



MESSAGE THERAPY CERTIFICATE CURRICULUM

COMPETENCY 1: ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY AND PATHOLOGIES

ELEMENT 1: THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE HUMAN BODY IN HEALTH AND DISEASE

Students will learn to:

- Identify and describe the anatomical organization and general physiological principles of the human body.
- Identify, locate, and describe the structures (anatomy), functions (physiology) and pathologies commonly encountered in the practice of massage therapy and bodywork for all systems of the body
- To define, identify and describe the following elements of Asian anatomy, physiology and pathology (For programs in Asian Bodywork Therapies only).

ELEMENT 1.2: EFFECTS OF TOUCH, MASSAGE AND BODYWORK TECHNIQUES

Students will learn to:

- Identify and describe the physiological effects of touch and specific massage or bodywork techniques. (Does not apply to programs in Asian Bodywork Therapies)
- Identify and describe potential emotional effects of touch and specific massage or bodywork techniques. (Does not apply to programs in Asian Bodywork Therapies)
- Identify specific indications, contraindications and precautions to touch, massage and bodywork, considering pathologies and various populations.
- Apply the concepts of Yin/Yang. (For programs in Asian Bodywork Therapies only)

ELEMENT 1.3: HEALTHCARE AND BODYWORK TERMINOLOGY

Students will learn to:

- Use healthcare and bodywork terminology to communicate treatment findings and therapeutic results.

ELEMENT 1.4: THERAPEUTIC ENVIRONMENT

Students will learn to:

- Define and describe the interpersonal and physical components of a therapeutic environment.

ELEMENT 1.5: WELLNESS MODEL

Students will learn to:

- Define and describe a wellness model.
- Identify the scope of practice of massage and bodywork in relation to a wellness model.

ELEMENT 1.6: ASSESSMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

Students will learn to:

- Describe the purpose of assessment and data collection.
- Perform assessment and data collection.

ELEMENT 1.7: CLINICAL REASONING AND TREATMENT PLANNING

Students will learn to:

- Develop a safe and effective initial session and on-going treatment plan, based on client goals, assessment findings, and understanding of effects of massage and bodywork.
- Write clear, concise and accurate notes of client treatment sessions.

COMPETENCY 2: PERFORM MASSAGE THERAPY AND BODYWORK FOR THERAPEUTIC BENEFIT

ELEMENT 2.1: ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CLIENT SESSION

Students will learn to:

- Communicate the plan and rationale for a treatment session to the client.
- Obtain informed consent from the client prior to beginning a treatment session.
- Modify the plan and therapeutic approach used during a treatment session based on client response.
- Manage time within a treatment session.

ELEMENT 2.2: APPLICATION OF TECHNIQUES

Student will learn to:

- Demonstrate techniques that are within the scope of training and practice of commonly recognized massage therapy or bodywork disciplines.
- Identify and apply principles and protocols for massage and bodywork sessions.
- Vary the choice and application of techniques as appropriate to the client's needs, including those of special populations.
- Demonstrate techniques that are appropriate for each body area, including endangerment sites.
- Identify and practice appropriate methods of sanitation and personal hygiene in the performance of massage and bodywork sessions.
- Describe appropriate methods of hygiene and sanitation for hydrotherapy applications.

COMPETENCY 3: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SELF-CARE STRATEGY

ELEMENT 3.1: SELF-ASSESSMENT AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

Students will learn to:

- Assess personal needs, behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge relevant
- Identify how personal and cultural values, attitudes, and ethics influence professional values, attitudes and ethics.
- Identify the physiological and psychological effects of stress.
- Identify various stress reduction techniques and their benefits.

ELEMENT 3.2: SELF-CARE AND PERFORMANCE

Students will learn to:

- Identify and describe the effect of physical fitness and lifestyle habits on the performance of massage and bodywork techniques.
- Define and describe the effect of centering, focusing, grounding and breathing on the performance of massage and bodywork techniques.
- Identify and demonstrate biomechanical skills necessary for the safe and effective performance of massage and bodywork techniques.

COMPETENCY 4: DEVELOP SUCCESSFUL AND ETHICAL THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS

ELEMENT 4.1: COMMUNICATION IN THE CLIENT-THERAPIST RELATIONSHIP

Student will learn to:

- Define and demonstrate active listening, rapport, empathy, and feedback.
- Identify strategies to effectively deal with emotional and behavioral client responses to massage therapy and bodywork treatment.
- Describe the principles of conflict resolution and apply conflict resolution skills effectively in the client-therapist relationship.

ELEMENT 4.2: PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Student will learn to:

- Identify the qualities and characteristics of boundaries.
- Identify cultural differences related to boundary issues.
- Define and discuss the difference between a personal and a professional relationship.
- Discuss the importance of professional boundaries.
- Define and discuss transference and counter transference.
- Describe techniques for establishing and maintaining safe and respectful boundaries with clients.
- Discuss and demonstrate the use of draping during treatment as a professional boundary.

Element 4.3: Professional Ethics

Student will learn to:

- Identify and describe the purpose of a code of ethics.
- Identify and describe the purpose of Standards of Practice specific to massage therapy and bodywork.
- Identify confidentiality principles related to massage therapy and bodywork practice, including requirements for HIPAA compliance.
- Identify common ethical situations in massage therapy and bodywork.
- Describe processes by which to effectively resolve ethical issues.

COMPETENCY 5: DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE, BUSINESS OR EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

ELEMENT 5.1: BASIC BUSINESS PRACTICES

Student will learn to:

- Identify common business practices and structures in massage therapy and bodywork practice.
- Identify and design effective methods for time management, client scheduling, and maintenance of the work environment.
- Create a business plan or outline an employment strategy, including short-term and long-term professional goals.
- Identify the basic aspects of legal agreements, contracts, employment agreements and professional insurance.
- Identify basic principles of accounting and bookkeeping suitable for various business structures.
- Create, maintain and identify legal requirements for retaining client, financial and tax records.
- Demonstrate knowledge of federal, state, and local regulations as they pertain to massage therapy and bodywork practice.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ADA requirements and their implication for massage therapy and bodywork practice.

ELEMENT 5.2: JOB SEARCH AND MARKETING

Student will learn to:

- Identify the elements of effective job search and marketing materials (such as resumes, brochures, business cards).
- Identify and discuss common methods of marketing for massage therapy and bodywork.
- Identify strategies to develop and maintain a client base.

ELEMENT 5.3: PROFESSIONAL REFERRALS

Student will learn to:

- Identify strategies for effective communication with other professionals regarding client care and referrals.
- Describe the process used to identify the scope of practice of allied health professions.
- Describe the appropriate use of medical release and consent forms

ELEMENT 5.4: PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Student will learn to:

- Discuss the process for establishing and maintaining professional relationships in the workplace.
- Discuss strategies for establishing and maintaining professional relations with peers and other professionals.
- Identify strategies for conflict resolution with other professionals, including the need for documentation.

COMPETENCY 6: IDENTIFY STRATEGIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ELEMENT 6.1: HISTORY OF THE PROFESSION

Student will learn to:

- Describe the history of massage therapy and bodywork.
- Identify the role of professional associations for massage therapists and bodyworkers.

ELEMENT 6.2: ONGOING EDUCATION

Student will learn to:

- Discuss the value of ongoing education and skill development as a professional.
- Describe methods for identifying advanced training programs to enhance performance, knowledge and skills.

ELEMENT 6.3: RESEARCH LITERACY

Student will learn to:

- Explain the value of research to the profession.
- Identify sources of published research literature on therapeutic massage and bodywork.
- Critically read and evaluate a published research article in the field of massage therapy and bodywork.