Proposal of Alternative Doctoral Residency

Department of Kinesiology, College of Education

For the Ph.D. Degree in Human Performance—Sport Pedagogy and Exercise Science Tracks

Graduate faculty submitting proposal: Matthew Curtner-Smith, Phillip Bishop, Mark Richardson, Jonathan Wingo, Brent Hardin, Oleg Sinelnikov, and Margaret Stran

A. Statement of Need
State the problems with the traditional residency policy for your students and why the graduate faculty in the department want an alternative approved.

Doctoral Degrees in Kinesiology
The doctoral degree earned within the Department of Kinesiology is officially titled “Human Performance.” There are two tracks within this Human Performance degree. These are:
- Exercise science: Students in this track focus on exercise physiology.
- Sport pedagogy: Students in this track study instruction related to physical activity and sport. Most students focus on school-based instruction.

Both tracks include the following components as minimum requirements:
- A set of eight three-hour courses from either exercise science or sport pedagogy which comprise the major area of focus
- A set of four three-hour research methods and statistics courses
- A set of four three-hour courses outside the major area of focus but which are foundational to this major area of focus
- A 24-hour dissertation

Why the Need for Alternative Residency for Exercise Scientists and Sport Pedagogists?
- Virtually all of our exercise science students take faculty positions in universities and colleges on graduation. A few also work in private industry (e.g., Nike) or clinical agencies (e.g., the Swedish Olympic Institute). With the increased focus on health and wellness, the growing concern over obesity and inactivity, and the interest in producing athletes that outperform their predecessors, there has been an explosion of research being conducted within exercise science. This, in turn, has led to a greater interest in the field among undergraduate students and corporations. These trends have meant that there is an increased demand for graduates of exercise science Ph.D. programs.
- Virtually all of our sport pedagogy students go on to work in universities and colleges. A few also work as instructional leaders or administrators within public school systems. Currently, there is a shortage of sport pedagogy doctoral students in the United States and an aging professorate. In recent years, this has meant that some sport pedagogy positions go unfilled and that, consequently, physical education teacher education programs have been closed. There is some concern that if this trend continues it will lead to a shortage of qualified physical education teachers.
**Current Graduate School Policy on Residency Requirement**

A minimum of two academic years of graduate study beyond the master’s degree is required for completion of Ph.D. programs in the College of Education. At least one academic year of doctoral study (or its equivalent, as noted below) must be spent in continuous residence as a full-time student [i.e., nine hours per semester] on the campus of the University of Alabama.

Doctoral program advisory committees may approve either of the following alternatives for meeting residence requirements:

- One full summer term and the following fall semester engaged in coursework on a full-time basis on the campus
- A spring semester and the following full summer term engaged in coursework on a full-time basis on the campus

**Problems for Kinesiology Students**

- A growing number of our sport pedagogy students are physical education teachers in the local public schools. As well as teaching some also have coaching responsibilities. This makes the completion of three three-hour courses a semester very difficult indeed and discourages some from pursuing graduate education at the University of Alabama.
- A growing number of our exercise science students work in clinical settings which require long hours including evenings. Again, this can make completion of nine hours per semester very difficult and discourages some from pursuing graduate education at the University of Alabama.
- The current policy is outdated and does not satisfy the “core spirit of residency” – being “immersed in a culture of scholarship.” Rather, it has the opposite of the intended effect in that it leads those who are not full-time students, and hence typically less engaged in research, to merely completing three classes a semester for one academic year.
- The current policy does nothing to enhance sport pedagogy students’ experiences and abilities within key areas with which employers (i.e., other institutions of higher education or educational agencies) are concerned. These are: a. experience of and ability to teach/train undergraduate physical education teachers, b. experience of and ability to conduct research, c. experience of and ability to teach physical education to children and youth, and d. experience of and ability to demonstrate collegiality.

**Problems for Exercise Science Students**

- The current policy does nothing to enhance exercise science students’ experiences and abilities within key areas with which employers (i.e., other institutions of higher education or clinical agencies) are concerned. These are: a. experience of and ability to teach/train undergraduate exercise scientists, b. experience of and ability to conduct research, and c. experience of and ability to demonstrate collegiality.

**Rationale for an Alternative Requirement**

The following alternative proposal would:

- Aid part-time students working outside the university who currently struggle to complete nine semester hours a semester for an academic year
- Be a mechanism by which faculty could hold doctoral students accountable for experiencing and demonstrating ability in key areas related with the “core spirit of residency” on which potential employers focus. Again, these areas are teaching, scholarship, and collegiality. Indeed, faculty believe that this added level of accountability should serve to increase the standard of the Ph.D. graduates from our department.
B. Proposed Alternative Residency Requirement for Doctoral Students in Kinesiology

Our proposal is straightforward and in two parts:

- Students would enroll in at least six hours of didactic on-campus coursework from within their approved programs of study for two consecutive semesters (i.e., fall and spring, spring and summer, or summer and fall).
- Students would engage in a set of experiences and demonstrate a set of abilities within the three key areas (i.e., teaching, scholarship, and collegiality) which the faculty and employers have identified as crucial to future success. These experiences and abilities would have to be engaged in and demonstrated during the time period in which the student was enrolled in the doctoral program.

Within the key area of teaching:

- Students in exercise science would have to teach or assist teaching one undergraduate course or supervise undergraduate exercise and sport science interns.
- Sport pedagogy students would have to teach or assist teaching one undergraduate methods course or supervise physical education interns in the local public schools.
- Sport pedagogy students would also have to instruct school-aged children or youth within an activity setting for the equivalent of at least one school-based unit.

Within the key area of scholarship, students in both the sport pedagogy and exercise science tracks would have to complete at least four of the following:

- Present or co-present a paper at a state, regional, or national conference
- Submit a single or co-authored paper to a peer reviewed state, regional, or national journal
- Attend at least one regional or national conference
- Conduct or co-conduct one workshop for practitioners in one’s chosen field
- Submit a grant proposal, work with a faculty member on a grant proposal, or attend a grant writing seminar/workshop outside of coursework

Within the key area of collegiality, students in both the exercise science and sport pedagogy tracks would have to complete at least three of the following:

- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member while teaching a class
- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member when submitting a presentation
- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member when submitting a manuscript for publication
- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member when submitting a grant proposal

C. Achieving the Five Value Constructs

(Documentation of how each of the five value constructs would be achieved in the proposed alternative residency requirement.)

The Mechanics of Documentation

The advisor of each doctoral student would be responsible for completing a doctoral residency checksheet (see attached) in which the experiences and abilities the department wishes students to engage in and demonstrate are listed under the three key areas related to the core spirit of residency the department has identified.

Students in Kinesiology would, therefore, achieve each of the five value constructs in our proposed alternative residency requirement in the following ways:
**Immersion in Advanced Study and Inquiry**

Students would enroll in at least six hours of didactic on-campus coursework from within their approved programs of study for two consecutive semesters (i.e., fall and spring, spring and summer, or summer and fall). In addition and obviously, the remaining 36 hours of coursework not counted for residency purposes, together with students’ dissertation work, would also result in students engaging in advanced study and inquiry although they may not be as deeply “immersed” as in their two residency semesters. Students would also satisfy the requirements of the Department of Kinesiology’s Key Area 2 – Scholarship (see doctoral residency checksheet attached and narrative above) during their doctoral programs. That is they would have to complete at least four of the following:

- Present or co-present a paper at a state, regional, or national conference
- Submit a single or co-authored paper to a peer reviewed state, regional, or national journal
- Attend at least one regional or national conference
- Conduct or co-conduct one workshop for practitioners in one’s chosen field
- Submit a grant proposal, work with a faculty member on a grant proposal, or attend a grant writing seminar/workshop outside of coursework

**Interaction with Faculty and Peers**

Enrolling in six hours of didactic on-campus coursework for two consecutive semesters should ensure that students interact with peers in those courses and the faculty teaching them. In addition and obviously, the remaining 36 hours of coursework not counted for residency purposes together with students’ dissertation work would also result in students interacting with faculty and students following the traditional residency requirement. Satisfying the requirements of the Department of Kinesiology’s Key Area 3 – Collegiality (see doctoral residency checksheet attached and narrative above) would also ensure students’ interaction with faculty and peers. Again, to achieve this students would have to complete at least three of the following:

- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member while teaching a class
- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member when submitting a presentation
- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member when submitting a manuscript for publication
- Collaborate with a peer or faculty member when submitting a grant proposal.

**Access to Educational Resources at the University**

Students who satisfy the proposed alternative residency requirement in the Department of Kinesiology would have exactly the same access to the university’s resources as students satisfying the traditional requirement.

**Interchange of Knowledge with the Academic Community**

This would be achieved through:

- Completion of the six hours of didactic on-campus coursework from within approved programs of study for two consecutive semesters. In addition and obviously, the remaining 36 hours of coursework not counted for residency purposes together with students’ dissertation work would also result in an “interchange of knowledge with the academic community.”
- Satisfying the requirements of the Department of Kinesiology’s Key Area 1 (teaching), Key Area 2 (scholarship), and Key Area 3 (collegiality) (see doctoral residency checksheet attached as well as the narrative above)
Broadening of Educational and Cultural Perspectives

- This alternative doctoral residency requirement should ensure that a greater number of students have an opportunity to pursue a Ph.D. degree in Kinesiology than would otherwise be the case.
- Broadening students’ educational and cultural perspectives is a cross-curricular theme of the Department’s Ph.D. degree. As their programs do not differ, this would remain the case for students satisfying both the traditional and alternative requirements for residency. For example, within the classes that comprise the exercise science major area of focus, students are encouraged to explore new areas of exercise physiology with which they have been previously unfamiliar. In addition, within the classes that comprise the sport pedagogy major area of focus, having gained a sound understanding of the positivistic and interpretive paradigms, students are introduced to critical research and encouraged to work within this third paradigm if interested.

D. Brief Description of Ongoing Measures of Academic Success of Students Following the Traditional and Alternative Doctoral Residency Requirements
(These would be presented as part of a comparison documenting the success of the two groups of students in four years.)

- Performance on comprehensive examinations
- Publication and presentation rates for dissertations
- Engagement in teaching (see Key Area 1 on Kinesiology checksheet and the narrative above)
- Engagement in scholarship outside the dissertation (see Key Area 2 on Kinesiology checksheet and the narrative above)
- Engagement in collegial practices (see Key Area 3 on Kinesiology checksheet and the narrative above)
- Quality of employers

E. Description of Proposed Alternative Doctoral Residency Requirement
(Description would appear in the graduate catalogue and/or on the graduate school’s website)

- Students pursuing alternative residency in the Department of Kinesiology will enroll in 6 hours of didactic on-campus coursework from within their approved programs of study for two consecutive semesters and satisfy departmental requirements for participating in teaching, scholarship, and collegial practices. Please contact the Department Head for additional information.