



**Columbia Southern University – Dept. of Continuing Education  
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**Education & Training Plan**  
**Spa Professional Certificate Program with Externship**  
**Columbia Southern University (CSU)**

Student Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Program includes National Certification & an Externship Opportunity**  
**Mentor Supported**

**Spa Professional Certificate Program with Externship**

Course Code: CSU-MT-SPA  
Program Duration: 6 Months  
Course Contact Hours: 375  
Student Tuition: \$3,999

**The Spa Professional**

In today's industry of massage therapy, it is more important than ever to have knowledge and skills necessary for a successful career. There are a wide range of opportunities available in today's spa environment, and there are many different potential business relationships that will be encountered throughout a typical career. Learning more about the business world will serve to equip the spa professional with information and tools that will inevitably be required as you begin your career.

**The Spa Professional Program**

This course provides an overview of the theoretical principles for common massage therapy systems and manual techniques. The course discusses the historical influences from a variety of cultures in order to best understand the massage therapy industry and profession today. In addition, the course overviews selected major cautions and contraindications for giving massage, as well as the effects and benefits of proper massage therapy treatments. The course prepares students with fundamental knowledge about sanitation, and creating an appropriate environment to perform massage therapy services with ethical and professional boundaries. The course also serves to introduce both the theoretical basis as well as the demonstration of fundamental manual techniques in the traditional discipline of Western Massage (i.e. Swedish massage), and the contemporary systems of Myofascial Massage, Trigger Point Therapy, and Reflexology. This course provides instruction the focuses on the basic knowledge and skills of business and professional development, including writing resumes, goal setting, self-care, and job interview comportment. Students will also have the knowledge and tools for basic entrepreneurship, including marketing for massage therapy. Finally, the course emphasizes utmost professionalism and ethical behavior.

## Education and National Certifications

- Students should have or be pursuing a high school diploma or GED.
- There are no state approval and/or state requirements associated with this program.
- There is a National Certification exam available to students who successfully complete this program:
  - **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Certification Exam.**

## Program Objectives

At the conclusion of this program, students will:

- Comprehend foundational knowledge for understanding and applying massage therapy.
- Gain insight into the philosophical and historical background of massage therapy.
- Explain the effects and benefits of massage.
- Understand clinical applications of massage.
- Understand general guidelines for giving massage including hygiene, setting up the physical environment, and elements of performance.
- Understand the basic physiology of trigger points, and explain the manual techniques used to treat trigger points as a massage therapist.
- Understand the principles of Reflexology and explain the basic techniques used to treat the various systems of the body with the application of manual reflexology methods.
- Develop career strategies, set goals, and plan for ongoing professional development
- Navigate the career path with sound business practices and ethical behavior
- Have the basic knowledge and tools for basic entrepreneurship, including marketing
- Observe ethical and professional behavior in accordance with ethical codes from the leading professional organizations in the industry
- Use Microsoft Office

## National Certification

Upon successful completion of this Columbia Southern University program, students would be eligible to sit for the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. Although there are no state approval, state registration or other state requirements for this program, students who complete this program at Columbia Southern University will be prepared and are eligible to sit for this national certification exam. Students who complete this program are encouraged to complete the externship option with their program. Students who complete this program can and do sit for the MOS national certification exams and are qualified, eligible and prepared to do so. Columbia Southern University works with each student to complete the exam application and register the student to take their national certification exam.

## Externship / Hands on Training / Practicum

Although not a requirement, once students complete the program, they have the ability to participate in an externship and/or hands on practicum so as to practice the skills necessary to perform the job requirements of a professional in this field. Students will be assisted with completing a resume and/or other requirements necessary to work in this field. All students who complete this program are eligible to participate in an externship and will be placed with a participating organization near their location. Columbia Southern University works with national organizations and has the ability to place students in externship opportunities nationwide.

**Columbia Southern University contact:** If students have any questions regarding this program including national certification and externships, **they should call Laurie Coleman at 800.977.8449 x1840 or via email at [laurie.coleman@columbiasouthern.edu](mailto:laurie.coleman@columbiasouthern.edu).**

Note: No refunds can be issued after the start date published in your Financial Award document.



## About Columbia Southern University!

### Welcome to Columbia Southern University!

**OUR MISSION:** Columbia Southern University provides diverse learning experiences and affordable, flexible distance education programs at the certificate, undergraduate, and graduate levels to a global student body, delivered by qualified, student-centered faculty committed to teaching and student learning. The University is dedicated to providing exceptional academic and student support services.

**OUR VISION:** The Vision of Columbia Southern University is to change and improve lives through higher education by enabling students to maximize their professional and personal potential.

The Continuing Education Department at Columbia Southern University is committed to a program of public service, outreach and continuing education by sharing resources with the workforce to enhance the intellectual capital of all those in need or desire lifelong learning and development. <http://www.columbiasouthern.edu/online-degree/continuing-education>



### Columbia Southern University and Pearson Education

Columbia Southern University's eLearning programs were developed in partnership with Pearson Education to produce the highest quality, best-in-class content and delivery necessary to enhance the overall student learning experience, boost understanding and ensure retention. Pearson Education is the premier content and learning company in North America offering solutions to the higher education and career training divisions of colleges and universities across the country aimed at driving quality education programs to ensure student success. Please visit us at [www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com).

### About Pearson Education

Welcome to Pearson. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. We are the world's leading learning company, with 40,000 employees in more than 80 countries helping people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives. We provide a range of education products and services to institutions, governments and direct to individual learners, that help people everywhere aim higher and fulfil their true potential. Our commitment to them requires a holistic approach to education. It begins by using research to understand what sort of learning works best, it continues by bringing together people and organizations to develop ideas, and it comes back round by measuring the outcomes of our products.

## **Spa Professional Program Detailed Student Objectives:**

### **HISTORY AND PERSPECTIVE OF MASSAGE THERAPY**

- Describe massage in the context of a natural healing art, and understand the traditional influences that helped to shape today's massage therapy profession.
- Define massage and describe fundamental massage techniques commonly used.
- Explain the concept of wellness, and understand how massage therapy is complimentary to Western medicine.
- Comprehend the basic terminology used to describe the various types of massage styles and techniques commonly used.

### **THE BENEFITS AND APPLICATIONS OF MASSAGE**

- Explain the various massage techniques and the effects they have on the body, mind, and emotions.
- Identify how and when massage therapy fits into the healing process of tissue repair.
- Explain the primary effects that massage has on each of the body systems, and on the organism level overall.
- Explain how massage therapy is used in treating human pathologies.
- Understand how research literacy and the evidence-based practice is important for the massage therapy profession.
- Explain the basic massage applications for each system of the body, and how massage is used to compliment standard medical treatment in hospitals and nursing homes.

### **CONTRAINDICATIONS AND MASSAGE GUIDELINES**

- Describe the major endangerment sites of the body, which require knowledge and caution to avoid injury during massage.
- Explain the principles for general, regional, and local contraindications for massage.
- Explain the common medications and understand the implications for giving massage to medicated clients.
- Describe the major components for maintaining a professional presence, including sanitation and hand washing practices.
- Explain the primary considerations for self-care as a massage therapist.
- Describe the primary elements of massage applications, including topical substances, proper draping, safety and comfort of the client, and use of techniques.
- Explain the paramount ethical and moral considerations for the professional of massage therapy, and confidentiality as a client's right to privacy.

### **WESTERN MASSAGE TECHNIQUES & JOINT MOVEMENTS**

- Identify the primary manual techniques used in Western Massage, and the variations for each
- Describe the variations of each of the primary western massage techniques, and how they can provide specific effects
- Understand how to use western massage techniques appropriately in a session
- Distinguish between active and passive movements, joint mobilization techniques, and stretching
- Explain the therapeutic benefits of massage
- Understand the application of mobilizing and stretching techniques for different joints and areas of the body, as well as the guidelines for applying joint movements

### **CONTEMPORARY MASSAGE AND BODYWORK**

- Identify three contemporary massage and bodywork systems that are popular within the industry

- Explain the basic history and physiological basis of myofascial massage
- Identify the primary guidelines, contraindications, and basic myofascial techniques used
- Explain the basic history and physiological basis of trigger point therapy
- Explain how to locate trigger points, and how they can radiate pain in predictable patterns
- Identify the primary deactivation techniques used to treat trigger points
- Explain the basic history and energetic basis of reflexology
- Explain zone therapy and the guidelines in giving reflexology sessions, including positioning the receiver and body mechanic considerations for the therapist
- Identify the primary foot reflexology techniques

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR A MASSAGE THERAPY CAREER**

- Explore the massage therapy career
- Define helping professions and identify characteristics of a helping professional
- Examine the importance of balance
- Evaluate a massage career in the context of one's life
- Explore aspects of a massage therapy employee, and aspects of an entrepreneur
- Contrast the benefits and drawbacks of employment and business ownership
- Define an elevator pitch and its importance to your career
- Identify and explore options for massage careers
- Describe employment venues
- Contrast status of employee, independent contractor, and room renter
- Identify ways to find jobs
- Create a captivating cover letter and winning résumé
- Explore interviewing and communications skills
- Relate the concept of culture and the importance of "fit"
- Evaluate the fine points of negotiation and examine your rights and obligations as an employee
- Illustrate why marketing still matters as an employee
- Explain the importance of continuing education and professional development

### **PROFESSIONAL ISSUES AND SELF-CARE**

- Define and explore ethics and professionalism for the massage therapist
- Distinguish important documentation and the importance of keeping records
- Explore the complexity of relationships between massage therapist and client
- Define different boundaries for the massage therapist
- Characterize sexual misconduct and identify preventative courses of action
- Analyze gender and the massage therapist
- Evaluate opportunities for the male therapist
- Identify requirements for licensing, certifications, and national exams
- Explore relevant professional associations and trade publications
- Illustrate the importance of taking care of the caretaker
- Explain the concept of "healthy selfish"
- Identify foreseeable stressors for massage therapists
- Examine techniques to manage stress
- Define and create a self-care mission statement
- Craft a self-care plan
- Develop a good support system
- Examine internal versus external nurturing
- Review the importance of boundaries

## **MARKETING FOR MESSAGE**

- Define marketing
- Explain the marketing mix and define the “four Ps” of marketing
- Define product and placement, and explain how to structure price
- Explore the various components of promotion, and learn how to leverage customer service as a marketing strategy
- Explain the purpose and makeup of a marketing plan
- Write a mission statement
- Examine trends in the massage industry
- Identify a target market
- Describe a company analysis and identify and assess competition
- Define and explore a SWOT analysis
- Introduce implementation tactics to help achieve marketing goals
- Discuss why marketing is important for the massage professional
- Evaluate marketing considerations and challenges unique to the massage industry
- Identify essential marketing materials for massage therapists
- Examine the anatomy of a business card
- Introduce cooperative marketing, low-cost and no-cost marketing techniques and tools
- Illustrate how to craft and deliver an elevator pitch for the massage therapist
- Explore niche marketing for different massage modalities and different target markets
- Examine the role of communications in marketing massage
- Learn ways to “recession-proof” your practice through marketing
- Identify ways to manage marketing information overload and exhaustion

## **ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM IN MASSAGE THERAPY**

- Define ethics and professionalism within the context of the bodywork and massage therapy professions
- Identify some things that are often misconstrued to be the same as professional ethics
- Explain the relationship between ethics and professionalism
- Explain the purpose of codes of ethics and standards of practice
- Define the principles underlying the code of ethics for massage therapy and bodywork professions
- Identify the character traits that provide a solid foundation for ethical behavior
- Identify common things that present challenges to ethical behavior
- Explain the types of justifications and rationalizations people use to defend unethical behavior
- Explain the components of the ethical problem solving model and the importance of using a standard approach

**Note: This program can be completed in 6 months. However, students will have online access to this program for a 24-month period.**

## **MICROSOFT OFFICE Module**

- Use an integrated software package, specifically the applications included in the Microsoft Office suite
- Demonstrate marketable skills for enhanced employment opportunities
- Describe proper computer techniques for designing and producing various types of documents
- Demonstrate the common commands & techniques used in Windows desktop
- List the meaning of basic PC acronyms like MHz, MB, KB, HD and RAM
- Use WordPad and MSWord to create various types of documents
- Create headings and titles with Word Art
- Create and format spreadsheets, including the use of mathematical formulas
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of computer database functions, including putting, processing, querying and outputting data
- Define computer terminology in definition matching quizzes
- Use the Windows Paint program to alter graphics
- Use a presentation application to create a presentation with both text and graphics
- Copy data from one MS Office application to another application in the suite
- Use e-mail and the Internet to send Word and Excel file attachments
- Demonstrate how to use the Windows Taskbar and Windows Tooltips
- Explain how copyright laws pertain to data and graphics posted on the Internet
- Take the college computer competency test after course completion
- Follow oral and written directions and complete assignments when working under time limitations

**Note:** Although the Microsoft Office Module is not required to successfully complete this program, students interested in pursuing free Microsoft MOS certification may want to consider completing this Microsoft Office Module at no additional cost.

### **System Requirements:**

#### **Windows Users:**

- Windows 8, 7, XP or Vista
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Internet Explorer

#### **Mac OS User:**

- Mac OS X or higher (in classic mode)
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Apple Safari

#### **iPad Users:**

- Due to Flash limitations, eLearning programs are NOT compatible with iPads

#### **Screen Resolution:**

- We recommend setting your screen resolution to 1024 x 768 pixels.

#### **Browser Requirements:**

- System will support the two latest releases of each browser. When using older versions of a browser, users risk running into problems with the course software.
- Windows Users: Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Mac OS Users: Safari, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox

#### **Suggested Plug-ins:**

- Flash Player
- Real Player
- Adobe Reader
- Java