The Applied Exercise and Health major is a comprehensive four year program that provides students with the knowledge and practical experiences to become leading professionals in the field of health and fitness. It is a cooperative educational program housed in the Department of Health & Kinesiology with support from Purdue’s Division of Recreational Sports, the A.H. Ismail Center, and surrounding community organizations dedicated to promoting health, education, and physical activity for all populations including children, adults, and seniors.

The Applied Exercise and Health curriculum was developed to meet expectations for the Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAes). Students complete coursework in biomechanics, exercise physiology, motor learning, functional anatomy, and training theories and techniques. Students learn methods for preventative and rehabilitative training of the generally healthy population, as well as those with known disease. The curriculum emphasizes a strong commitment to the real life application of skill sets learned in the classroom and provides students the opportunity to gain experience in community, corporate, clinical, and commercial health and fitness settings.

Program Goals

The goal of the Applied Exercise and Health program is to prepare students as entry-level health and fitness professionals. Students are trained to assess, design, and implement individual and group exercise and fitness programs for the general population. They are taught to evaluate health behaviors and risk factors, conduct fitness/performance assessments, write and implement appropriate exercise prescriptions, and motivate/coach individuals to modify negative health habits and maintain positive lifestyle behaviors for performance and health promotion. Students learn to communicate effectively and sensitively with clients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds. Students are prepared to sit for and pass one of only two certifications requiring a four year degree – the American College of Sports Medicine Health Fitness Specialist [HFS] Exam℠ or the National Strength and Conditioning Association Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist [CSCS] Exam®. Program curriculum emphasizes education in knowledge, skills, and abilities identified by the American College of Sports Medicine. Further reading and educational resources are required to study for the National Strength and Conditioning Association CSCS Exam.

Pre-Applied Exercise and Health

The Applied Exercise and Health major does not admit students directly from high school. Accordingly, if you want to apply for admission, you should enroll as a pre-Applied Exercise and Health student within the Department of Health and Kinesiology at the beginning of your freshman (or first) year at Purdue. This department is housed within the College of Health & Human Sciences. You may apply for admission to the Applied Exercise and Health major by completing the pre-
Applied Exercise and Health requirements and making formal application during the second semester of your freshman (or first) year at Purdue.

**Even if you have completed the pre-Applied Exercise and Health requirements, you cannot be guaranteed admission to the Applied Exercise and Health major.** The Department reserves the right to select students it feels are qualified to successfully complete the requirements for the major. If you are not admitted to the Applied Exercise and Health major, you may be eligible to change to a different major within the Department of Health and Kinesiology, the College of Health & Human Sciences, or another college or school at Purdue.

**Admission to the Applied Exercise and Health Major**

The program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree via the Applied Exercise and Health Program includes one year in the pre-Applied Exercise and Health program, a selection process, and three years in the Applied Exercise and Health major. **Because of enrollment limitations, students who have completed the pre-Applied Exercise and Health year at Purdue cannot be assured admission into the Applied Exercise and Health major.** All students must meet the designated criteria in order to be considered for selection. A formal application for admission to the Applied Exercise and Health major must be completed and submitted during the second semester of the pre-Applied Exercise and Health year.

**Selection of Students**

The Applied Exercise and Health Program reserves the right to select students qualified to enter the Applied Exercise and Health major after one year of pre-Applied Exercise and Health. The program selects approximately 35 students each year. The Applied Exercise and Health Admissions Committee considers many factors in making its final admission selections including:

1. **GPA for Pre-Applied Exercise & Health coursework.** A minimum grade point average of 2.5/4.0 in BIOL 20300, BIOL 20400, COM 11400, ENGL 10600, HK 11101, HK 13500, MA 15300, and PSY 12000 is required for application to the program.

2. **Individual grades** in BIOL 20300, BIOL 20400, COM 11400, ENGL 10600, HK 11101, HK 13500, MA 15300, and PSY 12000. The committee is looking for grades of B- or better in these courses.

3. **Application/Written Essay.** Each student will prepare a formal essay on the importance of leadership and how it impacts quality service in the exercise and health field. Students will describe the qualities of a good leader and how this degree program and its clinical experiences will enhance development of those qualities. This essay should highlight the students’ written communication skills.

Students will also do research to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the status of the health industry and the role of exercise and health professionals in that industry. The presentation should describe the four settings (commercial, corporate, community, and clinical) where exercise and health professionals work. Students should demonstrate an understanding of the roles professionals play in each setting as well as what knowledge, skills, and traits are necessary to be successful in each setting. Finally, students will provide information about which setting interests them the most and what personal and practical strengths and
limitations will play a role in their success within that setting. The presentation is evaluated on students’ preparation and professionalism.

4. **Group Interviews.** Students will participate in a group interview. Admissions Committee members will gauge student interest in the Applied Exercise and Health program and judge how the program may help them in their future career goals.

**Retention Criteria**

Only students formally admitted to the Applied Exercise and Health program will be allowed to enroll in advanced coursework and clinical experiences. Once admitted, the student will be evaluated each semester on various practical and professional skill sets. As long as appropriate progress is being made in the classroom (2.5 GPA for the semester) and in the clinical experience, the student will be allowed to progress to the next semester. If progress is unsatisfactory, the student will be placed on probation for one semester in order to remedy any deficiencies. Two successive substandard semesters will lead to suspension of the student from the program.

**Clinical Experiences and Internship Requirement**

Throughout the three years of the Applied Exercise and Health major, students are required to complete six semesters of clinical experience working with other students in the major as well as the general population. Because students obtain academic credit for practical experiences, clinical coursework is typically unpaid. All students enrolled in a clinical course are assigned an individualized schedule as determined by the course instructor and/or site supervisor. Students are responsible for reporting to the clinical sites at their assigned times and the schedule may change from semester to semester. Duties and responsibilities will vary by organization and area of specialty but could include fitness center supervision, performance of fitness/health assessments, leading designed exercise sessions including personal training and group exercise instruction, and presentation of education-based workshops. All clinical experiences emphasize efficiency in practice of identified skill sets in a realistic environment, practice of communication skills, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, and problem solving skills. The students receive hands-on personal instruction, training, and evaluation from educated and certified professionals in the field of health and fitness. Instructors support their students and become valuable resources and mentors.

Year 1 (HK21100-Fall; HK21100-Spring)
Year 2 (HK31100-Fall; HK31100-Spring)*
Year 3 (HK41100-Fall; HK41100-Spring)

All Students must maintain CPR/AED certification throughout enrollment in the program.

*Prior to beginning HK 31100 students must be certified through a nationally-recognized Personal Trainer certification process.

All students admitted to the Applied Exercise and Health major are also required to complete a minimum 250 hour internship experience with a professional setting of interest outside the university. These internships are coordinated through the Department of Health and Kinesiology. While students are encouraged to do multiple internships, the official internship required for the major must be approved by the Health and Kinesiology Department Internship Coordinator. Purdue
students have interned with hundreds of different organizations such as Kellogg’s, Verizon Wireless, Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc., St. Elizabeth Medical Center (Cardiac Rehab, OT/PT), and the YMCA. There are also opportunities to intern internationally through Study Abroad programs. Upon completion of the clinical coursework and internship, each student will have accumulated approximately 750 hours of hands-on experience.

**Potential Career Opportunities**

Cardiopulmonary rehabilitation specialist – Employers include hospitals and clinics. (Undergraduate degree, often master’s degree, recognized certification)

Exercise physiologist – Employers include commercial and clinical workplace settings. (Undergraduate degree minimum)

Group exercise instructor – Employers include commercial and workplace fitness centers. (Some college courses, recognized certification)

Fitness Manager/ Coordinator/ Specialist – Employers include fitness centers, YMCA's, YWCA's, hospital-based wellness centers, etc. (Undergraduate degree minimum, often master's degree, recommended ACSM/NSCA certification)

Personal trainer/Strength and Conditioning coach – Personal trainers might be self-employed or work for a fitness facility. Strength and Conditioning coaches are employed by universities and professional athletic teams. (Undergraduate degree minimum, recognized certification)

Students may also choose to pursue graduate education in various fields of kinesiology or professional schools in fields such as physical therapy or occupational therapy.

**For additional information about the Applied Exercise & Health program:**

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