To: MFT Education Committee  
From: Christy Berger  
Legislation Analyst  

Date: December 3, 2007  
Telephone: (916) 574-7847  

Subject: Discussion of Potential Impacts of Proposed Curriculum Changes to Schools with MFT Programs

The purpose of this memo is to discuss potential impacts of the proposed changes to the MFT educational requirements to schools that have MFT programs.

**Impact of Overall Increase in Units**

Although the increase in overall units will impact a number of schools, stakeholders have expressed particular concern about the difficulty that state schools (CSUs) will have in their ability to meet the proposed increase in overall units from 48 semester (72 quarter) to 60 semester (90 quarter) units.

State schools have to take many more steps to get curriculum changes approved than a private school. This process takes a CSU at least 2.5 years. There are also budget issues, including hiring new faculty. There are currently at least 1,368 students in CSU MFT programs, at least 57% of whom are already in a program that requires 60 or more units. See Attachment A for more information on enrollment and units required by CSU schools.

There are currently at least 4,518 students enrolled in MFT programs at private schools (NOTE: student enrollment data is incomplete as of this writing). 15% of students attending such schools are in programs that require 60 or more units, and 72% are in programs that require 52 or fewer units.

Smaller private schools may also have some difficulties, especially those with a small number of students, a unit requirement at or near 48, and non-accredited schools that have already been impacted by the sunset of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education (BPPVE). See Attachment B for a list of private schools, the number of students enrolled in their MFT programs and overall unit requirements.

The Committee has listened to the concerns expressed by CSUs and others and included a 3.5-year window from the effective date of the legislation to the implementation date. This will help to ensure that schools have plenty of time to implement the new requirements. Board staff also plans to work closely with the schools during implementation to provide advice and support regarding the content changes.
Impact of Practicum Changes

The Board’s statutes currently require 6 semester or 9 quarter units of practicum, along with 150 hours of direct client contact. California schools with an MFT program require an average of 8 semester practicum units, and an average of 230 client contact hours, although most schools require 150. A slight majority of students are in programs that require the current minimum 6 semester units of practicum and 150 direct client contact hours. However, a significant number of students are in programs that require a greater amount. See Attachment C for more information regarding individual school requirements and student enrollment.

For many schools, the proposed increase to 9 semester or 13 quarter units of practicum and to 225 hours of direct client contact does not pose a significant increase. Some concerns have been expressed that trainee positions in which hours are gained are often unpaid, and this would create a hardship for many. However, any additional hours of experience can be counted toward those required for licensure. Others have expressed support for the change, believing that it is necessary for protection of the public.

Methodology
The data in this memo and in the attachments was obtained directly from the schools via email and also from school websites.

Attachments

A. State Schools (CSUs) with MFT Programs - Overall Semester Units Required and Number of Students Currently Enrolled
B1. All Private Schools with MFT Programs in California - Number of Students Currently Enrolled and Total Units Required, Sorted by Enrollment
B2. All Private Schools with MFT Programs in California - Number of Students Currently Enrolled and Total Units Required, Sorted by Units
C1. All California Schools with MFT Programs - Minimum Practicum Units and Client Contact Hours Required – Sorted by Enrollment
C2. All California Schools with MFT Programs - Minimum Practicum Units and Client Contact Hours Required – Sorted by Units