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Anthropology of Sports

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Project Statement

For the Un-essay final project, I created a cookbook for student-athletes. The cookbook can also be used for all athletes in general or people looking to eat nutrient-dense foods. Initially I was going to create a cookbook for student-athletes overcoming eating disorders, but after some thought and research, I didn't feel qualified or comfortable creating a cookbook for something I am not educated/licensed on, which is eating disorders. I split the cookbook up into sections based on meals: breakfast, lunch/dinner, snack/pre-workout, and dessert. I incorporated food with high proteins because athletes are likely trying to build more or maintain muscle mass.

I wanted to create a student-athlete/nutrient-dense cookbook for my un-essay assignment because I have always been interested in food and nutrition, specifically geared towards health and athletics. Growing up as an athlete, I learned at a young age how essential nutrition is for supporting athletes' overall health and training schedules. Having a well-balanced diet gives the athlete the ability to have enough nutrients and energy to meet the training and exercise goals and facilitate recovery and athletic pursuits.

Even though we skipped/didn't get to the food and nutrition unit, of course I still thought a cookbook and athletes' nutrition related to the course Anthropology of Sports. Especially when it comes to who has access to nutrient-dense foods in terms of location, cost, and accessibility and how that affects the childhood development of young athletes and their trajectory in their sport. Additionally, the biological anthropology leans of what our bodies need to recover from intense exercise and sports performance.

I produced the cookbook by gathering my favorite recipes from family, friends, online fitness community (social media), online research. Also, resources that I found best suited for athletes who have a demanding training schedule and that facilitate recovery. Most of the recipes I did not come up with on my own. However, most recipes I personally modified from the original recipes adding a personal twist to the recipe. Additionally, I did research on what types of goods are great for recovery, muscle growth, and providing energy so athletes can perform at their best throughout the entire practice or game. However, I want to note that I am not a nutritionist or dietitian. These recipes/food are just from what I have researched and made that I have enjoyed in the past. Moreover, to graphically produce the cookbook, I used a design platform called Canva, and I used stock photos from Canva in my cookbook.

Works Cited

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- Some recipes were from a health and fitness influencer I follow on social media: Savannah Wright

Un-Essay Self-Assessment Questions

1. What did you learn?

Throughout the un-essay assignment I learned a lot about the importance of food and nutrition while working out and as an athlete for recovery. I knew a person needed protein and carbs after working out/playing sports but I didn't know why the body needed it. I learned when working out muscles use up glycogen and after a workout the body must restore that glycogen. The body also must regrow muscle proteins so it's crucial to consume proteins and carbohydrates post workout.

Additionally, I learned how to create an put together a cookbook. Before this project, I had never created a cookbook before. It is much more tedious and timely then I had originally expected. I definetly got a much better at understanding what exactly goes into making healthy dishes as well as how to simply display the recipes in a cookbook so it's user friendly.

2. What challenges did you face while completing this assignment?

The challenges I faced while completing the cookbook was deciding what platform to use and how I was going to create the cookbook. Originally, I was going to use a Microsoft word template but I was having trouble with the design and changing the header page from the body pages. Another challenge I faced was deciding which recipes to use for each type of meal. I wanted to do a combination of researched nutrient dense recipes but also incorporate some of my favorite recipes that I have been enjoying for a while.

3. How did you overcome these challenges?

To overcome this challenge I had learned about Canva from other classes and projects and found they had cookbook cover templates so I decided that format would be the most user friendly for me. Canva also had stock photos available on the site so I was able to use those for pictures of each recipe.

To combat the challenge of deciding on which recipes to use I did a combination of different resources. From family, friends, online community recipes (through social media), personal favorites, and researched recipes that I think would add value to the athlete when recovering from tough workouts.

4. How successful do you think you were with your final product?

I am very proud of the my final product. I think the product is successful because I could definitely see student-athletes or health conscious students at Notre Dame who life off campus or have access to a kitchen using the cookbook. I think the cookbook has a lot of variety. There are recipes that are super common with a personal twist but also some unique recipes.

5. What do you think you could have done better?

I could have managed my time better on this assignment. My original plan was work on the cookbook early in the weekend before the assignment was due. However, unfortunately I ended up getting horribly sick (not COVID thankfully) and I didn't have the strength in me to complete the assignment when I wanted to. I definitely felt a bit rushed completing the assignment. However, even if I had more time to complete the assignment i'm not sure what I would added to the cookbook beside more recipes for each meal.

6. If you worked in a group, who were you partners? Was it successful? What were the advantages and disadvantages of working in a group on this assignment? How did you divide the workload?

I worked on the un-essay individually!