

REVIEW OF THE M.S. IN KINESIOLOGY AND RECREATION

Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: 31.0501
Health and Physical Education/Fitness, General

OVERVIEW

The M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program at Illinois State University is housed in the School of Kinesiology and Recreation within the College of Applied Science and Technology. The school also offers undergraduate minors in Athletic Coaching, Exercise Science, and Recreation and Park Administration; a B.S. in Athletic Training; a B.S. in Exercise Science; a B.S., B.S.Ed. in Physical Education; and a B.S. in Recreation and Park Administration. The last review of the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program occurred in 2011-2012.

The M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program provides advanced training in eight sub-disciplines of the field: applied community and economic development, athletic training, biomechanics, exercise physiology, physical education pedagogy, psychology of sport and physical activity, recreation administration, and sport management. Common across the eight sequences is a focus on research methods and their application. While many colleges and universities in Illinois offer master's degrees in one or more of the sub-disciplines, the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program at Illinois State University is one of only two master's-level programs in the state that offers the study of multiple sub-disciplines within a broader kinesiology and recreation framework.

Enrollment by Plan of Study, Fall Census Day, 2011-2018 **M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation, Illinois State University**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Applied Community and Economic Development sequence					2	3	2	2
Athletic Training sequence	18	25	25	23	24	24	22	26
Biomechanics sequence	18	25	25	23	24	24	22	26
Exercise Physiology sequence	17	19	18	16	14	16	19	16
Physical Education Pedagogy sequence		5	3	2	15	15	13	16
Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity sequence	15	15	13	12	17	17	16	19
Recreation Administration sequence	17	17	14	12	11	8	12	18
Sport Management sequence	27	29	29	35	32	32	35	29
Total	102	116	107	105	117	118	126	136

Degrees Conferred by Plan of Study, Graduating Fiscal Year 2011-2018 **M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation, Illinois State University**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Applied Community and Economic Development sequence						0	0	2
Athletic Training sequence	6	10	10	15	11	11	14	12
Biomechanics sequence	3	5	2	1	2	1		4
Exercise Physiology sequence	7	11	8	12	7	6	5	9
Physical Education Pedagogy sequence			1	2	1		6	8
Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity sequence	5	7	6	8	3	7	9	10
Recreation Administration sequence	8	11	4	11	3	7	4	5
Sport Management sequence	18	12	13	15	14	19	13	18
Total	47	56	44	64	41	51	51	68

[See table notes on the following page]

Table notes:

Graduating Fiscal Year consists of summer, fall, and spring terms, in that order. For example, Graduating Fiscal Year 2018 consists of the following terms: summer 2017, fall 2017, and spring 2018.

The physical education pedagogy sequence was called the physical education-teacher education sequence until 2014-2015. At the time of the name change, the sequence was transitioned from a plan of study offered on campus to a fully online sequence. The physical education-teacher education sequence had been established in 2011-2012.

The applied community and economic development sequence was established effective May 18, 2015.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY REPORT

Program goals

The M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program prepares professionals committed to the promotion of health-enhancing lifestyles by emphasizing the role of scholarship and focused disciplinary study. The program prepares graduates to think conceptually and analytically and to positively impact professional practices and policies in their chosen profession.

Students learning outcomes

Students completing the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program should be able to demonstrate advanced knowledge focused on a specific academic discipline, demonstrate understanding of different research paradigms, synthesize research studies, and make practical applications of research results.

Program curriculum (2018-2019)

Students are enrolled in one of eight sequences: applied community and economic development, athletic training, biomechanics, exercise physiology, physical education pedagogy, psychology of sport and physical activity, recreation administration, or sport management.

Graduation requirements (all sequences):

33 credit hours consisting of 6 credit hours in research core courses, 21-24 credit hours in additional graduate-level courses, and 3-6 credit hours related to a culminating experience. Acceptable culminating experiences vary by sequence and may include a thesis, independent study, professional practice, or internship. In all but the applied community and economic development sequence (which requires an 11-month internship), students have a choice of culminating experience.

Program delivery

The physical education pedagogy sequence of the program is delivered fully online.

All other sequences are offered on the Normal campus and delivered primarily through face-to-face or blended face-to-face/online instruction.

The School of Kinesiology and Recreation sponsors short-term cultural immersion experiences in Costa Rica, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, and Russia. The school also sponsors a trip designed to introduce students to the cruise ship industry, which employs persons with knowledge and skills taught in several sequences of the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program (e.g., recreation administration, athletic training, and exercise physiology).

School faculty (Fall 2018)

24 tenure track faculty members (7 Professors, 8 Associate Professors, and 9 Assistant Professors)

17 non-tenure track faculty members (11 full-time and 6 part-time, totaling 13.99 FTE)

Undergraduate student to faculty ratio: 24.7 to 1

Undergraduate student to tenure-line faculty ratio: 38.1 to 1

Specialized accreditation

The athletic training sequence of the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program is recognized by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) as an accredited post-professional plan of study. The sequence is one of only 12 such plans of study accredited by CAATE in the U.S. The last accreditation review of the sequence occurred in August 2016, resulting in an award of continuing accreditation for seven years. The next accreditation review is scheduled to occur in 2022-2023.

Changes in the academic discipline, field, societal need, and program demand

Interest in the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program from prospective students has increased since the 2011-2012 program review, as evidenced by a 33 percent increase in enrollment to a historic high of 136 students in fall 2018. Increased interest can in part be attributed to the changes in the physical education-teacher education sequence that was established at the time of the 2011-2012 program review to provide advanced training for in-service physical education teachers of the state. In 2014-2015, the sequence was re-designed as an online offering to reach in-service teachers unable to travel to the Normal campus and was renamed the physical education pedagogy sequence. Enrollment in the sequence has increased as a result of these changes, from 2 in fall 2014 to 16 in fall 2018. A second new sequence, applied community and economic development, was established in 2014-2015 in collaboration with the Adlai Stevenson II Center for Community and Economic Development at the University. The sequence serves students with Peace Corps or similar experience who are interested in community or economic development careers with non-profit or governmental entities. Enrollment growth and curricular changes have occurred during a period of leadership changes for program. Since the prior program review, three program directors have left the program for other positions in the school or at the University. Delivery of the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program was not affected by the leadership changes, although they slowed program planning and development efforts.

Responses to previous program review recommendations

The 2011-2012 program review resulted in recommendations for faculty to continue efforts to recruit a more diverse faculty and student population, increase graduate assistant stipends, and provide for alumni tracking at the sequence level. With regard to faculty diversity, more focused outreach efforts have resulted in more diverse applicant pools for faculty positions and the hiring of faculty members from other countries. Until the program has sufficiently expanded its presence and reputation internationally, focused efforts on recruiting faculty from other countries will need to continue if further diversity is to be achieved. With regard to student diversity, the school has been able to increase the number of international students and students self-identifying with traditionally underrepresented racial/ethnic groups since the prior program review, although by percentages the program is still less diverse than university-wide graduate enrollment. Accordingly, in fall 2018 the biomechanics and exercise physiology sequences joined the university-wide INTO-ISU recruitment initiative to attract more international students to the institution. The school has also created a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to formalize and support diversity efforts. With regard to financial support for graduate students, the school has been able to increase graduate assistant stipends to levels above minimums set by the Graduate School at Illinois State. Students in the program able to secure an assistantship with the athletics department receive the highest graduate assistant stipend paid at the University. With regard to alumni relations, faculty members in each sequence decide how best to track their alumni, whether through systematic scanning of social media posts, collecting contact information as students graduate, or administering alumni surveys. Beginning in spring 2017 with implementation of the new assessment plan for the program, sequence-level alumni information is gathered and archived in a central program repository.

Major findings

The M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program continues to prepare highly-qualified professionals for work in numerous sub-disciplines of the field. As evidenced by increased enrollment since the prior program review, interest in the program remains strong. Particularly vital to student recruitment and retention are the relationships developed and nurtured by the program with external agencies, some of which are able to underwrite graduate assistantships. However, recruiting to sustain and grow enrollment has placed more demands on sequence coordinators and on faculty members working to effectively mentor students in completing their theses and other culminating experiences. Those impacts of enrollment growth and the impact growth may have on other aspects of program

quality merit monitoring and examination in the coming years. Also meriting continued attention is recruiting diverse pools of applicants for admission to the program and for filling faculty positions as they become available.

Initiatives and plans

- Develop and implement a plan for further increasing faculty and student diversity.
- Determine means of compensation for sequence coordinators.
- Work with the Graduate School on streamlining the admission application process.
- Develop a system to follow up with prospective students regarding incomplete applications for admission.
- Continue to develop relationships with area businesses and alumni to expand graduate assistantship opportunities for students in the program.

PROGRAM REVIEW OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Review Outcome. The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee thanks faculty and staff of the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program for a concise, critical, and forward-looking program review report that evidences opportunities for involvement in the self-study by all faculty members. Particularly noteworthy components of the report are the review of comparator programs and the discussion of enrollment targets by sequence.

The committee congratulates faculty and staff members for external recognition of the program since the last program review. In 2016 the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) granted the athletic training sequence of the program continuing accreditation for seven years. The athletic training sequence is one of only 12 master's-level athletic training plans of study in the nation that is accredited by CAATE. In 2018 the American College of Sports Medicine again awarded Gold Status to the *Exercise is Medicine on Campus* initiative of the School of Kinesiology and Recreation. Through this initiative, graduate students in the exercise physiology sequence of the program and their colleagues from other sequences provide fitness-focused information and care to members of the campus community.

The committee recognizes faculty members for their vigilance in maintaining a curriculum that is current, relevant, and responsive to student needs. Since the prior program review, faculty has established two new sequences. One is the applied community and economic development sequence, which enrolls students who have served in the Peace Corps or similar program and who seek careers working with community-based organizations. The capstone of the sequence is an 11-month internship placement with a community-based organization facilitated by the Adlai Stevenson II Center for Community and Economic Development at the University. The second new sequence is physical education pedagogy, created to provide advanced professional development opportunities for physical education teachers serving elementary or secondary schools in the state. The sequence is offered fully online for the convenience of students located far from the Normal campus. Courses were developed and are delivered based on the Quality Matters Rubric, a nationally-recognized quality assurance framework for online learning. In addition to establishing the new sequences, faculty members continue to modify sequence curricula and course content based on student learning outcomes and changes in the discipline.

Although the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program offers students multiple capstone options, more than 90 percent of students complete either a thesis or a research project. The committee commends efforts by faculty members to mentor students through those projects and for encouraging and assisting students with publication or presentation of their research findings. Success in mentoring students is evidenced by admission of graduates into doctoral programs at institutions such as Michigan State University, the University of Virginia, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Regarding future research opportunities, the committee commends the program for its recent efforts to establish a registered student organization for the program, which could serve as a venue for nurturing additional interdisciplinary research opportunities for students.

The committee acknowledges the financial support faculty and staff members arrange for students to make their enrollment in the program possible. Approximately 70 percent of students enrolling in the program receive a graduate assistantship, and most are placed with an institution or agency external to the University. The committee recognizes faculty and staff members for their efforts to arrange and maintain the placement agreements that make those assistantships possible.

Student learning outcomes assessment can be particularly challenging for programs with multiple sequences, such as the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program (which has eight). The committee commends faculty members of the program for their efforts to strengthen student learning outcomes assessment since the prior review. The program received a 2016-2017 Assessment Initiative Award from University Assessment Services on campus to revise the assessment plan for the program and then implement it in fall 2017. The previous plan included rubrics for evaluating student learning in core courses and in capstone experiences. Among the changes to the plan is the addition of mechanisms for obtaining feedback from additional stakeholders. One such mechanism is a new Graduate Advisory Council, organized by faculty to seek input from students and alumni regarding the programs.

Recommendations. The Academic Planning Committee makes the following recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle. In the next program review self-study report, tentatively due October 1, 2026, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

Develop and implement a plan for student recruitment. The committee recognizes faculty and staff members of the M.S. in Kinesiology and Recreation program for their work to establish and monitor enrollment targets for each sequence of the program and for their efforts to achieve the targets through student recruitment. Enrollment in the program has increased from 102 students in fall 2011 to 136 students in fall 2018, just two less than the program capacity established by faculty. However, the self-study report articulates concerns regarding sustainability by faculty and staff of the recruitment efforts. Accordingly, the committee recommends that program faculty and staff study their past recruitment efforts and outcomes of those efforts, investigate alternative or supplemental recruitment strategies, and compile a plan that sets forth recruitment strategies for the coming program review cycle that can be sustained given the resources available to the program. In connection with this study, the program might explore ways the new admissions software platform being deployed at the University (i.e., Slate) might be used to help streamline recruitment, application, and admissions processes.

Develop a plan for increasing student diversity. The self-study report concludes that development of a plan to further diversify the student population should be a priority initiative for the next program review cycle. The committee concurs. The newly-established Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the school could provide an appropriate venue for such an effort. Among the committee concerns is the percentage of students in the program who self-identify with racial/ethnic groups traditionally underrepresented in the discipline (averaging 7.9 percent from fall 2015 through fall 2017). The committee also recommends recruiting for diversity with respect to other identities and with respect to experiences and perspectives students bring to the program. Strategies faculty might pursue to increase diversity include fundraising for scholarships that could be used for student recruitment and outreach to students enrolled in undergraduate programs at universities located in more diverse metropolitan areas of the region. The committee supports efforts to increase diversity through recruitment of international students but counsels an approach that promotes a balance of international students and students who are U.S. citizens. The committee recommends that a plan for increasing student diversity also include strategies for maintaining an environment of inclusion so students want to remain in and complete the program. Such strategies might include considering diversity when inviting speakers to campus or when developing course content.

Develop a plan for increasing faculty diversity. The self-study report concludes that development of a plan for increasing faculty diversity should also be a priority initiative for the next program review cycle. The committee concurs. As with the effort to develop a plan for student diversity, the newly-established Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the school could provide an appropriate venue for development of a faculty diversity plan. The primary concern of the committee regarding faculty diversity is the low percentage of faculty members who self-identify with a racial/ethnic group traditionally underrepresented in the discipline (2.8 percent, according to the self-study report). As with addressing student diversity, the committee also recommends recruiting for diversity with respect to other identities and with respect to the expertise, interests, and perspectives faculty members bring to the

program. A first step in developing a plan to increase diversity might be to review and evaluate past recruitment efforts to identify recruitment strategies to continue and those to change. The committee recommends that a plan for increasing faculty diversity also include strategies for faculty retention.

Explore approaches for ensuring input from multiple faculty members regardless of capstone option. The committee commends faculty for the capstone options provided to students in the program depending on their sequence: a traditional thesis, research project (independent study), professional practice, or internship. Having options allows students to tailor their academic program to best fit their educational and professional goals. One concern of the committee, however, is whether all students are guided and assessed in completing their capstone experience by multiple faculty members rather than by just one faculty member regardless of the capstone option. The committee is concerned that all students be afforded a comparable level of support and guidance in their exploration of their sub-discipline by multiple faculty members having differing expertise and perspectives, which is a hallmark of quality graduate education. The committee asks faculty to review the support provided to students completing capstone projects in light of this concern.

Implement the revised approach to tracking and involving program alumni. Changes to the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program in 2016-2017 included changes to the ways in which the program communicates with its alumni. Although methods of maintaining relations with alumni remain largely decentralized to the sequence level, the revised assessment plan provides for centralized archiving of alumni information, centralized administration of an annual alumni survey to update the alumni database, and establishment of a program-wide advisory council that includes alumni. The committee encourages faculty and staff to implement this revised approach during the coming program review cycle to document professional experiences of alumni and to seek alumni feedback regarding the program as well as their assistance in recruiting and mentoring students, providing professional practice experiences for them, and contributing financial support for program initiatives such as scholarships.

Continue collaborating with Milner Library to provide resources and information fluency instruction in support of the program. The committee recognizes collaboration between School of Kinesiology and Recreation faculty and Milner Library faculty in assessing and prioritizing the kinesiology and recreation research collection that supports graduate study in the school, including efforts to prioritize database and journal subscriptions that support student and faculty research. With journal subscriptions continuing to increase at rates exceeding increases (if any) in funds available to purchase them, continued vigilance on the part of program and library faculty regarding journal subscription priorities may be necessary throughout the coming program review cycle. The pay-per-article model adopted by Milner Library since the last program review to provide access to canceled journal titles is a promising approach to providing access to specialized journals often needed in graduate-level research. Accordingly, the committee encourages promotion of *Get It Now*, a pay-per-use service offered by Milner Library, to graduate students and faculty. The committee also recognizes collaboration between the school and library to provide information fluency instruction to students in the graduate program (e.g., in the research methods course required of all students in the program). The committee recommends continuation of those efforts and their integration with the curriculum and student learning outcomes assessment.

Implement the revised student learning outcomes assessment plan. Having revised the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program in 2016-2017, faculty now has a methodologically-sound and sustainable approach to guide student learning assessment during the coming program review cycle. The committee encourages faculty to implement the revised plan and to document any program changes made based on assessment findings and the rationale for the changes.