SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY'S

Medical Family Therapy

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Program benefits

A post-master's certification, or continuing education credits, from SPU's MedFT Certificate program can open doors in the growing field of collaborative health care. Students in the program learn skills that will equip them to provide psychosocial and spiritual services in behavioral health care environments.

Families coping with challenging medical concerns need the support of a collaborative health care team. Behavioral health and spiritual health providers who wish to participate in such teams will benefit from training in Medical Family Therapy. Health care providers who wish to understand and effectively intervene in the psychosocial and spiritual implications of illness will also benefit.

Filling a great need

There is a growing need for sound training in integrative and collaborative health care. The health care delivery system is struggling to provide a model that meets the needs of the consumer, payer, and insurer. Therefore, the medical field has developed integrated health care teams to address the physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational needs of patients. For years, *The Lancet*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The New England Journal of Medicine,* and the journal of *Families, Systems & Health* have published studies showing that an integrated treatment protocol resulted in prolonged survival rates, significant cost savings, and an increased quality of life for patients coping with both acute and chronic illnesses including cancer, heart disease, and depression.

Professional outcomes

Seattle Pacific University has seen an increase in MedFT alumni obtaining jobs with different medical centers working with infertility, cancer, heart disease, chronic pain, mood disorders, diabetes, and other chronic conditions, as well as working closely with medical staff while working out of their own private or group practice. Community Mental Health agencies are moving toward integrative care and are seeking MedFTs to help build relationships with medical providers and clinics. Master's-level students and post-masters practitioners with advanced training in medical family therapy can become a vital part of a collaborative health care team. This is an ideal time to join the movement toward integrated health care that focuses on the needs of the whole person and their family system.

Medical Family Therapists offer specialized mental health treatment in the following areas:

- Depression, anxiety, feeling "stuck" in negative thought patterns related to medical conditions
- Dealing with initial diagnosis of illness, making lifestyle adjustments, negotiating family role changes
- Difficulties with adherence to prescribed health regimens and family coordination
- Difficult discussions and relationship difficulties that might arise or have worsened
- Family transitions, caregiver support, couple communication enrichment
- Diabetes "burnout" or difficulties related to burdensome self-care demands of chronic illness
- Parent/child power struggles and relationship conflicts around medication and self-management
- Issues with body image and self-esteem
- Grief and loss related to physical health, illness, anticipated loss, transitions, and death
- Cancer diagnosis, treatment, and recovery
- Chronic pain and chronic illness

continued

Certificate structure

For most students, certification can be accomplished over a two-year period by taking one to three classes per quarter during the first year, and four internship/practicum quarters during the second year. The clinical MDFT internship and accompanying practicum course requires 10 to 30 hours a week working on site as a MDFT intern at one of our approved sites and 2 hours a week of supervision practicum. Clinical MDFT internship sites are located in a variety of facilities including primary healthcare, cancer care, as well as other medical specialties. For students concurrently enrolled in a mental health master's degree, some part-time internships can be done concurrently with the clinical master's degree or completed after graduation from that program (the two programs are separately completed). Students concurrently enrolled in a theology program would complete an 8-credit medical chaplaincy internship approved by their program or a thesis in medical chaplaincy topic approved by their program combined with an independent study or other course to complete the 8 hours of MDFT internship requirement.

- Graduate students already enrolled in a mental health or theology graduate program at SPU may earn the Certificate by taking six MDFT seminar courses and completing eight MDFT internship credits.
- Professionals who have already concluded a graduate degree in mental health or theology/chaplaincy, either at SPU or at another institution, are also required to take 14 credits (six seminar plus eight practicum credits).
- Courses can be taken for transcript credit without the intent of completing the Certificate or doing the Internship. Check with your program and university about transfer credit processes and permissions. Check with your professional licensure board for their policy for using university courses for continuing education requirements.
- Courses are offered each term. Please visit SPU's "Graduate Time Schedule"— **Medical Family Therapy Courses**
- Visit **spu.edu/medft**

COURSES OFFERED — VARY BY YEAR	CREDITS*
BPSS Care & Collaboration in Medical Family Therapy	1
Motivational Interviewing to Improve Patient & Family Health	1
Assessment & Tools for Medical Family Therapy	1
The Brain Savvy Therapist	1
Spirituality & Health	1
Collaboration & Practice Roles in Integrated Care	1
Grief, Death & Families	1
Trauma-Informed Care in Medical Family Therapy	1
Specialty Practice in Medical Family Therapy (topic rotates)	1
Internship under SPU Faculty Supervision	8

** Not a summative list*

For more information contact:
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gradadmissions@spu.edu

Or the Program Director: ProutyA@spu.edu

spu.edu/medft

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