

Foundations in Horticultural Therapy – HTC1

INSTRUCTOR

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CLASS LOCATION

Grand Potager
7000 LaSalle Blvd.
Montréal, Québec

FORMAT

In-person, Virtual
Classroom and
Supported Experiential
Group Study

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is the first of two that comprises the Bird's Foot Horticultural Therapy Education Series and is worth 1.0 points (80 Contact Hours) toward professional registration with the CHTA. A Certificate of Attendance will be provided to students when all course requirements have been met.

*Please visit the CHTA website for current information about voluntary professional registration

COURSE FEES AND MATERIALS

The course fee is \$1,500 and includes instruction, evidence-based research and reference materials, plant material and supplies required for hands-on activities. Course fees are non-refundable and must be paid in full at the time of registration. Required textbooks are not included in the course fees.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The Profession and Practice of Horticultural Therapy, 1st edition, 2019 CRC Press, ed. Rebecca L. Haller, Karen L. Kennedy, Christine L. Capra. 384 pages.

Designing, Planting and Using a Therapeutic Garden, Sue Jeffries, The Crowood Press, 2023. 224 pages.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This foundational course introduces students to the profession and practice of horticultural therapy and explores the diverse benefits of gardening activities in the realms of health care, education and human services. Students will explore and deepen their understanding of their own personal connection to the natural world, and how to translate that into providing compassionate, respectful, patient-centered care as part of their professional practice.

This course provides students with HT/TH specific horticultural skills and knowledge, including discussion of toxicology of common plant species and common contraindications to avoid when working with varied populations. Students will explore how to grow and utilise therapeutic plants, necessary attributes of accessible and healing garden spaces and safe/adaptive gardening practices.

Students will be provided with practical experience in developing and delivering safe, goal-oriented programming for diverse populations. Discussion will include how to fully plan and budget for effective therapeutic programs, how to collect materials sustainably and best practices for program delivery and therapeutic approach. Students will practise developing assessments and evaluations to ensure the effectiveness of a program and how to appropriately document program outcomes.

*This course is a prerequisite for the second course in the series, Advanced Horticultural Therapy Applications and Professional Practice (HTC2)

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATES:	TIMES:	FORMAT	LOCATION
January 29 – February 1, 2027	8:30-4:30	In-person	TBD
February 2 - 5, 2027	TBD	Scenario-Based Activity*	Virtual Classroom
February 8 – 12, 2027	TBD	Experiential Activity*	Virtual Classroom
February 10, 2027	5:00-9:00	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom
February 13, 2027	8:30-12:30	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom
February 15-19, 2027	TBD	Scenario-Based Activity*	Virtual Classroom
February 17, 2027	5:00-9:00	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom
February 20, 2027	12:30-4:30	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom
February 22-26, 2027	TBD	Experiential Activity*	Virtual Classroom
February 24, 2027	5:00-9:00	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom
February 27, 2027	12:30-4:30	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom
March 1 – 4, 2027	TBD	Case Study*	Virtual Classroom
March 3, 2027	5:00-9:00	Synchronous	Virtual Classroom

*Each of the instructor-led course activities will consist of a minimum of 4 contact hours.

EXIT COMPETENCIES – CORE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

At successful completion of this course, students will have an understanding of:

- the difference between horticultural therapy (HT) and therapeutic horticulture (TH)
- different titles and terms used by HT/TH professionals (Horticultural Therapist, Registered, Horticultural Therapy Technician, Horticultural Therapy Practitioner, Nature Therapist, Ecopsychology, Ecotherapy)
- foundations and diverse evolution of horticultural therapy and the contemporary use of HT/TH internationally
- assessment, treatment, planning, implementation, and evaluation methods pertinent to HT/TH
- research and evidence base that supports the use of HT/TH and therapeutic landscapes
- CHTA Code of Ethics and updated CHTA core documents
- CHTA professional designation and titles and the Professional Registration process
- current opportunities to contribute to the CHTA
- adaptive facilitation styles including cultural awareness and using compassionate communication
- effective, intentional communication (cuing, gendered language, etc.)
- creating a safe and welcoming environment
- understanding individual and group dynamics
- cultural history and value of plants, including native and non-native plants
- physical, cognitive, psychological, social, and spiritual effects of plants on people
- theories supportive of HT/TH (Biophilic Theory, Attention Restoration Theory, etc.)
- life connection between plants and people
- nature-based self-care as a tool for professional development
- Indoor and outdoor plant care as it relates to HT/TH and greening of those spaces

- Plant Science and how it relates to HT/TH
- Organic gardening practice and all aspects of growing/harvesting as it pertains to HT/TH
- Tools including adaptation, and safety considerations
- Accessible/therapeutic landscape design, including universal design and basics of designing for varying abilities
- the physical aspects (hardscape) of creating a therapeutic environment considering both large and small spaces
- passive and active therapeutic garden design to maximize the potential for plant-people engagement (signage, invitations to engage, etc.), including sensory plants and how to engage all 5 senses
- the value and practical application of botanical arts and crafts, cooking/nutrition and other related activities
- land stewardship, honourable harvesting practices, and environmental education
- community consultation (ex. awareness of community horticultural network, or therapeutic needs of community)
- cultural history of forest tending and native plants
- assessment, treatment planning, implementation, and evaluation methods pertinent to HT/TH
- conduct assessment processes and document assessment findings using basic medical vocabulary and acronyms
- appropriate interventions and activities relevant to stated goals and objectives and construct treatment plans which acknowledge culture, heritage, socio-economic background, skills, and capabilities of individuals and groups
- adhering to ethical and professional standards of practice, incorporate safety and risk management procedures, accommodate individual strengths, skills, and preferences of the client group

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The Bird's Foot Horticultural Therapy Education Series offers a comprehensive look at the principles and practices for the professional use of horticulture as therapy. This two-module education series includes 160 hours of immersive study along with authentic experiential learning that focuses on the 'Core Skills and Knowledge' recommended for professional registration with the Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association (CHTA).

This challenging interdisciplinary program will focus on providing practical knowledge to support those wishing to pursue career opportunities in horticultural therapy (HT) and therapeutic horticulture (TH). Courses will also appeal to professionals currently working in healthcare, recreation, education, landscape design and horticulture who wish to broaden their skills and knowledge pertaining to the many therapeutic benefits of connecting people and plants. Students will have the opportunity to learn and to practice HT skills in real-world settings, under the guidance of experienced HT professionals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To provide students with a richer understanding of HT techniques and authentic HT experiences, classes are held in-person and via virtual classroom. Attendance and collaborative engagement are mandatory to earn a Certificate of Attendance. Students can expect additional study and coursework outside of specified contact/class hours. All course work must be completed and submitted within the parameters outlined by the course instructor.