students to attend our yearly MFT Practicum Orientation. The MFT Practicum Orientation includes several important items that are covered in order that all students may be more prepared for their MFT Traineeship. The State requires Western to approve each training site and the supervision provided. There are specific forms and requirements that must be completed prior to beginning these hours. Once both requirements are met, the final requirement is to gain the approval of the MFT Director before beginning MFT Practicum. If all three requirements have been completed, students may begin accruing supervised MFT hours.

A requirement of the State is that students complete six semester units of Practicum class. That is Western's MFT Practicum **1**, **2**, & **3** which are typically taken in the last year of the MFT program. These classes must be taken in order, beginning with Practicum 1 in the first semester. As long as a student is enrolled in Western's MFT program and seeing clients, they must be enrolled in a Practicum class. For those students who complete all three Practicum classes and are still enrolled in Western while seeing clients, they must take the Advanced Practicum class until they graduate.

Hopefully this information will be helpful to you in clarifying the State's and Western's policies for obtaining your MFT supervised experience. Please contact Dan Jackowitz if you have questions at 408-356-6889 ext 414 or [danj@westernseminary.edu](mailto:danj@westernseminary.edu)

**Judith Needham, Ph.D., LMFT**  
**MFT Program Director**

**Dan Jackowitz, LMFT**  
**MFT Administrative Coordinator**