

Biographical Data and Platform Statements

2024 Candidates

PRESIDENT-ELECT/PRESIDENT (1 POSITION)



Sarah E. Lyon, PhD (she/her/hers)

Reflection...that has been my experience since learning my name would be on the ballot for President-Elect. I found myself reflecting on my first year as a Master's student enrolling as a Student Member of

AAMFT for the first time and reliving the excitement and pride I felt at the beginning of what has now been an almost 20-year journey as a marriage and family therapist. Much has changed since that day I enrolled as a Student Member, but what has not changed is the love and commitment I have for the profession and practice of systemic therapy and for my professional home, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

I am grateful and humbled to be considered for the position of President-Elect of AAMFT. In my professional career, I have served as a clinician in an agency setting, as an educator and Clinical Director in a COAMFTE-accredited marriage and family therapy program, and as a leader in both state and national organizations. In these roles, I have come to value transparency, compassion, forward-thinking, thoughtful decision-making, and enthusiastic leadership.

The 2022 AAMFT Workforce Study gave voice to AAMFT members' needs, priorities, and top challenges. If elected, I am committed to upholding AAMFT's priorities, goals, mission, and values, including:

- Advocating for the expansion and protection of the profession of marriage and family therapy
- Advancing the practice of systemic therapies in the areas of research, clinical practice, education, and training
- Building our systemic community nationally and globally through strategic partnerships and recruitment efforts
- Valuing diversity, equity, and inclusion of members, experiences, and thoughts
- Encouraging our portability efforts nationwide
- Supporting therapist needs to reduce burnout, as caseloads are at an all-time high

Thank you for considering me for President-Elect of AAMFT and for the opportunity to continue serving an organization that I love.

(I) PRESENT PROFESSIONAL POSITION

- Friends University, Master of Science in Family Therapy Program (2015-Present)
 - o Kansas City Site Clinical Director (2018-Present)
 - o Assistant Professor of MFT
 - o Kansas City Clinical Internship Supervisor

(II) MOST RELEVANT PAST PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS (WITHIN THE LAST 7 YEARS)

- Assistant Professor of MFT, Master of Science in Family Therapy (MSFT) Program at Friends University, Kansas City
 - o 2015-Present
- Interim Program Director, Master of Science in Family Therapy (MSFT) Program at Friends University, Kansas City
 - o Fall 2021 (August-December)

(III) AAMFT MEMBERSHIP: PAST AND PRESENT PARTICIPATION IN AAMFT, INCLUDING TOPICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC INTEREST NETWORKS

- **State Licensure**
 - o LCMFT 922, State of Kansas (9/17/2015-Present)
 - o LMFT 953, State of Kansas (4/1/2008-9/17/2015)
 - o LMFT 924 (Temporary), State of Kansas (11/19/2007-11/30/2008)
- **AAMFT Membership and Participation**
 - o Member of AAMFT (2005-Present)
 - Professional Member (2005-Present)
 - Clinical Fellow (2015-Present)
 - o AAMFT Approved Supervisor (2017-Present)
 - o AAMFT Board of Directors
 - Director (1/1/2021-12/31/2023)
 - Awards Committee (1/1/2021-12/31/2023)
 - Chair of Awards Committee (1/1/2022-12/31/2023)
 - Awards Committee Task Force (Fall, 2022)
 - Strategic Plan Review Task Force (Spring/Summer, 2023)
 - o Kansas Division of AAMFT (KSAMFT)
 - Treasurer (1/1/2016-December 31, 2017)
 - o Geographic Interest Network:
 - Member, Missouri/Kansas - MOKAN (12/2018-Dissolution)
 - o Topical Interest Networks:
 - Member, Telehealth & Technology
 - o Member, Family TEAM

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- o Completed AAMFT Simulation Facilitatory Training (August, 2019)
 - Regular user and facilitator of the AAMFT Simulation Program (2019-Present)

(IV) PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (Activities should be directly linked to the position and should demonstrate the skills needed for the position. Please refer to the list of competencies and skills for the position)

Past and present activities, projects, or publications (limit 3) that are evidence of leadership skills, experience integrating information, working towards consensus, and decision-making skills.

As the Clinical Director of a COAMFTE-accredited master's-level marriage and family therapy program, my professional activities have primarily focused on the teaching and training of Masters-level graduate students with the goal of preparing them for eventual state licensure. Below are relevant examples of professional activities that demonstrate my history of leadership experience.

- **Relevant Professional Activities**

- o Clinical Director of MSFT-KC Program (2018-Present)
 - Develops, directs, and oversees all clinical internship activity, policies/procedures, curriculum, and evaluation
 - Oversees, trains, and works collaboratively with team of Program Supervisors/Clinical Faculty
 - Leads monthly Clinical Faculty Meetings and annual training with Program Supervisors and related staff
 - Demonstrates leadership regarding student Capstone Project
 - Develops and manages all pre-clinical and clinical courses
- o Assistant Professor of MFT (2015-Present)
 - Instructs courses related to history of marriage and family therapy, foundations of clinical practice, risk assessment and crisis management, clinical documentation practices, MFT theories, and clinical internship
 - Develops course syllabi and evaluation measures
- o AAMFT-Approved Supervisor (2017-Present)
 - Facilitates dyad and group supervision for Masters-level MFT students
 - Provides supervision mentorship for AAMFT-Approved Supervisor Candidates

- o Variety of service opportunities, committees, and task forces at Friends University since 2015
 - Some examples include: multiple faculty/staff search committees, AQIP Committee to address university accreditation, Commencement Committee, Wellness Committee, Technology Committee
- o AAMFT Board Member/Director (2021-2023)
 - Participated in generative, strategic-planning, and decision-making processes of the Board, including Committees and Task Forces
- o Board Member-At-Large, HOPE Family Therapy (Spring 2018-December 2019)
- o Member, International Family Therapy Association (October 2022-Present)
- o Member, Delta Kappa, International Honor Society for Marriage and Family Therapy (March 2016-Present)
 - Faculty Advisor (2016-2020)
- o Community Based Services Team Leader (January, 2011-July, 2015)
 - Family Service and Guidance Center, Topeka, KS
 - Supervised staff in the Community Based Services Department including case managers and parent support specialists
 - Launched, implemented, and supervised the Strengths Model of Case Management, an evidence-based practice model for case management
 - Developed grant-funding
 - Provided therapy as a Staff Clinician
- **Professional Presentations**
 - o **International**
 - Habben, C. & Lyon, S. (2023, April). *Evolving technology in clinical training*. [Conference Session], 2023 International Family Therapy Association Conference, Malaga, Spain.
 - Habben, C. M., & Lyon, S. E. (2020, March). The evolution of clinical simulation in family therapy training programs. Poster to be presented at the 2020 IFTA World Family Therapy Congress, Basel, Switzerland. [Conference Canceled].
 - Anderson, J. R., & Wiedower, S.E. (2008, May). Couple communication, conflict management, and intimate partner violence. Invited lecture given at the Clear Sky Counseling Center, Guangzhou, China.

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o National

- Hanson, S., Lyon, S., & Schaefer, E. (2024, March). "Little 'ol Me?" Yes! And "Little 'ol YOU!" *Overcoming leadership narratives to excel and enjoy the rewards of systemic volunteer service*. 2024 Leadership Symposium, Phoenix, AZ.
 - Habben, C. and Lyon, S. (2020, November 12-14). *Evolution of clinical simulation in family therapy training program*. [Conference Session]
 - Darnley, A., Habben, C. M., Lyon, S. E., Walker, G. (2020, August). *Simulation and impacts on mental health training*. Presentation for Mursion Healthcare Series, held virtually.
 - Habben, C. M., & Lyon, S. E. (2020, June). *The evolution of clinical simulation in family therapy training programs*. Presentation at the 2020 Institute for Advanced Systemic Family Therapy, held virtually.
 - Lyon, S. E., Stith, S. M., & Vennum, A. (2016, July). *Dating violence and the stay/leave decisions of young women in college*. Poster presented at the 2016 annual International Family Violence and Child Victimization Research Conference, Portsmouth, NH.
 - Anderson, J. R., Johnson, M. D., Ratcliffe, G. C., Wiedower, S. E., Chen, W. C., & Petersen, F. R. (2009, November). *An application of marital horizon theory to emerging adults in China*. Poster presented at the annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations, San Francisco, CA.
 - Chen, W. C., Anderson, J. R., Wiedower, S. E., Johnson, M., Ratcliffe, G. C., & Lee, C. Y. (2009, November). *Attitudes toward dating violence among Chinese college students*. Poster presented at the annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations, San Francisco, CA.
 - Wiedower, S. E., & Anderson, J. R., & Stith, S. (2009, October). *Impact of violence on couples' relationship satisfaction*. Poster presented at the annual conference of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Sacramento, CA.
 - Wiedower, S. E., & Hendrix, C. C. (2008, October). *Maltreating families: Factors affecting therapy dropout*. Poster presented at the 2008 annual conference of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Memphis, TN.
 - Wiedower, S. E., Anderson, J. R., & Stith, S. M. (2008, July). *Differential impact of dating violence on male and female college students' relationship satisfaction*. Paper presented at the 2008 annual International Family Violence and Child Victimization Research Conference, Portsmouth, NH.
 - Anderson, J.R., Wilde, J.L., & Wiedower, S.E. (2007, November). *From Fragile to Flourishing: Insights from "Expert" Couples*. Poster presented at the 2007 annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations, Pittsburgh, PA.
 - Patterson, J., Burr, B.K., Rolling, E., Wiedower, S.E. (2007, March). *Recruiting men to marriage education: What difference does fatherhood make?* Workshop presented at the annual conference of the Oklahoma Council on Family Relations, Edmond, OK.
 - Gardner, B.C., Wiedower, S.E., Burr, B.K., & Busby, D.M. (2005, November). *Relationship attributions: Family-of-origin biases in relationship meanings*. Poster presented at the 2005 annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations, Phoenix, AZ.
 - Burr, B.K., Wiedower, S.E., & Gardner, B.C. (2005, April). *Getting to the root of relationship attributions: Family-of-origin perspectives on self and partner views*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Oklahoma Council on Family Relations, Edmond, OK.
- #### • Peer-Reviewed Publications
- o Anderson, J.R., Chen, W.C., Johnson, M.D., Lyon, S.E., Lee, C.H.S., Zheng, F., Ratcliffe, G.C., & Peterson, F.R. (2011). Attitudes towards dating violence among college students in mainland China: An exploratory study. *Violence and Victims*, 26(5), 631-647.
 - o Anderson, J.R., Johnson, M.D., Goff, B. N., Cline, L. E., Lyon, S.E., & Gurss, H. (2011). Factors that differentiate distressed and nondistressed marriages in Army soldiers. *Marriage and Family Review*, 47, 459-473.
 - o Gardner, B.C., Burr, B.K., & Wiedower, S.E. (2006). Reconceptualizing strategic family therapy: Insights from a dynamic systems perspective. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 28, 339-352.

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(V) COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION: Past and present activities demonstrating knowledge of and commitment to social justice and systemic science.

- **Educational Activities**

- o As a Core Faculty member of a COAMFTE-accredited marriage and family therapy program, I am guided (and inspired) by our educational goal: *Sociocultural Competency – The program will promote cultural attunement, equity, and inclusion.*

- Examples of DEI-Focused Academic Presentations
 - “Introduction to Sociocultural Competency”
 - “Getting to Know Our Cultural Selves”

- o Person-of-the-Therapist Model – Integrated Person-of-the-Therapist (POTT) model into interpersonal, sociocultural, and clinical training in the MSFT-KC Program

- **Service Activities**

- o Director, AAMFT Board of Directors – Engaged in purposeful and independent thought, reflection, consideration, and decision-making processes with commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all Board, committee, and task force activities

- o MSFT-KC Clinical Director – Oversees identification of community placement sites that provide diversity in population and clinical presentation

- o Quaker Heritage Task Force – Participated as a member to improve integration of Quaker values into course instruction and program curriculum, MSFT Program, Friends University

- o Multicultural Advisory Board – Former member in MSFT Program, Friends University with plans to relaunch

(VI) RELEVANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION – Optional (up to five sentences)

You may choose to identify and/or describe parts of your background which may include the following: work setting (e.g., private practice, academia, agency, community health, government), home location (e.g., rural, urban, suburban), region (e.g., US state, international), any other relevant demographic information (e.g., age, ethnicity/race, gender, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual affiliation, ability, immigration status, languages spoken).

Sharing a little about my own social location, I am a white, cis-gender, able-bodied, female who occupies the roles of daughter, sister, wife, and mother in my personal life. Professionally, I have had the opportunity to work in both academic and non-academic/clinical settings (agency). Currently, I work in a suburban community yet reside in a rural community in the Midwest (Kansas).