



UNIVERSITY OF  
**South Carolina**

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**Arnold School of Public Health**

**Department of Exercise Science**

**Graduate Student Handbook**

**2022-2023**

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# Section One: Overview

## 2022-2023 Graduate Academic Bulletin

It is the right and responsibility of every graduate student at the University of South Carolina to be familiar with the current version of the [Graduate Academic Bulletin](#). This document contains general information concerning the Graduate School and includes information specific to the [Arnold School of Public Health](#) (ASPH) graduate degrees offered by the [Department of Exercise Science](#) (EXSC), and a description of graduate courses.

## Program of Study

The program of study lists all courses that a graduate student must complete as a part of the degree to which the student has been admitted. The program of study form must be signed by the student, the student's advisor, and the graduate director in accordance with the graduate curriculum for the department of exercise science. The approved program of study must be submitted to the program graduate coordinator who will then submit the form to the Graduate School for review and approval by the graduate dean. The time at which it is submitted is based on degree requirements, and should be discussed with the student's advisor. All forms are located [here](#).

## Timeline to Completion

All courses in a program of study leading to a master's degree must be completed within a 6-year period from the date of admission to graduation. Courses not completed within this period must be retaken. All courses in a program of study leading to a doctoral degree must be completed within a 10-year period from the date of admission to graduation. Courses not completed within this period must be retaken.

## Transfer Credits

A maximum of 12 credit hours can be transferred from another institution toward earning a graduate degree for programs of 30-65 hours, and up to 15 credit hours can be transferred for programs of 37-45 hours. Transfer of credits must be approved by the Graduate School and the department of exercise science. Upon the approval of a program of study by the advisor and exercise science graduate director, the student must complete a [Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit](#) (G-RTC) for each course to be transferred. The following provisions apply:

- The courses must be documented by an **official** transcript mailed to the Graduate School by the awarding institution.
- The transcript must clearly indicate that **graduate** credit was awarded or specifically verified by the institution's registrar or graduate dean.
- The courses must be judged as appropriate by the student's academic committee and listed on a program of study approved by the graduate school.
- Courses with grades lower than "B" are not transferrable.
- Students who have another graduate degree in a related field (e.g., MS, MPH, DPT) can transfer their degree (not individual courses) which allows for the first 30 hours of the required 60 hours of their PhD.
- Students in doctoral programs defined as **post-baccalaureate** must have on the [Program of Study](#) (D-POS) a minimum of 60 hours that are in-date (i.e., completed within 10 years), 30 of which must be unique to the University of South Carolina. Students in doctoral programs defined as **post-master's** must have on the [Program of Study](#) (M-POS) a minimum of 30 hours in-date and unique to the University of South Carolina.

## Research Projects

Students who are involved in research projects associated with degree programs (e.g., master's theses, master's projects, and dissertations) are required to be formally enrolled during the period that they are actively engaged in the project. Collection of data, laboratory analysis of data, computer analysis of data, manuscript review (with

faculty) and revisions are examples of active engagement. The minimal enrollment is 1 credit. The student would normally be enrolled in either EXSC 798, EXSC 799, or EXSC 899, but enrollment in any course within the EXSC department or another university department will satisfy the requirement. This requirement is to reflect the involvement of the university's resources in the process. Students who enroll for research hours in a given semester must execute the work for which they are receiving credit in that same semester.

The above stated regulation applies to master's degree students completing a project (EXSC 798) as well. A project student should not enroll in EXSC 798 until the student is prepared to conduct the work. A project proposal must be approved by the student's advisor and the MS graduate director prior to the student's enrollment in EXSC 798. Failure to complete the project within the enrolled semester will require the student to register for at least one graduate credit each semester until the project is complete.

## Progress Toward Degree

To keep on track for graduation, students will need to plan to meet major Graduate School milestones and academic requirements for their degree program. The [Graduate School](#) website provides links to the forms and a list of deadlines for master's and doctoral degree programs and graduation.

## Advisement and Registering for Classes

Each semester all graduate students need to be advised each semester prior to registering for classes. This includes meeting with your academic advisor and completing an [advisement form](#).

For each course, list the department, course number, section number, credit hours, and name of the instructor. After the advisement form is signed by you and your advisor/mentor, send the form to your specific department graduate coordinator, who will verify the section and course registration numbers (CRN), and lift the advisement hold. A scanned copy of the form will be emailed to your @email.sc.edu account once processed.

- Graduate coordinator for PhD Program: Latoya Townes, [ljfrazi@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:ljfrazi@mailbox.sc.edu)
- Graduate coordinator for MS and MPH Programs: Barbara Reager, [breager@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:breager@mailbox.sc.edu)

For more detailed information on advisement and the registration process, see Appendix.

## Independent Study Courses

The purpose of an independent study is to allow the student to pursue an area of academic interest not adequately covered by the regular course structure. Therefore, an independent study course cannot be used to fulfill a core requirement.

Prior to enrolling in an independent study course, a student must complete a graduate [Independent Study Contract](#) (G-ISC) form. The approval of the course instructor, the master's student's advisor or chair of the student's doctoral advisor committee, and the graduate director of the program is required. Students will send the signed form to the appropriate graduate coordinator who will send the approved copy of the G-ISC to the Office of the University Registrar. The graduate coordinator will notify the student when the student is able to register for the course.

**Note:** Not more than **6 hours** of independent study may be used on a **master's** program of study and no more than **9 hours** of independent study may be used on a **doctoral** program of study.

## Course Enrollment Load and Full-time Status

An exercise science graduate student **without** a graduate assistantship is considered full-time when enrolled in 9 or more hours during a fall or spring term. An exercise science graduate student who **does** have a graduate assistantship is considered full-time when enrolled in 6 hours during a fall or spring term. The maximum course load in fall or spring semesters is 15 credit hours. The maximum course load in any summer session is 6 hours. Summer enrollment is not required **unless it is your first semester of study. If summer is your first semester of study, full-time enrollment is required.**

For international graduate students, the [International Student Services](#) office (ISS) recommends that students refrain from starting during the summer term if at all possible because of potential difficulties with the full-time

enrollment requirement. A student must be enrolled for at least 1 credit during any semester in which dissertation/thesis/project progress is made and such university resources as the library, computer facilities, or faculty time are used. As an international student, **only one online class per semester counts toward full-time enrollment**. This means you must be enrolled in mostly traditional classes that require presence in a classroom.

For information on Advisement and Registration, see Appendix.

## Special Enrollment Status (Z-Status)

[Special Enrollment Status](#) was created for students in traditional research programs who typically complete their coursework but need an additional semester or two to complete their project, thesis or dissertation. Many of these students received departmental support, some of which included tuition abatements, or external support that require full-time enrollment. While these students usually work on their thesis or dissertation full-time, they do not need to enroll beyond one hour of thesis or dissertation preparation. However, many of these students receive graduate assistantships (GA), fellowships, or external funding that required 6-9 hours of enrollment. Special enrollment status was created to treat these students as full-time even though they are enrolled in less than 6-9 hours. This privilege also can be given to students in non-thesis/dissertation programs, but with similar capstone experiences, such as internships, field experiences, or practica, and for students covered under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

## International Graduate Students

The [International Student Services](#) Office provides assistance, support and community for international students to help them get the most out of their time in graduate school. The office is staffed by trained and experienced experts who offer support for international students, including immigration advice, special programming, support for international organizations, and advising for cultural adjustment.

## Leave of Absence

Occasionally, a student may request a leave of absence (LOA) for medical, family, or personal reasons. During the LOA, there is no policy that mandates or guarantees that a mentor or program continues financial support of the student or that guarantees student support upon resumption of the program following a leave of absence. A leave of absence longer than two academic semesters decreases the likelihood of a mentor being able to resume financial support. An extended LOA may also impact the student's timeline to completion and potentially result in courses having to be retaken.

## Communication

Communication between students, faculty, and staff is critical. To ensure accurate and consistent communication, graduate students are expected to follow these guidelines:

- Use their UofSC email account (@email.sc.edu) instead of their personal email account throughout the entire time they are enrolled in their graduate program.
- Check their email regularly and respond in a timely manner, e.g., 24-48 hours.
- Use appropriate and professional language in emails.
- Check the MS, MPH, or PhD Blackboard organization for updates and important announcements

**If students have questions about departmental policies, they are expected to find the answers by checking the handbook first, before questioning faculty and staff.**

## Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is an important mechanism used by the faculty to evaluate the curriculum and course objectives. Students participate in this process through the following mechanisms:

- Formal course and instructor evaluations are administered by the department or university. Faculty and administration expect students to take the responsibility to participate in this evaluation process seriously

and provide constructive feedback to assist the faculty in their efforts to keep the curriculum and program timely and progressive.

- Informal feedback through the IDP evaluations, structured group forums, and the academic curriculum committee structure.
- Completion of surveys (via consent to text/phone/email) related to program progression, career progression, and outcomes following graduation from the program. Keeping the department updated related to changes in contact information makes these communications possible.

## ***SECTION TWO: PROGRAMS OF STUDY***

### **Master of Science Degree Program**

The MS in Exercise Science degree program provides students with advanced foundational knowledge and skills in exercise physiology application, research methods, and statistics. In addition to this foundational knowledge, the curriculum offers a variety of electives to prepare students for career opportunities in the areas of:

- Strength and conditioning
- Sport science
- Performance nutrition
- Clinical exercise physiology
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Physical rehabilitation
- Corporate fitness
- Health and wellness
- Research
- Preparation for additional graduate training (PhD, DPT, MD, PA)

### **MS Curriculum**

The MS curriculum is 33 credit hours. It consists of 15 credit hours of core courses, 12 or 15 credit hours of electives, and a culminating project or thesis. Students have the option of completing a 3-credit project or a 6-credit thesis. The program is typically completed in 4 to 5 semesters (2 years). The MS curriculum is presented in the table below:

#### **MS Curriculum – 33 credit hours**

<b>MS in Exercise Science Core</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>PUBH 700</b>	Perspectives in Public Health (online)	3
<b>BIOS 700</b>	Introduction to Biostatistics	3
<b>EXSC 780 or 781</b>	Physiology of Exercise or Physiology, Exercise, & Disease	3
<b>EXSC 787</b>	Research Methods and Design for Exercise Science	3
<b>Choose one of the following:</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>EXSC 700</b>	Physical Activity and Health: Epidemiology, Research, and Practice	
<b>EXSC 710</b>	Behavioral Aspects of Physical Activity	
<b>EXSC 731</b>	Mechanisms of Motor Skill Performance	
<b>EXSC 777</b>	Endocrinology of Exercise and Health	
<b>Electives (12 or 15; minimum 9 EXSC credits)</b>		<b>12 or 15</b>
<b>Project (EXSC 798) or Thesis (EXSC 799) (3 or 6)</b>		<b>3 or 6</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>



## Examples of Advisor-Approved Elective Courses

EXSC 507 - Exercise, Sport and Nutrition (3h)\*  
EXSC 541 - Physiological Basis for Strength and Conditioning (3h)\*  
EXSC 555 - Current Topics in Exercise Science (3h)\*  
EXSC 562 - Impairments of the Human Motor System (3h)\*  
EXSC 563 - Physical Activity and the Physical Dimensions of Aging (3h)\*  
EXSC 585 - Women's Health and Physical Activity (3h)\*  
EXSC 608 - Apps, Wearables & Technology for Lifestyle Behavior Change & Weight Loss (3h)  
EXSC 620 - Nutrition and Immunology (3h)  
EXSC 669 - Skeletal Muscle Physiology: Form and Function (3h)  
EXSC 695 - Writing and Presenting in Research (3h)  
EXSC 723 - Genetics in Health Sciences (3h)  
EXSC 732 - Measurement of Body Composition and Associated Health Behaviors (3h)  
EXSC 742 - Clinical Exercise Testing (1h)  
EXSC 754 - Community-based Physical Activity Interventions (3h)  
EXSC 755 - Special Topics in Exercise Science (3h)  
EXSC 775 - Neural Basis of Skilled Motor Behavior (3h)  
EXSC 790 - Independent Study (1-3h, repeatable up to 6h)  
EXSC 795 - Internship in Exercise Science (3h)  
EXSC 808 - Neuro Repair-Rehabilitation (3h)  
RHAB 540 - Assistive and Adaptive Technology (3h)  
RHAB 710 - Medical Aspects of Rehabilitation (3h)  
PHPH 750 - Fundamental Neuroscience (4h)  
BIOS 757 - Intermediate Biometrics (3h)

\* **Note:** Limit of **three** 500-level EXSC courses

## MS Advisement

Students entering the MS degree program in Exercise Science will be advised by the MS graduate director prior to their first semester. Students must identify a faculty advisor in the Department of EXSC before their second semester. Students are required to meet with their advisor prior to the start of each semester to complete the advisement form. The academic advisor and student are responsible for completing the [Master's Program of Study \(MPOS\)](#) **before the last semester of coursework**. The advisor and the student should review the student's academic performance to ensure that appropriate progress is being made toward the completion of the Master's Program of Study. If academic problems arise, the advisor will be directly involved in the resolution of the problem, and the MS graduate director may also serve as a resource. Students are encouraged to consult with their academic advisor to express concerns over the program and/or their future professional interests.

## MS Program of Study

The master's program of study lists all courses a student must complete as part of their degree program. The [Master's Degree Program of Study](#) (MPOS) form must be signed by the student, advisor, graduate director, and graduate dean. The program of study must include the following:

- Coursework listed in chronological order
- The correct number of hours for the degree (33 hours)
- A maximum of three **500-level** courses may be included
- No more than six hours of independent study (EXSC 790)
- If the student is a teaching assistant, GRAD 701 is not included on the MPOS.
- Only courses with dates of completion no more than 6 years prior to the satisfaction of all degree requirements.

The MPOS must be submitted to the Graduate School **prior to the student's last semester of coursework**.



## Adjustments to the Program of Study

After the MPOS is submitted to the Graduate School, if there are any changes to courses listed (e.g., substitution, addition, or deletion of courses), students must complete the [Program of Study Adjustment](#) (GS-43-POSA) form. This form must be approved by the student's advisor, graduate director, and the dean of the Graduate School.

## MS Selection of Project or Thesis

As part of the MS curriculum, students have the option of completing a 3-credit project or a 6-credit thesis at the end of their program. Students are strongly encouraged to start planning for this when they begin the MS program. Students must identify a faculty mentor to oversee their project or thesis. The faculty mentor must be a faculty member in the department of exercise science who has graduate faculty status. Students should consider the following when deciding between a project or thesis:

### Project (EXSC 798)

- Purpose is application, analysis, evaluation, or creation of knowledge related to the field of exercise science
- Is completed in the student's last semester
- May consist of practical experience (internship) at a cardiac rehabilitation clinic, sports team, or wellness/fitness center
- Must have a written product. Examples include:
  - Original research article
  - Systematic literature review
  - Abstract and poster for a conference
  - Paper applying concepts from a practical or clinical experience
- Great option for students who want to work as a strength and conditioning coach, exercise physiologist, or cardiac rehabilitation specialist

### Thesis (EXSC 799)

- Purpose is to create knowledge by going through the entire scientific process to answer a research question
- Students may collect data (primary data collection) or analyze data that have already been collected (i.e., secondary data analysis)
- Is completed in the student's last two semesters
- Must have a written product that follows the Graduate School's thesis guidelines
- Great option for students who want to teach at the university level, conduct research, or go on to further graduate work (PhD, MD)

## MS Project

Students choosing to complete a project must complete the work for the project during their last semester. The primary purpose of the MS project is application, analysis, evaluation, or creation of knowledge. The project must include a written component. Examples include an original research article, systematic literature review, or an abstract and poster for a conference.

Prior to their second semester, students choosing to complete a project must identify a faculty member to serve as their project mentor. The project mentor must be a faculty member in the department of exercise science and must hold graduate faculty status. The project mentor has the responsibility to guide the activities of the project and provide final approval of the written project proposal and end project. Students must submit a written project proposal approved by the student, project mentor, and MS graduate director **prior to enrolling in EXSC 798**. The MS Project Proposal Template is found in the EXSC-MS-PROGRAM organization on [Blackboard](#). If the student's project topic is related to the student's employment, the objectives of the project must be above and beyond their work for employment.

The student in cooperation with the project mentor may form an advisory committee to aid in the development of their project. Each student will present their project work upon completion and will answer questions directly following the presentation, which will be the comprehensive examination.

## Process for Completing a MS Thesis

Prior to their second semester, students choosing to complete a thesis must identify a graduate faculty member in the department of exercise science to serve as their thesis director. If a student does not identify a thesis director, a thesis director may be assigned based upon the interests of the student and the professors actively pursuing research in that area. To be able to register for thesis credit hours (EXSC 799), students must have a thesis director.

- Students must complete 6 thesis credit hours (EXSC 799). Most students split this into their last 2 semesters by taking 3 hours each semester. The thesis defense and the corresponding comprehensive examination must be completed in the student's last semester.

### Thesis Committee

- Before registering for the final 3 thesis credit hours, each student must identify a thesis committee with the aid of the thesis director. The thesis committee will act as critical reviewers of the thesis proposal and all activities associated with the thesis.
- The names of the thesis committee members must be submitted to the MS graduate director for approval. The MS thesis Committee Appointment Form can be found in the EXSC-MS-PROGRAM group in [Blackboard](#).
- The thesis committee is responsible for giving final approval to the thesis proposal, the thesis proposal presentation, the final written form of the thesis, and the oral defense of the thesis.
- The thesis committee shall consist of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 members, all of whom must have graduate faculty status. At least 2 must be members of the UofSC department of exercise science. If the student and thesis director want to include an expert who does not have graduate faculty status, they must provide rationale to the MS graduate director who will submit a formal request to the Graduate School for approval.

### Thesis Proposal

- The student will develop a thesis proposal in conjunction with the thesis committee.
- After the graduate student and thesis director have discussed a proposed thesis topic, the student will prepare a brief preliminary proposal that includes a brief rationale for the study, a clear statement of the proposed topic, and a reasonably detailed methodology to be used. This document must be approved by the thesis director before proceeding any further.
- The student and the thesis director may wish to schedule a pre-proposal committee meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to get committee input and consensus before beginning work on the thesis proposal.
- Once approval is given, the student will develop a thesis proposal. This proposal will be distributed to the thesis committee only when the thesis director judges it to be ready to be read by the committee.
- A thesis proposal generally should provide pilot data and/or other evidence that the procedures to be used are appropriate.
- After a draft of the thesis proposal is approved by the thesis director, it will be distributed to the thesis committee and a thesis proposal presentation will be scheduled.
- After completion of the thesis proposal presentation, the thesis committee will either approve the proposal or make appropriate revisions. **Primary data collection or secondary data analysis must not occur before final approval by the thesis committee.**
- For all theses that use human subjects, approval must be obtained from the appropriate institutional review board(s) before data collection can begin.

### Thesis Defense

- The format of the written thesis must be consistent with [Graduate School](#) requirements and guidelines.
- The body or text of the thesis must be in the form of a journal-style article and should be written in the reference style appropriate for the intended journal of publication. It is the responsibility of the student and thesis director to ensure proper referencing of citations.

- Upon completion of the thesis, the student must contact Barbara Reager, graduate coordinator, to schedule the thesis defense and reserve a conference room.

### Graduate School Guidelines and Deadlines

- After the student successfully defends the thesis, the student must obtain signatures of the thesis committee and graduate director on the [Thesis Signature and Approval Form](#) (G-TSF).
- Guidelines concerning regulations for [master's theses](#) are available from the Graduate School. **It is the student's responsibility to obtain current guidelines concerning application for graduation and acceptable master's thesis format.**
- As with the guidelines, [deadlines](#) for submitting theses and applications for graduation are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of these deadlines. In general, the following date is important: deadline for submission of thesis/dissertation is 20 days prior to graduation.

### MS Comprehensive Examination

The Graduate School requires that all candidates for a master's degree must complete a comprehensive assessment in the major field of study that is distinct from program course requirements. Therefore, the department of exercise science will administer a comprehensive examination in the last semester of the student's program.

The MS comprehensive examination is an oral examination directly following the thesis defense or the presentation of the project. Graduate faculty in the department of exercise science will administer the oral comprehensive examination. MS students must complete the comprehensive exam and (the corresponding thesis or project presentation) during their last semester.

Students failing in their initial examination will be required to repeat all or part of the exam. ***A second failure of the comprehensive exam will result in the student's release from the graduate program.***

### MS Progression to Degree

Below is a general progression to the MS degree that can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

- Submit program of study** - Every degree student must file a Master's Program of Study (MPOS) with the Graduate School for approval by the dean of the Graduate School. If needed, you may file a program adjustment form to request changes to your original MPOS.
  - [Master's Program of Study](#) (MPOS) form
  - [Program of Study Adjustment](#) (GS-43-POSA) form
- Apply for graduation** - In your final term of study, submit your [application for graduation](#) online in [Self Service Carolina](#) the [designated date](#) for that semester. This is usually done no later than 15 days after the beginning of the semester in which a student plans to graduate.
- Take comprehensive examination/pass language requirements** - All candidates for a Master's degree must complete a comprehensive assessment in the major field of study that is distinct from program course requirements. Language and research methods requirements for the Master's degree vary from program to program.
- Submit committee appointment request form** - For the MS students doing a thesis, the form can be found in the EXSC-MS-PROGRAM organization on [Blackboard](#).
- Submit thesis draft** - Submit your thesis draft to your thesis director and to your thesis committee.
- Check thesis format/defend thesis** - Submit a draft of your thesis via the ETD process for a preliminary [format check](#). In order to submit your draft, you will create an account within the [UMI/ProQuest](#) site. This is the site you will use to submit your final thesis and make any final revisions required by your thesis committee and the Graduate School. Visit the [Thesis & Dissertation](#) webpage to view the format guide, ETD samples, templates, and instructions on how to submit your document.

- G. **Submit signature and approval form** - Submit your Thesis Signature and Approval form to the Graduate School. This form can be found in the EXSC-MS-PROGRAM organization on [Blackboard](#).
- H. **Submit thesis** – Submit your final approved thesis vis the ETD process.
- I. **Graduate** – Congratulations, you made it!

## **Doctor of Philosophy Degree Program**

The PhD program in exercise science is designed to prepare students for research careers in the exercise sciences. Graduates are trained for entry into positions in universities, colleges, research institutes and research-oriented clinical settings. Areas of research emphasis correspond to those of the departmental faculty. Below is a general progression to degree that can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

### **PhD Curriculum**

Students will complete an approved [Doctoral Degree Program of Study](#) (DPOS) form of up to 60 hours beyond the baccalaureate level or 30 hours beyond the master's or clinical doctorate level. Included in the plan of study are any approved transfer credits. The PhD curriculum includes coursework in exercise science, statistics, and research methods and design. The student will also be required to form a cognate of specialization which can include electives from such areas as physiology, neuroscience, epidemiology, health promotion, motor control, rehabilitation sciences, and psychology, as well as independent study and dissertation hours. Doctoral students are also expected to attend and present at research seminars. In addition to coursework, all doctoral students are expected to be heavily involved in ongoing research during their time in the academic program.

#### **General Course Requirements – PhD**

*\*Public Health (≥ 3 hours)- course defined below*

*Exercise Science (≥6 hours)*

*Research/Statistical Methods (≥6 hours)*

*Electives (>3 hours)*

*Dissertation (≥12 hours)*

*\*PUBH 700 Perspectives in Public Health or equivalent (3h)*

\*Students with a MPH degree from a CEPH-accredited school of public health will have had this course equivalent and can be released from this requirement.

**All PhD students are required to fulfill the equivalent of the existing MS program in their emphasis or a closely related field.** If students do not wish to take any of the required courses, they must provide evidence of successful completion of equivalent courses prior to matriculation into the doctoral program. In consultation with their advisors, students are to develop a cognate of emphasis, and electives should be related to this area of specialization. Students can develop a specialization in many areas including but not limited to physiology, neuroscience, epidemiology, health promotion, motor control, rehabilitation, and psychology.

**Note: All courses should be at the 700- or 800-level. In general, 600-level courses are not acceptable for doctoral students unless otherwise approved by your advisor, program of study committee, and/or graduate director.**

#### **Sample Course Options**

These courses are by no means exhaustive and can be supplemented with other courses approved by the student's advisor, Program of Study committee, or the Graduate director.

#### **Exercise Science**

*EXSC 710 - Behavioral Aspects of Physical Activity (3)*

*EXSC 731 - Mechanisms of Motor Skill Performance I (3)*

*EXSC 732 – Measurement of Body Composition and Other Associated Health Behaviors (3)*

*EXSC 735 – Applied Human Biomechanics (3)*

EXSC 754 – Community-based Physical Activity Interventions (3)  
EXSC 755 - Selected Topics in Exercise Science (3)  
EXSC 775 - Neural Control of Movement (3)  
EXSC 777 - Endocrinology of Exercise and Health (3)  
EXSC 780 - Physiology of Exercise (3)  
EXSC 781 - Physiology, Exercise and Disease (3)  
EXSC 787 - Research Methods and Design for Exercise Science (3)  
EXSC 790 - Independent Study in Exercise Science (1-3)  
EXSC 801 - Ethical Conduct in Public Health Research (1)  
EXSC 802 - Predoctoral Fellowship in Writing Course with Special Emphasis on NIH F31 (1)  
EXSC 808 - Neuro Repair-Rehabilitation (3)  
EXSC 882 - Physical Activity and Health: Epidemiology, Research, and Practice (3)

### **Rehabilitation/Physical Therapy (considered as EXSC hours)**

PHYT 788 – Evidence-Based Practice in Physical Therapy (2)

### **Biostatistics**

BIOS 700 - Introduction to Biostatistics (3)  
BIOS 701 - Concepts and Methods in Biostatistics (3)  
BIOS 757 - Intermediate Biometrics (3)  
BIOS 770 - Longitudinal Data Analysis (3)

### **Epidemiology**

EPID 741 – Intermediate Epidemiologic Methods (3)  
EPID 744 - Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology (3)  
EPID 758 - Application of Epidemiology in Public Health (3)

### **Psychology**

PSYC 727 - Foundations in Community Psychology (3)  
PSYC 783 - Health Psychology/Behavioral Medicine (3)  
PSYC 801 - Cognitive Neuroscience I (3)  
PSYC 888 - Selected Topics in Psychology (1-6)

### **Health Promotion Education and Behavior**

HPEB 701 - Theoretical Foundation of Health Education (3)  
HPEB 710 - Evaluation for Public Health Education Programs (3)  
HPEB 731 - Health Promotion for Older Adults (3)  
HPEB 748 - Community Health Development (3)  
HPEB 752 - Nutrition and Public Health (3)

### **Physiology, Pharmacology, Neuroscience**

PHPH 741 - Special Topics in Neuroscience (3)  
PHPH 745 - Neurophysiology (3)  
PHPH 750 - Fundamental Neuroscience (4)  
PHPH 751 - Fundamentals of Neuroscience II (4)

## **Primary Mentor**

The student's primary mentor must be a member of the faculty in the department of exercise science with graduate faculty status. The primary mentor is determined at the time of admission based on the student's area of interest and the faculty member's acceptance of the student. This mentor/mentee relationship is considered a commitment for the duration of the student's time in the program. Mentors accept students based on a mutual area of research interest and the ability to provide funding.

The primary mentor has the responsibility to guide the student in choosing appropriate coursework and experiences to facilitate their development related to career objectives and to meet the standards and requirements of the



program. Students are responsible for their plan of study and ensuring that individual objectives and program requirements are being met.

### **Change in Primary Mentor**

Occasionally, a student may wish to petition the graduate director to change mentors. Petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the program is not obligated to permit a change in mentor. If a suitable new mentor, who can fund the student, cannot be found, the student may withdraw from the program or continue with the original mentor.

A mentor may also petition the graduate director for the termination of a mentoring commitment. Reasons could include but are not limited to, the mentee not fulfilling GA responsibilities, ethical conduct issues, or a conflict affecting the mentor/mentee working relationship. If efforts by the graduate director and department to resolve the situation are not successful and a new mentor who can fund the student cannot be found, the student may withdraw or be dismissed from the program.

## **PhD Program of Study**

Students in consultation with their faculty mentor will track their program of study from their first year onwards as part of the Individual Development Plan (IDP) process. After passing the qualifying exam each student must formally submit a [Doctoral Program of Study \(DPOS\)](#) form. Students enrolled in the doctoral program have ten years from the first term of enrollment in which to complete the degree. Students must be enrolled for at least one credit hour during the term of graduation.

### **Adjustments to the Program of Study**

The official [Doctoral Program of Study \(DPOS\)](#) represents a contract between the university, the department and the student, and once approved, it is binding unless all parties agree to its adjustment. Any adjustments to the doctoral program of study must be completed using the [Program of Study Adjustment](#) (GS-43-POSA) form and approved by all parties concerned.

## **Residency Requirement**

The intent of a residency requirement is to ensure that doctoral students benefit from and contribute to the full spectrum of educational and professional opportunities provided by working closely with the graduate faculty and other students at a research university. All graduate programs are expected to encourage, design, provide and monitor the means for doctoral students to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values appropriate to their discipline through mechanisms that extend beyond mere course work.

Doctoral students in the department of exercise science must enroll in an approved program of study for at least 3 academic years. The department, based on the types of research conducted, the mentorship model, and the belief that doctoral education goes far beyond coursework alone, uses a model of full-time in-person training and mentorship. Beyond academic coursework, there are professional development experiences that contribute to student success and represent required skills for a successful transition into research, academic, or industry careers. Students are expected to engage in and contribute to relevant experiences of graduate study and the academic community through the following:

- Attendance of exercise science seminars, departmental guest speaker seminars, and program proposal and dissertation defenses of fellow graduate students.
- Presentation at the graduate exercise science seminars, University Discovery Day, and professional conferences.
- Attendance of other program, department, colleges, Graduate School, Office of Research, and university professional development activities, as appropriate.
- Engagement with service activities of the department, school, university or professional organization aligned with the student's interest.
- Engagement in leadership opportunities within the department, school or university (e.g. student coordinator of department graduate seminar series, role in graduate student government, and roles with professional organizations.)

- Attending faculty candidate presentations and participating in the interview process of faculty candidates.

The University has a residency requirement of two-consecutive semesters or one academic year (August - May) that must be spent on the Columbia campus as a full-time student. The department's expectation for full-time in-person training is greater than the university's requirement.

## Progress to Degree Completion

Progression through the exercise science PhD program is based on the yearly assessment of the individual development plan (IDP) and the completion of program milestones. The milestones, benchmarks, requirements, and process of remediation are outlined in the table and following sections.

### Milestone 1: Individual Development Plan (IDP)

#### Purpose

The IDP is an intentional and purposeful activity that is the product of a thoughtful analysis of the background, interests, and needs of each student. This includes developing a mentoring plan that assesses the needs and goals of each student, describes short- and long-term career objectives, and identifies professional development activities needed to reach them.

The IDP is a tool to help in this planning process and to facilitate communication between mentees and mentors. The IDP should be viewed as a dynamic document that is **reviewed annually** and updated throughout an individual's training.

#### Expectations

##### Creation and Submission of IDP

- Fall semester IDP: Each doctoral student will complete an IDP within the first 30 days of each fall academic semester. The fall IDP will establish the goals, and plan for the upcoming academic year.
- Spring semester IDP: Each doctoral student will complete a follow-up IDP by the last day of classes of the spring academic semester. The spring IDP will include completed accomplishments from the fall IDP, as well as other accomplishments.
- An academic curriculum vitae should accompany the spring semester follow-up IDP and should be updated and included each year thereafter. The format for the CV can be found on the EXSC-PHD-PROGRAM group on [Blackboard](#).

##### Faculty review of IDPs

Each IDP (fall and spring) should be reviewed and approved by the student's mentor and their program of study committee before final submission to the graduate director. The student's mentor and program of study committee should work closely with the student to create and revise the IDP throughout each semester. The IDP should be reasonable and appropriate based on the combined needs, experience, and expectations of the student and mentoring team. The entire exercise science faculty will have access to all IDPs and the opportunity to review them annually.

##### Oral defense of IDP

Every other year (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, ...), each student will make a 15-minute oral presentation to the exercise science faculty describing their IDP goals, progress, and future plans. Based on the results and feedback from the oral IDP presentation, each student will receive a letter of progress from the department indicating their rating of progress towards degree.

Any deficiencies in training or achievements will be adjudicated with additional course work or scholarship, as deemed necessary by the mentor and program of study committee, or via a potential exam to determine ability to stay in the program. Identification of any deficiencies will result in an automatic **yearly** oral presentation of accomplishments and progress to the PhD faculty. Failure to submit an IDP each semester or to give the oral IDP presentation and/or unsatisfactory performance in either of these may result in the student losing their GA/TA position.



## Exercise Science PhD Milestones for Progress to Graduation

	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED TIME	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT	REMEDATION
No Grad Degree	<b>Master's of Science</b>	Students without a graduate degree must complete all required Master's of Science core courses (no electives) prior to proposal of their dissertation.	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> year.	Completion of all required courses for Master's of Science.	Students must take and pass all required courses for Master's of Science with a cumulative 3.0 GPA or higher in those courses.	
MILESTONE 1	<b>Annual IDP</b>	Completion of IDP outlining 1 <sup>st</sup> year courses completed and plan for future courses, research, scholarship, teaching, and service related activities.  Creation of Program of Study_ (POS).	Establish goals with IDP within 30 days of 1 <sup>st</sup> semester each academic year.  Submit completed accomplishments by last day of classes of 1 <sup>st</sup> year. To be reviewed by POS Committee and full doctoral EXSC faculty each year.  Orally presented to full doctoral EXSC faculty every other year (1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , ...)	Satisfactory performance towards degree as indicated by mentor and POS Committee.	Student completes IDP document and presents an oral summary to faculty regarding annual progress from IDP.  Student receives written letter rating progress towards degree from department.	Additional course work, scholarship, or exam, as deemed necessary by mentor and POS Committee, to determine ability to stay in program.  May lose GA/TA with unsatisfactory performance.
MILESTONE 2	<b>Qualifying Exam</b>	Produce a written product and orally defend to Qualifying Exam Committee (see details below).	Typically end of course work – usually end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> or start of 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Pass, conditional pass, or fail  Must pass prior to moving to comps/proposal in Milestone 3	See Qualifying Exam Format section below	Allowed only one fail to continue in program.  Fail/conditional pass – must retake, rewrite, or revise all or portion of same or new written product  May lose GA/TA with unsatisfactory performance
MILESTONE 3	<b>Dissertation Proposal (Comps)</b>	Student develops written dissertation proposal document and presents the research orally to faculty and students	End of course work – typically start or end of third year	Satisfactory performance as indicated by mentor and dissertation committee. Must satisfactorily pass prior to moving to Milestone 4	Student provides written document and presents orally. Oral presentation advertised 2 weeks in advance for attendance by EXSC faculty and students	Revisions of written document, specific aims, analysis plan, and/or study design per dissertation committee's recommendations
MILESTONE 4	Dissertation Defense	Student develops written manuscripts and presents the results orally to faculty and students	Typically end of 4th year	Satisfactory performance as indicated by mentor and dissertation committee	Student provides written document and presents orally. Oral presentation advertised 2 weeks in advance for attendance by EXSC faculty and students	Revisions of written document per dissertation committee's recommendations

## Committee Membership Composition

Milestone	Committee	Composition
1	Program of Study Committee	Minimum 3 faculty: Mentor plus 2 other EXSC faculty
2	Qualifying Exam Committee	Minimum 3 faculty: Mentor plus 2 other faculty (can be faculty at UofSC or outside the university). <i>NOTE: Committee can include members from the Program of Study Committee, but this is not required.</i>
3 and 4	Dissertation Committee	Minimum 4 faculty: Mentor 2 additional EXSC faculty (other members can be faculty at UofSC or outside the university). Exceptions can be made based on expertise required for the dissertation. <i>NOTE: Committee can include members from the Program of Study Committee or Qualifying Exam Committee, but this is not required.</i>

### Milestone 2: Qualifying Exam Format

- Topic and format are determined by the mentor and/or qualifying exam committee.
- Timeframe to respond - 1 to 4 weeks (mentor/qualifying exam committee determined).
- Written product(s) could encompass one or more of the following:
  - Data analysis (data set provided) with manuscript as written product to defend,
  - Paper (e.g., position paper, methods paper, systematic review),
  - Small grant (e.g., R03/R21 style),
  - Scholarly analysis or discourse related to questions in the field,
  - Other – as determined mentor/qualifying exam committee.
- The topic and product can be aligned with the student’s dissertation, but cannot be the entire dissertation.
- Student independently completes written product in adherence to the honor code.
- Following a successful or conditional pass on the written product, student will orally present/defend the product with the mentor/qualifying exam committee (within 30 days, as determined by the committee).
- Following the oral defense, mentor/qualifying exam committee determines if student is ready to progress to their dissertation.
- Grading options: Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail.
- Pass - admission to candidacy.
- Fail/Conditional Pass – must retake the exam, as specified by committee, within 30 days of decision.
- Upon passing the comprehensive examination Milestone 2 and completion of all associated forms, the doctoral student earns the title of doctoral candidate.

### UofSC Graduate School Requirements

A qualification exam will be administered at least one year prior to graduation, signifies “Admissions to Doctoral Candidacy.”

### PhD Committee – Milestones 3 and 4

The Graduate School dean must approve an advisory committee for the candidate before a program of study can be recommended for the PhD student. The student must submit the [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request \(G-DCA\)](#) form which names the members of the committee. In addition to securing the permission of graduate faculty

members to be named to this committee, the composition of this committee must receive the approval of both the exercise science graduate director and the Graduate School dean. The committee for the comprehensive exam and dissertation can be the same or different.

The committee includes **3** members in the UofSC department of exercise science and **1** outside member (outside the department of exercise science, see [Graduate School](#) requirements for outside member). This committee must be appointed prior to the student's admission to candidacy.

All committees requiring the Graduate School dean's approval must receive that approval *before* functioning as committees. Where alteration of committee membership is necessary, the change must be requested in writing with appropriate justification and receive approval before a new member can serve.

Committee member updates (e.g., additions or deletions) must be submitted as they occur using the [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request](#) (G-DCA) form.

## PhD Comprehensive Examination – Milestone 3

The student must satisfactorily pass a comprehensive exam in their field(s) of study. The comprehensive exam must include both written and oral components and should reflect the student's curriculum as represented by the program of study. The degree must be completed within 5 years of completing the comprehensive exam, or a revalidation of the exam will be required.

The student's committee administers the oral part of the comprehensive examination. The doctoral comprehensive exam verification form must be completed by the graduate director and submitted to the Graduate School (no less than 60 days prior to graduation). The successful passing of the dissertation proposal defense will constitute the completion of comprehensive exam. Please see PhD Dissertation section below.

### UofSC Grad School Requirements:

A comprehensive exam (aka dissertation proposal) must be administered no later than 60 days prior to graduation. Written and oral assessments are required.

## PhD Dissertation Proposal Procedures - Comprehensive Examination

Based on extensive review of the literature and pilot work, the student must propose and defend before the dissertation committee a research project that addresses a deficiency or weakness in the literature. The doctoral student will develop a dissertation proposal using departmental guidelines. Generally, the proposal document will include the following:

- **Introduction** in which the rationale for testing the hypothesis(es) is (are) clearly stated, including limitations, delimitations and scope of the proposed investigation.
- **Review of the literature** pertaining to the research question.
- **Detailed methodology**, including pilot data which corroborate the need for the research, provides data for power calculations and documents the validity and reliability of the selected methodologies.

The proposal document is prepared by the student in conjunction with the chairperson of the committee. Once approved by the chairperson, it is then distributed to the other members of the dissertation committee and a proposal defense is scheduled. The general format of a dissertation proposal defense is as follows:

- **~30 minutes:** Presentation of dissertation research by the student candidate to include introduction, rationale, hypothesis(es), and methodology.
- **15-20 minutes:** Question and answer period by the full audience, after which all but the student and committee members are excused.
- **15+ minutes:** Continued questioning of the student by the committee.

At the conclusion of the proposal presentation, the dissertation committee will either approve the proposal or make appropriate revisions. Approval from the appropriate institutional review board(s) must be received prior to data

collection for all dissertations that use human subjects. Candidates using animal models must participate in a short course on handling laboratory animals.

## PhD Dissertation Defense Procedures – Milestone 4

The student must publicly defend the results of his/her research before the dissertation committee and any other interested parties and must satisfactorily pass the dissertation defense of original work in his/her field(s) of study. During **all** phases of the completion of the dissertation, any candidate who uses university resources or facilities or confers with a faculty member on dissertation work must be officially enrolled for dissertation credit.

The body or text of the completed dissertation must be in the format and written in the style appropriate for the intended journal(s) of publication. The candidate works under the guidance of the chairperson of the dissertation committee and the other committee members in preparing the dissertation for dispersal to the full dissertation committee. Upon completion of the dissertation research, the candidate must notify the graduate faculty in writing at least 10 days prior to the scheduled defense. This written notification should include a brief abstract of the results, along with the date, time and location of the defense. The general format of a dissertation defense is as follows:

- **~30 minutes:** Presentation of dissertation research by the candidate to include introduction, rationale, hypothesis(es), methodology, results, interpretation/discussion, summary and conclusions.
- **15-20 minutes:** Question and answer period by the full audience, after which all but the student and committee members are excused.
- **15+ minutes:** Continued questioning of the candidate by the committee.

Final official approval of the dissertation is by majority vote of the dissertation committee. Signatures of committee members on the title page constitute approval. The student obtains dissertation committee signatures on the [Dissertation Signature and Approval Form](#) (G-DSF) which will be submitted to the Graduate School by the graduate director.

## Submission of the Dissertation to the Graduate School

The successfully defended dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School in the accepted format specified according to [Graduate School regulations](#). The dissertation must be turned into the Graduate School approximately 20 days before the end of the semester in which the student plans to graduate, but students are responsible for verifying deadlines associated with graduation. **A bound copy of the dissertation should be provided to the candidate's advisor/chairperson of the dissertation committee.**

## Associated Forms for Progression through your Degree

- Choose your committee** - Your advisory, comprehensive examination and dissertation committees may be appointed at the same time using the [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request \(G-DCA\)](#) form.
- Complete qualifying exam** - Take the qualifying exam and submit your approved [Doctoral Program of Study \(D-POS\)](#) to the Graduate School. If needed, you may file a [Program of Study Adjustment \(POSA\)](#) form to request changes to your original D-POS.
- Pass comprehensive exam/fulfill language requirements** - You must pass a written and oral comprehensive examination conducted by your academic program under the direction of your comprehensive examination committee. Language and research methods requirements for the doctoral degree vary from program to program. The graduate director will submit the [Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Verification](#) form to the Graduate School on your behalf.
- Apply for graduation** - In your final term of study, submit your [application for graduation](#) to the Graduate School. Complete the online graduation application in [Self Service Carolina](#). The [Apply to Graduate](#) link is located under the student tab in the bottom left corner of the page.

- E. Submit draft/Schedule defense** - Submit a draft of your dissertation to your advisor and committee members. Schedule and submit your dissertation defense announcement at least 14 days prior to defense, using the [ETD Administrator](#).
- F. Check format and defend dissertation** - Submit your dissertation draft to the Graduate School for a preliminary [format check](#). In order to submit your draft, you will create an account with the [UMI/ProQuest site](#). (This is the site you will use to submit your final approved dissertation.) Complete your dissertation defense, and make any final revisions required by your committee and the Graduate School. Visit the [Thesis & Dissertation](#) webpage to view the format guide, ETD samples, templates, and instructions on how to submit your document.
- G. Pass dissertation examination/submit approval form/complete survey/doctoral hooding information** - You must pass a written and oral dissertation defense examination conducted by your academic program under the direction of your doctoral committee. Submit your [Dissertation Signature and Approval Form](#) (G-DSF) to the Graduate School in hard copy. Complete the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#). Submit [doctoral hooding](#) information to be published in the doctoral hooding program.
- H. Submit dissertation** - Submit your final approved dissertation via the ETD process.
- I. Graduate** - Congratulations, you made it!

## **Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Please refer to the [DPT Policy and Procedure](#) manual for DPT program criteria.

## **Master's in Public Health in Physical Activity and Public Health**

Please refer to the program's [handbook](#) for [program criteria](#).

## **Master's of Athletic Training**

Please refer to the program's [handbook](#) for [program criteria](#).

## **Master's of Advanced Athletic Training**

Please refer to the program's [handbook](#) for [program criteria](#).

# ***Section Three: Requirements of Graduate Assistants***

## **Professionalism Standards and Expectations**

Graduate assistants are fully admitted graduate students who are paid employees of the University of South Carolina. As such, they are expected to perform their assigned duties in a timely, effective, and responsible manner. Graduate assistants play key roles in the department of exercise science and the way they perform their duties reflects importantly on the department's reputation with students, clients, research subjects, and other members of the University community.

Graduate assistants are typically appointed to 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) positions and, accordingly, are assigned to work 20 hours per week throughout the semester. However, in some cases appointments are made at lower fractions of an FTE. Starting and finishing dates for work assignments are designated on a semester-to-semester basis and may vary with the nature of the specific assignment.

## **Research and Lab Safety Training Programs**

The department of exercise science requires all graduate students who are teaching or conducting research in any of the department labs to complete the appropriate [Research and Lab Safety Training Programs](#). These may include

but are not limited to chemical and lab safety, biosafety level 2 for labs, hazardous waste, bloodborne pathogens, radiation safety, etc. See course dates on the [environmental health and safety website](#). Students conducting research involving human subjects as part of their graduate assistantship, thesis or dissertation are required to complete training in human subjects research, good clinical practice and responsible conduct of research (RCR) available online at the [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative](#) (CITI). Additionally, all students are required to complete research ethics training from the CITI program and other sources (e.g., ethics classes, seminars, online training) as appropriate. **It is the responsibility of the student to complete these courses prior to or after enrollment and annually or as required thereafter. Completion certificates should be sent to the student's direct supervisor and will be reviewed as part of the annual IDP process.**

## Animal Handling Course

The [animal handling course](#) is required for all personnel who may work with animals. The intent of this online course is to familiarize students with appropriate precautions when working with animals, as well as how to handle animals safely to prevent injury to the personnel and the animals. Additional tutorial sessions can be arranged to learn advanced techniques that may be necessary to fulfill either assistantship or thesis/dissertation responsibilities.

## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification

Graduate students **may** be required to be certified in adult and/or pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automatic external defibrillation (AED) in order to work or perform research in specific exercise science classrooms, research labs, or clinical settings. Failure to comply with this requirement could impact your graduate assistantship.

Teaching assistants in exercise science courses that include exercise testing labs are required to be certified (EXSC 742 and EXSC 330L). GA's working in the [Clinical Exercise Research Center](#) (CERC) are required to be certified. Such students will present their CPR/AED card to the department administrative coordinator, Barbara Reager in PHRC 220, where a photocopy will be kept on file. Online CPR certifications **will not** be accepted.

Research assistant requirements are based on the type of research carried out by the lab and will be determined by the mentor/lab director. CRP certification documentation will be the responsibility of the mentor/ lab director.

All graduate assistants not required to be certified in CPR/AED are strongly encouraged to at least complete an online "hands only" CPR training, as part of their responsibility as a public health professionals.

- [American Heart Association](#)
- [American Red Cross](#)

## Placement/Assignment

Graduate assistantship work assignments are made on a semester-to-semester basis. These assignments are made by the department chair with input from the faculty. In making the assignments the following issues are considered:

- The needs of the department
- Competencies and background of the graduate assistant
- Interests of the graduate assistant

While consideration is always given to the graduate assistant's preferences, the needs of the department must take precedence.

## University Workshops for Teaching Assistants

Graduate assistants who are assigned to serve as teaching assistants (e.g., instructors in laboratory sections or other courses) are **required** by the university to complete [workshops for teaching assistants](#). These workshops are held prior to the start of the fall and spring semesters. Teaching assistants are also required to take GRAD 701 in the semester they start their assistantship. Teaching assistants only need to complete these trainings one time unless otherwise notified.



## English Proficiency

The South Carolina legislature mandates that all instructors at the university have adequate proficiency in English. International students for whom English is not their primary language can be appointed as teaching assistants only if their oral proficiency in English has been evaluated as satisfactory by the faculty of the English programs for internationals (EPI). All international graduate students who will be newly appointed TA's/IA's must additionally participate in an [International Teaching Assistant Workshop & Assessment](#) and subsequently have their English proficiency assessed tested prior to the start of classes.

## Office Hours

It is both a university and department requirement that graduate assistants with teaching responsibilities adhere to regular office hours. The purpose is to facilitate communication between students and their teaching assistant.

## Enrollment Requirement

Graduate assistants are required to be registered as full-time students during any semester in which they are appointed to an assistantship. Therefore, the minimum amount of credits a student must take is 6 credits in the fall and 6 credits in the spring. During the summer, 3 credits are required to work under a graduate assistantship. Students who are in the dissertation or thesis, or project phase can apply to be on [Special Enrollment Status](#) (Z-Status).

## Appointment Dates: University Holidays vs. Assistantship Responsibilities

In general, graduate assistantship duties start on the date designated by the department chair at the beginning of each semester and extend through the end of the final exam period for the semester. Typically graduate assistants are not required to work during university holiday periods. However, in some special cases graduate assistants may be required to work during holiday periods. [University holidays](#) are different from class holidays (i.e., fall and spring breaks, election day). Graduate assistants will be notified of any special requirements at the time of assignment. In some cases, additional compensation will be awarded to graduate assistants for work during holiday periods. Communicate with your faculty supervisor to determine dates you are expected to work in fulfillment of your responsibility as an employee.

## Outside Employment

Graduate assistants who are appointed at the 0.25 FTE level (10 hours per week) or more are discouraged from having additional employment outside the department. This Graduate School recommendation applies to any activity that involves a continuing commitment to an outside employer for which compensation is made.

## Exercise Science Graduate Seminar Attendance

Exercise science seminars are part of the graduate curriculum providing opportunities for student presentation and professional development. Speakers are departmental students and faculty who present current research data, as well as visitors who are nationally and internationally recognized researchers. Professional development topics and development of soft skills (e.g., ethics, postdoc positions, career preparation, the construct of higher education) are also covered in these seminars. The seminars occur regularly throughout the semester. The date, time, location, and speakers will be posted at the beginning of each semester. **All graduate assistants are required to attend these seminars.** Students without a GA are strongly encouraged to attend these seminars.

## Grievances, Problems and/or Concerns in the Program

Students who have a concern or grievance regarding a mentor/advisor or faculty member should first speak with the mentor or faculty member regarding their concerns. If the concern is not resolved or if the student deems the



concern needs to be addressed outside a discussion with mentor/advisor or faculty member they should bring that concern to the appropriate graduate director (MS, MPH, or PhD).

The policies and regulations of the University of South Carolina serve as purposeful guidelines and standards for students as they pursue degree objectives. Occasionally, individual students may feel they have grounds to seek exception from the uniform application of such regulations and policies. Graduate students may file written grievances, appeals or petitions to the Office of Faculty Affairs and Curriculum seeking to reverse or modify decisions made at a lower level of authority. Resolution of any written grievance must follow the procedures outlined in policies maintained by the UofSC Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support ([STAF 6.27 Student Grievance Policy – Non-Academic](#)) and ([STAF 6.30 Academic Grievance Policy](#)). As described in STAF 6.27, student ombudsmen are also available to help students resolve grievances and maintain policy compliance. For more information, visit the My Arnold School website for [Student Grievance, Appeals and Petitions](#).

## ***Section Four: Health and Safety***

### **Current Covid-19 Guidelines**

The university continues to work closely with local and state health officials to help keep our community safe. The university's mitigation plans have evolved to address the current phase of COVID-19, allowing individuals to take personal responsibility for keeping themselves healthy while being mindful of their role as members of the larger university community. Please note the following guidelines for the fall:

**Face coverings** are not required in residential and instructional spaces but are encouraged when physical distancing is not possible. Face coverings remain available on campus and KN95 masks remain available by request at the Center for Health and Well Being at the Student Health Center. Note: face coverings will continue to be required in the Student Health Center.

**Vaccines and boosters will continue to be available through Student Health Services** and, in accordance with recommendations from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), we strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated to minimize the risk of severe symptoms from COVID-19. Moderna vaccines and boosters continue to be available for all students, faculty, and staff at no cost. Student Health Services offers the Moderna vaccine Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Center for Health and Well-Being at the Student Health Center. If you have been vaccinated elsewhere, please remember to [upload your vaccine record to MyHealthSpace](#).

**Free on-campus COVID-19 testing is available** for all students, faculty and staff who wish to be tested. In addition to on-campus saliva-based testing, there are [multiple locations](#) available for testing throughout the state and local community.

**Isolation requirements** based upon guidelines from the [CDC](#) and [SCDHEC](#) will remain. Students, faculty and staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be expected to isolate for 5 full days to prevent the spread of illness, regardless of vaccination status. Following this isolation, if symptoms completely resolve, the individual may leave isolation but must wear a face covering at all times for an additional 5 days when around others.

**Personal responsibility and planning** are essential, as students and families must devise an individualized isolation plan should they test positive while attending the university. Each living situation is unique, but plans must be created to reduce the exposure and subsequent viral transmission to others. While the best plan is to stay with a family member or close friend, isolating in place may also be a potential option. We recommend an open discussion with roommates, suitemates, or housemates regarding each other's plans before or upon arrival to campus.

**In-person and telehealth appointments** with Student Health Services medical providers are available for students through [MyHealthSpace](#).

Throughout the year, you will find updates to the current guidelines on the UofSC [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) webpage](#).

## Policy on Bloodborne Pathogens

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard applies to all employees who have occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM). Students enrolled in the program should be particularly aware of the potential contamination from infectious agents in the health care environment. All employees will utilize **universal precautions**. Universal precautions is OSHA's required method of control to protect employees from exposure to all human blood and OPIM. The term, universal precautions, refers to a concept of bloodborne disease control which requires that all human blood and certain human body fluids be treated as if known to be infectious for HIV, HBV or other bloodborne pathogens. The standard states that any health care worker who might potentially come in contact with bodily fluids should be educated in infection control. **Engineering controls** and **work practice controls** will be used to prevent or minimize exposure to bloodborne pathogens.

## Precautions for the Transmission of HIV and HBV

Basic training for students and faculty in the safe handling of bodily fluids and blood in conjunction with the following blood and bodily fluid precautions can help prevent the transmission of blood borne agents.

- a. The blood and other bodily fluids of all patients/participants will be considered to be infectious at all times.
- b. Whether or not the patient/participant is known to be infected with HIV, HBV, the student/faculty will:
  - Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and immediately after contact with patients, their blood, urine, or other bodily fluid.
  - Wear gloves when handling patient's or participant's blood, bodily fluids, and/or items soiled with these fluids.
  - Wear gown, mask and eye coverings when performing procedures where aerosolization or splattering is likely to occur.
  - Consider sharp items (needles, pipette tips, scalpel blades etc.) as being infective and handle with extreme care to prevent accidental injury.
  - Dispose of sharp items in puncture-resistant sharps containers immediately after use.
  - Do not recap, purposefully bend, or otherwise manipulate by hand needles that are to be disposed.
  - Minimize the need for emergency mouth to mouth resuscitation by using pocket masks, bag valve masks, or other ventilation devices.
  - Clean up spills of blood or bodily fluids immediately with a disinfectant and clean work areas with a disinfectant after work is completed.
  - If a cut or abrasion is present, cover these with a waterproof dressing.
- c. If an incident occurs, please follow the following instructions:
  - During normal working hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm):  
The exposed individual should immediately report to UofSC's Student Health Services for a confidential post-exposure evaluation and for assistance with any necessary referrals and appropriate follow-up care. Student Health Services is only equipped to provide medical evaluations for low risk and minor exposure incidents. Higher risk and more significant exposure incidents will be referred to the Palmetto Health ER. The Student Health Services clinical staff and the exposed individual will ensure the health care professional evaluating the exposure incident receives a description of the job duties relevant to the exposure incident, route(s) of exposure, circumstances of exposure, agent or hazard involved in the incident (e.g. HIV+ blood, Vibrio parahaemolyticus, lentiviral vector), and relevant medical records.
  - Exposures occurring outside normal working hours and on weekends or holidays:  
Report to the Emergency Department at Palmetto Health Richland Hospital. UofSC main campus faculty/staff/students and UofSC School of Medicine students should verify that UofSC's Student Health Services is provided an incident report and any medical evaluation records. This report must include the date of the incident, person involved and their supervisor, nature and consequences of the incident, root cause, and a description of the material/hazard involved.

If you need immediate assistance, call Campus Police from a university phone at 7-9111 or from any other phone at 803-777-9111 (24 hours a day, 7 days per week).

## **Immunizations and Health Insurance**

Visit the Graduate School website to see the [health requirements](#) for immunizations and health insurance. Students must submit proof of your health insurance during the waiver period each term or you will be billed for the university health insurance plan.

## **Counseling and Psychiatry Services**

Maintaining your mental health during this vital time of your life is of the utmost importance in sustaining your academic performance and successes here at the University of South Carolina. [Counseling & Psychiatry](#) provides students a safe place to speak privately and confidentially with a trained counselor or psychiatrist about a variety of concerns. These may include stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression, relationship difficulties, questions about identity, eating concerns, substance use, sexuality, managing an existing mental health condition or any other issue. Their multi-disciplinary team of professional mental health providers includes psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, social workers and supervised trainees in psychology, counseling, and social work.

Currently enrolled UofSC students who have paid the student health fee are eligible to receive most services for counseling at no additional charge. However, students who request more than 10 individual sessions per academic year may incur additional charges. Visits with a psychiatrist require additional charges. Enrolled students who have not paid the student health fee are eligible to receive most services within Counseling and Psychiatry but are charged on a fee-for-service basis. You can schedule an appointment at (803) 777-5223 or on [MyHealthSpace](#). You can also call after-hours for crisis counseling.

[Wellness Coaching](#) can help you improve in areas related to emotional and physical wellbeing, such as sleep, resiliency, balanced eating and more. Wellness Coaching appointments can be made by calling 803-777-6518 or on [MyHealthSpace](#). You can also access virtual self-help modules via [Therapy Assistance Online](#) (TAO). Resources and support for [mental health and emotional well-being](#) can assist with all the dimensions of your health and well-being, from physical and emotional to financial and intellectual.

Anyone in the Carolina community who feels a student is a risk to themselves or the community can report a concern; including students, parents, faculty and staff, and other community members. All referrals are kept confidential. Submit a referral and find additional information on resources by going to the [Student Care and Outreach Team](#).

## ***Section Five: Academic Standards for Graduate Students***

### **Academic Integrity**

Only in an environment where honesty and integrity are core values can we truly advance the science and practice of public health. The department of exercise science places a premium on academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity are thus taken very seriously. Many details about academic integrity are described below, but a fundamental precept to guide your approach is to take pride in doing work to the best of your natural abilities and doing so honestly and fairly. The following excerpts are taken from [STAF 6.25 Academic Responsibility – The Honor Code](#), last revised August 1, 2017.

“The Honor Code is a set of principles established by the university to promote honesty and integrity in all aspects of a student’s academic career. It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty in connection with any academic program. A student who violates, or assists another in violating the Honor Code, will be subject to university sanctions. The Honor Code delineates the values set forth in the tenets of the [Carolinian Creed](#). When a

student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate this Honor Code, it is the responsibility of the student to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member or instructor of record.”

**The following is a list of honor code violations with associated prohibited behaviors.**

**Plagiarism:** Use of work or ideas without proper acknowledgment of source. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Partial or incomplete citation of work or ideas.
- Improperly paraphrasing by acknowledging the source but failing to present the material in one’s own words.
- Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of the source.
- Multiple submissions of the same or substantially the same academic work for academic credit.
- Copying, partially or entirely, any material without acknowledgement of the source.

**Cheating:** Improper collaboration or unauthorized assistance in connection with any academic work. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Copying another individual’s or group’s academic work.
- Receiving and utilizing academic work for purposes of fulfilling an academic requirement.
- Completing any academic work for someone else or permitting someone else to complete academic work on your behalf.
- Using any bribe or unauthorized aid (e.g., outside source, cell phone, calculator, notes, previous testing materials).

**Falsification:** Misrepresenting or misleading others with respect to academic work. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Signing in for another student who is not in attendance or requesting this action.
- Interfering with an instructor’s ability to evaluate accurately a student’s competency or performance on any academic work.
- Fabrication of documents submitted in connection with academic work.

**Complicity:** Assisting or attempting to assist another in any violation of the Honor Code. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Sharing academic work with another student (either in person or electronically) without the permission of the instructor.
- Communicating (either in person or electronically) with other student(s) or other individual(s) during an examination without the permission of the instructor.

All work submitted by a student is expected to be that student’s own work **unless the instructor specifically states that students may work together on the assignment/ homework/project, etc.** If permitted by the instructor, students may use their notes and books and other references for take home examinations but cannot consult with each other.

If a student is writing a paper that uses external sources of information, **all external sources of information must be cited.** If the sources are used verbatim, the words must be in quotation marks and the source must be cited. If the sources have been paraphrased, the sources still must be cited. A paper submitted for one class may not be submitted for a subsequent class, unless a student has the express permission of the professor of the subsequent class. This might happen if the current work builds upon previous work.

These rules are not meant to cover all circumstances. If any questions arise, please discuss them with your instructor, advisor, or graduate director. Plagiarism and other violations of the Honor Code are serious offenses and will be taken up with the office of academic integrity. For more information, visit the [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) website.

## **Academic Probation and Suspension Policy - "3.00 Rule"**

Graduate degree-seeking students whose cumulative grade point average drops below 3.00 (B) will be placed on academic probation and allowed one calendar year in which to raise the grade point average to at least 3.00. In the case of conversion of grades of incomplete that cause a cumulative GPA to drop below 3.00, a graduate degree-seeking student will be placed on academic probation at the end of the semester in which the grade is posted. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below the required minimum of 3.00 by receiving a grade for a course in which

they received an Incomplete will, instead of a one-year probationary period, be granted only one major semester of probation dating from the semester in which the grade is received by the registrar in which to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.00 or above. Students who do not reach a cumulative 3.00 grade point average during the probationary period will not be permitted to enroll for further graduate course work as a degree or non-degree student.

## Graduation Grade Point Averages

At the time of graduation, the student's cumulative grade point average must be at least 3.00. Additionally, the student's average on all grades recorded on the program of study must be 3.00 and the student's GPA for courses numbered 700 or above, recorded on the program of study, must be at least 3.00.

## “I” (Incomplete) to “F”

An “Incomplete” is a temporary mark that may be assigned at a professor's discretion to allow an additional specified amount of time to finish course requirements following illness, accident or unusual hardship. **A grade of “I” is automatically converted to a grade of “F” after a default of one (1) year or unless otherwise assigned by the course instructor.** In the event of an “I” grade, the student must make arrangements with the course instructor to finalize completion of the course.

## Student Assistance Program for Behavioral and Academic Problems

Faculty, staff, and other students may notice behavior that appears unethical or unprofessional in a student enrolled in the program. In addition, a student may experience academic problems with selected course content. Independent observations of isolated events may not be sufficient to draw attention to a larger potential problem. For this reason, collective observations may assist in the identification of a significant problem and indicate a need for external assistance.

Faculty and staff of the department have established policies and procedures for assisting students who are exhibiting behavioral or academic problems. The objectives of this program are:

- The early identification of students exhibiting behavioral and/or academic problems that will be detrimental to their progression in the academic program or outside work experiences.
- The development of a remedial plan of action designed to assist a student in managing and addressing behavioral or academic problems.

UofSC has a wealth of resources to assist students, faculty, and staff in addressing a range of student issues that may arise. An individual who observes unusual behavior (physical signs, emotional signs, or social interactions) should complete an [incident report](#) related to the issue. The confidentiality of the respondent will be assured. Upon receipt of a completed form, the appropriate university office will follow-up with the matter promptly. Students may also be referred to additional support agencies on campus including the [Counseling and Psychiatry Services](#) at Student Health Services for professional and personal problems and [Student Affairs and Academic Support](#) services for problems related to academic skills.

## Academic Assistance

All students at UofSC can perform at their maximum potential when given the appropriate guidance and assistance. The division of [Student Affairs and Academic Support](#) designs and provides comprehensive resources to support students' academic achievement, and our outreach and intervention efforts strive to ensure that no student falls through the cracks. The Student Success Center offers graduate students access to [classroom success consultation](#).

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in a class, contact the [Student Disability Resource Center](#): 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email [sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu), or stop by Close-Hipp room 102. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of any approved accommodations for each course.



## Financial Aid

Information regarding financial aid may be obtained from the [Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships](#).

## *Section Six: Funding Opportunities*

### Graduate Research Grants

Sponsored by the office of the vice president for research, the [SPARC Graduate Research Grant Program](#) is a merit-based award designed to ignite research and creative excellence across all disciplines at UofSC. The overall objective of the SPARC graduate research grant is to provide support and to encourage outstanding students to pursue exciting research directions during their graduate career at the University of South Carolina. To achieve this end, the SPARC program provides the opportunity for eligible graduate students to secure funding up to \$5,000 to support their research, creative or other meritorious scholarly project. SPARC funds can be used to pay for salary, supplies and other costs essential to completing and promoting funded projects. By completing SPARC's competitive research proposal process, graduate students also gain experience that helps prepare them to seek national fellowship and grant awards throughout their academic careers.

### Travel Support for Student Research

Travel grants are designed to provide opportunities and support for student research presentations at professional scientific conferences. Travel grants are awarded from the Exercise Science department (EXSC), Arnold School of Public Health (ASPH), and the Graduate School. Faculty mentors may also provide additional financial support, if available.

### Eligibility and Guidelines

#### You must.....

- Be enrolled in a degree-seeking MS, MPH, or PhD program when you apply and when you travel. For graduating students, please note that awards may not be applied to travel occurring after your graduation date.
- Present a research paper or poster at a conference or meeting of national or international standing. Students presenting at a state or regional meeting or participating in a group competition at a national meeting are also eligible for ASPH and EXSC grants.
- Have a grade point average of 3.00 - 4.00 or higher.
- Be the first or sole author of the work. When the paper or presentation under review for the student travel award involves co-authors, **only** the presenter may be awarded the maximum amount of \$300. If there are multiple presenters who would like to attend the conference, then the amount of \$300 may be divided among the group (up to three members). If multiple presenters are applying for funds, only one application should be submitted.
- Provide a copy of your invitation to present or your acceptance notification. If the conference acceptance notification isn't received before the application deadline, make note on the application that it will be provided upon receipt. All awards are conditional upon that acceptance.
- Apply travel awards only to acceptable travel-related expense (e.g., airfare, baggage fees, lodging, meals, registration fees, ground transportation, parking, etc.). Travel grants cannot be used for membership fees.

**Please note.....**

- All student travel support is based upon the availability of funds.
- Only students presenting at national or international meetings are eligible for the maximum award.
- When applying for grants from all three organizations, apply to the grad school **first**, ASPH **second**, and EXSC **third**.
- Students will receive email notifications upon approval of each award application. It is not advisable to purchase airline tickets without the notifications.

### **1. The Graduate School 2022-2023 Award Cycle and Guidelines**

Graduate students may receive up to \$500 for domestic travel and up to \$800 for international travel. Students may receive no more than one travel grant in any fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) and no more than two while here at UofSC.

Cycle	Application Period	Travel Dates
1	June 1 - 7, 2022	July 1 - Sept. 30, 2022
2	Sept. 1 - 7, 2022	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31, 2022
3	Dec. 1 - 7, 2022	Jan. 1 - March 31, 2023
4	March 1 - 7, 2022	April 1 - June 30, 2023

Applications for travel grants are accepted in four cycles each year. The application portal remains open for one week each cycle and then grants are awarded on a rolling basis until funds for the cycle have been exhausted. Students who apply early in the award cycle have a significant advantage.

Please go to the [Graduate School Travel Grant page](#) for full instructions for their application.

### **2. Arnold School of Public Health 2022-2023 Award Cycle and Guidelines**

Students may receive up to \$300 for travel. Funds are allocated on a fiscal year basis (July 1 - June 30). Qualified master’s students may receive a maximum of one student travel award and doctoral students may receive a maximum of two student travel awards during their tenure at the Arnold School of Public Health. Students who complete both their undergraduate and master's degree at the Arnold School of Public Health are eligible for a maximum of two awards and students that complete both a master’s and doctoral degree are eligible for a maximum of three awards. Doctoral students may receive no more than one student travel award in any academic year.

Cycle	Submission Deadlines	Decision By
1	September 20	October 1
2	January 20	February 1
3	April 20	May 1

Applications for ASPH’s student travel are accepted three cycles per year. Priority may be given to students who have not received a previous travel award from the school.

Please go to the [ASPH Student Travel Support page](#) for full instructions for their [application](#).

### **3. Exercise Science Travel Award Guidelines**

The EXSC department matches travel awards from the ASPH up to \$300 but may also offer awards to students without an ASPH travel award. Master’s students may receive a maximum of 1 award per academic year. Doctoral students may receive a maximum of 2 awards per academic year.

The [EXSC Travel Award Guidelines and Application](#) can be found on the Online Request portal. Include a budget for travel, the research abstract, and proof of conference acceptance. If the student has not received the conference acceptance notification at the time of application, please indicate. Upon receipt, submit the notification to Barbara Reager ([breager@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:breager@mailbox.sc.edu)) in PHRC 220. All awards are conditional upon that acceptance.

### **Travel Approval and Reimbursement**

- Once official notifications of travel awards are received, submit a [Travel Authorization](#) (TA) request through the [Online Request](#) portal no later than **2 weeks prior to travel**. Provide as much information as possible about how the expenses will be reimbursed in the “Source of Funds” field. Attach travel award letters and provide your faculty mentor’s name, for verification purposes, if the mentor is contributing.




- Authorization does not ensure **full** reimbursement of travel, but only for the amount and expenses approved on the TA via travel grants, faculty mentor support, when available. No reimbursements will be given without an approved TA. It is not advisable to purchase airline tickets without an approved TA. Not all faculty mentors may agree to provide reimbursement for certain expenses or meal per diems.
- During the trip, **keep all receipts** for ground transportation (taxi, uber, etc.), parking, baggage fees, and hotel. No receipts are necessary for meals or gasoline. UofSC pays a per diem for meals (\$50 per day for out of state travel and \$35 for in state) and pays 62.5 cents per mile when using your personal vehicle for transportation if these are approved expenses on the TA or by the faculty mentor if providing funding. Receipts must show the vendor's name, date, amount paid, and the name of the person being reimbursed (if applicable), and identify the service or product purchased.
- Within 30 days of completing your travel, submit all receipts (conference registration, abstract submission, flight, baggage fees, hotel, ground transportation) and proof of purchase (credit card statement) to Barbara Reager ([breager@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:breager@mailbox.sc.edu)) or Libby Furr ([furrke@email.sc.edu](mailto:furrke@email.sc.edu)) for reimbursement.
- Reimbursements can be expected within 2 weeks after processing.

## APPENDICES

### Graduate Student Handbook Acknowledgement

All new graduate students are asked to acknowledge that they have read this handbook and are aware of the policies and procedures. To sign and submit this form, go to the [My Arnold School-Online Requests](#) page for the [Graduate Student Handbook Acknowledgement](#) and follow the instructions.

 <b>Exercise Science</b> Arnold School of Public Health		
<b>Graduate Student Handbook Acknowledgement</b>		
I acknowledge that I have read the contents of the Department of Exercise Science Graduate Student Handbook. I am aware of the policies and procedures stated within.		
_____ Printed Name	_____ Degree	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature		

## Advisement and Registration

Each semester all graduate students need to be advised prior to registering for courses. This includes meeting with your academic advisor and completing an [advisement form](#).

For each course, list the department, course number, section number, credit hours, and name of the instructor. After the advisement form is signed by you and your advisor, send the form to your specific department graduate coordinator, who will verify the section and course registration numbers (CRN), and lift the advisement hold. A scanned copy of the form will be emailed to your @email.sc.edu account once processed.

- Graduate coordinator for **PhD Program**: Latoya Townes, [ljfrazi@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:ljfrazi@mailbox.sc.edu)
- Graduate coordinator for **MS and MPH Programs**: Barbara Reager, [breager@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:breager@mailbox.sc.edu)

If taking an independent study course, note that an [Independent Study Contract](#) will be required. Please review the instructions and links below for more information about registration.

### First steps

Upon receipt of the official notification of acceptance from the University of South Carolina Graduate School, which may take 1-2 weeks after receipt of the department recommendation letter, you may access your account in Self-Service Carolina.

### Access Self-Service Carolina

[Self-Service Carolina](#) is the university's interactive website where you will manage your academic, financial, and personal information. You will need to claim and manage your account through [myaccount.sc.edu](http://myaccount.sc.edu) before accessing Self-Service Carolina. Please follow these 4 steps in the order presented:

1. Obtain your VIP-ID from your official offer letter sent to you by the UofSC Graduate School.
2. [Claim your account](#) (for admitted students).
3. Enroll in the university's [Multifactor Authentication](#) service.
4. Login to Self Service Carolina ([my.sc.edu](http://my.sc.edu)).

### Before you register

Before you can register for classes, you must submit the following to remove registration holds:

- [Immunization information](#) must be submitted through [sc.edu/myhealthspace](http://sc.edu/myhealthspace).
- [Citizenship Status Verification](#) must be submitted through Self Service Carolina. Non-US citizens must submit immigration documentation to [International Student Services](#).
- Students seeking in-state tuition must establish proof of South Carolina residency. Students with assistantships do not need to submit proof of residency to qualify for in-state tuition.
- [Apply for SC Residency](#) (through Self Service Carolina).

### Register

[How to Register for Classes?](#) Self Service Carolina has a Registration window with multiple options to select. Start with "Look Up Classes" to view course offerings and proceed from there.

### New Self Service Carolina Tutorial Videos:

- Overview of the Student Tab - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mfe4WuY-NrI>
- Overview of the Student Profile - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xd110lqjwdw>
- Searching & Registering for Individual Courses - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8R7dwJT00Ms>
- How to Browse Classes - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8R7dwJT00Ms>
- How to Search for Part-Term Courses - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIUh7GxfeHo>
- Viewing Registration Status & Holds - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbm6ZaGq7Fk>
- How to View Your Unofficial Transcript - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RG0gJW46M3w>

### Additional Registration Details

- For information about payment deadlines, go to: [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/bursar/my\\_bill/important\\_dates/index.php](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/bursar/my_bill/important_dates/index.php)
- If a student is dropped for non-payment and re-enrolls in classes after the payment deadline, these students and any students registering for the first time will need to pay their account balance in full or enroll in the University's payment plan option by the drop/add date to retain their class schedule.

- Students who have been dropped for non-payment who request to be re-enrolled in their classes AFTER the last day to drop/add must submit a [Registration Exception Form](#) (AS-199) and will be assessed a \$75 reinstatement fee.
- **Late Registration:** you can register yourself during the drop/add period. After that period, you will be required to submit a [Registration Exception Form](#).
- With the implementation of 'On Your Time Carolina' and multiple terms per semester, you are encouraged to review the 'Part of Term Dates' associated with your specific section to ensure you meet deadlines. Part of term calendars may be viewed [here](#).
- Some courses have restrictions or special permissions. If you attempt to register for a course listed on your approved advisement form and are unable to register, please contact the Office of Graduate Student Services and provide details of the error message posted in SSC. If a course is full (indicated by the letter 'C' listed beside the section in the first column labeled 'Select' in SSC), a capacity override will only be processed with written approval from the instructor.
- Students can drop a course or withdraw with a grade of W or WF via [Self Service Carolina](#). Deadlines for dropping a course without receiving a W and WF, as well as refund dates, are determined by the [part of term](#) to which a course is attached. Every part of term during a semester has a drop/add deadline.
- Should you wish to withdraw from a course with a grade of W or WF, a grade of W or WF will be recorded on your transcript. A grade of W will not be calculated in your GPA but will be recorded on your permanent record. Courses dropped after the WF deadline will be recorded as a WF on your permanent record. The grade of WF is treated as an F in the calculation of your GPA. The WF deadline will vary based on the part of term for your class.
- **Health Insurance:** the following groups of students are required to show proof of health insurance as a condition of enrollment: undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in 6 or more credit hours, students with a graduate assistantship, students in the School of Medicine enrolled in 1 or more hours, and international students. Students must either enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan or waive the plan by showing proof of their own health insurance. Answers to common questions are available by visiting this site: <https://sc.myahpcare.com/> or [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/health\\_services/insurance-payments/index.php](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/health_services/insurance-payments/index.php). If students do not waive out by the deadline or do not have adequate health insurance coverage, students will be enrolled in the university-sponsored Student Health Insurance Plan, and the premium fee will remain on their tuition bill.
- If a course is not posted in the "Look Up Classes" section of SSC, you may register using the CRN provided on your advisement form. Go to *Student>Registration>Register for Classes>Select Term>Enter CRNs* tab.
- Courses with adjustable credit hours will default to 1 hour. To adjust:
  - Sign into SSC and select the Student tab
  - Select the Registration menu then select Register for Classes
  - Once the effective term is entered, all registered courses for that term will appear.
  - Select the Schedule Options tab and there will be a hyperlink for any course with variable credit hours.
  - Click the link and update the credit hours for the specified course.

## QUESTIONS?

**Barbara Reager**  
**MS and MPH Graduate**  
**Program Coordinator**  
 Department of Exercise Science  
 921 Assembly Street, PHRC 220  
 Columbia, SC 29208  
 Phone: 803-777-9333  
 Email: [breager@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:breager@mailbox.sc.edu)

**Latoya Townes**  
**PhD Graduate Program**  
**Coordinator**  
 Department of Exercise Science  
 921 Assembly Street, PHRC 219  
 Columbia, SC 29208  
 Phone: 803-777-7745  
 Email: [ljfrazi@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:ljfrazi@mailbox.sc.edu)

**Office of Graduate Student Services**  
 Arnold School of Public Health  
 921 Assembly Street, PHRC 108  
 Columbia, SC 29208  
 Phone: 803-777-5031  
 Email: [cfsmith@sc.edu](mailto:cfsmith@sc.edu) or  
[sphstsrvc@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sphstsrvc@mailbox.sc.edu)