



American Horticultural Therapy Association®

Course Titles that Support the AHTA Job Task Analysis Core Curriculum Topic Areas For the HT-BC certification exam for Pathway 2 exam applicants.

HT-BC Exam Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility for the **HT-BC (Horticultural Therapist–Board Certified)** exam requires completion of horticultural therapy coursework through an AHTA-accredited certificate program to ensure foundational therapeutic knowledge.

For **Pathway 2**, applicants must also complete:

- 12 semester credits in **Plant Science**
- 12 semester credits in **Human Science**

Summary of Requirements:

- Horticultural Therapy (HT) coursework (from an AHTA-accredited certificate program)
- 12 semester credits in Plant Science
- 12 semester credits in Human Science

This document provides supplemental guidance to the HT-BC Exam Handbook.

It includes:

1. A **checklist of knowledge areas** and their corresponding exam weight percentages, which can be used to compare selected course syllabi with exam content requirements.
2. A **suggested course list** for both Plant Science and Human Science.

Note: Specific horticultural therapy coursework is not listed, as AHTA-accredited programs are designed in alignment with established AHTA guidelines. Knowledge of horticultural therapy is reflected within the exam content areas. .

Checklist of knowledge areas and corresponding weight percentages which can be used to compare the course syllabi with exam content requirements.

The Certification Examination for Horticultural Therapy will be weighted in the following manner:

Horticulture (34.2%)

A. Plant Propagation and Maintenance

01. Select appropriate plant materials
02. Set planting/plant maintenance schedules
03. Identify possible sources for seeds/plants and other materials for program
04. Propagate plants and seeds/stem cuttings/root cuttings
05. Maintain plants throughout their life cycles
06. Prepare and apply soil amendments
07. Prepare and apply plant nutrients
08. Develop and implement watering schedules
09. Identify, prevent, and manage plant diseases
10. Identify and manage common weeds
11. Develop and implement an integrated pest management plan
12. Transplant plants
13. Prune/trim/train plants
14. Harvest food, plant material, or flowers
15. Plan for proper disposition of harvest

B. Indoor/Outdoor Plant Environments

01. Manage greenhouse/nursery/outdoor gardens
 02. Create and maintain indoor plant environments
 03. Design gardens and landscapes in keeping with therapeutic horticultural design concepts
 04. Coordinate maintenance of non-plant-related landscape features, hardscapes, and program sites
- Revised 2/24/2025 305. Use tools (such as shovels, rakes, spading forks, trowels, small pruners, etc.) demonstrating appropriate and safe use
06. Maintain/repair tools and equipment
 07. Maintain equipment and supply inventory
 08. Maintain a compost system/properly dispose of yard, garden, and greenhouse waste

Treatment Plan (17.3%)

- A. Review charts/documentation of participant
- B. Participate in treatment team meetings with practitioners of other modalities
- C. Develop and co-facilitate collaborative services with other treatment providers
- D. Conduct and document assessment
- E. Develop and document individualized intervention plan
- F. Review intervention plan with participant
- G. Identify and write measurable goals and objectives
- H. Monitor goals and objectives of individual intervention plan and document participant's progress
- I. Revise/update individualized plan

Program Planning and Activity Design (27.8%)

A. Program Development

01. Develop and schedule the ongoing program, session plans, and/or lesson plans
02. Integrate therapeutic, academic, vocational curricula
03. Implement individual, group sessions/programs

B. Program Evaluation

01. Evaluate program effectiveness for participants and facility
02. Identify strategies for program improvement
03. Generate periodic program reports
04. Incorporate implementation best practices

C. Activities

01. Utilize activity analysis and task analysis
02. Understand presenting issues, strengths, needs, and safety requirements of participants
03. Match tasks to participant needs (considering task analysis, material preparation, safety concerns, etc.)
04. Adapt and/or modify (grade) activities and/or instructions
05. Adapt tools and equipment
06. Perform task analysis on horticultural and gardening activities/exercises
07. Create a “toolbox” or manual of activities for months/ seasons
08. Identify new activities appropriate for population or individual

Managing Human Resources (5.0%)

A. Conduct on-the-job training for other HT staff

B. Recruit, train, educate, supervise, and/or evaluate volunteers and students

C. Develop, implement, and/or maintain horticultural therapy internship program

D. Recruit, train, educate, supervise, and/or evaluate interns

E. Educate non-HT team members on horticultural therapy techniques and interventions

Business Practice, Safety, and Ethics (8.3%)

A. Develop, monitor, and maintain safety plan

B. Document occurrences relating to health and safety

C. Prepare, implement, evaluate, and/or monitor budget

D. Promote the agency, horticultural therapy services, and the profession through marketing and public relations

E. Follow HIPAA regulations and other rules and regulations of location, employer, etc.

Professionalism and Scholarship (7.3%)

A. Support research programs or special projects

B. Establish and maintain network with organizations and advocates

C. Provide education to the community

D. Develop proposals for funding and grants

E. Participate in professional events (e.g., conferences, job fairs, etc.)

Recommended Plant Science Course Descriptions- 12 Total Semester Credits Required

***Please note many of the topics are covered in more than one course area, each candidate is responsible for ensuring their coursework meets the knowledge areas in order to be prepared for the exam.**

This list is not exhaustive, please refer to the skills check list to determine your readiness to sit for the exam.

- Introduction to Horticulture: Course content includes an introduction to horticultural crops, understanding of environmental factors involved in production of horticultural crops, an overview of plant science, horticultural practices, and careers in horticulture.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Introduction to Horticulture
- Horticulture Science
- General Horticulture

- Greenhouse or Nursery Production/Management: Course content includes the management and production of foliage and floral crops in the field or greenhouse, environmental controls, identification, diagnosis, and treatment of common pests and disease of horticultural crops, how to analyze symptoms, a discussion of treatment options, and cultural and preventive practices. cultural production, and an overview of different crops grown in the greenhouse.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Greenhouse Management
- Nursery and Greenhouse Management
- Nursery and Greenhouse Operations

- General Plant Pathology: Course content includes an introduction to organisms and environmental conditions that cause plant disease, the methods and interactions between plants and the disease causing agent, and the role of plant disease in plant production. Treatment of common pests and disease of horticultural crops, how to analyze symptoms, a discussion of treatment options, and cultural and preventive practices.

Examples of courses in this area:

- General Plant Pathology
- Introduction to Plant Pathology
- Pest Plant & Disease Management

- Plant Materials: Course content includes an overview of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers used in the landscape, identification of materials through form, color, texture, and habitat, and the uses for plant materials in the landscape design.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Landscape Plant Materials
- Herbaceous Plant Materials

- Plant Materials

- Plant Propagation: Course content includes an overview of the techniques, materials, and conditions necessary for plant propagation of the vegetative and sexual reproduction of herbaceous, woody, greenhouse, and interior foliage plants.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Plant Propagation

- Landscape Design: Course content includes an introduction to landscape design elements, site analysis, practical solutions to landscape problems, and may include the construction of landscape structures, turf management, and irrigation systems.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Introduction to Landscape Design
- Landscape Design Techniques
- Landscape Construction and Design

Recommended Human Science Course Descriptions- 12 Total Semester Credits Required

***Please note many of the topics are covered in more than one course area, each candidate is responsible for ensuring their coursework meets the knowledge areas in order to be prepared for the exam.**

This list is not exhaustive, please refer to the skills check list to determine your readiness to sit for the exam.

- General psychology: Course content includes an introduction to the traditional theories of psychology, the biological bases of behavior, development, learning, personality, cognition, perception, motivation, behavior disorders, and social psychology.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Introductory Psychology
- General Psychology
- The Science of Psychology

- Abnormal psychology: Course content includes the study of human behavioral disorders, the history, theories, etiology, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and system of classification of psychological disorders.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Abnormal Psychology

- Abnormal Behavior
- Introduction to Abnormal Psychology
- Human lifespan development: Course content includes an overview of the major developmental theories in relationship to the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of an individual from birth to end of life.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Human Growth and Development
- Human Development Across the Lifespan
- Human Life Span Development

- **Adult Development and Aging:** Course content includes an overview of theory in relationship to adult development and aging, the stages of adulthood through aging and end of life, and may include an overview of disease related to aging.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Psychosocial Aspects of Aging
- Psychology of Aging
- The Psychology of Adulthood and Aging

- **Counseling Theories:** Course content includes an overview of the major theories in the field of counseling from theoretical, personal, functional and philosophical perspectives, and provides an introduction to basic counseling techniques.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Foundations of Mental Health Counseling
- Counseling Theories and Practice
- Introduction to Counseling Theories

- **Aspects of Disabilities and Illnesses:** Course content includes an introduction to the historical context of disability and society, to the psychological and social aspects of various types of physical, mental and social disabilities, and may cover aspects of universal design.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Psycho-Social Aspects of Disability
- Adults with Disabilities
- Medical Aspects of Disability

- **Group Dynamics:** Course content includes an overview of dynamics and major approaches to group counseling, leadership styles and leading groups effectively, group membership, and the different types of groups.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Introduction to Group Dynamics
- Group Dynamics
- Group Counseling Theories and Procedures

- **Principles of Therapy:** Course content provides an introduction to effective communication skills, core counseling techniques, the theory of counseling interventions, and may include role playing, videotaping, and situational interviewing.

Examples of courses in this area:

- Interviewing and Counseling Skills
- Counseling Techniques

- Introduction to Counseling Theory and Practices

