

# Health and Wellness A Graduate Course Syllabus

Teacher Education Institute ©

## Course Description

There is a fundamental and universal shift underway in education for more engaging and dynamic learning environments. Building proactive connections between movement and learning reaches across grade levels and curriculums. This course weaves together learning and movement with the portable life skills of health, nutrition, and wellness. Healthy students are more attentive, connected, happier and better equipped to make positive choices. Because teachers are on the front line, seeing students every day, they are in the best position to create and reinforce these healthy habits.

In this course educators will expand their knowledge and understanding of current mind and body-friendly techniques for encouraging healthy student development including movement, nutrition, social-emotional intelligence and managing stress more effectively. Educators will find tips and information to initiate, manage and organize a kinesthetic-friendly classroom, build a cohesive and safe learning environment that adapts to grade and ability levels, and enhance neural connections.

Kinesthetic education is not just for Physical Education and Health departments, it opens the conversation to overall wellness and a wholistic approach to the student, the school and the community. Participants in this course will discover practical, clearly explained movements and activities that will spark optimal learning opportunities. In this course educators will explore how to successfully integrate health, nutrition and wellness across multiple subject areas.

In this course educators will also learn how to integrate healthy lifestyle choices to address head-on the issue of childhood inactivity and obesity. Childhood obesity has tripled in the 30 years between 1985 and 2015. The course will investigate the underlying causes of obesity, including changes in eating habits and food availability, and the lack of movement both in and outside of school.

The course will also introduce and examine mental health issues in the Covid and Post-Covid era, explore the concept of self-esteem, worth and value. Creating greater class cohesion and participation along with connecting the core curriculum to life outside the classroom will be addressed.

## Required Text

Kuczala, M., Lengel T. (2018). Ready, Set, Go!: The Kinesthetic Classroom 2.0. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. [ISBN-13: 978-1-5063-6583-1]

## Websites

Action for Healthy Kids <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/blog/>

Action-Based Learning <https://www.youthfit.com/>

Open Colleges Learning Hub <https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/>

Shape American Teachers Toolbox <https://www.shapeamerica.org/>

Healthy Schools Campaign <https://healthyschoolscampaign.org/>

## **Learner Outcomes**

Students will:

- Examine the state of schools and students in terms of wellness
- Be introduced to the concept of the kinesthetic educator
- Discover how movement (both fine and gross motor) impacts learning
- Determine and assess several approaches to bringing movement into the classroom
- Understand the scope of the problem of childhood obesity
- Outline the link between nutrition and attention
- Enhance understanding of the cost/benefit analysis of food choices
- Create an environment for social-emotional intelligence in the classroom
- Review how to create, nurture and grow positive relationships
- Recognize the precursors to mental health issues
- Manage mental well-being and self-care today and in the future
- Address the impact of stress on the mind and body
- Examine the six components of wellness
- Create a safe and cohesive learning environment
- Connect the core curriculum to life outside the classroom
- Develop an action strategy for creating greater overall wellness

## **Course Requirements**

Health and Wellness is a 45-hour, three credit graduate level course completed over 2 weekends or 5 consecutive days.

## **Student Requirements**

1. Participation: Actively participate in all activities
2. Reading assignments: Complete all readings and reflection assignments

## **Course Evaluation**

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>	
Participation	25	95-88	A
Assignments	45	87-81	B
Final Project	25	80-73	C
Total Points	95		

## **Student Academic Integrity**

Participants guarantee that all academic class work is original. Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism (to take ideas, writings, etc. from another and offer them as one's own), is a violation of student academic behavior standards as outlined by our partnering colleges and universities and are subject to disciplinary action.

## **Course Schedule**

**Session One: Assessing the health and wellness of students in today's classroom**

**Contents:**

1. Examine the state of schools and students in terms of wellness
2. Review the strengths of today's educational system
3. Scrutinize the weaknesses (real and perceived)
4. Introduce the concept of the Kinesthetic Educator
5. Introduce the opportunity to lead by example
6. Being authentic and truth telling in today's world of social media dominance
7. Discover what you hope to learn and achieve in this course by setting specific SMART and action-based goals.

**Session Two: Making the case for the Kinesthetic Educator****Contents:**

1. Discover how movement (both fine and gross motor) impacts learning
2. Develop strategies to introduce a movement mindset.
3. Practical tips for the action-based classroom
4. Review the benefits of an engaged and dynamic classroom
5. The concept of side benefits vs. side effects to action-based learning
6. Determine and assess several approaches to bringing movement into your classroom

**Session Three: The epidemic of childhood obesity****Contents:**

1. Understand the scope of the problem of childhood obesity in today's youth
2. Determine what constitutes obesity (various metrics)
3. Review eating habits and the concept of calories
4. Examine and critique school meal choices and at home
5. Address the role of advertising on food choices and making more informed choices
6. Go deeper into the relationship between diet, movement and metabolism
7. Set and track goals related to weight and wellness

**Session Four: The role of nutrition in learning****Contents:**

1. Outline the key terms in nutrition
2. The link between nutrition and attention
3. Explore what "eating right" looks and feels like
4. Examine why nutrition is a factor in learning
5. Address how nutrition awareness benefits the teacher, the student and their learning
6. Enhance understanding of the cost/benefit analysis of food choices

**Session Five: Social-emotional intelligence as a critical skill****Contents:**

1. Define Emotional Intelligence
2. Create the environment for social intelligence in the classroom
3. Emotional intelligence and stress management as it relates to learning

4. The five components of social-emotional learning
5. Effective communication tips
6. Social-emotional intelligence in the classroom and community
7. Review how to create, nurture and grow positive relationships

### **Session Six: Mental health issues (in the Covid and post-Covid era)**

#### **Contents:**

1. An overview of mental health issues in k-12
2. Recognizing the precursors to mental health issues
3. Enhance knowledge of mental health to better identify the warning signs
4. What are the main mental health concerns in the Covid and post-Covid era?
5. Manage mental well-being and self-care today and in the future
6. Wellness as a portable life skill

### **Session Seven: Stress and self-esteem**

#### **Contents:**

1. Explore the concept of self esteem beyond participation trophies
2. Examine coping tools
3. Reveal how to mitigate negative events
4. The impact of stress on learning: body and mind
5. Identify and developing competencies
6. Identify and improving weaknesses
7. Affirm value and worth

### **Session Eight: The mind-body connection**

#### **Contents:**

1. Introduce the mind-body connection to the classroom and learning
2. Explore relaxation techniques
3. Create and reinforce a healthy mindset and habits
4. The physical presence of emotions
5. Mindfulness and living with intention vs. impulse
6. The six components of wellness
7. Mind-body integration moving forward

### **Session Nine: Creating greater class cohesion**

#### **Contents:**

1. Creating a safe and cohesive learning environment
2. Establishing rapport with any school population
3. The importance of participation in the activities (and making it safe to participate)
4. Defining goals and values and a mission for the class
5. Steps to build trust
6. Establishing class-wide check-ins to evaluate progress

## **Session Ten: Action strategies for whole communities, schools and students**

### **Contents:**

1. Adapting movement in the classroom to ability levels, grades and curriculums
2. Connect the core curriculum to life outside the classroom
3. Identify and be inclusive of community stakeholders
4. Create a community resources map
5. Reflecting on SMART and action-based goals from the beginning of and beyond this course
6. Develop an action strategy for creating greater wellness