



HORTICULTURAL THERAPY

Clinical Skills in HT Course Outline

Pre-Course Work

Pre-Reading Case Studies- outlined in additional document for Registrants

- [CHTA FAQ Page](#)
- [CHTA Core Skills & Knowledge](#)
- [Wichrowski, M. J., & Moscovici, M. \(2024, April\). Horticultural therapy for individuals coping with dementia: practice recommendations informed by related non-pharmacological interventions. In Healthcare \(Vol. 12, No. 8, p. 832\). MDPI.](#)

Required Textbook

- Haller, R. L., Kennedy, K. L., & Capra, C. L. (Eds.). (2019). *The Profession and Practice of Horticultural Therapy*. CRC Press.
 - [Snapshot of the applicable nature of this book to our learning in this course here.](#)
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Session 1: Introduction to Each Other & to Clinical Skills in HT

Objective: Build rapport, establish a shared purpose, and introduce foundational concepts of clinical skills in HT.

- **Welcome, orientation, course overview**
 - Instructor background & story
 - Student introductions
- **Introduction to Clinical Skills & Jargon**
 - Person-first/client-centered practice principles
 - Understanding the therapeutic process: assessment → planning → facilitation → evaluation → documentation
 - Small group reflection: personal goals for clinical HT practice



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Session 2: Therapeutic Assessment in HT

Objective: Participants will be able to research, identify, and apply multiple assessment types in horticultural therapy practice, practice strategies for administering assessments, and recognize the role of bias and risk awareness in the assessment process.

- **Assessments**

- Need & value of assessment
- Explore assessment types: observational, standardized, functional
- Strategies for administering assessments
- Group activity: Assessment practice
- Introduction to risk awareness in assessments
- Homework: Self-assessment completion w/ reflection on use of 'self-assessments' for clients

Session 3 & 4: Goal Setting & Program Planning

Objective: Participants will be able to write measurable therapeutic goals and criteria-based objectives, and design program plans that align interventions with client needs, background, and desired outcomes.

- **Goal Setting**

- Why goals and objectives are imperative
- Writing measurable therapeutic goals
- Writing clear, criteria-based objectives
- In-class examples and practice

- **Program Planning**

- Aligning programs/ interventions with client needs and desired goals/ outcomes
- Building session plans and program structures
- Breakout room partner activity: Drafting therapeutic goals from an assessment case study
- Program activity examples
 - group brainstorming for shared resource of program ideas
- Homework: developing a program plan, with evidence (one paper) included

- **Cultural Competency**

- Unique position of HT to offer cultural supports and expression
- Group discussion: *How might cultural factors influence engagement, communication, and responses to horticultural therapy interventions?*
- Resources/ courses to strengthen cultural competency skills



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Session 5: Facilitation & Adaptation Skills

Objective: Participants will be able to apply core facilitation strategies to support engagement and motivation in HT sessions, and design program modifications and adaptations to meet diverse client needs.

- **Facilitation Strategies**

- Core facilitation techniques for HT (modeling, mirroring, pacing, sequencing activities)
- Supporting engagement and motivation
- Cuing
- Managing group dynamics
- Difference in one to one therapy facilitation
- Creating therapeutic presence (attunement, active listening, body language)

- **Adapting / Modifying programs based on assessment**

- Translating assessment findings into practical adaptations
- Modifying activities for physical, cognitive, sensory, or psychosocial needs
- Incorporating adaptive tools or technology
- Adapting cuing strategies

Session 6: Documentation & Evaluation

Objective: Participants will be able to explain the value of evaluation and documentation, demonstrate effective documentation skills using a variety of formats, and apply evaluation tools to measure client progress and program outcomes while upholding ethical standards.

- **Documentation**

- The value and ethics of documentation
- Progress notes, charting, program evaluation
- Common formats and writing styles (SOAP, narrative, checklists, etc.)
- Group activity:
 - Reviewing *unfinished* sample progress notes and offering 'improvements'
 - Writing 1-2 progress notes
- Homework: submit a progress note on session 2 program plan homework for instructor review and feedback

- **Evaluation**

- Program/ session evaluation tools
- Individual evaluation tools



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Session 7: Risk Management & Ethics in HT

Objective: Participants will be able to identify and apply risk management strategies across physical, emotional, environmental, and cultural domains, and integrate ethical considerations and professional boundaries into horticultural therapy practice..

- Risk management strategies: physical, emotional, environmental, cultural
- Where do we record risk management planning?
- Ethical considerations in therapeutic practice
- Boundaries and scope of practice in interdisciplinary contexts
- Group case study: exploration of risk scenarios

Session 8: Interdisciplinary Teamwork & Advocacy for HT role

Objective: Participants will be able to identify opportunities for collaboration within interdisciplinary teams, practice communication strategies that support effective teamwork, and apply advocacy approaches to promote the role of horticultural therapy in professional settings.

- **Interdisciplinary Team**
 - Personal reflective activity: Who is our interdisciplinary team?
 - Brief scope outline for interdisciplinary team members and how we can collaborate
 - Collaborative assessments
 - How progress noting can impact interdisciplinary teamwork
- **Advocating for HT in your role**
 - Advocacy strategies for HT as a recognized therapeutic modality
 - Communication strategies for interdisciplinary collaboration (including styles of meetings, virtual communication tools, and communicating our assessment results)
 - Group activity: practicing our 'elevator pitch' in clinical settings, with different team members
- **Course wrap-up, reflection, and next steps in practice**
 - Continued learning opportunities
 - Opportunities with the CHTA



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Course Resources to be available to students in a google shared drive

- Assessment collection folder in shared drive
- PDF list of objective clinical language for progress noting
- Example goals and objectives document; including referencing page numbers that list examples in required text
- 10 example program plans
- Risk management checklist for HT sessions
- Reading list of key HT research and evidence-based practice articles