

# PLS 3080: Introduction to Horticultural Therapy

Credits: 3

## Instructors:

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**Office Hours:** By appointment at Wilmot Gardens Greenhouse, by phone, or online..

## Course Description:

This course describes the profession and practice of horticultural therapy including its history, current state, and relevant literature and theories. The course will explore people-plant relationships, therapeutic methods and benefits, and populations served. Students will also be introduced to existing programs and the role of therapeutic gardens.

## Course Objectives:

After completing this course students will be able to:

- Describe the history, development, and current status of horticultural therapy
- Characterize the many ways plants and nature impact human life and the theories underlying their therapeutic bases
- Contrast the different therapeutic models used in the profession and analyze cognitive, physical, and psychosocial benefits
- Summarize research relevant to horticultural therapy and therapeutic environments
- Compare relevant tools in assessing needs of the participant, program, and facility served
- List the special characteristics of populations served and relate them to treatment plans and goals
- Describe the use of gardens in horticultural therapy and their special design characteristics

## Required Texts:

Haller, R.L., Kennedy, K.L. & Capra, C.L. (2019). *The profession and practice of horticultural therapy*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

## Selected Readings:

Posted within the individual modules on Canvas.

## Suggested Readings:

Haller, R.L. & Capra, C.L. (2016). *Horticultural therapy methods: Connecting people and plants in health care, human services, and therapeutic programs*. (2nd ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Simson, S.P. & Straus, M.C. (2003). *Horticulture as therapy: Principles and practice*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

## Land Acknowledgement:

The Certificate in Horticultural Therapy Program at the University of Florida, based at Wilmot Gardens, acknowledges that for thousands of years, the area now known as Florida has been, and continues to be, home to many Native Nations. We recognize that the University of Florida campus, including Wilmot Gardens, is located on the ancestral territory of the Potano and Seminole peoples.

The Potano, of Timucua affiliation, lived in the Alachua region from before European arrival until the early 1700s, when their towns were destroyed. The Seminole, also known as the Alachua Seminole, established towns here shortly after but were forcibly removed during the Seminole Wars.

We honor the past, present, and future Native residents and cultures of Florida. We also recognize the wisdom of Indigenous ways of knowing, which have long taught about the healing power of nature. Their traditions—rooted in respect, reciprocity, and stewardship—serve as a foundation for our work in horticultural therapy.

As a program, we are committed to honoring Indigenous knowledge and ensuring that we do so with integrity and respect. We will work to amplify Indigenous voices, build meaningful partnerships, and educate ourselves and others about their contributions without appropriating or misrepresenting their teachings. Our approach centers on listening, learning, and practicing reciprocity, so that our work reflects the values of respect and care that Indigenous peoples have long upheld.

### **Course Mechanics:**

This is an online asynchronous course. Students can view instructional materials at their own time during the week but there are fixed schedules and assignment deadlines. Lectures can be accessed via UF e-learning in Canvas ([elearning.ufl.edu](https://elearning.ufl.edu)). Students should view narrated lectures each week to keep up with the topics as listed on the schedule, unless otherwise indicated. There are no live lectures, but timely feedback on your assignments will be given by the instructor. The student's UF Gatorlink username and password are necessary to log into the system.

Course modules are published on the Saturday before the week commences. For example, if Module 1 begins on Monday the 3rd, course content will be available from Saturday the 1st.

Students are also expected to participate in weekly graded discussions on Padlet (<https://www.padlet.com>), which is free for students. Our class registration link is: <https://padlet.com/pls3080/student/FRqCpDSX4elQIESq>

### **How Much Time Should I Be Spending on This Course?**

This is an upper-level undergraduate course and the rigor and expectations correspond to that level; as a 3-credit hour course, you can expect to spend 6-12 hours per week on the course.

### **Using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in this Course**

Writing is integral to thinking and it can be challenging. Generative writing tools like ChatGPT can be useful tools for helping improve our writing and stimulate our thinking. They should **never** serve as a substitute for writing and thinking. Think of generative AI applications as a lower quality substitution for a writing tutor. The tutor would never do the writing for you but might ask you questions to jumpstart brainstorming or idea development. They might also point out poor grammar, organization, and use of passive voice.

Similarly, you may use generative AI to help generate ideas and brainstorm a topic. Know that the information generated by programs such as ChatGPT may be inaccurate, incomplete, and biased. Know that relying on these tools may also curb your own independent thinking and creativity. Recognize that AI is not capable of independent thinking or making judgments based on lived

experiences, cultural contexts, or ethical considerations. **Remember that AI cannot think for itself, so don't let it think for you.**

Generative AI develops its responses from previously created texts from model training sources, but it does not cite those sources. When asked to include sources, it may create sources that are not real.

### **PLS 3080 Course Rules Regarding AI Use:**

- You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own.
- If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (consider that as a reference it is likely low quality or unreliable).
- If you use AI tools in your assignments, please include a note to clarify: 1) where in your process you used AI; 2) which platform(s) you used; and 3) what prompt you entered.
- You may not use entire sentences or paragraphs suggested by an app without providing quotation marks and a citation, just as you would for any other source.
- Citations should take this form:
  - OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT. Response to prompt: "Explain what is meant by the term 'Situational Assessment'" (February 15, 2024, <https://chat.openai.com/>).
- You may not have an app write a draft (either rough or final) of an assignment for you
- You are free to use spell check, grammar check, and synonym identification tools (e.g., Grammarly, and MS Word)
- You are free to use app recommendations when it comes to rephrasing sentences or reorganizing paragraphs you have drafted yourself
- You are free to use app recommendations when it comes to tweaking outlines you have drafted yourself

Evidence of inappropriate or plagiarized AI use will be grounds for submission of an academic integrity report. Sanctions will range from a zero for the assignment to an F for the course. Be aware that other classes may have different policies and that some may forbid AI use completely.

**In summary, I assume we won't have any issues but want to ensure that my expectations are clear so that we can focus on learning content rather than being concerned about whether your work is your work. Please don't hesitate to ask questions or for clarification on any of this information.**

### **Course Communications:**

All class members are expected to follow the rules of common courtesy in all communications, written and verbal. Guidelines for these rules can be accessed at [https://cise.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/08/CISE\\_Netiquette\\_Guide.pdf](https://cise.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/08/CISE_Netiquette_Guide.pdf)

General questions of relevance to the whole class should be posted to the course's discussion board or Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section. Please check for answers there before emailing the instructor. Private questions should be sent to the instructor via Canvas mail.

### **Course Schedule:**

Week	Module & Lecture Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1	Introductions and Getting Started Library Resources	Syllabus Quiz

<b>Module 1: People-Plant Relationships</b>		
Week 2	History of Plants in Human Life Human Dimensions of Horticulture Intrinsic Characteristics of Plants & Nature	Week 2 Padlet Discussion Week 2 Demonstration of Content Poll Introduction Video & Responses
<b>Module 2: The Profession of Horticultural Therapy / Horticultural Therapy Models &amp; Program Types</b>		
Week 3	History & Background Current State of the Profession Registration & Types of Practice	Week 3 Padlet Discussion Week 3 Demonstration of Content Poll Course Checklist
Week 4	Standards of Practice & Code of Ethics Stakeholders & the People Served Benefits of HT	Week 4 Padlet Discussion Week 4 Demonstration of Content Poll 3-Minute Research Report
Week 5	Definitions of Practice Program Models: Therapeutic, Vocational, Social Facilities & Populations Served	Week 5 Padlet Discussion Week 5 Demonstration of Content Poll Research Report Peer Reviews Activity Proposal Part 1
<b>Module 3: Horticultural Therapy in Practice</b>		
Week 6	Treatment Teams Treatment Plan Process Misericordia Gardens HT Program	Week 6 Padlet Discussion Week 6 Demonstration of Content Poll
Week 7	Goals & Objectives Documentation Part 1 - 3	Week 7 Padlet Discussion Week 7 Demonstration of Content Poll Activity Proposal Part 2
Week 8	Treatment Activities Task Analysis Activity Analysis & Modification	Week 8 Padlet Discussion Week 8 Demonstration of Content Poll
<b>Module 4: Horticultural Therapy Clients</b>		
Week 9	Defining Disability Defining Disease Defining Mental Illness	Week 9 Padlet Discussion Week 9 Demonstration of Content Poll
Week 10	<b>Spring Break – No Classes</b>	
Week 11	Characteristics of Special Populations Parts 1 – 2	Week 11 Padlet Discussion Week 11 Demonstration of Content Poll Activity Proposal Part 3

Week 12	Characteristics of Special Populations Parts 3 - 4 Disability Etiquette WBG TH Program – History & Facilities	Week 12 Padlet Discussion Week 12 Demonstration of Content Poll 3-Minute Client Group Report
Week 13	WBG TH Program – Participants WBG TH Program – Activities HT-Related Research	Week 13 Padlet Discussion Week 13 Demonstration of Content Poll Client Group Report Peer Reviews
<b>Module 5: Research, Theory, and Healing Gardens</b>		
Week 14	Stress Reduction Theory Attention-Restoration Theory History of Healing Gardens	Week 14 Padlet Discussion Week 14 Demonstration of Content Poll Activity Proposal Final Report
Week 15*  *Reading Days	Healing Garden Types	Virtual Field Trip Video & Responses
<b>Ap 28 - May 2</b>	<b>Finals Week</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>

## Assignments:

### Introduction Video

You will create and post a three-minute video at the beginning of the course that introduces you to the class and includes information on yourself, your reason for taking this course, your interests, and your favorite plant. You will also be expected to respond to five of your peers' videos. More information is provided within the assignment link in Canvas.

### Demonstration of Content Polls

The goal of the content poll assignments is for you to demonstrate an understanding of horticultural therapy, and its practices based on the week's readings and lectures. Every week there will be a poll assignment on Canvas that you will need to complete by Saturday at 11:59 pm ET. More information on content polls will be provided in Canvas.

### Padlet Discussions

The goal of the discussion assignments is for you to guide discussion and interact with fellow students around HT/TH topics while demonstrating your grasp of its components and incorporating your own related experiences. Each week you will respond to a prompt posted by the instructor as well as respond to another student's post by Saturday at 11:59 pm ET. We value meaningful, thoughtful engagement in discussion posts, and we assess them based on the effort and intention demonstrated in your writing. Posts should show:

- **Depth of Thought:** Your post should reflect a clear understanding of the topic and contribute new ideas, insights, or perspectives to the discussion.
- **Intentionality:** Your post should demonstrate that you have carefully considered the topic and the purpose of your response.

We recognize that people express ideas differently. Whether your writing style is concise or expansive, the focus is on the quality of your contributions rather than the length. Consider using specific examples, reflections, or questions to enrich your post.

### **3-Minute Reports**

You will research and post a three-minute report on the given topic, following the template provided in the assignment link. Your grade will be assessed on content, clarity, and delivery as detailed in the associated rubric.

### **3-Minute Report Peer Reviews**

You are expected to read/listen to your classmates' 3-minute reports and post a response to two classmates based on the rubric or instructions provided in the assignment instructions.

### **Activity Proposal Project**

You will create an activity proposal for a group HT/TH session. You will research a client group, determine appropriate goals and activities for the group, and then choose an activity that can serve their therapeutic needs. This project will have four parts, each with a grade. Detailed instructions are provided in the assignment link.

### **Virtual Field Trip Video & Peer Responses**

You will create and post a three-minute video at the end of the course that shares a nature-oriented location that you feel has therapeutic qualities. You will also be expected to respond to three of your peers' videos. More information is provided within the assignment link in Canvas.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be comprehensive. There will be practice sessions available. If a student has a 90% or higher (A- or A) in the class going into the exam, they may opt out. If, however, a student takes the exam, no matter their grade going in, the exam grade will count toward the final course grade. The exam is to be taken individually; no collaboration is allowed. The exam is not to be recorded or shared in any way.

### **Extra Credit**

There may be an opportunity to earn a few extra credit points during the semester. Those will be announced on the Canvas site if they are available.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

### **Inclusion Statement**

The Certificate in Horticultural Therapy Program at the University of Florida is committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and welcoming environment for all students, staff, and participants. We recognize that diversity in all its forms—including race, ethnicity, culture, language, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, socioeconomic background, and lived experience—enriches our program and strengthens the field of horticultural therapy.

We are dedicated to creating a space where differences are celebrated, voices from marginalized communities are amplified, and barriers to participation are actively addressed. We strive to ensure that our teaching, research, and practices reflect a deep respect for the unique identities and experiences of those we serve.

Through ongoing dialogue, training, and reflection, we will continue to evolve as a program that centers equity, access, and inclusion in every aspect of our work. We believe that the healing power of nature is for everyone, and we are committed to making that vision a reality.

**Academic Resources and Policies:**

A complete list of [UF's academic policies and resources](https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/), including health and wellness resources, can be found here: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>