

Student Handbook 2024-2025

MS in Recreational Therapy

Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences



Updated Augustly 20242

Table of Contents

Welcome and Introduction.....	3
Recreational Therapy at Temple University.....	3
The Mission of the Recreational Therapy Program.....	3
Student Learning Outcomes.....	4
Program Goals.....	5
Departmental and Program Contact Information.....	6
Faculty and Staff Directory.....	6
Advising Information.....	6
Curriculum Requirements.....	8
Program Electives.....	10
Departmental Internship Requirements.....	11
Mandatory Health Screening Requirements.....	12
Additional Certificate Options.....	13
University, CPH, and Program Policies and Procedures.....	14
Program Professional Behavior Statement.....	14
Recreational Therapy Essential Functions.....	15
Professional Certification.....	15
Student and Professional Organizations.....	15
Student Awards and Recognitions.....	16
Handbook Acknowledgement Quiz.....	18

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Recreational Therapy (RT) Program within the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, College of Public Health (CPH) at Temple University (TU).

We, the RT faculty members, are excited to work with you as you pursue the Master of Science degree in Recreational Therapy (MSRT). We are here to provide you a quality education and support you as you pursue the MSRT degree and your academic and professional goals. We also want to encourage you to take advantage of all that Temple University has to offer.

This handbook is designed for graduate students enrolled in the RT Program. It provides basic information about the degree, advising, faculty, clinical education experiences, and professional development opportunities. Students are encouraged to consult the [CPH Graduate Student Handbook](#) and the [Temple University Graduate Bulletin](#) for more details. Additionally, students should become familiar with and monitor the Canvas Recreational Therapy Program Information site. Also, faculty are available to meet with you to discuss your academic and career goals and progress as well as the RT profession in general.

Recreational Therapy at Temple University

Recreational Therapy (RT) is an established discipline in health care and human services. Since 1973, Temple University has offered an academic concentration or major in Therapeutic Recreation or RT. In May 2018, the program name was changed to Recreational Therapy. Additionally, the MS degree program was approved to move fully online, providing expanded opportunities for recreational therapy education. Currently, there are two academic degrees for students with career interests in RT -- a B.S. in RT, and an M.S. in Recreational Therapy. Alumni of Temple's RT programs can be found in a wide range of health and human services agencies in and around Philadelphia, and in several states across the country. Many have assumed leadership roles in professional organizations, and several have achieved national distinction and recognition. Academic excellence is also evident in the fact that graduates of Temple's RT programs score above the national average on the national credentialing examination for recreational therapists.

Recreational therapists (also called Therapeutic Recreation Specialists) use recreation and other activity- based interventions to assist people who have illnesses and disabilities to improve and maintain their physical, cognitive, social, and emotional health and well-being. Additionally, RT professionals assist with and advocate for individuals with disabilities to live physically and socially active lives in the community, thereby reducing health risks associated with various illnesses and disabling conditions and increasing social inclusion within communities. Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists® (CTRSs®) are employed in diverse settings including hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, schools, community recreation agencies, and human and social service agencies.

The Mission of the Recreational Therapy Program

The overall mission of our program is to become a world-class academic and research unit committed to advancing the role of play, recreation, and leisure opportunities in promoting active living, health and life quality, and rehabilitation and disease prevention for diverse groups, especially those with chronic illnesses and disabilities across the lifespan.

This mission is achieved through three interrelated components -- *teaching*, *research*, and *service*. The teaching mission of the program is to provide the best and most current teaching techniques and learning opportunities for students at all academic levels, and to instill a set of values, ethics, and skills that will guide academic pursuit and professional practice. The Program's mission also includes contributing to the ever-changing knowledge base in health, leisure, and disability studies through research and other scholarly activities. The Program's service mission is emphasized through faculty and student service to local and regional agencies and organizations including schools, community recreation providers, and health care and human services agencies. Central to the overall mission of the Recreational Therapy Program is a commitment to access and diversity. This is realized through a commitment to ensuring equal access to all qualified applicants (students and faculty), and a

commitment to promoting equal access to recreation and leisure opportunities for all people regardless of age, economics, race, gender, culture, sexual orientation, religion, or abilities.

Program Goals

The 36 semester-hour master's program in recreational therapy (MSRT) is designed for individuals who want to advance their knowledge and skills related to evidence based practice within health care and human services. The curriculum teaches from a conceptual model of health promotion and rehabilitation and maintains a lifespan perspective in three core areas: health, disability, and leisure. Based on academic and professional goals, students may develop an area of specialization with guidance from a faculty member.

Students who do not have an academic background in Recreational Therapy (RT) may use the program to meet eligibility requirements for the national credentialing examination for recreational therapists. While this graduate program does not require prerequisite courses to qualify for admission, students may be required to take additional courses necessary for national certification. These courses are listed in the coursework section as *leveling courses*. As an exit requirement, all M.S. students must successfully complete an exit exam and develop an evidence-based recreational therapy protocol.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

Graduates of the MSRT program at Temple University will meet the following competencies:

1. Use factual knowledge of the history and development of the field of recreational therapy (RT) to evaluate the current status and future development of RT in health and human services systems.
2. Use strategic thinking and procedural knowledge of research, conceptual models, and theoretical frameworks to create individual and programmatic evidence-based, recreational therapy interventions and services.
3. Apply meta-cognitive knowledge of human development, function, and relationships in reflective client-centered practice.
4. Use conceptual knowledge of health and human services systems to create effective and efficient RT services.

Course objectives are designed to develop these competencies throughout the curriculum.

Departmental and Program Contact Information

Recreational Therapy Program
Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
College of Public Health
1700 North Broad Street,
Suite 304 Philadelphia, PA 19121

Main Office Phone: 215.204.3934
Fax: 215.204.1386
Website: <https://cph.temple.edu/RT>

Faculty and Staff Directory

Recreational Therapy Program

Name	Title	Contact Information	Interest Areas
Lindsey Oakes, Ph.D., LRT/CTRS	Program Director; Undergraduate Program Coordinator	304 A 1700 N. Broad St. lindsey.oakes@temple.edu 215-204-1387	Inclusive service delivery on campus & community-based recreation, intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, inclusive postsecondary education programs, virtual reality, emWave, and photovoice.
Heather Burket, M. Ed., CTRS, CCLS	Instructor; Internship I Coordinator	301 N 1700 N. Broad St. hburket@temple.edu 215-204-3947	Anxiety, stress & coping within the family system; Pediatrics; Child Life; Trauma informed care; Pain Management; Interprofessional Collaboration; Strengths based approaches, Professional involvement
Ann Dolloff, M. Ed., CTRS	Instructor; Internship II Coordinator	301 B 1700 N. Broad St. adolloff@temple.edu 215-204-5701	Community Integration, Adapted Recreation, Summer Camp & Non-profit Administration, Youth Development, Assistive Technology, Disability Culture
Bryan McCormick, Ph.D., CTRS, FALS, FDRT	Professor	301 C 1700 N. Broad Street bryan.mccormick@temple.edu 215-204-6817	Recreation & Leisure interventions for individuals with schizophrenia & serious mental illnesses to increase social connectedness & community participation; environmental enrichment; international use of RT to improve psychosocial outcomes
Heather Porter, Ph.D., CTRS, FDRT	Professor	304 D 1700 N. Broad St. hporter@temple.edu 215-204-5746	Physical Rehabilitation, Leisure Meanings, Leisure Education & Counseling, & Biopsychosocial model approach (ICF)
Brandon Snead, MS, CTRS	Instructor	304 F 1700 N. Broad St. brandonsnead@temple.edu 215-204-6733	RT & leisure education to promote engagement in meaningful community-based recreation; Formation of wellness-based identities; Adults experiencing mental health challenges; Populations who identify as LGBTQ
Gretchen Snethen, Ph.D., CTRS, FDRT	Professor	304 1700 N. Broad St. gsnethen@temple.edu 215-204-3934	RT as a means to promote independent community participation, physical activity, & psychosocial well-being among adults with mental

			health conditions; Supporting active transportation (walking/biking) to increase independence and physical activity
Gena Bell Vargas, Ph.D., CTRS	Assistant Professor; Graduate Program Director	301 D 1700 N. Broad St. gena.vargas@temple.edu 215-204-7010	Integration of autonomy, competence, & relatedness in RT practice as a method to intrinsically motivate clients; Integration of Aromatherapy practices into TR/RT; Mental Health; Positive Psychology & Strengths Based approaches; RT Curriculum
Aurora Verlin, MS, CTRS	Instructor	304 C 1700 N. Broad St. aurora.verlin@temple.edu 215-204-2703	Engagement in RT modalities to improve QOL in older adults & those with dementia; Positive cognitive, social & physical benefits of structured RT sessions for individuals with dementia; Positive coping techniques for caregivers of older adults

Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

Name	Title	Office and Email	Phone
Jennifer Ibrahim, Ph.D., MPH, M.Ed.	Interim Department Chair, Professor	Bell Building (TECH Center), 3rd Floor jennifer.ibrahim@temple.edu	215-204-5200
Scott Burns, PT, DPT, Ph.D., OCS, FAAOMPT	Vice Chair, Professor	300 1700 N. Broad St. scott.burns@temple.edu	215-204-9016
Brenda Browning, MA	Assistant Director, Administration	633 RA, 1301 Cecil B Moore brenda.browning@temple.edu	215-204-4391
Keisha Hankins, Ph.D.	Student Services Coordinator RT & OT Programs	304 G 1700 N. Broad St. keisha.hankins@temple.edu	215-204-2366
Lafrance Howard	Department Coordinator	304 G 1700 N. Broad St. lafrance@temple.edu	215-204-3934
Sarah Carroll	Student Services Coordinator PT, AT & BSHP Programs	637 RA 1301 Cecil B Moore Ave.	215-204-9042
Emily Simonitis	Administrative Coordinator	304 E 1700 N. Broad St. emily.simonitis@temple.edu	

Advising Information

Throughout your studies in this program, you will encounter different individuals who can assist you with your academic and career planning. The primary person who serves as your Academic Advisor is your Graduate Program Director, Gena Bell Vargas, PhD, CTRS, who will assist you with your academic plan, advising, and registration needs. The RT Program Director, Dr. Lindsey Oakes, LRT/CTRS is also available to assist with RT discipline-specific questions and career advising. You can

also seek mentorship from other faculty members, who are available for frank and candid discussion with you about your career plans and any difficulties you are encountering in any aspect of your studies. These individuals are vital to your success and professional growth and development. While these individuals work as a team to help you succeed at Temple, each individual plays a different role with which you should be familiar.

Roles and Functions of the Academic Advisor

The academic advisor is the person who is best qualified to help you navigate university program and degree requirements throughout your program. The Academic Advisor will communicate with you upon admission to develop and explain your academic plan and then will meet with you periodically throughout your tenure as a RT student to update your academic plan as needed. Students are urged to be in touch with their advisor early and often to resolve questions about degree requirements, course selection, and many other academic matters. Working with your academic advisor requires collaboration and mutual respect.

In order for you to have a successful experience, you should:

- Read this *Graduate Handbook* and learn what is required of you in the curriculum,
- Read the Temple University *Graduate Bulletin* to learn about university policies that apply to students,
- Read the [College of Public Health Graduate Student Handbook](#),
- Schedule regular conferences with the RT academic advisor periodically to discuss your course selection issues and academic questions, and
- Attend advising meetings sufficiently prepared with courses for the next semester worked out, necessary records in order (leveling transcripts, etc.), and knowing clearly where you stand academically in terms of credits and requirements.

Remember, your education is your responsibility! While the advisors and faculty are available to help provide guidance through the curriculum, you are ultimately responsible for ensuring successful completion of all academic requirements.

The academic advisor can assist you with:

- Selecting your courses in accordance with academic requirements and your professional goals;
- Working through academic difficulties you may be having;
- Utilizing the support services and facilities of the RT program and the university;
- Providing assistance with your roster, drop/add requests, overload requests, program policies and requirements, and financial aid issues;
- Identifying resources to meet needs such as counseling, tutoring, disability services, and placement testing; and
- Developing a plan to successfully repeat a course (if necessary) should you not earn the required grade of B- or better in required courses, and C- or better in elective courses, in accordance with the Graduate School and College of Public Health guidelines.

Roles and Functions of the Graduate Program Director

The Graduate Program Director is available to discuss any aspect of your RT coursework as well as advise you regarding career development activities. They will also assist you with:

- Confirming graduation requirements have been met;
- Addressing academic concerns and difficulties, including petitions for course sequence exceptions, requests for course repeats, and grievances and grade appeals;
- Initial approval of course work from other colleges and universities,
- Identifying employment opportunities; and
- Ensuring that you are qualified both academically and professionally to seek entry-level employment within the Recreational Therapy profession and certification as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist® (CTRS®) through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification® (NCTRC®).

Roles and Functions of the Internship Coordinator

The Internship Coordinator will inform you about the internship experience and processes including eligibility requirements, site requirements, and academic requirements. Along with the Graduate Program Director, they will clear you for eligibility for internship placement, including reviewing your academic record, health clearances, and necessary criminal and child abuse background checks. They will assist you in the process of securing your own internship site, which will need their final approval.

Roles and Functions of the Faculty

The RT faculty represent a wide range of experiences and philosophies in the field of Recreational Therapy and are eager to help you find your unique path in the profession. At any point during your academic career, the faculty are available to provide you with added support and advice and to assist you with developing an academic program that will lead to your professional and employment goals. Faculty input should be sought on things related to choosing among electives, internship possibilities and placements, professional development opportunities, academic difficulties, and anything else you would like to discuss. Faculty do not replace the academic advisor or the graduate program director. Rather, it is hoped that a chance to personally connect with a RT faculty member will help you with decisions about your RT degree, the RT field, and life after you graduate.

Curriculum Requirements

Your academic advisor will share a course plan with you prior to your first advising meeting. This plan will guide you as you move through the program. Please note course offerings vary every semester; therefore, students should meet at least annually with the academic advisor to plan their course schedule accordingly.

Recreational Therapy Program Requirements

The following pages display the typical course sequence for the M.S. degree program for both students entering with and without an academic or clinical background in recreational therapy. Students should be aware that deviation from the suggested course sequence may increase time to degree as all courses are not offered every semester. Students choosing to develop a “cognate” or “area of specialization” as part of the academic program should consult with the faculty advisor about appropriate courses and their suitability for being used to achieve specialty certification with the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification® (NCTRC®). Descriptions of the graduate courses can be found in the Graduate Bulletin or Banner. Students also have the ability to complete the program part time. However, you should reach out to the program director to develop an individualized course timeline to meet your needs.

Graduate students with academic and professional experience in RT and current NCTRC certification have an opportunity, in consultation with a faculty advisor, to individualize coursework according to one’s academic and professional development plan.

Students who do not have an academic or clinical background in recreational therapy may be admitted to the degree program and use the required courses *as well as* prerequisite and supportive courses beyond the degree to meet the academic sitting requirements for the national credentialing examination for recreational therapists. These students are required to complete one undergraduate leveling course through Temple University (RCTH3096, Assessment & Documentation), as well as other “support” coursework that is required for the national credentialing exam by the end of their first year in the program. All students should meet with their faculty advisor to discuss what supportive coursework is needed. Three courses (Developmental Psychology/Lifespan Human Development, Abnormal Psychology, and Human Anatomy & Physiology) may be prerequisites for specific courses within the M.S. degree program. Students must have their supportive coursework completed by the end of their first year of graduate studies.

All students in the program are required to complete HRPR 5001: Current/Emerging Issues in Public Health/Health Professions. This is an online course that carries 0 credits but must be completed prior to enrolling in RCTH 5302: Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy II. Students are not charged tuition for this course.

M.S. in Recreational Therapy Course Sequence- Without NCTRC Certification

Course Delivery schedule for full time students entering without NCTRC Certification
(Part time study options are also available):

Students without the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) credential			
Pre-or-Post Acceptance	Fall 1st Year	Spring 1st year	Summer 1st year
Temple RCTH 3096 Assessment & Documentation NCTRC Requirements Anatomy & Physiology Lifespan Developmental Psychology Abnormal Psychology	RCTH 5001 Grad Research I	RCTH 5311 Conceptual & Contemporary Issues in Recreational Therapy	<i>Complete any remaining leveling courses</i>
	RCTH 5102 Recreational Therapy Now & Then	RCTH 5312 Leisure, Health, & Interventions	HRPR 5001 Current and Emerging Issues in Public Health Professions (0 credits)
	*Elective #1	*Elective #2	
	<i>RCTH 3096 – if not completed in summer</i>		
	(9 Graduate Credits + 3 Undergraduate credits)	(9 Credits)	
	Fall 2nd Year	Spring 2nd year	Summer 2nd year
	RCTH 5301 Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy I	RCTH 5302 Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy II	RCTH 5787 Recreational Therapy Practicum
	RCTH 5442 Program Planning in Recreational Therapy	RCTH 5402: Recreational Therapy Administration	
	*Elective #3		
	(9 credits)	(6 credits)	(3 credits)

{Additional Coursework for NCTRC Certification:

All students will need to provide evidence of successfully completing the following undergraduate courses prior to graduation from the MSRT program. These courses may have been completed prior to admission into the MS in RT program. Students who have not completed these courses prior to admission should arrange to take them at other institutions while enrolled in the Temple MSRT degree program (for course credit at an accredited online university, community college, etc.). Some institutions will require an Introductory Psychology course prior to the psychology courses listed here. Many students opt to use Summer during Year 1 to complete any remaining supportive coursework. Students are advised to confer with the graduate program director prior to enrolling in courses to discuss whether or not they might meet NCTRC requirements.

1. Human Anatomy & Physiology I
2. Developmental Psychology (Across the Lifespan)
3. Psychopathology (Abnormal Psychology)

MS Recreational Therapy Course Sequence (with CTRS)

Course Delivery schedule for students entering with NCTRC Certification (36 CH)

(Part time study options are also available.)

Students who possess the CTRS credential	
Fall 1 st Year	Spring 1 st year
RCTH 5001 Grad Research I RCTH 5102 Recreational Therapy Now & Then *Elective #1	RCTH 5311 Conceptual & Contemporary Issues in Recreational Therapy RCTH 5312 Leisure, Health, & Interventions *Elective #2
(9 Credits)	(9 Credits)
Fall 2 nd Year	Spring 2 nd year
RCTH 5301 Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy I RCTH 5442 Program Planning in Recreational Therapy *Elective #3	RCTH 5302 Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy II RCTH 5402 Recreational Therapy Administration *Elective #4
(9 credits)	(9 credits)

{}

Program Electives

Detailed below are the suggested courses associated with each cognate area. Students with NCTRC® certification may substitute other courses with the permission of their advisor. This is a partial list and course options are constantly changing. Please refer to the University's Graduate School web site for course descriptions (<https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/courses/rcth/>). **Please note:** some courses are only offered in certain semesters and may require prerequisites or advanced permission of a course instructor in order to enroll.

RCTH 5009: Entrepreneurship in Health Professions

RCTH 5204: RT and Assistive Technology

RCTH 5205: RT in Geriatric Services

RCTH 5212: Play and Pediatric Development

RCTH 5214: Child Life Interventions

RCTH 5250: Special Topics in RT

RCTH 5261: Disability Seminar on Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Conditions

RCTH 5271: Disability Seminar on Physical & Neurological Health Conditions

RCTH 5314: Leisure Time Physical Activity and Community Engagement in RT

RCTH 5315: Social Engagement and Community Participation in RT

RCTH 5382: Independent Study

HRPR 8985: Teaching in Higher Education

Selecting Diverse Electives

Students are required to complete 3-4 RT electives. In order to meet NCTRC® requirements and best prepare for the exam, students without a background in RT will be advised to take 5261 Recreational Therapy and Disabilities Seminar I and RCTH 5271 Recreational Therapy and Disabilities Seminar II. A number of the electives are approached from broad topical areas that allow students to apply assignments to their own interests. Students are encouraged to discuss interests with faculty early in the semester.

Additional Course Options from Other Departments

Depending on individual student interest and background, it is occasionally possible for students to fulfill one or more of their electives with courses from other departments/programs in the University. The Graduate Program Director can make recommendations and must approve all courses if they are to be used to fulfill this degree requirement.

Teaching in Higher Education Certificate

The Center for Advancement of Teaching at Temple University offers a certificate for Teaching in Higher Education. The first course, HRPR 8985 (Teaching in Higher Education) can be used to count as one elective. To complete the certificate, a student may choose to take an additional course, HRPR 8987 Teaching in Higher Education Practicum, EPSY 8960 Seminar Series: Problems in Educational Psychology, or to complete an RT Teaching practicum through the RT program.

Exit Requirement

Candidates for the MS in Recreational Therapy are required to complete a culminating exit exam as well as an evidence-based protocol. This will be completed during RCTH 5302 EBP II in your final Spring semester.

Departmental Internship Requirements

MSRT Students not already in possession of their CTRS® credential are required to complete a credit-bearing internship experience [RCTH 5787: RT Practicum] as part of their curriculum. Students taking RCTH 5787 are responsible for securing their own internship placements with the assistance of the Internship Coordinator and faculty. Internship sites are extremely competitive. There are no guarantees that you will get your first choice for an internship site, and the process of securing a site may take a few months. Students must present themselves professionally to potential internship sites, realizing that sites are not obligated to accept internship students and have many applicants from which to choose. The Internship Coordinator will schedule mandatory orientation meetings approximately five to six months prior to the semester in which you will complete the internship experience. Prior to attending the orientation meeting, students should review the current internship manual for the appropriate internship from the Recreational Therapy Program Information Canvas site, which is accessible to all Recreational Therapy majors. During the orientation meeting, the Internship Coordinators will explain the process of securing an internship site, the necessary eligibility requirements, and the actual internship experience. Students are also encouraged to schedule an appointment with the Internship Coordinator to discuss their own interests, goals, and options. Prior to registering for your internships, there are several requirements that need to be met in addition to securing internship placement. Therefore, it is imperative that students begin this process early.

Policies Related to RCTH 5787: RT Practicum

This is the culminating experience of your academic training and is designed to at a minimum meet NCTRC's® internship eligibility requirements for becoming a CTRS®. As such, you should engage in thoughtful discussion with an RT faculty member and the Internship Coordinator about your career plans, academic needs, and potential internship sites that can best meet your needs and interests. To help you identify potential sites for your Practicum, consult the [RT START database](#). While RT Practicum is completed in your final semester, this discussion should begin a year earlier. Prior to enrolling in RT

Practicum, students must be on track to successfully complete all coursework. Students must also have a 3.0 GPA, and no incompletes in any coursework before beginning RT Practicum. Students should work with the Internship Coordinator to ensure that they have identified appropriate sites for a potential internship. Students will be prohibited from registering for the internship until all required documentation is received, including an acceptance letter for the internship; criminal and child abuse clearances; infant, child, and adult first aid/CPR certification; and the CPH health screening requirements. A preparation checklist can be found on the (<https://templeu.instructure.com/courses/38809>).

Mandatory Health Screening Requirements

The University has defined minimum health screening requirements for students in all majors, including Recreational Therapy, within the College of Public Health. Documentation of these requirements must be submitted prior to any client contact by the student.

The requirements are as follows:

- Documentation of an immunization record *along with laboratory reports of titers/antibodies* that verify your immunity to infection with measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B.
- Documentation of a current physical conducted by a physician.
- Documentation of a tetanus/diphtheria booster shot within the last 10 years.
- Documentation of a two-step Tuberculin Skin Test (PPD) or QuantiFERON Gold titer.

Additional health screening forms and information can be obtained from the Recreational Therapy Program Information Canvas site.

Additional Certificate Options Available for Temple MSRT Students

If you would like to discuss additional certificate options available at Temple University as part of your academic program, schedule an appointment with your academic advisor. Graduate Certificates can be found in the Graduate Bulletin:

<https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/scd/cph/>

Important University, CPH, and Program Policies and Procedures

The Recreational Therapy program follows the academic policies and procedures detailed by the [Graduate School](#) and the College of Public Health. Additionally, students should refer to the CPH Graduate Student Handbook. The Graduate Program Director can assist you with any specific questions you may have after reviewing these policies. Academic forms for current students, such as for grading grievances, are available for download on TUPortal. Log in and navigate to the College of Public Health tab; once there, look for the *Academic Resources* panel.

Accepting or Deferring Admission

A certificate of admission to a graduate program in the Recreational Therapy Program is valid for the semester indicated in the letter of admission. If a student does not enroll for the semester indicated, she or he must request, in writing, a deferral of admission.

Matriculation Time Requirement

The time period for completing the master's degree in the Recreational Therapy Program begins with the semester for which the student is matriculated. The program of courses and exit requirements must be completed within four years from the time of matriculation. The Department may grant one one-year extension beyond this time. Any additional extensions can only be granted by the Graduate Board's Student Appeal Committee. Students should be aware that a leave of absence does not extend the time limit to complete the degree. It only allows you to meet the requirement for continuous enrollment or be dismissed from the program.

Transfer of Credit

Transfer of credit from other institutions is limited, with program approval, to no more than 20 percent of the total credit hours required by the master's program. All transfer credits must be of "B" quality or better. Courses requested for transfer must have been taken no more than five years prior to the date when the request is made. Transfer of credit for extension or correspondence courses is not permitted. Requests for transfer of credit must be made on the Transfer of Credit Form, which

may be obtained from the Graduate School website. Requests for transfer of credit must be documented by an official transcript sent directly to the student's program by the Registrar or some other appropriate authority at the approved institution where the credits were earned.

Application of Credit Taken Prior to Matriculation

A maximum of nine (9) credits of work done at Temple University (usually through Continuing Education) prior to the semester of matriculation may be counted toward satisfying degree requirements. Additional credits may be counted only with permission of the Graduate Program Coordinator and the University Graduate Board through a separate appeal process.

Continuous Enrollment

All students enrolled in a master's program must be enrolled every fall and spring semester between matriculation and graduation except during those semesters for which a leave of absence has been granted.

Leaves of Absence

Students may request a leave of absence for a period of time not to exceed one year. A written request using the Graduate School's form, indicating the reason for the leave of absence, must be approved by the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator. Leaves of absence will be granted only for documented cases of personal illness, family emergencies, or extreme personal problems. The form requesting the leave of absence can be obtained from the Graduate School website. Students should be aware that obtaining a Leave of Absence does not extend the time to complete one's degree and that no more than four semesters (Fall and Spring) can be taken as Leaves of Absence while still remaining active in the program.

Extensions of Time

Students may apply for an extension of time to complete their graduate degree program if they have exceeded the allotted time period. Students must indicate the reason(s) for the request and must submit a written plan to complete the degree within the requested time extension. This request must be signed by the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator. A form for this request is available at the Graduate School website. Students in the master's degree program may receive no more than a total of one year of extension during their program. If these time limits are exceeded, students must petition the Graduate School's Student Appeal Committee for an additional extension.

Standards of Scholarship

A student is expected to maintain satisfactory progress toward a degree. A student's graduate record begins with the first course credited to a degree and includes all subsequent courses, whether or not such work is required for the degree. Additional **academic standards** apply to all Recreational Therapy graduate students within the Department of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences:

- A minimum grade of B- in all **required** graduate courses (not electives);
- No more than two grades of less than "B-" quality, beginning with the semester during which they matriculate in the program. If a student has taken a course or courses prior to matriculation, and if the student intends to count these courses toward their degree, then this rule applies to those courses as well;
- No more than one grade of "F" during their graduate program;
- A grade point average of at least 3.0 at graduation;
- No "I" (Incomplete) on their graduate record at graduation;
- Registration for additional course work is not permissible if a student has more than six semester hours of incomplete grades.
- Consideration of credits earned at another institution, in another degree program, or in graduate work done at Temple prior to the time of matriculation may only be requested if that work is of "A" or "B" quality;
- The same course may be taken more than once only if the subject matter in the course varies from semester to semester and only if this variability is clearly documented in the appropriate departmental publications;
- Courses may be retaken with the permission of his/her advisor, if a "Repeat Course Request Form" has completed and submitted to the Department. The second grade replaces the first grade, if it is higher than the first, for purposes of grade point average calculations. Both grades remain on the transcript and are included in evaluating the two grades less than B- and one F rule.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Completion of Requirements

It is the responsibility of graduate students to become informed about deadlines, requirements for degrees, and requirements for graduation. To receive a degree, students must submit their graduation application through TUPortal by the deadline indicated on the University calendar. This will also be communicated through email to the student's Temple email address.

University Disciplinary Code

All student behavior at the University is governed by the Student Disciplinary Code of Conduct. This Code covers such activities as plagiarism and the possession of dangerous drugs. Violations of this code can ultimately be brought before the University Disciplinary Committee. Students should become aware of the specific details of this code by obtaining a copy of the Student Rights, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures which is available in the Student Assistance Center.

Grievances

If at any point during your academic career in the RT program, you are experiencing difficulties with an instructor or staff of the program, you can make an appointment with the Graduate Program Director to discuss these issues and determine if further action is needed either by you as the student or by identified responsible parties. If the issues you are having involve the Graduate Program Director, you can then directly request a meeting with the Vice Chair of the Department (Dr. Scott Burns). If your grievance involves appealing a final grade that you received for a course, follow the procedures found in the [CPH Graduate Student Handbook](#).

RT Program Professional Behavior Statement

Students within the Recreational Therapy program are expected to abide by standards of professional conduct. It is expected that each student will adopt the [Code of Ethics](#) of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association and maintain a demeanor appropriate to that code at all times (especially in the classroom, during professional development hours, and during internship and volunteer placements). Additionally, students are expected to adhere to Temple University's [Code of Student Conduct](#). Failure to comply with the expectations of the code can result in disciplinary action. Further, students completing clinical experiences (e.g., internships) are required to adhere to the Professional Behavior Agreement (see internship manual).

In light of this, students should be mindful that they have an obligation to respect the rights of others within the classroom environment so that it remains a positive learning environment, free of distractions and conflict. Appropriate classroom behavior includes at a minimum, attendance and engagement in the learning process, turning off all cell phones and not engaging in work for another class. All instructors in the Recreational Therapy program note in their course syllabi their specific expectations regarding professional behavior.

In addition, the RT faculty take issues of academic dishonesty seriously. Penalties can be found in the [CPH Graduate Student Handbook](#). "The penalty for plagiarism or violating the rules of an assignment or cheating on an examination is, at a minimum, an F in the assignment. In addition, it may result in an F in the course, dismissal from the program, and/or referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. The penalty varies with the nature of the offense but may result in suspension or expulsion from the university." [The Academic Dishonesty form](#) will be used, as warranted.

Recreational Therapy Essential Functions

Approved December 10, 2021

The Recreational Therapy Program at Temple University is dedicated to providing the professional education and development for students as they become competent entry-level recreational therapists through the Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Recreational Therapy. Individuals who successfully complete the program are eligible to sit for the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC)[®] exam.

Graduates are expected to function as autonomous entry-level practitioners and to provide a full range of recreational therapy services. As a result, all students admitted to the program must be able to demonstrate the following essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

Professionalism

Students must act professionally in any environment, including stressful situations or when faced with impending deadlines. Acting professionally includes, but is not limited to, practicing safely, ethically and legally, demonstrating responsibility for lifelong professional growth and development, demonstrating respect for others, advocating for the health and health care needs of patients/clients, coping in difficult situations, demonstrating contextually appropriate hygiene, dress code and affective interpersonal behaviors.

Cognition

Students must exhibit an understanding of the academic knowledge base and preparation expected of a recreational therapist, identify cause-and-effect relationships one may encounter in a clinical or classroom setting, develop and modify client goals/plans, respond effectively to emergency situations, apply universal precautions, integrate information from a variety of sources, and apply teaching and learning theories in health and human services.

Judgement

Students must demonstrate sound judgment, based on an understanding of the rationale and justification for their choices in classroom, fieldwork settings, other professional situations, and on social media.

Emotion

Students must demonstrate emotional intelligence when interacting with others, as well as emotional stability to function effectively under stress and adapt to changing environments. Acknowledge and respect individual values and opinions in order to foster harmonious working relationships with colleagues, peers, and patients/clients. Sustain the mental and emotional rigors of a demanding educational program in recreational therapy that includes academic and clinical components that occur within set time constraints, and often concurrently.

Communication

Students must demonstrate clear, effective and efficient ability to understand and use the written, expressive and receptive English language, as well as to respond effectively to written and/or expressive and nonverbal forms of communication.

Mobility

Students must demonstrate the physical ability to efficiently and safely move between and within health and human service environments and maneuver under various conditions of environmental constraint.

Sensory

Students must demonstrate the sensory abilities to provide safe and effective recreational therapy.

Accommodations for Essential Functions

Upon the student's request, Temple University Disability Resources and Services (DRS) will evaluate a student's ability and needs to progress academically with reasonable accommodation(s) and confirm that the stated condition qualifies as a

disability under applicable laws. Once an accommodations letter is approved and sent to classroom faculty, the student should initiate a meeting with each instructor to discuss the specific needs they have related to that course.

Approved accommodations in the classroom setting are not often applicable or guaranteed in a clinical practice setting, and require a specialized clinical accommodation letter from DRS. Once the clinical practice letter is received and shared with faculty and clinical supervisors, students will meet with both supervisors and determine the specific implementation plan at the fieldwork setting.

Health Requirements, Clearances, & Trainings

The University has defined minimum health screening requirements for students. Further documentation is required by the Recreational Therapy program prior to beginning RCTH 3185 Internship I, RCTH 4185 Internship II, and RCTH 5787 RT Practicum. Health screening forms and information can be obtained from fieldwork coordinators and the Recreational Therapy Program Information Canvas course.

The required documents are: 1) Immunization records and laboratory reports of titers/antibodies verifying immunity of measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B; 2) Current physical conducted by a physician; 3) Proof of tetanus/diphtheria (Tdap) shot within the last 10 years; 4) Proof of flu and COVID-19 shots; 5) Yearly 2 step or QuantiFERON Gold Tuberculin Skin Test (PPD); 5) Yearly Child Abuse Clearance and Criminal Background Check; 6) Pediatric and Adult CPR Certification, and First Aid Certification; 7) Proof of Bloodborne Pathogens and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) trainings. NOTE: Individual fieldwork sites may require additional documentation that the students will be responsible for providing in addition to these requirements.

Qualifications for National Certification

The National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC)[®] credentials Recreational Therapists. NCTRC lists 14 grounds for denying certification or recertification, revoking certification or recertification, or issuing other sanctions. Recreational Therapy students should be particularly attentive to the following grounds for denying certification.

1. Habitual use of alcohol or any drug or substance, or any physical or mental condition which impairs competent and objective professional performance.
2. Gross or repeated negligence, malpractice, or misconduct. Violation of the ethical guidelines of the profession (as referenced in published codes and guidelines).
3. Conviction of, plea of guilty to, or plea of no contest to a felony or misdemeanor directly relating to therapeutic recreation practice and/or public health and safety. A candidate convicted of a felony directly related to recreational therapy practice and/or public health and safety shall be ineligible to apply for certification or recertification for a period of three (3) years from the exhaustion of appeals, completion of probation or final release from confinement (if any), whichever is later. Convictions of this nature include but are not limited to felonies involving rape, abuse of a patient or child, actual or threatened use of a weapon, violence, and prohibited sale, distribution, or possession of a controlled substance.

Professional Certification Related to Recreational Therapy

Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS)

Students graduating from the Recreational Therapy program at Temple University are eligible to apply for the national certification exam to become a CTRS. This credential was established in 1981 as the national certification for recreational therapists. Managed by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC), the CTRS certificate is awarded to applicants who meet all eligibility requirements through either the academic or equivalency paths and pass a written, knowledge-based examination. This is a five-year renewable certificate with re-certification requirements. For more information, contact [NCTRC](http://www.nctrc.org) at 845.639.1439 or <http://www.nctrc.org>.

Additional Specialty Certifications

There are other specialty nonacademic certifications which graduate RT students may pursue while completing their degree. Examples include the Certified Addictions Counselor, and Certified Child Life Specialist. Each specialty certification has its own set of required courses and internship or life experiences. Students are responsible for gathering the most current requirements if they are interested in pursuing these certifications and for discussing their interests with the Graduate Program Director.

Certified Addictions Counselor Certification (CAC)

The Pennsylvania Chemical Abuse Certification Board (PCACB) certifies persons who have met certain competencies in the areas of providing treatment services to substance abusers. There are four (4) levels of counselor certification, and each has different certification requirements, consisting of: education, counseling experience, and examinations. For more information, contact the PCACB at 717.540.4455 or www.pacertboard.org.

Child Life Specialist Certification (CCLS)

A Child Life Specialist is a professional who uses play, recreation, education, self-expression, and theories of child development to promote well-being in children, adolescents, and their families. Students completing the Recreational Therapy curriculum will meet most coursework requirements for Child Life certification. Students can build in additional coursework and internship hours to qualify for this additional certification. For more information, contact the [Association of Child Life Professionals](http://www.aclp.org).

Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Professional (CPRP)

The Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner credential (CPRP) is a test-based certification that fosters the growth of a qualified, ethical, and culturally diverse psychiatric rehabilitation workforce through enforcement of the [PRA Code of Ethics](http://www.praethics.org). Currently there are CPRPs with PhDs to GEDs, occupational therapists to peer specialists, social workers to caseworkers and so many more, all of whom share a commitment to the fundamental principle that recovery from serious mental illness is possible. (<https://www.psychrehabassociation.org/certification/cprp-certification>)

Student and Professional Organizations Related to Recreational Therapy

Students are encouraged to join the Recreational Therapy Student Association of Temple University, as well as one or more professional organizations. These organizations are excellent ways to become involved with the profession, connect with peers and CTRs to begin to develop a professional network, engage in professional development beyond the classroom and TU courses, and have some fun. All of the organizations offer student memberships and a variety of means for students to become active members. Additionally, each organization provides a variety of professional development opportunities including at least an annual conference.

- Student: [Recreational Therapy Student Association of Temple University](http://www.rtsa.org) (RTSA); you can also find information about RTSA on the RT Program Professional Issues Canvas site.
- National: [American Therapeutic Recreation Association](http://www.atra.org) (ATRA)
- Regional: [New Jersey/Eastern Pennsylvania Therapeutic Recreation Association](http://www.njepa-rt.org), A Chapter of ATRA (NJEP-RTA)
- Pennsylvania: [Pennsylvania Therapeutic Recreation Society](http://www.ptsr.org) (PTRS) – A branch of Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, Inc.
- Not local? [Look](#) for a chapter near you!

Student Awards and Recognitions

Awards from Professional Organizations

National Academy of Recreational Therapists Future Scholars Award

The National Academy of Recreational Therapists (NART) is a national academy that pursues activities to support and advance the recreational therapy profession by recognition, education, research, scholarly activity, advocacy, and the provision of advice to decision makers. The purpose of NART's Future Scholar Program is to provide a currently enrolled master's degree student who is interested in pursuing a doctorate in an area related to therapeutic recreation/recreational therapy with the intention of entering academia as a faculty member in therapeutic recreation/recreational therapy the opportunity to meet some of the leading scholars in the field. The selected applicant is required to attend the ATRA Annual Conference as a guest of the NART and will receive up to \$1,000 from NART to help cover conference expenses. <https://www.nart.academy/>

The Peg Connolly Scholarship Program

The American Therapeutic Recreation Association provides students within the field of Recreational Therapy the opportunity to apply for the Peg Connolly Scholarship. Named in honor of Dr. Peg Connolly, former Executive Director of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification, this program funds attendance at ARTA's annual conference, including conference registration, lodging accommodations, and a meal stipend. Students are responsible for their transportation to and from the conference. Scholarship recipients assist in various aspects of implementing the conference such as room hosting, registration, and monitoring social events. This scholarship is available to undergraduate and graduate students who are enrolled in a Recreational Therapy program during the conference year. For more information and deadlines visit the [ATRA website's award page](#).

Martha Judge Scholarship for 1st Time Conference Attendees

The American Therapeutic Recreation Association is excited to provide the opportunity for ATRA Student and Professional members to receive the Martha Judge Scholarship for First Time Conference Attendees. Named in honor of Ms. Martha Judge, a longtime ATRA member, past ATRA board member, and a proud attendee of EVERY ATRA conference, this scholarship provides financial resources for individuals who have never attended an ATRA conference. Through the prompting of Dr. Tim Passmore, this scholarship was officially named in honor of Martha at the 2022 Annual Conference in Birmingham, AL. For more information and deadlines visit the [ATRA website's award page](#).

Scholarships through Temple University

The College of Public Health has a page about scholarships <https://cph.temple.edu/admissions/scholarships>. It directs you to create a profile on **Scholarship Universe** so that you can then be matched with scholarships for which you are eligible to apply. Three are specific to the RT program, one (KCP scholarship) is specific to our department, several others are college wide.

Awards from the Recreational Therapy Program

The Recreational Therapy program bestows distinct honors to deserving students in its undergraduate and graduate programs. Two program awards exist for which graduate students are eligible- the RT Wise Owl Award and the Recreational Therapy Scholarship. These honors are given to those students who best exemplify the professional and academic integrity required to be tomorrow's leaders. Award recipients are recognized at the RT program's Commencement Reception each May, and their names are engraved on a plaque that is displayed in the main office suite of the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences.

Martha Grace Armonio-Tan Scholarship:

Established in 2022 by Dr. Peter M. Tan to honor his late wife, the purpose of the Martha Grace Armonio-Tan scholarship is to provide a \$2,200 scholarship annually for a student with financial need who is enrolled in the Recreational Therapy program in the College of Public Health.

RT Wise Owl Award

Established in 2021 to provide scholarships for full-time undergraduate and graduate recreational therapy students who demonstrate a commitment to the field of recreational therapy and recreational therapy evidence-based practice.

Recreational Therapy Scholarship

The Recreation Therapy Scholarship Fund supports students enrolled in the College of Public Health's Recreation Therapy program, who have demonstrated academic merit and financial need.

Awards from Department of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences

KCP Endowed Scholarship

In 2022, Dr. Zebulon V. Kendrick, Vice Provost of Graduate Education at Temple University and a Professor of Kinesiology in the College of Public Health, generously donated the KCP (Kendrick, Clemmer, Phillips) Endowed Scholarship. The purpose of the KCP Endowed Scholarship is to provide an annual scholarship for a graduate degree student who is actively engaged in a research assistantship in the Department of Kinesiology or the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. Preference shall be given to a student who intends to apply to a research-focused Ph.D. doctoral degree program. In order to be eligible for the scholarship, the student must have a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.5 after completing at least 15 credits of core and elective courses in their master's degree program.

Awards from the College of Public Health

The College of Public Health Excellence Award

This award is given each year to the undergraduate student with the highest cumulative grade point average achieved for coursework in the College of Public Health. Grade point averages are determined by the Dean's Office.

The College of Public Health Alumni/ae Federation Acres of Diamonds-Spirit Award

This award is given annually to the undergraduate student who has demonstrated caring and commitment, bringing pride to herself or himself and to the college and the university. Each department may forward a nomination for this award.

Handbook Acknowledgement Quiz

All students should complete the Handbook Acknowledgement Quiz, which is assigned via the MSRT Orientation and Resources Canvas site. The statements below are the quiz questions, you will respond to them online to indicate your acceptance and understanding, which acts as your signature. They include:

I have been made aware of the policies, procedures, and resources of the Recreational Therapy program and of related CPH and university policies. I am aware that I can access the Recreational Therapy *Undergraduate Handbook* for the academic year 2022–2023 at any time via the RT Program Information Canvas site.

I have carefully reviewed the Essential Functions portion of the handbook and will communicate to the Graduate Program Director if I have concerns about my abilities related to these functions so that we can discuss accommodations.

I understand that it is my responsibility to monitor and fulfill the curriculum and graduation requirements and maintain an acceptable GPA (overall 2.0, 2.5 in major).

I understand that it is my responsibility to be knowledgeable about the program, CPH, and university policies and procedures, as outlined in this handbook.
