Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: Community, Family, and Addiction Services Department (CFAS)

Onsite Review Dates: March 8 – 10, 2015

Name of Reviewers
Internal:
Please include name, title, and Department

External:
Virginia Solis Zuiker, Associate Professor, Family Social Science, University of Minnesota

I. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan
Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Vision, Mission and Goals
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Strategic Plan
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The vision, mission, and goal statements for this department for Community, Family, and Addiction Services (CFAS) Department and Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program are congruent with the mission statement of Texas Tech University. These statements are clearly stated and include elements of research, instruction, and service with an emphasis on excellence and diversity. Also, these statements are clearly stated in the graduate student handbook.

II. Program Curriculum
Please evaluate the following:

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
Program learning outcomes assessment
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Both the documents provided by the department to the review team and the comments shared by the leaders in the department and the faculty are in alignment. The Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Ph.D. graduate program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) and the program curriculum aligns with the COAMFTE guidelines of what needs to be in an accredited MFT graduate program. The program learning outcome statements are clearly written and provide much detail in what the expectations are for graduate students graduating from either the masters or the doctoral graduate programs. Additionally, the document details the expectations of faculty in contributing to the graduate program and to the profession. Members of this community will contribute to scholarship, provide professional clinical services, provide instruction, and give service to the university, and to the profession. It is clearly stated that these will be carried out in an environment that is respectful of diversity in others.

Since the doctoral graduate program is accredited by COAMFTE, the program curriculum is comparable to their peer programs. Also, COAMFTE requires these institutions to have their program curriculum be stated in student learning outcomes as a way to measure their achievement of each of the learning outcomes. This program has stated their program curriculum in this manner. The MFT master’s graduate program is not yet accredited, but the faculties are working towards having the master’s program accredited in the near future. The MFT master’s graduate program can be considered as a pipeline into the MFT Ph.D. graduate program.

The niche for this graduate program is its focus on addictive disorders and recovery studies (ADRS). The MFT graduate program at both the masters and doctoral level are required to take ADRS courses as part of their graduate program curriculum. Very few MFT programs offer this focus ADRS in their graduate programs.

III. Faculty Productivity

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Qualifications
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Publications
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Load
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
External Grants
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Evaluations
_X__ Excellent ____ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Professional Service
_X__ Excellent ____ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Community Service
_X__ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

This academic unit is unique compared to many academic units at Texas Tech University, since their faculties are expected to be leaders in research, instruction, and outreach which includes a clinical component; however it is similar to other COAMFTE accredited graduate programs, since these programs are required to have a clinical component or access to clinical sites for their graduate students to gain clinical experience.

Faculties feel very supportive from the dean’s office and the college. A challenge for faculty with clinical appointments is the clinical requirement along with the research and instruction mandates as one goes through the tenure process.

Currently, this department has few senior faculty members, at least 2 at the full professor level, with the others being at the associate and assistant professor level. Faculties commented on potential for collaboration with each other, integration of research and clinical aspects, working across departments in the college and the university, and good community relations due to the Family Therapy Clinic which housed in this department. Start-up funds for new faculty have been good once they have been awarded, but the process has often times been finalized late in the hiring process.

The MFT faculties are actively engaged in scholarship each year. On average about 6 peer review publications per year have been published since 2011 by the 12 MFT faculties collectively for a total of 72 publications in this time period. Collectively, this department has produced at least 8 presentations/posters each year by the 12 MFT faculties since 2011 totally around 95 presentations/posters in this time period. Graduate faculty are publishing and presenting their research with their current and former graduate students. The graduate faculty have been sought out to be keynote speakers, by media representatives, content experts, to serve as editor/editorial, to serve on executive boards, and to serve as officers for their professional organizations. As well as being asked to serve in administrative roles within the department and the college. Three of the faculties are members of the Texas Tech Teaching Academy.

A barrier expressed amongst faculty was balancing clinical and research training and having it recognized and acknowledge as part of their tenure process.
IV. Students and Graduates

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

**Time to degree**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Retention**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Graduate rates**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Enrollment**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Demographics**

___ Excellent ___ Very Good _ X_ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Number of degrees conferred annually**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Support Services**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Job Placement**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

**Student/ Faculty Ratio**

_ X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

When meeting with the graduate students, there were at least 20+ graduate students who showed up to voice their support of the MFT graduate program. These graduate students were mainly master’s students and at least 5 Ph.D. level graduate students who were mainly in their first or second year of their doctoral program. These students voiced that they felt the graduate program was a collaborative program, it was engaged with the community and held in high esteem due to the Family Therapy Clinic, and they appreciated the mentoring and training of the graduate program. They felt that they were supported both financially and emotionally. It was also expressed that the department was welcoming to international students. They came to this graduate program at Texas Tech due to its national reputation and they felt that the program helped them to be successful and felt supportive by the graduate faculty. Both the masters and doctoral students expressed that these two groups were allowed and felt comfortable interacting with each other and treated as one group versus separate programs (masters and Ph.D.). One graduate student expressed that she felt that faculty took their concerns seriously and helped her to problem solve when she had issues. It was expressed that faculty helped the students to network especially when they were attending their national conferences. They felt the program was preparing them to do research and train clinically in MFT. Also, that there were many research
opportunities for them. In sum, these graduate students felt that there was a community of collaboration, collegiality, a sense of mentorship, cooperation, and team works between and amongst graduate students and the faculty.

These graduate students had many positive comments about the graduate program. When asked if there were barriers to the graduate program, the master’s students expressed the issue with lack of funding to support master’s students. It was expressed that the priority of student funding was given first to Ph.D. students and then to master’s students. Another concern was voiced by the master’s graduate students that they did not feel that they understood what it took to do a thesis option for their master’s graduate program. MFT master’s graduate student can either choose to write a thesis or take additional clinical hours for a clinical master’s degree. These students felt that when they finally got the research interest that it was in essence too late to switch over to earn a master’s degree with a thesis option and wished that there had been more discussion of this option earlier in their graduate program so that they could switch over to that degree plan.

Students felt very supportive in this graduate program. At the end of our meeting with the graduate students, one of the graduate students of color came up to me to express that in the area of diversity that she had felt supportive by the faculty when it was expressed that some clients coming to the Family Therapy Clinic might not feel comfortable being in a session with a student therapist of color. She felt that they had discussed the issue should one arise and helped her prepare for this in the event it actually happened. She felt that she was being supported as a student of color with regards to diversity.

We asked the Ph.D. students if they were going into academia did they feel prepared to be an instructor and to do research. They expressed that they were getting preparation for doing research, but that they weren’t too sure about the teaching aspect. They expressed that the university offers a 2 day workshop on teaching and the department also had a short training, but that they felt their training was more a learning by doing approach with regards to teaching versus being taught how to teach.

The graduate program appears to be comparable to its peers with regards to enrollment, degrees conferred, number of graduate students admitted into the program, and time to degree. MFT graduates of this department have been successful in locating and obtaining both clinical positions and academic positions. Along with their master’s graduate students have also been able to find careers as clinicians and many have gone on to pursue doctorate educations. Graduate students are encouraged and have been publishing with their faculty members and amongst graduate students. In reviewing the materials sent to the reviewers, it appears that the average time to completing a MFT master’s degree and a MFT Ph.D. degree is comparable to other peer institutions.

In reviewing the materials sent to the reviewers, it appears that MFT graduate program at Texas Tech and its peer institution are not doing well in recruiting and retaining students of color. In a state/region that has so much diversity with respect to the Latino/Hispanic and African American populations, it would make sense to try to recruit more students of color to this graduate program.
V.  Facilities and Resources

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Facilities
_X_ Excellent __ Very Good __ Good __ Needs Improvement

Facility Support Resources
_X__ Excellent __ Very Good __ Good __ Needs Improvement

Financial Resources
_X__ Excellent __ Very Good __ Good __ Needs Improvement

Staff Resources
_X__ Excellent __ Very Good __ Good __ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

On our onsite campus visit, one could see that there is much renovation occurring in the College of Human Sciences at Texas Tech University. Specifically, in the Community, Family, and Addiction Services Department there was construction taking place. For example, a new site was being added for the Neuroimaging and Violence research and remodeling of the Family Therapy Clinic. We toured the Center for Collegiate Recovery Communities and were impressed by the facilities and programing that is going on in this center.

VI.  Overall Ranking

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.

The Institute and Center structure offers a unique competitive advantage to its peers across the nation since it gives graduate students and faculty the opportunity to hone their clinical skills along with integrating research and instruction opportunities through each of their centers: Center for Family Systems Research & Intervention; Center for Collegiate Recovery Communities, and the Center for Addiction Recovery Research.

Considerations for this department for the near future are to add an Addiction and Recovery Ph.D. graduate program. Only one other Ph.D. graduate program is offered in the U.S. and Texas Tech would be the second graduate program to be available for those graduate students who are interested in this field.

The MFT master’s graduate program is considering accrediting its master’s degree program with COAMFTE so that both the master’s and doctoral graduate programs would be accredited. Currently, only the Ph.D. program is accredited. This change could potentially increase both their out of state and in state graduate student enrollment at the master’s level once the MFT master’s program has been approved for accreditation. Additionally, the MFT master’s degree program will serve and continue to serve as a pipeline into the MFT Ph.D. graduate program.
Faculty in the past have been cautious with online learning, however currently there are several classes that are being developed as online courses.

It was apparent from our meeting with the dean that she was supportive of this department and saw great potential from this department. It was also apparent that faculty felt supportive from their dean. The Dean also used the term collaboration in her conversation with the review team. She sees the MFT graduate program being involved with Recovery Service and Addiction Science and sees links to collaboration within the department, the college, and across the university. She expressed that there could be a link with obesity and addiction and financial planning with addiction specifically with its impact to retirement planning.

Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.

During our onsite campus visit, we heard several terms mentioned by the leaders in the department, the faculty, the graduate students, and the dean of the college. The terms we heard either directly mentioned and/or alluded to were community of collaboration, collegiality, and sense of being supported.

This department is composed with many faculties who are at the associate and assistant professor levels. It would be helpful to have a mentor committee that would support the faculty member who is going through the tenure process with ideas and suggestions on how to improve their tenure dossier and make them a stronger candidate for promotion and tenure. For example, if you had an assistant professor, the committee membership would include the assistant professor, a senior faculty member in the department, and a senior faculty member in the college. This committee could meet twice a year with the assistant professor to discuss his/her goals for that academic year and also have the faculty member write their teaching, research, and outreach philosophies so that when it is the year to come up for tenure these documents have been written and reviewed before they are sent out. This committee would be a mentoring committee to give feedback to the assistant professor and let he/she know if they were on track for promotion i.e. it would act as a support group for the faculty member. This process should carry over when the assistant professor is tenured and promoted to associate professor and be completed when the faculty member is a full professor.

It was apparent that student priority funding was given first to Ph.D. students and then to Master’s students. When the MFT master’s graduate program becomes accredited with COAMFTE and the graduate program starts to draw both in state and out of state master’s graduate students, funding sources will be needed to attract these students and to retain them. Along this line, more awareness of where graduate students specifically master’s students can apply for scholarships, grants, and assistantships is needed. The master’s graduate students did not feel confident that they knew where there were sources; perhaps covering this in one of the graduate classes that is specifically for master’s students, sending out emails on a listserv when funding opportunities come available, and posting such announcements on a bulletin board in the department or an announcement monitor screen for those in the department to view.

As the potential for the graduate student population to increase and the potential to bring in more diverse graduate students, having targeted faculty searches for faculty of color would be beneficial. So, that graduate students of color can see and be mentored by faculty of color. One way to recruit students of color would be to have faculty and/or graduate students visit regions of the state where there are large numbers of Latino/Hispanic undergraduate students and African American undergraduate students to entice them to apply to this program. Another idea is to reach out to the Lubbock Hispanic/Latino community and West Texas Hispanic/Latino community and recruit undergraduate students from this region to apply to this graduate program.
With regards to the MFT master’s graduate students, being more explicit with the students early on what the thesis option entails so that if they find that they are interested in doing research that they can switch to this option sooner. This could be done in a class with master’s students and/or at one of the graduate student association meetings.

Somewhere within the university system, there could be a semester and/or yearlong training of becoming a future faculty member and what that entails so that Ph.D. graduate students will feel more prepared for the teaching aspect of academia.