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Department of Biokinetics Exercise Science Program  
Technical Standards Policy for Admission & Retention  
Consideration & Waiver to be signed by student

## I. Overview

The goal of the Exercise Science program is to prepare students for entry-level exercise science careers involving people on a broad continuum of health and physical fitness, and in a wide variety of settings. The Exercise Science program is formed on the biological and physiological sciences and focused on human work, which encompasses recreation, athletic competition, occupation and medical therapy. The rigorous curriculum build upon the foundational study of health, fitness concepts, and nutrition to lead students through the more advanced study of exercise biochemistry, physiology and prescription in populations that range from elite athlete to end-stage heart failure. Students in the Exercise Science program are required to acquire and integrate a large body of scientific knowledge, while simultaneously developing the clinical skills and abilities to include behaviors and attitudes, of entry level exercise specialists which were established by the American College of Sports Medicine. The program is enriched by major requirements that intentionally attend to written and verbal discourse in the discipline, and research literacy. Finally our mission is one of Christian service to our community, local and global, through faith, reason and justice. The Exercise Science program received accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) in September, 2009.

## II. Retention Requirements

Students are evaluated across academic and non-academic factors to insure that they can successfully perform the essential functions of the academic program required for graduation. Retention decisions made by the faculty are based on academic achievements as well as non-academic factors. The Exercise Science program meets our responsibility to society to graduate knowledgeable, competent and caring exercise specialists, by requiring that they meet academic standards as well as the essential functions of the program. Consistent performance across all of these domains is required to progress through the curriculum and to meet the requirements for graduation from the Exercise Science program. Policies and procedures for eligibility for graduation are located in the students Handbook: Requirements for Graduation. *Essential Functions* refer to acceptable demonstration of mastery and/or competence in various disciplines throughout the exercise science education program. Acceptable levels of mastery are judged by faculty members, examinations and other measurements of performance. These areas of competency are:

- Affective skills that include emotional, behavioral/social professionalism and cultural competence.
- Cognitive skills that include sufficient intellectual, conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities to make effective judgments about client management.

Motor skills that include the necessary psychomotor clinical skills for client care.

Sensory skills including perceptual and observation skills necessary for client care.

Communication skills including verbal (oral and written) and non-verbal abilities.

These essential functions are the aptitudes and abilities set forth by the ACSM that enable the exercise science specialist perform the necessary care to their clients.

### Students with Disabilities

It is our experience that individuals with disabilities (as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American Disabilities Act) may be qualified to study and practice exercise science with the use of reasonable accommodations. To be qualified to study exercise science at Eastern University, students must be able to meet both our academic standards and essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodations. Accommodation is viewed as a means of assisting students with disabilities to meet essential standards by providing them with an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of each course or clinical experience. (A reasonable accommodation is not intended to guarantee that students will be successful in meeting the requirements of any one course or internship).

### The Use of Auxiliary Aids and Intermediaries

Qualified students with documented disabilities, who are provided with reasonable accommodations, may use an intermediary or auxiliary aid. No disability can be reasonably accommodated with an intermediary



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that provides cognitive support or substitutes for essential clinical skills or supplements clinical and ethical judgments. Such reasonable accommodations should be designed to help the students meet learning outcomes without eliminating essential program elements or fundamentally altering the curriculum. Thus, accommodations cannot eliminate essential program elements or fundamentally alter the Exercise Science curriculum.

Procedure:

1. Upon the declaration of the major, all students must sign a form acknowledging that they have read and understand the essential functions.
2. Students who may have concerns about meeting these expectations are advised to meet with the Chair of the Department of Biokinetics.
3. If a student feels that he/she requires reasonable accommodation for didactics and/or clinical components of the program, he/she must contact the Cushing Center for Counseling and Academic Support before accommodations can be considered. Students who have a change in status at any point during their matriculation in the exercise science program requiring accommodation should begin this process at the time of status change.
4. Due to the time it takes to properly evaluate a student's needs and to implement reasonable accommodations, it is recommended that students request accommodations as early as possible. While it is possible that need for reasonable accommodation may arise unexpectedly, it is preferable to make a request for accommodation at least 30 days before the start of a course or internship.

### **Essential Functions:**

#### **Communication**

Use appropriate verbal, non-verbal and written communication with all individuals when engaged in exercise testing and prescription, research and education, including clients, families, care givers, practitioners, consumers and policy makers.

Verbal:

- Express own ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback.
- Receive and send verbal communication in emergency situations in a timely manner within the acceptable norms of a clinical setting.
- Analyze and communicate information on the client's status with accuracy in a timely manner, including seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills as needed for productive classroom discussion, respectful interaction with classmates and faculty and development of appropriate client-specialist relationships.
- Communicate clearly and audibly during interactions with classmates, professors, clients and members of the exercise staff.
- Listen attentively and actively in order to receive and interpret oral communication.
- Communicate effectively and sensitively in English with other students, faculty, clients, family and other professionals in both oral and written formats.
- Elicit a thorough history from clients and communicate findings in appropriate terms to clients and members of the health care team if necessary.

Written:

- Receive, write and interpret written communication in both academic and clinical settings.
- Read and record observations and plans legibly, efficiently and accurately in documents such as client's record which may be written or electronic.
- Complete reading assignments and search and evaluate the literature.
- Complete written assignments and maintain written records, including both handwritten and electronic.

Non-Verbal

- Establish rapport with client, caregivers and colleagues.
- Observe clients for the purposes of eliciting information; accurately describing changes in facial expression, mood, activity, and posture and perceiving non-verbal communication
- Use therapeutic communication such as attending, clarifying, coaching, facilitating and touching.

**Motor**

Students majoring in exercise science must possess a variety of gross and fine motor skills. These skills are reflective of the physical capacities required to perform the job of an exercise specialist in a wide variety of settings. Students must be able to:

- Maintain and assume a variety of positions including sitting for up to 2 hours continuously, frequent standings, walking, bending, squatting, kneeling, stair climbing, reaching forward, reaching overhead, turning and movement of the trunk and neck in all directions.
- Perform manual material handling and manipulations of various sizes and weights. Specific requirements include:
  - Safely lift twenty pounds independently
  - Safely push and pull up body weight
- Demonstrate strong bilateral grasp/upper and lower body strength to manipulate equipment and fine motor control to manipulate testing instruments/equipment/writing instruments/computers.
- Balance self and provide support and balance to clients on a variety of surfaces including level and uneven ground, ramps, curbs and stairs.
- Have sufficient endurance to continue performing a variety of exertional activities for up to 8 hours with occasional rest breaks.
- Respond quickly to emergency situations by lifting, pushing, pulling clients, applying force to perform CPR, assist with transporting clients.

**Sensory Abilities:** Includes the ability to **perceive** all information necessary for effective client management inclusive of functional use of vision, hearing and tactile sensations. During classroom, laboratory and experiential learning activities (including but not limited to one-on-one interactions, small group discussions and presentations, large group lectures, and client encounters) students must be able to perceive the presentation of information through:

- Visual observations of:
  - Audiovisual presentations and written material in lecture
  - Laboratory demonstrations and procedures
  - Clients (at a distance and in close proximity)



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- Treatment equipments, inclusive of textual and graphic readouts, and environment (at a distance and close at hand)
- Auditory ability for:
  - Effective auscultation/auditory evaluation of, but not limited to, heart and blood pressure
  - Environmental cues inclusive of, but not limited to: phones, overhead paging systems, verbal communication in a setting with competing ambient noise.
- Tactile ability for:
  - Appropriate feedback related to the safe application of gradient pressures during examination and intervention.
  - Appropriate feedback for manipulation of dials, sensors, switches on all examination and therapeutic equipment.

### Affective

Possess the emotional health required for the full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt and safe completion of all responsibilities attendant to exercise testing and prescription.

Maintain mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals in academic and clinical environments including highly stressful situations.

Possess the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and or in unpredictable ways.

Understand that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others.

Possess the ability to reason morally and practice exercise science in an ethical manner.

Demonstrate willingness to learn and abide by professional standards of practice

Possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, honesty, caring, fairness, responsibility, concern for others, accountability, interest, tolerance and motivation.

Interact effectively with individual, families and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds.

Acknowledge and respect individual values and opinions in order to foster harmonious working relationships with colleagues, peers and clients.

Demonstrate the ability to be self-reflective.

Maintain general good health, self care and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with which one interacts.

Possess adequate endurance to tolerate physically, emotionally and mentally taxing workloads and to function effectively under time restraints, proactively making use of available resources to help maintain both physical and mental health.

Accept suggestions and criticism and if appropriate, respond by modifying her/his behavior.

Demonstrate appropriate assertiveness, delegate responsibilities, and function as part an exercise science team.

### Cognitive

Students majoring in exercise science must possess sufficient intellectual – conceptual ability that includes the capacity to use integrative and quantitative abilities and make decisions. These cognitive skills are critical for the exercise specialist to make clinical decisions during the testing and development of exercise prescription.



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- Recall and retain information in an efficient manner in order to meet the minimal requirements of classroom and clinical environments to provide safe and effective client care.
- Gather information during client testing and throughout client management to make clinical decisions.
- Appraise information to determine appropriate tests and measures during the client examination.
- Evaluate the information learned from the client examination, including client history and any available medical, surgical and radiological information, to formulate goals and exercise prescription.
- Acknowledge the limitations of knowledge and/or performance in order to provide safe, effective client care including the necessity of referring the client to healthcare professionals.

**III. Certification**

I certify that I have read and understand the technical standards listed above (section II) and recognize that they must be satisfied in this educational program. If I need an adaptation or accommodation for this program based on disability, I will make an appointment with the Cushing Center for Academic Support for review of that request.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

