Information Session

MScPT Scholarly Practice Curriculum

Department of Physical Therapy

University of Toronto

Sharon Gabison, PhD, PT

Nancy Salbach, PhD, PT

Karl Zabjek, PhD

Academic Co-Leads

Physical Therapy
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

BOUNDLESS

Introducing….

Sharon Gabison, PhD, PT (she/her)
Assistant Professor
Unit 7 & 13 Academic Co-lead

Nancy Salbach, PhD, PT (she/her)
Professor & TRI Chair
Unit 7 Academic Co-lead

Karl Zabjek (he/him)
Associate Professor
Unit 7 & 13 Academic Co-lead

Session Goals

- Increase understanding of:
  - ✓ Types of projects appropriate for PT Program
  - ✓ Requirements and deadline for project submission
  - ✓ Project evaluation criteria
  - ✓ Timelines for involvement
  - ✓ Roles and responsibilities
  - ✓ Outputs or deliverables of the curriculum
  - ✓ Advantages of involvement as an advisor

Questions you asked

- We have a feasibility study currently on my unit. I am interested to see if this would be appropriate to involve learners. Would also like to gather more details and then share with the PT team.
- I will join hoping for an overview on the roles and responsibilities of the supervising site, the workload and time commitment.
- No specific questions yet, meeting with PBRI for idea generation - may have questions by time of session.
- What sort of program evaluation projects would qualify?

MScPT Scholarly Practice Curriculum Goal

Students will develop competency in multiple domains of physiotherapy practice (i.e., communication, collaboration, management, leadership, scholarship, and professionalism) through **outlining, preparing, conducting and disseminating a group research or program evaluation project in collaboration with advisors**:

- Developing a 10-page research proposal based on a project outline
- Developing and submitting an ethics application and obtaining ethics approval
- Developing a work plan ("learning contract")
- Reporting accountability ("Activity log")
- Collecting and analyzing data
- Developing a poster and manuscript to disseminate knowledge
- Presenting project proposal and project findings

"Learn by doing"

Competency Profile for Physiotherapists in Canada (2017)

Do you:

Have a clinical or education program that needs evaluation?

Need pilot data for a grant application?

Need experience with graduate student supervision?

MScPT Students can Help!

YOU

Advisory Teams could be:

Clinician Advisor(s) + Scientist Advisor(s)

Scientist Advisor(s) alone

Trainee + Scientist Supervisor

Physical Therapy
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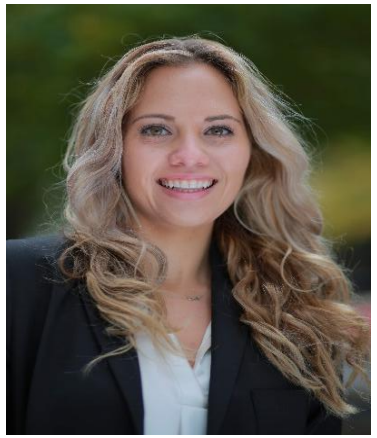
Physical Therapy Student Group

MScPT Program

Course Instructors



- ✓ Students
- ✓ Lectures
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Software
- ✓ Structure

Teaching Assistants

Who Typically Serves as an Advisor?

- ✓ Scientist
- ✓ Clinician, Practice Leader, Manager, Educator
- ✓ PhD student or Postdoctoral Researcher

Advisor teams should include:

- Minimum of 2 advisors, maximum of 4 advisors
- Clinician-led projects should include a Scientist familiar with REB and data sharing
- PT Dept can assign a faculty advisor to a small number of projects if a Scientist is needed

1-year Time Commitment for Lead Advisor

Month	Key Activities
April	✓ Submit 2-pg project by deadline
July	✓ 1 orientation meeting with students (Zoom)
September 3-week course	✓ 4 meetings with students (Zoom) ✓ Review 10-page research proposal ✓ Review slide deck for 15-minute presentation ✓ Review learning contract
October	✓ Submit ethics application (vs already approved)
January – June ~13 Research Mondays	✓ Training/onboarding ✓ Data collection ✓ Progress meetings
June – July 6-week course	✓ Review manuscript ✓ Review poster ✓ Complete student evaluation form
Post-program	✓ Submit manuscript to journal

MScPT Scholarly Practice Curriculum (SPC) Timeline

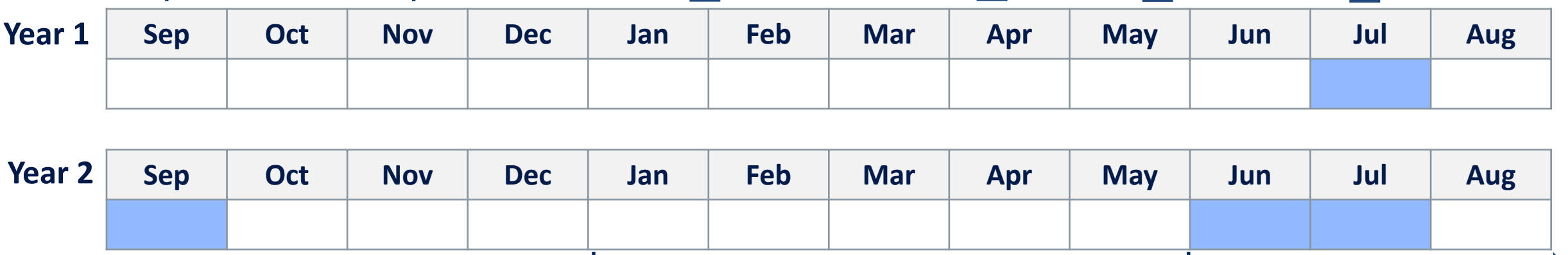
Units 1 and 2: Foundational Content

Call for Projects

Deadline

Ranking

Unit 6: Intro to SPC; Research question & Lit review; TCPS2 Module



REB application & response to reviews

KT plan: Conference, Journal, etc

Unit 7: 3 weeks
Lectures, tutorials, TAs
Outputs:
*10-pg Research proposal
*Learning contract
*Protocol presentation
*REB application

Research Mondays: recruitment, data collection, entry, cleaning
Workshops & Lectures:
*Qual. data collection/analysis
*SPSS, NVivo
*Quantitative data analysis

Unit 13: 6 weeks
Data analysis, reporting
Outputs:
*Manuscript
*Poster @Research Day

Responsibilities of MScPT Program vs Advisors?

MScPT Program

- ✓ Lectures & Workshops on:
  - ✓ Literature searching, reference management
  - ✓ Protocol development
  - ✓ Quantitative & qualitative research methodology
  - ✓ Ethics & program evaluation
  - ✓ Manuscript & poster writing
- ✓ Instructor & TA support
- ✓ REDCap, NVivo, SPSS software
- ✓ Student group as a resource

Advisors

- ✓ Project idea (Outline)
- ✓ Critical feedback on student documents
- ✓ Project leadership - Facilitate:
  - ✓ REB application (U of T privileges)
  - ✓ Data collection
  - ✓ Project progress
  - ✓ Positive collaborative experience
- ✓ Data transfer agreement
- ✓ Cover project costs
- ✓ Regular meetings

Common Projects

Qualitative projects (interviews/focus groups)

E-surveys (REDCap)

Retrospective health record reviews

Measurement projects

Experimental (pre-post) projects

Pilot studies

25 projects, 6 students per project each year

Overview of 2025 MScPT projects

➢ **25 projects in total**

- 15 qualitative projects
- 7 e-surveys
- 0 chart review
- 2 measurement
- 0 experimental (pre-post)
- 1 pilot

✓ 10 first-time lead advisors
✓ 4 trainees as lead advisors

Project Selection Criteria

- ✓ Quality
- ✓ Relevance to **physical therapy**
- ✓ Feasibility:
  - Project can be done in curriculum timelines
  - Students have capacity for the project
  - Advisors can manage REB and data sharing
  - Methods and sample size feasible
  - Limited to one site, acceptable student travel, etc

You Submit a Project Outline that Includes:

- Advisor Name, Contact Info
- Location for Data Collection
- Location for Data Analysis
- Need for Data Transfer Agreement
- Name of advisor with ability to submit ethics application at U of T
- Project Title
- Purpose
- Objectives
- Rationale and Relevance to PT
- 3-5 references
- Study Design
- Participant Eligibility Criteria
- Data Collection Tools
- Data Source
- Sample Size
- Recruitment Methods
- Costs
- Need for SPSS
- Role of Students vs Advisors

Deadline: April 7, 2026, by 4pm

Project Submission

- **Project Submission via MS Forms:** https://forms.microsoft.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=JsKqeAMvTUuQN7RtVsVSEHP3gmPQN1VHilb0n0of6UZUNjVPRERPM0o1RkVBVlVCRkxJN09TMlpVWC4u
- *Project Template* in Word: *https://app.rehab.utoronto.ca/ptresearchproject/MScPT-Project-Outline-2026-Word-Template.docx*
- *Project Checklist: https://app.rehab.utoronto.ca/ptresearchproject/MScPT-Project Checklist for advisors-2026.docx*
- *Example Qualitative Project: https://app.rehab.utoronto.ca/ptresearchproject/Qualitative-Project-Outline.pdf*
- *Example Quantitative Project: https://app.rehab.utoronto.ca/ptresearchproject/Quantitative-Project-Outline.pdf*

Go to: 1) Project Outline Template in Word, 2) Project Checklist

Project Topics can be directly or indirectly related to PT

QUALITATIVE

Physical therapist (PT) experiences:

- Tailoring aquatic PT
- Integrating a community based exercise in a family health team
- Regulation of AI in PT practice
- Hybrid pre-habilitation for lung transplantation
- Administering virtual performance-based mobility tests
- Pediatric PT practice in South Rural India

Patient experiences:

- Using an online pressure injury module
- Preferences for a Peer Support Program for People with Limb Loss
- How Gender Influences Participation in Home-Based Rehabilitation

EXPERIMENTAL

- Does inspiratory muscle loading and associated dyspnea limit driving performance?
- Effect of virtual cross training on dance performance

E-SURVEY

Physical therapist (PT) practice:

- Assessing Standing and Walking After SCI
- Management of Axial Spondyloarthritis
- Virtual Reality to Manage Post-Concussive Dizziness
- Attitudes towards Physiotherapy Services in the Emergency Department
- Recognition of Sexual/Professional Boundaries

MEASUREMENT

- Reliability and Validity of an Instrumented Dynamometer for the Measurement of Lower Extremity Muscle Strength
- Inter-session reliability of technology-assisted indicators of stability using mobile technology
- Sensibility evaluation of the Stroke Aerobic Exercise Implementation Toolkit (START)

Project Scope: Qualitative Projects

- **Sample size:** 10 to 12 participants
- **Recruitment:**
  - One population only
  - Ideally, you have access to a list of potential individuals for recruitment
- **Data collection:** Interviews and focus groups conducted using Zoom to avoid student travel
- **Analysis:**
  - Students transcribe the interviews
  - Descriptive qualitative study with thematic or content analysis is feasible, but not more advanced approaches
  - At UofT, students have access to NVivo software for free

Project Scope: E-Surveys

- **Sample size:** will depend on the population and response rate
- **Recruitment:** If you want to recruit through the CPA or the OPA, you need a confirmation email from them stating they will assist
  - 2023, CPA required the questionnaire to be translated into French
  - One population only, advisors pay for monetary incentives
- **Data collection:** Ideally use or adapt validated questionnaires, adapted questionnaires should undergo a validity review
  - Advisors pay license for Qualtrics or SurveyMonkey; REDCap is free for UofT faculty
- **Analysis:**
  - Statistics: Descriptive, chi-squared, correlations, t-test (no regression)
  - At UofT, students can access SPSS on ~4 computers in computer lab (TBC)

Project Scope: Prospective pilot or Measurement studies with scheduled in-person evaluations

- **Sample size:** 10-20 participants
- **Recruitment:** Healthy participants* for proof of concept is common; recruitment of patient populations is challenging

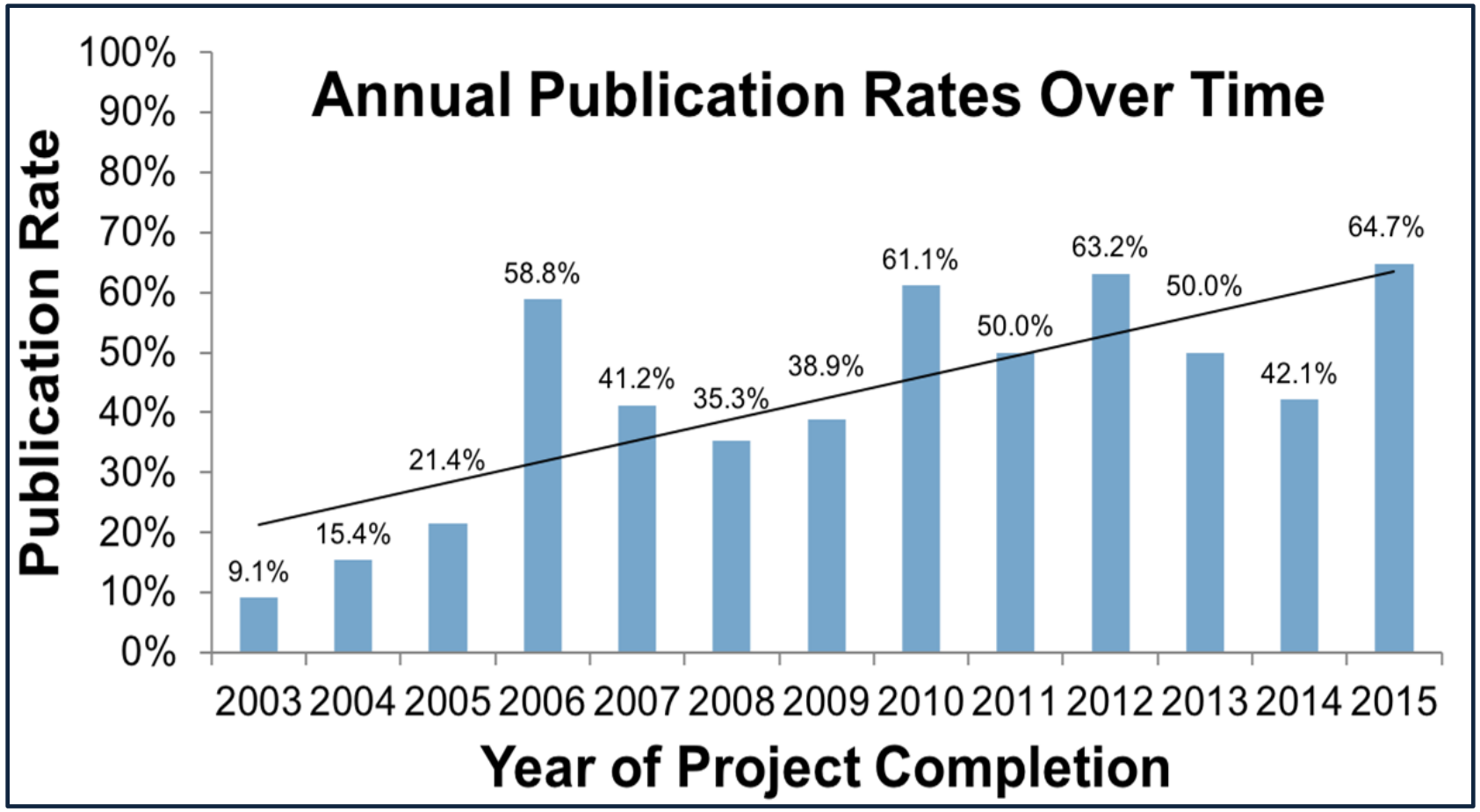
*Can recruit from PT class and UofT community

- **Data collection:** Need to train PT students and oversee data collection
  - Keep evaluation duration to a reasonable time period
- **Analysis:**
  - Statistics: Descriptive, chi-squared, correlations, t-test (no regression), ICC, Bland-Altman plots
  - At UofT, students can access SPSS on ~4 computers in computer lab (TBC)

Project Scope: Retrospective Chart Reviews

- **Sample size:** 100-200 charts is feasible, depending on the amount of data to abstract
- **Data collection:** Sometimes hospital business center can abstract the data for the students to analyze
  - Online data abstraction more feasible than asking students to travel to the hospital
  - Hospitals may require students to complete training and charge per student abstractor
  - Data transfer agreements (required if data will come to UofT) can cause delays
- **Ethics:** Need hospital ethics approval then UofT ethics approval, this takes more time (strategy: get REB approval before Unit 7)
- **Analysis:**
  - Statistics: Descriptive, chi-squared, correlations, t-test (no regression)
  - At UofT, students can access SPSS on ~4 computers in computer lab (TBC)

Publications from Research Projects in our MScPT Program



- **Top Journals**:[1]
  - Physiother Can (47%)
  - Disabil Rehabil (9%)
  - Arch Phys Med Rehabil (9%)
- **Research Areas**:[2]
  - Clinical (52.2%)
  - Health Services (31.8%)
  - Biomedical (8.0%)
  - Social, Cultural, Environment & Population Health (8.0%)
- **Top Conferences**:
  - CPA Congress
  - OPA Conference
  - WCPT Congress

1-Salbach et al 2013; 2-Lacey et al 2018

MScPT Authorship Policy

- Policy applies to **presentations, abstracts and manuscripts** resulting from MScPT research project
- In list of authors, MScPT students will be listed first, followed by advisors
- Advisor providing primary leadership of the project will be the senior responsible author listed as last author

We are here to support!

Sharon Gabison (she/her)
shar.gabison@utoronto.ca

Nancy Salbach (she/her)
nancy.salbach@utoronto.ca