

Claudia Nieuwland

Supervisor: **Dr. Roxanne Seaman**

Research Focus

Dance is a popular form of physical activity for individuals with disabilities as it can be adapted to meet the needs of every individual. Given the well-known benefits of dance for individuals with disabilities, adapted dance programs have been implemented worldwide, and continue to grow rapidly in popularity. Despite the emergence of these programs, there is no consistent competency for all learners in dance settings, and therefore wide variability in the application of program outcomes across programs.

The purpose of Claudia's research was to evaluate existing adapted dance literature to aid in the creation of a formal adapted dance curriculum. The pedagogical methods of adapted dance were investigated through analyzing relevant curriculum documents and conducting interviews with dance instructors experienced in instructing adapted dance. Combining themes emerging from the interview process with structural components gathered from analyzing documents, a curriculum was created for use in adapted dance environments. Once the curriculum development process was complete, the document was distributed to experts in the fields of dance, education and occupational therapy for review. Upon receiving the expert feedback, general edits were applied to the curriculum. Each of the experts involved in this process recommended for the curriculum to be applied. The "next-steps" or future applications of this research is for the curriculum to be implemented into adapted dance programs and assessed based on its functionality.

The Researcher

Claudia Nieuwland is a fourth-year student graduating with a Bachelor of Kinesiology with Honours. She is originally from Barrie, Ontario, but has found a love for her "home away from home" in Wolfville, NS. Claudia is an active member of the Acadia community, having volunteered with S.M.I.L.E., Kinderskills and Acadia's Global Medical Brigades. She has worked as a Resident Assistant on campus for three years and has been a TA for multiple Kinesiology courses. Claudia has also been a part of Acadia's competitive cheerleading team since her first year. From a young age, Claudia has had a passion to pursue a career in the field of healthcare. Upon graduation, Claudia wishes to pursue a degree in medicine and hopes to one day, become a primary care physician working in youth mental health or family medicine.

