

YMCA Group Fitness Instructor Development Program

The YMCA has always relied on strong leaders to achieve its mission, and has a long history of encouraging individuals to assume responsibility for themselves and for the welfare of others. The YMCA developed the first nationally recognized fitness leadership program in 1974 and has continued to train fitness leaders ever since.

Stages of Certification

Stage 1 –YMCA Healthy Lifestyle Principles Course (4 hours)

Prerequisites: Must be at least 18 years of age.

This is the basic level prerequisite course for all other YMCA Health and Fitness certification courses. It provides practical and theoretical information for instructors of all YMCA health and fitness programs, including information on effective leadership, basic physical activity and healthy lifestyles principles, and program safety guidelines. The course also covers the YMCA mission, philosophy, and the national program training and certification system.

Stage 2 – Foundations of Group Exercise Course (8 hours)

Prerequisites: YMCA Healthy Lifestyle Principles Certification and First Aid & CPR certification.

This course is designed to train participants in the basics of conducting all varieties of group exercise classes. Course content includes the practical application of cardiovascular and neuromuscular exercise science, leadership and teaching skills for group exercise instructors, behavior modification and motivation information, and a practical session on general exercise selection and execution. This course is the required prerequisite for all other courses in the YMCA of the USA Health and Fitness Group Exercise Track. Successful completion of the exam is required before progressing to specialties.

Stage 3 – Apprenticeship – Peer Teaching (12 hours)

Apprenticeship and peer teaching is done either in a group program with other candidates or one-on-one with an instructor.

Stage 4 – Practicum – On the Floor Teaching (12 hours)

Candidates gain 8 hours of practical experience in a formal class setting. A YMCA Trainer (Fitness) completes the practical evaluation and observation.

Stage 5 – Evaluation and Certification

Once all 4 stages and the practical observation in the chosen stream are completed, the candidate will receive certification. Certifications are valid for 3 years and there is a recertification process in place.

(Pick up registration forms at the Fitness Desk.)

