

New P.E. Course Considerations

Proposaling for Adding a New PE Class

Reed College offers one of the largest and most diverse course catalogues in Physical Education of any liberal arts college of its size. We offer a wide range of courses in order to appeal to as many areas of interest and skill levels as possible. The Athletics, Fitness & Outdoor Programs Department offers over 50 classes each quarter and various clubs in order to support students in receiving college credits required for graduation and to improve student well-being. Feedback re. class popularity and attendance is provided through surveys, direct student feedback, coach/instructor feedback, and attendance documents. We have a long list of classes that students would like to see added to the curriculum, and each year we try to accommodate these requests to the best of our ability based on a variety of factors.

A brief scan of our offerings includes Folk Dance, one of the longest running courses in our catalogue, Fencing, Capoeira, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Archery, Rock Climbing, Table Tennis, Billiards, Kayaking, Rugby, Rowing, Hip Hop, Zumba, Tango, Meditation, Skiing, Cardio Kickboxing, Muay Thai Kickboxing, ABC's of Self Defense and many of the more conventional PE classes such as Basketball, Table Tennis, Soccer, and Swimming. Occasionally, we are approached to add a new offering to our already rich course list. We are always interested in examining new trends in health and fitness, and finding new ways to excite and entice students into engaging in physical activities that are both recreative and healthful as a way to stimulate and balance their physical and mental well-being. If you have an idea for a new course offering that might benefit the Reed community, you can fill out the New Course Offering Proposal located on our website, and bring it to our offices located on the first floor of the Sports Center. Before filling out the proposal, we encourage you to consider the following questions in order to help us determine if your idea will be a viable option (the more information and background you can provide, the better):

- What are the resources required to conduct a class of this nature? (i.e. in addition to a certified instructor, are there equipment, apparel, or spatial requirements necessary for this practice, assuming reasonable safety to the students?)

Funding: The Athletics department has a finite (and ever shrinking) budget year-to-year; finding money to fund a new PE class/clubs often means dropping or cancelling an existing class; obviously it can be a tough call to decide what class should stay and what class should go, as each class has it's devoted advocates.

- What is the *demonstrated* level of student interest and how can we measure it? Before devoting resources to a new course, we want to make sure that there will be a high enough level of student participation to warrant the resources. Participation levels vary year by year and we have found that many times one person carries the torch and rallies folks to action but when that person graduates or loses interest sometimes sports and activities go dormant.
- Is there proven longevity of the practice? (i.e. is this a new trend that will likely pass, or will the resources expended have lasting impact for the school?)

Once you have submitted the proper form, the Director will review your proposal and follow-up with you to determine if this is a viable option for our department, or if more information is needed before making such a determination.

Next steps: My suggestion is to gather those interested in a particular activity and seek funding through Student Body Funding. This allows us to see true interest by folks, aka how committed are they to showing up consistently over a period of time. If you find there is good or great participation levels, our department would certainly be open to discussing a proposal and the possibility of receiving college support. AFOP takes student requests to heart; our department wants to help students pursue their interests! But scheduling and funding a new PE club can be quite challenging.

We welcome conversations about all inquiries and can give further detail in person if desired but hopefully this email will answer a variety of questions and get folks pointed in the right direction.