Group Fitness Instructor Scope of Practice

The ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructor is an exercise professional who has met all requirements of the American Council on Exercise to prepare and lead safe, effective, inclusive, and enjoyable fitness classes to promote and support a healthy, active lifestyle. In addition to possessing knowledge of exercise science, the ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructor motivates and leads by using teaching techniques suitable for multiple stages and styles of learning and adapts workouts based on the diverse needs of the participants. The ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructor realizes that group fitness instruction is a service focused on helping people enhance fitness and modify risk factors for chronic disease to improve health. As members of the healthcare continuum with a primary focus on prevention, ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructors have a scope of practice that includes:

- Developing and leading exercise classes that are safe, effective, and appropriate for individuals who are apparently healthy or have medical clearance to exercise
- Conducting pre-class assessments of participants and, where appropriate, conducting health screenings with participants to determine the need for referral or medical clearance and identify contraindications for exercise
- Constructing group exercise classes that are appropriate for the intended audiences and objectives for the class format using evidence-based and published protocols
- Assisting participants in setting and achieving meaningful and realistic fitness goals that align with their values
- Teaching correct exercise methods, progressions, and modifications through demonstration, explanation, and proper cueing and exercise leadership techniques
- Instructing class participants in monitoring exercise intensity using heart rate, ratings of perceived exertion, and/or the talk test
- Empowering individuals to begin and adhere to their exercise programs using guidance, support, motivation, lapse- and relapse-prevention strategies, and effective feedback
- Assessing the class environment by evaluating/monitoring the room and equipment before and during each class session
- Educating participants about fitness- and health-related topics to help them adopt healthful behaviors that facilitate long-term success

- Protecting participant confidentiality according to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and related regional and national laws
- Always acting with professionalism, respect, and integrity and providing inclusive exercise classes for all participants
- Referring participants to other healthcare professionals when appropriate
- Responding to and managing class incidents and high-risk situations following established protocols to ensure safety and reduce liability