

The Wellness Credit



Why does Grand Rapids Community College require a wellness credit?

Grand Rapids Community College requires a wellness credit because it is an essential tool that supports academic success and helps students meet their goals and contribute to society. There is extensive, longitudinal research on the many physical benefits from exercise. More recently, there is a growing body of evidence revealing the profound effect that exercise can have on the brain. Toxic levels of stress erode the connections between the billions of nerve cells in the brain and chronic depression shrinks certain areas of the brain. Exercise unleashes a cascade of neurochemicals and growth factors that can reverse this process, physically bolstering the brain's infrastructure. In fact, the brain responds like muscles do, growing with use and wasting with inactivity.

As a college of distinction, Grand Rapids Community College embraces this overwhelming body of scientific evidence by requiring that all students who are pursuing an Associate's degree complete at least one wellness credit to better prepare them to attain their goals and contribute to the community. It is through this wellness credit that the college encourages students to be proactive in preventing the many chronic diseases that plague millions of people causing decreased productivity in the workplace and negatively impact quality of life.

Effect of Exercise on the Brain:

- Improves rate of learning
- Improves memory
- Improves academic performance
- Improves ability to focus
- Decreases risk of depression
- Helps manage mood
- Helps reduce addictive cravings
- Helps manage anxiety
- Improves sleep quality

Effect of Exercise on the Cardiovascular System:

- Improved function of heart, blood vessels, respiratory system
- Increased levels of neurotransmitters and increased blood flow to the brain
- Better blood flow
- Improved self image
- Better ability to manage stress
- Better sleep
- Decreased depression or anxiety
- Decreased risk for stroke
- Decreased risk of heart disease or heart attack
- Better cooling of the body
- Decreased body fat
- Increased bone density
- Decreased risk of injury
- Increased blood volume
- Decreased low back pain
- Improved immunity
- Reduced risk of many chronic diseases including:
 - hypertension
 - hyperlipidemia
 - diabetes
 - cancer
 - osteoporosis

Examples of Wellness Course Offerings:

- WE 110 Urban EcoTrek
- WE 120 SPINNING
- WE 124 Circuit Training and Physical Fitness
- WE 127 Yoga I
- WE 129 Water Aerobics
- WE 130 Tennis
- WE 132 Golf
- WE 134 Body Tone and Sculpt
- WE 135 Yoga II
- WE 137 Pilates
- WE 139 Zumba
- WE 140 Personal Defense
- WE 141 Weight Training
- WE 165 Dynamics of Fitness
- Full course list available online

The Gerald R. Ford Fieldhouse

The Fieldhouse is available to students on a drop-in basis with use of their RaiderCard. There is a weight room, cardiovascular machines, pool, basketball court and indoor track. Find hours at grcc.edu/geraldfordfieldhouse.

GRCC Exercise Science Department

Gerald R. Ford Fieldhouse
111 Lyon, NE (GRCC downtown campus)

(616) 234-3994

exercisescience@grcc.edu

grcc.edu/exercisescience

facebook.com/grccexercisescience



GRCC

143 Bostwick Avenue, NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-3295
www.grcc.edu

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GRCC

EXERCISE SCIENCE



Careers in Exercise Science

Exercise Science is the study of physiological responses and adaptations that the human body experiences due to exercise. The field of Exercise Science is a relatively new profession and area of study. Career opportunities have grown tremendously and generally can be classified as clinical or non-clinical in nature.

Employers and Job Settings:

- Hospitals and clinics
- Health clubs
- Colleges and universities
- Schools
- Sports teams
- Community recreation departments
- Health and fitness equipment manufacturers
- Leisure and tourism companies
- Public health departments (health promotion and/or chronic disease prevention)
- Corporations
- Country clubs
- Non-profit organizations
- Outdoor recreation

Examples of Clinical Track Careers:

- Athletic Trainer
- Biomechanist
- Cardiopulmonary rehabilitation specialist
- Dietitian
- Exercise physiologist
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Researcher
- Sports psychologist
- Instructor

Examples of Health/Fitness Track Careers:

- Group fitness instructors
- Fitness coordinator
- Fitness director
- Personal trainer
- Strength and conditioning specialist
- Educator
- Health coach (provide direction and motivation related to behavior modification)
- Athletic director or administrator
- Corporate wellness
- Event coordinator or director
- Facility coordinator or director
- Recreation coordinator or director
- Sales (sell fitness or exercise products and/or services)

Clinical vs. Non-clinical Careers

Clinical Exercise Science careers typically require an advanced degree beyond a bachelor's degree. Commonly, degree programs also involve a strong emphasis in the sciences, with classes including organic chemistry and physics. The clinical track usually serves as a preparatory undergraduate field of study for a more advanced degree. The non-clinical, or health/fitness track, also includes sciences however it is not as intensive and does not serve as preparation for graduate schools in the sciences. Students pursuing a health fitness track can also go on to graduate school, however, more often they enter the workforce immediately after graduating with their four-year degree.

	Clinical	Health/Fitness
Setting	Medically supervised in a clinic or hospital; usually part of a larger medical team; generally work one-on-one with client or patient.	Corporate, health or fitness clubs, athletic and/or sports venues; work with individuals as well as large groups of people.
Clientele	Clients are higher risk and usually have some form of injury, illness, or chronic disease such as cardiovascular, lung, obesity, diabetes, cancer, older adults, etc.	Clients are a generally healthy population or at low risk of medical complications.
Coursework	Emphasis on sciences; Preparatory for graduate school programs like Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physician Assistant.	Preparatory to gain entrance to workplace with Bachelor's degree working in health promotion and disease prevention, behavior modification, individual and group exercise design, assist others with weight loss, provide community programs, etc.



GRCC Exercise Science Department

Foundational Program Courses:

- WE 140 Personal Defense
- WE 156 First Aid
- WE 157 Elementary Games and Rhythms
- WE 165 Dynamics of Fitness
- WE 189 Healthy Living
- EXS 180 Football Theory
- EXS 181 Baseball Theory
- EXS 182 Basketball Theory
- EXS 184 Introduction to Exercise Science
- EXS 185 Sports Officiating
- EXS 186 Community Recreation
- EXS 195 Water Safety Instruction
- EXS 198 Introduction to Athletic Training
- EXS 201 Title IX: Women in Athletics
- EXS 203 The Obesity Epidemic
- EXS 225 Public Health Concepts

Transfer Agreements

Grand Rapids Community College has Clinical Exercise Science and Health Fitness Instruction transfer agreements with multiple universities in Michigan. Contact an advisor for more information.

Professional Certifications

The Exercise Science Department hosts many professional certifications that allow students to gain professional credentialing through:

- American Council on Exercise
- YogaFit
- TRX
- Zumba
- SPINNING

The Exercise Science Club

Students pursuing a career in the field of Exercise Science are welcome and encouraged to join the Exercise Science Club! The purpose of the Exercise Science Club:

- Offer support and encouragement to students in the Exercise Science major.
- Create additional educational and career opportunities for Exercise Science students.
- Invite and visit guest speakers in various fields of exercise, health, nutrition and other allied health professions.
- Plan trips to professional places of business as well as workshops and conferences, which will both expand current knowledge of club members as well as allow them to network and engage with professionals.
- Promote exercise, health and wellness to all GRCC students, faculty and staff and to the community.
- Conduct regular informational and organizational meetings, social events and service learning opportunities benefiting the GRCC and surrounding community.

