



National Association for
Sport and Physical Education

*an association of the American Alliance for Health,
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*

NASPE Sets the Standard

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Suggested Guidelines for Teaching Undergraduate History of Physical Education and Sport In a Physical Education Teacher Education Program

Introduction: Why Study the History of Physical Education and Sport

Studying the historical antecedents of physical education and sport typically forms part of the curriculum of physical education teacher education (PETE) programs in U.S. colleges and universities. These courses commonly use a survey model, briefly examining the development of organized physical education and sport practices and programs from prehistoric times to the present.

Considering the breadth of such courses, both in terms of detail and extent of body of knowledge, NASPE has prepared these guidelines to provide PETE students with theoretical and practical knowledge about the history of the discipline. This document is intended to provide a template for faculty members teaching PETE students, and it identifies minimum competencies for students pursuing careers in this field.

A course in the history of physical education and sport should raise students' awareness of the role of the profession in broader social and cultural history. Reading about, analyzing and reflecting critically on the profession's evolution expands students' abilities to present information publicly about the profession (an important and often necessary skill in times of economic constraints on physical education).

Of current salience is the physical educator's ability to examine critically and engage in the popular discussions of obesity, chronic diseases such as diabetes and the growing awareness of the consequences of childhood sedentary behavior. Issues, such as inactive lifestyles and obesity have historical precedence and context; the informed PETE graduate benefits from being well-prepared for engaging in and guiding an effective response to these issues.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Linkages

Traditionally, the study of history comprises a significant component of a student's general education requirements and serves as a foundation for this course. History can bring to the present important insights and information that can be useful in forming better understandings

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of today's issues and problems. A more insightful understanding of those issues helps shape a more intelligent and positive future. A historical framework is important for examining events and ideas and putting them into the broader social, cultural, political and economic context within which they arose, grew and changed.

Knowing the history of physical education and sport allows PETE majors to link what they have learned in their general education history experience to the study of the discipline and its professional past. The study of history explores not only the journey of the discipline and profession, but it also examines the historical underpinnings of the profession and each culture's relationship to physical education and sport.

Guidelines (Minimum Exit Outcomes)

Basic Concepts in the Study of the History of Physical Education and Sport

Sport and physical education history should be studied chronologically beginning with the ancient world to present-day events. Specific emphasis should be placed on American development of physical education and sport. Each era should include historical events, significant people who have influenced the discipline, and institutions that have helped shape the profession today. It is important that students learn to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of descriptive and interpretive research and an understanding of historical research, change, and progress. PETE graduates who complete a study of the history of physical education and sports should be able to demonstrate knowledge about these chronological concepts.

Physical Education and Sport in the Ancient World (3000 – 1500 B.C.)

1. Early civilizations, including Sumerian, Mesopotamian, Persian, Egyptian, Minorian, Mycenaean and Mesoamerican.
2. Contributions from China.
3. India's role in sport development.

Physical Education and Sport in the Greek Civilization (circa 900 – 400 B.C.)

1. The age of Homer and the significance of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* and their accounts of sport competition.
2. The Greek city-states of Sparta and Athens and their contributions to physical development and sports.
3. Pan-Hellenic festivals, with an emphasis on the characteristics and events of the Olympic Games.
4. The Greek physician Hippocrates, often called "the father of medicine," who observed that health is affected by diet and exercise.
5. The philosopher Plato, who distinguished gymnastics (physical education) from athletics in *The Republic* and set forth his views regarding exercise and diet in *The Laws*.
6. Aristotle, who stated in Book 8 of *Politics*: "It is an admitted principle that gymnastic exercises [physical education] should be employed in education."

Physical Education and Sport in Rome (500 B.C. – A.D. 500)

1. The role of physical development during Rome's Republic age.
2. Romans' desire for spectator sports, including chariot races and massive gladiator events during Rome's Empire age.

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3. Claudius Galen, the Roman Empire's most famous physician, who devoted an entire section of his *De Sanitate Tuenda* to exercise.

Physical Education and Sport in the Middle Ages (900 – 1400)

1. Knights and their involvement in hunting, jousts and tournaments during the time of feudalism.
2. Significance of the Roman Catholic Church's desire to dominate the world, which influenced historical events such as the Crusades and how that affected the development of physical education and sport.

Physical Education and Sport in the Renaissance and Reformation (1400 – 1600)

1. The change from a feudalistic society to one that was more nationalized.
2. The emphasis on health and the human body.
3. How Protestant sects relegated body development to an inferior position and endeavored to curb worldly pleasures, leading to expansion of the Protestant work ethic into North American colonies.
4. How education leaders and philosophers influenced attitudes toward and programs of physical education and sport.
5. English physician William Harvey, who discovered that blood circulated throughout the body and was vivified by the lungs, a major step in opening the way for further discoveries in physiology.

Physical Education and Sport in the Age of Enlightenment (1600-1800)

1. How the age of science influenced an increase in knowledge and rationalism, including John Locke's writing in *The Social Contract*. How naturalism arose, as espoused by Jean Jacques Rousseau through his writing of *Emile*, in which he gave considerable attention to play and exercise.
2. The emphasis on naturalism in the programs of Johann Basedow at the Philanthropinum and Christian Salzmann and Johann Friedrich GutsMuths at Schnepfenthal Institute. GutsMuths set forth a systematic approach to gymnastic exercises in his book *Gymnastics for Youth*.
3. The development of nationalistic Danish gymnastics under Franz Nachtegall at the Military Gymnastic Institute.
4. The development of nationalist, medical and aesthetic Swedish gymnastics under Per Henrik Ling at the Royal Gymnastics Central Institute.
5. Jan Comenius, called "the father of modern education," who advocated for a universal system of education. In his book *The School of Infancy*, he gave considerable attention to exercise and simple games for children and youths.

Physical Education and Sport in Europe in the 1800s

1. The development of the nationalistic Turner gymnastics by Friedrich Jahn, known as the "Father of German Gymnastics." Jahn saw physical development of the German people as a way to foster both physical strength and nationalism.
2. The development and spread of school gymnastics in Denmark, Sweden and Germany, as developed by Franz Nachtegall, Adolph Spiess and Hjalmar Ling, respectively.
3. The development of modern sports in England and their affect on sports in the United States. The rise of the "gentleman amateur" approach to games-playing, which emerged at English public schools such as Eton and Rugby during the mid-1800s, profoundly influenced sports associated with U.S. schools and colleges.

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4. Influence of the English public school games-playing ethos on Pierre de Coubertin and the development of the modern Olympic Games.

Physical Education and Sport in the United States (1700s-1800s)

1. How early settlers survived through hunting, fishing and work-related recreation, while various groups such as the Dutch and settlers in Virginia favored sports such as bowling and horse racing.
2. The British heritage of sports, such as rounders, cricket, boxing and track and field, as brought to the United States.
3. Catharine Beecher's system of calisthenics and whom it influenced. She wrote *A Manual of Physiology and Calisthenics for Schools and Families* and included daily exercise at the girls' seminaries she founded.
4. How Dioclesian Lewis popularized a system of light gymnastics at the Normal Institute for Physical Education, where he trained teachers.
5. The introduction of German gymnastics in the United States, where it became a significant part of the physical education curriculum in the United States from the 1880s to the 1920s.
6. Hitchcock's system of health and physical education at Amherst College.
7. The characteristics of Sargent's system and his professional programs at Harvard College.
8. The introduction of Swedish gymnastics in the United States, where it became a significant part of the physical education curriculum from the 1880s to the 1920s.
9. Many early leaders in the profession held medical degrees demonstrating the close allegiance between health and physical activity at this time.
10. Battle of the systems.

Physical Education and Sport in the United States (1900s)

1. The establishment and growth of today's American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. Nine of the first 10 presidents were medical doctors.
2. The establishment of professional organizations such as the American College of Sports Medicine, the National Athletic Trainers' Association and the National Strength and Conditioning Association.
3. Transitional stages and the legacy of the playground movement.
4. The Public Schools Athletic League, which began interscholastic sport competitions for boys.
5. The development of amateur sports.
6. Key developments in the history of men's intercollegiate athletics.
7. The history of women's physical education, the beginnings of competitive sports and the impact of Title IX on competitive sport opportunities for girls and women.
8. Federal legislation requiring equal education opportunities for all students.

Physical Education and Sport in the United States (2000s-present)

1. Outstanding leaders such as Luther Gulick, Thomas Wood, Clark Hetherington, Jay Nash and Jesse Williams and their emphasis on play, recreation and education outcomes linked with physical education.
2. Charles McCloy, the person who advocated for the education of the physical
3. The transitional stages and legacies of the fitness movement, including establishment of the President's Council on Youth Fitness, development and administration of the AAHPER Youth Fitness Test, development of the AAHPERD Health-Related Physical Fitness Test and collaboration of Physical Best with Fitnessgram

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4. Major developments in the provision of equal education opportunity in physical education and sports for people with special needs.

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