

# EXERCISE SCIENCE AND PERFORMANCE NUTRITION (PH.D.)

## Degree Requirements

### Doctor Of Philosophy In Exercise Science And Performance Nutrition

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program in Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition provides trainees with a blend of formal coursework and the mastery of laboratory skills in order to design and implement high-quality research within the broad scope of exercise and nutritional sciences. The Ph.D. degree is awarded to students who demonstrate the ability to be independent researchers involving nutrition and/or exercise as they relate to human performance improvement and sport, exercise adaptations, and preventing disease.

Evaluation of candidates includes a comprehensive examination consisting of foundational knowledge of topics essential to success within the profession. Additionally, each candidate develops and completes a formal dissertation involving a research problem that contributes new knowledge to the field. The candidate serves as the principal investigator in an independent capacity with oversight from a research mentor and committee.

The Ph.D. program in Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition emphasizes experiential learning in laboratory and classroom settings to foster the development of well-rounded graduates capable of effective teaching, mentorship, and ethical research practices leading to preparation for a wide variety of positions, which may include academia, industry, and/or government entities.

### Requirements For Admission

To apply to the Ph.D. in Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition degree program, please visit the University of South Alabama (USA) Graduate School website.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the USA Graduate School, admission requirements for the Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition Ph.D. program are:

1. A **master's degree in a related field** (i.e., exercise science, kinesiology, nutrition, physiology, or similar) from an accredited institution of higher education. Students with a degree outside of the discipline and/or deficiency in relevant coursework may be required to successfully complete additional prerequisite courses prior to admission.
2. **GPA Requirement:** A minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale on all graduate coursework.
3. A brief **personal statement** (1 to 2 pages) describing the applicant's research experience, related skills, and academic and career goals.
4. **One letter of recommendation (faculty advisor preferred)** attesting to the applicant's potential for developing into an independent researcher **and contact information for three references** (may include the letter writer).
5. A **writing sample (thesis/manuscript preferred)** as evidence of the candidate's capacity for scholarly written communication.

6. **Commitment from a program faculty member** to serve as a mentor to supervise the applicant's doctoral training and research.

7. A GRE score is not required. Voluntary submission of GRE scores will be accepted and considered with the application materials. An overall GRE score of 310 or greater along with an Analytical Writing score of 4.0 or greater can be used to replace the writing sample requirement.

8. **International Students:** If the applicant does not have a master's degree from a U.S.-accredited institution of higher education, a GRE score is required. Any additional admission requirements set forth by the USA Graduate School for international applicants must be met.

9. An **interview** with one or more program faculty member.

Admission is competitive and the decision is based on a review of all submitted admission materials.

### Program Requirements

To qualify for the Ph.D. in Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition, a minimum of 60 semester hours of approved graduate credit is required and the following program of study must be completed with a grade of "B" or better in all course work.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Core Courses</b>		<b>15</b>
KIN 540	Cardiovas Resps Adapt Excerc	
KIN 601	Biomech Found Human Movement	
KIN 603	Adv Measurement-Eval in HKS	
KIN 681	Current Topics in Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition	
KIN 694	Directed Study and Research	
<b>Support Courses</b>		<b>12</b>
KIN 505	Research Methods - HKS	
KIN 699	Research Project	
IDE 620	Quantitative Methods I	
or ST 540	Stat in Research I	
IDE 621	Quantitative Methods II	
or ST 545	Stat in Research II	
<b>Electives (choose from the following)</b>		<b>18</b>
KIN 516	Exercise Physiology	
KIN 521	Motor Learning	
KIN 562	Biochem & Molec Exer & Nutr	
KIN 563	Nutrition	
KIN 571	Exer Mgt Chronic Disease/Disab	
KIN 572	Neuromuscular & Biomechanical Principles in Exercise	
KIN 574	Sport and Fitness Conditioning	
KIN 579	Fitness Assessment-Exer Presc	
KIN 583	Clinical Ex Test & Prescript	
KIN 590	Special Topics-	
Advisor-Approved Elective		
<b>Dissertation</b>		<b>15</b>
KIN 799	Dissertation	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>60</b>

**Academic Standards**

Student must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA in order to be in good standing. Failure to maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA will result in the student being placed on academic probation. The Director of Graduate Programs may recommend the dismissal of a student who does not maintain good academic standing or is not making sufficient progress.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate assistantships are available on a competitive basis and are awarded on the recommendation of the Department of Health, Kinesiology, and Sport.

**Comprehensive Examinations**

Doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination. The format of the examination will be determined by the comprehensive examination committee. Normally the examination is based on the required coursework. Failure to pass the comprehensive examination within three attempts will result in dismissal from the program.

**Candidacy**

A doctoral student is admitted to candidacy upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination. Candidacy indicates the student has completed the required coursework and is eligible to begin the dissertation research project.

**Dissertation Hours And Defense**

Doctoral candidacy is required to enroll in KIN 799 Dissertation. While only 15 hours of KIN 799 may be counted toward the degree, a student must continuously enroll in at least 1 credit hour of dissertation during the fall and spring semesters until the dissertation is successfully defended. Failure to enroll continuously without the written approval of the Graduate Program Director may lead to dismissal from the program.

A doctoral candidate must successfully defend a dissertation prospectus. The final oral defense of the dissertation is scheduled after the dissertation study has been completed and prepared in written form. Revisions to the written dissertation may be required for final approval by the dissertation committee and as a result of a review by the Graduate School.

**Transfer Credit**

A maximum of 18 semester hours of graduate credit earned at an approved graduate school may be counted toward the Ph.D. program. Transfer credit may be approved after the completion of nine (9) semester hours of credit at the University of South Alabama. Transfer credit must be approved by the Health, Kinesiology, and Sport Department Chair and Graduate Program Director with the recommendation of the student's advisor.

**Time Limit**

All requirements for the PhD degree must be completed within seven (7) calendar years from the date of matriculation as an Exercise Science and Performance Nutrition Ph.D. student. This seven calendar year constraint also applies to all transfer credits.

After reaching candidacy, a student has a maximum of 3 years to complete the dissertation. A student may apply to the Graduate Program Director for an extension to complete the degree.