

The CFT-I™ Exam will consist of 100 questions delivered online. Questions will be multiple choice and cover the following competency areas:

Financial Competency Areas (30%)

- A. The Fundamentals of Economics (5%)
 - a. Supply and Demand
 - b. Fiscal Policy
 - c. Monetary Policy
 - d. Economic Indicators
 - e. Business Cycles
 - f. Inflation and Deflation
 - g. Yield Curve

- B. The Basics of Behavioral Economics (10%)
 - 1. Client Evaluation
 - a. Money Attitude Assessment
 - b. Financial Knowledge
 - c. Economic Expectations
 - d. Outcome Expectations
 - e. Financial Risk Tolerance Assessment
 - f. Wealth Accumulator Task Assessment
 - g. Time Horizon
 - 2. Client Assessments
 - a. Financial Behaviors
 - b. Cognitive Biases
 - c. Behavior under risk

- C. The Fundamentals of Financial Planning & Counseling (15%)
 - 1. The Process of Financial Planning
 - 2. Time Value of Money & Computations
 - a. Present Value
 - b. Future Value
 - c. Present and Future of Annuities
 - d. Geometric Varying Annuity
 - e. Net Present Value
 - f. Internal Rate of Return

- g. Loan Payments – (i.e., amortization schedule)
 - h. Holding Period Returns
 - i. Average Returns
 - j. Real and Nominal Rates of Return
 - k. Tax Equivalent Rates of Return
- D. Money Management I: Cash Flow and Net Worth Planning (15%)
- 1. Budget Development
 - 2. Income and Expense (Cash Flow) Statement Development
 - 3. Balance Sheet Development
 - 4. Financial Ratios
 - a. Current Ratio
 - b. Emergency Fund Ratio
 - c. Savings Ratio
 - d. Debt Ratio
 - e. Debt-to-Income Ratio
 - f. Credit Usage Ratio
 - g. Front-end Mortgage Ratio
 - h. Back-end Mortgage Ratio
 - i. Sources of Emergency Funds
- E. Money Management II: Credit and Debt Management (10%)
- 1. Credit Management
 - a. Credit Reports
 - b. Credit Scores
 - c. Checking Accounts and Debit Cards
 - d. Credit Cards
 - a. Types
 - i. Visa
 - ii. MasterCard
 - iii. Discover
 - iv. Travel and Entertainment (American Express)
 - v. Affinity
 - vi. Rewards
 - e. Credit Card Statements

- a. Minimum balance
 - b. Monthly payment
 - c. Interest rates
 - d. Penalty
 - e. How companies calculate fees
 - f. Payday and Title Loans
 - g. Personal Loans
 - a. Auto
 - i. Leasing versus purchasing
 - h. Home Loans
 - a. Renting versus purchasing
 - b. PMI
 - c. Title insurance
 - d. Adjustable/Fixed rates
 - e. Closing documents
 - f. Type of home valuation
 - g. Property taxes
 - h. Mortgage terms
 - i. Decision to refinance
 - j. HELOC (home equity line of credit)
 - k. FHA and VA loans
 - l. Reverse mortgages
- F. Identity Theft and Consumer Protections (5%)
- 1. Consumer Protection
 - a. Securities Act of 1933
 - b. Securities and Exchange Act of 1934
 - c. Investment Company Act of 1940
 - d. Investment Advisers Act of 1940
 - e. Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010
 - f. Department of Labor and ERISA
 - g. Bankruptcy Law
 - a. Chapter 7
 - b. Chapter 11

- c. Chapter 13
 - h. Sales Transaction Laws
 - i. Privacy Laws
 - j. Consumer Credit Laws
 - k. Housing Laws
 - 2. Identity Theft
 - a. General personal protections in the digital age
 - b. Reduction of risk of being a victim of identity theft
 - c. What to do if your identity is stolen
 - d. What's necessary in identity theft protection?
- G. Basic Financial Analysis I (20%)
 - 1. Tax Analysis
 - a. Earned Income Sources
 - b. Fringe Benefits Sources
 - c. Imputed Income (e.g., Section 79)
 - d. Unearned Income Sources
 - a. Dividends
 - b. Interest
 - c. Capital Gains
 - e. Tax-Free Income Sources
 - f. Capital Gains
 - a. Tax Basis
 - b. Short- and Long-Term Gains
 - g. Basic Form 1040 Tax Calculation
 - a. AGI
 - b. Modified AGI
 - c. Tax Credits
 - d. Tax Calculation
 - h. Alternative Minimum Tax Triggers
 - i. IRS Dispute Options
 - j. Difference between overall and marginal rates
 - 2. Insurance Analysis
 - a. Terminology

- i. Risk Retention
 - ii. Risk Transfer
 - iii. Premium
 - iv. Deductible
 - v. Co-payment
 - vi. Co-insurance
- b. Life Insurance Underwriting Requirements
- c. Tax Benefits of Insurance
- d. Life Insurance Needs Estimates
 - i. What is triggering the need for life insurance?
 - ii. Knowing an estimate of what is needed
 - 1. Human Life Value Approach
 - 2. Capital Retention Approach
 - 3. Income Retention Approach
- e. Types of Life Insurance
 - i. Term
 - ii. Return of Premium Term
 - iii. Whole
 - iv. Universal
 - v. Variable
 - vi. VUL
- f. Life Insurance compensation structures (commissions)
- g. Parties (and Responsibilities) to a Life Insurance Contract
 - i. Owner
 - ii. Beneficiary
 - iii. Insurance
- h. Life Insurance Valuation
 - i. Yearly Price per Thousand Formula
- i. Types of Annuities
 - i. Fixed
 - ii. Variable
 - iii. Immediate
 - iv. Deferred
- j. Types of Health Insurance

- i. Traditional Indemnity
 - ii. Preferred Provider Organization
 - iii. Point of Service
 - iv. Health Maintenance Organization
 - v. High Deductible
 - vi. Flexible Spending Account
 - vii. Marketplace/State Exchanges Navigation
- k. Triggers and Probabilities of Disability
- l. Workers Compensation
- m. Disability Definitions
 - i. Elimination Period
 - ii. Benefit Period
 - iii. Qualification Period
 - iv. Residual Benefit Rider
 - v. Cost of Living Adjustment
 - vi. Waiver of Premium
- n. Disability Insurance Definitions
 - i. Any
 - ii. Own
 - iii. Modified Own
 - iv. Split Definition
- o. Social security/disability
- p. Disability Insurance Need Estimate
- q. Triggers of Long Term Care Need (Eating, Toileting, Transferring, Bathing, Dressing, Continence)
- r. Long Term Care Coverage Options
- s. Sources of Long Term Care Expenses
- t. Long Term Care Insurance Estimate
- u. Purpose and Use of Property and Casualty Insurance
 - i. Attractive Nuisance
 - ii. Indemnity
 - iii. Endorsements and Riders
 - iv. Insurance Scores
- v. Personal Automobile Policies

- i. Guaranteed Auto Protection Coverage
 - ii. No Fault
 - iii. Split Limit Coverage
 - iv. Liability Coverage
 - v. Comprehensive Coverage
 - w. Homeowner's Insurance
 - i. Personal Liability Coverage
 - ii. Excess Liability Coverage
 - iii. Flood Insurance & FEMA
 - iv. Earthquake Insurance
 - v. Personal Articles Coverage
 - vi. Identity Theft
 - vii. 80% Rule
 - viii. Inflation Endorsement
 - x. Asset Protection (Insurance Alternatives)
 - i. Corporation
 - ii. S Corporation
 - iii. LLC
 - iv. Partnership
 - v. Trusts
 - 1. Revocable (living)
 - 2. Irrevocable
 - 3. Special needs
 - 4. Spendthrift
 - 5. DAPT (domestic asset protection trust)
- H. Basic Financial Analysis II (20%)
 - 1. Investment Analysis
 - a. Types of Risk
 - a. Systematic
 - b. Unsystematic
 - b. Brokerage Accounts
 - a. SIPC Insurance
 - c. Types of Diversification

- d. Asset Types
 - a. Cash and Cash Equivalents
 - b. Banks and Credit Unions
 - i. FDIC
 - ii. NCUA
 - c. Savings Bonds
 - d. Equities
 - e. Real Estate
 - f. Bonds
 - g. Commodities
 - h. Alternatives and Collectibles
 - i. Mutual Funds and Exchange Traded Funds
 - i. Securities ratings (Morningstar)
 - e. Sources of Investment Income
 - a. Capital Gains
 - b. Interest
 - c. Dividends
 - f. Modern Portfolio Theory
 - a. Asset Allocation Principles
 - b. CAPM
 - c. Standard Deviation
 - d. Beta
 - e. Alpha
 - f. Sharpe and Treynor Ratios
2. Education Analysis
- a. Educational Cost Estimates
 - b. Financial Aid
 - a. FAFSA
 - b. Stafford Loans
 - c. Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students
 - d. Federal versus private loans
 - e. Grants
 - c. Student Debt Repayment Plans
3. Retirement Analysis

- a. Retirement Needs Estimates
 - a. Capital Depletion
 - b. Capital Preservation
 - b. Retirement Plans
 - a. 401(k)
 - b. 403(b)
 - c. 457
 - d. Profit Sharing
 - e. ESOP
 - f. Defined Benefit
 - g. Governmental Thrift and Sharing
 - h. IRA
 - i. Roth IRA
 - j. Roth 401(k) and Roth 403(b)
 - k. SIMPLE IRA and 401(k)
 - c. Rules
 - a. Required Minimum Distributions
 - b. Tax Ramifications
 - c. Penalties
 - d. Deferral Limits
 - d. Social Security
 - a. Monthly Benefit Calculator
 - b. Disability Benefits
 - c. Death Benefit
 - d. Medicare
 - e. Military Benefits
 - a. Tricare
 - b. GI benefits
 - c. Family benefits
 - d. Housing benefits
 - f. Distribution Alternatives
 - a. Annuities
 - b. "4% Rule"
4. Estate Analysis

- a. Probate
- b. Sources of Estate Liquidity
- c. Types of Property Ownership
 - i. Tenancy in Common
 - ii. Joint Tenancy with Right of Survivorship
 - iii. Tenancy by the Entirety
 - iv. Community Property
 - v. POD and TOD
- d. Assets Included in a Gross Estate
- e. Common Estate Deductions
- f. Qualified Domestic Relations Orders
- g. Wills, Codicils, and Letters of Last Instruction
- h. Powers of Attorney
- i. Living Wills and Advanced Medical Directives
- j. Basic Trusts
 - i. Living (Revocable) Trust
 - ii. A-B Trust
 - iii. Life Insurance
 - iv. Qualified Personal Residence Trust
- k. Charitable Giving
 - i. Tax Implications
 - ii. Charitable Trusts
 - 1. Pooled Income Fund
 - 2. CRAT and CRUT
 - 3. Donor Advised Fund
 - iii. Personal Giving
 - 1. Tax Implications
 - 2. UGMA and UTMA

Therapeutic Competency Areas (30%)

- I. The Fundamentals of Therapy (10%)
 - 1. Significance
 - 2. Purpose
 - a. Distress
 - b. Support
 - c. Coping
 - d. Self-Exploration
 - e. Relational Dynamics
 - 3. Individual, Couple, and Family Therapy
 - 4. Systems Theory
 - a. Holistic
 - b. Interdependent Perspective
- J. Theories and Models of Therapeutic Intervention I (10%)
 - 1. Theory/Stages of Change
 - a. First and second-order change
 - b. Trans-theoretical model of change
 - c. Financial development (informed by human development theory)
 - a. Financial socialization, age appropriate financial development/milestones
 - d. Pre-contemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action, Maintenance, Relapse
 - 2. Models/Stages of Change
 - a. General Order
 - a. Description of the phases of typical therapy work (beginning, middle, end)
 - b. Rapport building and establishing trust or building a therapeutic alliance
 - c. General assessment (formal, informal – structured, unstructured)
 - d. Case formulation/conceptualization
 - e. Goals and “treatment” planning
 - f. Maintenance
 - g. Termination
- K. Theories and Models of Therapeutic Intervention II (15%)
 - 1. Therapeutic Models & Intervention
 - a. List of models

- a. Cognitive-behavioral
 - b. Solution-focused
 - c. Narrative
 - d. Experiential/Gestalt
 - e. Strategic
 - f. Neo-Freudian Psychodynamic
 - g. Emotionally Focused Therapy (Gottman and Johnson)
 - h. Imago Therapy (Harville Hendrix)
 - i. Motivational Interviewing
2. Systems Theory
- a. Assumptions
 - a. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts
 - b. Process vs. content
 - c. Power dynamics
 - b. Keywords
 - a. Negative and positive feedback loops
 - b. Structure/hierarchy
 - c. Boundaries
 - d. Family of origin/genogram
 - e. Generational transmission of schemas/values/skills
 - f. Circular Causality
3. Psychodynamic Theory/Basic Freudian Theory
- a. Assumptions
 - a. Understand the unconscious
 - b. Importance of the basic drives of sex and aggression
 - c. Role of therapist as “blank screen” and the importance of dreams, free association and interpretation as ways of gaining insight to be able to love and work to maximum capacity
 - d. Understand the historical importance of Freud’s discoveries about how the human mind works
 - b. Keywords
 - c. Shared assumptions with other base theories
 - d. Neo-Freudian theories
 - a. Fairbairn (Object Relations Theory)

- b. Winnicott (Object Relations Theory)
 - c. Kohut (Self-psychology Theory)
 - d. Ainsworth (Attachment Theory)
 - e. Based more on the importance of relationship and attachment
 - f. Less authoritarian and more interpersonal and interactive
 - g. Curative is the relationship and the working through of childhood issues and beliefs with a supportive and empathic therapist.
 - 4. Cognitive Behavioral Theory
 - a. Assumptions
 - a. Model: Activating Event → Schemas → Thoughts → Behavior/Emotions – > Outcome.
 - b. Cognitions affect and cause behavior (cognitions are not only involved in the behavioral process but necessary to it).
 - c. Cognitions can be measured, monitored, and altered.
 - d. As cognitions change, behavior may change.
 - b. Keywords
 - c. Shared assumptions with other base theories
 - 5. Positive Psychology
 - a. Assumptions
 - b. Keywords
 - c. Shared assumptions with other base theories
- L. Communication & General Counseling Skills I (15%)
- 1. Audible
 - a. Attending
 - b. Active listening
 - c. Mirroring or matching
 - d. Pacing
 - e. Summarizing
 - f. Restating/rephrasing
 - g. Reflecting
 - h. Paraphrasing
 - i. Reframing
 - j. Interpreting

- k. Self-disclosure
 - l. Genuineness
 - m. Noticing
 - n. Complimenting and appreciation
 - o. Affirming
 - p. Empathizing
 - q. Normalizing
 - r. Open-ended questions
 - s. Challenging or confronting
 - t. Providing feedback
 - u. Checking in
 - v. Non-judgmental stance (unconditional positive regard)
 - w. Development of the working alliance/rapport
2. Physical
- a. Body language
 - b. Non-verbal
 - c. Facial expression
 - d. Posture
 - e. Eye contact
 - f. Nodding head
 - g. Seating position
 - h. Unconscious mannerisms
3. Other Considerations
- a. Pacing
 - b. Timing
 - c. Physical space and environment
 - d. Affect and emotional climate of room

M. General Counseling Skills II (15%)

1. Therapeutic Alliance
- a. Cohesiveness in direction/outcomes of therapy
 - b. Trust in expertise and knowledge
 - c. Maintenance of the therapeutic relationship
 - d. Therapeutic relationship sequence of rupture and repair

N. Knowledge of Mental Health Diagnoses (10%)

- a. Diagnosis Process
- b. Impact of Diagnosis
- c. Tools for Diagnosis
- d. Common Mental Health Diagnoses
- e. The role of the CFT-I™ in diagnosis

O. Culture and Diversity (10%)

1. Social Justice
 - a. Knowledge of oppression/stigmas
 - b. Low-income/marginalized/economically-disadvantaged populations
 - c. Eastern/Mindfulness influences
2. Advocacy
 - a. Promotion of Diversity

Financial Therapy Competency Areas (40%)

P. Self of the Financial Therapist (20%)

1. Definition
2. Importance of one's own money work
3. Transference/Countertransference
4. Elements that can impact the work of a financial therapist
 - a. E.g., biases, personality traits, personal experiences, money beliefs
5. Importance of support and continuing education
6. Defining self-care
7. Relevant self-care strategies for financial therapists and for financial therapy clients

Q. Research Evaluation (10%)

1. Quantitative and qualitative research
2. Identify sources of research data
3. Core statistical skills for interpreting empirical financial therapy studies
4. Key elements of an empirical research article
 - a. E.g., purpose, theoretical framework, participants/sample, results
5. Sound methodology
6. Evaluation of results and outcomes

7. Recognizing research bias
 8. Areas of caution with research evaluation
- R. Money and Relationships (40%)
1. Systems theory: An important lens for conceptualizing money dynamics
 - a. Key concepts of General Systems theory
 - b. Cybernetics
 - c. Key concepts of family systems
 2. Relational money dynamics in financial therapy
 3. Additional theoretical lenses for money dynamics & financial therapy
 - a. E.g., Systemic financial therapy; Solution-focused financial therapy
 4. Framing money patterns in individuals, couples, and families
 - a. E.g., financial socialization; money scripts; money personalities; money genograms
 5. Special Topics in financial therapy
 - a. E.g., intergenerational wealth transmission; financial enmeshment; money conflict; relationship dissolution and divorce; financial infidelity; relational and financial abuse; financial trauma; addiction
- S. Standards of Practice and Ethical Considerations (30%)
1. FTA Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
 2. CFT-I™ Scope of Practice
 - a. “Scope of practice” defined
 - b. Applicable licensure (state-specific) and federal regulatory laws for CFT-I™ practitioners
 - c. Knowledge of complementary disciplines to financial therapy
 - d. Collaborative models of financial therapy
 - a. Relational financial therapy
 - b. Narrative financial therapy
 - c. Conjoint financial therapy
 - e. The referral process
 3. Fiduciary Standard
 - a. Definition
 - b. Identifying and disclosing conflict of interest
 - c. Suitability standard vs. Fiduciary standard

4. Informed Consent
5. Red Flag Issues
 - a. Disclosure responsibilities
 - b. Personal/professional boundaries
 - a. Awareness of potential power dynamics and the impact on practitioner/client relationship
 - c. Child/elder abuse and neglect, suicide, homicide, intimate partner violence
 - d. Mental illness
 - e. Relational and/or financial infidelity
 - f. Financial abuse
 - g. Trauma