Exercise & Sport Science

Western’s Exercise & Sport Science program prepares you for careers promoting healthy lifestyles and enhancing performance in exercise, sports and physical activity.

What Is the Western Difference?

In Western’s Exercise & Sport Science program, you’ll find:

- The High Altitude Performance Laboratory.
- Caring, student-centered faculty, who have a wide range of expertise and professional experience.
- Small classes that ensure individual attention.
- Multiple opportunities for hands-on learning and research.
- Professional networking, including conferences and internships.
- Strong connections to graduate programs.

Our program offers four emphases: Clinical Exercise Science, Health Fitness, K-12 Physical Education and Sport & Fitness Management. Students prepare to lead in fitness, wellness and sport programs in the private and public sectors, through practicums, internships and field experiences. We have placed students in hospitals, assisted living centers, adaptive sport programs, worksite health programs, commercial fitness centers, sport and exercise laboratories, community parks and recreation, and intercollegiate and professional sport organizations.

Quick Facts

- Western is the only school in Colorado offering a “3+1” agreement with the Palmer College of Chiropractic. Students complete their Western degrees after their first year Palmer.

- Wellness Elevated, an exercise program for community members, allows students to work under faculty supervision with people at risk of cardiac or related diseases.

- Students work with local nonprofit organizations, such as Gunnison community schools and Gunnison Parks & Recreation.

- Learning opportunities include trips to Olympic training facilities and professional sport venues.

- Our student organization, ASSESS, meets regularly for social events and to discuss current research. Members also attend professional conferences.

More Information: 800.876.5309 | admissions@western.edu
What Skills Will I Learn?

The Exercise & Sport Science Program prepares you to earn a teaching license, or complete nationally accredited certifications.

You’ll build communication, critical thinking, writing and problem-solving skills.

Students play key roles in our High Altitude Performance Laboratory through coursework, volunteer work and undergraduate research opportunities. They work with all ages to develop and implement evidence-based activity and nutrition plans for healthy living.

The Sport & Fitness Management emphasis focuses on the business of sport and fitness, including marketing, promotions, event and facility management.

What Can I Do With My Degree?

Exercise & Sport Science graduates find internships and careers in teaching, fitness, sport administration and wellness, in both the private and public sectors.

Opportunities after graduation include:
- Personal trainer.
- Cardiac rehabilitation athletic trainer.
- Strength and conditioning specialist.
- Sports marketing/logistics.
- Sports organization operations.
- Physical education teacher.
- Sport coach.
- Adult fitness specialist.
- Military fitness specialist.
- Worksite health promotion.

Many pursue graduate degrees in physical therapy, exercise physiology, nutrition, athletic training, cardiac rehabilitation, sport psychology, teacher education, sport administration, physical education, special education, biomechanics, physician’s assistant, accelerated nursing, occupational therapy and other allied health fields.

Meet Tara Richardson

Tara Richardson grew up in the small town of Wiggins, Colo., and was looking for a university that would help ease her transition. Western and Gunnison fit the bill, and an enthusiastic Exercise & Sport Science professor won her over on a campus visit.

“I remember how passionate and excited he was about his work and the program,” Richardson says.

She found Western’s hands-on education a big plus, especially in the High Altitude Performance Laboratory. Richardson conducted research, stress tests and fitness assessments, wrote manuscripts, and worked through the publication process.

“Most students do not get this type of experience until they begin graduate school,” she says.

Richardson is pursuing a master’s degree in health and exercise science at Wake Forest University. Her goal is to teach at the university level. She sees a doctoral degree in her future.

“Ideally, I would return to Colorado,” Richardson says, “hopefully, to Gunnison.”