

WAC 246-809-121 Program equivalency. (1) To meet the program equivalency requirement, an applicant must have course work equivalent to a master's or doctoral degree in each area of study described in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) A total of forty-five semester credits or sixty quarter credits are required in the nine areas of study as described in this subsection. A minimum of twenty-seven semester credits or thirty-six quarter credits are required in the first five areas of study: Marital and family systems, marital and family therapy, individual development psychopathology, human sexuality, and research. Distribution of the course work is as follows:

(a) Marital and family systems. An applicant must have taken a minimum of six semester or eight quarter credits in marital and family systems. Marital and family systems is a fundamental introduction to the systems approach to intervention. The student should learn to think in systems terms on a number of levels across a wide variety of family structures, and regarding a diverse range of presenting problems. While the most intense focus may be on the nuclear family (in both its traditional and alternative forms), models should be taught which integrate information regarding the marital, sibling, and individual subsystems, as well as the family of origin and external societal influences. Developmental aspects of family functioning should also be considered of the family system; it also provides a theoretical basis for treatment strategy. Some material may be drawn from familiar sources such as family sociology, but it should be integrated with recent clinically oriented systems concepts. Supplemental studies may include family simulation, the observation of well families, and study of the student's family of origin.

(b) Marital and family therapy. An applicant must have taken a minimum of six semester or eight quarter credits in marital and family therapy. Marital and family therapy is intended to provide a substantive understanding of the major theories of systems change and the applied practices evolving from each orientation. Major theoretical approaches to be surveyed might include strategic, structural, experiential, neoanalytical (e.g., object relations), communications, and behavioral. Applied studies should consider the range of technique associated with each orientation, as well as a variety of treatment structures, including individual, concurrent, collaborative, conjoint marital, marital group, transgenerational, and network therapies.

(c) Individual development. An applicant must have taken a minimum of two semester credits or three quarter credits in individual development. A course in this area is intended to provide a knowledge of individual personality development and its normal and abnormal manifestations. The student should have relevant course work in human development across the life span, and in personality theory. An attempt should be made to integrate this material with systems concepts. Several of the courses in this category may be required as prerequisites for some degree programs.

(d) Psychopathology. An applicant must have taken at least one course in psychopathology. Course work required is a minimum of two semester credits or three quarter credits.

Psychopathology is the assessment and diagnosis including familiarity with current diagnostic nomenclature, diagnostic categories and the development of treatment strategies.

(e) Human sexuality. An applicant must have taken at least one course in human sexuality. Course work required is a minimum of two semester credits or three quarter credits.

Human sexuality includes normal psycho-sexual development, sexual functioning, physiological aspects, sexual dysfunction and its treatment.

(f) Research. An applicant must have taken at least one course in research methods. Course work required is a minimum of three semester credits or four quarter credits.

The research area is intended to provide assistance to students in becoming informed consumers of research in the marital and family therapy field. Familiarity with substantive findings, together with the ability to make critical judgments as to the adequacy of research reports, is expected.

(g) Professional ethics and law. An applicant must have taken at least one course in professional ethics and law. Course work required is a minimum of three semester credits or four quarter credits.

This area is intended to contribute to the development of a professional attitude and identity. Areas of study will include professional socialization, the role of the professional organization, licensure or certification legislation, legal responsibilities, legal liabilities, ethics and family law, confidentiality, independent practice and interprofessional cooperation.

(h) Electives. An individual must take one course in an elective area. Course work required is a minimum of three semester credits or four quarter credits.

This area will vary with different institutions but is intended to provide supplemental and/or specialized supporting areas.

(i) Supervised clinical practice. An applicant may acquire up to nine semester credits or twelve quarter credits through supervised clinical practice in marriage and family therapy under the supervision of a qualified marriage and family therapist as determined by the school.

Applicants who completed a master's or doctoral degree program in marriage and family therapy, or a behavioral science master's or doctoral degree with equivalent course work, before January 1, 1997, may substitute the supervised clinical practice educational component by documenting a minimum of three years of postgraduate experience in marriage and family therapy. These hours are in addition to the two years supervised postgraduate experience required under RCW 18.225.090.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. WSR 17-13-082, § 246-809-121, filed 6/16/17, effective 7/17/17. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. WSR 09-15-039, § 246-809-121, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. WSR 01-17-113, § 246-809-121, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]