



Rutgers University – New Brunswick

Graduate Program in
Kinesiology and Applied Physiology

**Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
in Kinesiology**

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Academic Year 2026-2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLYING TO THE KAP PhD PROGRAM	4
Program Prerequisites	4
Application Due Date	4
WELCOME AND GREETINGS FROM THE FACULTY	5
Mission Statement	5
Competencies Expected at Program Completion	5
Diversity Statement	6
Faculty	6
Administrative Staff	8
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	8
Idealized Timeline of Study	8
Selecting A Mentor	10
Selection of Doctoral Committee Members	11
Course and Credit Requirements	11
Required Courses	11
Elective Courses	11
Research credit requirements	12
Registration	12
Student Status	12
Individual Development Plan (IDP)	13
QUALIFYING FOR DOCTORAL CANDIDACY	13
Comprehensive Exam	13
Exam Timeline	14
Exam Questions	14
Exam Format	15
Grading	15
Second Attempts	16
Dissertation Proposal	16
Format	17
Grading	17
Failing to Qualify	18
Qualifying – The Paperwork!	19
ADVANCEMENT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDACY	19
Writing the Dissertation	19
Formatting	21
Dissertation Defense	21
GRADUATION	21
Program Completion Timeline	22
Dissertation Deposit Deadlines	22
Required Forms	22
Commencement and Convocation	23
GENERAL INFORMATION	23
Research Policies	23
Human subjects research	23
Animal research	23
Additional requirements	23
Scientific Products	24
Transferring Credits	24
Program culture	24

Career Paths	24
Interpersonal Conflicts	25
Student Organizations	25
Rutgers Graduate Student Association (GSA)	25
KAP Graduate Student Organization (KAP-GSO)	25
Housing	26
INCOME SOURCES	26
Teaching Assistantship (TA)	26
Exercise Physiology Lab TA positions	26
Anatomy Lab TA positions	27
Appointment Process	27
Reappointment Process	27
Graduate Assistantship (GA)	28
TA/GA Student Health Insurance	28
Individual Fellowships	28
Summer / Supplementary Employment	29
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES	29
Central Resources	30
RUID, NetID, and Rutgers ID cards	30
Central Authentication Service	30
Rutgers Connect	30
My Rutgers Portal	30
Parking	30
Registrar	30
Academic Resources	30
Schedule of classes and Academic Calendar	30
Registration	31
Canvas	31
Box	31
Docusign	31
University Library System	31
Technology Resources	31
Information Technology	31
RUWireless	31
RAD (Rutgers Active Directory)	31
Cisco Anytime Connect (Virtual Private Network)	31
Duo	32
software.rutgers.edu	32
Virtual Meeting Programs	32
Rutgers Research Administration and Proposal Submission System (RAPSS)	32
Virtual Computer Lab	32
General Resources	32
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AT RUTGERS	33
Student Conduct	33
Academic Integrity Violations	33
Academic Performance Policies	33
Academic Difficulty and Procedures	33
Student Appeals	34

APPLYING TO THE KAP PhD PROGRAM

The Ph.D. in Kinesiology and Applied Physiology is a research degree that prepares students to become independent scholars in a variety of conceptual areas that span physiological systems, metabolism, human behavior, and performance. A Ph.D. signifies that the holder is capable of original and ethical research in a particular field and of making a significant contribution to that field. To attain this degree, graduate students, guided by their own interests and by the expertise of their graduate mentors, develop an individual plan of study that includes conducting a research project from beginning to end. The research project culminates in a substantive body of work that is written into a dissertation and orally presented to the students and faculty of the program.

A key consideration when choosing to apply for the M.S. or Ph.D. program is the availability of funding. Only students who apply for the Ph.D. program are eligible for teaching assistantships (TAs). *In most situations, students who have majored in Exercise Science or Kinesiology as an undergraduate and have obtained at least one year of research experience apply to our doctoral program; about half of our students enter our doctoral program without an M.S.*

Program Prerequisites include one year of general biology (plus lab), one year of general chemistry, exercise physiology (plus lab), exercise testing and prescription, and 12 additional credits in advanced physiology, kinesiology/exercise science, chemistry, physics, calculus, or psychology. In all classes, students must have earned a B or better. Prior research experience is mandatory. Personal statements must clearly articulate an interest in a research path and identify **a minimum of 2 research faculty members**.

Admissions are conducted centrally through [Rutgers University Graduate Admissions](#).

Application Due Date for the **Fall 2027 cohort** are due December 1, 2026 (US students), September 1, 2026 (International students). We do not accept students in the Spring semester.

We're on social media!

<https://www.facebook.com/RutgersKAP>

https://www.instagram.com/rutgers_kines_and_phys_grad/

WELCOME AND GREETINGS FROM THE FACULTY

We are pleased to welcome you to the **Graduate Program in Kinesiology and Applied Physiology (KAP)**, housed in the Rutgers [Department of Kinesiology & Health](#)/School of Arts and Sciences and [School of Graduate Studies](#). Through coursework and research, our graduate students learn critical thinking, scientific inquiry, and practical applications to allow them to meet the demands of careers in academic science, biotech and pharma, healthcare, fitness, and athletics. Kinesiology, exercise science, and applied physiology have become increasingly valued disciplines given the trends in obesity, heart disease, hypertension, type II diabetes, cancer, and other non-communicable chronic diseases. The role of physical activity, exercise, and related lifestyle factors (e.g., sleep, nutrition, substance use) in the prevention and treatment of these conditions, as well as in the treatment of depression, anxiety, and other stress-related disorders has received considerable attention. The research developed in the **field of Kinesiology** has shaped the guidelines for physical activity promoted by major health organizations (e.g., US Department of Health and Human Services) and is strongly influencing the current social narrative around health. In addition, the **field of Applied Physiology** emphasizes organ systems, especially musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, pulmonary, neural, and digestive systems, in health research. Linking these systems to human behavior and clinical health outcomes has proven to be a successful path to federal grant funding by our faculty and students.

The purpose of this handbook is to help graduate students navigate the curriculum of our program. It is a repository of all current policies for the program. It can serve as a resource for current mentors and for all others who are interested in our program. It should be used in conjunction with the SGS materials. All students are accountable to the bylaws of the KAP program and the SGS. Graduate mentors can assist students in navigating requirements, but cannot interpret policies, rules, or regulations of KAP or SGS. Likewise, peer advice can be useful but should not be confused with official KAP and SGS information. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Graduate Program Director (GPD) or the Graduate Program Administrator, who will answer them or direct the student to the proper administrator to find the answer. *Students are responsible for meeting all program requirements.* This handbook will be updated annually. If substantive changes occur from year to year, current students can discuss with their mentor and the program director to which degree requirements they should adhere.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Rutgers KAP Graduate Program to train the next generation of researchers, educators, and practitioners in the areas of human health, physiology, and performance. Demand for individuals with advanced education in these fields continues to grow, as demonstrated by the popularity of health-focused college majors (including exercise science), expansion of kinesiology faculties around the country, the ever-increasing number of start-up and corporations developing health-related technologies that track physiological function across organ systems, the multi-billion dollar fitness industry, and the continued allocation of federal funding for behavior change research to reduce the public health burden of chronic disease by exploring new ways to motivate and support greater physical activity, better sleep, healthy diet, and less substance use.

The KAP program is committed to creating a supportive and stimulating learning environment for our students. Not all students will join our program with the same long-term career goals, and we encourage our students to tailor the curriculum to their chosen career path. In addition to core course requirements and research opportunities, there is a wide variety of courses to support scientific writing, pedagogy, and/or business that can position students for success after graduate school.

Competencies Expected at Program Completion (Learning Goals)

- (1) possess critical analytic skills;
- (2) read and effectively critique scientific literature in their area of expertise;
- (3) use core knowledge to select and formulate research questions;
- (4) have general skills in research design, data collection, data management, and data analysis;
- (5) design and implement rigorous research protocols in their field;
- (6) work with data, data programs, graphing and statistical software;
- (7) present research findings in writing and orally in a professional and scientific manner.

In addition, all doctoral students should have had opportunities to:

- (1) engage with the broader scientific community in a clinical/professional setting;
- (2) present their own research at professional meetings;
- (3) lead and assist with scientific publications;
- (4) for those seeking academic careers, teach and apply for grants.

Diversity Statement

The KAP Program supports an inclusive learning environment wherein diversity and authenticity are valued. We are committed to creating a culture of equity that respects the diverse voices of our students, faculty and staff. We will continuously strive to create a curriculum and academic environment to reflect the community we serve, and drive innovation, social responsibility and excellence. Our diversity in thought, skill, and academic discipline is a resource and strength that stands to benefit the whole and positively contribute to university and global reach. *We expect that all of our students consistently uphold these standards.*

Faculty

Brandon Alderman, Ph.D.

Department Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Gym, Room 107, Douglass Campus

Laboratory: Health Neuroscience Lab

Tracy Anthony, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences
Foran Hall 166, Cook Campus (Office)

Laboratory: The Anthony Lab

Marsha Bates, Ph.D.

Distinguished Professor Emerita, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 104, Douglass Campus

Laboratory: Cardiac Neuroscience Lab

Jennifer Buckman, Ph.D.

Graduate Program Director, Kinesiology and Applied Physiology
Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 118, Douglass Campus (Office)

Laboratory: Cardiovascular Stress Reactivity Lab

Sara Campbell, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 112, Douglass Campus (Office)

Laboratory: Exercise and Gastrointestinal Health Lab

Anthony Delli Paoli, Ph.D.

Associate Teaching Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 002, Douglass Campus (Office)

Laboratory: Psychosocial Processes in Health Lab

Katie Devine, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey
Rutgers Cancer Institute, Room 4512A (Office)

Laboratory: Devine Research Program

Ryan Dougherty, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 110, Douglass Campus (Office)

Laboratory: Rutgers Exercise, Aging, and Brain Health Lab

Samantha Farris, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology
Tillett Hall, Room 421, Livingston Campus (Office)
Laboratory: Rutgers Emotion, Health, and Behavior Lab

Andrew Gow, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology
William Levine Hall, Room 009, Busch Campus (Office)
Laboratory: Reactive Oxygen and Nitrogen Species Lab

Daniel Hoffman, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences
Food Science Building 107, Cook Campus
Laboratory: Hoffman Nutrition Research Program

Erik Hummer, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 108, Douglass Campus (Office)
Laboratory: Rutgers Applied Biomechanics Lab

Peter Kokkinos, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 102, Douglass Campus (Office)
Exercise Epidemiology

Fangyu Liu, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 109, Douglass Campus (Office)
Laboratory: Applying Causal Evidence & Epidemiology in Intervention & Geroscience Research Lab

Steven Malin, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 106, Douglass Campus
Laboratory: Applied Metabolism & Physiology Lab

Kenneth McKeever, Ph.D., FACSM
Professor, Department of Animal Sciences
Barlett Hall, Room 003, Cook Campus
Laboratory: Equine Exercise Physiology Lab

Sue Shapses, Ph.D., R.D.
Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences
Foran Hall, Room 195a, Cook Campus (Office)
Laboratory: Nutrition, Metabolism, & Bone Lab

Andrea Spaeth, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Gym, Room 002, Douglass Campus
Laboratory: Rutgers Sleep Lab

Nathan Wages, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Rehabilitation and Movement Sciences
Rutgers – Newark, School of Health Professions
Laboratory: Neuromotor Plasticity & Rehabilitation Lab

Carey Williams, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Animal Sciences
Bartlett Hall 213E, Cook Campus (Office)

Peixuan Zheng, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health
Loree Classroom, Room 118, Douglass Campus (Office)
Laboratory: Physical Activity & Neuroscience Lab

Administrative Staff

Jenny Gehrmann, Senior Department Administrator | Department of Kinesiology and Health
Jennifer Chudy Simon, Graduate Program Coordinator | KAP Graduate Program
Janice Nappe, Department Assistant | Department of Kinesiology and Health

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 72 semester credits is required to earn a Ph.D. (32 course credits; 24 research credits; the remaining 16 credits may be earned from course work or research). Four major components must be completed satisfactorily to earn a doctoral degree, including:

- Core and elective coursework
- Qualifying process: comprehensive exam (written) and dissertation research proposal (oral)
- Substantive independent research
- Submission and oral defense of dissertation

The SGS publishes a graduation [checklist](#). Students are responsible for ensuring all requirements are completed. However, graduate students *should not* regard their program of study as the mere accumulation of numerical credits and the meeting of formal requirements. Progress toward mastery of a discipline depends upon the student's initiative and *consistent* guidance of the mentors and administrators of KAP.

Idealized Timeline of Study

The following timeline is meant to create a general sense of “flow” through the program that will set the student up for graduation within 5 years, which is the general goal of the program (*students coming in with MS degrees may graduate within 4 years and merge expectations in Years 1 & 2*). It must be acknowledged that such a timeline cannot always be followed. Progress in the program depends on the extent of skill development needed, project components, lab dynamics and projects, as well as course offerings each semester. Core courses are usually taught every other year, with two taught in odd years and two taught in even years. Expectations for timelines and deliverables should be clearly established between the student and Primary Mentor as part of shaping the IDP.

Year 1	
Fall – 9 credits towards degree	Spring – 9 credits towards degree
Core (3)	Core (3)
Electives (3)	Electives (3)
Research (3)	Research (3)
TA (6)	TA (6)
Course work	2 core + 2 electives
Research	- Learn lab skills and assist in ongoing projects - Identify skills you/your mentor want to prioritize for training - Set weekly one-on-one meeting schedule with mentor - Create 3-member KAP Doctoral Committee - In Spring, complete IDP to set expectations [research/products/timeline] with mentor
Products	- Look for co-authorships on conference abstracts and lab publications (ask if

opportunities are available)	
Summer	- Submit IDP for review - Generate ideas for dissertation project
Year 2	
Fall – 9 credits towards degree	Spring – 9 credits towards degree
Core (3)	Core (3) + Seminar (1)
Electives (3)	Electives (3)
Research (3)	Research (2)
TA (6)	TA (6)
Course work (25 of 32)	2 core + 2 electives + seminar - Exam preparation. You must have completed core courses, but not electives.
Research (11 of 24)	- Review IDP, track accomplishments and revise plan as needed - Continue assisting in ongoing lab projects and building lab skills - Begin planning dissertation (start the conversation if it isn't started by your mentor!)
Products	- Submit first-authored conference abstract / attend first conference (local/national as lab funding and opportunities permit) - Seek opportunities for co-authorships and/or first-authorships - You should be working towards an authorship by the end of Year 2. If opportunities do not exist within your lab, work with mentor to find other opportunities with collaborators or other KAP faculty.
Summer	- Comprehensive exam!!!! - Form your Doctoral Committee (3 KAP faculty + outside member)
Year 3	
Fall – 9 credits towards degree	Spring 9 credits towards degree
Electives (3)	Elective (3)
Research (6)	Research (6)
TA (6)	TA (6)
Course work (31 of 32)	2 electives
Research (23 of 24)	- Start dissertation proposal – you do not qualify for doctoral candidacy until that is done! - Review IDP, track accomplishments and revise plan as needed - Solidify dissertation project - Continue assisting in ongoing lab projects
Career-specific activities	<u>Academic research path</u> : develop grant (e.g., NIH, ACSM, NeXT) to submit in <i>Summer</i> <u>Industry path</u> : diversify lab skillsets, identify training opportunities <u>Teaching path</u> : develop/teach a course in <i>Summer</i>
Products	- Conference abstract (national, travel awards if lab funds are unavailable) - 1st first-authorship should be submitted/published - Publish! Set a goal (but not expectation) of 1 first-authorship; 3 total by graduation.
Other	- Meet with all Doctoral Committee members to set parameters and timeline
Summer	- Proposal defense - Obtain approvals (IRB/IACUC) - Begin collecting dissertation data (after approvals!)
Year 4 & 5	
Fall (Yr 4) – 5 credits towards degree	Spring (Yr 4) – 5 credits towards degree
Seminar (1)	
Research (4)	Research (5)
TA (6)	TA (6)

Fall (Yr 5) – 4 credits towards degree		Spring (Yr 5) – 4 credits towards degree	
Research (4)		Research (4)	
TA (6)		TA (6)	
Course work (32 of 32)		seminar [1 credit]	
Research (40 of 24)		- Prioritize dissertation project - Complete data collection, begin analysis - WRITE!!! - Continue assisting in ongoing lab projects <i>as time permits</i>	
Products		- Conference abstract (apply for national travel awards) - Continue publishing	
Other		- You must meet with your Doctoral Committee at least once per semester! - Get your CV in order, apply for jobs/postdocs/next steps	

Selecting A Mentor

The student, mentor, and GPD, as well as the entire KAP faculty share the responsibility of creating a positive academic and research experience. Without a cooperative effort, a student's academic and professional development may be hindered, and the integrity of the program is jeopardized. Historically, in both the U.S. and European university systems, a close and sustained relationship between an experienced faculty mentor and an advanced graduate student has been a central, respected component of graduate education, and is a tested and effective method for preparing the next generation of scholars and researchers. At its core, science uses an apprenticeship model. Students benefit from the knowledge, experience, and counsel of established scholars and researchers who facilitate the apprentice scholar's socialization to a particular discipline. Mentors act as advisers, guides, role models, supervisors, and collaborators, with the goal of enabling graduate students to make the transition from student to independent investigator.

Selection of a mentor should be taken very seriously!

It is very important that students (and mentors!) carefully consider what type of mentor-mentee relationship they are looking for. Some faculty are “hands on”, whereas others are not. Some faculty assign students to specific projects, whereas others allow students to choose. Some faculty have strict time-in-lab requirements, whereas others allow remote work. Each style has strengths and weaknesses, but a mismatch in expectations and temperament/interpersonal style can make the graduate years unhappy and unproductive.

Many students identify a mentor at the time they applied, but in the event that a mentor was not identified or circumstances have changed, confirmation of a mentor within the first 6 weeks of the first semester is required to progress in the program. **All students in KAP must be receiving formal mentoring from a full member of the KAP faculty at all times while enrolled in the program.** The mentor identified at or near matriculation will be designated as Primary Mentor.

At the end of Year 1, after the student has ample opportunity to interact with the mentor and lab members to get first-hand experiences with lab culture and expectations, the student can extend this relationship or choose to change laboratories/primary mentors if they can find another mentor who fits better with their interest, abilities, or interpersonal style. Such a change must be discussed with and approved by the first year Primary Mentor, the proposed Primary Mentor, and the GPD. These can be hard conversations for students to initiate but students should know that these things happen and there will be no repercussions from such a request, even if the student has the first-year mentor as a professor for a course taken subsequently. The GPD can serve as a liaison as needed. After the end of the first year, doctoral students should only change mentors in exceptional circumstances. Such changes will likely alter the timeline to graduation and may affect funding (teaching and graduate assistantships). Such circumstances should include consultation from the GPD as well as the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Health. Resources within SGS can also be identified if necessary.

Selection of Doctoral Committee Members

With assistance from the Primary Mentor, students should begin to consider their Doctoral Committee as early as the end of their first year. This is a committee of 3 KAP faculty (mentor and 2 additional KAP-affiliated faculty members) plus an outside member who is external / not affiliated with the KAP program or the Department of Kinesiology and Health and holds a doctoral degree. These committee members should be selected to provide the student with broader research and career support as they progress in the program. They should have conceptual or methodological overlap with the student's research interests / likely dissertation topic area. Students are encouraged to draw on the professional networks and knowledge of their mentors for selection of this outside member. Committee membership must be approved by SGS.

By the beginning of Year 3, after passing the comprehensive exams, students are expected to meet with their Doctoral Committee KAP members each semester (the external committee member need not be involved). Doctoral committee activities as well as progress towards graduation timelines will be discussed at the end-of-semester meetings with the GPD.

Course and Credit Requirements

Students must meet all prerequisites prior to matriculation or, with approval by the GPD, during the first semester after enrollment. Upon matriculation, students must earn 32 graduate course credits. The exact program of study should be developed in consultation with the Primary Mentor and GPD based on prior graduate education and future career goals. As much coursework as possible should be completed within the first two years of the program. See page 31 for information about transferring credits.

For required courses, only courses in which the student earned a B or better will count towards their degree. No more than 6 credits of C+/C can be used towards degree requirements. Students are expected to earn an A in at least half the courses attempted in order to continue to advance towards the doctoral degree. Courses may be attempted no more than twice. In the event of an Incomplete, students must create a specific plan and timeline for completing the course in collaboration with the GPD; failure to do will result in Incompletes automatically converting to a grade of F after two semesters.

Required Courses

Students must pass (with a minimum grade of B) two advanced human physiology courses, a scientific research fundamentals course, and a statistics course (total: 12 credits). Students are also expected to enroll in the KAP colloquium or seminar course during their graduate years.

Course #	Course Name
16:572:602	Principles of Research and Scientific Writing for Health Sciences
16:572:603	Statistics/Research Design for Exercise Science
16:572:610	Adv Applied Human Physiology 1
16:572:611	Adv Applied Human Physiology 2
16:572:521	Seminar in Health Physiology

Elective Courses

Selection of electives should consider career goals and focus on specific skills and necessary conceptual knowledge domains. The following courses may not be offered every year. Courses that are taught by faculty outside the KAP program may or may not be open to KAP students (or require special permission). Please contact the GPD for more details. **NOTE:** *KAP doctoral students may not take co-listed (undergraduate) courses for credit, but these courses may be accepted for transfer from a prior master's program of study.*

Course #	Course Name	Credits
16:572:501	Advanced Exercise Physiology	3
16:572:502	Exercise Prescription & Programming	3
16:572:504	Exercise Endocrinology	3
16:572:505	Fundamentals of Scientific Research in Health Science	3
16:572:507	Metabolic Response to Exercise	3

16:572:510	Clinical ECG Interpretation	3
16:572:513	Exercise Epidemiology	3
16:572:516	Motor Control & Skill Acquisition	3
16:572:517	Biomechanics of Musculoskeletal Injuries	3
16:572:518	Clinical Exercise Physiology Theory	3
16:572:519	Strength & Conditioning Theory	3
16:572:522	Capstone Writing Workshop	3
16:115:556	Ethical Scientific Conduct	1
16:115:557	Statistics in Biomedical Science	3
16:125:571	Biosignal Processing	3
16:125:574	Biomechanics and Biomaterials	3
16:125:578	Interdisciplinary Biostatistics Research Training for Mol & Cell Sci	3
16:137:501	Fundamentals of Intellectual Property	3
16:137:502	Principles of Communication and Leadership	3
16:137:552	Python Methodologies	3
16:186:856	Design Your Own Course (<i>no credit</i>)	0
15:233:569	Designing Training for Adults	3
15:310:500	Curriculum and Instruction	3
15:310:505	Curriculum Development in the Secondary School	3
16:682:550	Special Topics: Know your Microbiome	3
16:709:521	Community Nutrition	3
16:709:524	Health Promotion in Nutrition & Dietetics	3
16:709: 552/553	Nutrition: A Biochem and Physio Basis	4
16:718:512	Team Science: Collaborations in Biomed Sci	3
16:718:560	Communicating Science	3
16:761:600	Physiological Basis of Disease	3
16:761:610	Biological, Biomedical, Social Aspects of Aging	3
16:820:555	Adult Psychopathology	3
16:830:533	Experimental Design and Methods	3
16:830:637	Seminar in Cognition	3
16:830:560	Emotion and Motivation	3
16:830:577	Health Psychology	3
16:830:690	Endocrinology	3
16:962:512	Integrated Organ Physiology	3
18:844:617	Assessment and Intervention in Sport Psychology (online)	3
18:844:618	Sports Psych: Theory, Research, Practice (online)	3
31:720:540	Endocrine and Reproductive Pharmacotherapy	3

Research credit requirements

A minimum of 24 research credits are required for graduation. Students must enroll in **16:572:701** Research in Kinesiology credits each semester. To stay on track for graduation within 5 years, 3 research credits per semester are recommended prior to candidacy and 6 credits per semester are recommended after candidacy. Credit number should parallel time and effort in the laboratory. It is expected that students will have less time to dedicate to laboratory/research activities prior to advancing to candidacy (estimated 10-20 hours / week) due to course work and teaching commitments; after advancing to candidacy, time dedicated to laboratory/research activities should increase significantly (estimated 25-40 hours / week, depending on TA commitment).

Registration

Students must register each semester at <https://sims.rutgers.edu/webreg/>. It is useful to briefly meet, or communicate via email, with the GPD before each semester to ensure course registration and research credit plans are correct for ensuring on-time graduation. Some courses require a Special Permission Number (SPN) - contact the graduate program coordinator.

Student Status

You must enroll in 9 credits per semester to maintain full time student status, except for doctoral students after **advancement to doctoral candidacy (see “Qualifying for Doctoral Candidacy”)**, at which point 1 credit is sufficient to be considered a full-time student. TA and GA credits can be used towards student status, although

these credits are not applied towards the required degree credits. No more than 15 credits (including the TA/GA credits) can be taken per semester and only in extenuating circumstances will the SGS approve an increase to 16 credits; beyond this, additional credits are not possible because it represents more than full-time employment.

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Students are required to develop an annual individual development plan (IDP) with their Primary Mentor. Clear discussions about student goals and mentor expectations should begin upon matriculation into the KAP program. IDP topics include: career goals, general research activities, milestones and progress to dissertation, awards & achievements, teaching experiences, transferable knowledge & skills, outreach/service, DEI, ethics, and mentor meetings. This document will set expectations for coursework, roles on lab projects, publications, conference attendance, and grants. It will be updated each year by the student and formally reviewed with the primary mentor and GPD; as necessary, the IDP may be reviewed by the KAP Executive Committee.

The IDP should be seen as a living document that changes as student goals and mentor projects/needs change. It is not meant as a report card but rather as a living document that allows students and mentors to document progress, identify and correct training/educational gaps, and shape a well-rounded graduate experience. This plan, when done correctly, will avoid misunderstandings, limit obstacles to success, and help identify mismatches between students and mentors early on.

All students must draft an IDP using [SGS's online platform](#) each year (due June 1st). Students can draft the document independently and then meet with their mentor to review or work collaboratively with the mentor throughout the process. The final, mentor-approved IDP must be submitted online by Aug 1st for GPD review and approval. In the event that a student and mentor cannot agree on the IDP, the GPD should be contacted. **All students must demonstrate consistent and satisfactory progress toward their doctorate each year in order to be eligible for reappointment as a Teaching Assistant/Graduate Assistant and to avoid academic warnings.** Definitions of satisfactory progress in academics are stipulated by the SGS (see ***"Academic Performance Policies"***). Definition of satisfactory progress in research may vary by lab and student, and the IDP is meant to document this. In general, progress in research is determined by research projects conducted under the supervision of the mentor; participation in abstract, manuscript, and grant products from the lab and in collaboration with the mentor; and, conference attendance and presentations.

Following the general flow below will ensure such progress is being made. Warnings will be provided if progress is not maintained at a sufficient pace.

QUALIFYING FOR DOCTORAL CANDIDACY

After 2 years in the program and completion of the core courses with a B or better, students are ready to begin the 2-part process of advancing to doctoral candidacy. First, students must successfully pass a written comprehensive exam in the Summer following Year 2. Then, in Year 3, they must complete an oral defense of their proposed dissertation project. Passing both parts of this process indicates that a student is now qualified, i.e., has sufficient critical thinking skills, oral and written capacities, and content knowledge to conduct doctoral-level research/scholarship.

Students qualify for doctoral candidacy after successful completion of both the comprehensive exam and dissertation proposal. Paperwork, signed by the doctoral committee, must be submitted to SGS after both are completed.

Comprehensive Exam

This written test is designed to assess competency in core areas of the KAP program [(a) exercise / health behaviors / chronic disease and (b) human physiology]. It tests **breadth of knowledge**. Passing the exam denotes that a student now has sufficient critical thinking skills, written capacities, and content knowledge to conduct doctoral-level research/scholarship.

The exam will be taken at the end of Year 2 contingent on KAP core courses passed with a B or better AND transcripts that demonstrate satisfactory academic progress based on timeline and GPA standards (**see Academic Performance Policies**). To petition to take the exam after Year 1, a student must have an M.S., completed all KAP core courses with A grades, and have the written approval of their first-year mentor. To petition to take the exam later than Year 2, a student must demonstrate extenuating circumstances that have led to unsatisfactory grades/academic progress. In the event of extenuating circumstances, a written request must be submitted to and approved by the GPD, Curriculum Committee Chair, and Primary Mentor. In the case of unsatisfactory grades/progress, a one-year delay will be allowed but **an Academic Warning** will be issued. *NOTE: 2 Academic Warnings lead to dismissal from the program.* If the student's unsatisfactory performance has already elicited an Academic Warning, the failure to take the exam on time serves as the second Academic Warning and will begin the process of dismissal from the program.

Exam Timeline

- **In Fall semester**, based on student and faculty availability, the date for exam will be set (typically early July).
 - For 2027: July 7th (WED)
- **30-day Study Period** will begin with the release of all study materials via a Rutgers Box folder.
 - Studying together is allowed and encouraged.
 - No conference attendance, presentations during study period; no lab requirements for a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the exam date.
- **Exam Day** – 1-day, 8-hour exam period.
 - Closed book
 - In-person, completed on a computer that is not connected to the internet
 - No cell phone use is allowed in room once exam is started. If an emergency occurs, cell phone use will be allowed under supervision
 - No online materials or generative AI is allowed
 - Honor Code - no AI; no checking answers, materials, or information during breaks or lunch.
- **30-day Grading Period** - grades will be provided to students within ~ 30 days of exam completion
- **Second Attempts** - occur ~14 days after exam grades are released

Exam Questions

Questions will be contributed by 8 KAP faculty selected from faculty housed within DKH and any non-DKH faculty actively engaged in primary mentorship (dissertation committee chair) of a KAP doctoral student. Each of the 8 selected faculty will provide one exam question based on general knowledge, information obtained from the core KAP courses, and assigned research papers (no more than 4, with a mix of reviews/meta-analyses/theory/experimental). Research papers will focus on human physiological system functioning - either its basal functioning or its adaptation to exercise and other health behaviors, fitness and disease states. Questions will be sufficiently broad to allow students to draw on their own primary research area to answer the question, *i.e., blending their interests/expertise with the correct answer.*

Students will be provided with the PDFs of all assigned research papers associated with each of the 8 potential exam questions in a shared Box folder. Research papers will be organized by question, identified by the faculty examiner (e.g., Faculty #1). Assigned papers are intended to serve as foundational resources, and students are expected to draw upon the knowledge and evidence presented in them when responding to the selected exam questions. The assigned papers are **not** intended to be an exhaustive list of relevant material. In addition to integrating insights from these readings, students are expected to incorporate knowledge gained through course lectures, discussions, assigned coursework, and, where appropriate, their own research experience to develop well-supported, comprehensive responses. In addition to the assigned papers, the faculty will include a document with any broad expectations or study guidance they wish to add. For example:

- Direct citations from assigned documents are expected
- Pay particular attention to differences between McCrory and Paluch papers
- Question will emphasize metrics not theories

Exam Format

Selected faculty will provide either a content question that focuses on concepts, theories, and general biological system functions or a data question that focuses on data descriptions and interpretations. For example, content questions can cover any physiological system explored in the Adv Applied Human Physiology courses, exercise & related health behaviors, health & disease states, and performance. Data questions can cover methods (e.g., study design), results (e.g., descriptive and inferential statistics), data interpretation (e.g., reading graphs and tables), and conclusions (e.g., interpretations of results), especially related to materials learned in Principles of Research and Statistics for Exercise Science.

Students must answer 4 questions in total: 2 **content questions** and 2 **data questions**. There is no set length or style for answers (unless explicitly specified by the faculty examiner).

Grading

The exam outcome is either pass or fail. Answers are evaluated both on the content **and** the writing quality. The content is determined by the questions asked, the reading lists provided, and the expectations of each faculty examiner. Students, both domestic and international, are required to demonstrate proficiency in written and spoken English. Formal assessment of these skills occurs as part of the qualifying exam process. Language proficiencies are evaluated separately from content assessments.

In general, the content areas to be evaluated are:

- The directness and correctness of the answer.
- The breadth and completeness of the answer.
- General research knowledge integrated into answer.

In general, the written English components to be evaluated are:

- Vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Sentence and paragraph structure – tone, length, style.
- Logical organization of content and readability.

To guide evaluations and set standards for students, the following rubrics are offered. Students must achieve an overall evaluation of “Meets Standards (3)” in both content and written English on all written responses to pass the written exam. In addition to the rubrics below, each question writer will provide a list/rubric of required content to demonstrate comprehension.

Content Rubric

	Outstanding (5)	Exceeds Standards (4)	Meets Standards (3)	Below Standards (2)	Poor (1)
Correct and direct	The response was direct and correct. Content was specific to the exam prompt.	Most of the response was correct. Content mostly directly related to the specific exam prompt.	Enough of response was correct. Some content was specific to prompt, but some was incorrect, off-point or generic.	Most of response was incorrect and/or generic. Content was often indirect or unrelated to the specific prompt.	The response was incorrect and/or generic. Content was limited to the general topic area.
Breadth	Comprehensive answer; clear understanding of area. Many different specific points embedded in general topic area.	Answer was mostly complete; showed solid understanding of area. Some specific points embedded in general topic area.	Answer was sufficiently broad to demonstrate understanding of area but few specific points; most general.	Answer breadth was limited; insufficient understanding of area. Specific points were few or disjointed.	Student failed to demonstrate clear understanding of overall area.
General Knowledge	Response was detailed. Strong integration of primary research literature and general topic area.	Some details and research literature was integrated into discussion of general topic area.	Research literature was reasonably integrated into discussion of general topic area, but details were limited.	Response was superficial and research literature was not well connected to general topic area.	Response was superficial. Primary research literature was not connected to general topic area.

Written English Rubric

	Meets Standards (3)	Below Standards (2)	Poor (1)
Errors	Limited errors in vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Errors have limited effect on readability.	Numerous errors in vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation that affected readability in some places	Excessive errors in vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation that made the whole answer difficult to understand
Tone	No unprofessional language or tone	A few examples of unprofessional language or tone	Significant use of unprofessional language or tone
Length	Information was presented clearly. Some rambling, repetitiveness, digressions, but generally concise and to the point.	Multiple areas were too wordy (rambling, repetitive, digressions, over-emphasis on minor points) or too brief to adequately cover point.	Sentence and paragraph structure made it difficult to understand the information presented.
Organization	Well-organized. Communicates ideas clearly.	Poorly organized. Order of ideas difficult to follow.	Disorganized. Ideas are very difficult to follow.
Readability	The writing was easy to read. The flow of ideas was logical within and between paragraphs. Minor logic gaps evident.	Effort was required to understand the writing. Several gaps in logic.	Very difficult to follow and extremely difficult to understand. Substantial gaps in logic were evident.

Each question will be graded by the faculty examiner (who provided the question). In the event of a dispute between the student and examiner, the nature of the dispute will be evaluated by the KAP Executive Committee and an independent review will occur. The Executive Committee also reserves the right to provide an independent review of exam grading when the faculty examiner is also the primary mentor of the student. The possible outcomes are:

QUESTION GRADES

- **Pass** – all content and Written English evaluations exceed “Meets Standards (3)”.
- **Provisional Pass** – all content and Written English evaluations are at least “Meets Standards (3)” but the faculty examiner seeks additional clarification before providing a unrestricted “Pass”.
- **Fail** - any “Poor (1)” evaluations for content and writing or >2 “Below Standards (2)” evaluations for content and writing.

Second Attempts

Students that are given a “Provisional Pass” or “Fail” grade will have the opportunity to correct, strengthen, or revise the response in question. Students will be given 2 weeks (14 days) prior to the second attempt.

For answers that receive a **Provisional Pass**: In keeping with the idea that the comprehensive exam is a learning experience, when a student meets but does not exceed standards, they must either (a) meet with the faculty examiner to review their answer or (b) submit a written revision. The decision for the verbal or written revision is up to the faculty examiner. It is the student’s job to reach out to any faculty who gave a 'provisional pass' grade to address concerns.

For answers that receive a **Fail**: Second attempts must involve both a written and oral component. The faculty examiner and KAP Executive Committee will review and vote on all second attempts. Consensus (>75% of members) must agree that revised answers achieve at least “Meets Standards (3)” for all criteria.

Once all second attempts are completed and faculty examiners provide a Pass or Fail designation, the KAP Executive Committee will render the final determination for the comprehensive exam outcome.

EXAM GRADES

- **Passing** - all questions graded as “Pass”.
- **Failing** – one or more question is NOT graded as “Pass”. **An Academic Warning will be issued and the student will not advance to doctoral candidacy (see “Failing to Qualify”).**

Dissertation Proposal

Upon successfully passing the Comprehensive Exam, students must complete an oral defense of the dissertation proposal that will be graded by their Doctoral Committee. This process serves as the second qualifier for doctoral candidacy. The dissertation proposal is a formal process whereby the project that the student plans to undertake for their dissertation work is presented to the Doctoral Committee.

Identifying a dissertation project should start early! It is the student's responsibility to speak with their Primary Mentor frequently until a project is selected. It is strongly recommended that doctoral committee meetings start early – during the brainstorming and shaping phase – even if the formal proposal presentation is contingent on pilot data collection, grant submission, publication preparation, etc. Remember that there may be situations where a student spends significant time on a pilot study, grant application, or manuscript that does not pan out. An active and informed committee can help students navigate such situations.

The oral defense of the dissertation proposal should occur no later than the end of Year 3. This timeline is important to ensure that you are satisfactorily progressing through the program and that you are engaging with and learning from multiple KAP faculty about high quality and rigorous research design and implementation.

Format

The proposal defense is, at a minimum, an oral presentation that demonstrates **depth of knowledge** in a primary field/area of study. The proposal should include:

- The rationale and significance of the study being proposed with extensive details about the project background and relevant literature.
- A detailed study design, including participant/subject details, all necessary methodological and procedural details, and a comprehensive data/analytic plan.
- Well formulated hypotheses should be included in the presentation.

There is no set length or style for the proposal presentation, but students must discuss with their committee members prior to the presentation to determine what specific features, elements or styles are expected. *This is a student responsibility, but mentors should be actively involved in this process.* All members of the committee must be present for the entirety of the dissertation proposal. After an oral presentation to the committee, it is expected that considerable group discussion will ensue, with the goal being to ensure that the proposed project is of sufficient depth and breadth, and feasible within the doctoral timeline. A minimum of 1 hour should be allotted to this meeting; preferably a 2-hour window is set aside.

A written proposal is no longer required for the KAP program, but it is encouraged. If proposing without a written proposal, students must create and share a schedule / benchmarks for writing with their mentors and committees during their presentation. Writing progress must be formally addressed at the Doctoral Committee meetings held each semester and with the GPD at each end-of-semester meeting. Typically, a written proposal includes a literature review with a list of the aims and hypotheses and a complete method section for each study/aim. This equates to having a fully drafted Chapter 1 (see Suggested Dissertation Format below) plus a comprehensive outline of the methods and statistical plans for Chapters 2-4.

NEW: After successfully proposing, students must meet with their Doctoral Committee each semester to demonstrate satisfactory progress.

Grading

The proposal presentation is evaluated as pass or fail. Passing is based on the evaluation of the presentation and question & answer response period that follows the presentation. The overall presentation as well as the correctness and comprehensiveness of the project content are graded, as is the oral communication skills of the student. The grading is not based on whether the materials are 'perfect', but rather whether they demonstrate clear understanding of the ideas, goals, and methodologies of the proposed projects. Revisions, even reasonably extensive ones, may be requested even with a 'Pass'.

- **Pass** – denotes that the ideas, plans, and presentation reflect sufficient skills and abilities to carry out an independent, doctoral-level project. It is not expected that the ideas and plans are in their final form; in fact, the committee should be there to provide feedback and advice to improve the general plan at the meeting AND continue to meet with the student at least once per semester to track progress. Pass simply implies that the committee believes that the student has sufficient depth of knowledge to be granted Doctoral Candidacy.
- **Fail** – denotes that the student is incapable of understanding, articulating and/or defending the ideas and plans needed to carry out an independent, doctoral-level project or the presentation fails to reflect a

sufficient depth of knowledge that would be expected of a Doctoral Candidate. Students may attempt the defense twice before an Academic Warning is issued.

Some examples of problems include:

- Not knowing why they are doing the project (i.e., not knowing the significance of the field or the background research that has led to the project being proposed)
- Not understanding questions or feedback from the committee
- Not able to defend decisions related to the design or analysis
- Not able to communicate scientific ideas fluidly and with appropriate verbiage/scientific jargon

There should be a clear sense of the student's ability to answer questions; the mentor may assist but cannot answer questions themselves. To guide the committee member's evaluations and set standards for students, the following rubrics are offered. Students must achieve an overall evaluation of "Meets Standards (3)" in both content and spoken English in all responses to pass the oral exam.

Content Rubric

	Outstanding (5)	Exceeds Standards (4)	Meets Standards (3)	Below Standards (2)	Poor (1)
Presentation	Clear and detailed. The ideas and plans were strong.	Clear; ideas and plans were mainly strong. Minor revisions.	Clear; ideas and plans were acceptable with revisions.	Unclear; ideas and plans hard to follow; major revisions needed.	Unclear. Ideas and plan were unacceptable.
Correct	Presentation and Q&A responses were direct and correct.	Presentation and Q&A responses were mostly correct.	Presentation and Q&A were sufficiently correct.	Several errors and/or generic information.	Mostly wrong, generic, or irrelevant information.
Comprehensiveness	Student showed clear understanding of overall area.	Student showed understanding of overall area.	Student showed sufficient understanding of overall area.	Student did not show sufficient understanding of overall area.	Student failed to demonstrate understanding of overall area.

Spoken English Rubric

	Meets Standards (3)	Below Standards (2)	Poor (1)
Errors	Few errors in vocabulary and grammar but without affecting clarity.	Several errors in vocabulary and grammar making the answer difficult to understand.	Many errors in vocabulary and grammar making the answer incomprehensible.
Length and clarity of thinking	Information was clear and concise. Minimal rambling or repetitiveness. Communicated ideas clearly.	Too wordy (rambling, repetitive, digressions, over-emphasis on minor points) or too brief to adequately cover the point. Ideas were difficult to follow.	Sentence structure made it difficult to understand the information presented. Ideas were very difficult to follow.
General Stylistic	Good oral communication style. Delivery of ideas demonstrated confidence, polish, enthusiasm, and command of topic. Good use of scientific language, and terms central to the content area. No unprofessional language or tone.	Unsatisfactory oral communication style. Delivery of ideas was disorganized. Lacking confidence, enthusiasm, or command of topic. Limited use of scientific language and terms central to the content area. A few examples of unprofessional language or tone	Unacceptable oral communication style. Delivery of ideas was incomprehensible. No confidence, enthusiasm, or command of topic demonstrated. No scientific language and topic-specific terminology. Significant use of unprofessional language or tone

Failing to Qualify

In the event of a failure to pass the comprehensive exam in two attempts, pass the oral dissertation proposal defense, or receive 2 academic warnings for any other reason, the student will be dismissed from the program.

A one-semester extension of a TA and/or student status may be allowed (determined on an individual basis by the KAP Executive Committee and based on TA availability) to complete a thesis towards a terminal M.S. Students are only eligible for a terminal M.S. from our program if they have not already earned a parallel Master's degree from another institution **AND** have successfully met all requirements for the M.S. thesis track, including overall GPA of at least 3.0, passed all required courses, and obtained sufficient research and overall credits. In addition, these students must complete and successfully defend a thesis in order to obtain the M.S. in Kinesiology. Final decisions to allow a student to terminate with a Master's degree is contingent upon

approval of the GPD and the SGS. A [Change of Degree Status](#) form must be completed and submitted for approval to SGS.

Qualifying – The Paperwork!

After successful completion of the dissertation proposal, the student is responsible for submitting the [Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy](#) to the SGS via [email](#).

This form should be filled out by the student and sent to all **Doctoral Committee** members upon completion of the exam. All members must sign the form; signatures must be verifiable (use DocuSign or Adobe Professional). This form must be submitted to the aforementioned email address at least two months before the final oral defense of the dissertation.

ADVANCEMENT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDACY

Upon successfully passing the comprehensive exam and the dissertation proposal process, students must ensure that they have submitted the candidacy application to the SGS. Then, the student is considered a Doctoral Candidate. Their transcript will show them as “post-qualifying”. At this point, the student’s **own doctoral research should become the priority**. Thus, while they should continue to support ongoing mentor/lab projects, their priority **should shift to their own independent research project**.

It is important for the student and the Primary Mentor to start carefully planning a timeline towards completion, especially if the student is funded by TA or GA lines that have fixed time frames. For example, if the student is funded via a TA, and the TA line is not renewed for an additional year, then the final written dissertation and defense *as well as all edits and revisions* must be completed prior to Oct 1. If this deadline is missed, then the student may be required to pay for additional semesters.

Writing the Dissertation

A dissertation is meant to be a final, independent project that is conceptualized, designed, and executed mainly by the student. The doctoral project should demonstrate substantial depth of understanding of the ideas that shape the project, the methods (including statistical methods) utilized, and the interpretations of the results. This does not mean that the student cannot work on an ongoing project, be guided by their mentor, or assisted by peers and lab personnel. In fact, the Primary Mentor and fellow lab members should provide support and assistance with all aspects of the project as needed, and an ongoing exchange of ideas is the sign of a healthy mentor-mentee relationship (and lab culture). However, a doctoral student should not be ‘given’ a fully planned project or asked to complete part of an already conceived and active project over which they have no say. It is important that a doctoral student views themselves as the ‘principal investigator’ of their doctoral research – being allowed to shape the narrative and influence study design. They should be able to both give and take feedback by the time they graduate, feeling confident in their ability to decide a best course of action as well as understanding when someone else’s expertise should be heeded. This level of growth towards independence in all aspects of research is a general expectation of individuals holding a doctoral degree and is critical to success in both industry and academia.

The final dissertation defense consists of the written dissertation and oral defense. There is no ‘correct’ length for a dissertation and there are several general structures that are considered acceptable for the KAP doctoral program. Students should work closely with their Primary Mentor to determine the general outline.

Nearly always, the first chapter is a general overview / literature review / explanation of problem. The middle

chapters usually represent one of the following:

- 3 or more related manuscripts
- 3 or more related but independent research studies
- 3 or more related but statistically independent aims, or
- some combination of these options

The final chapter generally is the weaving of the studies/aims together, with a general discussion of findings (not repetitive but rather an extension of what is discussed in the middle chapters).

Opening Chapter: This chapter should include a review of the foundational research that led the student to develop the dissertation. It should be broad and cover ALL research domains that will be covered in the subsequent chapters; subsections are acceptable and usually improve readability. The health significance and/or importance of the dissertation research should be mentioned and can often be a good lead-in for the aims and hypotheses, which must be included at the end of this chapter. Bibliography should be included only at the end of the dissertation, as per the [Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide](#).

Middle Chapters: There should be a minimum of 3 middle chapters, which each typically include a more specific introduction that is tailored to that specific aim/study, a complete method section with data and statistical plans, results with tables and graphs embedded per the [Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide](#), and an aim/study-specific discussion section.

- If a student wishes to **reproduce a published or submitted manuscript** (primary research or review) as a chapter in their dissertation, they must (a) be the first author of the study and (b) be the primary writer of the study and closely involved in the editing and revision process, and (c) have performed the statistical analyses or understand the statistical strategies sufficiently to describe them in detail at their oral defense. For *primary data collection*, the student must demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the study design and data collection procedures and been a participant in either or both. For *secondary data analyses*, the student must have been involved in the analytic design and statistical analyses. It is not acceptable to use a lab-publication that does not meet these requirements in a dissertation.
- If a student designs a **single study with multiple aims**, as is common with grant-funded dissertation projects, the dissertation aims should be clearly differentiated by using a different subset of variables, participants/subjects, and/or statistical strategies; two similar analyses of the same data (i.e., that lead to the same conclusion) cannot be split between two chapters. Each chapter must address an independent aim/goal. Even in the event that there is considerable redundancy in the methods across the aims, all middle chapters must have a method section. The first middle chapter may present the complete method and subsequent chapters may be much briefer. For example, if the aims differ in analytic strategy, the procedures may be very brief in subsequent chapters but the analytic plan should contain all new details. Subsequent chapter should not simply say 'see Chapter 2'.
- If a student wishes to combine a **series of independent research studies** into a dissertation, there should be an overarching vision / goal / hypothesis. The studies can be very different as long as they are all triangulated around a single concept or research question. Three unrelated ideas cannot serve as the foundation of a dissertation project.

If in doubt, please contact the GPD.

SUGGESTED DISSERTATION FORMAT

Chapter 1 - Literature Review.

Review of all research that grounds the aims of the study (premise). Can be written in sections if the dissertation spans several conceptual domains. Should address significance of topic. Concludes with Aims and Hypotheses.

Chapter 2 - Aim 1.

More focused introduction, complete method, results, discussion, conclusion.
May be manuscript style

Chapter 3 - Aim 2.

More focused introduction, complete method, results, discussion, conclusion.
May be manuscript style

Chapter 4 - Aim 3.

More focused introduction, complete method, results, discussion, conclusion.
May be manuscript style

Chapter 5 - General Conclusion.

Review of main findings from each aim, integrate findings with each other and prior literature. Discussion of main contributions of project. Limitations and future directions.

Formatting

Don't take this piece lightly! There is absolutely a correct style! Dissertations **must** conform to the [Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide](#) and will not be accepted if it does not adhere to the stylistic and technical requirements specified. Don't worry, though, SGS doesn't micromanage, but make sure not to skip this step.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense should be scheduled only once the final written dissertation has been approved by the mentor for dissemination to the committee. The defense should be scheduled at a time when all Doctoral Committee members are available to attend. Typically, a defense takes 2 hours; please schedule accordingly. An in-person defense is strongly preferred; if other options are needed, please coordinate with the GPD and committee in advance. Virtual attendance by committee members is allowed but discouraged; recorded defenses that are later viewed by committee members are disallowed. Students should work with committee members to identify a time and date well in advance (see timeline below); the KAP program administrator can then help the student find an available room.

Defense date, time, and location along with the candidate's name and dissertation title should be advertised 3-4 weeks prior to the defense via Rutgers outlets and can be broadly disseminated to family, friends, and the public as desired. The KAP program administrator can assist with making marketing materials. Zoom links may be offered to make the defense accessible to family and friends; KAP students and faculty are strongly encouraged to attend the defense in person whenever feasible. Making time for and supporting your fellow students *in person* is essential to foster the program culture.

Students should prepare a ~45-minute presentation (with PowerPoint or equivalent) of the dissertation findings. They should leave ~15 minutes for questions from the general audience. At the end of the first hour, the general audience is excused, and the candidate and committee members remain for the approximately 1-hour defense. At the formal defense, committee members ask probing questions about the conceptualization, methods, results, and conclusions of the dissertation project; the student is expected to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the project details and "defend" decisions made related to the project design and interpretation of findings.

At the end of the defense period, after the student has exited the meeting space, the committee members voice their overall evaluation of written dissertation as well as the defense. Through a chair-led discussion, the committee then comes to a consensus about whether the student should advance to graduation. A major focus of this discussion is on the quality of the written document and the students overall command of their project and field of study. There are four possible outcomes:

- **Approval** of dissertation document, as written. Graduation is recommended.
- **Conditional approval.** Minor edits to the written dissertation are requested by the committee. The candidate makes necessary edits and submits to the mentor for approval. No further committee participation is required. Graduation is recommended.
- **Revision needed.** Edits to the written dissertation by the committee are substantial enough to warrant additional committee review after suggested changes are made. It should be clarified at this time whether additional individual or group meetings are required, or whether email review is sufficient. Graduation is tentatively recommended and reasonable efforts by all committee members will be made to help the student meet dissertation deposit deadlines.
- **Major revisions needed.** The committee determines that substantial changes are needed to the document or that the student's comprehension of the project is insufficient. Ongoing committee participation is required; the nature of this participation should be clearly defined. Graduation is not recommended at this time. The GPD should be informed immediately, especially in the event that matriculation for an additional semester is required.

GRADUATION

As the student begins writing their final written dissertation, the following timeline is suggested to ensure that

students meet deadlines for graduation (assuming approval by the Doctoral Committee).

Program Completion Timeline

At the beginning of the semester that you expect to graduate, student MUST:

- inform the GPD to ensure that all academic requirements are complete
- ensure that there are no outstanding fees or holds on your university account

8 weeks prior to SGS dissertation deposit deadline:

- Schedule dissertation defense date, time, and location
- Provide information to KAP program administrator, who will create marketing materials for the defense
- Invite family and friends as well as members of your scientific community to attend.

5 weeks prior to SGS dissertation deposit deadline:

- Provide Doctoral Committee with final draft of dissertation document

3 weeks prior to SGS dissertation deposit deadline:

- Defend dissertation

1-2 weeks prior to SGS dissertation deposit deadline:

- Finalize written dissertation with mentor, incorporate committee feedback, and double check formatting
- Complete all forms (see below)

Dissertation Deposit Deadlines

All forms listed below must be submitted by **~October 1** to graduate with an October degree.

All forms listed below must be submitted by **~January 1** to graduate with a January degree.

All forms listed below must be submitted by **~April 1** to graduate with a May degree.

Required Forms

All information can be found [here](#). The student is responsible for completing the following 7 forms for graduation. They must be sent in one email as a single PDF to **sgs.degree.submissions@grad.rutgers.edu** before the deadline listed above. In addition, the final dissertation must be submitted and approved in by our office in order to graduate. See the SGS graduation [checklist](#) for more details.

**** NOTE:** Committee members must sign #2 and #3. The GPD must sign #3.

- 1) Unofficial transcript – explained [here](#)
- 2) [Diploma Application](#) – submit PDF of email confirmation
- 3) [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#). Return the Certificate of Completion (at the end of the survey) as a PDF.
- 4) [Ph.D. Exit Survey](#). [Save](#) and return the "Verification Sheet" as a PDF.
- 5) [Degree Candidate Responsibility Statement](#)
- 6) [Publishing Agreement](#) – when asked if you want to copyright your dissertation, reply **YES**. You will have to pay \$75 but KAP will reimburse you (submit invoice and payment documentation). In today's AI world, copyright is important.
Once complete, click on "Manage this ETD"> "View ETD Details"> "Print your Details Page". Submit "ETD DETAILS" page as a PDF. More information can be found at: [Electronic Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\) Submission](#)
- 7) [Application for the Doctorate of Philosophy](#) – this form [at end of linked webpage] should be completed by the student, uploaded to DocuSign, (see instructions below) and signed by the doctoral committee members and GPD .
- 8) One original [title page](#) **signed by your committee** in PDF format. Leave an unsigned version of the title page with the full dissertation document. Copy the title page into its own document and send out to committee members for signatures (via DocuSign).

Additional forms that need to be reviewed:

[Dissertation/Thesis Acknowledgement of Previous Publications](#)

[Dissertation Deferred Publication Policy](#)

Although there should be ample opportunity to discuss the overall graduate experience throughout the student years, an “exit interview” would also be greatly appreciated. This interview can be with the GPD, other departmental administrators (e.g., DKH chair or vice chair of research), or another appointed individual. The goal of these meetings is to ensure that the program continues to meet the needs of its students.

Commencement and Convocation

SGS holds their annual commencement (general ceremony) and convocation (where graduates are individually recognized) ceremonies in the spring. All students who graduate within the year may attend that spring’s commencement and convocation. For students whose degrees are dated for October or January, diplomas will be available by November and February, respectively. Decision to attend commencement and convocation should be indicated on the diploma application. Students may request a temporary certificate of completion by submitting a written request to the university registrar (Administrative Services Building, Busch Campus). This request form may be obtained at the Dean's Office.

Students must purchase doctoral regalia for the convocation. The department has some regalia that can be borrowed for the event and some (e.g., the cap) are available for less on Amazon. If you would like to inquire about available regalia, speak with Janice Nappe. In addition, if you purchase regalia and do not plan to need it in the future, consider donating it for future student use.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Research Policies

All research conducted by KAP students and faculty must be held to the highest possible standards and adhere to all University and Federal regulations and guidelines. The Rutgers Office for Research oversees all research activities and should be contacted if the student has any concerns about mandatory training and approvals. This office also provides information and maintains reporting sites for [conflicts of interest](#) and research [misconduct](#).

Human subjects research

All individuals involved performing studies using human participants must complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative ([CITI](#)) program *prior to beginning any research activities*. The Basic Course (usually Biomedical/ Clinical) must be completed. In addition, individuals conducting or involved in NIH-funded clinical studies must complete at least one [Good Clinical Practice Course](#).

All research activities involving human participants also requires approval by the Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects in research (IRB). Protocol forms, templates and, policies and procedures are available for review [here](#). The electronic submission portal ([eIRB](#)) must be used to submit all materials and research cannot begin until formal approval by the IRB is given.

Animal research

All research activities involving animal subjects requires approval by the Rutgers Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee ([IACUC](#)).

Additional requirements

The student and mentor must ensure that all approvals have been obtained prior to commencing research. Studies can be shut down if such approvals are not obtained. For example, if biospecimens, such as saliva, urine, blood, are collected, online coursework, protocol submissions, and/or in-person meetings may be required by the [Rutgers Biosafety Program](#) and other Rutgers research bodies. Students should discuss required approvals with their mentor prior to the beginning of any research activities. If in doubt, contact the

GPD or the Director of the IRB/IACUC.

Scientific Products

The use of a Rutgers affiliation on publications and/or other science-related materials, presentations, and applications (i.e., grants, awards) that have not been formally approved by the student's Primary Mentor or the GPD is prohibited. Students should report their affiliation as *Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Department of Kinesiology and Health, New Brunswick, NJ*

Transferring Credits

Credits obtained from master's programs offered at peer institutions may be transferrable and used towards elective credit requirements. To get transfer credits approved, a student's official transcript plus the course syllabus is required. Materials must be in English. The course syllabus must include a breakdown of all class topics. Transfer credits are only available if the student obtained a B or better in the course. **Transfer credits cannot be requested or evaluated until a minimum of 9 credits of graduate level course work with grades of B or better in the SGS has been completed.** Transfer credits can only be requested by matriculated students in good standing.

1. Transfer of credit is allowed only for formal graduate level course work specifically related to the student's program of study in which grades of B or better were received.
2. No credit may be transferred for thesis research work, course work done as independent study, or work in courses which were not graded.
3. Only in rare circumstances will transfer credits be applied towards core requirements; in such cases, the transfer course must completely overlap with the KAP course in terms of class topics and time spent per topic to demonstrate that both the breadth and the depth of materials are parallel.
4. Credit is not normally transferred for courses taken more than six years prior to the application for transfer of credit. Appeals for waiver of this time limit may be made by the GPD, in writing, with a statement verifying that the course material still represents the current state of science and that the student's knowledge of the subject remains intact as the result of directly working in the field of study.
5. For Ph.D. students, no more than the equivalent of one year of course work may be transferred; typically this is 18 credits.
6. For M.S. students, no more than 40% of the course credits required for the Master's degree may be transferred (i.e., 10-12 credits).
7. Credits that counted towards an undergraduate degree cannot be transferred.
8. Quarter credits will be converted to semester credits by reducing the total by 1/3 (i.e., 9 quarter credits = 6 semester credits).
9. Complete the transfer of application [form](#) (also available on the SGS website)

General Calendar of Activities

Sept	DKH Volleyball Game
Oct	KAP Coffee Break
Nov	<i>Student appreciation event</i>
Dec	DKH Holiday Party
Jan	<i>Spring semester starts</i>
Feb	KAP Coffee Break
Mar/Apr	Student luncheon
May	Year-end Party

Program culture

Graduate school can be stressful and difficult; students should be able to draw support from each other as well as from the KAP faculty. Your fellow graduate students do not need to become your "best friends", but they can provide useful insights and information while you are in the program, help ground your lab and course experiences, and may end up being lifelong professional peers. A large professional network is always an asset and there is no better time to start developing it than in grad school.

Our program and department seek to create camaraderie among the students, and between the students and faculty, beyond the classroom and lab by hosting events throughout the year. We encourage students to engage in KAP extracurricular activities whenever possible; active participation in the KAP Graduate Student Organization is also encouraged. These activities benefit the students and shape the culture of the program.

Career Paths

Not all students who enter the KAP program have the same long-term goals. Kinesiology is a field that offers

many opportunities for individuals with advanced degrees. A M.S. degree offers more options and higher pay in fields like fitness, athletics, and physical education. A Ph.D. opens doors in fitness and health industries, including wearables and app development, as well as teaching-focused and research-focused academic careers. Examples of possible career paths include:

- Data scientist (industry)
- Sports scientist (athletics)
- Research scientist (biotech, pharma)
- Tenure Track professor at “R1” research university
- Tenure Track professor at “R2” or “R3” research university or non-tenure track teaching professor
- Clinical research coordinator (medical school)

It is important for students to consider their most likely career path to guide their selection of electives and experiences while enrolled in graduate school. The program will support student interests related to teaching and industry careers as well as research careers.

Interpersonal Conflicts

The KAP program expects students to treat each other with respect and understanding at all times – including at off-campus social settings. KAP takes the university’s and school’s code of ethics and professionalism seriously. Consider other possible interpretations before sending a text, email, or post; attempts to be funny or smart may come across as hurtful or condescending and can lead to misunderstandings and disputes. This can seriously and negatively affect the culture of a lab and the program.

Unfortunately, it is inevitable that interpersonal conflicts will occasionally arise – between students or between a student and a faculty member or a mentor. It is worthwhile considering that most individuals seeking a doctoral degree are on career paths that will involve personnel management (this is certainly a component of academic science!). Personnel management is very challenging even for seasoned professionals but any opportunity that a student gets to learn how to navigate difficult interpersonal situations in a civil and constructive manner is valuable. We encourage students to attempt to resolve minor difficulties on their own – sometimes an email, where words can be carefully thought out and crafted, is preferable to an impromptu conversation; such an approach also allows the other person to be equally measured in their response. It can also create a paper trail to clarify the situation if things escalate. In the event of more than minor problems, the first recourse is with the lab director/Primary Mentor (unless the issue is with the mentor); the student should then seek guidance from the GPD, Departmental Chair, or Divisional Dean (in that order).

Student Organizations

Rutgers Graduate Student Association (GSA)

The GSA sponsors a variety of social and cultural activities for graduate students and represents their interests to the university through its legislative body. The GSA provides free legal advice to students, and it sponsors academic programs, films, mixers, trips to New York, and community action programs. Every graduate student, full time, or part time, in any of the New Brunswick graduate and professional schools automatically becomes a member of the GSA. A president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary are elected at large. The GSA's main legislative body is its Council, which meets once a month. Every graduate program may elect one representative for every 40 students enrolled. (NOTE: Programs with less than 40 students also are allowed one elected representative.) If you are interested in being a department representative, check with your program organization or the GSA office. The GSA offices are located in the Graduate Student Lounge (GSL) in the Rutgers Student Center on College Avenue in New Brunswick and may be contacted at 848-932-7995. The GSL is primarily for the use of graduate students and for the functions sponsored by and for graduate students. It provides a comfortable atmosphere for socializing, lounging, and studying.

KAP Graduate Student Organization (KAP-GSO)

The purpose of the KAP-GSO is to provide support and resources for fellow graduate students in pursuit of their degree. The organization meets bimonthly to discuss journal articles, student presentations, and research. The goal of the organization is to expand outreach within the Rutgers community for the education of

students and peers on health and fitness. The KAP GSO is made up of the officers, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Social Media Manager and the students within KAP who chose to attend the meetings and participate in activities. Elections for officers are held in the fall semester and an officer can hold a position for no longer than 2 years.

Housing

On-campus housing is available at favorable rates for both married and single students. While this is convenient when first coming to Rutgers, most students choose to live off campus in one of the numerous communities near the university. Information on housing is sent to applicants upon acceptance by the SGS. Popular towns with rentals for graduate students include New Brunswick, Highland Park, and Piscataway. Students can live further away from campus and commute, but this should be discussed in advance with the mentor based on in-lab time expectations.

Housing resources:

On campus - <https://oncampus.rutgers.edu/>

Off campus - <https://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/>

On campus billing rates - <https://ruoncampus.rutgers.edu/housing-info/rates-and-billing>

INCOME SOURCES

Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) policy guarantees 5 years of financial support for admitted Ph.D. students as long as they remain "*in good standing*" (see below). Students can formally waive support if they have an independent source of support or choose to pay for the credits themselves ([tuition rates](#) are determined by the university). Options for financial support are teaching assistantships, graduate assistantships, or graduate fellowships.

Teaching Assistantship (TA)

This is the most common form of financial assistance offered by the program. A TA is a 10-month, ~15 hour/week position that covers tuition, provides [health insurance](#), and offers a salary of ~\$36,000 (2024-2025). Full tuition remission is available for Fall and Spring semesters; summer courses are not covered.

KAP students typically instruct laboratories associated with undergraduate courses that are required for our Exercise Science major. There are a total of 9 Exercise Physiology and Anatomy TA positions available through KAP. Some KAP students may also instruct laboratories associated with the Division of Life Sciences Office of Undergraduate Education courses, including General Biology and Systems Physiology. To optimize students' teaching portfolio, students should expect to TA two different courses during their doctoral years.

Exercise Physiology Lab TA positions

"Ex Phys Lab" involves overseeing hands-on student learning experiences. This lab is a requirement of our department's undergraduate Exercise Science major and typically enrolls ~200 students per semester. Each lab section includes 10-12 students; each TA oversees 2 lab sections. In addition to attending all lab periods (2.5 – 3 hours each), TAs can expect 2 – 3 hours of grading per week.

Morgan Murray serves as the Coordinator of the Exercise Physiology Labs. He is responsible for TA training and supervision. The TA schedule is set based on students' KAP course schedules and dissertation research needs. The first 30 minutes of each lab is dedicated to reviewing the results of the previous lab and discussing the important concepts for the current lab. The remainder of the time is spent on the lab procedures/activities. TAs are expected to administer a variety of laboratory tests pertaining to: aerobic capacity, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, body composition, etc. Examples include: VO₂max tests, the Wingate Anaerobic Test, Resting Energy Expenditure, Goniometric Range of Motion, Skinfold Assessments. TAs are expected to generate enthusiasm and interest among their students. New TAs are trained during their first semester and are encouraged to attend summer sessions prior to beginning their TA to get a first-hand sense of the student experience. Training is handled on a case-by-case basis based on prior experience.

Anatomy Lab TA positions

Anatomy Lab involves overseeing hands-on student learning experiences with cadavers. Adam Divine serves as the Course Coordinator of the Anatomy Labs. The lab is highly interactive and TAs are expected to engage students and encourage other opportunities for involvement and participation to those who are reticent about handling the cadaver directly. Being an effective TA involves weekly preparation of the topic and knowledge of the anatomical regions on both cadavers; this ensures that students have the chance to learn on multiple bodies.

Each lab section includes 15-20 students and, after the first year, TAs oversee 2 lab sections. In addition to attending all lab periods, TAs are expected to attend a weekly meeting with the Coordinator to prepare and review; this standardizes the information provided to students across all sections. TAs create weekly non-credit quizzes that are administered at the start of the lab based on the prior week's material to prepare students for the mid-term and final practical format. TAs also prepare ~50 exam questions for the mid-term and practical. TAs grade all test materials in a timely manner – often immediately after - to allow exam review as an additional learning tool. Lastly, each TA will supervise 1-2 undergraduate student lab assistants whose role is to help fellow students review the material after the lecture-based portion of the lab is complete.

In the first year, the TA shadows the Course Coordinator during 1 lab section and independently runs a second session each semester. First year students must have all quiz and exam questions approved by the Course Coordinator prior to administering the items to students. During any semester that students are 'shadowing', they are also assigned to be a 'grader' (see below) for one of the large required undergraduate Exercise Science major courses (e.g., Exercise Physiology, Exercise Testing and Prescription, Psychology or Sport) but are not paid additionally for this grading role; this is to improve parity across TA assignments. Upon approval by the Course Coordinator, TAs will independently oversee two lab sections.

The [Teaching Assistant Project](#) (TAP) offers a comprehensive [handbook](#) that can answer many questions. TAP is designed to promote excellence in undergraduate and graduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick through the professional development of TAs. TAP recognizes the dual role of TAs in the university and seeks to assist them in teaching on the college level while balancing their responsibilities as graduate students. They offer a new TA orientation, workshops and seminars, certificate programs, discipline-specific trainings, videotaping/reviewing, and both written and web-based materials. A dedicated telephone line, the TA helpline (848-932-11TA), also provides assistance to TAs who have questions about teaching.

Appointment Process

Initial TA appointments are competitive. Incoming students are notified upon acceptance into the program about their TA appointment or other expected form of support. Based on past enrollment and graduation rates, 1 – 2 TA lines are expected to become available for new doctoral students each year. Rutgers requires initial appointment letters to be sent by April 30th; more detailed departmental appointment letters are sent in May or June. Except in unusual circumstances (e.g., midyear graduation or changes in student standing), a TA appointment is for both Fall and Spring semesters of the upcoming academic year. After appointment, students must enroll in TA credits on webreg every semester to receive tuition remission. Contact the graduate program coordinator for SPN.

The TA salary is paid during the 10-month employment period. **Students should be aware that no paycheck is received in July or August.** Options for summer and supplemental employment are listed below.

Reappointment Process

TA reappointments are not automatic; they are contingent on student performance metrics (per School of Arts and Sciences policy) that are reviewed in April to ensure the student is in "good standing", which is defined as:

- Maintaining a GPA of 3.0 (from transcripts)
- Adequate progression through program milestones (from IDP)
- Appropriate engagement in your doctoral research lab/with your primary research mentor (from transcript, IDP, and mentor report)

- Fulfilling all responsibilities of the TA mechanism (from teaching effectiveness ratings and Course Coordinator reviews)
- Having no disciplinary, integrity, or conduct actions or pending actions

The School of Arts and Sciences further stipulates that students must have fewer than 75 credits for reappointment. Please note that the 75-credit limit only applies to credits counting towards your graduate degree (i.e., not your TA credits), including credits transferred from other institutions or credits earned in another graduate program at Rutgers.

Graduate Assistantship (GA)

The SGS defines a GA as a “graduate student paid a salary to render service to the university, primarily in research, either directly, or under a grant or contract with other agencies, normally at the maximum rate of fifteen clock hours per week”. A GA is therefore a 12-month, ~15 hour/week position that covers tuition and provides [health insurance](#), and a salary of ~\$41,500.

In the KAP program, GAs are grant-funded positions that are only available when a faculty member has external (non-Rutgers) research funds dedicated to supporting a graduate student or the opportunity to support a student through a federal training grant (e.g., NIH T32 grant). GAs are assigned directly by the faculty with funding, not by the GPD. Nonetheless, all KAP GAs are accepted through the same process and must adhere to the policies put forth in this handbook and as dictated by the KAP Bylaws.

Student’s work on a faculty’s individual grant-funded project can be related to or independent from the student’s dissertation project. A letter clearly delineating grant and dissertation work expectations (including time allotments for each and which activities count towards grant project versus dissertation) must be provided to the student upon hiring and a signed copy must be sent to the GPD. This letter must also clearly delineate boundaries between the grant aims and the dissertation aims; students should not propose a dissertation project that addresses a primary aim of a faculty’s grant. This is to ensure that students can adequately progress in their degree requirements while fulfilling obligations to the grant-funded project and ensure a level of project independence appropriate for a doctoral student.

To align with the SAS 5-year funding commitment, faculty wishing to bring in a student on a GA line must stipulate in writing to the student and GPD that full-salary funds (plus complete tuition remission and health insurance) are available for 5 years in the program (which is rarely possible) or develop a formal plan in collaboration with the GPD for alternative funding (# of years and TA / individual fellowship expectations).

TA/GA Student Health Insurance

TAs and GAs who receive full academic or calendar year appointments are considered state employees, and they and their dependents/family are eligible for the same health plans as Rutgers faculty and staff. Graduate students not funded by a full-time TA or GA are also typically provided single-coverage health insurance through a student health insurance plan with United Healthcare. The fee for the student insurance plan is included in the term bill of all full-time students. If a student has an alternate health insurance plan, he or she can complete an online waiver form and remove the fee. If the waiver is not completed, the student will be enrolled in the student health insurance plan. There is no overall maximum dollar limit on the policy. Plan details, including waiver and enrollment information, may be found at <https://www.universityhealthplans.com>. Students also may purchase coverage for their spouses and children at additional cost. For further information, contact the Office of Student Health Insurance, Hurtado Health Center, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 11 Bishop Place, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1180 (732-932-8285).

Additional useful information may be found here:

<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/TA-GABenefitsGuide.pdf>

<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/policies-resources/faqs/faq-health-insurance-ta-ga-less-full-time-appointment>

Individual Fellowships

The SGS offers a limited number of [fellowships](#), including [several](#) focused on promoting diversity, access, and

equity. These fellowships typically cover partial salaries (aligned to TA rates) and/or are available for 1 year. Supplementary funds must be made available by the primary mentor to ensure fellows are paid at the same rate as their TA/GA peers and have a guarantee of 5 years of funding.

Students are also able to apply for individual federally-funded fellowships with the approval of their Primary Mentor. These grants are highly competitive and require considerable time and effort to develop. Students whose Primary Mentor is federally funded are best positioned to obtain these fellowships but a strong training team with federally funded secondary mentors may still be competitive. Both the student and mentor should be aware that research activities may be limited during the grant development period. Clear timelines and milestones towards completion and submission are strongly advised.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) offers a [National Research Service Award](#) (NRSA / F31) to doctoral students in health-related fields (US citizen/national/permanent resident only). These prestigious awards make students more competitive for career positions after graduation. After advancing to candidacy, students can work with their Primary Mentors to submit a research project and training plan to support their dissertation work. If selected for funding, the student's tuition and health care costs are covered and they receive a 12-month stipend of \$28,224 from the NIH. Primary mentors must provide supplemental funds to ensure fellows are paid at the same rate as their TA/GA peers. Please ensure that the Primary Mentor knows that there is currently an ~\$8,000 shortfall in NIH pay, which will need to be supplemented.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) offers a [Graduate Research Fellowship Program](#) (GRFP) for basic research in various science fields (US citizen/national/permanent resident only). This is a prestigious fellowship with 3 years of an annual stipend (\$37,000) and a cost-of-education allowance covering tuition and fees. Students who have previously earned a MS are not eligible. Applications must be submitted before first year of graduate study is complete. Primary mentors must provide plans for funding at least two additional years so students have a guarantee of 5 years of funding.

[Health insurance](#) for fellows is different than for TA/GAs.

GradFund

GradFund is a peer mentoring fellowship advising service designed to help graduate students learn how to apply for merit-based fellowships and grants to support their graduate study. Such activities should be undertaken with approval by the Primary Mentor and/or GPD. <https://gradfund.rutgers.edu/>

Summer / Supplementary Employment

When possible, Primary Mentors supplement the 10-month TA salary with summer (June/July) pay. Students should clarify summer salary *in advance* with their mentor. The rate should be negotiated based on available funds and summer expectations, a benchmark of ~\$500/week to make the TA salary commensurate with a 12-month GA salary is reasonable. Hourly pay for those with a Bachelor's is typically \$15-20/hour; those with a Master's usually earn \$20-25/hour.

Outside employment is not disallowed but cannot interfere with TA/GA responsibilities or negatively affect student progress. In such cases where outside employment is interfering with performance in the KAP program, the Primary Mentor will first issue a warning to make changes. If changes are not made, the GPD may issue an academic warning letter.

Opportunities for supplemental pay during the academic year are also sometimes available. For example, large undergraduate courses in the Exercise Science major often utilize graders. These positions pay \$2500 per semester and require ~6 hour/week time commitment.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

The SGS offers a complete [handbook](#) about resources available to graduate students at Rutgers University. Additional information specifically pertinent to KAP students is also provided below.

Central Resources

RUID, NetID, and Rutgers ID cards

Upon admission into the program, all students are given a RUID (a 9-digit number). The RUID is used by the registrar. They are also given a unique alphanumeric identifier known as a NetID (e.g., abc123). Nearly all Rutgers programs and services available to students uses the NetID. Upon acceptance, students must activate their Rutgers NetID at <https://netid.rutgers.edu/index.htm>. Once activated, students can begin accessing Rutgers programs and utilizing Rutgers resources.

When activating their NetID, they will be asked to upload a photo online. By doing so, they will be eligible to receive an ID card that is important especially for those students who will spend time in clinical spaces and hospitals, where ID must be worn at all times. For more information about ID cards, see <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/publicsafety/iam/student-id>

Central Authentication Service

'CAS' is the landing screen for logging into most centralized university programs. It requires an active NetID <https://cas.rutgers.edu>

Rutgers Connect

The official email and calendar system for Rutgers faculty and staff is based on Microsoft 365 and includes Outlook and OneDrive (a document sharing program akin to Google Drive). Microsoft 365 and all Office software are available free for Rutgers students. Note: the Division of Life Sciences, of which the Dept. of Kinesiology and Health is a member, does not allow the use of Google email, calendar, docs, drive, or other software to conduct university business; however, these rules do not apply to students. Students should use the same programs as their primary mentor whenever possible. <https://it.rutgers.edu/rutgers-connect/>

My Rutgers Portal

This site provides access to payroll and paycheck information and tax forms. It allows you to submit expenses and change your profile and personal information. Go to: <https://my.rutgers.edu>

Parking

The age-old question on every university's campus, especially Rutgers is: where can I park? Rutgers provides parking to students at a cost of \$200. You must have an active NetID and employee contract (for new students). Parking must be renewed annually. If you sign up for online W2s, Rutgers now has auto-renew for parking. You can pay by credit card or request a pre-tax payroll deduction, which spreads the payments across multiple paychecks. To register your car: <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/dots/permits/faculty-staff>. Janice Nappe is also a good resource for all parking-related concerns. KAP students do not have access to the small gated lot in front of Loree but can park behind the student center next door and many lots on all campuses.

Registrar

For billing, financial aid, and registration questions, see <https://registrar.rutgers.edu>.

Academic Resources

Schedule of classes and Academic Calendar

A searchable database of available classes in the upcoming semesters, including course name, department, instructor, time and date of instruction, prerequisites and special permission requirements. <https://classes.rutgers.edu/soc/#home>

Semester start and end dates as well as holidays can be found at <https://scheduling.rutgers.edu/scheduling/academic-calendar>

Registration

Students must register every semester. Pre-qualifying exam, 9 credits or more is considered full-time. Post-qualifying exam, 1 credit or more is considered full-time. No more than 15 credits per semester [HARD CAP!] can be taken. Doctoral students should not forget to register for TA/GA credits to ensure tuition remission.

<https://sims.rutgers.edu/webreg/>

Canvas

The official learning management system for teaching and learning at Rutgers

<https://canvas.rutgers.edu/>

Box

A secure, cloud-based file storage system that allows managing and sharing of research resources. It can be used in addition to or instead of OneDrive or Google Drive. Box is free for Rutgers students at

<https://rutgers.app.box.com>

Docusign

A secure electronic signature tool that verifies, routes, tracks and stores documents requiring signatures. This is a frequently used program by KAP students!

<https://it.rutgers.edu/docusign/>

University Library System

Students at Rutgers have access to an enormous collection of online scientific materials that can be accessed through the library http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/libraries_centers or by accessing a research article through Rutgers (which should bring students to the Central Authentication Services [CAS] site).

Technology Resources

Information Technology

Rutgers has centralized IT support and both the Department of Kinesiology and KAP have specific IT staff that can help with all computer-related issues. For general information: <https://it.rutgers.edu/> If you have a specific question, purchase, need (e.g., assistance installing new software), you must create a ticket by emailing ithelp@sas.rutgers.edu. Our 'go to' is Tamela Wilcox (tpringle@sas.rutgers.edu).

RUWireless

RUWireless Secure is the university's wireless network that is available to all students in all Rutgers buildings. To download RUWireless, go to <https://it.rutgers.edu/ruwireless>. Once downloaded, you should automatically connect whenever on campus. While I'd like to say that the program is seamless, it is not. It occasionally does not connect, requires another download, or needs the computer to be rebooted.

All students also have access to **eduroam**, which provides access to wireless networks at universities around the world. If you are traveling, setting up an account with eduroam is worthwhile.

RAD (Rutgers Active Directory)

Any computer purchased through the university must be secured by Rutgers IT. RAD-secured computers are easier to interface with Rutgers programs and services and have direct access to Rutgers IT services. RAD systems can be remotely accessed by IT to troubleshoot and fix problems.

Cisco Anytime Connect (Virtual Private Network)

Rutgers provides remote access to faculty, staff and students to services secured by the Rutgers network using a VPN. You must register through the self-portal: <https://it.rutgers.edu/virtual-private-network/>

Duo

Students will need to download Duo, a dual authentication software, for all remote accessing of Rutgers programs and services. More information can be found at <https://it.rutgers.edu/two-step-login/>. To set it up, go to <https://go.rutgers.edu/setup>. Sign in with your NetID and click Start setup to begin enrolling your device. For additional instructions see <https://it.rutgers.edu/two-step-login/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2020/09/Two-step-login-enrollment-instructions-PDF-FINAL.pdf>

software.rutgers.edu

Rutgers University Software Portal allows you to search and find various software programs that are free to students (through site licenses) or available for purchase (at an educational discount). You can download and update software based on current licensing agreements.

<https://software.rutgers.edu/info/login/>

Some programs you should consider getting:

- Adobe Creative Cloud – including Acrobat Professional, InDesign, Photoshop, and Premiere
- Cisco Secure Endpoint Virus Protection
- Microsoft 365
- Statistics programs used by your laboratory. Mentors will often pay for these programs or you can access them free at on-campus Computing Centers. Some popular statistical programs include SAS, SPSS, OriginPro, GraphPad Prism.

A full list of available software programs: <https://software.rutgers.edu/catalog>

Virtual Meeting Programs

Rutgers has site licenses for Zoom, Webex, and Teams. Our program prefers Zoom, but many Rutgers administrators also use Teams. All are pretty user friendly, but it is recommended that you sign up for a Zoom account through Rutgers even if you have a personal account. Some Rutgers sessions are more difficult to access from non-Rutgers accounts. <https://rutgers.zoom.us>

Rutgers Research Administration and Proposal Submission System (RAPSS)

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) provide a range of services to faculty, students and staff seeking funding from public and private not-for-profit sponsors. They provide institutional sign-off on proposal submissions, accept incoming awards, and negotiate a wide variety of grant-related agreements, including sub-awards to and from not-for-profit sponsors. Neither students nor faculty can provide these sign-offs independently. RAPSS is the electronic gateway for the submission, review, approval and tracking of funding proposals and related budgets for research at this institution. **RAPSS is mandatory for all new submissions of research proposals, corporate contracts, and associated items.** <https://rapss.rutgers.edu/> Training on RAPSS can be found here -- <https://research.rutgers.edu/rapss/training>

Virtual Computer Lab

Rutgers provides access to virtual computers to allow students access to software programs that are not available in their labs, are too expensive to purchase, and/or are not compatible with their personal computer. It is beneficial to have set up a OneDrive account first so that the virtual computers can find and save files needed. <https://it.rutgers.edu/virtual-computer-labs/>

General Resources

- [University Safety and Security](#)
- [Services for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Records and Privacy Rights under FERPA](#)
- [Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment:](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [Rutgers Global Advancement and International Affairs](#)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AT RUTGERS

Principles of academic integrity are taken seriously at Rutgers. All graduate students must uphold the standard of the academic community in their roles as student, researcher, and teacher. All students have a responsibility to understand and familiarize themselves with the [university's policies](#) and ethical standards. Failure to comply with the standards and codes of the university are grounds for dismissal from the program. A [summary brochure](#) is available for quick review; complete information is available at <https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

Student Conduct

All students are expected to abide by the university and school codes of conduct and professionalism. The University Code of Student Conduct is published at <https://grad.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/2021-07/10-2-11-current%20%281%29.pdf>. All students are expected to be familiar with the policies. This extensive document provides guidelines for behavior, including behaviors that are not tolerated at Rutgers.

The SGS further expects honesty, integrity, respect, and tolerance. Students are expected to work diligently towards goals, take responsibilities seriously, and demonstrate professionalism in all activities including their academics, teaching, and research. Students are expected to learn to provide and accept constructive feedback. Failure to uphold these expectations may result in integrity violations.

Academic Integrity Violations

The most common violations of the principles of academic integrity include plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of dishonesty, academic sabotage, violation of research or professional ethics (e.g., misuse of grant or institutional funds, violating professional ethics as a TA/GA), and violations involving potentially criminal activity. Violations are divided into three categories defined by the university as:

- Level 1 - may occur due to inexperience; evidence of lack of malicious intent.
- Level 2 - misconduct of a more serious or recurrent character; misconduct that affects a major, significant, or essential portion of work; demonstrates premeditation; poses harm to others.
- Level 3 - most serious breaches of conduct; serious violation of a professional code of conduct; extreme cases of dishonesty and maliciousness or violations of law; likely to cause harm to others.

Sanctions range from grade reductions in course work, grade of F, disciplinary reprimand/probation, removal of support, suspension, dismissal from program or school; loss of academic appointments, degree revocation.

Academic Performance Policies

Student progress is tracked on an ongoing basis. Students should schedule meetings with the GPD at the end of each semester to ensure that satisfactory academic progress is being made. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress is a violation of the standards of the SGS and can lead to revocation of financial support, academic warnings, and possible dismissal in addition to prolonging the time it will take to obtain a degree.

The SGS defines **satisfactory academic progress** as:

- Min GPA of 2.5 for first 12 credits and 3.0 for the remainder of time in the program;
- No more than one "U" in courses that are graded S/U;
- No more than two temporary Incompletes on record at any time; courses must be completed within 2 semesters and the GPD must approve the reasons for the incomplete and the specific plans to complete the work; **and**,
- Passing the qualifying exam based on the policies noted in this handbook.

The KAP program further defines **satisfactory academic progress** as:

- Continued active participation in research activities under the guidance of the Primary Mentor;
- Active engagement in dissertation-related activities after passing the qualifying exam.

Academic Difficulty and Procedures

In cases of academic or other program-related difficulty, the GPD will convene the KAP Executive Committee

to review the case and plan a course of action. The committee will review the academic record and mentor/faculty reports to determine a course of action. In the event that it is determined that the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic performance, a written warning letter will be issued.

The **first warning letter** will explain the committee's concerns, document evidence, and recommend steps to improve performance. Ordinarily, first warnings are issued when academic performance is marginal and/or are starting to show more serious academic difficulty. First warnings may also result in academic probation when unsatisfactory progress indicates a general failure to maintain school and program standards or in cases of academic/research dishonesty. Students are expected to formally acknowledge receipt of the warning and show significant changes or progress in the subsequent semester.

After the first warning letter, failure to maintain good academic progress will result in a **second warning letter** that typically includes formal written notification that processes for dismissal will begin. The second warning letter will also be sent to the student's Primary Mentor and Doctoral Committee Members. For qualifying exams, failing the exam the first time will generate a first academic warning. A second warning will be issued if the student does not pass again after given an opportunity to retake the exam.

The students should know the resources available to them from the university, such as:

- <https://grad.rutgers.edu/current-students>
- <https://grad.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-enrichment-programs>
- <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>
- <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>

The SGS may have additional recommendations and students should reach out to them for guidance. The Graduate Student Association or Office of Labor Relations also may be contacted. The KAP program cannot adopt alternative procedures to circumvent university policies, such as registration blocks or encouraging withdrawal. This handbook provides students with complete details of academic expectations, ramifications of failing to maintain these expectations, and avenues for students to appeal.

The process for **academic dismissal** begins after the second written warning of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress is sent. When dismissal from the program is being recommended, the written warning letter will specifically note that processes for dismissal are being undertaken by the program. Failure to pass the qualifying exams after two attempts will result in an academic dismissal.

Suspension from the Program may be recommended when unsatisfactory progress is mitigated by personal circumstances outside the student's control or may be elected by the student to allow time for resolution of special circumstances through ordinary means.

Student Appeals

All students should be aware that they can appeal academic decisions within thirty days of the written warning. First, students should appeal to the KAP Executive Committee. They have the right to examine all evidence that led to the warning letter and discuss that evidence with the committee; these meetings may include the Primary Mentor. Both the evidence and notes/minutes from any subsequent discussion will become part of the student's file and be maintained by the GPD.

Should the appeals process within the program not rule in the student's favor, a recommendation for dismissal may be sent to the Dean of the SGS, who may delegate the process of initial review to one or more senior deans within SGS. Initial review may result in (a) a delay in dismissal accompanied by specific recommendations to the program for improving the academic performance of the student; (b) recommendation that the student file a formal appeal with the SGS, or (c) decisions to process the dismissal of the student from the SGS. Final dismissal of a student from the program may be done only by the Dean of the SGS in accordance with established procedures.