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. The Applied Exercise and Health major is a cooperative educational program housed in the Department of Health & Kinesiology with support from Purdue’s Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, Purdue’s Division of Recreational Sports, and surrounding community organizations dedicated to promoting health, education, and physical activity to all populations including children, adults, and seniors.

The Applied Exercise and Health major includes a one year Pre-Applied Exercise and Health program that prepares students for application to one of two major concentrations: Health Exercise Specialist Concentration and Sport Performance Concentration.

**Applied Exercise and Health: Health Exercise Specialist Concentration**

A Health Exercise Specialist emphasizes preventative and rehabilitative training of the generally healthy population (youth, adults, and seniors), as well as those with known disease. The curriculum is structured to enhance development of skills necessary for working in community, corporate, clinical, and commercial health and fitness settings.

**Applied Exercise and Health: Sport Performance Concentration**

A Sport Performance Specialist works in assessment and programming for the athletic population (recreational, high school, collegiate, and professional). Individuals pursuing this concentration typically have a strong desire to work in high-level sport settings. The curriculum is structured to enhance development of skills necessary for working with athletes.

Both concentrations integrate biomechanics, exercise physiology, neurology, motor learning, functional anatomy, pedagogy, and training theories and techniques. The Applied Exercise and Health curriculum was developed to meet expectations for the Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAes) and emphasizes a strong commitment to the real life application of skill sets learned in the classroom.

**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 (both those who are apparently healthy and those with controlled disease) as well as trained athletes. 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 Exam℠ or the National Strength and Conditioning Association Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist 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 to either major concentration, 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. Once admitted to a concentration, the program takes a minimum of three years to complete.

Even if you have completed the pre-Applied Exercise and Health requirements, you cannot be guaranteed admission to either concentration in 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 in either concentration includes one year in the pre-Applied Exercise and Health program, a selection process, and three years in a concentration (Health Exercise Specialist or Sport Performance). 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 either concentration of the Applied Exercise and Health major after one year of pre-Applied Exercise and Health. The program selects approximately 35 students each year for the Health Exercise Specialist Concentration and approximately 15 students each year for the Sport Performance Concentration. 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 11300, HK 11800, 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 11300, HK 11800, HK 13500, MA 15300, and PSY 12000. The committee will be looking for grades of B- or better in these courses.

3. Personal interview and presentation. Each student will give a five-minute presentation on a topic of interest in exercise and health. In addition, the student will respond to interview questions intended to derive information about the student’s academic skill, personal characteristics, and health and fitness background. A portion of the interview will involve discussion of the student’s career intentions in order to determine whether this degree is a good fit as well as how much the student knows about a career in health and fitness. The personal interview and presentation will be evaluated on how well the student was prepared, professionalism, and assessment reliability for successful completion of degree clinical requirements.

4. Letter of recommendation. One letter of recommendation should describe the student’s personality and work habits as they would pertain to a career in the fitness field. The student’s desire for and dedication to a career in the field should also be discussed. Recommenders should be people who have worked closely with the student such as teachers, coaches, or other mentors. Members of the selection committee may not be utilized as references. This letter will not be scored but is required as part of the application process.

5. Written Essay. Each student will prepare a formal essay on the health and fitness industry and their understanding of what their concentration will entail. This essay should highlight the students’ written communication skills and their general knowledge.

Retention Criteria

Only students formally admitted to either concentration of the Applied Exercise and Health program will be allowed to enroll in advanced course work 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 sub-standard 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 unpaid clinical experience working with other students in the major as well as the general population. Students earn academic credit for their required clinical experiences. 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 one-on-one and group training sessions, presentation of education-based workshops, and leading group exercise classes. 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.

**Health Exercise Specialist Concentration**
Year 1 (HK21100-Fall; HK21100-Spring)
Year 2 (HK31100-Fall; HK31100-Spring)*
Year 3 (HK41100-Fall; HK41100-Spring)

**Sport Performance Concentration**
Year 1 (HK25000-Fall; HK25000-Spring)
Year 2 (HK35000-Fall; HK35000-Spring)
Year 3 (HK45000-Fall; HK45000-Spring)

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

*Prior to beginning HK 31100 students in the Health Exercise Specialist Concentration 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 International 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**

Biomechanist – Employers include product developers/users in research and clinical settings; future growth is expected in industrial settings. (Master’s or doctoral degree)

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)

Occupational therapist – Employers include hospitals and clinics. (Master's or Doctoral degree after an Undergraduate Degree)
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)

Physical therapist – Employers include hospitals and clinics. (Doctoral degree after an Undergraduate degree)

Physician - Employers include hospitals and clinics (Undergraduate degree, 3-5 years of an advanced degree and training, plus specialization training)

Physician’s Assistant – Employers include hospitals and clinics. (Master’s degree after an Undergraduate Degree)

Pharmaceutical/medical sales – Employers include pharmaceutical and other medical development companies. (Undergraduate degree minimum)

For additional information about the Applied Exercise & Health program:

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http://www.purdue.edu/hhs/hk/hkadvising/AppliedExHlth.htm