The Department of Kinesiology offers programs leading to the doctor of philosophy (PhD) degree in human performance with emphases in exercise science and sport pedagogy.

Exercise Science

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree with a specialization in exercise science has been designed to provide students with the coursework, laboratory, and practical experiences to become a leading educator and researcher.

Admission

Admission to the Exercise Science program is competitive and based on prior academic achievement, graduate record examination (GRE) scores, recommendations, and at the doctoral level, research interests. Minimum requirements consist of:

- a composite (verbal and quantitative) GRE score of 300
- one of the following:
  - undergraduate overall grade average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4-point scale
  - 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours in a degree program
  - 3.0 for a completed graduate degree program.

An applicant who does not meet both the entrance examination score and GPA requirements for regular admission may be considered for conditional admission if he/she meets one of the two. In such instances, conditional admission is not guaranteed and is handled on a case-by-case basis. Preference is given to students who have strong backgrounds in the Life Sciences or related fields, meet the minimum requirements stated above, and have research interests compatible with at least one of the Exercise Science faculty members.

Procedures & Deadlines

Interested applicants should apply online to the Graduate School of the University of Alabama. While the Graduate School does not impose deadlines, the Exercise Science Program adheres to the following deadline for admission and assistantship applications:

- Fall admission – February 1

All materials must be received by the dates above to be considered for the specified entrance term. Materials received after the due date will be considered for the next entrance term. Assistantship decisions are made in February and announced sometime between late February and mid-March. Assistantships are typically not awarded for Spring admission although interested applicants are encouraged to apply in order to have an application on file for the subsequent Fall term.

Residency Requirement

A minimum of two academic years of graduate study beyond the master’s degree is required for completion of the Ph.D. program in the College of Education. At least one year of doctoral study must be spent in continuous residence as a full-time student. (See also Alternative Residency Options in “Forms”)

Sequence of Steps through the Ph.D. Program

The sequence of steps for a doctoral student from admission to graduation is:

1. Satisfaction of admission requirements
2. Formation of doctoral program of study
3. Completion of coursework
4. Completion of major comprehensive exams
5. Formation of doctoral dissertation committee
6. Proposal of doctoral dissertation
7. Admission to candidacy
8. Oral examination of the dissertation
9. Submission of final copies of the dissertation

The Program

The Ph.D. degree requires a minimum of 72 hours beyond the master’s degree. This program includes 1) 24-hour exercise science core; 2) 12-hour competency in research and statistics; 3) 12 hours of foundation courses in human physiology/biochemistry to support the major; and 4) 24 hours of dissertation.

Doctoral Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is designed to provide students with a significant research experience and is considered a contribution to the research and the literature in the field. It is anticipated that students will complete credits for the dissertation after the completion of all coursework and the comprehensive examination. The student will work closely with the doctoral program chair and committee in developing a dissertation proposal and conducting the dissertation research. The doctoral dissertation committee will consist of a minimum of five faculty members, one of whom must be from outside the department.

Advising

All doctoral students will be advised by a major professor with whom they will have been aligned as part of the admissions process. In the event a doctoral student is granted admission without a research mentor/major professor, they will be assigned an interim advisor upon admission to the Ph.D. program. The advisor will assist the student in the evaluation of previous work, selection of coursework, and research oversight.

Time Limit for Doctoral Study

Students must complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree within seven calendar years from the time they are officially admitted to a program of study.

Sport Pedagogy

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in human performance with a specialization in sport pedagogy has been designed to provide students with the coursework, laboratory, and practical experiences to become a leading educator and researcher.

Residency Requirement

A minimum of two academic years of graduate study beyond the master’s degree is required for completion of the Ph.D. program in the College of Education. At least one year of doctoral study must be spent in continuous residence as a full-time student.

Admission to the Ph.D. Program

To be considered for regular admission to the Ph.D. program, a student must satisfy the following criteria: 1) a master’s degree from an accredited institution; 2) a 3.0 grade point average for the last 60 semester hours (4.0 scale); and 3) An entrance exam score of at least 300 on the quantitative and verbal sections of the Graduate Record Exam. Applications accepted year round.
Sequence of Steps through the Ph.D. Program
The sequence of steps for a doctoral student from admission to graduation is:

- Satisfaction of admission requirements
- Formation of doctoral program of study
- Completion of coursework
- Completion of comprehensive exams
- Formation of doctoral dissertation committee
- Proposal of doctoral dissertation
- Admission to candidacy
- Oral examination of the dissertation
- Submission of final copies of the dissertation

The Program
The Ph.D. degree requires a minimum of 72 hours beyond the master’s degree. This program includes:

- 24-hour sport pedagogy core
- 12-hour competency in educational research and statistics
- 12 hours of foundation courses to support the major
- 24 hours of dissertation

Doctoral Dissertation
The doctoral dissertation is designed to provide students with a significant research experience and is considered a contribution to the research and the literature in the field. It is anticipated that students will complete credits for the dissertation after the completion of all coursework and the comprehensive examination. The student will work closely with the doctoral program chair and committee in developing a dissertation proposal and conducting the dissertation research. The doctoral dissertation committee will consist of a minimum of five faculty members, one of whom must be from outside the department.

Advising
All doctoral students will be assigned an interim advisor upon admission to the Ph.D. program. The interim advisor will assist the student in the evaluation of previous work, selection of coursework, and the preliminary work in selecting a program chair and a program advisory committee.

Financial Support
A limited number of graduate assistantships are available each year. These assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis. Graduate assistants may be asked to assist with teaching, research, and/or the outreach mission of the academic unit.

Time Limit for Doctoral Study
Students must complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree within seven calendar years from the time they are officially admitted to a program of study.