"ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS" OF PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY

According to [Lakehead University Policy on Accommodations and Access for Students with Disabilities/Medical Conditions](#), Essential Requirements are "the bona fide requirements of a task, course or program that cannot be altered without compromising the fundamental nature of the task, course or program." Furthermore, essential requirements "…legitimately cannot be accommodated because it is necessary that the person perform the task in a particular way or via particular methods or equipment, which could preclude a given accommodation" (Roberts, Mohler, Levy-Pinto, Nieder, Duffett, & Sukhai, n.d.)

To be considered "essential," the following criteria must be met
1. the knowledge or skill must be demonstrated to meet the learning outcomes of the course or program; and
2. the knowledge or skill must be demonstrated in a prescribed manner.

A. Group work

The undergraduate programs offered by the School of Kinesiology place high importance on, among other things, group work and collaborative skills. Group work can be defined as more than one person working together to complete a task or assignment. Almost every required course incorporates some element of group work in assignments and/or lab settings. Furthermore, multiple courses rely on group work to meet our learning objectives e.g., KINE 1110, KINE1711, KINE3610, KINE3710, KINE4193, KINE4710, KINE4230, KINE4310, KINE4015, etc.

As noted on the Lakehead University School of Kinesiology website, [undergraduate program learner outcomes](#), one of the key learning objectives of the programs is to "Engage effectively with other students in group learning processes". We make note of this learning objective in program reviews such as for Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators (CCUPEKA) accreditation and for Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) reviews. Group learning is also further justified by the recognition that Kinesiology is a regulated health profession and our graduates need the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively in a team environment with other health professionals. As a School, we also aspire to meet the competencies described by the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (2010). There are six competency domains outlined in the document: 1) interprofessional communication, 2) patient/client/family /community-centred care, 3) role clarification, 4) team functioning, 5) collaborative leadership, and 6) interprofessional conflict resolution. Group work throughout the curriculum allows our students to have the experiential

education necessary to appreciate and develop competencies within these domains. For these reasons we also consider community engagement an "essential requirement".

B. Community-based learning

Community-based learning refers to a variety of instructional methods that connect what is being taught to the surrounding community (What is Community-Based Learning?, n.d.). The School of Kinesiology engages in community-based learning for a number of courses, for example KINE 1110, KINE 1711, KINE 3070, KINE 3010, KINE 3011, KINE 3134, KINE 3135, KINE 3230, KINE 4113, KINE 4193, KINE 4230, KINE 4712, KINE 4713. Working with the community is an example of the experiential education necessary to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively in a team environment. Community work is also an example of a High Impact Practice (NSSE, n.d.), which is being promoted by the National Survey of Student Engagement and is explicitly noted as a metric of Lakehead University's Strategic Plan (2018-2023), i.e., 100% of senior-year students will have participated in a High-Impact Practice (HIPs) by 2023. Making community engagement an essential requirement also brings the School of Kinesiology in line with the Ontario Ministry of Education statement on Experiential Learning (n.d.), that "Today's students need learning that goes beyond the classroom". Because of their importance and consistent presence in the kinesiology undergraduate programs, group work/collaboration, and community-based learning are considered Essential Requirements.

According to Roberts et al, (n.d.), the following questions should be addressed when considering essential requirements:

1. What is being tested?
A number of skills are assessed via group work. These include, but are not limited to, the ability to work effectively in a team environment; interpersonal and communication skills; conflict resolution (i.e. the ability to resolve differences collaboratively); and project management and organizational skills. A good example where these skills are brought to the fore is KINE4230 which is the 4th year research project. In this class students work collaboratively to develop, discuss, and carry out a research project.

Community-based learning provides an environment to evaluate the aforementioned skills in authentic, real-world settings relevant to the field of Kinesiology. For example, KINE4113 - Lifestyle Counselling is a mandatory course during which students' in-class learning is applied in a real life setting through interviewing a community professional. This allows students to develop their communication skills while also providing a professional example of an individual working within Kinesiology or a related field. Additionally, another mandatory course, KINE1711 - Movement Observation &

Assessment, requires students to engage with different populations from the community in order to apply assessment skills related to different ages across the lifespan. This would not be possible without engagement with the community.

2. What is the nature of the task?

Students engage in group work and community-based learning to become familiar with course materials, to engage in hands-on learning experiences, and to produce assignments that show their understanding of course content. The competencies we are striving to instill around group work would be captured by the six competency domains articulated above by the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (CIHC). A few specific examples of the nature of group work and/or community engagement are provided below:

Kinesiology 1110 – Foundations in Kinesiology

The course material associated with KINE1110 is delivered in a lecture format and in a weekly laboratory. The weekly laboratory serves to provide students a practical learning experience where they are able to synthesize and consolidate their learning related to complex constructs reviewed in lecture. The laboratory component constitutes a critical component of the course, where laboratory assignments and a final exam represent at least 35% of the final course grade. The laboratory assignments are performed in groups of 3-4 students and require an applied component where students are required to work together to conduct an assessment and/or implement a corresponding intervention. The groups complete a report that requires elevated consolidation of concepts reviewed. This group work is performed as collaborative learning where students interact, collaborate, and leverage competencies. Working in groups in this context provides opportunity for students to learn how to inquire, share ideas, clarify differences, problem solve, and identify new perspectives of understanding (Gillies & Boyle, 2011). The implications for kinesiology students within the context are important as kinesiology undergraduate programs provide the training platform for students to practice kinesiology and/or to apply to other health care professions (i.e. physiotherapy, occupational therapy, medicine). The skills learned in groups in KINE1110 provide students with the foundation within which to work in these transdisciplinary teams and to provide the best possible interventions for their clients and/or patients as they learn to actively communicate, problem-solve, identify differences, and arrive at a common understanding.

Kinesiology 1711 – Movement Observation & Assessment

Students engage in group work to complete assignments and experiential learning opportunities. These groups typically consist of 4-5 students. Additionally, the majority of this group work takes place either at community-based locations, e.g., daycare,

elementary school, high school, or with community members at the Lakehead University campus. Group work is necessary for movement assessment because there are numerous roles and responsibilities related to the process, e.g., demonstrating, observing, recording, spotting, etc. It is not possible for one individual to perform all of these requirements simultaneously. Additionally, the "spotter" role, specifically, represents an important component of creating a safe environment for students and participants. Group work also provides the opportunity for students to learn performance and assessment skills prior to completing assignments by reviewing and completing skills before engaging with any "real" participants; group members are required to simulate the formal assessment environment. This format also allows for collaborative learning, where students are able to share and discuss different perspectives and aspects of movement observation, as well as share the responsibilities of writing reports between group members. The workload associated with completion of each lab report is significant, and would be unrealistic to assign to an individual alone. Finally, group work contributes to the development of important foundational skills related to the field of Kinesiology, including cooperation, communication, problem-solving, leadership, time management, and accountability.

Community-based learning provides students with the opportunity to assess a variety of populations, e.g., infants, children, adolescents, and older adults. This is important because motor development capabilities change across the lifespan as well as vary between individuals. This format also allows students to connect in-course learning with experiential learning. Engaging with different populations reflects information from KINE1711 as well as KINE1035 – Physical Growth & Motor Development, another required course for our undergraduate Kinesiology degree programs. Learning with and within the community simulates realistic professional experiences in the field of kinesiology, e.g., movement observation in different locations and environments with a diverse variety of individuals. Community-based learning also contributes to the development of important foundational skills related to the field of kinesiology, including communication, leadership, adaptability, critical thinking, professionalism, and instruction.

Kinesiology 1113: The Principles of Health
Students enrolled in this first year course are required to create and deliver orally a group-based poster presentation for their peers. In order to promote autonomy, students are responsible for selecting their own group members at the mid-point of the course (3-5 depending on class size). The purpose of the assignment is to create a scholarly piece of work representing an issue pertaining to the personal determinants of health. The goals of the group-based format include: promote an environment of collegiality; enhance communication and interpersonal skills (in anticipation of subsequent work in future courses and in the workplace post-graduation); and foster a

community of tolerance and respect for the views, work habits, and personalities of others. More specifically, the nature of this type of work necessitates coordination of schedules, ongoing communication, balancing different and evolving leadership styles, and negotiating content in service of creating a quality final product. These are essential life skills that also apply to working in the field of kinesiology/health care beyond degree completion.

Kinesiology 3134 and 3135: Musculoskeletal Injuries I and II
The weekly practical labs in this course are carried out in groups of 2-3 students and is a requirement of the course. The nature of the assessment skills taught requires a hands on and interactive approach that spans the assessment of the hip, knee, foot and ankle, shoulder, elbow, wrist and hands. Students will act as the model for their partner to complete the assessment technique after the instructor has demonstrated the required task. At the end of the course and as part of the mark for the course, an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) is undertaken by each student who completes the assessment process on a model and is evaluated on this by the instructor. The intent of this process is also to prepare students that are interested in pursuing post professional training in medicine, physiotherapy, chiropractic, and occupational therapy where a licensing examination is required in order to practice. This is a very important introduction to that process in a much more interactive learning environment. The group work also aligns with the material covered in the didactic lectures and required weekly readings.
A similar approach and requirement is used in KINE 3135 but applied to the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine regional assessment. In KINE 3135, students are also required to complete a group paper in groups of 2-4 students depending on the class size. This paper is a narrative literature review and is used to demonstrate how a team of individuals sometimes is required to complete a report on patients in which multiple disciplines complete various sections but together make up a comprehensive report. The teamwork, challenges with scheduling and communication, and merging of different writing styles so that a cohesive report is presented are the skills that this assignment hopefully achieves.

Kinesiology 3230 Research Methods in Kinesiology
Students enrolled in this third year course are required to collaborate in small groups of 3-4 (depending on class size) for one major assignment (or two if they choose this format for their final research proposal) including a "mock ethics" submission. Because this third year course is intended to prepare students for completion of a group-based thesis project in fourth year, the inclusion of this group-based format is integral for exposing the students to the nuances of working with others in a research capacity. Similar to Kinesiology 1113, the goals of the group-based format include:

promote an environment of collegiality; enhance and refine communication and interpersonal skills (in preparation for work in future courses and in the workplace post-graduation); and foster a community of tolerance and respect for the views, work habits, and personalities of others.

Kinesiology 4230 Team Research Project
Students in this required course complete an entire research project in groups of ~3 students/group. A key learning outcome is to work collaboratively within a group to develop, discuss, and carry out a research project. While all of the aforementioned CIHC competencies are important, one example could be conflict resolution. With a year-long project, conflict among group members is almost inevitable. Learning to deal with this conflict in a healthy way is crucial. Students learn how to handle conflict in a respectful and positive way. Community engagement is also stressed as data collection (i.e. often with participants from the community) allows students to practice these skills in real world settings. In other words, this is an example of a High Impact Practice.

3. Does it have to be done in only one way?
Yes.

4. If so, why?
Students must participate in group work and community-based learning in order to learn the aforementioned skills. Additionally, a number of other skills explored via group work are done so because of logistical as well as safety considerations. One example, of many, is KINE3010 - Exercise Physiology, where physiological assessments (i.e. the VO_2 max lab) are performed as a team with different students assuming different roles (monitoring heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen consumption, and perceived exertion, while other students are responsible for spotting should the participant stumble while running on the treadmill). Teamwork is critical to efficient, safe, and accurate data collection. Furthermore, experiences like the VO_2 max lab allow students to use laboratory resources efficiently as well as be exposed to unique and high-quality technological tools to gain research and clinical skills.

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