ACSM 2012 PROFILES
IN SPORTS MEDICINE AND EXERCISE SCIENCE

A Professional Guide to Programs and Career Opportunities
In Sports Medicine and Exercise Science
Master of Science in Clinical Exercise Physiology

at Benedictine University

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ACSM 2012 PROFILES in SPORTS MEDICINE AND EXERCISE SCIENCE

A professional guide to programs and career opportunities in sports medicine and exercise science across the country!

Distributed at the ACSM 59th Annual Meeting
May 29–June 2, 2012 in San Francisco, CA

Thank you to our ACSM 2012 PROFILES participants:

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Contact: Graduate Program Director  970-491-5081  hesinfo@cahs.colostate.edu
Those born between 1980 and 2000 are considered in Generation Y. You have grown up in an environment unique to that of your mentors.

- You’ve likely never seen a rotary dial phone or know what a computer floppy disk looks like (let alone punched cards for a mainframe!). Ask your mentor, they probably do.
- While your professors may think of canned meat when they hear the word “spam”, you think of electronic junk mail.
- We thought Post-it notes were an ingenious invention in 1981. You’ve never known a world without them.
- You have always seen exercise videos (Jane Fonda opened this market in the early 1980’s) while mentors might have watched Jack LaLanne on television.
- You have always known “sedentary lifestyle” as part of the major risk factors for heart disease. ACSM members helped to elevate the recognition of this connection in the 1980s.

These differences in experience and context affect how you are motivated and learn. It will also affect how you teach future students.

Embrace your “Gen Yness”!

Satisfying career
Gen Y wants to find meaning and have an impact through their work. It is hard to beat the fields represented by ACSM membership (e.g. teachers, physicians, researchers) for having a powerful impact on health of the population. Seeing a sedentary, unhealthy person develop an exercise habit or witnessing the excitement of a student who finally “gets it” can be highly motivating. Find out if your mentors believe they have had an impact. It could be an interesting conversation.

Challenge
There is satisfaction gained from mastery. Gen Y wants a career that allows continual skill improvement and advancement of knowledge. In the words of the New York Times columnist, Tom Friedman, “average is over”. Those who will advance must continue to grow professionally and make themselves uniquely qualified. Find out what you can do beyond the minimum to challenge and advance yourself.

Financial reward
Although the recession has concerned many graduates starting careers, Gen Y folks in ACSM should find comfort in facts from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This agency reports that the most growth in new positions through 2018 for individuals with any graduate degree will be in post secondary teaching; 257,000 new jobs are expected. Physicians are second with 144,000 new jobs. A 40% increase is expected for medical scientists. Compensation goes up consistently with amount of education. The average weekly salary of those with a doctorate is more than double that of high school graduate and about 50% more than those with a Bachelors’ degree. So, when you feel like completing your degree is only a dream, think about what comes afterward.

Networking
While your mentor might still carry business cards to help develop their network, you likely use LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter to make new personal and professional connections. While some of your mentors might lament the explosion of electronic communication and the need to reply to the 100 emails they receive everyday, you are constantly and happily connecting via the Internet. Use that system...
to also connect with colleagues to share ideas, best practices, and develop collaborations at work.

**Coach/mentor**
Gen Y prefers to have a coach or mentor rather than a traditional boss. You like lots of encouragement, feedback, and guidance in the workplace. Search out a mentor in your field who is willing to provide this if your actual supervisor does not. Make sure you give back and show your appreciation for the efforts of mentors. They can have a major influence on your success.

**Work-life balance**
We have all heard that none of us will ultimately wish we had stayed a few more hours at the office. Having a full and interesting life outside of work improves your productivity at work. Luckily, research has shown that exercise, a habit I assume you all have, is one of most consistent stimuli for neurogenesis and improved learning so don’t feel guilty about it! Find time to develop friendships and family. These connections can help you weather the difficult times at work.

**Flexibility**
Having some control over your work life is empowering and reduces boredom. Gen Y wants the opportunity to work in a new way. Remember, just as you have different expectations and habits than your mentors, you will face new, unpredictable expectations in the generation that follows you. Just as I learned to move away from the overhead projector to online chat sessions for class, you will need to keep current with the latest cutting-edge techniques for teaching and research. Make use of training opportunities to move into the new reality.

If you believe some of the predictions for the future of higher education, we may have a small set of master teachers doing the online teaching for most of our students. I don’t expect this to be the reality but I do expect things to change. Be part of the innovators rather than the grumblers when change is imminent.

To sum up, embrace your “Gen Yness”! In parallel, be willing to learn from those who see things from previous perspectives and be ready to welcome Gen Z.

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Making the Most of Your Graduate Degree

By Barbara Ainsworth, Ph.D., MPH, FACSM, ACSM President

Remember your undergraduate days? You took classes, completed assignments and tests, and over time, you graduated. Now you are in graduate school and you may ask, what is expected of me? Is there a formula for success? Whether you are earning a Master or a Doctoral degree, succeeding in graduate school takes deliberate action. Here are a few tips to help you to get the most out of your degree.

Treat your graduate education like your job.

Come to class on time and pay attention while you are there. Turn off the internet and engage in class discussions. Go the extra mile to turn in assignments on time and without errors. Be thoughtful in your work and strive to be present while in class and in research settings.

Avoid taking the easy path.

While some courses will be required, many will be electives. You will have many opportunities to develop your skills and interests. Ask your professors what courses and/or experiences they think will help you reach your career goals. If you want to be a clinician, seek experiences that will let you know if that career is for you. If you want to be a researcher, learn the skills required for success—gain expertise in a couple of areas, learn how to design research studies on topics that funding agencies will support. If you want to be a teacher, develop the skills and subject matter expertise needed for effective teaching.

Open your mind to new ideas.

Graduate school is the time to explore new ways of thinking about topics you never knew existed. Don’t sell yourself short by limiting your focus to a single interest area or approach. Your job will require you to interact with people from many disciplines, so think broadly about solving problems and thinking outside the box.

Hang out where the action is.

If your research is in the lab, then hang out in the lab. If your research is somewhere else, then hang out where your advisor can easily find you. By being close physically to where research decisions are made, you have the best shot at being part of the discovery process. In graduate school, a lot of the learning happens outside the classroom. You need to be where the problems arise so you can be part of the solutions.

Always ask, what can I do to help?

Scholars are busy people. They need bright, eager, new professionals to help them accomplish their tasks. You can get involved in activities that can take your career to a whole new level by giving freely of your time.

As graduate students, you are the next generation of professionals. By making ACSM your primary professional organization, you are already at the head of the pack. Present your best research at ACSM regional and national meetings. Get involved in the organization and be a leader. By being part of ACSM, I guarantee that you will make friends and have experiences that will broaden and deepen your career for a long time to come.

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ACSM Fellows Offer Advice to Students

Succeeding in Graduate School—

Intellectual curiosity is critical to your success. You will need to read the literature and discuss research studies with fellow graduate students and with your mentor. Find out about research projects going on in the laboratory. Most graduate programs include journal clubs and most labs have a weekly meeting to assist you with this process. Initially you will likely find that you are interested in everything! This is where your mentor can help you focus your ideas. You will soon begin to realize how much you do not know. Do not let this scare you—just enjoy learning and keep focusing on what you do know.

Priscilla Clarkson, PhD, FACSM

Remember to work as a team with other graduate students academically as well as professionally. Assist professors and other graduate students with data collections, volunteer as a research subject, attend research seminars, and attend and present your work at professional meetings. If this sounds familiar, it should. You are not only gaining the foundational skills to become a good researcher, teacher and scholar, you are preparing from the beginning of the master’s program for admission to a Ph.D. program and/or a professional career. If you choose to pursue a Ph.D., your research mentor and other graduate faculty will be the best sources for advice on matching you with a mentor and seeking admission and financial support. William Butler Yeates said, “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” Your educational experience should feed your curiosity and excitement in addition to supplying you with the necessary tools to succeed in a career. It takes hard work and dedication. Fuel your fire!

Richard Gay Israel, EdD, FACSM

Do not leave graduate school without getting the valuable experience and knowledge you need for the next step of your career. Get grant and manuscript writing experience, present your research at national meetings, and get involved in other research projects besides your own. If teaching is one of your goals, make sure you get a variety of teaching experiences, even if you have to volunteer. Get a strong background in statistics and research design, learn to use statistical computer programs, and clearly understand the statistics used in your own research. Start a journal club if your school does not have one where you can discuss research articles in depth. Once you leave graduate school, find a mentor to help you continue learning and improving your research and teaching skills. Remember, graduate school is just the beginning of the learning process that will last a lifetime.

Melinda Manore, PhD, RD, FACSM

It is most important, especially in your doctoral studies, to choose a mentor who is well respected and has done considerable work in your area of interest. The work you do in your doctoral program will likely be your springboard for your career. If you have no idea of your area of interest, then you may not truly be ready for a doctoral program. It is a good idea to peruse the program and the faculty websites to gain background information on the program. I also strongly recommend that you personally contact the faculty member of interest to discuss your interests and qualifications for the program. This should be followed up by an interview. In this way, you have an opportunity to meet in person. Over the course of four years, you will be developing a very personal relationship with your mentor. It is important that you are able to connect on a personal, as well as professional, level. An interview also gives you the opportunity to visit the lab environment and meet with other graduate students who can provide additional information from the viewpoint of the student.

Irene Davis, PT, PhD, FACSM

I cannot overstate the importance of networking for establishing a presence in the field. One of the best vehicles through which to interact with successful people is to become active in the ACSM regional chapters. Volunteer to serve on a committee. Go to the regional and national ACSM Annual Meetings. Attend the social events offered at these meetings. Go out to dinner with your major advisor and his or her friends. Participate in the group morning run. Get involved with the ACSM interest groups. There is an extensive amount of business that gets conducted at these social events that can lead to your career advancement.

Linda Pescatello, PhD, FACSM

What will you consider a “successful” experience? New knowledge and skills? A job? Lifelong colleagues? What are your goals? How do they fit in with the goals of your advisor and the experiences you will receive in a given program? Realize that your goals may, and probably should, change as you gain knowledge, experience, and exposure to new ideas and topics. The motivation for taking on the challenge of graduate work has to come from within yourself; those who go on to graduate school in an attempt to live up to the expectations of others have a much more difficult time, and risk getting through it only to learn that it is really not what they wanted in the first place. There are so many wonderful opportunities that can come from the graduate school experience, particularly in the exercise and sports sciences. With options, however, comes the stress of decision making. Knowing what success means to you will help you make decisions along the way.

Jane Kent-Braun, PhD, FACSM

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For many individuals in exercise science and sports medicine, learning about and doing research is one of the joys of an academic career. It is exciting to discuss important exercise topics, and develop and answer timely questions about the role of physical activity on health, and other related issues. Given what we know about the importance of physical activity and health from previous research, there is no chance that we will run out of important questions to address in the years to come.

When young investigators learn to do research, they must master the specific nuances of their subdisciplines such as appropriate methodologies, effective intervention strategies, and proper analytical techniques. However, investigators must also be cognizant of the rules, many of them unwritten, which govern the integrity of the research performed. That is, investigators must be sure to have an appreciation for, and practice, responsible conduct of research.

Responsible conduct of research can take many directions, and space does not permit detailed discussion here. Suffice it to say that when performing research, investigators must be aware of issues related to care for the well-being of human and/or animal study participants, conflict of interest, and confidentiality. In addition, it is important to learn what might constitute research misconduct, which includes falsification or fabrication of data, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from the specific discipline.

As Research Integrity Officer at Michigan State University, it is my job to investigate research misconduct issues. While many of the rules for responsible conduct appear to be common sense, you would be surprised at how many cases I see that arise out of ignorance of such rules and ethical practices. In fact, it never ceases to amaze me how many student researchers, and even senior investigators, have serious misconceptions about what might violate research integrity.

While research expectations and infrastructure vary widely among colleges and universities, there is always someone (usually housed in the research office) who deals with responsible conduct of research issues. I suggest to any investigator involved with developing, performing, or disseminating research and/or other scholarly creative activities to seek out those “in the know” at your particular university, and discuss your concerns. It is a discussion worth having, for all our sakes. Knowing the rules up front will help you conduct the best science possible, and enhance all our efforts to develop better understanding of the role of physical activity on health and disease.
The Master of Science degree is a multi-disciplinary degree involving course work in biomechanics, cardio-pulmonary disease management, exercise physiology, graded exercise testing and exercise prescription, health psychology, epidemiology, research design, and statistics. The HES Department has a research agenda focused on understanding the determinants and prevention of chronic disease and disability across the lifespan. Graduates typically pursue further graduate study, research careers in exercise science laboratories and/or direct preventative and rehabilitative programs. Assistantships include a tuition waiver and are awarded in the first and second years, respectively. The 2 year program comprises course work in the first year and a thesis during the second year focused in one of the program areas (Biomechanics, Chronic Disease Rehabilitation, Exercise Physiology, Health Psychology, Exercise Psychology, Nutrition). In addition, all students serve an internship in the university’s chronic disease rehabilitation program. Deadline for application is January 15 for fall semester enrollment. For further information contact Dr Tony Marsh by email at marshap@wfu.edu or phone at 336-758-4643.

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The M.A. in Wellness Promotion further prepares you to sit for either the Advanced Level Certification for Health Educators (Master Certified Health Education Specialist-MCHES) and/or the Health Fitness Instructor Certification (American College of Sports Medicine-ACSM-HFI).

This 100% online program provides the skills and knowledge needed for success in a wellness career, along with a personalized touch that incorporates mastery learning and individualized pacing into select content courses.

* Students with undergraduate degrees in exercise science, health promotion, health/physical education teaching, nursing or other health related fields are eligible for unconditional admission. Other undergraduate majors will require some pre-requisite coursework before beginning graduate study.

See what we offer: 606-783-2180
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