

# ACSM Certified Group Exercise Instructor®

2018 Exam Blueprint Update

## Performance Domains and Associated Job Tasks

In 2018, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) began the redevelopment process for its Certified Group Exercise Instructor (ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup>) examination. The ACSM-GEI examination is a certification available for group exercise instructors who develop and implement safe, effective exercise programs to help healthy individuals accomplish their fitness goals.

## Job Definition

The ACSM Certified Group Exercise Instructor<sup>SM</sup> (ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup>) possesses a minimum of a high school diploma, and works in a group exercise setting with apparently healthy individuals and those with health challenges who are able to exercise independently to enhance quality of life, improve health-related physical fitness, manage health risk, and promote lasting health behavior change. The ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> leads safe and effective exercise programs using a variety of leadership techniques to foster group camaraderie, support, and motivation to enhance muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, cardiorespiratory fitness, body composition, and any of the motor skills related to the domains of health-related physical fitness.

## Approach

A three-step approach was used to conduct an analysis of the ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> practice: a focus group meeting where an SME panel revised and updated the current content outline of the ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> exam, a survey of certified group exercise instructors to provide input on the revised content, and a follow-up meeting with the SME panel to review the results of the survey. The results of these activities were then used to create the exam specifications.

## Results

The Job Task Analysis (JTA) for the ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> certification describes what the professional does on a day-to-day basis. The JTA is divided into performance domains and associated tasks performed on the job. The percentages listed below indicate the number of questions representing each domain on the 100-question ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> examination.

Crosswalk comparisons of performance domains and job tasks are provided on tables 1 and 2, respectively. Exam forms published on December 18, 2018 will be based on the 2018 ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> JTA.

**Table 1. Crosswalk Comparison of 2010 and 2018 ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> Performance Domains.**

Performance Domains (2010)		Performance Domains (2018)	
Domain I: Participant and Program Assessment	10%	Domain I: Class Design	30%
Domain II: Class Design	25%	Domain II: Leadership	25%
Domain III: Leadership and Instruction	55%	Domain III: Instruction	30%
Domain IV: Legal and Professional Responsibilities	10%	Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities	15%

**Table 2. Crosswalk comparison of 2010 and 2018 ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> job tasks**

<b>Performance Domains (2010)</b>		<b>Performance Domains (2018)</b>	
<b>Domain I: Participant and Program Assessment*</b>	<b>10%</b>	--	--
A. Evaluate and establish participant screening procedures to optimize safety and minimize risk by reviewing assessment protocols based on ACSM standards and guidelines.*	--	--	--
B. Administer and review, as necessary, participants' health risk to determine if preparticipation assessment is needed prior to exercise using PAR-Q, ACSM pre-participation health screening or other appropriate tools.*	--	--	--
C. Screen participants, as needed, for known acute or chronic conditions to provide recommendations and/or modifications.	IV.C	--	--

\*Domain I A and B (2010) job tasks no longer included in the 2018 ACSM-GEI<sup>SM</sup> examination. ACSM industry subject matter experts recommended removal of the 2010 Domain A, B to be consistent with employer expectations. Assessment of client risk (including preparticipation screening) would be determined by a facility's policies and procedures. The group exercise instructor would be accountable for identifying and responding to emergencies.

<b>Domain II: Class Design</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>Domain I: Class Design</b>	<b>30%</b>
A. Establish the purpose and determine the objectives of the class based upon the needs of the participants and facility.	I.A	A. Establish the purpose, and determine the objectives of, the class based upon the needs of the participants and facility.	
B. Determine class content (i.e., warm-up, stimulus and cool-down) in order to create an effective workout based upon the objectives of the class.	I.B	B. Determine class content (i.e., warm-up, stimulus and cool-down) in order to create an effective workout based upon the objectives of the class.	
C. Select and sequence appropriate exercises in order to provide a safe workout based upon the objectives of the class.	I.C	C. Select and sequence appropriate exercises to provide a safe workout based upon the objectives of the class.	
D. Rehearse class content, exercise selection and sequencing and revise as needed in order to provide a safe and effective workout based upon the purpose and objectives of the class.	I.D	D. Rehearse class content, exercise selection and sequencing and revise as needed to provide a safe and effective workout based upon the purpose and objectives of the class.	

<b>Domain III: Leadership and Instruction**</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>Domain II: Leadership**</b>	<b>25%</b>
A. Prepare to teach by implementing pre-class procedures including screening new participants and organizing equipment, music and room set-up.	III.A	A. Create an exercise environment to optimize participant adherence by incorporating effective motivational skills, communication techniques and behavioral strategies.	

B. Create a positive exercise environment in order to optimize participant adherence by incorporating effective motivational skills, communication techniques and behavioral strategies.	II.A	B. Respond to participants' concerns to maintain a professional, equitable environment by using appropriate conflict management or customer service strategies set forth by facility policy and procedures and industry guidelines.	
C. Demonstrate all exercises using proper form and technique to ensure safe execution in accordance with ACSM standards and guidelines.	III.B	C. Educate participants to enhance knowledge, enjoyment and adherence by providing health and fitness related information and resources.	
D. Incorporate verbal and nonverbal instructional cues in order to optimize communication, safety and motivation based upon industry guidelines.	III.C	D. Promote healthy lifestyle practices to class participants.	
--	--	<b>Domain III: Instruction**</b>	<b>30%</b>
E. Monitor participants' performance to ensure safe and effective exercise execution using observation and participant feedback techniques in accordance with ACSM standards and guidelines.	III.D	A. Prepare to teach by implementing pre-class procedures (e.g., organizing equipment, music, room set-up)	
F. Modify exercises based on individual and group needs to ensure safety and effectiveness in accordance with ACSM standards and guidelines.	III.E	B. Demonstrate safe and effective exercise technique in accordance with industry standards and guidelines.	
G. Monitor sound levels of vocal and/or audio equipment following industry guidelines.	IV.D	C. Incorporate verbal and nonverbal instructional cues to optimize communication, safety and motivation based upon industry standards and guidelines.	
H. Respond to participants' concerns in order to maintain a professional, equitable and safe environment by using appropriate conflict management or customer service strategies set forth by facility policy and procedures and industry guidelines.	II.B	D. Monitor participants' performance to ensure safe and effective exercise execution in accordance with industry standards and guidelines.	
I. Educate participants in order to enhance knowledge, enjoyment and adherence by providing health and fitness related information and resources.	II.C	E. Modify exercises based on individual and group needs to ensure safety and effectiveness in accordance with industry standards and guidelines.	

\*\*Domain III (2010) split to Domain II and Domain III (2018)

<b>Domain IV: Legal and Professional Responsibilities</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities</b>	<b>15%</b>
A. Evaluate the class environment (e.g., outdoor, indoor, capacity, flooring, temperature, ventilation, lighting, equipment, acoustics) to minimize risk and optimize safety by following pre-class inspection procedures based on established facility and industry standards and guidelines.	IV.A	A. Evaluate the class environment (e.g., outdoor, indoor, capacity, flooring, temperature, etc.) to minimize risk and optimize safety by following pre-class inspection procedures based on established facility and industry standards and guidelines.	
B. Promote participants' awareness and accountability by informing them of classroom safety procedures and exercise and intensity options in order to minimize risk.	IV.B	B. Promote participants' awareness and accountability by informing them of classroom safety procedures and exercise and intensity options to minimize risk.	
C. Follow industry-accepted professional, ethical and business standards in order to optimize safety and reduce liability.	IV.E	C. Identify and/or address participants with known acute or chronic diseases or conditions to provide recommendations and/or modifications.	
D. Respond to emergencies in order to minimize untoward events by following procedures consistent with established standards of care and facility policies.	IV.F	D. Monitor sound levels of vocal and/or audio equipment following industry standards and guidelines.	
E. Respect copyrights to protect original and creative work, media, etc. by legally securing copyright material and other intellectual property based on national and international copyright laws.	IV.G	E. Follow industry-accepted professional, ethical and business standards in order to optimize safety and reduce liability.	
F. Engage in healthy lifestyle practices in order to be a positive role model for class participants.	II.D	F. Respond to emergencies to minimize untoward events by following procedures consistent with established standards of care and facility policies.	
G. Select and participate in continuing education programs that enhance knowledge and skills on a continuing basis, maximize effectiveness and increase professionalism in the field.***	--	G. Respect copyrights to protect original and creative work, media, etc. by legally securing copyright material and other intellectual property based on applicable copyright laws.	

\*\*\* Continuing education is an administrative requirement to maintain the certification and will no longer be assessed on the exam.