

MScPT Scholarly Practice Curriculum Information Session

Department of Physical Therapy
University of Toronto

Sharon Gabison, PhD, PT
Nancy Salbach, PhD, PT
Academic Co-Leads



Session Overview

- Welcome and Introductions
- MScPT Scholarly Practice Curriculum goals & timelines
- Project selection criteria
- Role and time commitment to serve as a lead advisor
- Project submission and selection
- Scope of the projects that can be submitted
- Q & A



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



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



Darlene Reid (she/her), PhD, PT
Unit 13 Academic Co-lead

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

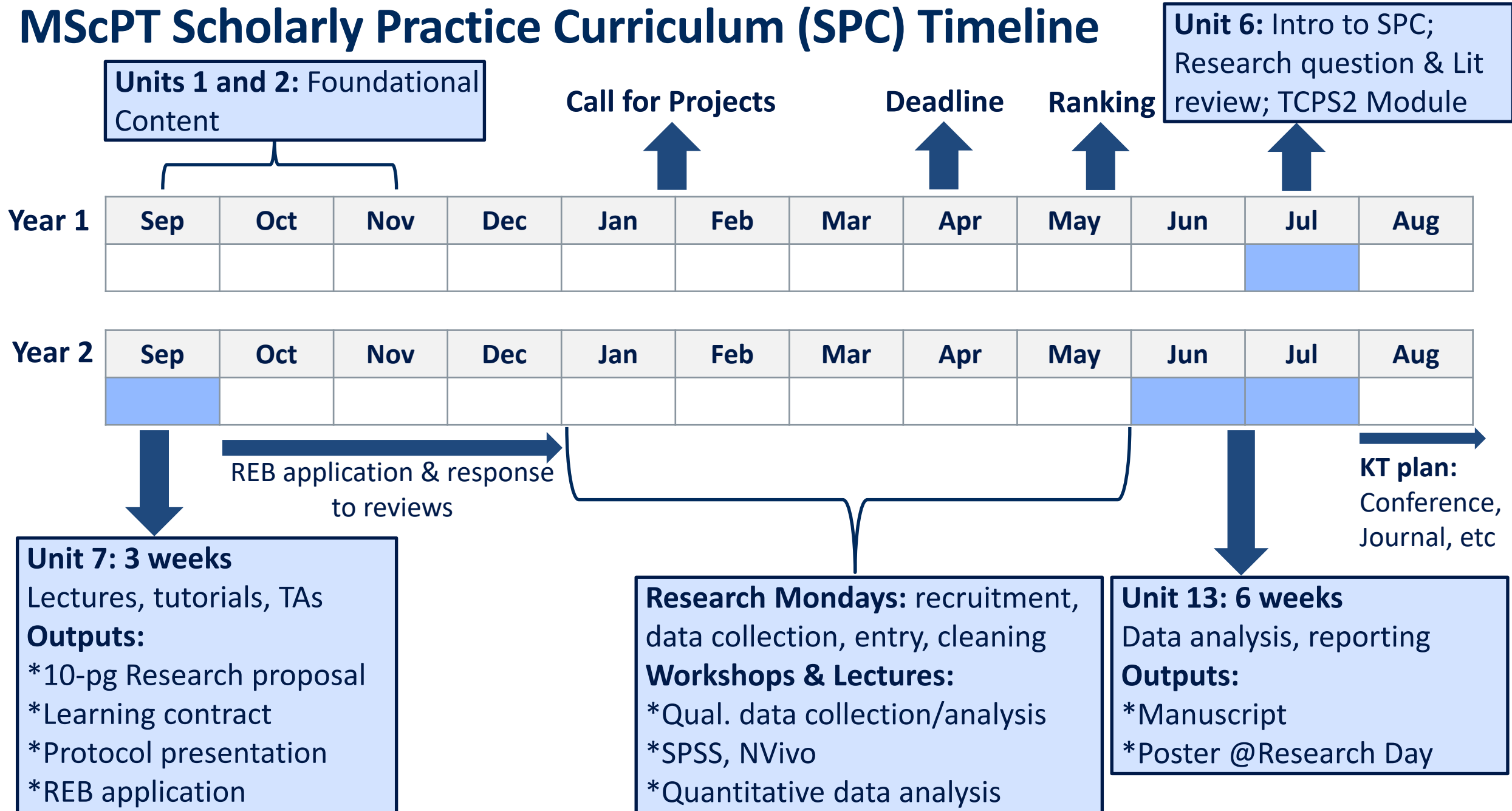
“Learn by doing”

Competency Profile for Physiotherapists in Canada (2017)

Project Selection Criteria

- ✓ Quality of the project description
- ✓ Relevance of the project to physical therapy, and
- ✓ Feasibility of the project in relation to the timelines of the MScPT research curriculum, and the research capacity of the students.

MScPT Scholarly Practice Curriculum (SPC) Timeline



Year 1 Foundational Content

Timing	Unit	Activity	# Hours
Sep	Unit 1	Lecture: Scholarly Practice in Physical Therapy	1 hour
Sep	Unit 1	Lecture: Measurement in Physical Therapy I	2 hours
Oct	Unit 2	Lecture: Measurement in Physical Therapy II	1 hour
Nov	Unit 2	Lecture: Evidence in Practice I	1 hour
Nov	Unit 2	Lecture: Evidence in Practice II: Understanding Results	1 hour
		TOTAL:	6 hours

What do the MScPT Program vs Advisors Provide?

MScPT Program

- ✓ Faculty advisor if project selected
- ✓ 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 all 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 during SP units

Time Commitment Estimates for Lead Advisors

Timing	Activity	# Hours
July '25 Unit 6	1 orientation meeting with students (Zoom or in person)	1 hour
Sep '25 Unit 7	4 meetings with students (Zoom or in person)	4 hours
	2 reviews of the 10-page research proposal	5 hours
	2 reviews of the slide deck for 15-minute presentation	2 hours
	1 review of learning contract	1 hour
Jan – Jun '26 Unit 10, 11	Training of students (eg pilot interviews, equipment use) ~13 Research Mondays, standing 1-hour meeting each Monday, not all will be needed	Project dependent ~13 hours
	Qualitative data analysis (eg coding)	Project dependent
Jun – Jul '26 Unit 13	6 meetings with students (Zoom or in person)	6 hours
	2 reviews of manuscript	5 hours
	2 reviews of poster	2 hours
	Completion of student evaluation form and debrief	2 hours
Throughout	Emails	3 hours
	TOTAL:	44 hours*

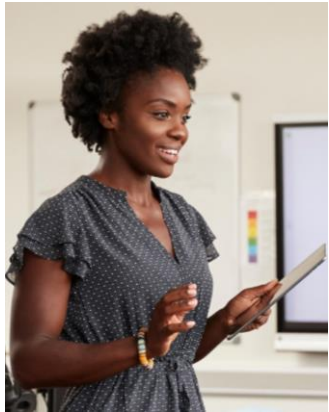
*does not include drafting project outline, REB application & response, pursuit of journal publication post-program

Advisory Model



Lead & Co-advisors

+



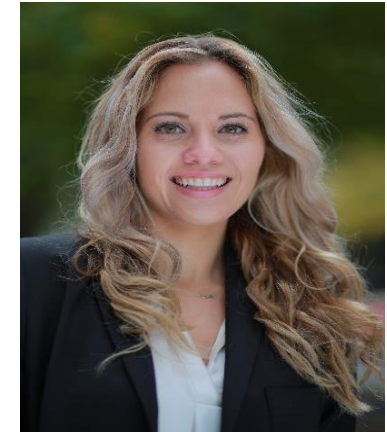
**Faculty
Advisor**



Student Group



Unit 7 Academic Leads



Teaching Assistant

Advisory Model

Who can serve as a Lead Advisor?

- ✓ Trainee (Postdoctoral researcher, PhD student)
- ✓ Academic clinician
- ✓ Scientist

Who would serve as a Faculty Advisor?

- ✓ PT Dept faculty member (RSI appointment & U of T research privileges)

Optimal strategy: Invite a Faculty Advisor to collaborate on the project before submission

Project Submission

- **Project Submission Website:**
<https://app.rehab.utoronto.ca/ptresearchproject/>
- *Project Template* in Word and *Example Projects* are Available Online on the Project Submission Website

Go to Project Outline Template in Word

Project Submission

- **Project Submission Website:**
<https://app.rehab.utoronto.ca/ptresearchproject/>
- *Project Checklist* is Available Online in the Project Submission Website

Go to Advisor Checklist for MScPT Research Projects

Overview of 2024 MScPT projects

➤ 19 projects in total

- 8 qualitative projects (1 secondary data analysis)
- 2 e-surveys
- 1 chart review
- 4 measurement
- 3 experimental (pre-post)
- 1 pilot

✓ 6 first-time lead advisors

✓ 4 postdoctoral researchers as lead advisors

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)

Advisors:

Keys to Success in Unit 7 & Unit 13

- Unit 7: Finalize research questions by end of week 1
- Effective ongoing communication
- If lead advisor not available at a critical time, another advisor must cover
- Quick turnaround time to respond to questions & provide feedback on presentation slides and protocol
- With multiple clinical advisors, one should take a leadership role – clarify role of each advisor at start of unit
- Group meetings to resolve challenges
- Weekly meetings during data collection to keep on track
- Projects should be feasible for novice researchers

