

Pedagogy to Involve Research Process in an Undergraduate Physical Fitness Course: A Case Study

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Abstract : Undergraduate research is well documented in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), neurosciences, and microbiology disciplines, though it is hardly part of a physical fitness & wellness discipline. However, students need experiential learning opportunities, like internships and research assistantships, to get ahead with graduate schools and be gainfully employed. The first step towards this goal is to have students do a simple research project in a semester-long course. The value of research experiences and how to integrate research activity in a physical fitness & wellness course are discussed. The investigator looks into a mini research project, "Awareness of Obesity among College Students" and explains how to guide students through the research process, including journal search, data collection, and basic statistics. Besides, students will be introduced to the statistical package program SPSS 22.0 to assist with data evaluation. The lab component of the combined lecture-physical activity course could include the measurement of student's weight with respect to their height to obtain body mass index (BMI). Students could categorize themselves in accordance with the World Health Organization's guidelines. Results obtained after completing the data analysis help students be aware of their own potential health risks associated with overweight and obesity. Overweight and obesity are risk factors for hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and certain types of cancer. It is hoped that this experience will get students interested in scientific studies, gain confidence, think critically, and develop problem-solving and good communication skills.

Keywords : physical fitness, undergraduate research experience, obesity, BMI

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