

**Surviving the MFT
Written
and Oral Exams**

Sponsored by:
**Oklahoma Association For
Marriage
and Family Therapy**

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**The AMFTRB PES Written
“Examination in
Marriage and Family
Therapy”
(The “National Exam”)**

What is AMFTRB?

Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards

- An association of statutorily constituted bodies legally responsible for the regulation of Marital and Family Therapists

-to facilitate communication among its member boards concerning the regulation of Marital and Family Therapists

What does AMFTRB do?

The Association contracts with PES

(Professional Examination Service) to develop and administer the National Examination in Marital and Family Therapy

- **National Pool of Item Writers**
- **Job Analysis - Tied To Job Duties**
- **Test and Items Continuously Reviewed and Validated**
- **Multiple Approaches to test validation**
- **Test Bank Contains over 2000 items**

**Each 200 Item
Version of the
Test is Based on
5 Knowledge
Domains**

**Domain 01 (22.5%)
The Practice of Marital and
Family Therapy**

This domain encompasses tasks related to incorporating systemic theory and perspectives into practice activities, and establishing and maintaining ongoing therapeutic relationships with the client* system.

**Domain 02 (22.5%)
Assessing, Hypothesizing,
and Diagnosing**

This domain encompasses tasks related to assessing the various dimensions of the client system, forming and reformulating hypotheses, and diagnosing the client system in order to guide therapeutic activities.

Domain 03 (32.5%)

Designing and Conducting Treatment

This domain encompasses tasks related to developing and implementing interventions with the client system.

Domain 04 (7.5%)

Evaluating Ongoing Process and Terminating Treatment

This domain encompasses tasks related to continuously evaluating the therapeutic process and incorporating feedback into the course of treatment, as well as planning for termination.

Domain 05 (15%)

Maintaining Ethical, Legal, and Professional Standards

This domain encompasses tasks related to ongoing adherence to legal and ethical codes and treatment agreements, maintaining competency in the field, and professionalism.

Each Version of The Test

- 200 objective multiple-choice questions
- Each item has four alternative answers, only one of which is correct
- Candidates are allowed four hours to complete the exam

When Taking The Test:

- Answer Every Question (there is no penalty for incorrect answers)
- The candidate should choose the single best answer to each item.

Questions Are Drawn From Specifically Identified Theories:

Adlerian family therapy, Feminist family therapy, Attachment theory, Medical family therapy, Bowen family systems theory, Milan systemic family therapy, Cognitive behavioral therapy, MRI Brief therapy, Collaborative language, Narrative therapy, Communication theory, Object relations therapy, Contextual therapy, Psychoanalytic family therapy, Couple, marital, and family enrichment models, Second order cybernetics, Emotionally focused therapy, Solution focused therapy, Ericksonian therapy, Strategic therapy, Experiential approaches, Structural therapy

Sample Question #1

According to Minuchin, the therapist's methods for creating a therapeutic system with a family and of positioning himself/herself as its leader are known as:

1. introjection.
2. restructuring.
3. joining.
4. enacting.

For Questions #2-3

- Mr. and Mrs. Walter have been married for 1.5 years and have a newborn baby. They seek therapy to deal with behavioral problems involving Mrs. Walter's three children from a previous marriage. Mr. Walter angrily says that the children, ages 9, 12 and 16, "mouth back" at him and do not respect their mother's authority. Mr. and Mrs. Walter have started having serious fights.

Sample Question #2

Which one of the following statements should the therapist make to help the family perceive their complaints from a systems perspective?

1. "The children are having difficulty adapting to the new baby."
2. "It is difficult to be a stepfather."
3. "The marital relationship is being affected by Mrs. Walter's children."
4. "You are experiencing a normal adjustment to becoming a stepfamily."

Sample Question #3

The family therapist decides to focus initially on the times when Mr. Walters has thought that the children were respecting their mother's authority. The purpose of this focus is to help the:

1. mother perceive her part in the interaction.
2. father accept his role as a stepparent.
3. parents to feel hopeful about the situation and to mobilize their resources.
4. parents unite the marital dyad.

Sample Question #4

A therapist working with a couple gives the following instructions: Get ready for bed; then I want you [the wife] to lie on your belly; then you [the husband] caress her back as gently and sensitively as you can; move your hands very slowly; do no more. In the meantime, I want you [the wife] to be "selfish" and just concentrate.

The therapist is here using a technique developed by Masters and Johnson and known as:

1. guided fantasy.
2. inverse massage.
3. sexual paradox.
4. sensate focus.

Sample Question #5

According to Haley, a correct statement regarding system maintenance is that it:

1. is a therapeutic intervention.
2. is a therapeutic process supporting the relationship.
3. describes the therapist's non-directive effort to provide symmetrical balance.
4. may involve hidden payoffs for the resistant family.

Sample Question #6

In the use of videotape in working with families, the most essential condition is that:

1. the equipment remains inconspicuous.
2. all those to be taped agree to its use.
3. its use will be necessary to achieve a certain goal.
4. the worker will be personally comfortable with being taped.

Answers:

- Answers to these questions, and other test information can be found in the "Exam Handbook" found on the AMFTRB website:
- www.amftrb.org under MFT National Exam

Professional Issues and Responsibilities Are Included in The Written Exam

- Some questions from the AAMFT Code of Ethics, case law, and other federal law (such as HIPPA) may be included on the written Exam
- A source for some of this up to date practice information is found in the members section of the AAMFT web site.

Top Ten Famous Statements of People Who Fail The Test:

10. "I don't believe in paying money to get help passing a test."
9. "This should be easy. I don't need to study."
8. "Tests are stupid."
7. "I don't need to know this stuff to do my job."
6. "I hate theory."
5. "If I don't pass it the first time, I'll use it as a learning experience."
4. "I couldn't find the "MFT Test For Dummies" book."
3. "I'm a purest. I only need one theory."
2. "When I graduated, I pledged I'd never read another book."
1. "I don't need a license to be a life coach."

Recent Statistics On Test Performance

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Facts on Test Takers

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Methods of Test Preparation:

- Cold Turkey
- Cursory Glance
- Sample Test as Test Preparation
- Comprehensive Review of All Graduate Course Materials
- Individual Study
- Group Study
- Strategic Plan Utilizing Multiple Methods

Methods of Test Preparation:

- Use of Test Prep Materials
 - Reviews
 - Charts
 - Sample Tests
 - Online Practice Test (AMFTRB or others)
 - CD-ROM Based Tests and Programmed Materials
- Attendance at a Test Prep Workshop

**Oklahoma Oral MFT Exam
Covers:**

- Psychopathology, DSM-IV Diagnosis
- Oklahoma Law and Ethics

Once You Have Been
Notified You Have Passed
The Written Exam You Will
Be Contacted To Appear
Before The Test Sub-
committee of The Licensing
Board For The Oral Exam

- The Oral Exam Sub-committee
Consists of 2 – 3 Licensing Board
Members
- The Oral Exam Takes 20-30
Minutes
- You Will Be Given 3-5
Questions In Each of the Two
Areas (Depending on the
Number of Parts to The Question)

Each of the two areas of the oral
exam are scored separately, with
either a “pass,” “fail,” or
“provisional pass,” result.

You can pass both sections, pass
one section, or fail both sections.

Should you pass one section, you
will only have to take the one
section over that you failed.

“Provisional Pass,” scores are given when the test taker gets most of that portion of the test correct, but may have made a minor error.

Assignments are given as an alternative to “failing” the applicant. Assignments must be completed before a “pass” result is entered.

Why a DSM Oral Exam?

- A number of states do not license their MFT’s to independently “diagnose and treat mental disorders.”
- This added responsibility requires that licensees to have a higher level of training in order to fulfill this responsibility.

The Diagnosis Section Consists of:

- Clinical scenarios depicting clients with specific symptoms.
- Licensees will be asked to provide a DSM-IV diagnosis based on the scenario, possibly including subtypes, the Axis for the diagnosis, and to identify other disorders with overlapping symptoms that might need to be ruled out.

The Diagnosis Section

- Does not contain “trick questions,” or deliberately misleading facts.
- If you know the diagnostic criterion well, the diagnosis will be clear cut.
- The test does not seek out obscure diagnosis’ that are rare in clinical practice.

The Oklahoma Law and Ethics Portion of the Oral Exam:

- Covers The Oklahoma Licensed Marital and Family Therapist Act and Regulations with the primarily focus on the code of professional conduct section contained in the Rules and Regulations.

The Oklahoma Law and Ethics Portion of the Oral Exam:

- Unlike some other states which may adopt a simplified code of ethics such as that of the AAMFT Code of Ethics, the Oklahoma MFT Code of Professional Conduct includes more specific provisions.
- The Licensing Advisory Board seeks to provide licensees with greater clarity in areas that have been obscure or in areas where ethical mistakes have been commonly made.

- The Law and Ethics questions may be scenario based, or may call for a summary of what the law or Regulations say about a specific issue (such as confidentiality, or exceptions to confidentiality, etc.)
- The answer to the questions are not what is “best,” or “a good idea,” or “recommendations for practice.” The answer is a clear statement of what is explicit in the Law or Regs.

See Additional Resources:

- Check the Christian Family Institute Website @
- www.christianfamilyinstitute.com
- Check under “Resources” for the Study Guide
