The DPE Mission is to educate, train, and inspire the Corps by challenging each Cadet in activities that promote holistic health and optimal physical performance to commission leaders of character who are physically fit and mentally tough.
LETTER FROM THE MASTER OF THE SWORD – COL GIST

The volatile and dynamic nature of armed conflict requires graduates of the United States Military Academy (USMA) Physical Program to be lethal, highly fit, and mentally tough leaders – Army officers who strive for impeccable character, who demonstrate the Warrior Ethos, who solve complex problems – leaders who build cohesive teams that are highly trained, disciplined, and fit. Our graduates must be adaptable and flexible to optimally meet all athletic demands in any combat environment.

The Physical Program Strategy establishes Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that support the West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS) outcomes to Live Honorably, Lead Honorably, and Demonstrate Excellence. Aligned with the WPLDS, the Physical Program is a 47-month transformational development process. Administered and stewarded by the Department of Physical Education (DPE), the Staff & Faculty are committed to providing inspired service as role models of all facets of the Army profession.

The DPE Vision is to cultivate a culture of physical fitness excellence. With an infinite mindset, the vision is aspirational and communicates an individual and organizational growth mindset in pursuit of human performance optimization.

The DPE Mission is to educate, train, and inspire the Corps by challenging each Cadet in activities that promote holistic health and optimal physical performance to commission leaders of character who are physically fit and mentally tough.

Physical Program functions include a challenging physical education curriculum that provides a series of experiences across the Affective, Cognitive, and Psychomotor learning domains. Individual physical fitness assessments provide feedback on performance and growth. Extracurricular competitive sports experiences develop positive followership and leadership attributes that are hallmarks of cohesive teams.

Within the Physical Program, Cadets are immersed in an environment that exposes them to Staff & Faculty Expertise. The DPE is a diverse blend of military operational experience and civilian disciplinary expertise in a variety of Physical Education and Kinesiology sub-disciplines. Content & Experiences are rigorous, iterative, and developmental curricular and extracurricular activities. Throughout all phases of program Delivery, the DPE strives to provide world-class facilities, best educational practices, and innovative solutions to create and sustain an optimal learning environment. Cadet Performance concentrates efforts on the principal focus of the DPE – the United States Corps of Cadets. We must develop and assist in the pursuit of optimal physical performance throughout a comprehensive 47-month experience. This developmental experience culminates with the emergence of leaders of character who are physically fit, resilient, and prepared to lead Soldiers from the front.

Set the Standard… Maintain the Standard!
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Our Core Values

The Department’s Core Values reflect a commitment to not only developing leaders of character but to the Army’s Values, as well as those aspirational virtues that enable us to build trust as we strive to meet both our mission and vision. We Live Honorably, Lead Honorably, and Demonstrate Excellence as role models of the attitude and effort required of educators, coaches, mentors, and Army leaders.

**Respect & Dignity** – This value represents the “Golden Rule” or treating others the way you would want to be treated in all situations. Members of the department and our stakeholders are valued for their diverse perspectives and contributions to the mission. Basic dignities will be afforded all through inclusive communication and behavior.

**Communication & Trust** – Clear and open communication is foundational to developing healthy professional relationships. Listening to understand enables us to develop empathy and properly acknowledge diverse perspectives. Through open and honest communication, we build a culture of trust where department members are viewed as authentic, competent, fair, and dependable.

**One Team, One Mission, One Standard** – This value symbolizes our unity and alignment as a department. Across varied committees and directorates, we are banded by our commitment to our mission and to each other. We recognize our vital and unique role within the academy’s mission and strive to establish and maintain effective relationships with external partners across the broader USMA community.
Our Vision

Cultivate a culture of physical fitness excellence.

Our Vision provides a direction for what we want to become. We are not solely caretakers of a program or institution. With a primary focus on the Corps of Cadets, we continuously assess and innovate to remain militarily relevant across functions and provide a scientific basis for curricular and extracurricular programs that integrate learning in the Affective, Psychomotor, and Cognitive domains.

Our Vision emanates from focus on achieving the West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS) Outcomes of Live Honorably, Lead Honorably, and Demonstrate Excellence. Underpinning our culture is a Leader Requirements Model articulated in Army Doctrinal Publication 6-22. The Leader Attributes and Competencies dictate what Army Officers should Be, Know, and Do.
Our Mission

To educate, train, and inspire the Corps by challenging each Cadet in activities that promote holistic health and optimal physical performance to commission leaders of character who are physically fit and mentally tough.

The Physical Program Whitebook operationalizes this Strategic Plan, providing Cadets a resource that describes in detail the challenges they will face in their 47-month developmental experience.
Our Strategic Approach – Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Expertise, Content & Experiences, Delivery

Our strategic approach is tailored to generate faculty expertise in holistic health and fitness, develop scientifically based, militarily relevant content and experiences, and deliver them utilizing sound pedagogical practices.

Pursuit of Excellence

We expect Cadets to pursue excellence across our curriculum, which includes coursework, fitness testing, competitive sports, and physical readiness training (PRT). Excellence can be defined as achievement of optimal physical performance while exhibiting both physical and mental toughness. Each course and program area defines excellence differently based on course and program level outcomes.
PLO 1: Expertise

Generating warrior leaders requires a highly skilled and diverse faculty that blends military operational experience with civilian disciplinary expertise across a variety of Physical Education and Kinesiology sub-disciplines. A robust and exhaustive recruitment process focused in the appropriate discipline sectors and facilitated by a diverse subset of faculty is required to obtain ideal candidates for department selection. The end state is an effective team of professionals committed to our Values, our Vision, and the USMA Mission to develop leaders of character.

PLO 2: Content & Experiences

Content and experiences are used to define the knowledge Cadets should know and be able to execute. These capabilities are developed through our curriculum, fitness testing, and competitive sports participation. All material and activities must be grounded in their ability to meet the department’s mission and the pursuit of DPE’s Vision to cultivate a culture of physical fitness excellence. Content and experiences are structured in a sequential and interdependent manner to progressively challenge Cadets as they matriculate through the physical program. Enriching activities build upon each other, allowing Cadets to develop the cardinal knowledge and competencies necessary to optimize individual and collective performance. This design is further refined through routine, critical examination. Regular, planned assessment is a fundamental necessity to validate the efficacy of all program elements, enhance Cadet learning outcomes, and identify opportunities for evolution. Notably, evaluation of content and experiences must be backed by routine modification, transformation, or innovation where appropriate.

PLO 3: Delivery

Assess, Acquire, and Evolve Teaching Resources and Venues

Effective content delivery requires sourcing and maintaining world class teaching resources and continual modernization of teaching venues. DPE leaders and Directors must assess program requirements to acquire the resources, facilities, equipment, and funding necessary to meet or exceed our mission. Exceptional delivery requires stewarding current resources and modernizing our teaching venues through deliberate, routine assessment of industry standards and innovative technologies.

Create a Learning Environment

Faculty provide challenging, relevant, and safe instructional climates. We will use best practices and innovative technology, seen in other institutions of higher learning, to create impactful and meaningful learning opportunities. Faculty must continually analyze the real-world and military applicability of the program to deliver relevant and challenging experiences for each Cadet. Every instructional environment must push Cadets toward physical excellence in a safe and healthful manner.
PLO 4: Pursuit of Excellence

Pursuit of excellence is the relentless quest to perform optimally. Cadets are evaluated on their ability to plan, prepare, execute, assess, and continually improve across the physical program. While pursuing excellence, Cadets are expected to live honorably, develop effective teams, and demonstrate courage and resilience. Cadets who exhibit physical excellence move efficiently, display athleticism, and possess strong presence.

Course directors and program directors are responsible for defining excellence as it pertains to their respective domain within the physical program. The Physical Program Score (PPS) is a comprehensive, reliable measure of overall cadet physical achievement as a 15% portion of the Physical Performance Score (PPS) considers all components of the curriculum: Instructional Course Work, Character in Sports Index (CSI), and Fitness Testing (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Physical Performance Score (PPS)
"This is My Squad"

A diverse blend of military operational experience and civilian disciplinary expertise in a variety of Physical Education and Kinesiology sub-disciplines; an effective team of professionals committed to our Values and the USMA Mission to develop leaders of character.

- Military Faculty → 22
- Civilian Faculty → 25
- Civilian Staff → 24
Our Leadership Directorates

The Leadership Directorates support the planning, execution, assessment, and improvement of the physical program. Current directorships include:

**Program Director:** Provides guidance and leadership to all department areas of operation. Leads the Directorates in planning, execution, and assessment of the physical program. Provides key decision-making in the direction and pace of execution towards the vision and mission of the department.

**Deputy Program Director:** Provides guidance and leadership to eight subordinate directors. Ensures the successful execution of the physical program curriculum, the competitive sports program, and fitness testing for the Corps, while responsibly stewarding all fiscal resources.

**Executive Officer:** Provides administrative, human resources, and supply management support to the department.

**Instruction:** Responsible for leading a comprehensive program of physical education instruction and physical fitness testing for Cadets; promoting and adhering to appropriate physical education pedagogical practices; designing, implementing, and supervising faculty development and preparation programs; supervising and providing guidance to course directors; developing teaching standards and appropriate assessment strategies; recommending curricular decisions and revisions based on continuous, systematic and thoughtful assessment of program effectiveness; and scheduling department teaching assignments; providing leadership to the orientation, advisement and counseling program to enhance cadet development.

**Fitness Education:** Responsible for the synchronization of concepts, material, and activities across a progressive course sequence designed to provide future Army leaders with an educational foundation of health and fitness that is scientifically based and militarily relevant. The Fitness Education Directorate is responsible for the integration of the Army's Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) system into DPE's core curriculum and operations.

**Kinesiology:** Leads a team of faculty in a dean-approved major in Kinesiology. Key roles include program design, administration, assessment, and improvement, faculty development, student and faculty mentorship, and student recruitment and retention.

**Competitive Sports:** Leads a team of faculty in a robust Competitive Sports program that includes Company Athletics and Competitive Club Sports. Primary functions include character development through sport, administrative team support, facility scheduling, and selecting the Hal Moore Award, the Coach K Award, and the Banker's Trophy.
**Sports Medicine:** Provides all Cadets with the highest quality of prevention, care, and rehabilitation for athletic injuries during DPE coursework, fitness testing, and Competitive Sports.

**Assessment:** Provides assessment reports to leadership in the follow areas: physical education coursework, fitness testing, competitive sports, summer physical readiness training, and West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS). In addition, controls Physical Development Review (PDR) administration, Course End Feedback design and reporting, Faculty Survey, and Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) assessments.

**Operations:** Supervises the planning and execution of all Operations in DPE. Responsible for the planning and execution of day-to-day operations, weekly training meetings, short and long-term calendar scheduling, taskings, and liaisons with USCC and adjacent units. Additionally, serves as the subject matter experts for all matters concerning DPE operations at the United States Military Academy.

**Facilities & Fields Management:** Provides oversight and direction to recreational staff members, the building labor force, equipment repair technicians, and custodial staff. Assumes building commandant responsibilities to ensure both accessibility and safety are provided to only those authorized access to Arvin Gymnasium and various playing fields.

**Information Technology:** Responsible for systems that provide information to the faculty and staff, protecting information that must be kept private, managing an intranet, improving technology accessibility, technology upgrades, facility design, and technology training compliance facilitation.
Our Functions

All Cadets must successfully complete and pass seven physical education courses, the Indoor Obstacle Course Test (IOCT), eight academic terms as a member of one or more Competitive Sports teams, and all cadet summer training physical fitness leadership events. This rigorous, iterative, and developmental physical education curriculum is designed to produce leaders of character who are physically fit and mentally tough. In addition to supporting a physical education curriculum for all Cadets, the Department also supports an academic major in Kinesiology with an average of sixteen graduates every year. Assessment of each program component is planned and deliberate by Course Directors, Program Directors, and the Director of Assessment. Results of annual assessments are reported via the Physical Program Assessment Report published annually in August.
Physical Program Strategy Revision
Team Members

Director: COL Nicholas Gist  
Deputy Director: COL Julia Wilson

Subordinate Directors:

Instruction: Dr. Jeff Coelho  
LPAs: Dr. Lynn Fielitz  
Operations: Dr. Craig Yunker  
Facilities & Fields: Mr. Arthur Coughlin  
IT Support: Mrs. Jennifer Trainor

Kinesiology: Dr. Jesse Germain  
Competitive Sports: Dr. Dan Furlong  
Assessment: Dr. Jason Suby  
Sports Medicine: Mr. John Palmer  
Fitness Ed: LTC Matthew Magennis

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Combat Applications: Mr. Matt Larsen  
Army Unit Fitness: MAJ Brett Sullenger

Boxing: Dr. Ray Barone  
Survival Swimming: Mr. John McVan  
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“Set the standard… Maintain the standard”
Appendix A: Physical Program Assessment Plan

The Physical Program Assessment Plan is implemented over a 6-year cycle and serves to inform the Program Director on achievement of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Each year there is a deep dive assessment of one of the PLOs. This deep dive incorporates specific Directorates as LEADs based on their subject matter expertise for the review and assessment. In addition, each year the Pursuit of Excellence is assessed via the Year-End Assessment with course directors and program directors. A deep dive assessment on the Pursuit of Excellence will occur in AY26, providing comprehensive insights into our PLO focused primarily on Cadets.

Subcommittees of deep dive assessments will include leaders within each area as well as junior faculty, providing a diverse and inclusive approach to assessment. Shared governance such as this provides a valued service component as well as faculty development opportunities.

In closing, planned assessment such as these provide meaningful induction reports each year, which will then inform the revision of a new Strategic Plan every six years.
Artwork Compliments of Dr. Dan Furlong, Director of Competitive Sports