

TOCCOA MFT MATTERS

The Toccoa Falls College Marriage & Family Therapy Newsletter



RENEWAL, REFLECTION, AND RESILIENCE

As we move into the summer months, we reflect on several important themes within the field of Marriage and Family Therapy. May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month, reminding us of the importance of prioritizing mental wellness, not only for our clients, but also for ourselves as clinicians and clinicians-in-training. This is one reason our program requires students to complete six counseling sessions prior to or during client contact, as self-awareness and personal growth are essential components of ethical and effective therapeutic work.

June is National PTSD Awareness Month, and many of our students and alumni work closely with clients who have experienced significant trauma. Trauma-informed care requires patience, empathy, consistency, and an understanding of the lasting impact trauma can have on individuals and families.

In July, we recognize Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Our program remains committed to serving diverse, marginalized, and underserved communities in alignment with COAMFTE standards. We believe culturally responsive care is essential to providing meaningful support and advocating for individuals whose experiences and voices are often overlooked within mental health systems.

As we continue to grow as a program, our newsletter will now transition from a monthly publication to a quarterly release schedule. We hope you enjoy your summer, and we look forward to reconnecting with you again in August.

Warmly,
Dr. Jamie Brodarick
Program Director
Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy
Toccoa Falls College



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PROGRAM IMPORTANT DATES

LICENSURE DEEP DIVE

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



IMPORTANT DATES REMINDER

SUMMER SESSION BEGINS
MAY 26TH, 2026

SUMMER SESSION ENDS
JULY 17TH, 2026

FALL REGISTRATION
DEADLINE AUGUST 1ST, 2026

FALL 2026 SEMESTER DATES:

SESSION A:
8/24/2026 - 10/14/2026

SESSION B:
10/19/2026 - 12/11/2026

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LICENSURE DEEP DIVE



DR. ARIELLE BLUM

CORE FACULTY, MASTER OF ARTS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

Dr. Arielle Blum will be offering a workshop for students and alumni on "Licensure Deep Dive" Thursday, August 13th at 7pm EST via Teams.

Students are encouraged to attend the upcoming Licensure Deep Dive, an informative training designed to help prepare future clinicians for the transition from graduate education into professional practice. This session will provide valuable guidance on licensure requirements, supervision expectations, documentation, and important steps in the post-graduation process. Whether nearing graduation or planning ahead, this training is an excellent opportunity to gain clarity and confidence about the path toward state licensure.

RSVP to Dr. Brodarick at JBrodarick@tfc.edu.

UPCOMING AWARENESS

June



Awareness Month

July



NATIONAL
MINORITY
MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS MONTH
JULY

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

TRACEE VAUGHN



What led you to pursue a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy at TFC?

My decision to pursue a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy at TFC was both professional and deeply personal. Over the years, I have worked with individuals and couples through my family's coaching practice, and I have consistently encountered situations that required deeper clinical insight and intervention. Although coaching allowed me to support clients' growth, many of the individuals that I served were navigating trauma, relational distress, and emotional wounds that required therapeutic support.

Additionally, I was drawn to TFC's integration of Christian principles into clinical training, which was especially meaningful to me because I previously attended Point University. I wanted to be equipped not only with evidence-based practices but also with a framework that acknowledges and honors the spiritual aspect of healing and restoration. This program has enabled me to align my faith, my calling, and my professional development in a significant way.

Tell us about your transition from life coaching to pursuing practicing marriage and family therapy? How did coaching prepare you for this work? What do you feel distinguishes therapy from coaching?

My transition from life coaching to marriage and family therapy felt like a natural progression. As a certified life coach and co-founder of Genesis Coaching Services, I spent several years assisting individuals in setting goals, improving their self-esteem, and navigating life transitions. Coaching strengthened my ability to actively listen, ask effective questions, and build rapport, which are essential skills in counseling as well.

However, I began to recognize the limitations of coaching when clients presented with deeper issues such as unresolved trauma, attachment wounds, and complex family dynamics. Coaching is typically future-focused and action-oriented, whereas therapy allows for deeper exploration of the past, emotional processing, and, when appropriate, clinical diagnosis.

Since entering the program, what has been the most helpful/interesting thing you have learned about yourself/others?

Since entering the program, the most impactful thing that I have learned is the importance of slowing down and being more attuned to emotional processes, both for my clients and myself. I have learned that change does not always occur through immediate solutions, but through creating space for connection, vulnerability, and emotional safety.

I have also gained a deeper understanding of how family systems, attachment styles, and past experiences shape present behaviors. This has helped me approach others with greater empathy and humility. Personally, I have become more aware of my own emotional responses and how they can influence the therapeutic process. This program has significantly stretched me, and at times, the process has been uncomfortable. However, this increased awareness has been essential to my growth, both professionally and personally.

What has your clinical training experience (internship/practicum) been like? Tell us about the work you are doing now and what you hope to do post-graduation.

My clinical training experience has been both rewarding and growth-oriented. Through my practicum, I have had the opportunity to work with individuals, couples, and families navigating a range of concerns, which has deepened my clinical awareness, strengthened my cultural humility, and enhanced my ability to be more intentional in sessions. I have been particularly drawn to working with couples and exploring dynamics such as the pursuer-withdrawer pattern, helping clients build emotional safety and develop healthier communication.

Currently, I am continuing to develop my clinical skills at my practicum and internship site, while integrating approaches such as Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) into my work. In addition to my clinical training, I am developing a faith-based framework centered on identity, healing, and emotional wholeness, which reflects my passion for integrating spiritual and psychological growth.

After graduation, I plan to take the licensure exam to become a licensed marriage and family therapist. I also intend to continue growing my practice by integrating coaching and therapy in an ethical and clinically sound manner. Additionally, I hope to expand my work with couples and families while creating resources that support women in developing a healthy sense of identity, emotional resilience, and a strong spiritual foundation. Before fully transitioning into this next season, I also look forward to taking some time to visit family in New York and enjoy much-needed rest, laughter, and meaningful connection.