

**The Maharashtra Dyslexia Association, Mumbai** is a citizen sector organization committed to promoting the rights of students with Learning Disabilities to an appropriate education within the mainstream. It provides consultative, assessment and remedial services for students and their families, as well as training opportunities for teachers, special educators and therapists who are interested in acquiring the skills needed to work with affected students. In pursuit of this goal, the MDA has tied up with the **Multisensory Language Training Institute of New Mexico** to introduce the Academic Language (Dyslexia) Therapist Training Programme for the first time in India.

**The Multisensory Language Training Institute of New Mexico** is a graduate level educational institution providing training for teachers and therapists who wish to gain an understanding of specific developmental dyslexia and to learn a curriculum and techniques for teaching reading and written language skills to students with dyslexia and related language learning disorders. **It is accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC) and the Alliance For Accreditation And Certification Of Structured Language Education, Inc.**

**Certified Academic Language (Dyslexia) Therapists** are specially trained to treat children and adults diagnosed with written-language learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, developmental reading disorders and other related learning problems. The core curriculum of this training programme adheres strictly to the certification requirements laid down by the Alliance for Accreditation and Certification of Multisensory Structured Language Education, Inc., an organization sponsored by The International Dyslexia Association.

Developed throughout the two years of training are:

- Theories, history, characteristics of specific developmental dyslexia, including identification, etiology and placement.
- A structured, multisensory, process-oriented, phonetic approach to teaching **reading** which emphasizes:
  - Phonemic awareness
  - Word attack skills
  - Accuracy and fluency
  - Linguistic and morphologic patterns
  - Listening and reading comprehension skills
- Remediation of handwriting difficulties
- A structured, multisensory, process-oriented approach to teaching **spelling**, which emphasizes:
  - Phonological/phonemic awareness
  - Basic sound/symbol relationships
  - Spelling rules and generalizations for base words and derivatives
- Research and legislation pertaining to dyslexia and related disorders
- Multisensory and discovery teaching strategies

**Candidates successfully completing this course will be eligible to appear for the Alliance Registration Examination to qualify for membership of the Academic Language Therapy Association. A One-year Teacher Certification option is also available. See [www.altaread.org](http://www.altaread.org) for details.**

## The Dyslexia Therapist Training Program

**Prerequisite: Bachelor's Degree in Education or related fields. Master's degree recommended.**

This is a two-year\*\* rigorous course of study for the professional preparation of Academic Language (Dyslexia) Therapists, based on the requirements of the Academic Language Therapy Association. Successful graduates are eligible to take the professional exam to be registered as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT). CALTs are specially trained and qualified to treat children and adults diagnosed with written-language learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, developmental reading disorder and other related learning problems at all degrees of severity. Training includes academic instruction, clinical training, and supervised teaching.

### COURSE WORK

Completion of a minimum of 200\*\* clock hours of instruction, including these MLTI-NM courses:

- Structure of the Language and *Sounds In Syllables* Introductory Course - 3 weeks
- First Year - Intermediate Course – Two Saturdays a month, June to March.
- Second Year - Advanced Course – Ten days' theory in May, + two Saturdays a month.

Satisfactory completion of all assignments and exams including (but not limited to):

Check of English speech sound production

- 5 Article Reviews /Topic Searches/Research Studies, from *Annals of Dyslexia*
- 3 Handwriting Samples, as assigned
- 4 Book Reports from specified categories
- Original Sentence Writing - as assigned
- Paper: "The Person With a Language Learning Difference"
- Quizzes and Final exams each semester

### PRACTICUM:

Clinical Practice, under supervision of a Qualified Instructor including:

- A minimum of 3 situations, beginning the S.I.S. curriculum at least 3 times
- One individual, 4-5 times per week, minimum 17\*\* months, 200\*\* lessons, 45 minutes to an hour in duration. A minimum of 80 lessons must be completed the first year.
- One individual, 4-5 times per week, minimum 150 lessons
- One individual or group (2 - 6), 3-5 times per week, minimum 60 lessons\*
- A minimum of 700 teaching hours - in no less than 24 months - under supervision
- A minimum of 10 demonstration lessons (videotaped) with one in SIS Level IV.
- Demonstrate Clinical Competency at the Therapy Level
- Pre-tests and Initial Report on each student
- Actual test protocols on primary demonstration student
- Progress Reports on students - due at Saturday class meetings
- Final Reports and Pre/Post Testing Data on students
- Accumulated Lesson Plans on primary demonstration student
- Case Study

**\*\*Candidates completing one year of training with a minimum of 45 hours of instruction and 90 hours of practicum have the option of appearing for the Alliance Exam at the Associate Level, and will receive a Dyslexia Teacher's Diploma jointly from MDA and MLTINM.**

## COURSE CONTENT (For 2-year Therapist Course):

- I. Language Development and The Structure of the Spoken English Language – (Phonological Awareness)
- II. History of the Alphabet /Writing and The Structure of the Written English Language
- III. Reading Development and Instruction - Historic, Current, Theoretical Models
- IV. Dyslexia and Related Written Language Disorders - Historic, Diagnostic, Research, Laws
- V. Instructional Strategies and Curricula - Multisensory, structured, direct \*\*
- VI. Professional Practice - Professional writing skills, practice management, ethics
- VII. Characteristics of a Successful Therapist - Outside the “knowledge base”
- VIII. Evaluating the Skills of Therapists In Training -Clinical Competencies

\*For more details, visit <http://www.altaread.org>.

\*\*The core therapy curriculum which provides the instructional strategies and sequence of presentation is *Sounds In Syllables Multisensory Language Therapy* by Sandra Dillon.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

A minimum of 30 clock hours of continuing education every three years after completion of the program.

## FACULTY:

**Ms. Sandra Dillon, Director, MLTINM**, is a Certified Academic Language Therapist and a Qualified Trainer and Qualified Instructor, with decades of experience as the Albuquerque Public School's Language Clinic for Dyslexic Students. She is the author of *Sounds In Syllables*, an Orton-Gillingham based curriculum designed to meet the needs of bright but severely reading-impaired high school students, which has been in use for over 30 years as the core curriculum in public schools and clinics all over the USA and Canada. Ms. Dillon will teach the core curriculum in person through full-day sessions at MDA in May, and videotaped lectures throughout the rest of the year, besides critiquing and assessing demonstration lessons and examination papers.

**Ms. Masarrat Khan, Clinical Psychologist and CEO, MDA**, has worked with children with special education needs for nineteen years. Ms. Khan will be course coordinator and local supervisor.

**Ms. Tanee Trivedy, M.A. (Sp. Ed: LD, American University, Washington D.C.), M.Ed. (LD; SNDT University, Mumbai).** Ms. Trivedy is a former teacher from the Lab School of Washington, and founder-director of their branch in Baltimore. Her considerable experience and skills will be available to guide trainees in the practical implementation of the programme, apart from contributing as a guest lecturer.

In addition to the core curriculum given below, the MDA will conduct regular lectures with visiting faculty who are leaders in related fields, giving the trainees the opportunity to add to their knowledge base as well as familiarize them with issues that relate to the education of the differently-abled in India.

The Visiting Faculty includes, among others:

Dr Vrajesh Udani, M.D., Consulting Pediatric Neurologist, Hinduja Hospital.

Dr. Samir Dalwai, M.D., Pediatrician.

Ms Shobha Bharat, M.Sc.; Cert, Emergent Literacy, Golda Meir Institute, Israel.

Ms. Lalitha Ramanujan, M.A. (Psych.), B.S. (Educational Psychology, Univ. of Minnesota).

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### I. General

Class attendance and completion of all assignments is required. Full-day classes will be held 12<sup>th</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008, and subsequently on two Saturdays every month. Lectures in the month of May will be conducted by a Certified Academic Language Therapist and Qualified Instructor from the Multisensory Language Training Institute of New Mexico. During the rest of the year, videotaped lectures from MLTNM will alternate with lectures by MDA staff and visiting faculty.

All participants shall submit a transcript showing possession of a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and coursework by the end of the First Year Fall class.

At a minimum, all participants intending to advance to the second year therapy level, shall have taught through SIS Book I by the end of the first year and completed at least 80 lessons with their demonstration student.

### II Clinical Experience

The practicum includes supervised and guided practice using *Sounds In Syllables, Multisensory Structured Language Therapy*, an Orton-Gillingham based program. Time shall be spent in direct instruction of students who present characteristics of dyslexia and/or related language-based learning disorders. Ancillary activities such as writing lesson plans, scoring tests and other activities may not be counted as teaching hours. Trainees are responsible for selecting demonstration students of an age, intelligence, attention level, cooperation level, and with adequate attendance and support from the parents and school to enable the trainee to move at a pace which will meet the requirements of the course. It is suggested to choose a first student who is at least 9 years old, with average to above I.Q., with a mild to moderate reading disability. Therapists-in-training shall provide supervised academic language therapy in at least three different situations, starting from the beginning of the curriculum three times, ideally in sessions that meet 4 or 5 days per week, 45 to 60 minutes per day. Clinical experience shall be with three individuals or two individuals and one small group (2-6 students).

Clinical experience shall include beginning the SIS curriculum (Book 1) and progressing through an advanced level (middle of Book 4) with at least one student.

A total of 700 hours of supervised clinical experience shall be acquired, in no less than 24 months. If the required number of clinical hours has not been completed during the two years of coursework, trainees shall pay an additional fee (\$150 per semester) for continuing clinical supervision until the required hours are complete. This may continue for no more than five years.

### III Demonstration Lessons

Demonstration lessons shall be of a complete lesson (unless otherwise directed by the Clinical Supervisor). During the first year of training, one video shall be submitted, per month. The trainee shall view each video and write his/her own critique before submitting it in for evaluation. A minimum of 10 observations shall be required. At least eight demonstration lessons with the same one-to-one student will be viewed and critiqued by an MLTI-NM clinical supervisor. Two demonstrations may be of the second or third situations.

#### **IV Documentation**

Trainees shall file an Initial Report (including pre-test scores) and signed permission to videotape, prior to beginning a new student or group. Actual test protocols shall be submitted on the primary demonstration student, only.

Progress reports on each teaching situation shall be submitted each month during the period of course work and quarterly, thereafter, until all requirements are met. Written lesson plans shall be submitted each month on each situation and actual student work (linkage, writing, and spelling papers) on the primary demonstration student for the first 30 lessons.

A Case Study is required in the second year, in which the therapist-in-training chooses one student and presents to the class, (both written and oral) pre and post test scores, an account of the presenting difficulties, and a discussion of the student's experience and progress in the program.

Pre and post test results on all student's shall be reported at the end of each year while in training and then again when therapy is terminated with each student.

#### **V Exit Criteria**

Each MLTI-NM level course involves "exit criteria" for satisfaction of course requirements and a passing grade. These vary with the specific course. Intermediate and Advanced level courses require demonstration of competencies as well as a passing grade on a final examination. In every case, continuous attendance is a factor. In addition, assigned readings and independent study requires a considerable investment of time.

#### **VI Grading**

Each course instructor is responsible to assign a grade of Pass/Fail to course participants. Instructor judgment of student competencies is the decisive factor in the final evaluation of the trainee. Letter grades will be assigned for students taking the courses for graduate credit.

#### **VII Certification**

Letters of successful completion of coursework can be provided for all courses if requested.

Candidates will be awarded **Dyslexia Therapist** certificates upon successful completion of the therapy level requirements including 700 practicum hours.

Graduates who have successfully completed all requirements, including the 700 practicum hours will be eligible to take the ALTA professional exam.

All tuition and fees must be paid before certificates can be issued.

#### **VIII Advanced and/or Supplementary Seminars**

Attendance at certain seminars shall be required of some participants who may be lacking specific course content in their academic background. These will be offered for an additional fee, through our continuing

education offerings or through other means, such as online courses. Participants will be informed of these requirements after submitting their transcripts during the first term.

### **IX Continuing Education**

30 Continuing Education Units (CEU\*) every three years is required of all graduates. Course graduates will submit CEU documentation to the MLTI-NM director annually. The director may submit for listing in the IMSLEC directory of accredited programs and their graduates, only those graduates who have completed the required CEUs and are in good standing with the training center.

*\*Definition: The CEU is the standard unit of measurement for participation in a continuing education activity. Established by the U.S. Department of Education (1968), one (1.0) CEU is defined as 10 contact hours of participation in an organized CE experience offered by a sponsor, excluding meals and breaks. The contact hour is defined as a clock hour, or a typical 60 minute classroom instructional session. 14 contact hours constitute 1.4 CEUs. Fractions of an hour do not count.*

### **X Fees**

The fee for the Dyslexia Therapist course is Rs. 75,000/- per year, payable in advance, and is non-refundable. Cost of textbooks and course materials (approximately Rs. 4,000/-), Alliance Examination fees and the cost of videotaping demonstration lessons are **not** included. (Each student will be provided with a complete teaching kit for the core curriculum "*Sounds in Syllables*" and the prescribed textbooks through MDA and MLTINM, which will be charged as per the actual billing).

Applicants who fulfill the admission criteria will be called for an interview before 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Outstation candidates may seek special permission for telephone interviews.

A limited number of full-time and part-time internships at MDA are available to deserving candidates.

The decision of the Screening Committee shall be final in all matters pertaining to admissions to the course and recruitment of interns.