

Careers in Human Movement Science

The number of students interested in careers in physical education has increased dramatically in the past ten years. This growth is due in part to the fact that society has recognized the importance of physical fitness, and in part to the increase in the time Americans now spend in sports and fitness activities. Employment opportunities for professionals in the physical education fields are expected to grow at least through the year 2010 (adapted from the guide "Careers in Physical Education and Sport" by the College and University Physical Education Council).

Physical Education Teaching Option

Teachers of physical education traditionally operate in a school setting. They are most likely to be employed in a middle/junior high school or high school setting, however, there are positions for physical education teachers in the elementary schools where physical education begins in kindergarten and continues throughout a person's education.

In most states a physical education teacher is required to complete a teacher certification program with a specialty in physical education and another minor subject. This certification program must include student teaching.

There are many advantages in choosing a career in physical education teaching. One advantage is that physical education teachers have a captive audience because most high schools require students to take at least one physical education course for graduation. This makes it possible for instructors to reach and educate the majority of the student body about healthy exercise choices. Another benefit is the fact that learners are in their developmental years which means the impact of physical education may be significant and there is less need to work with learners to unlearn improperly developed skills. The opportunity to help influence learners' values and affect their behaviors can also be a very meaningful responsibility for the physical education teacher.

The responsibilities of a physical education teacher are varied. Some of the core teaching responsibilities include: 1) motor learning and development, 2) psychology of exercise and sport, 3) sociological, philosophical, and historical perspectives of sport, 4) social science of physical activity, 5) human movement and sport, 6) sport administration, 7) sport/exercise management, 8) adaptive physical education, 9) curriculum development, and 10) program administration.

Job opportunities in the traditional physical education setting include: Elementary Physical Education School Teacher, Secondary Physical Education School Teacher, College Instructor/Professor, High School Sports Coach/Manager, College/University Sports Coach/Manager.

Non-traditional careers for teachers of physical education include: Youth/Sport Camp Director, Professional Sports Coach/Manager, Youth Sports Coach, and Early Childhood Motor Skills Instructor, Sports Management/Marketing, Sports Communication, Fitness Development, Professional Referee/Official/Umpire, Sports Team Manager/Publicist, Professional Athletic Scout, Director of Operations for a Sports Team.

Exercise Science Option

The exercise science option is designed to prepare students to pursue a vocation in private fitness or corporate fitness, athletic training, health promotion, or to pursue graduate studies in the rehabilitation or fitness areas. Many students chose this option to prepare for a career in physical therapy or occupational therapy by fulfilling the care requirements for the option and adding extra prerequisites for their specific graduate program as electives within the option.

Graduates in the exercise science option should be responsible for understanding biomechanics, exercise physiology, athletic training, kinesiology, cardiac rehabilitation, preventative cardiovascular health, movement science, sport physical therapy, and strength and conditioning.

Job opportunities for exercise science graduates may include: Aerobics Instructor, Geriatric Fitness Instructor, Weight-Control Counselor, Dance Instructor, Personal Trainer Health Club Manager, Fitness Program Coordinator, Strength and Conditioning Coach, Professional Referee/Official/Umpire, Sports Team Careers such as General Manager/Publicist, Public Address Announcer, Scoreboard Operations, Professional/Athletic Scout, Club/Equipment Manager, Ticket Sales Manager, Administration in Professional Sports/Athletics, Communications/Journalism in Professional Sports/Athletics.

Students who graduate in exercise science may pursue graduate studies or certifications in the following careers: Cardiac Rehabilitation, Physical Therapy, Physical Therapy Assistant, Physician's Assistant, Corrective Therapy, Recreational Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Dance Therapy, Sports Medicine Physician, Sports Podiatrist, Sport Nutritionist, Sports Medicine Technician or Assistant, Sports Psychologist, Athletic Trainer, Team Physician, Sport Orthopedists, Sport Osteopathy, Podiatry Medicine, Sports Prosthetics and Orthotics, Chiropractics.

Pre-Physical Therapy Option

The pre-physical therapy option is designed to prepare students to enter a post baccalaureate degree program in professional physical therapy. Professional physical therapists are health care professionals who are trained in the prevention, identification, and resolution of dysfunctional motor behavior. They identify causes of motor dysfunction in order to design appropriate programs to prevent injury and disability. When injury exists, the therapist is concerned with helping to achieve strength range of motion, coordination of motion, and function. The therapist also helps individuals to learn to adapt motor performance within the limitations of permanent loss.

Graduates in the pre-physical therapy option should be responsible for knowing prevention and care of athletic injuries, exercise physiology, principles of conditioning, kinesiology, and biomechanics.

Students who graduate in pre-physical therapy may pursue graduate studies or certifications in the following careers: Cardiac Rehabilitation, Physical Therapy, Physical Therapy Assistant, Physician's Assistant, Corrective Therapy, Recreational Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Sports Medicine Physician, Sports Podiatrist, Sports Medicine

Technician or Assistant, Sports Psychologist, Athletic Trainer, Team Physician, Sport Orthopedists, Sport Osteopathy, Podiatry Medicine, Sports Prosthetics and Orthotics, Chiropractics.

USU Physical Education Faculty

Pedagogy

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Exercise Science

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