

Docket Item:

Community College Approval: Mt. Hood Community College, Certificate of Completion in Fitness Technology, within 31.0507 - Physical Fitness Technician.

Summary:

Mt. Hood Community College proposes a new Certificate of Completion in Fitness Technology. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed certificate. After analysis, HECC staff recommends approval of the certificate as proposed.

Staff Recommendation:

The HECC recommends the adoption of the following resolution:
RESOLVED, that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approve the following certificate: Certificate of Completion in Fitness Technology.



Mt. Hood Community College seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission's approval to offer an instructional program leading to Certificate of Completion in Fitness Technology.

Program Summary:

Chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, numerous forms of cancers and many other unhealthy conditions continue to contribute to a public health crisis within the United States of America. Decades of verifiable research has correlated the positive effects of exercise and healthy diets on preventing such chronic diseases. The health and fitness club/gym industry is on the forefront of helping people attain and practice balance in exercise and diet. Fitness trainers are a significant part of this industry as they help educate, guide and motivate individuals into gaining fitness and acquiring healthy behaviors. The Fitness Technology Certification program is designed to prepare students for work within the health and fitness club/gym industry. Students who successfully complete the one-year program have the opportunity to attain a nationally recognized fitness professional certification from the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM). This certification will allow students the opportunity to seek employment as a fitness/personal trainer. According to members of the program's advisory committee, the NASM personal training certification is one of, if not the most, preferred nationally recognized certifications within the United States. Additionally, this one-year certification program acts as an academic guided pathway for students interested in continuing their education in Exercise and Sport Science or a related field. Partners at Eastern Oregon University, Portland State University and Concordia University (Portland) have expressed excitement for the transfer opportunities this program offers.

Program Catalog Description:

Heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke and numerous other chronic diseases have been on a steep incline for decades. The development of these diseases have been linked with inactivity, unhealthy nutritional choices, poor time management and other lifestyle-related factors. Fitness Technology professionals are at the forefront of ebbing this deadly and costly trend by helping to promote health and prevent disease. The fitness industry is continuing to grow as more people become health conscious and demand trained professionals to help reduce risk factors for disease.

The Fitness Technology certificate is designed to give individuals the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to become a fitness professional. The one-year curriculum is aimed at preparing students to demonstrate proficiencies in multiple fitness related domains including human movement science, considerations in nutrition, exercise technique and training instruction, health and fitness assessment, fitness program design, etc. This program will help students work towards obtaining a nationally recognized certification in the fitness industry and can help students continue their education in the exercise/sport science field. Students successfully completing this program will also earn a First Aid and CPR Certification.

1. Describe the need for this program by providing clear evidence.

Health and fitness is increasingly becoming a local and national concern as incidents of chronic diseases are on a rapid rise. The Advisory Committee indicates an increase in individuals and families enrolling in fitness and recreational sports centers. Members of the Advisory Committee speculate a global concern for such chronic diseases are

attributing to the rise in club/gym memberships. To address the needs of this influx of clientele, the Advisory committee acknowledges a demand for job-ready entry-level fitness/personal trainers.

The following information was obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program: Note: Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program. Employment of fitness trainers and instructors is projected to grow 8 percent from 2014 to 2024, about as fast as the average for all occupations.

As businesses, government, and insurance organizations continue to recognize the benefits of health and fitness programs for their employees, incentives to join gyms or other types of health clubs are expected to increase the need for fitness trainers and instructors. For example, some organizations may open their own exercise facilities onsite to promote employee wellness.

Other employment growth will come from the continuing emphasis on exercise to combat obesity and encourage healthier lifestyles for people of all ages. In particular, the baby-boom generation should continue to remain active to help prevent injuries and illnesses associated with aging.

Participation in yoga and Pilates is expected to continue to increase, driven partly by older adults who want low-impact forms of exercise and relief from arthritis and other ailments.

Quick Facts: Fitness Trainers and Instructors

2015 Median Pay -- \$36,160 per year -- \$17.39 per hour

Typical Entry-Level Education -- High school diploma or equivalent

Work Experience in a Related Occupation - None

On-the-job Training -- Short-term on-the-job training

Number of Jobs, 2014 -- 279,100

Job Outlook, 2014-24 -- 8% (As fast as average)

Employment Change, 2014-24 -- 23,400

While the national growth for this profession is 8 percent, the State of Oregon Employment Department (QualityInfo.org) reports a 15.6 percent growth.

A State of Oregon Employment Department (QualityInfo.org) search of the Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers, Oregon statewide, found the following data:

713940 - Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers found 801 employers.

The members of the advisory committee expressed enthusiasm for this Fitness Technology Certification and the benefits it will have on this industry within the local community. This committee indicated that a nationally recognized certification was necessary to obtain a fitness/personal training position at one of their health/fitness clubs. They also agreed that the NASM was either the only certification or among the most desirable certifications that they would expect from their trainers. Unanimously, the advisory committee agreed the students from this program would be highly marketable because of the year-long program with practical experience embedded in it. Local Employers: 24 hours Gym, Cascade Athletic Club, Crunch, LA Fitness, Mt. Hood Athletic Club, Multnomah Athletic Club, NW Women's Fitness Club, Planet Fitness, Portland Athletic Club, Premiere Sports and Fitness, Snap Fitness, West Coast Fitness, West Side Athletic Club, Lloyd Athletic Club

2. *Does the community college utilize systemic methods for meaningful and ongoing involvement of the appropriate constituencies?*

This program has been created in collaboration with MHCC's office of instruction, the Dean of Health and Physical Education (HPE), the college wide curriculum committee and HPE faculty on campus. Externally we have relied on input from our advisory board that consists of members from private industry as well as public institutions that employ our graduates. This group meets annually to provide feedback and insight into current industry trends and will continue to provide input on this certification/academic path. Individuals on the advisory board have shared ideas and resources for curriculum and qualities and skills they want to see in a career ready Personal/Fitness Trainer professional.

3. *Is the community college program aligned with appropriate education, workforce development, and economic development programs?*

The proposed Fitness Technology Certification program aligns with current Board goals of developing Guided Pathways essential for practices to enhance students' educational experiences. By adhering to Guided Pathways best practices throughout the development of this program, students should be prepared to enter employment or pursue further educational opportunities. The course progression will be clearly mapped out for students, so they know which courses they should take each term and in what sequence, allowing them to plan their lives around school from term to term. Students will easily see how far they have come and what they need to do to complete their program requirements. Courses critical for student success will be clearly identified. Faculty advisors will monitor students' progress toward completing the program requirements. The college will be able to identify at-risk students and have policies and supports in place to intervene, so that students could get back on track. While reviewing the current curriculum for inclusion in the new degree program, special attention is taken to ensure that learning outcomes are clearly defined for this program and as well as within each course. These outcomes will align with the requirements for success in both employment and further education. Conversations will take place early and often with Advisory Board Members regarding curricular outcomes.

4. *Does the community college program lead to student achievement of academic and technical knowledge, skills, and related proficiencies?*

The Health and Physical Education (HPE) department at Mt. Hood currently offers students a guided pathway for an Associates of Science Degree with an emphasis in Physical Education/Exercise and Sport Science. The course work included in this AS degree is transferable to several four-year academic institutions within Oregon and satisfy lower-division coursework and prerequisites. The coursework included in the proposed Fitness Technology Certification program will satisfy several requirements towards the AS PE/Exercise and Sport Science emphasis. This will help students interested in pursuing a Bachelor's degree at several Oregon four-year institutions. Additionally, students who successfully complete the one-year FTC program have the opportunity to earn a nationally recognized certification that will qualify them for employment as a fitness/personal trainer. The curriculum is designed for students who wish to enter the workforce at the completion of the 1-year program.

5. *Does the community college identify and have the resources to develop, implement, and sustain the program?*

The Health and Physical Education (HPE) department at Mt. Hood Community College

(MHCC) is proposing the implementation of a new one-year Fitness Technology Certification program. This program will consist of 40 credits of coursework that includes required courses for general education, electives and fitness technology specific classes. The 40 credits will be delivered throughout three terms (Fall, Winter, Spring) of instruction. Three newly developed Fitness Technology Certification (FTC) courses will be included in this program. Each FTC course will be three credit hours totaling nine credits of program specific coursework. To compensate for cost, numerous Physical Education activity courses have been discontinued due to low enrollment. Because of this, there would be no additional cost to the college to offer these new courses and the Fitness Technology Certification program as a whole. All HPE program advisers have the requisite experience to advise students regarding the program and pathway options.

Assurances

Mt. Hood Community College has met or will meet the four institutional assurances required for program application.

1. *Access.* The college and program will affirmatively provide access, accommodations, flexibility, and additional/supplemental services for special populations and protected classes of students.
2. *Continuous Improvement.* The college has assessment, evaluation, feedback, and continuous improvement processes or systems in place. For the proposed program, there will be opportunities for input from and concerning the instructor(s), students, employers, and other partners/stakeholders. Program need and labor market information will be periodically re-evaluated and changes will be requested as needed.
3. *Adverse impact and detrimental duplication.* The college will follow all current laws, rules, and procedures and has made good faith efforts to avoid or resolve adverse *intersegmental* and *intra-segmental* impact and detrimental duplication problems with other relevant programs or institutions.
4. *Program records maintenance and congruence.* The college acknowledges that the records concerning the program title, curriculum, CIP code, credit hours, etc. maintained by the Office are the official records and it is the college's responsibility to keep their records aligned with those of the Office. The college will not make changes to the program without informing and/or receiving approval from the Office.