



HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

October 12, 2017

Docket Item:

Community College Approval: Lane Community College, Certificate of Completion in Fitness Specialist, within 31.0507 - Physical Fitness Technician.

Summary:

Lane Community College proposes a new Certificate of Completion, Fitness Specialist. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed program. After analysis, HECC staff recommends approval of the degree as proposed.

Staff Recommendation:

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



Lane Community College seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission's approval to offer an instructional program leading to a certificate of completion in Fitness Specialist.

Program Summary

Fitness Trainers and Instructors lead, instruct and motivate individuals or groups in exercise activities, including cardiovascular exercise, strength training, and stretching.

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

The Fitness Specialist prepares students for employment in the fitness industry by combining a science-based academic foundation with an abundance of experiential learning.

Students who successfully complete the program will have a competitive edge over job seekers without the certificate. Recent employment data for Lane county reveals the need for certified fitness specialist to work in the numerous fitness and recreation facilities.

Labor market statistics indicate that employment for fitness trainers and instructors is projected to grow 8 percent from 2014 to 2024, about as fast as the average for all occupations.

Fitness workers should have excellent opportunities for finding work due to continued job growth in health clubs, fitness facilities, youth sports academies, and entrepreneurial endeavors.

Median annual wages of fitness trainers and aerobics instructors in the Eugene / Lane County area is \$38,490 or \$18.51 per hour (based on 2016 wages); however, self-employed trainers and those with advanced degrees can earn greater than \$60,000 per year.

Based on 2016 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics there are over 700 fitness trainers and aerobic instructors in Lane county. <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399031.htm#st>

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

This program of study was developed to contribute to the mission of the college as well as serve the interests and needs of our students and community workforce.

The Exercise and Movement Science department has designed the Fitness Specialist certificate in response to student, community, faculty and staff feedback.

An advisory committee was formed over 5 years ago. The committee's diverse membership consists of community and business associates in the Fitness and Recreation industry.

This committee has been extremely vital in our efforts to create a curriculum that prepares the students be ready for employment.

The Fitness Specialist students are offered opportunities to work within the community fitness agencies to receive hands on instruction and to take advantage to network within the fitness trade.

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

Students enrolled in this program will come from many different entry points, including students recently out of high school, students who have been in, or are currently in, the workforce, students in transitions and student of a variety of demographic, ethnicities, economic backgrounds and nationalities.

This program of study focuses on skills and knowledge that lead to professional growth and advancement opportunities; it is a rigorous course of study and skill training that prepares the student for Fitness Specialist careers.

This certificate can provide a foundation for students to achieve their academic/professional goals including further education towards other degrees or certificates.

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

Students receive opportunities for internships with community organizations to work with other fitness professionals.

Each course offered for this program has specific learning outcomes that are part of the overall program goals.

Assessment mechanisms have been created for each learning outcome.

The program is designed to be completed within 9 months but includes transferrable elective coursework for students seeking to further their education in related fields.

Upon completion, graduates of this program should expect to seek the appropriate National Certification before finding careers working in health clubs, country clubs, fitness or recreation centers, gyms, hospitals, universities, yoga and Pilates studios, resorts, and/or as entrepreneurs.

When considering that trainers rarely receive on the job training, certification and experience are critical to obtaining a job. They are expected to know how to do their jobs when they are hired. Therefore, the program was designed to provide an abundance of experiential learning while preparing students for the American Council on Exercise (ACE) and/or National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) certification exams. Simulated Lab, Internships

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

This program will utilize existing curriculum

Courses for this certificate are currently and actively being taught in the Exercise Science and Movement program at the College.

Class sizes are small, between 18-20 students to instructor ratio.

As industry standards and technology change, the College will need to stay current with the different types of fitness equipment and machines, as well as, updated software.

The Health, Physical Education and Athletic division will continue to support the faculty/staff and students pursuing this certificate. Dedicated Lab Facilities. Advanced educational equipment e.g. Bod Pod, Hydrostatic Pool

Assurances

Lane 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.