Student Handbooks constitute Student Policy and are revised as needed. Please go to TCL.edu for updates.
SECTION VI: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: MASSAGE THERAPY

This Massage Therapy Student Handbook serves to supplement the current TCL Catalog and Division of Health Sciences Student Handbook to provide additional guidance for students enrolled in the Massage Therapy Program. It constitutes Student Policy. It undergoes revision annually and as necessary. Review online at http://www.tcl.edu for updates.

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MASSAGE THERAPY PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

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Massage Therapy is a branch of complementary health care that works to improve health and well-being through the manipulation of muscles and other soft tissues of the body. The mission of the TCL Massage Therapy program is to prepare graduates to succeed as professional entry-level massage therapists in a variety of settings. The philosophy of the program is to provide a holistic education allowing students to develop an innate understanding of the holistic practice of Massage Therapy.

The program is comprised of a 750 hour, three-semester (11 month), 31 credit hour curriculum recognized by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. A Certificate in Massage Therapy is awarded upon graduation. The TCL Massage Therapy Program is accredited by the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA), with accreditation renewed through 2023.

Successful completion of the Massage Therapy program, including coursework and supervised clinical practice, makes students eligible to take the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx), approved to meet requirements for South Carolina State Licensure, and accepted by 42 states with more states in process. The TCL Massage Therapy program meets and exceeds all instructional criteria for the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork: At least 125 hours of instruction on the body’s systems (anatomy, physiology and kinesiology), at least 200 hours of massage and bodywork assessment, theory and application instruction, at least 40 hours of pathology, at least 10 hours of business and ethics instruction (minimum 6 hours in ethics), at least 125 hours of related instruction including supervised clinical practice and practicum (professional internship).

All program hours must be completed as in-class supervised instruction. By state law, the instructional hour will be identified as 50 minutes. One semester credit hour will be identified as 750 minutes of classroom instruction or equivalent laboratory time plus an exam period. By state guidelines, the credit ratio of laboratory/clinical practicum/internship: lecture is 3:1, meaning three contact hours of structured lab activity equals one credit hour; one contact hour of lecture equals one credit hour. Each year, the massage
therapy class size is limited to 16 participants. Instructor to student ratio in clinical supervision is a maximum of 1:8. All classes in the Massage Therapy program take place at the TCL New River campus. Lecture classes are scheduled in standard classrooms (see individual schedule for room listing following registration), and all clinical program activities are held in the Massage Therapy Lab, Room 221. All equipment (massage tables, massage chairs, bolsters, etc.) are supplied for use while students are enrolled, with ratio of students to equipment for all activities 2:1.

STANDARDS AND CODE OF ETHICS
The TCL Massage Therapy program adheres strictly to the professional standards of practice and code of ethics of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA). These principles and rules apply equally to students and faculty of the TCL Massage Therapy program. Any violation of professional ethical behavior by any student, faculty or staff member should be reported immediately to the Massage Therapy Program Director. Students may speak with their instructor, the Program Director, the Dean of the Division of Health Sciences or other college administrator with the expectation of confidentiality in receiving assistance, support and resolution of any ethical issue or concern. Students are required to maintain appropriate physical and interpersonal boundaries and uphold professional standards during all classroom and clinical activities, in keeping with their responsibilities to the profession, outlined in the Code of Ethics below. Prior to state licensure, students may not accept money or other gratuities for massage services.

Code of Ethics for Massage Therapists
This Code of Ethics is a summary statement of the standards of conduct that define ethical behavior for the massage therapist. Adherence to the Code is a prerequisite for admission to and continued membership in the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA).

Principles of Ethics. The Principles of Ethics form the first part of the Code of Ethics. They are aspirational and inspirational model standards of exemplary professional conduct for all members of the association. These Principles should not be regarded as limitations or restrictions, but as goals for which members should constantly strive.

Massage therapists/practitioners shall:

1. Demonstrate commitment to provide the highest quality massage therapy/bodywork to those who seek their professional service.
2. Acknowledge the inherent worth and individuality of each person by not discriminating or behaving in any prejudicial manner with clients and/or colleagues.
3. Demonstrate professional excellence through regular self-assessment of strengths, limitations, and effectiveness by continued education and training.
4. Acknowledge the confidential nature of the professional relationship with clients and respect each client’s right to privacy within the constraints of the law.
5. Project a professional image and uphold the highest standards of professionalism.
6. Accept responsibility to do no harm to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of self, clients, and associates.

Rules of Ethics. The Rules of Ethics are mandatory and direct specific standards of minimally-acceptable professional conduct for all members of the association. The Rules of Ethics are enforceable for all association members, and any members who violate this Code shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Massage therapists/practitioners shall:

1. Conduct all business and professional activities within their scope of practice and all applicable legal and regulatory requirements.
2. Refrain from engaging in any sexual conduct or sexual activities involving their clients in the course of a massage therapy session.
3. Be truthful in advertising and marketing, and refrain from misrepresenting his or her services, charges for services, credentials, training, experience, ability or results.
4. Refrain from using AMTA membership, including the AMTA name, logo or other intellectual property, or the member’s position, in any way that is unauthorized, improper or misleading.
5. Refrain from engaging in any activity which would violate confidentiality commitments and/or proprietary rights of AMTA or any other person or organization.
REQUIREMENTS OF TRAINING FOR LICENSURE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

From Section 40-30-110, South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended by the Massage/Bodywork Practice Act, Act 387 of the 1996 General Assembly:

To be licensed as a massage therapist in South Carolina, a person must
1. be at least 18 years of age and have received a high school diploma or GED (high school graduate equivalency diploma);
2. have completed a course of supervised study of at least 500 classroom hours at an approved institution;
3. have received a passing grade on an approved examination such as the National Certification Examination.

For additional information and/or for application for South Carolina state licensure, contact
SC Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
Office of Business and Related Services
P.O. Box 11329 (803) 896-4490
Columbia, SC 29211-1329 www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/MassageTherapy

Requirements for training and standards of practice in other jurisdictions may vary.

NON-DESCRIMINATION POLICY
The Technical College of the Lowcountry Massage Therapy program is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all qualified applicants for admissions or employment without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, religion, marital status, veteran status, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

FINANCIAL AID
Eligibility for financial aid is established by completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the link on the Financial Aid webpage of the TCL website www.tcl.edu. Federal, State, and private Foundation sources of assistance are available as described in the TCL Catalog, pages 26-32.

By definition, Federal and State scholarships and grants are funds applied toward the educational costs of students who meet eligibility criteria and remain in good academic standing, which are not repaid by the student. Federally subsidized, unsubsidized, or private loans are obtained by the student or parents of dependent students, and must be repaid, subject to specific terms of repayment, including interest fees.

IMPORTANT: All students requesting funding through student loans are required to complete an annual Financial Literacy workshop. Contact Financial Aid or check the website for workshop dates.

CPR CERTIFICATION
Massage therapy students must have a current Adult Basic CPR certificate prior to beginning clinical courses. This certification must be kept current according to the expiration date of the card and maintained throughout the program. It is the student's responsibility to complete CPR certification. Students will not be permitted in the clinical area without current certification.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES
The curriculum content is designed to build knowledge, skill, and confidence in the student therapist:
• Perform safe and effective massage therapy application
• Demonstrate healthy body mechanics and self-care
• Employ professional ethics and laws specific to the practice of massage therapy
• Apply knowledge of human structure, function, and pathology
• Provide massage therapy services to the public in clinical courses
• Document clinical activities using proper medical terminology
• Develop basic business planning and management skills
• Integrate knowledge and skills needed to pass Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination
CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR INSTRUCTORS
All Massage Therapy instructors must participate in continuing education in technical and instructional skills. This requirement may be satisfied with in-service or outside programs. Documentation must be provided.

MAKE-UP POLICY
Students in this science- and skills-based program are expected to attend all classes. Students who miss more than 10% of classes are subject to administrative withdrawal from the class. All assignments must be completed or the student will receive an “I” (Incomplete) in the class. Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the designated date. Students who are not able to be present for a lab evaluation or test MUST contact the instructor in advance to request an opportunity to reschedule or “make-up” the evaluation or test. “No-call/no-show” for an evaluation or an exam will result in a grade of “0.” There are no “make-up” activities equivalent to hours in the program. (For example, a student may not write a paper to “make-up” hours in a specific course.)

DRAPING PROCEDURES
Professional standards of draping are required and maintained at all times during the curriculum. Draping procedures are introduced and practiced in MTH 121 Principles of Massage I during Fall Semester, and required during all courses involving massage application.

Any student who does not observe appropriate draping technique and respect for physical and interpersonal boundaries will be immediately removed from the clinical activity. Behavior will be documented by the instructor, and discussed in private with student for appropriate resolution, including potential dismissal from the course and the program. In cases where the situation is resolved and the student is allowed to return to clinical activities, any deliberate or repeated inappropriate behavior following corrective instruction will result in dismissal from the program.

HYGIENE
Since the practice of massage therapy involves physical contact with fellow students during massage application courses and members of the public during clinical sessions, students are required to maintain professional standards of hygiene and grooming at all times. Daily showering/bathing, use of unscented deodorant, clean clothing, well-groomed haircut, and conservatively trimmed hair including mustache and beard, are required of all students at all times.

Smoking is discouraged while enrolled in the program, and if a student smokes, care must be taken to remove odors from linens, clothing, skin and hair. Because some students and clients may be sensitive to scent, grooming products used should be unscented, and colognes and perfumes should not be used. Chewing gum is not allowed, but breath mints are allowed and may be recommended due to close proximity of work with fellow students and clients. Nails must be trimmed short and filed.

Best practices of clinical hygiene and universal precautions including proper hand-washing, handling of linens, and cleaning of equipment will be employed during all class and clinical activities.

STUDENT DRESS CODE
Massage Therapy requires mobility of the practitioner while maintaining a modest and professional appearance. Therefore, TCL requires suitable student attire for classroom, clinics, and internships. Appropriate clothing includes:
• Shirts with sleeves for classroom activities; scrubs are required for clinical sessions.
• Slacks or shorts: slacks or scrub pants, loose enough to allow mobility; shorts of reasonable length and substantial material are allowed for classroom activities; shorts are not allowed for clinical activities
• Undergarments are required; no clothing may expose any undergarments for male or female students
• Closed-toe shoes and socks are required for labs and clinical sessions; clean tennis shoes are acceptable
• No piercings filled with jewelry other than one small earring per ear are allowed in classroom or clinic, for both professional appearance and safety
• Students agree to refrain from receiving any body piercing or tattooing while participating in program
• No hats are to be worn in classroom or clinic
• Students with long hair must tie hair back in braids, clips or ponytail for clinical sessions
• Rings, watches and bracelets must be removed while giving massage
PROGRAM FACILITY
The Massage Therapy program is offered in its entirety at the TCL New River Campus in Bluffton, South Carolina. The campus currently comprises 32 acres of land, parking lot with capacity for 240 cars, and one 32,670 sq. ft. building providing classrooms, meeting rooms, administrative offices and student service offices. Rooms are comfortably arranged on two floors, with stair and elevator access.

The first floor contains lobby, main administrative office and bookstore, student services office, library/learning center, President's office, Assistant Vice President's office, three large standard classrooms, one auditorium-style classroom, one large meeting room, one small meeting room, two large industrial arts/multipurpose classrooms, and warming kitchen (refrigerator/microwave; no food preparation on-site).

The second floor contains biology lab, nursing lab, massage therapy lab, five shared divisional offices, TCL Foundation office, three large classrooms, and student lounge with vending area. The environment is enhanced by paintings, photographs and sculptures on loan from the State of South Carolina collection on display throughout the building. Adjacent to the parking area, the TCL New River Campus is the site of a 9-part, 20 kilowatt solar array, generating renewable power supplied to the local electrical grid. The TCL New River Campus opened in August, 2006.

Massage Therapy academic courses take place in lecture classrooms as designated on the individual student schedule. Massage application classes take place in the dedicated Massage Therapy Lab, Room 221. The Massage Therapy Program Director's office is adjacent to the lab. All lecture classrooms are equipped with modern audiovisual equipment, and selected courses (MTH 120 Introduction to Massage, Fall Semester, and MTH 124 Massage Business Application, Summer Semester) are scheduled in computer equipped classrooms (one PC per student) to enhance learning with online resources and enable special lessons (research literacy, resume preparation, etc.).

The Massage Therapy lab is dedicated to program activities and no other programs or courses are scheduled in that space. Massage tables are provided to allow two students to every workstation, with additional individual space provided for storage of student supplies and belongings. Heavy opaque curtains partition workstations for privacy in undressing and dressing.

MATERIALS LIST
Massage media (crèmes, lotions, oils) are supplied while students are enrolled. Students are required to purchase:

- Fall Semester: MTH 120 lab kit; two twin sheet sets, white, basic percale. Students are required to bring sheets clean, folded, and ready to use for each class and clinical session
- Spring Semester: Two additional twin sheet sets, white, basic percale. Students are required to bring sheets clean, folded, and ready to use for each class and clinical session
- Scrubs (solid pants, solid or patterned top) to be worn during clinical sessions.