

Respect for Diversity

The Online Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program is committed to creating a learning context that is characterized by the inclusion of multiple groups in the student body and faculty. Further, the faculty and program leadership view matters of diversity as integral to the foundational curriculum and foundational practice component. The program defines diversity as acknowledgment and acceptance of individual factors including but not limited to: race, age, gender, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, housing status, immigration status, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, and religious and spiritual practices. The program aspires to include representation of these contextual factors in the student body and faculty.

The university's mission is to “educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.” The mission of MFT Online is to graduate clinically competent, ethical, and professionally engaged marriage and family therapists. More specifically, students and graduates will provide effective intervention to diverse couples, families, and individuals and cultivate a sense of vocation informed by Christian principles.

Our calling as people of faith is to be Christ's body for mission and service in the world. As faculty and students in ACU's online marriage and family therapy program, we aspire to serve our clients faithfully by learning the science of marriage and family therapy and applying it skillfully and ethically. The course of study in the program requires a commitment to the Christian principles of honesty, integrity, and hospitality. It is with the principle of hospitality in mind that we aspire to celebrate the gift of diversity by employing faculty and recruiting students with diverse ethnicities, experiences, interests, abilities, and training. Because the program aspires to graduate clinically competent, ethical, and professionally engaged marriage and family therapists, the curriculum and practice component seeks to be enriched by diverse ideas, thoughts and perspectives.

Faculty and staff within ACU, and within the Online MFT program, understand that creating a learning environment that accepts and respects diversity requires intentional practice. Such a learning environment must extend beyond the classroom. A total learning environment in which respect for, and acceptance of, diversity must be cultivated explicitly and implicitly throughout the program. Explicit content on diversity is integrated throughout the curriculum and taught by instructors who model respect for, and appreciation of, diversity. This culminates in a required emphasis in the final Capstone presentation required of each student. Implicitly, the Online MFT program models respect for, and appreciation of, diversity in its policies, procedures, recruiting, daily practices, and attitudes. As a professional MFT training program in the landscape of Christian higher education, appreciating and respecting all humans, regardless of differences, is of utmost importance.