

# Therapeutic Riding Instructor Training Program

Approved by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH)



Today's equestrian professionals recognize that there is a growing market among people with disabilities who want to take the equine route to improved health and well-being. Centenary's Therapeutic Riding Concentration will prepare equine studies students to add Therapeutic Riding Instruction skills to their expertise.

## About Therapeutic Riding

Horseback riding for people with disabilities is "therapeutic" on several levels:

- As a physical activity, sitting on a moving horse causes the rider's upper body to respond in an unconscious, three-dimensional manner to the movement of the horse's back. The rhythm of 80 — 100 steps each minute stimulates righting reflexes and balance reactions in a way that cannot be duplicated by the human therapist. In addition, overall physical condition is improved as muscles and tendons are exercised mildly and repeatedly.
- On the psychological and emotional level, the thrill of being seated on a large, powerful animal that is trained to respond willingly to the rider's signals is reported by many as the most obvious benefit.
- In support of cognitive development, the rider must learn to relate to the space of the riding arena including other riders and special equipment, and interact with his horse to navigate safely.

These effects have been documented by physical therapists, occupational therapists, special educators and, of course, by riders themselves. To facilitate these benefits, riding instructors need special training in adapting their teaching skills to this population.

### Supplemental Classes for full-time undergraduate students:

EST 1010 and 1012 Practical Horse Management I and II	8 credits
EST 1011 Fundamental Theories of Riding	4 credits
EST 2015 Intro to Equine Assisted Activities & Therapies	2 credits
Riding Skills	Intermediate level skills without jumping

### Teaching Therapeutic Riding I and II

EST 3017 and 3018	4 credits each
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Topics include:

- Human physical, emotional, educational and psychological development
- In-depth study of a variety of disabling conditions
- Selection and training of therapeutic horses and adaptive equipment
- Working with volunteers
- Adapting the teaching of riding skills to accommodate individual needs
- Mounting and dismounting techniques for the safety of each rider
- Goal setting and record keeping
- Working with health and education professionals as part of the therapeutic riding team
- Non-profit organization management skills
- Fund raising and financial management

### Therapeutic Riding Practicum

EST 4017	1 credits
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Students will attend lessons for at least two hours a week acting as aides to the instructor. They will learn:

- To lead and sidewalk with a variety of riders with disabilities
- To evaluate horses, design and implement a training/schooling program for at least one horse

### Teaching Practicum

EST 4018	1 credits
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Practicum allows students to complete the following:

- Taught a minimum of 25 hours under supervision of a Certified Instructor
- Evaluated riders with various disabilities
- Kept detailed progress notes
- Fulfill all pre-requisites for testing as PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor (CTRI)

**Age:** *Must be 18 or older.*  
**CPR/First Aid:** *All students must become certified in both before taking the Teaching Practicum.*