

## **Couple and Family Therapy Services Program**

Adler Community Health Services' Couple & Family Services Program trains therapy externs who comply with the standards established by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), which include:

- Professional identity as a Marriage and Family Therapy Professional
- Relational/systemic philosophy and ethics as laid out in the AAMFT Code of Ethics
- Multi-culturally informed, globally-minded perspective
- Promotion of inclusion, respect for diversity, non-discrimination, and social responsibility from a perspective that is appreciative of the effects of larger sociocultural factors on experience.

### **Program Goals**

The CFS therapy externs are evaluated based on the Student Learning Outcomes established by Adler University's M.A. and Doctoral Programs in Couple and Family Therapy, which are:

- To understand and apply systems, modern, and postmodern Couple and Family Therapy theories;
- To assess ethical, legal, and professional issues related to clinical practice;
- To demonstrate cultural competency in practicing Couple and Family Therapy with diverse populations;
- To display proficiency in clinical skills in the practice of Couple and Family Therapy;
- To demonstrate knowledge of Adlerian principles that can complement systemic work with couples, families, and individuals;
- To illustrate knowledge and integration of Couple and Family Therapy research;
- To describe, understand, and identify issues of social justice, social responsibility, and oppression with couples and families; and
- To establish a clear professional identity as a Couple and Family Therapist.

### **Program Objectives**

Based on these standards and to achieve the program goal, the program provides training and experiences to achieve the following objectives:

- Knowledge of and skill in a range of Couple and Family Therapy theories and methods
- Knowledge of and skill in case conceptualization and treatment planning
- Knowledge of and skill in progress note taking, report writing and record keeping
- Knowledge of and skill in the integration of research and practice
- Knowledge of and sensitivity to individual and cultural diversity
- Knowledge of and skill in identifying issues of social justice, social responsibility, and oppression with couples, families and individuals.
- Knowledge of and skill in Adlerian concepts and principles that can complement systemic work with couples, families, and individuals.
- Knowledge and appreciation of treating a person holistically and in their context
- Knowledge of and skill in consultation and community education

Upon completion of the practicum, CFS therapy externs, therefore, are expected to demonstrate the following:

- Competency in the areas of the therapeutic relationship, assessment, and intervention, and beginning skills in consultation/education
- Understanding of the importance of disciplined inquiry and the integration of research in providing clinical services
- Appreciation of and respect for the role of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, religion, age, and other aspects of individual and cultural diversity in providing services and working with couples, families, and individuals
- A basic understanding of key concepts of Adlerian theory and practice that can complement systemic work with couples, families, and individuals.
- Sensitivity to the importance of the environmental contexts that may contribute to the overall health of a couple, family, and individual
- Individual responsibility, cooperation, and collaboration in working with others and a commitment to contributing to the greater good of the community; and
- Commitment to the highest standards of professional ethics, lifelong learning, and professional development.

### **Practicum Training Activities**

The ACHS service delivery model involves developing partnerships with community agencies who serve underserved and disadvantaged populations and providing on-site behavioral health services at those partner sites. Therapy externs provide service at partner sites, receive supervision and participate in meetings throughout the practicum. Therapy externs are expected to provide at least 1,000 hours over the course of the training year, for an average of 20 hours per week including two days at a community site and four hours for supervision and meetings.

Therapy practicum activities include:

- Service (*Two eight-hour days*)
  - Psychotherapy (individual, couple, family, group) *300 hours total*
- Supervision
  - Individual Supervision *1 hour per week*
  - Group Site Supervision *1 hour per week*
- Didactic Training
  - Therapy Didactic *1 hour per week*
  - Therapy Case Conference *1 hour per week*

### **Supervision**

The Couple and Family Services Program is committed to relational/systemic-oriented supervision. The CFS therapy externs will receive supervision from an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate each week in which they are seeing clients. Additional supervision may be provided by AAMFT Approved Supervisor equivalents or state approved

supervisors. The CFS therapy externs will receive one hour of individual supervision (one supervisor with one or two supervisees) and one hour of group site supervision (one supervisor and eight or fewer therapy externs) with an emphasis on supervision utilizing observable data.

Each therapy extern is assigned to a licensed clinical supervisor. The licensed clinical supervisor of a case is the legal and ethical owner of the case. Therapy externs may seek consultation with other clinicians, but all clinical decisions are the responsibility of the licensed clinical supervisor of the case. The licensed clinical supervisor is ultimately liable for each case and for decisions rendered about each case. In pressing circumstances, all ACHS staff clinicians are available to provide opinions, advice and recommendations about a case if a therapy extern's supervisor is not available at that moment, but the ultimate arbiter in decisions relating to a case is the therapy extern's assigned licensed clinical supervisor.

Therapy externs should make every effort to video/audio record the therapy sessions. After the case supervisor reviews the recorded session, the therapy extern will erase the session. Session recordings are only permissible with informed consent from the client and when HIPPA compliant recording technology is used. Digital audio recorders are provided for therapy externs.

*CFT Doctoral students who have completed the AAMFT 30-hour Fundamentals of Supervision course and are under ongoing supervision of supervision by a current AAMFT Approved Supervisor Mentor may be given an opportunity to provide secondary supervision to Master level CFS therapy externs, if available.*

### **Developing a Professional Identity**

Therapy externs are expected to approach all aspects of the program with appropriate professional disposition. Examples of appropriate professional dispositions include but are not limited to the following: therapy externs must demonstrate a commitment to personal and professional growth; evidence appropriate attention to self-care (including voluntary personal therapy if indicated); evidence an obvious openness to clinical supervision and feedback; demonstrate respect, integrity, honesty in interactions with clients, peers, and supervisors, and follow strict adherence to ethical and legal codes of practice and behavior.

Therapy externs are expected to be mindful with respect to the differences of others. Supervision and clinical discussions will invite an open airing of thoughtful and responsible expressions of opinion and intellectual position. Philosophical difference and disagreement is not only permissible, it is welcome. However, views of intolerance and/or bigotry are both disrespectful and unprofessional and they will be prohibited. Discrimination with respect to gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, physical ability and religious preference is unethical in our professional roles and unlawful in educational settings.

Each activity of the program is designed to afford an opportunity for therapy externs to work toward the professional identity of a couple and family therapist. Therapy externs are encouraged to see their supervisors as mentors toward this end and to support each other with this identity shift.