



Utah System of Higher Education
Therapeutic Massage
FY2026 / 26 Credits (825 Clock-Hours)

Foundational Courses

TETM 1010 Anatomy, Physiology & Kinesiology

6 Credits / 180 Clock-Hours

In the Anatomy, Physiology & Kinesiology course, students examine the muscles (their origins, insertions, actions, and the organs to which they reflex), bones, nerves, and functions of the body's systems through anatomical drawings, experiential exercises, and labs. Students also analyze the structure, function, and pathophysiology of other body systems (integumentary, nervous, endocrine, circulatory, respiratory, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, lymphatic, urinary, excretory, and reproductive) as they relate to massage therapy. Students expand their knowledge of the actions of muscles and muscle groups through palpation and drawings, muscle fiber directions, joint structure and movements (flexion, extension), types of muscle contractions (e.g. eccentric, concentric, isometric), and proprioception.

Objectives:

- Identify the locations and functions of the bones and bony landmarks of the skeletal system.
- Identify and demonstrate the actions of the muscles in the musculoskeletal system.
- Identify the locations and functions of all major organs of the body.
- Identify the origins and insertions of the muscles and their attachments.
- Identify muscle fiber directions and types of muscle contractions.
- Identify and describe the four functions of muscle tissue.
- Analyze the three joint structure types.
- Locate and define the major classifications of joints.
- Display knowledge of the functionality of the physiological systems in the body.
- Demonstrate and perform the major movements of the body.

TETM 1110 Pathology

2 Credits / 60 Clock-Hours

In the Pathology course, students study the diseases and disorders of the human body. Students learn the etiology, signs, and symptoms of various diseases and how the diseases affect each system of the body. Students study the differences between acute and chronic conditions and the modes of contagious disease transmission. Students also gain an understanding of the medical terminology, indications, and contraindications (cautions) of diseases as they relate to massage therapy.

Objectives:

- Identify several musculoskeletal disorders.
- Identify several nervous, lymphatic, immune, respiratory, endocrine, urinary, digestive, reproductive, and cardiovascular system conditions.
- Describe the purpose of inflammation and the three major stages of inflammation.
- Explain why damaged skin contraindicates massage therapy.
- Distinguish 10 common signs that indicate the possibility of cancer.
- Identify at least 3 internal factors in the development of cancer.



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TETM 1210 Therapeutic Massage Techniques I

4 Credits / 120 Clock-Hours

In the Therapeutic Massage Techniques I course, students learn the foundations of Swedish massage and how to apply basic Swedish techniques safely and effectively. Students gain an understanding of the history and benefits of massage therapy and the various contraindications encountered in the field. Students also learn basic draping techniques, hygiene, sanitation, and professional conduct required when working with clients. Touch and pressure sensitivity and proper table and body mechanics are emphasized as tools for longevity in massage therapy careers. Students are also introduced to the following topics: spa therapy treatments; aromatherapy; hydrotherapy; hot stone massage; seated chair massage theory and techniques; and the history, principles, and application of reflexology techniques. Students also learn personal hygiene and the proper protocols for creating a comfortable, sanitary, and safe environment for the practice of massage therapy. Students explore infection control procedures to prevent the spread of serious diseases. An American Heart Association CPR Certified Instructor provides basic first aid training and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification.

Objectives:

- Identify and explain the benefits of massage therapy.
- Perform the five Swedish massage strokes with proper body mechanics.
- Label, define, classify, and apply types of contraindications for massage therapy.
- Perform 60-minute and 90-minute Swedish massage sessions, and a 15-minute seated chair massage.
- Identify key essential oils and describe how they can be used in a massage therapy practice.
- Identify the benefits and contraindications of hot stone massage/hydrotherapy and perform these techniques in Swedish massage.
- Identify indications and contraindications and demonstrate knowledge of the theories and benefits of reflexology.
- Perform a general reflexology session while identifying major reflex points of the foot.
- Identify the basic rules and procedures of sanitation and how they are used to control transmission of pathogens.
- Demonstrate proper hand hygiene and determine when gloves are needed for massage therapy.
- Identify the methods for disinfecting contaminated linens, surfaces, and reusable objects.
- List the contraindications of massage and endangerment sites relative to standard precautions.
- Obtain CPR/AED Certification.



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TETM 1220 Therapeutic Massage Techniques II

4 Credits / 120 Clock-Hours

The Therapeutic Massage Techniques II course expands on the materials and skills learned in Therapeutic Massage Techniques I. Students explore the history, anatomy, and treatment techniques of craniosacral therapy, including the craniosacral system, specific bones, bone motion, and common dysfunctions in the system. They also explore how to safely adapt and perform massage therapy to special populations, including pre/postnatal women and geriatric, palliative care, and cancer/hospice clients. Students learn side-lying and semi-reclined positioning and specialized draping techniques. They also demonstrate and practice joint mobilization and stretching techniques for the neck, arms, shoulders, back, and legs. During massage lab time, students demonstrate, practice, and refine skills learned in previous courses.

Students also obtain a basic understanding of proper nutrition with an overview of nutrients, proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, and enzymes. Students learn and apply the six dimensions of the wellness model: physical, occupational, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual. Students will also learn how to prevent therapist burnout and achieve career longevity.

Objectives:

- Describe and list the benefits of craniosacral therapy and perform a 60-minute craniosacral therapy session.
- Define and describe the benefits, contraindications, and special considerations for pre/postnatal massage.
- Demonstrate proper table body mechanics and client positions for pre/postnatal massage.
- Apply appropriate techniques of draping and bolstering to clients in a side-lying position.
- Identify benefits, contraindications, and special considerations for specialized populations.
- Identify the difference between active and passive movements.
- Demonstrate mobilizing and stretching techniques in different areas of the body.
- Identify proper nutrients and a balanced diet.
- Define wellness and the wellness model.
- Define career longevity and identify self-care techniques and ways to prevent therapist burnout.

TETM 1230 Therapeutic Massage Techniques III

3 Credits / 90 Clock-Hours

In the Therapeutic Massage Techniques III course, students learn how to safely access the deeper structures of the body through trigger point therapy, sports massage, neuro-muscular therapy, and deep tissue massage. Basic postural analysis, methods of integration, and assessment procedures are demonstrated. Course instruction includes athletic pre-post event protocols, case studies, event coordination, and on-site preparation and set-up. Students also refine their palpatory skills with supervised clinical training.

Objectives:

- Identify trigger points and their referral patterns in major muscle groups.
- Demonstrate the various types of sports massage techniques with cramp relief techniques.
- Demonstrate compression, deep transverse friction, and ischemic compression techniques.
- Identify the five principles of neuromuscular therapy.
- Identify and label postural dysfunctions; perform a postural analysis and formulate a treatment plan.
- Demonstrate palpation techniques through various layers of connective tissue.
- Perform a deep tissue massage on the upper and lower body.
- List contraindications for modalities learned in the course.



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TETM 1240 Therapeutic Massage Techniques IV

1 Credit / 30 Clock-Hours

The Therapeutic Massage Techniques IV course provides an overview of the theories and systems of traditional Chinese medicine foundations: yin and yang, meridians, shiatsu, acupressure, and chakra systems. Students are introduced to lymphatic drainage massage. Students practice and apply these techniques in full body massage sessions or stand-alone sessions.

Objectives:

- Locate the 12 primary meridians, the governing vessel, and the conception vessel.
- Describe the Yin/Yang theory.
- Identify the 5 elements or phases.
- Locate, label, and define the seven chakras of the body.
- Demonstrate proper table and body mechanics and client positions for shiatsu.
- Identify indications and contraindications of lymphatic drainage.
- Perform lymphatic drainage massage.

TETM 1310 Professional Standards, Ethics, and Business Practices

2 Credits / 60 Clock-Hours

The Professional Standards, Ethics, and Business Practices course introduces students to the business side of massage with topics of interest for the small business owner, employee, and/or independent contractor. Students learn basic business skills and practices including client interview techniques; SOAP/session record keeping; accounting practices; requirements for local, state, and federal laws; and income taxes. Additionally, students learn about legal entities, insurance, and marketing strategies. Students explore the therapeutic relationship between client and practitioner, including safety, privacy, power differentials, transference and countertransference, boundary issues, and appropriate conduct. Students also learn practices related to informed consent, the right of refusal and confidentiality, and working with trauma survivors.

Students will explore the psychological factors affecting massage therapy and the psychology of touch and healing. Students learn how to appropriately identify and respond to an emotional release during a massage therapy session. Students gain an understanding of the components of body armoring, armoring patterns, and character structures. Students will also explore mental health conditions and disorders that may require referrals to mental health professionals.

Objectives:

- Identify tax ramifications, elements of business planning, marketing techniques, and create business cards.
- Create a client intake form, a policy and procedures form, and complete S.O.A.P documentation.
- Demonstrate knowledge of state law requirements to become a licensed massage therapist.
- Describe the difference between transference and countertransference.
- Identify the duties and rights of the practitioner and the client in the therapeutic relationship.
- Describe the psychological effects of massage therapy on the client.
- Describe emotional release and the role of touch in emotional healing.
- Identify the psychological defenses that manifest as physical tension patterns or body armoring.
- Describe the relationship between muscle memory and trauma.



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TETM 1530 MBLEX/National Exam Prep

1 Credit / 30 Clock-Hours

This course prepares students to sit for the MBLEX exam. Students participate in extensive reviews, quizzes, and exams on anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, pathology, business practices and ethics, Swedish massage, and other massage modalities taught throughout the Therapeutic Massage program. Students learn how to prepare for the MBLEX exam, including personal time management and strategies for studying.

Objectives:

- Demonstrate knowledge of terminology: prefixes, roots, and suffixes.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of anatomy, physiology, and pathology.
- Demonstrate understanding of the concepts of kinesiology and biomechanics.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the history, theory, assessment, and application of massage and bodywork.
- Demonstrate knowledge of energetic anatomy, including meridians and chakras.
- Demonstrate understanding of professional standards, ethics, and business practices, including client confidentiality, ethical standards, and effective communication.

TETM 2999 Clinical Applications Externship

3 Credits / 135 Clock-Hours

This is an experiential, hands-on course where students apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the therapeutic massage technique courses. Students interact with diverse clientele from the public through client interviews and assessments, documentation reviews, client consultations, S.O.A.P. notes, and client education. Students also use this experience to synthesize their clinical skills, refine techniques, re-define professional goals and discuss case profiles under clinical supervision.

Objectives:

- Demonstrate initiative and confidence in communication with clients.
- Demonstrate knowledge and synthesis of client needs and health concerns to determine appropriate massage therapy protocols.
- Complete client session notes.
- Provide chair massage, 60-minute, and 90-minute therapeutic massage sessions for clients.
- Provide various massage modalities to clients based on Techniques I-IV.