

NYBG

Therapeutic Horticulture Certificate Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is Therapeutic Horticulture?

Therapeutic Horticulture is a nature-based healing modality that empowers individuals and groups whose lives have been affected by illness, injury, disability, processes associated with aging, and/or life circumstances.

Emerging from a health and wellness model of human development, therapeutic horticulture uses plants, gardening and nature to achieve improvements in cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being across a variety of communities and settings.

Who enrolls in Therapeutic Horticulture courses?

Anyone with a passion for plants and the desire to help others benefit from gardening and engagement with the natural world for health and wellness purposes is welcome to enroll.

- This certificate greatly supports professionals working in education, mental health, and allied health professions, such as occupational, physical, speech and language, and recreational therapy. The courses in the certificate program will expand your skills and level of competence in integrating a therapeutic horticulture approach into your practice.
- For those seeking to initiate or grow existing programs in community service, this certificate provides you with the background and tools to create programming in a wide variety of settings such as community gardens, nature centers, ancillary education programs, parks and recreation, supportive housing, urban farms, food alliances and more.
- Our students come from all life stages and walks of life. Students bring their diverse backgrounds and varied life experiences, enriching the learning community, while creating a camaraderie of shared interests and peer support.

What will I learn?

- How evidence-based research supports the efficacy of therapeutic horticulture across a wide range of human service communities
- The characteristics and needs of various human service communities who may benefit from therapeutic horticulture

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What will I learn? (continued)

- Skills to conduct programs for groups and individuals- goal setting, activity planning, adaptations, safety issues, accessibility, universal design, and evaluation of outcomes
- A foundational knowledge of gardening practices, including how to select and care for plants appropriate for therapeutic horticulture programming
- How to set up a business as an independent contractor of services and successfully market to meet the growing demand for nature related therapeutic services
- How to conduct therapeutic horticulture programming by observing it in action through visits to various community sites
- How to apply classroom learning to real-life situations, through a structured field experience with guidance from an experienced practitioner

When can I enroll?

Courses are offered continuously throughout the calendar year. We recommend you begin by enrolling in THP 301, our introductory course, which is the prerequisite course for all of the Therapeutic Horticulture courses in the program (THP prefix). While courses can be taken in any order, please be mindful of pre-requisites specific to individual courses. The Foundations of Horticulture courses can be taken at any time.

How is the program delivered?

Some of our courses are completely online. Others are blended, which means they are online and in-person at NYBG. Our online courses are synchronous- in real time- and class sizes are kept small (12- 15 students) to allow for greater engagement with the instructor and with fellow students. At this time, we **do not** offer a totally virtual program. Our blended courses, as well as site visits and field experiences, require attendance in the NYC metro area.

Where are classes held?

As described above, classes meet both online and on site at NYBG. This allows our cohorts to meet in person and experience the garden's myriad of resources as part of the learning experience.

How long will it take to complete the Therapeutic Horticulture Certificate?

In Adult Education, we recognize that the time frame for completion will vary for each student and their availability to enroll in courses, dependent on their work responsibilities and family life. Most students take two-four years to complete the entire program. Students have six years from their first required course to complete a certificate.

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How do I arrange a Therapeutic Horticulture Field Experience?

NYBG works with several established therapeutic horticulture programs in the New York area where students can complete a 100-hour internship. Alternatively, if a student works at a site where they are able to create and implement an TH program, they can apply to gain approval for this and enroll in an Independent Study course with an experienced practitioner. All THP coursework should be completed prior to engaging in the field experience. Please contact the Program Coordinator at thrcoordinator@nybg.org for complete information about therapeutic horticulture field experiences.

Why should I choose the New York Botanical Garden program?

Our Long History

The New York Botanical Garden has the longest continuously running certificate program in the country focused on therapeutic horticulture. We offered our first course in therapeutic horticulture in the late 1970's and began a formalized certificate program in 1987. We are proud of our 40+ year reputation of training students to use horticulture as a therapeutic medium.

Our Forward Thinking Approach

As interest in nature-based therapies continues to grow exponentially, our program develops and offers new elective courses to focus on specific topics and current trends relevant to the field. Former students and graduates are encouraged to enroll in electives that will keep them up to date while enriching their current practice.

Our Expert Faculty

Our diverse faculty is unparalleled in their therapeutic horticulture experience. As actively practicing experts in their respective fields, they bring real-world experience into classroom instruction and to their roles as mentors and site visit hosts. Our instructors are registered horticultural therapists, therapeutic horticulture practitioners, licensed social workers, occupational therapists, and other allied healthcare professionals. They are recognized leaders in the field, researchers, authors, conference presenters, recipients of prestigious awards, and creators of innovative therapeutic horticulture programs.

NYBG's accomplished master horticulturists also serve as program instructors and use our gardens and collections as your outdoor classroom.

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Which organizations in the Tri-State area are affiliated with the NYBG's program?

The New York Botanical Garden and the following organizations are mutually supportive of the use of therapeutic horticulture. Our partners are valuable collaborators in the therapeutic horticulture certificate program.

- The Horticultural Society of New York
- NY Langone Medical Center NYC
- The James J. Peters Veterans Administration Hospital Bronx NY
- Caring Kind NYC: The Heart of Alzheimer's Caregiving
- Parker Life, Highland Park NJ
- The Mercy Home, Brooklyn NY
- Pal-O-Mine Equestrian Center, Long Island NY
- Archcare: The Continuing Care Community of the Archdiocese of NY
- The Good Samaritan Hospital, Suffern NY
- Plantrophy, LLC
- Gre'energy, LLC
- The Mid- Atlantic HT Network

Is there a license or credential required to be a Therapeutic Horticulture Specialist?

Currently, there are no legal requirements to practice in the field of therapeutic horticulture. The American Horticultural Therapy Association offers a Voluntary Professional Registration in Horticultural Therapy. Our certificate program does not support this registration process and we do not provide college credits.

How does a certificate in Therapeutic Horticulture help my career goals?

Our certificate program has a proven track record of preparing students to complement existing careers or begin new careers. Therapeutic horticulture is a broadly encompassing field and our certificate prepares students for the many pathways that ultimately lead to more people benefitting from this unique and health-enhancing therapeutic medium.

Are there scholarships to help me complete the Program?

NYBG is not able to offer scholarships at the current time. Scholarship opportunities are offered by local networking groups such as the Mid- Atlantic HT Network, the Northeast HT Network, organizations such as the Garden Club of America and local garden groups that support horticulture as a therapeutic medium.

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If I am already enrolled in the program, how do I know which classes I now need to take to complete my Horticultural Therapy Certificate?

Old HT Certificate Requirement	New TH Certificate Requirement
THR301: Introduction to Horticultural Therapy	THP301: Introduction to Therapeutic Horticulture
THR401: HT for Older Adults	THP401: TH for Older Adults
THR402: HT for Youth with Disabilities	THP402: TH for Youth with Disabilities
THR403: HT for Physical Rehabilitation	THP403: TH for Neurological Conditions
THR404: HT for Behavioral Health	THP404: TH for Mental Health
THR406: HT Methods and Materials	THP406: Accessibility in TH Programming AND one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- THP350: Indoor Plants for Therapeutic Programs- THP351: Outdoor Plants for Therapeutic Programs
THR407: Activities Analysis for HT	THP407: TH Activity Planning
THR408: Garden Design for Special Populations	THP405: TH for Chronic Health Conditions
THR409: HT Program Management	THP409: TH Program Management