

⚠ Endorsed: Caution Advised			
Program LMI Endorsement Criteria			
	Met ☒	Partially Met ☐	Not Met ☐
Supply Gap:	There are projected to be 4,342 annual job openings throughout Los Angeles and Orange counties for <i>exercise trainers and group fitness instructors</i> , which is more than the 408 awards conferred by educational institutions .		
Self-Sufficiency Standard Living Wage ¹ :	Met ☐	Partially Met ☐	Not Met ☒
	The typical entry-level wage for <i>exercise trainers and group fitness instructors</i> is \$21.08 , which is below the OC living wage of \$27.13 .		
Education:	Met ☐	Partially Met ☒	Not Met ☐
	Typical education requirement for <i>exercise trainers and group fitness instructors</i> is an associate degree and 29% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education .		

This LMA brief is valid for 12 months and expires October 2027.

Summary

The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (OC COE) prepared this report to determine whether there is a supply gap in the Los Angeles and Orange counties regional labor markets related to one occupation:

- Middle-Skill
 - *Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (39-9031)*

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors*, and typical education requirements for this occupation generally align with a community college education. However, entry-level wages are below the Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage. **Therefore, due to some regional labor market criteria being met, the COE endorses this proposed program.**

¹ The living wage endorsement criteria in this report uses the University of Washington’s Center for Women’s Welfare Self-Sufficiency Standard, which the COE refers to as a living wage; Orange County’s living wage of \$27.13, was last updated in March 2024.

Exhibit 1 lists the occupational demand, supply, typical entry-level education, and educational attainment for the middle-skill occupation included in this report.

Exhibit 1: Labor Market Endorsement Summary

Occupation (SOC)	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (CC and Non-CC)	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Typical Entry-Level Education	Community College Educational Attainment
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (39-9031)	LA: 3,087 OC: 1,255	LA: 125 OC: 283	OC: \$21.08	High School diploma or equivalent	29%
Total	4,342	408	N/A	N/A	N/A

Demand

- In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* is projected to increase 10% through 2030, equating to 4,342 annual job openings.
- Hourly entry-level wages for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* are \$21.08 in Orange County, which is below the Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage.
- There were 3,265 online job postings for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* over the past 12 months. The highest number of postings were for personal trainers, Pilates instructors, and recreation leaders.
- The typical entry-level education for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* is a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Approximately 29% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Supply

- Between 2022 to 2024, an average of 29 awards were conferred by 8 community colleges for the middle-skill occupation in Los Angeles and Orange counties.
- From 2021 to 2024, non-community college institutions conferred an average of 379 awards for the middle-skill occupation.
- In the 2023-24 academic year, Orange County community college students that exited coaching programs had a median annual wage of \$38,694 (\$18.60 per hour) post-exit, and 28% attained the regional living wage.
- In 2022-23, 71% of Orange County coaching students that exited their programs reported working a job closely related to their field of study.

Demand

Occupational Projections

Exhibit 2 shows the annual percentage change in jobs for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* from 2020 through 2030. Beginning in 2025, Orange County job levels are projected to grow at a similar rate than all occupations through 2030.

Exhibit 2: Annual Percentage Change in Jobs for *Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors*, 2020-2030

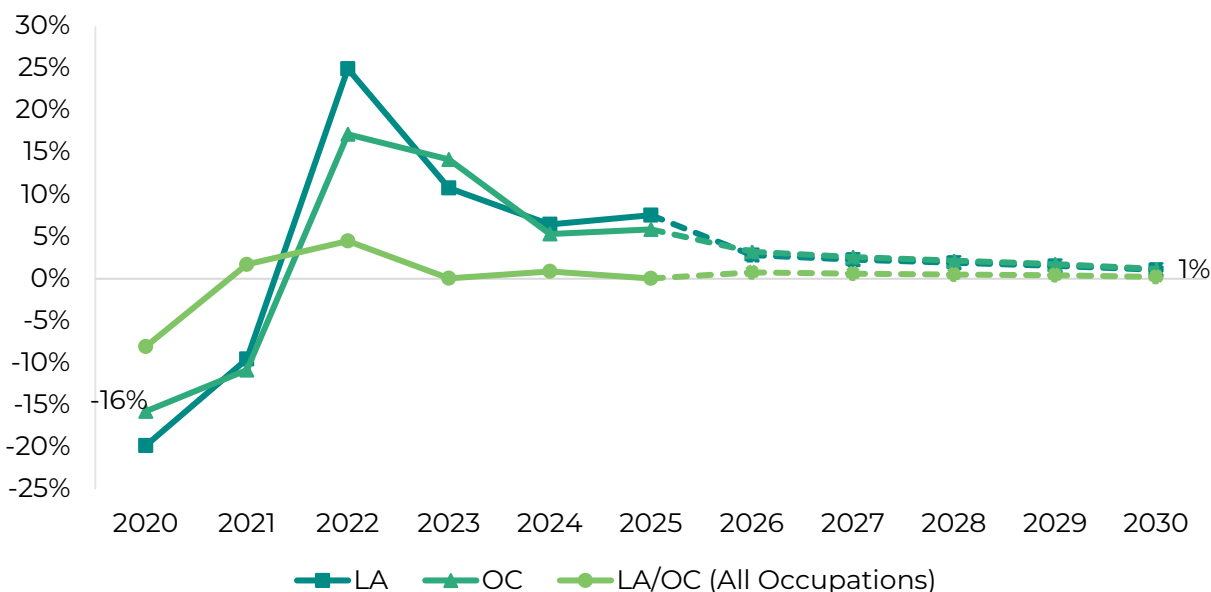


Exhibit 3 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors*. In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase 10% through 2030. There is projected to be 4,342 jobs available annually.

Exhibit 3: Middle-Skill Occupational Demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties²

Geography	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Change	2025-2030 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	14,955	16,444	1,489	10%	3,087
Orange	5,966	6,643	676	11%	1,255
Total	20,921	23,086	2,165	10%	4,342

Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wage for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* in Orange County as it relates to the county's living wage. Los Angeles County wages are included below to provide a complete analysis of the LA/OC region.

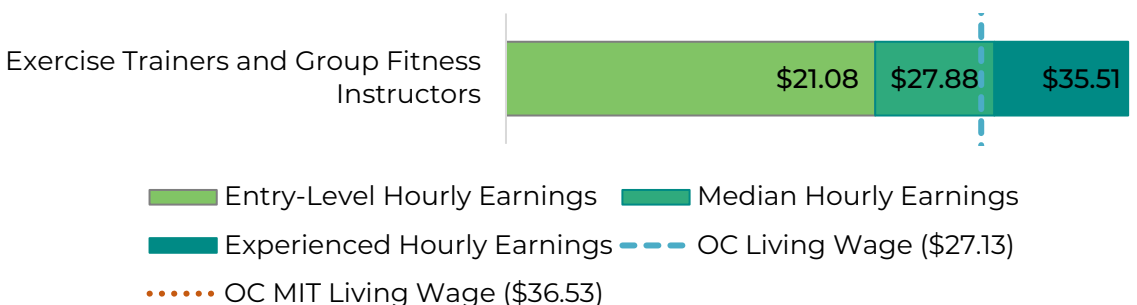
In addition to the Self Sufficiency Standard living wage, data for the MIT Living Wage (updated on February 15, 2026) is provided as a reference. Currently, the MIT Living Wage in Orange County is \$36.53. Both figures account for geographic-specific costs of necessities

² Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

such as housing, food, health care, and transportation to assess the cost of living, and are notated in the exhibits below.

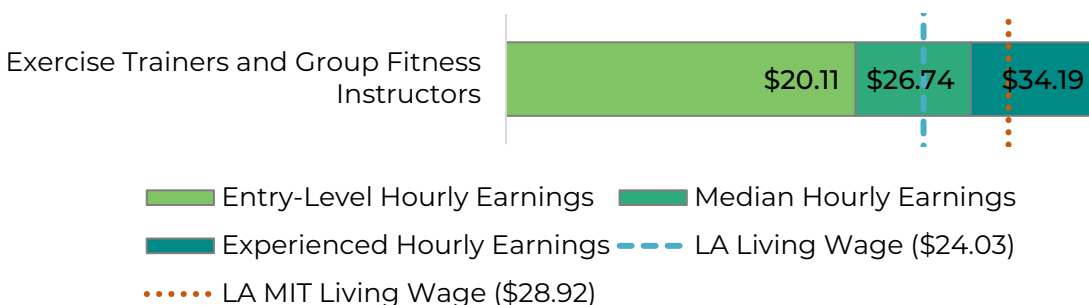
In Orange County, the typical entry-level wage for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* is \$21.08, which is below the Self-Sufficiency living wage of \$27.13 for a single adult. Exhibit 4 shows the wage range for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* in Orange County and how it compares to the regional living wage.

Exhibit 4: Wages by Occupation in Orange County



In Los Angeles County, the typical entry-level wage for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* is \$20.11, which is below the Self-Sufficiency living wage of \$24.03 for a single adult. Exhibit 5 shows the wage range for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* in Los Angeles County and how it compares to the regional living wage.

Exhibit 5: Wages by Occupation in Los Angeles County



Resilient Jobs and U.S. News & World Report Best Jobs

Exhibit 6 shows if the occupation is considered an Orange County Great Recession-Resilient, COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Job, or a 2026 U.S. News & World Report (USN&WR) Best Job³. *Exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* meet the criteria for a 2026 USN&WR Best Job.

Exhibit 6: Resilient Jobs and USN&WR Best Jobs Designations

Occupation	Great Recession-Resilient Job	COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Job	2026 USN&WR Best Job
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	☐	☐	☒

³ "100 Best Jobs," U.S. News & World Report, accessed January 12, 2026, <https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/rankings/the-100-best-jobs>.

Job Postings

Important Job Postings Data Note: There are limitations when analyzing job postings. A single job posting may not represent a single job opening for a variety of reasons.

There were 3,265 online job postings related to *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* listed in the past 12 months. Exhibit 7 shows the number of job postings by occupation.

Exhibit 7: Number of Job Postings by Occupation (n=3,265)

Occupation	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	3,265	100%
Total Postings	3,265	100%

The top job titles for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 8.

Exhibit 8: Top Job Titles by Number of Job Postings for the Middle-Skill Occupation (n=3,265)

Job Titles	Job Postings	Percentage
Personal Trainers	505	15%
Pilates Instructors	317	10%
Recreation Leaders	242	7%
Fitness Coaches	218	7%
Group Fitness Instructors	214	7%
Yoga Instructors	121	4%
Pilates Reformer Instructors	104	3%
Fitness Instructors	101	3%
Personal Training Managers	84	3%
Fitness Trainers	81	2%

The top employers for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 9.

Exhibit 9: Top Employers by Number of Job Postings for the Middle-Skill Occupation (n=3,265)

Employer	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
24 Hour Fitness	430	13%
Equinox	235	7%
Colleyville Lifetime Fitness	83	3%
Crunch Fitness Canada	82	3%
YMCA	57	2%
UFC Gym	54	2%
LA Fitness	50	2%
Life Time	42	1%
Supreme Fitness	40	1%
City Of Santa Clarita	34	1%

The top specialized, soft, and computer skills for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* listed by those most frequently mentioned in job postings (denoted in parentheses) are shown in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 10: Top Skills by Number of Job Postings for the Middle-Skill Occupation (n=3,265)

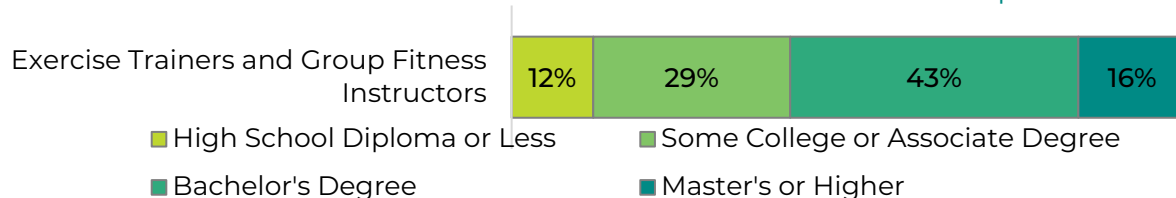
Top Specialized Skills	Top Soft Skills	Top Computer Skills
Pilates (851)	Communication (1,826)	Equinox (OSGi) (223)
Group Exercise Instruction (584)	Teaching (1,246)	Microsoft Outlook (46)
Program Design (549)	Customer Service (1,186)	Microsoft Excel (35)
Lifting Ability (454)	Management (874)	Project Management Software (29)
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) (409)	Coaching (674)	Microsoft Office (20)
Yoga (389)	Energetic (626)	Microsoft Word (19)
Anatomy (385)	Sales (489)	Microsoft PowerPoint (17)
Fitness Training (367)	Operations (484)	Plant Design Management System (PDMS) (13)
Strength Training And Conditioning (362)	Enthusiasm (424)	Calendaring Software (7)
Exercise Science (329)	Leadership (378)	Dashboard (6)

Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors*.

The national-level educational attainment data indicates that 29% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education. Exhibit 11 shows the educational attainment for this occupation.

Exhibit 11: National-level Educational Attainment for Occupations



Requested Minimum Education Requirement

In Los Angeles and Orange Counties, 40% (1,302) of job postings for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* included a stated minimum education requirement:

- 84% (1,092) requested a high school diploma or associate degree
- 16% (203) requested a bachelor's degree

Educational Supply

The following tables display the total educational supply for the TOP and CIP codes associated with the middle-skill occupation.

Community College Supply

Exhibit 12 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code:

- Coaching (0835.60)

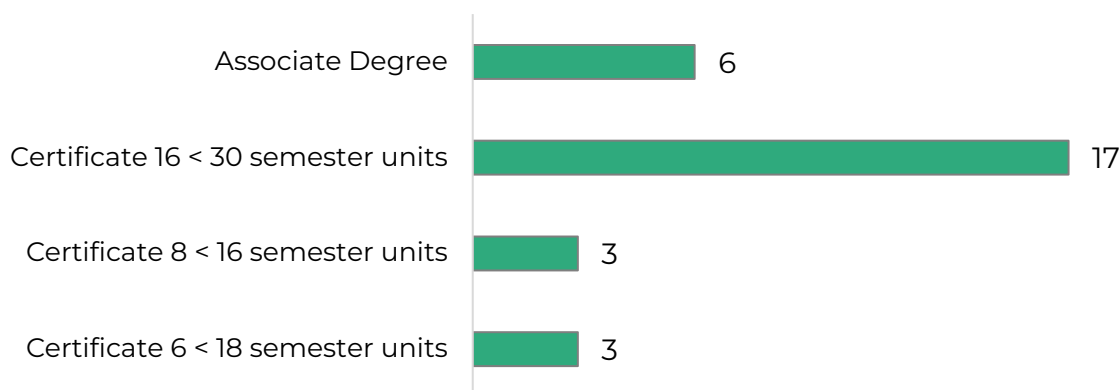
The colleges with the most completions in the region are Santa Monica (14), followed by Cypress (4), and Fullerton (3). Over the past 12 months, there were no related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

Exhibit 12: Regional Community College Awards (Certificates and Degrees), 2022-2025

2022-2023						
TOP Code	Program	College	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	2024-2025 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0835.60	Coaching	Glendale	3	2	4	3
		Rio Hondo	6	1	0	2
		Santa Monica	10	9	22	14
		LA Subtotal	19	12	26	19
		Cypress	3	7	2	4
		Fullerton	2	0	7	3
		Irvine	0	2	0	1
		Orange Coast	0	1	0	0
		Saddleback	2	3	2	2
		OC Subtotal	7	13	11	10
Supply Total/Average			26	25	37	29

Exhibit 13 shows the annual average community college awards by type from 2022-23 to 2024-25. The plurality of the awards are for certificate 16 to 30 semester units, followed by associate degree then certificate 8 to 16 semester units.

Exhibit 13: Annual Average Community College Awards by Type, 2022-2025



Community College Student Outcomes

Exhibit 14 shows the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) metrics for coaching programs in North Orange County Community College District (NOCCCD), the Orange County Region, and California. Of the 472 Orange County coaching students in the 2024-25 academic year, 84% (398) attended an NOCCCD college.

NOCCCD students that exited coaching programs in the 2023-24 academic year had higher median annual earnings (\$42,520 or \$20.44 per hour) compared to all coaching students in Orange County (\$38,694 or \$18.60 per hour). A higher percentage of NOCCCD coaching students attained the living wage (33%) when compared to all coaching students in Orange County (28%).

Exhibit 14: Coaching (0835.60) Strong Workforce Program Metrics, 2022-25⁴

SWP Metric	NOCCCD	OC Region	California
SWP Students	398	472	3,173
SWP Students Who Earned 9 or More Career Education Units in the District in a Single Year	26%	26%	18%
SWP Students Who Completed a Noncredit CTE or Workforce Preparation Course	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	75%
SWP Students Who Earned a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	32
SWP Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Postsecondary Institution (2023-24)	30	34	374
SWP Students with a Job Closely Related to Their Field of Study (2022-23)	67%	71%	48%
Median Annual Earnings for SWP Exiting Students (2023-24)	\$42,520 (\$20.44)	\$38,694 (\$18.60)	\$37,008 (\$17.79)
Median Change in Earnings for SWP Exiting Students (2023-24)	49%	28%	23%
SWP Exiting Students Who Attained the Living Wage (2023-24)	33%	28%	35%

⁴ All SWP metrics are for 2024-25 unless otherwise noted.

Non-Community College Supply

To comprehensively analyze the regional supply, it is crucial to include data from other institutions offering coaching programs. Exhibit 15 displays the annual and three-year average awards granted by these institutions under the related Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes:

- Sport and Fitness Administration/Management (31.0504)

The available data covers 2021 to 2024. During this period, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 379 awards annually in related programs.

Exhibit 15: Regional Non-Community College Awards, 2021-2024

CIP Code	Program	College	2021-2022 Awards	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	3-Year Award Average
31.0504	Sport and Fitness Administration/ Management	California State University-Long Beach	88	67	53	69
		Pepperdine University	25	20	21	22
		The Chicago School at Los Angeles	0	0	4	1
		The Master's University and Seminary	0	0	5	2
		University of Antelope Valley	22	13	0	12
		Concordia University-Irvine	333	239	247	273
		Westcliff University	0	1	0	0
Supply Total/Average			468	340	330	379

Regional Demographics

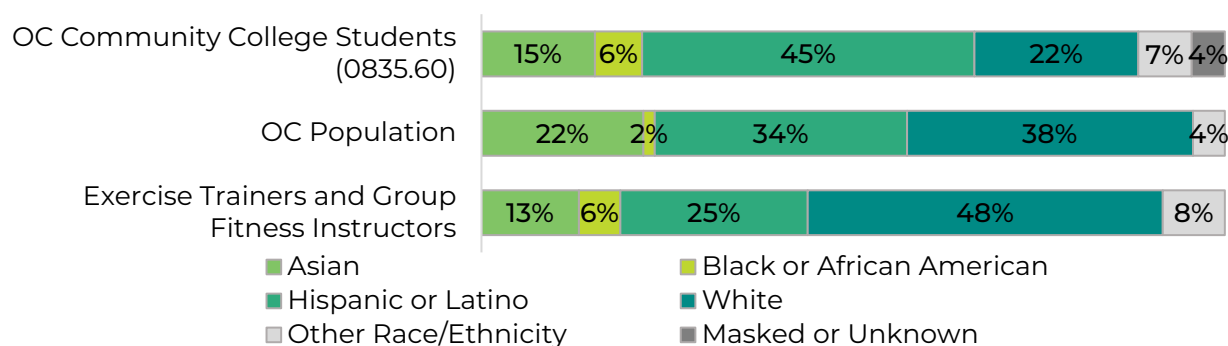
The following section presents occupational, community college program, and population demographic data for Orange County. This comparison can help identify possible equity gaps between the local workforce and the student pipeline who are preparing for these occupations. These insights can inform program development, outreach, and support strategies to better align community college programs with current labor market needs.

Ethnicity

Exhibit 16 compares the ethnicity of Orange County community college students enrolled in coaching programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors*.

Nearly half (48%) of *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* are white, which is more than double their representation in coaching programs (22%), suggesting that white workers may be entering these jobs through alternate training pathways. In contrast, Hispanic or Latino individuals make up only 25% of the workforce but account for 45% of program enrollment, indicating a potential disconnect between education and employment outcomes.

Exhibit 16: Program and County Demographics by Ethnicity

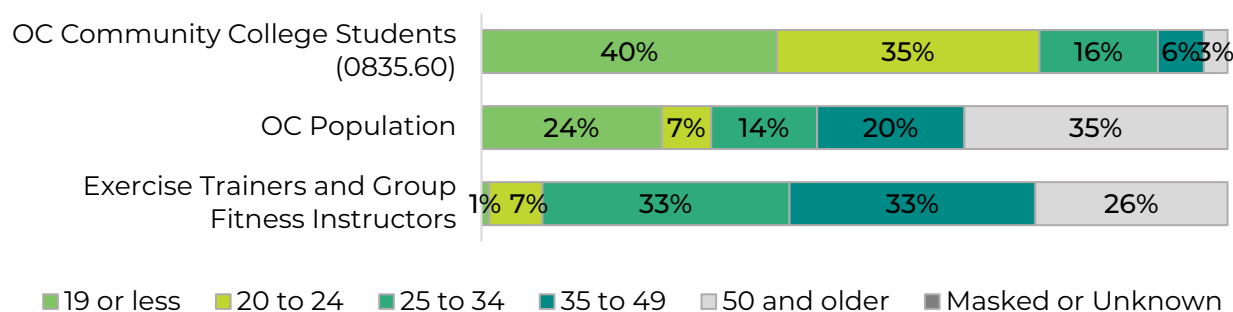


Age

Exhibit 17 compares the age of Orange County community college students enrolled in coaching programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors*.

Over half (66%) of *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* are aged 25 to 49, which is much greater than coaching students (22%) in the same age group. This suggests the field may attract mid-career individuals or require some level of prior training and experience for entry.

Exhibit 17: Program and County Demographics by Age

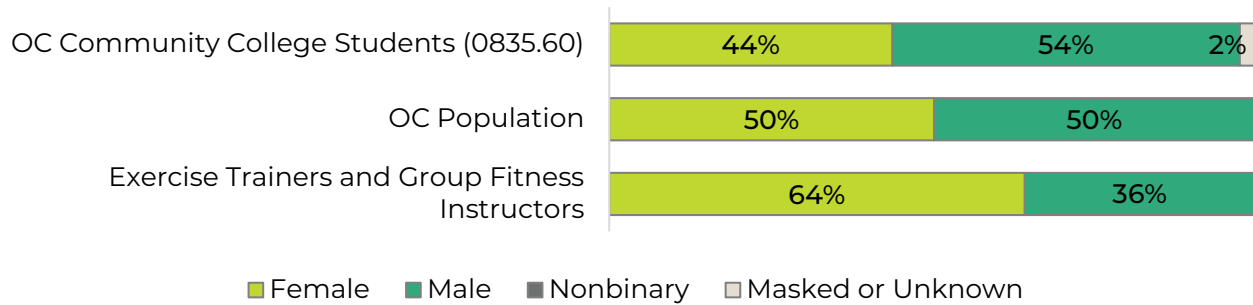


Sex

Exhibit 18 compares the sex of Orange County community college students enrolled in coaching programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors*.

Though the population is split evenly between women and men, only 36% of *exercise trainers and group fitness instructors* are men, yet make up 54% of community college students, signaling a disconnect between education and employment outcomes.

Exhibit 18: Program and County Demographics by Sex



Appendix A: Methodology

OC COE prepared this report by analyzing occupational and educational program data. Occupational data comes from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm which compiles information from the California Employment Development Department (EDD), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and other agencies. Analysis of emerging occupations is predicated on online job postings data combined with Occupational Information Network (O*NET) profile descriptions. Program supply data was sourced from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Data Mart (MIS Data Mart) (datamart.cccco.edu) and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data), also known as IPEDS, which was integrated into the COE's Supply Table. (IPEDS).

Using a TOP-SOC crosswalk, the OC COE identified middle-skill jobs for which programs within these TOP codes train. Middle-skill jobs include:

- All occupations that have an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor's degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education, but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

The OC COE determined labor market supply for each occupation (SOC code) by analyzing the number of 3-year average program completers or awards in related TOP and CIP codes. TOP code data comes from MIS Data Mart and CIP code data comes from the IPEDS. The TOP is a system of numerical codes used at the state level to collect and report information on California community college programs and courses throughout the state that have similar outcomes. CIP codes are a taxonomy of academic disciplines at institutions of higher education throughout the United States and Canada. The California Community Colleges are the only system that use TOP codes.

The analysis reflects labor market demand for occupations closely related to the proposed program as expressed by the requesting college in consultation with the OC COE. Traditional labor market data was used to assess current and projected employment based on data trends for detailed occupations, as well as annual average awards granted by regional postsecondary educational institutions. Real-time labor market information (online job postings) assesses employer preferences but cannot be used to measure the quantity of open positions, number of jobs, or annual openings.

All findings are based on the most current available data and a combination of primary and secondary sources. While care was taken to ensure accuracy, the OC COE, its host district, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are not responsible for individual decisions made based on this report.

Appendix B: Data Sources

Data Type	Source
Occupational Projections, Wages, and Job Postings	Traditional and real-time labor market information are captured using data from Lightcast (v.2026.3), a labor market analytics firm.
Living Wage	Per the CCCC's this report's endorsement criteria uses the University of Washington's Center for Women's Welfare Self-Sufficiency Standard last updated in March 2024, which is \$27.13 per hour (\$57,294 annually) in Orange County. The MIT Living Wage, updated on February 15, 2026, is a nationally recognized living wage metric and is provided for reference. The current MIT Living Wage in Orange County is \$36.53.
Typical Education and Training Requirements, and Educational Attainment	The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education, work experience in a related occupation, and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data.
Emerging Occupation Descriptions, Additional Education Requirements, and Employer Preferences	The O*NET database includes information on skills, abilities, knowledges, work activities, and interests associated with occupations.
Educational Supply	The CCCCO Data Mart provides information about students, courses, student services, outcomes and faculty and staff. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Integrated Data System (IPEDS) collects data on the number of postsecondary awards earned (completions).
Student Metrics and Demographics	Data Vista , a statewide data system supported by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office provides data on progress, success, employment, and earnings outcomes for California community college students.
Population and Occupation Demographics	The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is the premier source for detailed population and housing information. Data is sourced from IPUMS USA, a database providing access to ACS and other Census Bureau data products.

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