



Chaminade
University
OF HONOLULU

DOCTOR *of* MARRIAGE *and* FAMILY THERAPY

CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY OF HONOLULU

We believe in the power of education to drive positive change, broaden perspectives and deepen our understanding of one another. With transformative learning experiences, cutting-edge facilities and wraparound supports, we equip students with the skills they need to serve as leaders—ready to build stronger, healthier and more just communities.

WASC

Senior College and
University Commission

SCHOOL *of* EDUCATION *and* BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

We're on a mission to build a more equitable, educated and healthy tomorrow, inspiring our students to drive positive change and embrace innovation as they find new ways to support those they serve. From education and criminal justice to counseling, psychology and therapy, our undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs are student-focused, exceeding national standards for quality and career preparation with a focus on experiential learning and meeting community needs.



TAKE YOUR CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH A DMFT

Relationships are at the heart of what we do—and for good reason. Stronger relationships create healthier individuals, families, and communities, leading to greater resilience, adaptability, and well-being.

A **Doctor of Marriage and Family Therapy (DMFT)** degree will advance your practice and elevate your role in the MFT field—increasing your influence, and opening new career opportunities while continuing to do the meaningful work you love.

- Private practitioner and expert clinician
- Agency administrator
- Clinical supervisor
- Program developer and evaluator
- Clinical agency director
- Faculty in higher education
- Consultant for businesses and organizations

The demand for highly trained MFT clinicians is expanding, and our DMFT graduates step confidently into leadership roles in clinical practice, supervision, academia, and advocacy—helping to build stronger relationships, families and communities.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY IS **EXPECTED TO GROW 16%** FROM 2023-2033, MUCH FASTER THAN THE AVERAGE FOR ALL OCCUPATIONS. (U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, 2023)

69% OF HAWAI'I ADULTS—**130,000 PEOPLE**—IN NEED OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE WERE UNABLE TO GET TREATMENT, PUTTING HAWAI'I IN LAST PLACE FOR THE NATION. (MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA)

75% OF HAWAI'I'S YOUTH WITH MAJOR DEPRESSION—12,000 YOUNG PEOPLE—DID NOT RECEIVE MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT, RANKING HAWAI'I AT 49TH IN THE COUNTRY. (MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA)



100% ONLINE
DESIGNED FOR
ACTIVE CLINICIANS



**COHORT-BASED
LEARNING**
FOR SUPPORTIVE
EXPERIENCE



**FINISH IN AS FEW
AS 36 MONTHS**



**10-WEEK TERMS,
FOUR TERMS
PER YEAR**



**DEVELOP YOUR
DISSERTATION
THROUGHOUT
COURSEWORK**



**JOIN A COMMUNITY
AND NETWORK
OF CLINICIANS**



CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY'S DOCTOR *of* MARRIAGE *and* FAMILY THERAPY

We offer **Hawai'i's only Doctor of Marriage and Family Therapy (DMFT)** program, specifically designed for licensed mental health professionals.

Our **fully online, cohort-based program** features live and self-paced courses built around working clinicians—like you—blending synchronous and asynchronous learning for maximum flexibility.

Go beyond traditional doctoral training with robust, hands-on learning opportunities, an on-campus Marriage and Family Therapy clinic, dissertation boot camp, supervision mentoring and training, and access to residency opportunities. You'll gain credentials that will set you apart in the field of systemic therapy.

Our DMFT program is aligned with the Hawai'i-Approved Supervisor Designation, created in partnership with the Hawai'i Island Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (HIAMFT).

More than just a degree, you'll elevate your role, increase your influence, and open new career opportunities while continuing to do the meaningful work you love.

CURRICULUM

FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Develop advanced research, writing, and professional leadership skills that form the foundation of your DMFT experience.

DMFT 8000 Professional Development Seminar 1: Establish your career trajectory, research focus, and personal goals within the program.

DMFT 8010 Introduction to Clinical Research, Research: Writing & Research Ethics Master the ethical and methodological foundations of research in MFT.

DMFT 8012 Quantitative Research Methods & Statistical Analyses: Gain expertise in statistical models and data-driven decision-making for clinical and academic work.

DMFT 8013 Qualitative Methods & Analyses: Develop qualitative research skills to explore systemic and relational dynamics in therapy.

DMFT 8015 Psychotherapy Outcome and Process Research: Analyze how therapeutic interventions impact individuals, couples, and families over time.

DMFT 8022 Portfolio Planning and Development: Create a professional portfolio that integrates your dissertation, clinical expertise, and leadership development.

ADVANCED CLINICAL TRAINING & SPECIALIZATION

Deepen your clinical expertise in high-demand, specialized areas of systemic therapy.

DMFT 8052 Assessment & Diagnosis in Marriage & Family Therapy: Master complex diagnostic skills through a systemic lens.

DMFT 8055 Trauma Theory and Models with Vulnerable Populations & Systemic Approaches to Substance Treatment: Specialize in treating trauma and addiction within relational contexts.

DMFT 8060 Sex Therapy: Gain advanced competency in addressing intimacy and sexual health within couples and family therapy.

DMFT 8062 Medical Family Therapy & Introduction to Psychopharmacology: Understand the intersection of systemic therapy, medical conditions, and medication management.

DMFT 8059 MFT Through a Decolonized Lens: Centering Indigenous Healing Practices in Families: Expand your approach by integrating Indigenous healing models and culturally responsive therapy.

SUPERVISION & TEACHING CREDENTIALING (HIAMFT-Aligned for Hawai'i Supervisor Designation)
Become a clinical supervisor, educator, and leader in the field of MFT.

DMFT 8070 Fundamentals of Supervision in Marriage & Family Therapy: Build foundational skills in clinical supervision and mentorship.

DMFT 8080 Advanced Supervision 1: Learn to supervise using systemic, ethical, and developmental models.

DMFT 8081 Advanced Supervision 2: Refine skills in case consultation and supervisor-trainee dynamics.

DMFT 8082 Advanced Supervision 3: Prepare for independent supervisor credentialing and advanced mentorship roles.

DMFT 8071 Introduction to Teaching, Consultation, & Leadership: Develop skills in academic instruction, consulting, and leadership within MFT settings.

LEADERSHIP, POLICY, & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Prepare to lead, innovate, and advocate for mental health programs and policies.

DMFT 8073 Program Development, Design, & Evaluation for Families & Communities: Holistic Approaches to Prevention & Enrichment: Learn to create and evaluate large-scale mental health programs.

DMFT 8075 Family Healthcare Policy & Advocacy: Advocate for systemic change in mental health and family healthcare policy.

DISSERTATION INTEGRATION & APPLIED RESEARCH

Conduct original research, contribute valuable insights, and establish yourself as an emerging scholar in the professional and academic community.

DMFT 8990 Dissertation 1: Establish your dissertation topic and methodology with structured faculty mentorship.

DMFT 8991 Dissertation 2: Refine your research design and obtain institutional approval with faculty guidance and peer support.

DMFT 8992 Dissertation 3: Conduct data collection and begin analysis with structured feedback from faculty mentors.

DMFT 8993 Dissertation 4: Finalize your dissertation through faculty-supported revisions and prepare for the defense with comprehensive guidance.

Our DMFT curriculum is research-informed, theory-driven and practice-based. Courses seek to build upon your expertise with evidence-based, client-centered, and self-of-the-therapist learning, including a strong emphasis on diverse and culturally responsive approaches. Through a practitioner-scholar model, students engage in five core areas of coursework that prepare them for leadership roles.



FACULTY & MENTORS

Our faculty members have decades of experience in the field—as practitioners, leaders, educators and scholars. You’ll quickly find that the professionals teaching your courses are here to serve as your partners and mentors, interested in your growth as a clinician and in your leadership development for a dynamic, growing field centered on relationship-building.



BLENDINE HAWKINS, PH.D., LMFT
Director, Marriage and Family Therapy Programs
Assistant Dean, School of Education and Behavioral Sciences

With over 15 years of experience as a clinician, educator, and academic leader, Dr. Hawkins is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, AAMFT Clinical Fellow, and AAMFT-Approved Supervisor. She specializes in couples and relationship therapy and has extensive clinical experience in working with trauma, relational distress, and culturally embedded family systems. Her research focuses on intercultural couple dynamics, parent-child attachment, transnational families’ experiences, and the clinical skills and reflexivity of developing clinicians. Dr. Hawkins’ commitment to cultivating ethical, relational, and self-aware practitioners goes beyond the classroom, playing a pivotal role in advancing clinical systemic supervision practices across Hawai’i. Through ongoing program development, mentorship, and scholarship, Dr. Hawkins contributes to the growth of supervisory practice in Hawai’i, supporting the development of emerging supervisors committed to cultural humility and systemic awareness.



EMILY KAHUMOKU-FESSLER, PH.D., LMFTS
Associate Director, Doctor of Marriage and Family Therapy Program

With nearly two decades of experience in marriage and family therapy as a clinician and educator, Dr. Kahumoku-Fessler is driven by a deep commitment to strengthening mental health leadership in Hawai’i. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, AAMFT Clinical Fellow, and AAMFT-Approved Supervisor. She specializes in working with couples, sex therapy, and trauma-informed care and is certified in Accelerated Resolution Therapy (ART). Her recent research explores the use of ART with elite athletes to enhance performance and mental resilience. Passionate about fostering the art and science of becoming a leader in the mental health field, Dr. Kahumoku-Fessler is dedicated to training the next generation of culturally responsive and systemically minded clinicians who will help address the growing need for skilled mental health professionals in Hawai’i.



SONJA BIGALKE-BANNAN, MSW, LCSW

Bigalke-Bannan specializes in complex trauma treatment and advocacy. She is the owner of Heart Horses, an equine-assisted psychotherapy program, and the Clinical Administrator of Pearl Haven, an inpatient treatment program for youth with complex trauma. She previously served as Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers-Hawai’i for 10 years, leading statewide advocacy and non-profit initiatives. In 2023, she received the NASW Hawai’i Chapter Practitioner of the Year Award.

JANET BRITO, PH.D., LCSW

Dr. Brito is a nationally certified Latinx sex therapist, supervisor, speaker, trainer, and author with over 20 years of experience in the field. She is a graduate of the Fellowship Program in Human Sexuality at the University of Minnesota Medical School and is the founder and owner of the Hawaii Center for Sexual and Relationship Health, a group practice that specializes in relationship and sex therapy, sexual behavior, and gender and sexually diverse populations.



ABBY HALSTON, ED.D., LMFT

Dr. Halston is an accomplished marriage and family therapist who teaches, supervises, and conducts research on social media usage, relationship satisfaction, and dating practices. She has been published in the International Journal of Psychological Studies, the International Journal of Social Science Invention, and the Journal of Education, Teaching and Social Studies. Dr. Halston is an active professional member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy as well as serving on the board in the Hawai’i Association of Marriage and Family Therapy.

KIRSTEN LIND SEAL, PH.D., LMFT

Dr. Lind Seal is an experienced marriage and family therapist who teaches, trains, speaks, writes, and consults locally, nationally, and internationally on ethical and legal issues in the MFT profession. Her research has been published in the Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy, the Journal of Couple and Family Relationships, and she publishes regularly in the Psychotherapy Networker. Dr. Lind-Seal appears biweekly on WCCO (CBS) TV’s midmorning show Relationship Reboot providing information to the public about healthy families and relationships.



DEANNA LINVILLE, PH.D., LMFT

Dr. Linville is an Executive and Clinical Research Director and Co-Founder of the Center for Transformative Healing. She led the development and testing of multiple community-based clinical intervention studies across the last 12 years. She is the co-principal investigator for a multi-year grant-funded study using community-based participatory action research methods to understand the access barriers and mental health needs of current and former foster youth. Dr. Linville is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Oregon & Washington, and an American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor.

NICOLE WRIGHT, PSY.D., CSAC

Dr. Wright is a licensed clinical psychologist and certified substance abuse counselor. She is the Director of the Substance Abuse Treatment Program and Integrated Chronic Pain Management departments at Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and the Chief Behavioral Health Officer at Wahiawā Center for Community Health. She serves as the co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of IMUA Heart and as a clinical psychologist in the Hawai’i Department of Education’s school-based behavioral health program and was elected the first president of the National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors’ Hawai’i affiliate in 2022. She speaks nationally on health inequities and social determinants of health.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



"My experience in Chaminade's DMFT program has been wonderful. One of the great things is the faculty support ... and tight-knit cohort. What drove me to this program was the ability to become a quality clinician and serve my community. I can implement what I learned directly into my practice."

Yvonne Manupuna, LMFT, DMFT '25



"I highly recommend the DMFT program at Chaminade because it is well-suited for working professionals, the curriculum is specifically designed for the field of Marriage and Family therapy, and the faculty is incredibly supportive and understanding."

Traci Kazuko Muramoto, LMFT, DMFT '25



"The entire DMFT faculty has been amazing and they're the best in the field. We're learning from the cream of the crop. If you're looking for a program that is going to support and challenge you, this is the one for you."

Bridget Duncan, LMFT, DMFT '26

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

We welcome applicants who have a master's degree in any clinical and counseling-related fields, such as mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, counseling psychology, and social work.

- Actively working towards or have achieved your Licensure in Marriage and Family Therapy (LMFT) and are clinically active
- Completed application
- Official transcripts from all colleges/universities attended
- Current professional resume/CV
- Personal statement
- Academic writing sample
- Two (2) recommendation letters
- Admissions interview
- Proof of clinical activity
- Proof of clinical activity

READY TO GET STARTED OR HAVE QUESTIONS? WE'RE HAPPY TO HELP!

BLENDINE HAWKINS, PHD, LMFT

Director, Doctor of Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Associate Dean, School of Education and Behavioral Sciences
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ENROLLMENT ADVISOR

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LEARN MORE AT
[CHAMINADE.EDU/DMFT](https://chaminade.edu/dmft)



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ONLINE INFORMATION
SESSION



START YOUR
APPLICATION TODAY



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