Exercise and Nutritional Sciences, PhD

This program's name has changed effective Fall 2017. The previous name was Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Wellness.

Sitting is the new smoking. The physical activity, nutrition and wellness program was designed specifically to prepare scholars and leaders in exercise and nutrition sciences to address this growing health problem and help meet the ever-increasing demand to develop effective physical activity and nutrition programs for all segments of society.

Program Description

Degree Awarded: PHD Exercise and Nutritional Sciences

The graduate faculty mentors of the School of Nutrition and Health Promotion in the College of Health Solutions offer a PhD degree in exercise and nutritional sciences. The mission of the program is to foster research which will promote healthy lifestyles intended to reduce the physical, social and economic costs of unhealthy living. While many healthy lifestyles are studied, the emphasis is on physically active living and sound nutrition.

Students are challenged to integrate disciplinary information from the exercise and nutrition sciences in combination with health promotion research. Thus the doctoral program in exercise and nutritional sciences is uniquely designed to train scholars to conduct high impact, transdisciplinary health promotion research that explores issues that contribute to health through chronic disease risk reduction, quality of life promotion and enhancement of well-being.

Program graduates are prepared for research careers. The majority, 70 percent, have procured postdoctoral research fellowships, research faculty positions in research intensive universities, or have obtained research positions in the nonprofit industry, government or in for-profit private sector research institutes. About 30 percent of graduates secure clinical or teaching-intensive positions upon graduation.

The program requires full-time residency and typically is completed within four years of full-time study after the master's degree. Students work with an approved mentor from the beginning to the end of the doctoral program. A mentor is selected by mutual agreement between student and mentor based on mutually compatible research interests and funding availability.
Students are actively engaged in research at every stage of the program through participation in research internships, independent research experiences, research seminars and colloquia, and dissertation research.

At a Glance

- **College/School:** College of Health Solutions
- **Location:** Downtown Phoenix campus

Degree Requirements

97 credit hours, a written comprehensive exam, an oral comprehensive exam, a prospectus and a dissertation

**Required Core (6 credit hours)**
EXW 640 Analysis of Variance for Exercise and Wellness (3)
EXW 643 Correlation/Regression/Multivariate Statistics (3)

**Required Research (12 credit hours)**

**Elective Research (17 credit hours)**

**Professional Development (5 credit hours)**

**Area of Focus (theme) (15 credit hours)**

**Dissertation (12 credit hours)**

Additional Curriculum Information

Students are to tailor a course of study in either: nutrition and health, or physical activity and health. Within these areas, students are expected to focus their study in a specific thematic area. There are eight thematic areas to choose from:

- behavioral aspects of nutrition and physical activity
- biomechanics, movement control and injury prevention
- chronic disease prevention
- energy balance, metabolism and physiology
- epidemiology, surveillance and measurement
- health information, communication and technology
- lifespan, aging and special populations
- public health, community and health policy
Courses in the focus or thematic area are determined by the student and supervisory committee. Up to three but not more than nine credit hours in the focus area may be taken from a program outside the nutrition, exercise science and health promotion programs.

When approved by the student's supervisory committee and Graduate College, 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree are allowed to be used for this degree.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the College of Health Solutions.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a master's degree in any field, from a regionally accredited institution, and prefer that a data-based research thesis has been completed.

Applicants must have a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative GPA (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of a student's first bachelor's degree program, and applicants must have a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative GPA (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. GRE scores (verbal, quantitative and writing)
4. letter of intent
5. professional resume
6. three letters of recommendation
7. teaching or research assistantship application
8. writing sample (six to 10 pages)
9. an oral interview with program faculty (in person or via Skype) prior to acceptance
10. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English (regardless of current residency) must provide proof of English proficiency. Applicants must submit a TOEFL score unless the requirements for an exception have been met. Details are available at https://students.asu.edu/graduate/proficiency.

The letter of intent should indicate research or scholarly interest, primary program area, statement of career goals and name of a potential faculty mentor from the list of approved faculty mentors.
Prerequisites
All applicants must have taken a graduate level research methods and a graduate level research statistics course prior to admission. Students will be expected to take a pretest in research methods and research statistics the summer prior to enrolling.

It is expected that students admitted to the program will have documented academic training and a strong interest in exercise science, nutrition science or health promotion. Thus, depending on the student's academic training, background, scholarly interests and focus area, a student may be asked to take undergraduate courses as deficiencies prior to or concurrently with graduate course enrollment.

Pathways through program
Two pathways through the program are available to students depending on their funding source: full-time via TA/RA funding, or part-time self-funded. With both pathways, the intent is to involve and embed students in ongoing research as well as in class study throughout their stay.

Students should see the program website for application deadlines and admission terms.

Application Deadlines

Fall

Contact Information

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