

College Fitness-A Blog

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

By

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Signed

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Abstract:

Fitness and staying active has been a part of society for the past few decades. Many people choose this route as a way to relieve stress, while others choose to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Many college students are excellent at certain aspects of staying healthy, while performing poorly on others. Exercise science students are asked quite often how to get around some of the biggest fitness issues that are seen in college and also in after college plans. With the ever-increasing dependence of technology in the classroom and with the increase in the younger generations' use of technology, I chose to write a blog. The website for this particular blog is <https://collegefitness2015.wordpress.com/> and is a culmination of ten fitness topics that I chose to write about. By taking these ten topics, I hoped to reach out to as many students as possible, both at this university and at others, to try and combat the increasing obesity rate and also the increasing sedentary lifestyles among young adults and adults respectively.

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This first piece that I decided to write had been a work in progress since determining what I was going to do for my honors thesis/creative project. A lot of people always ask me, knowing that I am an exercise science major and that I am in the gym more often than not, how I ensure that I get a workout in on a daily basis. Because I am asked quite often how I ensure I get a workout in, I chose this as the first topic for my creative project. I wanted to try and cover something that is a common problem for quite a few different people who come to college. I also personally struggled with this when I was an incoming freshman, which is why I targeted the younger population of college age students (specifically freshman while still connecting to some sophomores). Normally it is seen with others as well but most of the suggestions in this first piece are geared towards that younger population.

Every class that exercise science students take as an undergraduate in the Ball State program continues to talk quite a bit about the ever increasing obesity rate and also the ever increasing sedentary lifestyles seen with the younger generations. I decided to talk about that a little bit in this post as well because we again see that in the freshman and sophomore community of college students. They come out of high school thinking they will be able to maintain their activity level when compared to how active they were in high school, all while having an even busier life (with having quite a bit of free time on top of things).

By writing on this first topic, I was able to start off more general and get more specific as the semester continued with the other topics I chose to write about. I was able to combine quite a bit of knowledge from all of the classes that I took as an undergrad and put them all in one common piece. When first coming up with some of the topics I wanted to

write about in this first post, I never thought there would be as many as I ended up with. Luckily I was able to change some around a little and write about the most common ones we undergrads see in the BSU exercise science program. It is not just one problem, but multiple.

With that being said, I did not end up changing the original thought of this first blog topic from the beginning to the end of writing and posting. It was a good one to start since I was able to be more general with an array of topics to get off on the right foot.

Once again, this topic is very important because we are starting to see an increase in both sedentary lifestyles, an increase in obesity rates, but also a growing "I want to workout, but I feel like I don't have time" population. This first blog is able to take those three different populations and answer their questions and hopefully start to get them questioning why they are the way they are and get them in the gym or start a gym program. The first post is titled "Having Trouble Getting Your Workout In" and is below.

Having Trouble Getting Your Workout In?

If college students have one thing in common, it is being extremely busy. Students, and some faculty/staff, seem to be running from one class to another, then to work with little to no time in between. Being guilty of that myself I had to figure out how to get my workouts in so it did not interfere with classes, work and other organizations. Being an exercise science major, I have talked with quite a few people about their workout routine and how they insure they get them in with their busy schedules. Based off what was said in those conversations I was able to come up with a few suggestions. Here are just a few if you are having trouble getting to the fitness center:

1. Go early

Every college student knows how hard it can be to get up in the morning regardless of when they went to bed. The only time you get up early is when you have class or a prior planned obligation. Adjusting sleeping patterns is one of the hardest things to learn when transitioning from high school to college. If you get up an hour earlier than normal and go work out, you will feel better after you complete your workout. If the facility has showers/a locker room, take a change of clothes so you can shower then head to class or wherever you need to go. It might take more than an hour extra, however. If you find yourself cramped for time the first week or two, get up an hour and a half earlier and see if that gives you more time.

2. Go late

Every college student seems to be up later than when they were younger. Use that to your advantage. If you are not a morning person, go to the gym before you settle down for the night. Living off campus for a year one of my roommates always went to the gym in the evening due to the complexity of his schedule. Going late was the only time that he had and he wanted to make sure to get his workout in. Make sure you check your facilities hours before you decide if you are going in the morning or the evening after all meetings/events have concluded. Each place has different hours. College facilities have a higher chance of being open much later than independently run gyms.

3. Split your workout up

One question always asked is how someone can make sure to get in their workout if they don't have one solid hour to workout. The best answer to that question is to split up your workouts. If you have a combination of time (10 minutes here, 30 minutes there and another 15 minutes later), use those short times to your advantage. Go to the gym and get a small portion of a workout done during those times. Just because the recommendation for daily activity is between 30-60 minutes a day does not mean it has to be done in one complete session. Any combination of time that adds up to the recommended total time is fine.

4. Workout with other people/get a workout partner(s)

Working out with someone is one of the best ways to ensure that you will get up on a daily basis to workout. That second person is there to hold you accountable. If you don't get up and/or plan on skipping a workout one day and fail to tell your partner, you are not only letting yourself down but also your workout partner. This leads to a higher chance of adhering to a workout program. Your partner is also there to ensure that you are lifting smart and is there to spot to prevent injury.

5. Use what you have

If you can't find time to get to a fitness facility, use what you have at home or wherever you may be. If you are stuck at home or in your residence hall, use the books that you paid for and have available. They are going to be heavy enough to give you some resistance (especially college textbooks). It's not always the best option, but you need to use what you have/are given. Also, look into residence hall accommodations. If it

has a fitness room, use it. You are most likely paying for the maintenance of the equipment. Again, they are not going to have most equipment that a gym might have, but you will be able to use what is there and modify your workout to fit.

6. Have a change of clothes in your car

Another common excuse often given when asked why people don't workout is they have to go home to change and don't want to walk/drive back. The best way to accommodate for that is to keep a change of clothes in your car or take them with you to work or class. Get a second bag that you will feel comfortable carrying. If you take your clothes with you, you will be more motivated to go to the fitness center after class/work than if you have to go home, change and come back. It also allows you to be able to split up your workouts in-between classes or when you have a little free time.

7. Workout at the same time every day

By working out at the same time each day (or around the same time), you are going to have a better chance of sticking to a workout plan. You won't have to continually work around your schedule to figure out when will be able to head to the gym. You will start to workout at the same time everyday and not have to worry about your schedule. Your body is also going to start to get used to the time of day that you workout. The hormones in your body will also get used to when you are being active if you stay consistent with the time of day. The hormones that are associated with repairing muscles and the body will give you better results by being active at the same time.

Schedules do change, but if you continue to workout around the same time each day, you will start to see better results and you won't have to worry about your schedule too much.

These are just a few suggestions that have been brought up in the world of exercise science to aid getting active. They are by no means going to work for every single person. By trying just one of these suggestions, you are going to increase your likelihood of adopting an exercise routine and will ultimately be able to start getting active (or back active) if that is your goal. Don't hesitate to try other things. If you think it will help in the long run, by all means try it! It never hurts to try something new, especially if you came up with it. It is always better if you personally come up with something versus someone else telling you how to complete a personal workout.

The second topic I undertook for my creative project is a question that is seen all throughout college just as much as the first topic covered. Quite a few incoming freshman and sophomores (and even some upper-classmen) want to continue their career as an athlete. Not always do people want to continue their career as an athlete, but there are some that do. Once again, this was something that I had struggled with when moving to college. I wanted to continue playing a sport, but did not have the chance to do so at a collegiate level. It is not easy to play a club sport by any means, which is why that lead me to write on this second very common topic.

This post was targeted more towards upperclassmen, taking a different spin on the normal target audience for most of these pieces. When I first wrote this, I had an idea that I wanted to give tips (like the first post that I wrote) on how to stay involved in sports when students make the transition from high school to college. However, it ended up being more

of a post on saying “these are the things you need to do in this order to continue your sport” type of post. Most of the students I have talked to know that they want to continue playing their sport, but they aren’t sure how to involved. Because I had talked to those students, I was able to switch up the original thought process behind the post.

The main reason in writing this post was to reach out to those students who want to play a club sport but don’t know how to get things going and in what order they need to do so. Most of the students whom I have talked to didn’t know how to get things going. Once again, a majority of the classes that I have taken in my undergraduate career always go on about the sedentary lifestyle and obesity rates. This is a great way for underclassmen to start to combat those two lifestyles. I was able to take everything in both my exercise science classes and also in my psychology minor classes and put it into one post.

With that being said, I did change the original thought process behind this post and the original audience behind this topic. I did not have to change it as much as I thought when writing it, but it was still changed a little. The second blog is titled “Getting Involved in Campus Club Sports, and is as follows.

Getting Involved in Campus Club Sports

After being both a welcome week leader and a mentor for an early start program at Ball State University, there were many students to whom I talked that were athletes in high school and wanted to continue to play that sport in college. They did not feel they were dedicated enough to play at the NCAA/NAIA level and wanted to know how to continue playing the sport they love. However, most of the other upperclassmen did not know what to tell the new students on how to get started looking for a club sport. When this happened,

most of the younger students felt that intramural sports were just as competitive as club sports (if they even knew what club sports were offered). In most cases, this is not true. If you are in this situation and want to find out more about club sports your university has to offer, here are a few steps that you might consider doing in order to get yourself started on the right track.

The first thing that you always want to do is start by doing your research. Find out how many club sports your university has to offer and see if the sport you want to continue is on that list. Contact your recreation center to see what club sports are offered if you are unable to find it elsewhere. If there is an activities fair at the beginning of your semester, attend if all possible. Club sports will most likely be in attendance and you will be able to find out very important information. Even if your sport is not in attendance, you will be able to talk to someone who will know who you need to contact to get information on the sport you strongly desire to continue/play.

Some larger colleges and universities have quite a few different club sports to offer. Just at Ball State University, located in Muncie, Indiana, there are over 30 offered (information obtained from the BSU recreation website). Also, according to an article written by the NY times, "An estimated two million college students play competitive club sports compared with about 430,000 involved in athletics governed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics," (Rise of College Club Teams Creates a Whole New Level of Success). So even if you think that you are not good enough to compete in club sports, think again. With the amount of students playing club sports, you are bound to be just as good as the others on the team and should have no problem making it if you stuck with it throughout your middle school

and high school careers. However, if you find out your sport is not offered, intramural sports will be the next best option. They are not as competitive/intense, but you will get to play with your friends and just let loose.

Once you have finished doing your research on whether or not your university has club sports, start contacting certain people involved. They will be able to tell you all the important information you need to know. Whether it is the cost, tryouts, practices and travel to tournaments, they will know and will be able to sit down and talk with you to iron everything out. They also should know the university policies, which is something else you need to understand. There are certain rules that some universities have that might be different than others. You should understand them all before you even consider getting involved.

Once you find out all this information, the next step for you to do is think things over. You never want to jump into a situation without thinking everything over. I personally did not think things over when I originally started playing a club sport (Ultimate Frisbee) for Ball State when I should have. I am not saying that I didn't love the sport that I was playing, but I should have considered a few things before. There are many different factors (e.g. money, will you have the time, will it interfere with school and/or work, is it all worth it, do you meet university policies (if there are any), etc.) that you need to consider before committing.

And finally, the last thing you need to do is just give it a try. What is the worst that can happen? If you have tryouts associated with your sport and you find out you do not love it as much as you did in high school, then it's better to find it out earlier rather than when you play the sport. You can always say you aren't interested after going to a few

practices. That's always better than getting involved and hating it halfway through after paying quite a bit of money. ALWAYS give something a try before you fully commit.

Being a club athlete myself on and off for the four years that I was an undergrad, these are some of the things that I wish I would have done. I did a few of them, but most of them I had NO clue about and just went in with a blind eye. I had no clue of some of the commitments that I had to make. I stuck it out because I fell in love with the sport, but just wish I would have done a little more research before. Just like when writing a research paper, or any other paper mind you, you want to have as much information as possible to be as prepared as you can. You can never be too prepared. It's better to have all the information before you start than finding out very important information when you are already fully engrained in the club sport. So if you find yourself wanting to play a club sport, give this a try. You never know what you might end up finding out about a sport that you have played your whole life.

The hardest part about getting back to an exercise program or completely starting a program is understanding the difference between using free weights and machines. It is yet again another question that my fellow exercise science students and myself get asked quite often. Students, even faculty and staff, tend to see us in the gym using both types and get confused as to what they should use. Because we get this question more often than not, and because we take multiple classes on resistance training and how to program workouts, it lead me to writing this third post on that topic.

Once again, I tried to gear this topic more towards underclassmen in college, but ended up being able to reach out to more people who are not on the young side. Adults can

sometimes be more on the novice side of resistance training and staying fit just as much as college students. It is starting to become a theme throughout this project because this is another topic that I have had personal problems with. By reaching out to that novice population, I was able to start to combat that same population that the first two blog topics have tried to cover. It was a nice culmination of multiple classes that I have taken. It has also given me a little knowledge for my next two years to understand the difference between free weights and machines. I am going to have to rehab multiple different injuries, so I am going to have to use both types, so it was nice to be able to bring everything from my classes and put it together.

However, the original thought process behind this post was to do more of a compare and contrast between the two different types of workout modes. However, I ended up changing them and talking about the good of both of them and not really contrasting them since it was a little more difficult than I thought. I also changed the target audience, from underclassmen to the novice lifters, from the original thought process to the final post.

Once again, this topic is important because not very many people understand the difference between free weights and machines. This topic and post is great for those people who want to start working out again and staying active. The third post is titled "Free-Weights versus Machines" and is as follows.

Free Weights Versus Machines

When patrons enter a gym for the first time ever, or return after a prolonged absence, most of the times they start to work out on machines. That is not always the worst case, but bad nonetheless. I would venture to say that most people haven't been properly

trained on either which is the first thing that must be done. One of the biggest questions I have been asked is the difference between using free weights and machines when exercising. After taking a class on resistance training during my exercise science undergraduate education, I have been able to study the differences between the two. There are quite a few pros associated with both, which will be discussed in this post. There are also cons with each mode (just like with everything else in the world). If you are starting to become active or are out of a structured program (like a high school weight lifting class or high school sport), here are a few items to consider when going back to the gym and starting another structured program.

Let's first take a look at machines. Machines are a very good starting point for anyone getting active again. They are MUCH easier to learn since there is typically one movement associated with them. Most gyms, especially 24-hour gyms like Planet Fitness and Anytime Fitness, are going to have quite a few different machines throughout their facility. You won't have to worry about changing cables and/or bars/straps like one you can have at home (more all-in-one). All you will have to do is change the weight and the seat position before you perform the lift. If you are limited on time, machines are great since you won't have to constantly be changing settings. However, if you are working out at home, the "all-in-one" types of machines (e.g. Bowflex, Total Gyms, and Marcy cages) will be more beneficial. They take up less space and you will be able to have everything you need in one machine. You will be able to complete everything you want, and possibly more.

Machines are also quite a bit safer than free weights. You typically will not need a spotter, as there is a limited range of motion on machines. If you feel like you are going to drop the weight, you can do so and it will stop once it hits the other weights that are

stationary. You will not feel like you are going to drop the weights and hurt yourself in some way, shape or form.

The limited range of motion that is associated with machines typically leads to more weight being lifted. Exercisers don't have to move the weight as far as someone who is using free weights, so there is less distance that the weight has to be moved. Someone might be able to lift 150 pounds on a machine, but when they move to free weights, they can only lift 100 pounds while still doing the same amount of work. Also associated with the limited range of motion, machines are good for rehab purposes. Clients are able to run through a limited range with the limb they are attempting to rehab and can avoid re-aggravating the injury. Being an intern at Henry County Sports Medicine Performance Enhancement, we use machines quite often for rehab purposes. At the clinic, I have used machines with patients that are working on rehabbing an injury from sports.

Finally, another perk of using machines is that most of the time you are doing bilateral movement. Bilateral movement pertains to doing the lift on both sides of the body. You can do them at the same time, or you can do one side at a time; it doesn't really matter as long as you do to one what you do to the other. You are not going to strengthen one side of your body more than the other. Most injuries that I have seen have been because one side is stronger than the other, which caused the client to overcompensate and injure the weaker side. With machines, you can work both sides of the body and strengthen them at the same time, or you can do one side in a much safer manner (going back to the safety aspect).

Moving away from machines, let's now take a look at free weights. I personally am more of a free weight user due to the amount of time I have been working out and lifting. I

have been trained on how to lift properly, which is something you need to understand before you even consider using free weights. That is one of the bigger downsides. However, there are quite a few pros associated with them as well. Let's take a look at a few of them.

One of the biggest differences between machines and free weights is the variability. You are able to do more than one exercise/type of movement with free weights for a specific muscle group. You will be able to change it up from week to week, or day-to-day depending on your activity level. The variability of this mode of exercise is very beneficial for someone who doesn't like to do the same types of exercise day in and day out.

Free weights also have a larger range of motion associated with the exercises that you might be doing. You are able to lift the weight over a longer angle, causing more work to be done by the muscle. With the larger angle, the weight might actually go down when compared to machines. Just because the weight is changing doesn't mean the exercise isn't doing what it needs to or is going to be any easier. However, it does mean that you are initiating more muscle fibers in the muscle. With more muscle fibers activated, you are going to get a better/more complete overall lift. You might even start to see the muscle getting bigger in areas that you didn't see when using machines. Most body builders start off with free weights just to see a bigger gain.

Just like with machines, free weights are great when it comes to rehabbing injuries. You are able to have your "normal weight" on the side that is not injured and a lower weight on the side that is being rehabbed. You don't want to just work on one side. You need to continue to do bilateral types of exercises so one side doesn't get stronger than the other. However, both free weights and machines are going to be great when it comes to rehab.

Finally, free weights have the tendency to be a little cheaper if you are thinking about putting something in your home/apartment. Different stores will have them priced differently, but free weights are going to average \$1.50 per pound. You can also get something that is similar to an "all-in-one" that has a dial that can change the weight on the handle. You turn the dial to the desired weight and then lift it up. There are special mechanisms inside that lock the weight in place. That type is much easier than having multiple weights, plates and dumbbells stacked in a room. With that being said, these types of weights are going to be much easier to store. So if you are limited on space, they might benefit you more than a machine that takes up quite a bit of space.

Just by taking a look at these few differences, you can see how someone might get confused about what they need to use for the goal they are trying accomplish. Unfortunately, there is no definite answer. Both machines and free weights are going to allow you to get in a nice lift; they will just accomplish that in different ways. From someone who has been lifting for a while, and after talking to a competitor in men's physique competitions, we both use free weights and machines. The best way to see gains is by changing things up and ensuring you have both machines and free weights integrated in your workout. So don't think that one is going to be more beneficial than the other. Be sure to mix things up!

The fourth piece I decided to take on is another one that isn't easy for incoming freshman and sophomores, especially in college. When making the transition from high school to college we must start to fend for ourselves when it comes to food and making sure we are eating right. Being an off-campus student is just as hard when it comes to

nutrition. Once again, we exercise science students are asked how to make sure students are eating right while maintaining a healthy lifestyle. We do not have to take very many classes on nutrition, but I still decided to take this topic on and write about it for the fourth piece in my creative project. I did not personally struggle with this topic as much as the others, but I still did struggle with this one a little.

The original target audience for this post was supposed to be underclassmen, but I realized that not very many underclass students live off campus. Most of the time they live on campus and don't struggle as much with nutrition. I was still able to take certain aspects of my undergraduate classes and combine them all to talk about nutrition. It's not an easy topic to cover, but was able to be more specific than some of the other topics in this creative project.

Since I am going to be working with athletes of all ages, nutrition is one topic that I will have to know more than others. I was able to take everything from my classes, and also from a little research that I did to make sure that nutrition is covered for off campus students. The original thought behind this post was to give tips on how to make sure off-campus students are eating right. I ended up giving more tips than anything else on what to eat and what to stay away from. It is still very important because I was able to take information from all my classes and put it all together to reach out to students who may have trouble with nutrition.

Once again, this topic is very important because we are starting to see an increase in both sedentary lifestyles, an increase in obesity, but also a growing "I want to lose weight, but I am not really sure where to start" population. The fourth post is titled "Off Campus Nutrition" and is below.

Off Campus Nutrition

One thing we don't see as often with freshman and sophomores in college is off campus living. The majority of the time we see juniors and seniors choosing to live off campus. The only time we do see younger students living off campus is when they are commuting. The majority of the time they choose to stay with family during these years, so nutrition is typically not a problem for them. For someone who wants to stay active, nutrition is key. Students who live off campus are typically on a budget and don't always have the extra money to be able to get groceries and eat the healthiest of foods.

I have seen so many of my friends and classmates move off campus and proceed to lose quite a bit of weight that they didn't have to lose. They claim they are eating enough, but in reality they are only eating one meal a day and are staying just as active as when they were eating two to three meals a day while living on campus. According to an article written by HealthStatus.com, most college students are burning an average of 1,800 calories a day just walking to class and sitting around doing homework/relaxing¹. By increasing your activity level, there is also an increase in calories burned. Therefore, you need to increase the amount of calories you are eating and not many people do that when living off campus.

Also, in order to maintain muscle strength and endurance, the amount of macronutrients you intake is extremely important. According to a presentation titled "Eating to Win" given by Dr. David Pearson of Ball State University, an average active individual needs to consume 50% carbohydrates, 35% fat and 15% protein in their diet. Being an off campus student, I am the first to vouch that fats and carbs are the two main nutrients consumed by students. We do not have the money to purchase higher quality

foods (however, that is not always the case). We also do not have as much time to cook meats/very extravagant meals, leading us to eat on the fly, which is very common.

Processed food is also something to stay away from if at all possible. You really don't know what is in those types of frozen microwave meals. Eating these types of meals on a regular basis tends to increase the amount of sodium and fats being put in the body. An excessive amount of these nutrients can start to play havoc with your body. Eating one every once in a while is not bad if you are combining it with other foods (healthier options) throughout the week.

Another problem that off campus students see is the availability of fast food restaurants. We don't want to cook (either because we are too lazy/tired or think we don't have the proper amount of time) and we don't want to go hungry. Just going to a fast food place and grabbing something quick is very easy for us. Once again, eating this type of food in excess can be harmful for the body. If you have ever seen the movie Super Size Me, you saw how harmful eating fast food for every meal for a month can be on the human body (if you haven't seen it, I would highly recommend it). I am not saying that you need to completely avoid fast food. You can eat it, but just know what to eat there. Not everything is as bad for you as you think.

After living off campus for a year, I had to come up with a few different ideas to make sure that I was eating properly. By properly, I mean both eating enough and in a healthy manner. Below is a short list that I was able to come up with to help me eat healthier while living off campus:

1. Make a list and stick to it when you go to the grocery store

Allows you to stop impulse buying and stops you from spending an excessive amount of money

2. Set a schedule of when to go to the grocery store every month

You won't have to worry about when you are going to go to the store and you will be able to budget a little better

3. Limit yourself to a certain number of meals out each week

4. Prepare meals early in the week so you won't have to worry about it when strapped for time later in the week

Will be easier for when you are eating on the fly. You will have multiple meals prepared and all you will have to do is worry about warming them up on the day you choose

5. Stay away from an excess amount of processed food (if at all possible)

6. Cook vegetables with your meals to fill you up faster

7. Invest in storage containers

This will allow you to save extra food that you cook so you can eat it later in the week for another meal. Not only will this allow you to cut

down on groceries, but it will also give you another meal for later in the week.

8. Get a meal plan if your university offers them

There are some universities that offer off campus meal plans for students. If you know you are going to have trouble with eating healthy/eating at all, get one of those plans so you have one less thing to worry about during the day.

Trying to eat healthy is not the easiest thing in the world. Starting a habit like this when you are in college will benefit you when you graduate college and enter the real world. By just trying to eat healthier, taking small steps to get there, you will start getting into a routine. It will especially make you feel better throughout the day as your body will have more energy to burn and won't have to figure out where to get the energy from. Nutrition is very important for anyone who wants to continue to stay active in college and after you complete your education. There is a popular quote that is often repeated although I don't remember the author:

"Abs are made in the kitchen"

You always need a place to start and the kitchen is the best place.

The fifth topic that I decided to write about is another one that we exercise science students get asked about quite often. We are in the gym quite a bit and, for the most part, not very many things bother us. There are quite a few people, however, who do not like

going to the gym because they feel like they are constantly being judged. I decided to take that topic on after taking one of the classes that I did in my undergraduate career. It wasn't a class that everyone had to take, but it was one of my favorite classes that I took. It was all on the psychology of exercise and how to make sure someone who wants to get in the gym could get there.

I was able to take what I learned in that class and some of the other topics from other classes and combine them all in one common place. Also, with the common theme with a few of the other posts, this is another one that I struggled with when coming to college. It is geared towards those people who don't like getting in the gym for psychological reasons. I wanted to try and gear it towards younger student in college, but I had to change that after writing it for a while.

With that being covered, I did change a few things during the process of writing this post. I did want to get this out to the younger students, but ended up gearing it more towards the novice exercisers who do not necessary like getting into the gym. I also changed the format of the post and also what I ended up writing about. I started writing it in the format very similar to the first post, but ended up changing it more to a generic post style. I was still able to get everything in the post that I wanted to, but I changed it up a little.

Again, this topic is very important because we are starting to see an increase in both sedentary lifestyles, an increase in obesity, but also a growing "I want to workout, but I feel like I am being judged" population. This fifth post is titled "Intimidation and how to beat it" and is as follows.

Intimidation and How to beat it

When you walk into a fitness facility, what is the first thing you see? Is it the weights? What about all the machines and benches? What quite a few people don't realize is the number of people who are at the facility. Even though motivated to exercise, there are certain people who will not go into a fitness facility/gym due to the number of people that are there. They feel intimidated and also feel like they are being judged by some of the "bigger" and "more fit" people in the gym. This is not always the case, but intimidation is a huge reason as to why some people do not continue to stay active when transitioning to college. After taking a class on the psychology of exercise, I was able to learn many different ways that someone may be able to overcome feeling intimidated in a gym setting. If that is you, here are some ways to get around that all too common feeling.

First and foremost, before even considering trying a few different things to get around the feeling of intimidation, you first need to determine what makes you feel so uncomfortable. Quite a few people feel the way they do because of the number of people who are at the facility. There are others who feel that they do not know what they are doing, and that makes them feel just as uncomfortable. These are just two common reasons as to why someone might feel weird about going and working out in a busy fitness center. However, these are not the only two. There are many reasons because everyone is different. The good news is that all these reasons are fixable (to an extent).

If you find out that the reason you are intimidated is because you feel like you are being judged and don't really know what you are doing, then try working out with someone else. Picking a workout partner that not only knows what they are doing, but also respects you for who you are is very beneficial. They will be able to give you many different types of support. To be more specific, there are three types of support likely to come from working

out with someone else. Your workout partner will be able to give you one (or more) of the following: companionship support, informational support and emotional support.

You might be asking yourself, what exactly are these types of support? Well according to *The Psychology of Exercise, Third Edition*, companionship support is when someone is able to just go with you and support you by being there (Ginis, et. al. pg. 103). Looking back at the first blog I posted, this is the same when using a workout partner. They are going to be able to go with you just in case you feel weird going in alone. Informational support is just as it sounds. The friend(s) that you go with will be able to provide you with information on programs, classes, and workouts you will be able to do either alone or with that friend. It will be that extra bit of knowledge you might not have had in the beginning and could easily relieve your anxiety. Finally, there is emotional support. This type of support might be the most beneficial for someone who has trouble with feeling intimidated. According to Ginis, et. al., emotional support happens through someone expressing encouragement, caring, empathy and concern towards a person (pg. 103). A workout partner will be able to encourage someone that what he or she is doing is beneficial even if they feel like they are not exercising right. This type of support is known to increase self-esteem, and will, hopefully, reduce feelings of intimidation.

Another great way to reduce feelings of intimidation is to participate in exercise classes. The people who are typically in exercise groups are going to feel the same way that you do about exercise. They may not know exactly what to do. You will all be able to learn everything together, which will be very beneficial for all who are involved. Smaller group classes/exercise groups are typically better because there is a better formation of group cohesion. Group cohesion is "a dynamic process reflected in the tendency of a group to stick

together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs (Ginis, et. al. pg. 117)." By forming a tight knit group, you will be able to work on those feelings of intimidation together. Someone in that group might have experienced the exact same thing you are going through. If that is the case, they will be able to work with you and give you tips on how they were able to overcome those intense feelings and might even work one-on-one with you.

Another great way to beat intimidation is to go to the gym when it isn't busy. Every gym/facility is going to have times where it is not jam-packed. Coming from a college where the gym is always busy in the afternoon, people learned to go either early in the morning or in the early evening. You will be able to complete everything you want to get done and will not have to worry about feeling like people are watching your every move. However, like I previously said, every gym is going to be different. Make sure you talk to the workers at the facility to find out when peak hours are and try to work your schedule around those hours. You will be amazed at how good it feels to not have people constantly staring at you while working out (speaking from experience).

And one final way to try and beat intimidation is to use a smaller facility/gym. With smaller facilities, the odds of more people being there at the same time are slim. There are still going to be peak hours, but you will be able to work around them with more ease. Coming from a university that has two different gyms, quite a few people who feel weird about using the main recreation center will use our smaller gym (Ball Gym for those who are familiar with Ball State University). The smaller facility has the same equipment, but does not have as many people who use it/even know about it. You will feel a little more confident about yourself if there are not as many people there.

Intimidation is something that is very real now a days. It will take quite a bit of time to work through it. Take it from someone who felt that way in high school. It took me quite a few years to get over the fact that people may stare at you, but as long as you are happy with yourself, then that's all that matters. Just think to yourself "at least I am in the gym working out when there are many others who are sitting on the couch doing nothing." My final words of advice for you if you are feeling intimidated: don't let the potential thoughts of others bother you. You are your own worst critic. Be positive and have positive thoughts when walking into the gym. Walk with confidence and you will have confidence.

The sixth piece that I chose to take on is another one that isn't easy for incoming college students. When making the transition from high school to college, we must start to fend for ourselves when it comes to food and making sure we are eating right. Being an on-campus student can be a difficult one. Once again, we exercise science students are asked how to make sure students are eating right, especially when living on campus. We do not have to take very many classes on nutrition, but I still decided to take this topic on and write about it for the sixth piece in my creative project. I did not have as many personal struggles with this topic, which has been a theme throughout this project, but I still did struggle a little when I was an undergraduate.

The original target audience for this post was supposed to be underclassmen, and then I realized that there are also quite a few upperclassmen that live on campus as well. We still struggle with nutrition while living on campus. I was still able to take certain aspects of my undergraduate classes and combine them all about talk about nutrition. It's

not an easy topic to cover, but was able to be more specific than some of the other topics in this creative project.

Since I am going to be working with athletes of all ages, both living on campus and off campus, nutrition is one topic that I will have to know more than others. I was able to take everything from my classes, and also from a little research that I did to make sure that nutrition is covered for off campus students. The original thought behind this post was to give tips on how to make sure on-campus students are eating right, which is what the majority of the post is about. It is still very important because I was able to take information from all my classes and put it all together to reach out to students who may have trouble with nutrition.

Once again, this topic is very important because we are starting to see an increase in both sedentary lifestyles, an increase in obesity, but also a growing "I want to lose weight, but I am not really sure where to start" population.. The sixth post is titled "On Campus Nutrition" and is below.

On Campus Nutrition

If there is one thing that we learn in college, it's that being a freshman/sophomore can sometimes stink. From moving away from your family, being on your own for the first time, to living on campus with some very interesting people; freshman year can be very interesting. One thing incoming freshmen fail to think about during the transition is nutrition. On campus students have to worry about nutrition just as much as off campus students. However, they need to do so in a much different way. Instead of worrying about eating enough, students who live on campus have to worry about overeating and eating

right; all while making sure they are still staying active to be able to burn off those extra calories. After personally experiencing this my freshman year (and a little during sophomore year), I had to come up with ways to ensure I was eating healthy while living on campus. Here are some ways you will be able to ensure you are maintaining nutrition while living on campus during your first few years of college studies.

1. Eat around the same time every day:

Everything is better when you get into a solid routine. By eating around the same time every day, you will begin to realize how and what to eat. You will get used to what your body has to say and what you need. It isn't always the easiest to eat healthy when you are on campus because healthy options can sometimes be expensive. You will start to remember what is being made on certain days and will know where to eat as well (will go into more detail on number 8). Time is also a huge factor. You will learn what food court/dining hall is busy on what days and during what times. You essentially won't have to work around your schedule as much once you determine where to eat and when. You can eat when you have time and will get into a very good routine.

2. Eat with friends:

Eating alone can be one of the hardest things to do. I had quite a few friends who couldn't eat with people due to their crazy schedule. They would either choose to not eat, or grab food that wasn't very healthy that was quick and easy to take back to their room. College life is very busy, and eating while doing homework is very common. However, it is not the greatest thing to do. You will start to worry about your homework

more than your meal and before you know it, you forgot to eat or run out of time before you have to go to another class or meeting. By eating with friends, you will not only have time to eat slowly, but you will be able to unwind by talking about your day or about things you have done since you last saw that friend(s). Even if you have to leave before your friends are done eating, at least you were able to have some time with them (which is very difficult to do during your freshman and sophomore years).

3. Stay away from processed food:

I already mentioned this in the off campus nutrition post, but it is the same for on campus students. Try and stay away from processed foods. You have no clue as to what went in to making that meal. These types of meals are typically very high in fats and sodium, which will start to build up in your body and can be detrimental to health (not trying to sound morbid). Fats and sodium are needed by your body, but not in a large amount. Eating too much of those nutrients can be harmful to your body. If you don't use them, sodium and fats typically get stored in the body and can cause you to gain weight, so try to limit the amount of them that you eat. Get meals that have been cooked in the kitchen to go so you can eat them in your room or during class. They are going to be healthier than the processed foods that you can pick up from the freezer section (if your food courts/dining halls have them).

4. Don't overeat:

Something very different than someone living off campus, on campus students have to worry about overeating. Having access to food throughout the day that is already

made can be extremely tempting. If you have money on your account (however your university does it) that can be used on snacks makes snacking extremely easy and tempting. However, if you eat quite a few snacks throughout the day (while still eating your "normal" meals) and aren't active, that can start to add up. The "freshman 15" is one of the most common things in college life anymore (we have even seen a slight increase in the average amount of weight gained by first year students). People have access to food more than they did when they were at home, and aren't as active. So, the moral of this section is to just watch what you are eating. Snacking is not a bad thing if it is done in moderation.

5. Use extra meal swipe money for healthy snacks throughout the day/for the evening

Going off something mentioned in the previous section, snacking is not bad if done in moderation and with the right options. Use that extra money that you may have on your card/ID and use it on healthy snacks. They will be just as tempting as the other snacks...but will be better for you in the long run. There is a chance they will be more expensive (everything healthy seems to be); so don't go all out every time. Only get them when you have the extra money to use so you aren't skimping out on your actual meals. Snacks are good at times, so snack smart.

6. Don't be afraid to splurge on sweets every couple of days

It seems as if all the younger students I have conversations with seem to think that eating sweets is something to completely avoid in college. Don't always believe everything you are told. You can splurge and treat yourself every now and then, but not

all the time. Do it in moderation. Treat yourself after stressful weeks or after you get a very good grade. Your body needs those sugars so don't be afraid to grab that candy bar on the way out of the food court.

7. Go with the healthier options (if possible)

One of the hardest things I experienced as an undergraduate while living on campus was eating healthy. All the unhealthier options were much easier to acquire, because people seemed to be avoiding them. The lines for the non-healthy foods were usually much longer and when you are on a time crunch that can be really inconvenient. However, those healthy options are what you need to eat. They are better for you and are going to give you all the nutrients that you are lacking from those faster options. They might be a little more expensive, so you don't have to get them every single meal. If you are really in a time crunch, grabbing those quick meals is fine, as long as you are not making it a daily habit. You need to make sure you are getting all the nutrients you need (According to a presentation titled "Eating to Win" given by Dr. David Pearson of Ball State University, an average active individual needs to consume 50% carbohydrates, 35% fat and 15% protein in their diet). So be sure to eat those healthy options so you can get all the proper nutrients that you need in order to keep healthy.

8. Switch up where you eat (will have more options)

Eating at the same place can get boring over time. You go in and get the same stuff and sit down at the same table and talk with the same friends about the same topics. Switch it up a little. Go to a different food court and try something different. You might

find something else that you enjoy eating just as much as the stuff from the original place you eat. There are going to be many different options. Coming from a university that has over eight different places to eat, it is nice to try and change things up. There is a chance that you will be able to eat healthy at one place that you never imagined. I remember one year we had a plan to eat at a different food court each day to switch things up. It was difficult to do because you want to eat the same stuff since you know what you like. However, switching it up will be just as fun since you will be able to try new items. It never hurts to step outside of your comfort zone and eat something new.

Nutrition is something that is never easy. Living on campus makes it a little easier, however. You have more access to food and it is prepared for you (most of the time). If you do find yourself struggling, try something that was mentioned here. Nutrition and eating is nothing to joke around about. It is very important since nutrients are the building block of our body. If you are still staying active, then nutrition is even more important. Don't be afraid to try something new, like something mentioned here. Eating is just as important as breathing...so keep that in mind the next time you are in line at the food court heading to grab lunch before class.

The seventh piece for this creative project took a completely different approach than the previous ones that were written and posted. There are not very many people who think that there is a correlation between memory and exercise. After taking one of my classes on the psychology of exercise, in conjunction with all of the other classes that I took one semester, I decided to take this topic and see what I could do with it. It is another

question that we exercise science students get asked, but again, it's not one we get asked very often. The target audience is more for those upper-class students who are taking very difficult classes along with staying active, which was a different audience than originally planned, which will be discussed here in a moment.

Overall, I did not end up changing the post from the beginning to the end of writing it. I went in with the thought process of writing this one to get information out in the college world for people who don't think there is a correlation between the two. The only item I did end up changing was the target audience. Most of the posts have been geared towards incoming freshman and sophomores, whereas this post is somewhat geared towards juniors and seniors, while still having some information for the younger college population.

This is a very hot topic when it comes to exercise, school, and also athletics. It is a very important topic for me, which is why I wrote about it. Society always assumes that athletes are not intelligent and that they struggle with school, which is not always the case. By reading this post, they will realize that athletes are in fact intelligent, and they are not all just "dumb jocks." I plan on being able to use the information from this topic the next few years as I continue to work with athletes in both high school and some in college. There is more information than society thinks about this topic and I just tip the iceberg. The seventh post is titled "Memory and Exercise" and is below.

Memory and Exercise

Think back to when you were in middle school. Do you remember all of the classes you took? What were the names of all your teachers? Out of those teachers, which one was

your favorite? Without looking at your grades (if you even have them handy), what grades did you get in your core classes? Odds are you don't remember what you had for breakfast earlier in the week and that's completely normal. Your memory is all based on what you do to try and remember those things and also how important they are to you. You are not going to remember everything you have done from day one (unless you are like Sheldon Cooper from *The Big Bang Theory* and have an eidetic memory). Making the transition to college, you have to remember even more than when you were younger and your professors expect more from you. Most of the time, people don't think that there is an association between exercise and memory. What they don't know is there is a strong association between the two, which will be discussed later. However, before we start, let's first take a look at the basics of memory and the brain.

There are two types of memory that everyone has. One might be better than the other, but nonetheless, they are both still present. The two types of memory that every person has are short-term and long-term memory. There is a third type, working memory, which is in close association with short-term memory but not a lot is known about it. The first type is short-term. Short-term memory is related to the most recent events that you have had: whether that is a phone number you have been asked to remember or where your seat was moved to in class or even where your class is being held. Most of the time, the way that a person adds something to his or her short-term memory is through rehearsal. You say something to yourself many different times to hopefully add it to your memory bank. According to an article written by examinedexistence.com, the average capacity of short-term memory is 7 items and they last from seconds to a few minutes in

the brain (Tri, Brain health and function). Short-term memory is good, but only for things you have to remember right then and there.

Long-term memory, however, is the amount of time that something is placed in this memory bank and how it happens. These types of events/memories are placed here permanently for us to recall. Most of the time they are the larger events that have happened in your family, or events that have happened to you. The majority of the time, these are very important events and/or people that you need to work hard to remember. There is a long process in the brain for us to add these types of events to our memory, and after studying the brain, it is a process that is very confusing. Overall, exercise does a lot for both of these types of memories.

Something related to memory is a concept known as the primacy and recency effect (also known as the serial position effect). This is more of a concept related to short-term memory, but it is a concept with memory nonetheless. This concept is related to what type of information you remember based off the location in a list. You are more likely to remember the items/words at the beginning and the end of a list more than what was in the middle. I wish I knew why you do that, but it does work. In a class that I took as an undergraduate (exercise psychology), I was able to prove it with a few of my classmates. I gave them a list of 30 words and told them to write down as many of them as they could remember after I finished reading the entire list. Everyone in the class, even the teacher, remembered the words at the beginning and at the end, but struggled with the words in the middle. It was very interesting to see how they reacted when telling them the list again and seeing which ones they remembered. Once again, exercise plays a large role in how and what you remember when trying to add something to your memory bank.

Now that we have briefly gone over what some of the components of memory are, we need to take a look at what happens to the brain when you exercise. Most people that I have talked to, and were in the exercise psychology class with me, didn't believe that exercise could have as large an effect on the brain as it does. Most of the time you can't tell exactly what is going on because the brain is so complex. But no matter what, there is always something going on in your brain and head as a result of exercise. According to an article titled *7 Mind-Blowing Benefits of Exercise* written by Deborah Kotz and Angela Haupt, exercise releases certain brain chemicals like serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine that can decrease tension and increase memory retention. Also, according to the same article "Exercise increases the level of brain chemicals called growth factors, which help make new brain cells and establish new connections between brain cells to help us learn. Interestingly, complicated activities, like playing tennis or taking a dance class, provide the biggest brain boost. "You're challenging your brain even more when you have to think about coordination," explains Ratey." By creating those new connections between the neurons, you are increasing your memory bank, as it is easier for those memories to travel to the memory center of the brain. So if you still think that there is no correlation between what happens in the brain and exercise, then you are completely wrong.

Based off everything that has been brought up so far, there is a big connection in college between memory, exercise, and doing well in classes. You are asked to remember more than you would like to, but you have to get through it day after day. If you are having a hard time settling down to study, or even remembering what you study the night before an exam, try exercising before you sit down and start. It doesn't have to be anything huge or overly intense. Go for a walk around your neighborhood or around your house. Go for a

short little jog to get the mind going or even do yoga. All of these are going to increase the amount of hormones that are being released in your brain and will get your heart rate up. If you still aren't convinced that exercise is going to help you, then read a study that was done a few years back in a high school relating PE classes and when core classes are. The results of the study (which I can't remember 100%) basically found that students who had physical education before a larger/more important class, say a math or science class, did better on average than someone who had those classes before physical education. Even in a high school setting they are proving something very large like this, which is absolutely amazing.

So, if you are having a hard time remembering different items that are related to a super important class, then try exercising before. Even being skeptical of it myself, I tried it a few times with some of my bigger exams a few semesters back and was more successful than when I hadn't been exercising before studying or going to class. Memory is something that will always be with you as you continue to age. You want it to be as best as it possibly can. With that being said, why not start at an early age. Exercise is not only going to help you become healthier, but it might also help you do slightly better in a few classes that you are struggling with, or think you are going to struggle with. This is not going to help every single person, but it is always worth a shot.

The eighth topic that I wrote about was another one that was a work in progress from the beginning of the project until the publishing date. When in the gym, I see a lot of people who look like they don't really know what they are doing. I am asked how I program some of my workouts, and how I ensure that I am able to hit all of the main muscles when I am at the gym. This is another topic that I am very passionate about and is one that I also

struggled with when making the transition from high school to college. There are also some fellow exercise science students who get asked this more often than me, but we all seem to get asked this question. We take a few different classes on how to ensure someone is working out correctly and also how to program him or her a workout once they are consistently in the gym. I was able to take everything that I learned in the four years I was at Ball State and combine it in one post on program ideas.

The original target audience was intended to be more novice lifters who might not know how to program workouts. However, when in the process of writing this post, I decided to take a different spin and focus more on the students who are already in the gym, but aren't really sure how to make sure they are hitting every muscle group they need to. I also changed the original thought process behind the post. Originally I was planning on doing sample programs and giving a rationale on why certain lifts were on certain days. After taking into consideration that not very many people know where to start and seeing as there are different ways to split up workouts, I took a different look and decided to focus more on the generic ideas and give a few examples where they seemed fit.

It is another hot topic because so many students want to stay active when coming to college, but they may not really know how to get going with a program. That is why this topic is another one that I feel is extremely important. I was able to get a small amount of knowledge to those students, who may or may not have had to take a physical fitness class in college, so they can start to think about what they want to do. It is not an easy task to complete, but is one that has been around for quite a while and there are very few people who want to take a crack at something like this. By combining information from a few of my classes, I was able to get some information out to people who are struggling. It is also

something that I am going to have to deal with during the next few years of my graduate studies as I work with both high school and college athletes and non-athletes. This post is titled "Workout Program Plans/Ideas" and is below.

Workout Program Plans/Ideas

Trying to create a workable schedule and stick to it is hard enough in high school and gets even tougher in college. You have more classes to worry about, a bigger homework load, and (to an extent) more free time to join various clubs and organizations that interest you. The majority of the time there is very little time in the day to workout and stay active. Once that happens, the question arises as to how many days you want to use that extra free time to workout. Most people whom I have talked to throughout my time at Ball State University in the exercise science program, have had to come up with intense programs based on the number of days they are able to workout. Being guilty of that myself, I too had to create some pretty crazy programs due to the amount of available time I had to be in the gym throughout the week.

One of the classes that I took as an undergraduate at Ball State talked about what programs should look like based on the number of days someone is in the gym. Depending on what you are trying to do, and how many days you want to be active, the most common number of days to workout is between two and six. The more advanced lifters are going to stick with the six-day programs and there are some people who feel the need to be in the gym seven days a week. On average, most people are able to workout anywhere between three and four days. Below are some tips to consider if you are having trouble coming up with programs on your own. Feel free to tweak them in any way to fit your needs.

Two day split:

Two-day programs are not as common as you think. Most people who workout try to get more than two days in the gym. However, if you are one of these people who can only get into the gym two days a week, the program for you is fairly simple. On the days you are able to make it to the fitness center, do total body workouts. That will give your whole body a nice little shock and you will be able to take quite a few days off for your muscles to recover. On the days you aren't able to make it to the gym, try to do some type of cardiovascular training. Go for a run, go for a bike ride or do yoga. Your body will not only appreciate it, but it will give you the adequate rest your body needs. In my experience during high school and college, most elite runners use(d) this type of program. They run nearly every day and get into the gym two days to lift a little. Hit all the major muscle groups, and you will be fine.

Three day split:

This type of program is a little more common for college students/ adults who want to try and stay active. When it comes to what muscle groups to concentrate on with this type of split, it is exactly the same as the two-day. When you are able to get into the fitness center, hit all the major muscle groups. Doing this will allow you to keep your body toned and will also allow you to stay in shape. On those days where you aren't in the gym lifting, do cardiovascular training to keep your heart healthy. A very good example of this is if you are working out on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, do cardio on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You will be able to have the weekend to relax and recover. Your muscles need time to recover; so giving yourself those days off between your lifting days will be plenty. Another

good example of this type of program comes from where I currently intern. One side of the clinic, called Healthridge, has a gym where the older population come and workout after they are set up with a program based off their medical history and what their doctors want them to accomplish. The wellness director only wants the patients to do the weights three days a week and cardio on the others (however, she does sometimes say that it's okay for cardio to be done every day if they want). This example is very good to show that it's not only young adults who need recovery time, but everyone.

Four day split:

Getting to the more "advanced" lifting programs, we come to the four-day. This program starts to get a little more complicated when compared to the previous two. You are not going to want to do total body on the four days you are able to get into the fitness facility and workout. You want to do lower body and upper body on separate days. Do upper body one day, lower body the next and then give yourself a rest day. You can flip them if you need to, just make sure to hit both of them before your rest day. On that rest day, try and do cardiovascular exercises. Your rest days don't have to be super intense, but just enough to keep you going and get your heart rate up. After that rest day, get back into the gym and do the same thing, upper body one day and lower body another. This is the program that I personally use and absolutely love it. You are able to do several variations on those days to ensure you aren't doing the exact same stuff day in and day out (which we all know can get boring after a while). Try this program if you are a college student who has more free time than you think.

Five day split:

The next two programs are more complicated than the previous ones discussed. Your lower body is going to be the same, but your upper body is going to be split so you aren't harming your body. The upper body should be split into chest/shoulders/triceps, and back/trapezius/biceps. You are still able to hit all the major muscle groups, but you are giving them more isolation than when you were just doing upper body or total body types of workouts. Now, when it comes to actually planning out what you are doing on certain days, lower body along with chest/shoulders/triceps should be hit more than once during the week. Do those workouts at the beginning of the week and again at the end of the week. You will still get enough rest (even if you think you won't) to be able to hit those muscle groups again. Your back/trapezius/biceps really only needs to be hit once because the odds of you doing exercises that are hitting those muscles groups on the other days are very high. You don't want to over train those muscle groups, or any muscle group mind you, to avoid injury. Make sure you give yourself two rest days and, once again, try to do cardiovascular training on those days. An example of how this might look is as follows:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rest (Cardio)	Chest/shoulders /triceps	Lower Body	Back/trapezius /biceps	Rest (Cardio)	Lower Body	Chest/shoulders /triceps

Six day split:

This type of program is by far the most intense. People using this program want to stay in the best shape possible (some even compete in physique and bodybuilding competitions) and have more free time than others. Once again, the upper body days are going to be split so you will be able to hit all the major muscle groups and isolate them. You will have plenty of rest in between to allow them to recover. Since there is only one rest day, make sure you are hitting cardio on that day to maintain heart strength and to allow you to stay in a nice routine. Your lower body days are going to stay virtually the same since you will only have two days devoted to lower body. Just make sure you are doing enough to get a nice workout in. The upper body is going to be split into two major days (but you will hit these days more than once during the week). Chest/back and shoulders/arms is going to be the most common way to split up your upper body workouts, but that is not the only way. There is a high chance that you will end up working out the other muscle groups as well, but it will not be as intense as the days where you are isolating them specifically. Like I said earlier, this program is for people who are at the gym quite a bit and are on the more elite side of either athletics or lifting in general. An example of how this workout my look is as follows:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Chest and back	Lower body	Shoulders and arms	Rest (cardio)	Chest and back	Lower body	Shoulders and arms

These are just some simple ideas for anyone who either wants to get back into the gym, or wants to start a program. It can be very difficult to figure out what all you need to

workout on certain days and also how many days you are able to get into the gym. Take these different programs and see what will work for you. Take one and change it up a little to best suit your needs. It cannot only be intimidating, but also tough to start a program. This right here is a good start, so use what you would like!

The second to last topic that I chose to write about is yet again a hot topic in the field of exercise science and in society. Many freshmen, and some sophomores, come in wanting to stay active but are not sure how to accomplish that while living in the residence halls. We, being exercise science students, are asked to help those students figure out how to stay active when there is very little time during the day. There was even a small study done in one of the exercise science classes on how to keep someone active while living on campus. I see more students struggle with this than I thought I would ever see. I did not struggle with this one as much as some of the other students whom I have taken classes with, but it is one that we see quite often.

Every class we take as an undergraduate in the Ball State exercise science program continues to go on about the ever-increasing obesity rate and sedentary lifestyle (which has been a theme in most of these pieces). I decided to cover that a little bit in this post as well because we again see that in the freshman and sophomore population of college. They come out of high school assuming they are going to be able to stay as active as they were in high school with an even busier life. So why not talk about staying active in the residence halls?

The original thought process behind this post did not change from the beginning to the end. I continued to keep the same target audience and the format/topics covered in the post. I stayed more on the informational side of things instead of going with the format

similar to the first few posts that I wrote not knowing what accommodations the students who read this post might have. Overall, this was one of my favorite topics because I was able to take information from all of the classes that I took, not just the ones in the exercise science program, and combine all of the knowledge I obtained from those classes. I was also able to combine all of that information with a little bit of research that I did to really get the ball rolling. People always say that there is no way you will use everything from all of your classes that you took in college, and I decided to prove them wrong.

This is very important to me because I want to see as many people as possible continue to stay active and I also want to see the obesity rate decline in young adults. There is no better place to start than with incoming freshman and sophomores in college. The ninth post is titled "Residence Hall Fitness Tips" and is as follows.

Residence Hall Fitness Tips

Making the transition to college is a very difficult and stressful time. Along with moving away from home and getting out in the real world, living on campus can be just as difficult. You don't know who your roommate is going to be (unless you live with a friend from home), how far away your classes are going to be, and how you are going to get along with your floor mates/other people you may encounter. Wanting to stay active while living on campus is easier said than done. It is much easier for on-campus students than off campus students due to the easy access to gyms. Off campus students have to make an effort to get to the gym where on campus students can just walk there. Quite a few freshmen (and some transfer students) come in saying they want to beat the ever so

common “freshman 15.” However, they think that by doing the bare minimum they will be able to beat it.

Before we take a look at what you should consider if you want to stay healthy/active on campus while living in a residence hall, let’s first talk about the freshman 15. It is one of the most common aspects of college that everyone hears about. Quite a few freshmen that I have had the privilege of talking to know what the freshman 15 is but don’t think it will happen to them. What they fail to realize is that it happens to more people than they think. You are away from home and have more access to food and other substances you might not have while living at home. There is also an increase in workload with classes/organizations and less free time to be active. So if you combine those two, you get the ever so common chance of gaining a little weight. It actually happened to one of my freshman roommates. He said he was going to work his butt off and we were going to workout every day. He mixed in with the wrong crowd(s) a few weeks into school and started to gain weight, while I chose to join a club sport and was able to lose weight. He didn’t think it could happen to him, but low and behold, it did. According to an article found on webmd.com ‘ “Almost one quarter of students gained a significant amount of weight during their first semester of college,” researchers Heidi J. Wengreen and Cara Moncur of the department of nutrition and food sciences at Utah State University in Logan write in *Nutrition Journal* (Jennifer Warner; Freshman 15: College Weight Gain Is Real).” There are a few ways to combat the freshman 15, and one of those is staying active. It can be hard, especially living on campus. Here are a few things to consider if you are someone who wants to stay active, but has very little time and lives in on-campus housing (residence halls).

One of the first things that you should consider is working out in your room. Most rooms in residence halls will have enough space for you to get in some type of workout. If you find yourself cramped for space, try moving furniture around and see if that gives you more space. There are plenty of at home workout videos floating around, so you are bound to find one that you like. YouTube is an excellent source to start your search. From yoga to at home cardio videos to even resistance training videos, they are all available. As long as you do something you enjoy to keep your heart rate up and burn off some of those calories, you will be set. One of my best friends in college did this every morning after she woke up. She did P90X and Insanity (both at home DVD workouts and at different times since they are both very intense) since she didn't like walking to the rec center and those videos were enough for her. She stayed active and was able to lose weight during her first semester of college and continued to do so as we continued our education. It's not for everyone, but it's a great place to start if you want to stay active but have limited time throughout the day.

Going along with trying to workout in your room, something else to try is using what you have available. I have mentioned this in another post, but it is extremely important for someone who wants to stay active while living on campus. We all have those expensive college books, and we all know how much they weigh. Try incorporating them in your workouts. They are not going to give you the most resistance in the world, but if you find a video that needs you to have some sort of resistance, those books are going to be sufficient. Also, use the furniture you have in your room. You can modify different types of exercises to better utilize what is available. Chairs and desks are great for certain types of pushups and tricep dips and other types of workouts. You will not be able to do everything you want to accomplish, but if you seem to always find yourself cramped for time and want to get a

small workout in without leaving your room, this is a great thing to try. Combine it with a few other things and you will be set!

Another thing to try is finding a workout partner that lives in the same residence hall. Like I talked about in one of my first posts, finding a workout partner will keep both of you accountable. If one of you is missing, then you are not only letting yourself down, but also your workout partner. Most people want to use either their significant other or a best friend that lives in a different residence hall or off campus completely as a workout partner. That's not the worst thing to do, but during freshman year it can be a little tough. By picking someone who lives in the same residence hall as you, possibly even your roommate, you will be able to keep track of each other a little easier. You can go to their room and either walk over to the rec center together or workout in one of your dormitory rooms. You won't have to fumble around as much with schedules, so there is a chance it will be a little easier to workout with someone who lives close to you versus someone who lives in a different place and has a much different schedule.

One other item mentioned in another post is look into fitness rooms that residence halls might have. All of the residence halls at my university (Ball State) have fitness rooms for the residents of that hall to use. They are the only ones who have access to it, unless someone brings a guest with them. It is much more private than using a giant rec center facility with open access. You won't even have to leave the comfort of your residence hall to workout. One downside is that they typically don't have the greatest equipment and can be a little small. That is a small price to pay for not leaving your hall. From personal experience, they get a lot of use during the wintertime, as people do not want to leave the warmth of their rooms and walk to the rec center. If you find yourself cramped for time and

just want to get something done before class or in the morning before you get ready, this is one of the best options for you; especially since you won't even need to leave your residence hall.

The ever so common freshman 15 is easy to beat. Most people come in thinking they are going to be able to control their weight in college and seem to fail. By combining eating right and staying active, you will have a better chance of either keeping that weight away and/or even lose a little bit. Trying to stay active while living on campus is not an easy feat to overcome. Here are just a few things to consider if you are having trouble staying active. So feel free to use what you want, revise to fit your needs, or make up a few of your own...you will be glad that you did.

This last piece I decided to write had also been a work in progress since deciding what I was planning on doing for my honors thesis/creative project. Quite a few people seem to ask me, knowing that I am an exercise science major and that I am in the gym more often than not, how I plan on staying active after graduation and getting a job and possibly relocating to better accommodate that job. That is why I chose this as my last topic. I wanted to try and do something that is a common problem for quite a few different people after graduating and obtaining a job in their field. There are quite a few graduating seniors I personally know who struggle with this, which is why I decided to tie it together for my last post.

By writing on this final topic, I was able to bring everything together and close out the project with a broader topic. I was able to combine quite a bit of knowledge from all of the classes that I took as an undergrad and put them all in one common place. When first

coming up with the information for this last topic, I never thought I would have as much as I did. Luckily I was able to change the original topics around and write about the most common ones that most undergrads and myself see in the BSU exercise science program. It is not just one problem, but many.

With that being said, I did not end up changing the original thought process behind the last blog topic from the beginning to the end of writing and posting. It was a good one to finish with since I was able to be more general with an array of topics and was able to finish off on a good note

Once again, this topic is very important because we are starting to see an increase in both sedentary lifestyles, an increase in obesity (especially in post-grad adults), but also a growing "I want to workout, but I feel like I don't have time" population. This last one is able to take those different populations and answer their questions and start to get them questioning why they are the way they are and start to get them in the gym or start a gym program. The last post is titled "How to stay active/adhere to an exercise program after gradation" and is below.

How to stay active/adhere to an exercise program after gradation

We all know how it feels (or will know in the next few weeks/months): walking across the stage at the end of your college career and thinking, "what in the heck am I going to do with my life now?" Getting out in the "real world" is probably one of the hardest things you will ever have to do. Unless you have a job lined up in your field (which is pretty hard to do), you don't know what is going to happen. Where are you going to have to move? Will you be able to find a job in your chosen career field to help you gain and maintain knowledge? Those are some of the most common questions asked after graduation. One not

commonly asked is “how am I going to have time to stay active?” Just because you graduate and move on doesn’t mean you will be able to stop staying active and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. You just have to do so in a different way. If you are currently this person, or think you will be this person once you officially graduate, here are a few things to consider.

The first thing you want to do if you have a job lined up or during interviews for prospective jobs is consider asking your employer/future employer if they offer fitness programs or if there is a gym they have a contract with. There are quite a few jobs that offer corporate wellness programs and other various programs. With the increase in obesity and sedentary lifestyles, companies want to see their employees stay healthy, especially if you sit for a long period of time in an office. According to an article from the CDC called *Benefits of Health Promotion Programs*, “Employers can benefit from workplace health programs through enhanced productivity, decreased employee absenteeism, and lower insurance and workers compensation costs. Employers who implement a comprehensive set of strategies to address employee health and safety including policy and environmental strategies benefit by having the ability to reach most if not all employees at the worksite simultaneously.” So these programs aren’t being implemented for just the heck of it. There are good benefits for these programs.

Some of the programs offered are just as intense as personal training. If you find that your job/future employment does not offer corporate wellness programs, ask them if there is a gym they have a contract with. Sometimes businesses will have contracts with gyms that will allow the employees to use the facility for free (or a reduced rate) and the business pays a discounted corporate rate. This is also a great program, and I have personal experience seeing this work. Where I intern, Henry County Sports Medicine Performance

Enhancement, the clinic has a gym for all Henry County Hospital employees and families to use. Also, certain other companies pay the hospital for the use of the gym for their employees. It is a fantastic program since they want to see their employees stay healthy after working all day. However, if your employer/future employer doesn't offer either of these, ask if they would be willing to pay for a gym membership close to your home or the building where you would be working. There is a chance they wouldn't pay for all of it, but they might be able to pay for some of it and put that in your weekly pay. Something small to consider when you are looking for jobs after graduation.

If you find out that your job/future job doesn't offer any of the programs mentioned or won't offer to help pay for a gym membership, find a gym that you would be comfortable joining. Depending on work schedules and other situations, a 24-hour gym might be the best option, you will be able to go whenever you have time. Time management is very difficult in college and after graduation, so that is why a 24-hour gym is a good option. One other problem that quite a few graduating seniors have is money. There are quite a few gyms that have very high rates, which isn't reasonable for some people who just graduated. By finding a gym that has more reasonable rates, you will not feel the crunch of finances, and will still be able to afford everything you need. This is something that I personally do and I absolutely love it (even though I have not officially graduated yet). Not only am I able to stay active, which is very important to me, but also I am able to afford everything else I need. Make sure you do your research on what all is offered at the facility; whether that is personal training, classes, and other programs you might be interested in. That way you won't be surprised when walking into the facility or after you talk to an employee.

When you find yourself a program or a gym that fits your needs both personally and financially, you have to then start thinking about when you will have time to get to the gym. You have to work with your schedule and other obligations you might have to see when you will have the most time. If you find yourself not having to report to work until later in the morning or in the early afternoon, get up and go before you have to go to work. It will take a little adjusting because we all know how much it can stink getting up earlier than you have to. It doesn't have to be super early either, just early enough to be able to get in what exercises you want. You will start to feel good in the morning since you will be more awake for work. You will also sleep better at night if you are doing everything correctly. In my last semester of college, during my internship which was as intense and time consuming as a job, I was able to get up and workout before I had to report to the clinic. I felt amazing throughout the day, and when it came to going to bed, I was super tired and had no problem falling asleep. Getting up early is not for everyone, especially when your schedule is hard to work around.

If you find yourself having a hard time getting up before you have to be at work or have a hard schedule to work around, go after work. This works very well for someone who has to be up at the wee hours of the morning. By going after work, you will already be awake and won't have to worry about trying to wake your body up. You will still be able to complete all of your errands after your workout, and you will feel just as good as someone who works out in the morning. Make sure you take clothes with you that you will feel comfortable changing into after work so you can go straight to the gym. The biggest excuse for someone to not go to the gym after work is that they have to go home to change and don't want to leave again. By taking clothes with you, you can eliminate that excuse and

start to get in a routine. Not only will your body thank you, but also the chances of your employer being just as happy are pretty high.

Overall, graduating and moving out in the real world is hard enough. We don't want to worry about staying active, but it is just as important as finding a job. Make sure you do your research and ask the right questions when you are searching for a job. With the increasing obesity rate and increase in sedentary lifestyles, employers want to make sure employees are staying healthy. Hopefully my blogs have been informative and have given you some ideas to maintain an active lifestyle. As always, the suggestions in this post aren't for everyone, just a little something to think about as you finish college and start to look for a job in the field of your choice.

Overall, this project has not only allowed me to reach out to multiple different population, both at this university and at others, but it also allowed me to use all of the information I learned from the four years of my undergraduate experience and put it to good use. I never thought that I would be able to expand the knowledge that I obtained during this process, but that was incorrect. I learned more about myself during this project and was able to expand all of the knowledge from the past four years.

This project is also very important to me since I will be going on to graduate school and will continue to work with high school and college aged students. I will be able to take some of the work from this project and use it when talking to those students. I have learned more than I ever imagined in my time at Ball State and I can tell from this project. There are many more topics that I could have chosen to write about, but chose to write on these ten, as they are more important to me than many of the others I could have written about.

I had a goal of reaching out to as many people as possible, and was able to see that as a success. I wanted to hit some of the main topics we exercise science students see, and that was also a success. Lastly, I wanted to be able to use all of the knowledge that I obtained from the past four years, combine it with some outside research to grow in my knowledge and passion for exercise science, and that, too, was successful. The project not only reached out to many people, but also allowed me to grow as a student, seeing as I will move on the next year to higher education.

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