

# CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY

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Established in 1970, Pratt's Department of Creative Arts Therapy is one of the oldest graduate creative arts therapy training programs in the country. Pratt offers a Master of Professional Studies in Art Therapy and Creativity Development and a Master of Science in Dance/ Movement Therapy. Students learn creative arts therapy skills as applied to a wide variety of patient populations, including psychiatric inpatient and outpatient, substance abuse, geriatric, special education, therapeutic nurseries, after-school programs, families, medical rehabilitation, child life, eating disorders, the HIV/AIDS community, the homeless, and traumatized populations, as well as work in prevention and wellness. At the end of their training, they are prepared for entry work in a broad continuum of settings, ranging from institutions to creative work in the community.

Our students learn to combine personal artistry with clinical acumen through the integration of experiential, theoretical, and practical learning. Our goal is to help students be able to use a complex and open theoretical framework that makes it possible for them to respond to a multitude of clinical situations. They learn to use themselves in the most creative ways possible, while being grounded in developmental and diagnostic skills, and group and individual dynamics. Each student is encouraged to develop his or her own unique style, informed by an experiential process.

The core of our teaching philosophy is the primacy of creative expression informed by psychological, developmental, and relational theory as the path to integration and healing. Experiential learning and process orientation are the cornerstones of our curriculum. Every course includes some experiential components, and the department maintains an environment that supports and encourages the students' involvement in that process. Accordingly, we are committed to maintaining small class sizes, enhancing communication between students and faculty, and encouraging discussion of the learning process itself.

One of the strongest elements of our program is the synthesis of the theoretical and the practical. Our program combines practicum/ internship assignments with coursework from beginning to end, providing graduates with a firm grounding in the actual practice of art and dance/ movement therapy upon graduation. Students attend two days of fieldwork/practicum/internship weekly. Art therapy students complete one practicum in each of their two years. Dance/movement therapy students complete 200 hours of fieldwork plus 280 hours of internship in their first year and a 480-hour internship with a second population in their second year. They receive weekly on-site supervision. In addition, they engage in weekly group and bi-monthly individual supervision sessions with a member of our faculty. Because Pratt is located in a large urban center, there are a wide variety of practicum sites with a range of populations. Our internship coordinators assist students in finding appropriate clinical placements based on the learning needs of each individual student.

There is richness to be gained from integrating both art therapy and dance/movement therapy students in the department. Students can learn about the nature of creative arts therapy in general and the particular strengths and limitations of their chosen modality. Though a majority of the courses are discipline specific, many of the classes combine art and dance therapy students so material is explored from both perspectives. Graduates receive discrete degrees in either art or dance therapy.

Knowledge of research and professional writing skills are developed across the curriculum through written assignments required in every class and the completion of a thesis. Students are given the option of a range of research methods, including quantitative and qualitative. The latter may include a case study, a project implemented in the community, or descriptive methods investigating the experience of a phenomenon or therapeutic process.

The American Art Therapy Association has approved the Art Therapy and Creativity Development degree. The Dance Therapy program is approved by the American Dance Therapy Association. Both programs are licensure-qualifying and graduates automatically satisfy educational requirements for licensure in New York State. For those considering a career in art or dance therapy or who want a basic introduction, we offer an Introduction to Art Therapy open to graduates and undergraduates with permission from the Chair of the Department.

## Academic Year/Low Residency Formats

The Creative Arts Therapy program offers its degrees in two formats: The academic-year format offers classes in a traditional manner, with classes in fall and spring semesters, for 15 weeks each semester. The low-residency format is an innovative educational program based on a low-residency adult-learning model. The program is designed for those students who do not live near or are otherwise unable to engage in a traditional master's degree format.

Students in the academic-year format are admitted for the fall semester only. Students in the low-residency format are admitted for the spring semester only. (See [www.pratt.edu/apply](http://www.pratt.edu/apply) (<http://www.pratt.edu/apply/>) for graduate requirements.)

## Admission Requirements (for all degrees)

A bachelor's degree is required for admission. For the Art Therapy program, a degree in art or psychology is preferred. For the Dance/ Movement Therapy program, a degree in dance or psychology is preferred. The following prerequisites are required for all programs: 6 credits in psychology (to include coursework in development and abnormal psychology).

For the Art Therapy program only: 6 additional credits of psychology coursework plus 18 credits in studio art (to include coursework in drawing, painting, and 3-D to include ceramics).

For the Dance/Movement Therapy program only: 1 credit (15 hours) in Anatomy/Kinesiology, extensive experience in at least two idioms of dance, one of which must be improvisational dance, and experience in mind/body modalities, such as meditation, yoga, body therapy, etc.

All prerequisite courses may be taken on an undergraduate level but must be taken from an accredited institution to receive academic credit. Studio classes will be accepted for movement experience. For the Art Therapy program, students may start classes with half of the psychology and half of the studio art credits but must complete all prerequisites before the start of the second year. For the Dance/Movement Therapy program, students must have completed the 6 credits of psychology coursework but may complete the 1 credit of anatomy/kinesiology after they start the program. Psychology credits must be completed before the start of the second year.

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- Art Therapy and Creativity Development, MPS (<https://catalog.pratt.edu/graduate/art/creative-arts-therapy/art-therapy-creativity-development-mps/>)
- Art Therapy and Creativity Development, MPS, Low Residency Program (<https://catalog.pratt.edu/graduate/art/creative-arts-therapy/art-therapy-creativity-development-mps-low-residency/>)
- Dance/Movement Therapy, MS (<https://catalog.pratt.edu/graduate/art/creative-arts-therapy/dance-movement-therapy-ms/>)
- Dance/Movement Therapy, MS, Low Residency Program (<https://catalog.pratt.edu/graduate/art/creative-arts-therapy/dance-movement-therapy-ms-low-residency/>)

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