

Recreational Therapy (RCTH)

Course information contained within the Bulletin is accurate at the time of publication in June 2025 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date course information, please refer to the Course Catalog.

RCTH 5001. Graduate Research I in Recreational Therapy. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is designed as a graduate level introduction to research design, methods, and analyses. The course will focus on the fundamentals of health and social research, including: the logic of scientific inquiry, research ethics, developing testable research questions, data collection techniques, and basic data analysis. Students will also examine the diverse methods used in health and social research - including survey research, experimental design, single-subject design, and qualitative research - exploring both strengths and weaknesses of different designs. Students will address a single research question by integrating multi-disciplinary sources in a scholarly paper and by orally presenting the findings.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5009. Entrepreneurship in the Health Professions. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is designed to introduce students to entrepreneurship. The goal of the course is to demonstrate the links between knowledge, experience and skills and commercial possibilities. The course integrates a number of different disciplines, ranging from sociology and psychology to economics, finance, marketing and human resource management. Through assigned readings, class discussions, activities and guest lectures from various professional fields, students will be challenged to apply theoretical principles, concepts and frameworks to real world situations.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

College Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Colleges: College of Public Health.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5102. Recreational Therapy: Now and Then. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores the historical roots of disability and the recreational therapy profession, as well as the current trajectory of the disability movement and recreational therapy practice. Concepts, models, approaches, and theories utilized in recreational therapy practice are reviewed, in which students are challenged to explain, apply, compare/contrast, and critique this information as it applies to current challenges, issues, and trends in practice and healthcare. The course additionally reviews and applies professional ethics and standards of practice to current healthcare situations; evaluates and reimagines scenarios for cultural competence and interprofessional collaboration; and hypothesizes potential approaches to current issues and trends for forward momentum of the profession, public health, and client outcomes. Students will review case studies that explore the application of the RT process (Assessment, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation, and Documentation) in different settings.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5204. Recreational Therapy and Assistive Technology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course provides an in depth review of the use of and opportunities for assistive technology in recreational therapy services in promoting the full inclusion and community participation of persons with disabilities. Emphasis is placed on the AT devices and services that promote functional independence and participation in the community and in physically and socially active recreation and leisure. Students will review the literature on the use of assistive technology and make practice recommendations for therapists working with individuals who may benefit from the use of assistive technology.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5205. Recreational Therapy in Geriatric Services. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the specifics of recreational therapy treatment in geriatric service settings, including in-patient long-term care, community-based settings and home care. Students will be introduced to common models and theories used in practice, including culture change models, and will develop an understanding of trends in senior care. Students will develop resources to benefit practitioners in these settings and will use current evidence and resources to plan individual, group and programmatic interventions. An emphasis will be placed on understanding the dynamics of formal and informal caregivers. Note: Undergraduates may register for this course with permission of the instructor and must have completed course content in basic psychology and anatomy and physiology.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5212. Play and Pediatric Development. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores the theoretical and practical dimensions of play and the dynamic relationship that exists between a child's play and ongoing development - from infancy through adolescence. Opportunities are provided to examine elements of play, benefits of play and various play modalities and the contribution to developmental tasks for typically and atypically developing children. Topics to be covered include the intersection of gender, race/ethnicity, disability, culture, community, media, and technology with play and development. Additional topics reviewed include assessing play behaviors, designing multipurpose play environments, selection and safety of play materials and apparatus and current efforts to reinvigorate the culture of play in the development of children.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5214. Child Life Interventions. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines Foundation of Child Life practice, including theories and methods used to reduce stress and increase child/family abilities to cope with illness and hospitalization. The course includes rationale and evidence for interventions related to techniques to prepare children for medical procedures, pain management, coping skills, family-centered care, and bereavement support. Students learn about credentialing requirements for Child Life Specialists and are encouraged to engage in field-based experiential learning. NOTE: Undergraduates may register for this course with permission of the instructor and must have completed course content in basic psychology and anatomy and physiology.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5250. Special Topics in Recreational Therapy. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Contemporary issues related to new methods and areas of RT practice, including, but not limited to assistive technology, RT in school settings, home health care, and community leisure programs for individuals with disabilities. Course topics will change. This course may be repeated for credit.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

RCTH 5261. Disability Seminar on Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Conditions. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the prevalence, etiology, pathology, prognosis, characteristics, and complications of various mental health diagnoses and developmental disabilities across the lifespan. Common needs and issues of these health conditions related to recreational therapy's scope of practice in healthcare and human services are reviewed, specifically issues related to institutionalization, community-based services and inclusion, as well as others. Healthcare and human services trends and common evidence-based recreational therapy interventions are reviewed.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5271. Disability Seminar on Physical and Neurological Health Conditions. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the prevalence, etiology, pathology, prognosis, characteristics, and complications of various physical and neurological health conditions across the lifespan. Common needs and issues of each health condition related to recreational therapy's scope of practice are reviewed, along with personal narratives of people living with the health condition to foster an understanding of the lived experience. Healthcare trends and common evidence-based recreational therapy interventions are reviewed, which students apply to case studies in preparation for clinical practice.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5301. Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy I. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will introduce students to evidence-based practice in recreational therapy (RT). Students will develop a critical understanding of how evidence is generated, retrieved, and appraised. They will become knowledgeable about the relevance of research findings for clinical decision-making in RT practice. Students will develop skills at synthesizing and presenting evidence to support or challenge current RT issues/practices for particular diagnostic groups or interventions.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5302. Evidence Based Practice in Recreational Therapy II. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course, students will explore the practitioner-researcher role by building upon prior knowledge attained across the Recreational Therapy program. This course supports the use of research knowledge in making practice decisions that improve the delivery of recreational therapy interventions. It serves as a culminating course through which students demonstrate mastery of program competencies. Course assessments include a comprehensive exam and the development of an evidence-based protocol.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in RCTH 5301 and RCTH 5442.

RCTH 5311. Conceptual and Contemporary Issues in Recreational Therapy. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines conceptual, theoretical, and practical issues associated with the organization and delivery of RT services. It uses a combination of readings and oral and written exercises through which students reflect on and develop informed positions on core values and beliefs that support the profession.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5312. Leisure, Health, and Recreational Therapy Interventions. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course, students will explore the relationship of leisure to health and well-being and delve into the literature on specific recreational therapy modalities, interventions, and facilitation techniques. A focus on evidence-based practice will be applied by identifying therapy ingredients in the literature that promote change, using thoughtful clinical decision-making in the absence of evidence, and adapting or modifying based on client needs. Students will conduct an activity and task analysis, identify modalities to meet specific population needs, and increase awareness of modality resources.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5314. Leisure-time Physical Activity and Community Engagement in Recreational Therapy. 3 Credit Hours.

This course provides an overview of the effects of physical activity and community participation on health among individuals with disabilities. All levels of physical activity (i.e., sedentary - vigorous) will be examined in relation to the impact on cognitive, physical, social, and emotional health. This class has a unique focus on utilizing the community as a resource to increase physical activity. Thus students will have the opportunity to assess barriers and facilitators to community-based physical activities in diverse populations, as well as exploring community specific resources. Particular attention will be given to organizational sponsorship of and different options for community-based activities for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the class will critique interventions aimed at increasing LTPA for individuals with disabilities. Topics to be covered include: sedentary-vigorous physical activity, metabolic equivalency of leisure time activities, assessment of physical activity, and a critique of population specific intervention considerations.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5315. Social Engagement and Community Participation in Recreational Therapy. 3 Credit Hours.

This recreational therapy course explores the theoretical and practical dimensions of social systems and the dynamic relationship between the individual with disabilities and their community. The course will identify how individuals with disabilities interface with their social environments and the challenges that are experienced in the navigation process. Students will explore aspects of stigma that influence the openness of a community, and consider both the benefits and the challenges of segregation, integration and full inclusion.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5316. Measuring Health and Disability: The ICF Model. 3 Credit Hours.

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health is a worldwide biopsychosocial model of disability and coding system for the purpose of providing a scientific basis for understanding and studying health, establishing a common language for describing health, and comparing data across countries and disciplines. This course introduces students to the ICF model reviewing the model's development, aims, and application in current healthcare practice, as well as opportunities to expand its application in the pursuit of providing high-quality, transdisciplinary, and integrated research and care in clinical and non-clinical settings.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5382. Independent Study. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.

This supervised project is structured between the student and a faculty mentor. Projects may include developing a research proposal, conducting a field-based investigation, or developing and evaluating a program. Registering for this course requires prior permission from a faculty mentor. A mutually agreeable study contract must be secured before the end of the second week of the semester.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

RCTH 5402. Recreational Therapy Administration and Management. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines program, personnel, fiscal, and facilities management, including professional standards of practice and accreditation standards that guide and regulate organization and delivery of Recreational Therapy services in health care and human services settings.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

RCTH 5442. Program Planning and Practice in Recreational Therapy. 3 Credit Hours.

This course prepares students to design and evaluate evidence-based recreational therapy comprehensive and specific program plans following a systematic process. This includes exploration of agency characteristics and population needs; identification of evidence-based interventions to meet the population's needs; development of a specific program and sequential program plan for the evidence-based intervention; implementation planning; program evaluation; and reflective practice.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in RCTH 5312.

RCTH 5787. Recreational Therapy Practicum. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Field placement is made with emphasis on acquisition and application of practical skills for students who do not meet eligibility for NCTRC professional level certification examination.

Level Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Degree Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Degrees: Master of Science.

College Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Colleges: College of Public Health.