



## AMERICAN DANCE THERAPY ASSOCIATION STANDARDS FOR DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPY MASTER'S PROGRAMS

### A. PREAMBLE

The activities of the dance/movement therapist directly affect the public. Therefore, the profession has a responsibility to protect both the consumer of dance/movement therapy services and the student of dance/movement therapy academic programs through the development of standards that will ensure the quality of education received by the practitioner. All approved graduate dance/movement therapy master's programs shall reflect and uphold the American Dance Therapy Association Code of Ethical Practice (see Code of Ethical Practice).

### B. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The dance/movement therapy master's program shall be guided by a philosophy from which the theoretical framework is derived and which leads to an integrated learning experience.

### C. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Dance/movement therapy master's education shall be designed to provide students with the following:

1. The basic principles, concepts and techniques necessary for the practice of dance/movement therapy.
2. The skills, knowledge and values basic to dance/movement therapy as a profession.
3. Knowledge of dance/movement therapy as a mental health profession within the broader context of society.
4. Knowledge of professional and ethical practice in the field of dance/movement therapy.
5. Methods for expanding knowledge in the field and improving the quality of practice.

## D. STUDENT COMPETENCIES

Upon completion of their graduate education, dance/movement therapy students will have the following competencies:

1. The ability to integrate knowledge and clinical skills generic to the theory and practice of dance/movement therapy.
2. Knowledge and skills in the art of dance and other related movement modalities.
3. A systematized approach to movement assessment, evaluation and observation.
4. Knowledge of the human body and its processes.
5. The capacity to work with a variety of clinical populations and an understanding of assessment, treatment planning and methods of treatment within a clinical setting.
6. The capacity to engage in therapeutic relationships informed by self awareness, an understanding of cultural context, recognition and respect for diversity, and a commitment to social justice.
7. Knowledge of individual, family and group psychodynamics and processes.
8. Skills in research design and methodology.
9. The ability to assume one's professional roles and responsibilities within various settings.
10. The ability to evaluate one's work and to seek continuous improvement of competency.

## E. THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational objective of master's programs shall be the preparation of students for dance/movement therapy practice. The educational program shall provide both the range and depth of skills and knowledge necessary for a professional dance/movement therapist. The course of study shall be integrated and sequentially ordered in such a way that it contributes to the development of the desired competencies. These guidelines leave open the possibility of cooperation between dance/movement therapy programs and other affiliated graduate programs.

1. The program shall grant a Master's degree in dance/movement therapy (that is, an MA or an MS). An equivalent master's degree will be accepted upon committee review.
2. Course descriptions and the specific degree offered shall be stated in the institution's catalogue or its equivalent.

3. The program shall offer theoretical perspectives that are specifically germane to dance/movement therapy practice.
4. The program shall offer curricular content that provides students with direct experiences in which a variety of dance/movement practices are taught.
5. The program shall offer experiential classes that maintain a student-to-teacher ratio which guarantees faculty responsibility to individual students.
6. In cases where dance/movement therapy programs are allied with other programs, the dance/movement therapy program must maintain its discrete identity in terms of content.

#### F. ACADEMIC CONTENT

Coursework in the dance/movement therapy program shall encompass the following content:

1. Dance/movement therapy theory.
2. The interrelationships between physiological, psychological and socio-cultural factors and their effects on human growth, development and behavior.
3. Knowledge of the developmental, multicultural, expressive and communicative aspects of verbal and non-verbal behavior.
4. Methods for observation, analysis and assessment.
5. Theoretical information and practical application relating to individuals, families and groups in their psychosocial and cultural contexts, including knowledge of group processes.
6. Clinical applications of dance/movement and related psychological theories.
7. Human anatomy and kinesiology.
8. Research in dance/movement therapy and human behavior.
9. Knowledge of psychopathology, and diagnostic skills.
10. Basic knowledge of neuroscience as it relates to the theory and practice of dance/movement therapy.
11. Elective content and additional study in areas that enhance the students' skills or adds to their knowledge of mental and physical health, and human behavior.

## G. CLINICAL FIELDWORK AND CLINICAL INTERNSHIP

Fieldwork and internships are required, and shall both be under the administrative and educational direction of the college faculty. Close liaison shall be maintained between the school and each agency with clearly defined methods for communication and evaluation. A contract between the school and each agency shall state the expectations and responsibilities of both parties.

Fieldwork and internship differ in the amount of time spent in an agency, and in the level of responsibility of the student/intern.

### 1. Clinical Fieldwork

Hours earned in Clinical Fieldwork cannot be applied to the Clinical Internship. Fieldwork shall provide the beginning student with:

- a. Direct exposure to dance/movement therapy practice within a clinical setting.
- b. An orientation to health and educational systems.
- c. An understanding of the role and function of the dance/movement therapist within the system.

### 2. Clinical Internship

Internship shall provide the student with the opportunity to integrate dance/movement therapy skills and theory within an intensive, supervised practicum experience. It is expected that by the completion of the internship, the student will be ready to assume the role of a beginning clinician.

- a. The internship shall be a minimum of six months full time or a 700-hour course of study, following the first year of graduate education. This shall include a minimum of 350 hours of direct client contact, all of which must be related to the development of skills required of a dance/movement therapist.
- b. Standards for entrance to, and completion of, the internship shall be clearly established by the d/mt academic program. These standards shall be written in the institutional catalogue, its equivalent, or in an internship manual.
- c. The Internship shall be concurrent with, or subsequent to, the graduate dance/movement therapy coursework.
- d. The 70 hours of BC-DMT supervision shall include a minimum of five (5) hours of onsite observation of student led sessions accompanied by five (5) hours of supervisory discussion. In circumstances in which live observation is absolutely not possible, the BC-DMT credentialed supervisor shall observe five (5) hours of video recorded on-site student led sessions accompanied by five (5) hours supervisory discussion.

- e. Facilities shall be selected on the basis of firm commitment to dance/movement therapy education and the ability to provide students with professionally trained dance/movement therapy supervisors capable of integrating and applying academic knowledge to practice.
- f. Facilities shall be licensed, accredited or therapeutic settings, which provide clinical experience and in-service education as it applies to criteria for Fieldwork and Internship sites.

## H. FACULTY

1. There shall be a full-time director in the academic dance/movement therapy department who is a BC-DMT with extensive teaching, clinical and administrative experience.
2. The dance/movement therapy program director shall have a full-time appointment in the institution, with primary responsibility to the dance/movement therapy program.
3. In addition, there shall be at least one BC-DMT appointed full-time to the program, or more than one to constitute one full-time equivalent.
4. Faculty shall teach only the subject area in which they are qualified. Teaching of dance/movement practice and theory content shall be limited to BC-DMTs. Teaching of observation and assessment of movement content requires documented evidence of additional and advanced training beyond what is required for master's approved programs.

## I. ADMINISTRATION

1. The program's parent institution shall be accredited by its regional accreditation association.
2. A program in dance/movement therapy shall be under administrative auspices that assure and support its philosophy, objectives, purposes and goals through:
  - a. Adequate financial support.
  - b. Allocation to DMT faculty of responsibility and authority for the program's governance in all respects within the policies and procedures of the parent institution.
  - c. Assignment of faculty workloads that reflect the need for release time for functions basic to the operation of a professional degree program, and commensurate with workloads in other professional degree programs of the institution.
  - d. Criteria and procedures for appointment, promotion and the granting of tenure

- for faculty in the program which are consonant with those of the program's parent institution.
- e. Allocation of sufficient support staff to facilitate the orderly administration of the program.
  - f. Provision of space, equipment, supplies and library/media holdings sufficiently adequate to meet the needs of the program.
3. There shall be established criteria and procedures for the filing and processing of grievances by faculty, staff and students in relation to any aspect of program operation, commensurate with those of the parent institution.

#### J. ADMISSIONS

1. Students shall be selected for admission to the program on the basis of written criteria and a corresponding screening process.
2. Admissions criteria shall include the applicant's:
  - a. emotional, physical and intellectual capacity as well as motivation in accordance with the demands of a graduate program in dance/movement therapy
  - b. a broad liberal arts undergraduate background,
  - c. a wide range of dance and movement skills;
  - d. the demonstrated capacity to use dance and movement in their broadest creative and expressive functions.
3. Admission requirements shall be stated clearly in the regularly published catalogue or its equivalent in the program's parent institution.

#### K. EVALUATION

There shall be established explicit criteria and procedures for the evaluation of

1. Students in relation to progress in the academic program, fieldwork and internship components of the program.
2. Faculty, including a formal feedback system by students.
3. The program's academic, fieldwork and internship component.

## L. STUDENT ADVISEMENT

The program shall have established criteria and procedures for ongoing advisement of students in relation to their academic and clinical studies. All advisement related to dance/movement therapy coursework and practice shall be provided by a trained dance/movement therapist.

## M. JOB DEVELOPMENT

The program shall participate in the development of employment opportunities for its graduates.

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ADTA Board of Directors Revised, April, 1996

ADTA Board of Directors Revised, April, 1999 (revisions included October, 2006)

Approved, April, 2004  
ADTA Board of Directors Revised, April, 2004

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ADTA Board of Directors Revised, March 2005

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# AMERICAN DANCE THERAPY ASSOCIATION ADDENDUM TO APPLICATION FOR PROGRAM APPROVAL\*

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

\*for use in completion of the self-study or program application

Academic Curriculum – all required and elective courses, sequentially organized, that comprise the degree requirements of a program.

Administrative Organization – hierarchical administrative structure of program.

Admission Criteria – academic, personal and dance/movement requirements stipulated by institution to qualify for entry into program.

Advisement – information and consultation on academic, internship or other matters related to educational and professional development.

Clinical Internship – clinical service as a dance/movement therapy intern for a period of six months full-time of a minimum of 700 hours over the course of study which meets all of the criteria listed in ADTA's Standards for Graduate Dance/Movement Therapy Programs.

Clinical Population – term may be appropriately used to draw patient/client distinctions in terms of age, diagnosis, psychosocial and/or developmental issues, and for prevention of problems and disease.

Clinical Supervisor – A BC-DMT who provides supervision in a dance/movement therapy clinical placement.

Course Outline – Form provided by the instructor to student that describes the purpose and objectives of course, content, requirements, methods of evaluation, required readings, and how the course content is to be covered through the semester.

Development – course content that covers the human life span from birth to death.

Faculty – full and part-time instructional personnel affiliated with the program.

Fieldwork – pre-internship dance/movement therapy experiences in a clinical setting, designed to provide students with: a) direct exposure to dance/movement therapy within a clinical setting, b) an orientation to educational and health systems and c) an understanding of the role and function of the dance/movement therapist with the system. Hours earned in Fieldwork cannot be applied to the internship.

Faculty Workload – all activities (teaching, advising, supervisory, administrative, etc.), which comprise a faculty member's total responsibility to the program.

Internship Placement Procedures – how internship policies are implemented regarding the establishment and maintenance of the clinical placement by the program inclusive of forms and contracts used to do so.

Liability Insurance – legal and financial protection against liability of the student while student is placed at a clinical facility.



Objectives – broad academic and clinical goals of the program.

Philosophy – fundamental beliefs informing program’s educational objectives.

Release Time – time granted to attend conferences and other professional developmental opportunities.

Student Competencies – areas of knowledge and skills students will have upon completion of the program.

Theoretical Framework – the conceptual model, principles and assumptions that guide the academic and clinical components of the program.

December, 1989

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