**Section 1283.30 Education**

a) An applicant for a license as a marriage and family therapist shall hold one of the following:

1) A master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a regionally accredited educational institution;

2) A master's or doctoral degree from a regionally accredited educational institution (by the U.S. Office of Education) in marriage and family therapy or in a related field (i.e., behavioral science or mental health) with an equivalent course of study in marriage and family therapy as set forth in subsection (b); or

3) A master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by either the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy or the Commission on Accreditation for Counseling Related Educational Programs.

b) An applicant must have completed a minimum of 48 semester hours or equivalent hours of graduate coursework. The applicant's graduate coursework, at a minimum, shall be substantially equivalent to the curriculum listed in this subsection (b). Courses are evaluated according to course content rather than course title. For the purpose of this Section, course shall be defined as an integrated, organized course of study. No student designed courses, independent study courses, workshops, on-line or correspondence courses may be used to satisfy the core courses. Course descriptions and syllabi are required for courses whose titles do not reflect the content described as follows:

1) Individual Development and Family Relations. Topics in marriage and family studies must be addressed in a minimum of 1 course (3 semester or 4 quarter hours or equivalent). Topics that may be counted toward this area of study include family development and family interactional patterns across the life cycle of the individual as well as the family. Courses may include the study of: family life cycle; theories of family development; marriage and/or family dynamics; sociology of the family; families under stress; the contemporary family; social, cultural, and spiritual foundations of family life; the cross-cultural family; gender studies; youth/adult/aging and the family; family subsystems; interpersonal relationships (marriage, parenting, sibling); human development; lifestyle and career development; personality theory; and human sexuality.

2) Theoretical Foundations and Clinical Practice.

A) Topics in marriage and family therapy must be addressed in a minimum of 6 courses (18 semester or 24 quarter hours or equivalent). The following topics must be covered:

i) the historical development, theoretical and empirical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions of the field of marriage and family therapy;

ii) overview of major clinical theories of marital and family therapy that offer conceptualizations and methods for working conjointly with two or more clients present in therapy sessions who are in significant relationships with each other outside the therapy context. These clinical theories shall include those in major textbooks in marriage and family therapy, such as: communications, contextual, experiential, object relations, strategic, behavioral, structural, systemic, transgenerational;

iii) assessment and evaluation of individuals (children, adolescents, and adults), couples and families;

iv) treatment and intervention methods for working with individuals (children, adolescents and adults), couples, families and groups in therapy;

v) assessment and treatment of mental, emotional, behavioral and interpersonal disorders and psychopathology, including making clinical assessments, certifying diagnoses, prescribing treatment and signing off on treatment plans for persons with mental illnesses or other clinical disorders;

vi) contemporary issues, which include but are not limited to gender, violence, addictions, abuse, psychopharmacology, physical health and illness in the treatment of individuals, couples, and families from a relational/systemic perspective; sexual functioning, sexual orientation, and sex therapy as they relate to couple, marriage and family therapy theory and practice; significant material on diversity and discrimination as it relates to couple and family therapy theory and practice;

vii) crisis intervention.

B) The coursework in this subsection (b)(2) must balance methods for working individually (one client in a therapy session), and for working conjointly with at least two clients present in therapy sessions who are in significant relationships with each other outside the therapy context, and must include methods for working with groups.

3) Professional Studies and Ethics. Topics in professional studies and ethics must be addressed in a minimum of 1 course (3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours or equivalent) that includes unique professional and ethical situations involved with conjoint therapies. Topics that may be counted toward this area of study include: professional socialization and the role of the professional organization; legal responsibilities and liabilities; independent practice and interprofessional cooperation; ethics; family law; unique professional and ethical situations involved with conjoint therapies.

4) Research. Topics in research must be addressed in a minimum of 1 course (3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours or equivalent). Topics that may be counted toward this area of study include: research design and methods; statistics; research in a mental health field.

5) Clinical Practicum/Internship. (300 hours) – 15 hours per week, approximately 8-10 hours in face-to-face contact with individuals, couples, families and groups for the purpose of assessment, diagnosis and treatment.)

c) In evaluating coursework from another jurisdiction, the Marriage and Family Therapy Disciplinary and Licensing Board (Board) may require documentation such as, but not limited to, an evaluation by a foreign equivalency documentation service indicating that the applicant's graduate program is equivalent to a graduate program in this country.

d) An individual who has taught a graduate level course in a regionally accredited educational institution in any of the areas listed in subsection (b) shall receive credit for the course. One course taught is equivalent to one course taken. Repetitive teaching of the same course may only be counted as one course. Syllabi and reading lists shall be submitted in order to obtain credit.

e) Courses taken at a post-degree institution may count as equivalent for an education requirement of subsection (b) if the institution's training program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) or meets the following requirements:

1) The institution's program is established to achieve coherent mission and training objectives and the program has as its primary objective the training of marriage and family therapists.

2) The specific course submitted as equivalent to those defined in subsection (b) is taught by faculty who hold graduate degrees and are trained and credentialed in the field in which they teach.

3) Courses must be offered by an established, identifiable facility or agency.

4) Courses must be ongoing and additive (offered at the same place over a specific period of time and available on an ongoing basis) or offered off site by an acceptable post degree institution with an established, identifiable home-base facility or agency.

5) Courses must include outlines, clear description of content, appropriate bibliography, and other indications or meet generally acceptable criteria for academic offerings.

6) Correspondence courses are not acceptable.

f) Credit for courses taken pursuant to subsection (e) will be given on a semester-hour equivalency basis which is 15 classroom hours per semester credit. Evaluation of course work is on a case-by-case basis for each applicant. To receive credit, an applicant must submit a syllabus for each course, proof of acceptable completion of the course, and all documentation necessary to demonstrate that the post-degree institution and the specific course meet all the requirements of subsection (e).

g) A thesis or dissertation completed as a requirement of the first qualifying degree will not be counted as equivalent for an education requirement of subsection (b).

h) Applicants who hold non-clinical qualifying degrees, or whose practicum/internship was in areas other than marriage and family therapy, may document the practicum requirement with their first 300 post-graduate client contact hours supervised by an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor, supervisor-in-training or a supervisor who meets the requirements set forth in Section 1283.21 of this Part.

i) The Department of Financial and Professional Regulation-Division of Professional Regulation (Division), upon the recommendation of the Board, has determined that marriage and family therapy programs accredited by either the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy or the Commission on Accreditation for Counseling Related Educational Programs meet the minimum criteria set forth in this Section and are, therefore, approved.

Source: Amended at 31 Ill. Reg. 4711, effective March 9, 2007)