

CERTIFICATE OR CONCENTRATION IN QUEER AND TRANS MENTAL HEALTH

Fairfield University offers a 9-credit certificate for mental health professionals to serve a diverse range of queer and trans youth and adults. The program is designed for the working professional or graduate student and is suited for marriage and family therapists, counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses, and more.

Candidates complete a 9-credit planned program of study over the course of one year.

Coursework includes an emphasis on the minority stress model to understand the impact of stigma on mental health; an analysis of queer and trans health disparities; barriers and pathways to accessing treatment; theoretical and evidence-based approaches to treatment; and mental health prevention and promotion. All courses will adopt an intersectional, relational, and life cycle perspective by examining how biological, social, cultural, and political contexts intersect to influence the development, coupling, and family formation processes of queer and trans individuals. Conversely, the curriculum will also emphasize how queer and trans individuals influence culture and society and develop resilience to stigma through coping and social support. The certificate culminates with a capstone project in which candidates create, implement, and evaluate a project, program, or product that impacts queer and trans mental health.

Learning Objectives

Learning outcomes for this program are based in professional standards for clinical treatment of queer and trans clients (i.e., American Counseling Association, American Psychological Association), the SEHD Conceptual Framework, and the Jesuit mission of Fairfield University. The certificate in Queer and Trans Mental Health prepares candidates who:

1. Recognize their own biases, privileges, and worldviews as it pertains to queer and trans individuals and take responsibility for how these impact assessment and treatment.
2. Distinguish how biological, familial, cultural, socioeconomic, and psychological factors influence the development, growth, life cycle, and relationship and family formation for queer and trans individuals.
3. Recognize how sexual and gender identity intersect with other social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, nationality, class, ability, religion/spirituality) to create diverse experiences of development, privilege, and oppression.
4. Articulate an affirmative approach to mental health treatment that includes a strength-based, normative view of sexual and gender diversity as well as an understanding of how stigma impacts mental health and well-being.
5. Seek and access resources for client care and continued professional development, including training, consultation, and research findings.
6. Create solutions that directly impact service delivery, community resources, or policy initiatives that improve queer and trans well-being.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university and demonstrate a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.67 across all degrees.

The program is intended for mental health professionals or graduate students with some clinical experience. Students are expected to have, at minimum, a basic knowledge of clinical assessment, diagnosis, and treatment and possess basic clinical skills.

Requirements

Concentration in Queer and Trans Mental Health

Code	Title	Credits
MFTH 5470	Queer and Trans Mental Health	3
MFTH 5480	Transgender and Gender Expansive Affirming Care	1.5
MFTH 5481	Conversations with Queer and Trans Youth	1.5
MFTH 5999G	Queer and Trans Mental Health Capstone	3
Total Credits		9

Plan of Study

Courses will be offered in sequence as follows:

Course	Title	Credits
Spring		
MFTH 5470	Queer and Trans Mental Health	3
		Credits
		3
Summer		
MFTH 5480	Transgender and Gender Expansive Affirming Care	1.5
MFTH 5481	Conversations with Queer and Trans Youth	1.5
		Credits
		3
Fall		
MFTH 5999G	Queer and Trans Mental Health Capstone	3
		Credits
		3
		Total Credits
		9