

To: Members of the Academic Senate

From: Tim VanHaitsma, Chair, Department of Kinesiology

Re: Proposed changes to Kinesiology major requirements – both tracks

Date: February 7, 2023

Dear Academic Senate Members,

The faculty of the Department of Kinesiology is proposing to one class change to the general Kinesiology major, that will have ramifications on both tracks within our major. We are proposing to increase the unit count of Motor Behavior from its current 2 credits, to a proposed 4 unit class. These proposed changes are the result of discussion among our faculty in the fall, and as a result of hiring Isaac Gomez this past year, who has a specialty in Motor Behavior, Control, and Learning. In addition, these proposed changes will better prepare our students for graduate study, and achieve a better alignment with our peer institutions. These changes are shown explicitly in the relevant *Westmont Academic Catalog* sections included with this proposal, but they can be summarized below:

Replace KNS185 Motor Behavior (2) with KNS185 (4). This better serves our majors as it allows a greater in-depth exploration of all motor behavior, learning, and control topics. One of the major complaints from students in past years for this class was the extremely fast pace, as the instructor tried to include as much information as possible. By increasing the unit count, Isaac Gomez is able to include more topics related to motor control and motor learning, increasing the breadth of the information, while also still retaining much of the depth of the original information. In addition, by increasing the in-class time, he can add active-learning modules – or in-class laboratory sessions – that will better increase student learning, interest, and retention of the information.

This proposed change has relatively little impact on our departmental teaching load, as Isaac Gomez was also teaching a separate Motor Learning class (KNS 145 (2)) in the fall, so it increases his total load by 2 credits. We, as a department, are able to shift classes around, with each of us taking a few of the PEA-032 Fit for Life classes, which will allow Isaac to seamlessly teach these classes.

This proposed change does have some ramifications for our major. For the Movement and Exercise Science BS Track, we would propose increasing the total unit count from 51 to 53 units. As this is one of the smaller BS majors within the Natural and Behavioral Science Division, we feel that this change will be minimal for our students, and will not affect graduation times/rates, nor will it affect the ability of our students to take GE courses or other classes that pique their interest.

However, we do feel as there are some major ramifications for our Movement and Medical Sciences BS Track. This track serves to house those students who are interested in pursuing medical school utilizing a kinesiology background. Currently, this track has a unit requirement of 79 units as there are 45 credits due to MCAT requirements. However, this track is also of interest to those wanting to pursue graduate school in exercise physiology/motor control/biomechanics. The two-credit increase in motor behavior better serves to prepare our students for future studies. To handle the two-credit change to Motor Behavior, we offer two potential solutions:

- 1) Be forthright with our students as they think about the unit count necessary for either medical school or most graduate programs within the exercise physiology context and simply add the two credits to the track. This would make the track require 81 credits to graduate.
- 2) If the previous unit count is too high, we propose that we remove General Psychology and Physics for Life Sciences I and II (and associate 1 cr lab) from the "Medical Science Courses" which would reduce the unit count from 45 to 32 credits in this category. With the increase in Motor Behavior from 2 credits to 4 credits, the new overall major count would be 68 credits/units. Physics for Life Sciences and General Psychology would still be recommended to students on this track as these classes are required for the MCAT, but they would no longer be part of the requirements.

I look forward to the discussion with the Academic Senate, and please let me know if you have questions or concerns with this proposal. I would be happy to discuss them with you further.

Respectfully,

Tim VanHaitsma