

AFAA-CGFI EXAM BLUEPRINT

The Athletics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) contracted with Professional Examination Service (ProExam) to conduct a practice analysis of Certified Group Fitness Instructor (CGFIs) in 2016.

This practice analysis study defines the current knowledge, skills and abilities that must be demonstrated by entry-level credential holders to safely and successfully practice. This study also serves as the “blueprint” for determining the content (performance domains) for the certification exam(s).

Performance Domains as validated by the 2016 Job Analysis Study include the information below:

Domain 1: Fundamentals of Exercise Science	32%
Domain 2: Class Design and Planning	28%
Domain 3: Class Instruction and Presentation	28%
Domain 4: Professionalism	12%

Domain 1: Fundamentals of Exercise Science

This domain encompasses the scientific knowledge bases that are fundamental to all activities performed by group fitness instructors.

Knowledge of:

- k1. Basic structure and function of nervous, muscular and skeletal systems
- k2. Basic structure and function of cardiovascular and respiratory systems
- k3. Fundamentals of human movement science/kinesiology including basic biomechanical terminology and how muscle actions and outside forces relate to human movement
- k4. Fundamentals of exercise metabolism, nutrition, and bioenergetics including basic training adaptations
- k5. Training concepts (such as flexibility, cardiorespiratory, core, balance, plyometric, SAQ, resistance)
- k6. Adaptation, progression, specificity, overload and recovery concepts
- k7. Health benefits of exercise (such as weight management, preventing chronic disease, stress management, increased energy)
- k8. Basic considerations for special populations (such as medical and orthopedic conditions, special needs, older adults, pre- and post-natal)
- k9. Physiological responses to environmental conditions (such as temperature, humidity, altitude, pollution)

Domain 2: Class Design and Planning

This domain encompasses the essential tasks performed when designing and/or planning for a well-structured and balanced fitness class for a diverse group of participants in order to create a safe and effective class and reduce the potential for injury.

Tasks

1. Define class objectives (such as endurance training, strength training, stability and core, flexibility, weight management) in order to create a goal-oriented class.
2. Select specific exercises appropriate for each class component (such as warm-up, main body of the workout, cool-down) based on class objectives and format, with consideration of fitness and skill levels of participants.
3. Select equipment based on understanding of the multiple uses for exercise equipment, classroom constraints (such as size, availability), class objectives and format, and the fitness level of participants.
4. Select appropriate music based on the context of the class (such as appropriate BPM for activity, using music genre/styles conducive to activity, consideration of participant demographics) in order to create a safe, effective, motivating and dynamic experience.
5. Design class movement/combinations/choreography and transitions to ensure class flow.
6. Select options and develop a plan for incorporating modifications, progressions and regressions for specific exercises used in the class based on considerations for participants at varying levels of fitness.
7. Develop a plan to periodically and strategically change class components by varying elements such as music, exercises, and intensity in order to support continued participant engagement and retention.

Knowledge of:

- k10. Basic components of a class (such as warm-up, main body of the workout, cool-down)
- k11. Class types/formats (such as dance, aqua, indoor cycle, interval, resistance, flexibility) and benefits and expected results
- k12. Considerations for various class sizes, locations and environments (such as outdoors, pool, small spaces, on the gym floor)
- k13. Methods to improve potential for results (such as adjust/alter frequency, intensity, time, type of training, and/or tempo)
- k14. SMART goal development
- k15. Proper warm-up exercises and techniques
- k16. Proper cool-down exercises and techniques
- k17. Proper techniques to increase muscle strength and endurance

- k18. Proper techniques to improve cardiovascular fitness
- k19. Proper techniques to increase flexibility and improve mobility (such as static and dynamic stretching)
- k20. Proper techniques to improve stability and balance
- k21. Appropriate exercises for use in different class formats
- k22. Proper sequencing, transitions flow (movement/combinations/choreography)
- k23. Exercise modifications
- k24. Exercise progressions and regressions
- k25. Various group fitness-related equipment, appropriate and safe uses, and space requirements
- k26. Proper music BPM and volume/decibel guidelines for common class activities
- k27. Music styles and tempos appropriate for different class formats and class components
- k28. Music structures (such as chorus, verse, 32 count phrase, radio edits, DJ mixes, mash-ups)
- k29. Differences between freestyle, pre-designed, and pre-choreographed class formats

Domain 3: Class Instruction and Presentation

This domain encompasses the essential tasks performed to deliver a positive, safe and effective group fitness class. These tasks include coaching, demonstration, monitoring, and providing modifications.

Tasks

1. Communicate class objectives and design to participants to set expectations
2. Demonstrate correct exercise form and technique.
3. Instruct participants, using various cueing techniques, in order to facilitate safe and effective movement execution and transitions.
4. Utilize positive and inclusive coaching techniques to motivate participants and encourage continued class participation.
5. Monitor participants' exercise/movement, form, posture, and exertion levels to identify contraindications or the need for individualization.
6. Provide exercise and movement feedback, corrections, regressions, and modifications in order to prevent injury.
7. Provide movement options to accommodate different fitness goals and enhance participants' experience
8. Instruct participants on how to monitor their own pacing/intensity using a measure of exertion to enable them to exercise at the most appropriate level.

9. Maintain flow and structure of classes, including adapting to unexpected environmental conditions (such as interruptions, potential conflicts, equipment failure, and insufficient equipment).

Knowledge of:

Knowledge of:

- k30. Communication strategies (such as speak clearly, make eye contact)
- k31. Coaching and motivation techniques to engage and retain participants
- k32. Participant-centered teaching approaches
- k33. Various learning styles (such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- k34. Appropriate class objectives and design characteristics that should be communicated to participants to set expectations
- k35. The major types of classes: cardio, strength, flexibility, and fusion and the benefits associated with each
- k36. Appropriate music, equipment, and temperature and other environmental considerations for each class type
- k37. Various cueing techniques (such as verbal, non-verbal, music-based cueing) and when to use them
- k38. Proper body alignment and posture (neutral spine, lordosis, kyphosis) during exercise
- k39. Safe and effective exercise technique (such as joint alignment, range of motion)
- k40. Correct mechanics for each exercise, movement, stabilization and balance
- k41. Physical signs and symptoms of over- and under-exertion, fatigue, and dehydration
- k42. Heart-rate response to various class components
- k43. Methods of monitoring exercise intensity (such as rate of perceived exertion [RPE], talk-test, monitoring devices)
- k44. Modifications for exercises for complexity, impact level and fitness level (such as taking out arm movements, removing jumping, push-ups on knees)
- k45. Appropriate responses to unexpected environmental conditions (such as interruptions, potential conflicts, equipment failure, insufficient equipment)

Domain 4: Professionalism

This domain encompasses the essential tasks focused on working within the confines of scope of practice and safety, legal and ethical requirements as well as tasks required to increase success as a group exercise professional.

Tasks

1. Work within the confines of legal and ethical practices (such as client confidentiality, proper instructor-participant relationship, trademark/copyright, music).
2. Demonstrate professional behavior (such as effective communication, punctuality, appropriate attire, appropriate language).
3. Operate within scope of practice.
4. Maintain requirements for liability insurance and participant liability waivers in order to help minimize risk for the instructor and organization.
5. Foster class growth and participant loyalty and retention by building rapport and using marketing strategies.
6. Engage in self-management (such as protect voice, monitor workload, avoid overtraining) in order to stay healthy and injury-free as well as prevent burnout.

7. Respond to emergencies following established protocols and documentation requirements.

Knowledge of:

- k46. Applicable music licensing laws
- k47. Client confidentiality requirements
- k48. Credible sources of information
- k49. Established industry guidelines regarding ethical practice
- k50. Scope of practice and limitations (such as nutritional advice, medical advice, psychological advice)
- k51. Liability insurance requirements
- k52. Proper/appropriate physical contact with participants
- k53. Considerations when using social media (such as appropriate content, participant agreement, music licensing, facility considerations)
- k54. Emergency response preparedness and documentation requirements
- k55. Aspects of professional behavior (such as punctuality, appropriate attire, appropriate language)
- k56. Customer service strategies to foster class growth and increase participant loyalty and retention
- k57. Marketing strategies to foster class growth and increase participant loyalty and retention
- k58. Potential risks and occupational hazards (such as overuse injuries, overtraining syndrome, vocal damage) for group fitness instructors and how to prevent them