

# PLS 4081: Techniques in Horticultural Therapy

Summer C 2025 – 3 Credits

## Instructors:

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Canvas email

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

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Canvas mail

**Office Hours:** By appointment via phone or video call.

## Teaching Assistants:

Bree Stark

via Canvas email

## Course Description:

This course examines the effectiveness of horticultural therapy across a diverse range of client populations, programs, and environments, describing the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial implications. Therapeutic, vocational, and social modalities employing plants will be explored, as well as task analysis, activity analysis and tool and site adaptations.

## Course Objectives:

After completing this course students will be able to:

- Compare the array of treatment modalities and methods in horticultural therapy settings and apply methods to assess therapeutic outcomes and benefits
- Characterize treatment plans, goals and objectives, treatment analysis, and related documentation
- List the distinct characteristics and therapeutic needs of diverse populations served in horticultural therapy programming, including unique adaptations
- Describe the importance of plant selection and horticulture techniques in designing individual and group activities and treatment plans
- Describe adaptive gardening strategies, plant selection criteria, and safety consideration for both indoor and outdoor settings
- Demonstrate basic horticulture knowledge common to horticultural therapy settings

## Required Prerequisite Course:

PLS 3080 - Introduction to Horticultural Therapy

## 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.

## **Recommended Texts:**

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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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://biostat.ufl.edu/current-students/e-learning-resources/e-learning-basics/etiquette-online/>

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.

## **Program 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.

### **Community Pledge:**

The Certificate in Horticultural Therapy Program at the University of Florida is committed to fostering a welcoming environment for all students, staff, and participants. We recognize that be it visible or invisible, our individual differences and each of our unique lived experiences enriches our program and strengthens the field of horticultural therapy.

We are dedicated to creating a space where all voices are heard and barriers to participation are addressed. We strive to ensure that our teaching, research, and practices reflect a deep respect for the unique populations, identities, and experiences of those we serve through.

Through our ongoing dialogue, training, and reflections, we will continue to evolve as a program that centers the populations we serve. We believe that the healing power of nature is for everyone, and we are committed to making that vision a reality

### **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 4081 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
  - 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 spellcheck, grammar check, and synonym identification tools (e.g. Grammarly or 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 Schedule:

Week	Module & Lecture Topic	Assignments Due
<b>Section 1: Introductions &amp; Review</b>		
<b>Week 1</b> May 11-15	Review Parts 1-3 Adjunctive Therapies & Philosophies Parts 1 -2 Adjunctive Therapies & Philosophies Parts 3-4	May 17: Re-Introduction Post May 17: Week 1 Discussion May 17: Syllabus Quiz
<b>Section 2: Individual &amp; Group Treatment Plans</b>		
<b>Week 2</b> May 18-22	Treatment Teams Initial Assessments Goal Setting Goals & Objectives Part 1	May 24: Week 2 Discussion May 24: Week 2 Content Quiz May 24: PPP Part 1: Planting Plan
<b>Week 3</b> May 26-29  *May 25 Memorial Day Holiday	Goals & Objectives Part 2-3 Documentation Parts 1-3	May 31: Week 3 Discussion May 31: Week 3 Content Quiz May 31: Noticing Nature #1
<b>Section 3: Treatment Session Planning</b>		

<b>Week 4</b> June 1-5	Programming Inventory Vocational Programs & Goals Therapeutic & Social Program & Goals Goals in HT Programs Part 1: Stroke, MS, PD, SCI, TBI	June 7: Week 4 Discussion June 7: Week 4 Content Quiz June 7: POP Part 1: Activity Observation Plan
<b>Week 5</b> June 8-12	Goals in HT Programs Part 2: DD Part 3: Mental Illness Part 4: Children & Youth Part 5: Older Adults Task Analysis Activity Adaptation & Modification	June 14: Week 5 Discussion June 14: Week 5 Content Quiz June 14: Research Report
<b>Week 6</b> June 15-18  *June 19 Juneteenth Holiday	Activity Selection Process Session Structure & Process Session Review & Evaluation	June 21: Week 6 Discussion June 21: Week 6 Content Quiz June 21: Research Report #1 Peer Review
<b>Week 7</b> June 22-26	<b>Summer Break</b>	
<b>Section 4: The Therapist's Role</b>		
<b>Week 8</b> June 29-July 2  * July 3 Holiday	The Therapeutic Relationship The Therapeutic Use of Self Communication Techniques Parts 1	July 5: Week 8 Discussion July 5: Week 8 Content Quiz July 5: POP Part 2: Activity Observation Report July 5: PPP Part 3: Midpoint Update
<b>Week 9</b> July 6-10	Communication Techniques Parts 2-3 Leadership Styles & Group Dynamics Motivation & Behavior Management Evidence-Based Practice Ethics & Professionalism	July 12: Week 9 Discussion July 12: Week 9 Content Quiz July 12: Session Activity Plan
<b>Section 5: Plant Use in Programming</b>		
<b>Week 10</b> July 13-17	Basic Plant Knowledge Basic Plant Physiology, Pathology & Taxonomy	July 19: Week 10 Discussion July 19: Week 10 Content Quiz July 19: Session Activity Plan Peer Feedback

	Basic Plant Propagation, Culture & Maintenance	
<b>Week 11</b> July 20-24	Choosing Plants Matt Wichrowski: Meet the Family Indoor & Outdoor Gardening Greenhouse Gardening	July 26: Week 11 Discussion July 26: Week 11 Content Quiz July 26: PPP Part 4: Final Report July 26: Noticing Nature #2
<b>Section 6: Adaptive Gardening &amp; Activity Ideas</b>		
<b>Week 12</b> July 27-31	Adaptive Gardening Enabling & Sensory Gardens & Tips	Aug 2: Week 12 Discussion Aug. 2: Week 12 Content Quiz Aug 2: POP Part 3: Final Report
<b>Week 13</b> Aug 3-7	Adaptive Tools & Techniques Activity Ideas: Indoor Gardening Activity Ideas: Indoor & Outdoor Plant Crafts & Nature Art	Aug. 7: Final Exam

## Assignments:

### Plant Propagation Project (75 points across four parts: 10, 15, 15, 35 points)

In this project you will keep a journal log on two plants that you propagate – one from seed and one from cutting. You will grow and care for the plants throughout the semester, recording in your journal both physical information about the plant and personal information about your experiences/feelings as the plant's caregiver. You will be assigned to a small group of students with whom you will share weekly information about your plants. This will also be a group with whom you can seek advice on plant care. Twice during the semester, you will be required to submit an update on your plants, following the prompt in the assignment link. You will also be required to provide a final report on your experiences. More details are available in the assignment links.

### Demonstration of Content Quizzes (75 points: 11 at 7.5 points each; lowest score dropped)

The goal of the content quizzes 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 an open-book quiz that you will respond to by **Sunday at 11:59 pm ET**. More information on content quizzes will be provided on Canvas.

### Discussions on Padlet (55 points: 11 at 5 points each)

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. 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. Each week you will respond to a prompt posted by the instructor as well as respond to another student's post by **Sunday at 11:59 pm ET**. More information on questions and polls will be provided in Canvas.

### **3 Minute Research Report (40 points)**

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 instructions.

### **Research Report Peer Review (10 points)**

You are expected to read/listen to your classmates' research reports and post a response to one classmate based on the rubric or instructions provided in the assignment instructions.

### **Noticing Nature Worksheets (20 points: 2 at 10 points each)**

Using an activity sheet as a guide, you will explore a nature-dominated area near you. You will then create a horticultural therapy activity inspired by your experience and choose a client group with whom you will deliver your activity.

### **Session Activity Plan & Peer Review (50 points across two parts: 40 and 10 points)**

In this assignment you will be given an activity, client group, and setting. In a small group you will put together a session plan for the group based on the given activity. You will use the task analysis, activity adaptation, and session plan templates presented in class to submit your plan. In addition, you will review and provide feedback on another group's plan following the instructions in the assignment link.

### **Program Observation Project (130 points across three parts: 10, 45, and 75 points)**

In this project you will observe a horticultural therapy, therapeutic horticulture, or other program that uses horticulture as a therapeutic medium. **In the first part** of the project, you will choose a program to observe, secure permission, and provide information on the site, location, facility, and client population. **In the second part** you will describe and summarize your observation visit, identifying strengths and weaknesses. You will also summarize the diagnosis of the observed client group diagnosis and related deficits and needs. **In the third part** you will present the same activity for the same client group but it will be redesigned to be more effective using task analysis, activity adaptation, and a session plan based on the observed activity. The report should include images, but you must seek permission first. In some cases, you may only have permission to take photos of clients' hands and the materials or not at all. Make sure you understand the facility's policy. Detailed instructions on each part are provided in the assignment link.

### **Final Exam (75 points)**

The final exam will be comprehensive and will include multiple choice, multiple answer, matching, fill-in-the blank, and short answer questions. There will be review and practice opportunities available. If a student has a 90% or higher score in the class going into the exam, they may opt out. If, however, a student takes the exam, no matter what 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.

## Evaluation of Grades:

Assignment	Points	Assignment	Points
Content Quizzes	75	Session Activity Plan	40
Padlet Discussions	55	Session Plan Peer Review	10
3 Minute Research Report & Peer Review	40 10	Plant Propagation Project	75
Noticing Nature Activities	20	Program Observation Project	130
<i>Final Exam if below 90%</i>			75
<b>Total Points</b>			<b>455/530</b>

## Grade Scale

A	94% - 100%
A-	90% - 93.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%
B	84% - 86.9%
B-	80% - 83.9%
C+	77% - 79.9%
C	74% - 76.9%
C-	70% - 73.9%
D+	67% - 69.9%
D	64% - 66.9%
D-	60% - 63.9%

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

## Academic Honesty Policy:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge that states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

## Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy:

All written assignments must be submitted through Canvas, which will give it a timestamp of submission. **Late assignments will not be accepted without proper documentation of an emergency or technological problem.**

No make-up quizzes or exams will be given unless the student has a university-approved reason for missing them and makes previous arrangements with the instructor or can document a university-excused absence. Missed course assignments or exams resulting from unexcused absences will receive a zero. Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **MUST** be accompanied by the UF Computing Help Desk ticket, indicating the date and time when you reported the problem. You



must e-mail the instructor within 24 hours, but this is not a guarantee of receiving permission to make up the quiz/exam.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **Online Course Evaluation Process:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### **Live Recorded Lectures**

In the event of live class sessions that would be audio and visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live, students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

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

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Campus Resources:**

#### **Health and Wellness**

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center:

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) - Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

## **Academic Resources**

*E-learning technical support*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

*Career Connections Center*, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.  
<https://career.ufl.edu/>

*Library Support*, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center*, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.  
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

*Writing Studio*, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.  
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

*Student Complaints On-Campus*: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

*On-Line Students Complaints*: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>