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Regular physical activity (PA) can reduce the risk of chronic diseases and improve cognitive function and emotional health (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018; Yorks et al., 2017). A significant portion of college students are inactive and at risk for chronic diseases and mental health conditions (American College Health Association, 2021). Innovative exercise interventions that promote PA and its benefits in this population are needed. PA adherence is enhanced when the experience promotes positive affect and intrinsic factors drive participants (e.g., Ekkekakis & Brand, 2019). Zumba fitness is a popular group exercise class (Nieri & Hughes, 2016) that provides a unique experience to participants in which intrinsic motivation and positive affect are reinforced. The purpose of this study was to implement and evaluate a Zumba fitness college course as a potentially effective way to promote PA among college students. The study encompassed online surveys completed throughout the semester that measured participants' affective experiences and acute feelings of PA, intrinsic motivation, and PA participation. Results indicated an overall positive trend showing an improvement in participants' feelings from the start and end of the semester and within individual Zumba sessions. Intrinsic motivation did not significantly increase from pre to post-test, but there was a significant increase in self-reported PA. Students perceived that the Zumba course increased their motivation to exercise and enjoyed aspects of the class such as the upbeat music, fun moves, and informative lectures. Findings from this study can offer strategies that other kinesiology departments can adopt in their PA courses to provide enjoyable PA experiences that may promote students' continued PA participation in the future.

PROMOTING COLLEGE STUDENTS' PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENJOYMENT AND
MOTIVATION IN A SEMESTER-LONG ZUMBA FITNESS COURSE

by

Isabel Woelfel

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