

**SCHOOL PERFORMANCE FACT SHEET,  
WESTERN INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH (WISR):  
MA PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGY  
LEADING TOWARD THE MFT LICENSE**

**December 23, 2011**

**Prepared for the 2010 Annual Report to BPPE  
Submitted to All Prospective WISR MFT Students  
subsequent to December 23, 2011**

**Data Gathering Methods**

In order to find out about our MFT alumni and their recent professional jobs and performance on the MFT licensing exams, we were able to interview 14 of our 18 alumni who have completed the program since 2000. In addition, in recent years, we have received updates on the professional progress of most all of our other MFT graduates dating back to 1990. We also cross-referenced what they told us with data obtained from the BBS on both the initial Standard Exam and the second exam or Clinical Vignette exam for the period January 1, 2008 through June 30, 2010. We were not able to obtain BBS data for the period July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010; however, interviews with alumni suggest that none of them took exams during that six month period. In addition, we have, from alumni, reports on exams that they took during 2011. We also obtained BBS data on the Standard Exam for the period going back to January 1, 2001.

**Details on Recent Graduates (2008-2010)**

Three students completed WISR's MA in Psychology, leading toward the MFT license during the period 2008-2010.

One student graduated in April 2010, and completed the maximum number of supervised hours as a trainee. She is currently working in the field of Education Therapy and is the Learning Support Director at a private school. She is **not currently obtaining further supervised hours toward the license but plans to begin working on these hours by July 2012** and to complete the necessary hours within the next 4 and a half years.

Another student graduated in June 2008, and completed her intern hours for pay, having done supervised private practice with a client load of 12-16 clients and an **annual salary of a bit less than \$60,000/year**. She **passed both exams on the first try**, having passed the second exam in November 2011 and is currently waiting to receive her license number.

The third student graduated in March 2008, and has completed her intern hours—about 75% of these hours were for paid work and about 25% for volunteer work. **Her intern position paid her**

**\$42,000/year.** She plans to take the first exam for licensure in early 2012. She is currently working on an interdisciplinary PhD degree at WISR, and is not currently employed in the field but is volunteering 15 hours per week doing work related to the field in a social services agency.

### **Performance on Licensure Exams During 2008-2011**

We obtained BBS (Board of Behavioral Sciences) data on the pass rates of our alumni on licensure exams for the period, January 1, 2008-June 30, 2010. We were not able to obtain data for the period, July 1, 2010-December 31, 2010, although based on interviews with our alumni, we don't believe that any WISR alum took either exam during that six month period. Finally, we have information from interviews with three alumni on how they fared on the clinical vignette exam (exam #2) during 2011.

*Standard exam (exam#1):*

**2 pass, 0 fail, 100% pass rate, both were first-time test takers.**

*Clinical Vignette exam (exam #2):*

**6 pass, 7 fail, 46% pass rate.**

**Among first-time takers: 4 pass, 2 fail, 67% pass rate.**

### **Performance on Licensure Exams by Alumni Graduating Since 2000**

We were also able to obtain BBS data on the pass rate of our alumni on the

*Standard Exam (exam #1) for the period, January 1, 2001 – December 31, 2007:*

**13 pass, 7 fail, 65% pass rate.**

We have graduated 19 MFT students since 2000, and we recently interviewed 14 of them. Also, we know about the current professional status of four of the five not interviewed. Here is a summary of their performance on licensure exams.

#### **9 of these 18 alumni have become licensed MFTs**

**\*\*4 have graduated since 2006 and plan to become licensed, and one of these has taken the first exam and passed it on the first try, but recently failed the second exam on her first try.**

**\*\*2 do not plan to become licensed, and did not take any exams, although one of these has moved to the State of Washington and is employed in a non-profit in the field.**

**\*\*2 are not yet sure whether they will pursue licensure, although one passed the first exam on her first try before moving back to her home country of India.**

**\*\*1 alumnus has not been in communication with us, but we believe she moved out of state.**

**Those who are licensed reported the following results on the licensure exams:**

**\*\*4 report passing both exams on the first try.**

**\*\*1 reported passing the first exam on the second try, but passing the second exam on the first try.**

**\*\*2 reported passing the first exam on the first try, but one took two tries to pass the second exam and the other took three tries to pass the second exam.**

**\*\*we do not know how many times two of the alumni took the exams before passing.**

**Detailed Vignettes on 16 alumni graduating from 2000-2007**

#1: Graduating in July 2006, this alum has so far earned 2,900 of the necessary 3,000 hours of supervised experience. He has been doing part-time, paid work, in an agency serving Native American families, but he declined to state his salary.

#2: Graduating in May 2006, this alum completed her intern hours and was paid for this work, earning \$50,000/year in a non-profit agency concerned with foster youth. She passed the first exam on the first try and recently missed passing the clinical vignette exam by one point on her first try.

#3: This alum graduated in April 2006, and began her intern hours at a law school, counseling law students. This was a paid position, but she stopped it because it was too difficult to handle alongside of her other, full-time position outside of this field. She plans to retire from that job in six months, at which time she will decide whether or not to continue to pursue the MFT license.

#4: This alum graduated in September 2005, but very soon after graduation she decided not to pursue the MFT license [this information is based on a previous interview with her in 2007].

#5: Graduating in August 2005, this alum was paid while doing all of her intern hours in a school-based program. She passed both exams on the first try in 2008. She currently works 30 hours per week in a school-based program and does 16 hours per week of private practice, earning a total of about \$71,000/year.

#6: Graduating in February 2005, we soon lost communicating with this alum, who had previously indicated that she might move out of state.

#7: This alum graduated in October 2004, and completed all of her intern hours while being paid at a children's services agency. She passed both exams on the first try and was licensed in 2008. She continues to work full-time at the same agency with an annual salary of \$65,000.

#8: Graduating in November 2003, this alum was paid for doing all of his intern hours and passed both exams on the first try, becoming licensed in 2008. He works full-time as a Professor in an accredited institution of higher education, and in addition, he sees about 15 clients per week in his private practice, which generates an added \$50,000 to \$60,000/year in income.

#9: This alum graduated in November 2003, and obtained his intern hours in a private practice where he was paid for his services. He passed both exams on the first try and was licensed in 2008. He has a part-time private practice from which he earns about \$5,000/year.

#10: Graduating in June 2001, this alum passed the written exam on the first try after having earned her intern hours mostly by volunteering, but aided with a \$4,000 stipend. She returned to her home country of India where she founded a non-profit agency focusing on women's issues and domestic violence, and serving both adult survivors of abuse and children who have been abused. In 2009, she passed a Master's of Philosophy exam in India, which is somewhat equivalent to the PsyD here in the US. She earns approximately \$12,000/year for her professional work in India. She may not pursue the MFT license in California, but instead will most likely pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology through an approved school in California, while continuing to work in her non-profit in India most of the year.

#11: This alum graduated in April 2001, and completed her intern hours while being paid in a supervised private practice. She passed the first exam on the second try, and passed the second exam on her first try. She now has a part-time private practice (about 10 hours/week) and earns between \$45,000 and \$50,000/year from that private practice, in addition to income from teaching part-time in a state-approved MFT program.

#12: Graduating in March 2001, this alum did not continue to pursue the California MFT license and was not recently interviewed. However, a year or two ago, she informed us that she had moved out of state where she works in the field of counseling in a non-profit agency.

#13: Graduating in February 2001, this alum was paid while pursuing his intern hours at a non-profit agency and at Kaiser. He passed the written exam on the first try, but just recently passed the clinical vignette exam on his third try. He currently works in the field, doing school-based counseling and earning an annual salary of \$50,000 - \$60,000/year.

#14: This alum graduated in August of 2000, and did not respond to our request for an interview, but from an interview a couple of years ago, we know she was licensed in 2008.

#15: Graduating in March 2000, this alum also did not respond to our request for an interview, but again from a previous conversation, we know she obtained the MFT license in the past two or three years.

#16: This alum also graduated in March 2000, and obtained all of her intern hours while being paid in an agency focusing on foster care. She passed the first exam on her first attempt, and then passed the second exam on the second try in 2008. Until 8 month ago, she was working in the field for an annual salary of \$51,000/year, but was then laid off due to budget cut-backs.

### **Synopsis of Professional Status of the 19 alums Graduating Prior to 2000**

**\*\*10 of the 19 became licensed (MFCCs or now, MFTs) in California**

**\*\*1 became licensed in Colorado and Arizona**

**\*\*1 pursued a PhD in Clinical Psychology at a State-approved institution**

**\*\*1 became a Pastoral Counselor**

**\*\*1 moved to Iowa and found work in a non-profit there**

**\*\*1 moved to Washington to pursue professional work related to the field**

**\*\*1 decided, soon after completing the degree, to remain in her previous field of work**

**\*\*1 passed away soon after graduating**

**\*\*we lost communication with two of these alumni**

### **Added Comments Made by Those Interviewed**

At the end of each interview, we asked the 14 interviewed the following question:

Please give an overview of your experiences pursuing a career as an MFT. Please include any helpful advice you may have for potential students interested in this field.

A few of them replied, and here's what they had to say:

**\*\* I believe that WISR prepared me as well as any other approved or accredited school would have. I did my practicum at the Pacific Center which was also great training. I did an additional year as a trainee and then intern there, then 3 years of private practice internship to get all my hours. My advice is to seek out a practicum with lots of training and good supervision support. If you want a private practice, then go to a practicum where you can take clients with you when you are done (e.g. Pacific Center, Women's Therapy Center), because this is crucial to being able to launch a private practice internship where you don't lose money.**

**\*\*If you can, get a varied internship experience with several different populations.**

**\*\*I have really enjoyed the process and now need to complete my internship hours. I have been researching possible ways to get the hours and have made many useful contacts. I plan to start my hours by July of 2012.**

**\*\*Being a student at WISR changed my life. I couldn't attend a traditional campus. WISR provided a safe environment where I could come and study in a close-knit environment and where I could be drawn out. I would advise students to have their own counseling; being in therapy made me more empathetic.**

**\*\*My best advice is to take the professional review courses 3 months before you take the licensing tests. Choose your internships wisely, as they are critical to shaping you as a therapist.**

**\*\* Lots of work, very fulfilling. Need to develop marketing process along w/ clinical skills. Clear clinical conceptualization leads to good marketing. Generosity is a good marketing plan. Network. Work w/ others and collaborate. Find areas where sharing information happens in related fields. Work really hard. Work consistently.**

