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Post-Secondary Students' Report on Physical Literacy and Living a Health-Enhancing, Physically Active Lifestyle

Mindy Welch

Butler University, mwelch@butler.edu

Lisa Farley

Butler University, lfarley@butler.edu

Philip Villani

Butler University, pvillani@butler.edu

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Title: Post-Secondary Students’ Report on Physical Literacy and Living a Health-Enhancing, Physically Active Lifestyle

Authors: Dr. Mindy M. Welch, Dr. Lisa A. Farley, Dr. Philip Villani

Institution: Butler University, Indianapolis, IN

PURPOSE: Physical education requirements at four-year American colleges and universities declined to 39.55% in 2010, an all-time low compared with 97% in the 1920’s (Cardinal, Sorensen, & Cardinal, 2012). The purpose of this study was to assess college students’ expectations and experiences of a Physical Well Being (PWB) requirement at a small Midwestern liberal arts university. **METHOD:** 506 students enrolled in 22 spring 2015 PWB courses responded to expectations (n = 260, 66%) and experiences (n = 246, 62%) surveys. Two PWB student learning outcomes (SLOs) framed the surveys: (1) to develop life-long habits of good health and physical activity, and (2) to increase awareness of the centrality of health and wellness for a pursuit of a good life. The survey comprised 42, 5-point Likert scale items aligned with the SLOs. A 75% response rate at scale level 4 or greater represents meeting the SLOs. **RESULTS:** Expectations: mean scores indicate high interest in staying fit and healthy (98%), maintaining a healthy lifestyle (96%), feeling less tension and stress (90%), expanding interest in staying fit and healthy (86%), expanding health-related knowledge and skills (86%), overall physical and psychological wellness (93%), optimal health and vitality (88%), physical activity and wellness (92%), and motivation for positive behavior change (87%). Experiences: 67% of responses indicated level 4 or higher interest for fitness, knowledge and skills development. The experiences survey indicated increased neutral responses. **CONCLUSIONS:** Survey results document the fidelity of requiring college students’ academic pursuit of physical literacy, health-enhancing and physically active lifestyles