Campus Advising Notes Related to Kinesiology’s Movement Science (MOVSC) Option and Physical Therapy (PT)

1. MOVSC and Physical Therapy

The most common career goal among MOVSC students is physical therapy (PT). Admission into a graduate program in PT is very competitive. For students admitted to graduate PT programs in 2011-12, the average cumulative GPA was 3.52 and the average math/science GPA was 3.37.

2. Pre-PT coursework:

Typical course requirements/recommendations for admission into a PT graduate program include:
BIOL 110, BIOL 129, BIOL 141, BIOL 142
CHEM 110, CHEM 111, CHEM 112, CHEM 113
PHYS 250, PHYS 251
PSYCH 100
Additional psychology (e.g., PSYCH 212, PSYCH 221/SOC 003, PSYCH 270)
STAT 200

If a PT school requires a 2nd general biology course with a lab, we recommend one course from either BIOL 220W, 230W, or 240W. BIOL 129 and BIOL 220W/230W/240W are “supporting courses” that count toward graduation. To save room in supporting courses, students may take PSYCH 270 and petition to have it count for GS. They may take PSYCH 212 or PSYCH 221/SOC 003 and petition to have either course count toward 3 credits of GA or GH.

Some PT schools will specify the level of math they require. The highest level math required for MOVSC is MATH 026. If students take MATH 040, 041, 110, or 140, it will count in place of MATH 026.

3. Pre-PT experience:

Students cannot rely solely on their coursework to get them into a PT school. PT graduate programs highly value experience in addition to the coursework required for admission. We encourage students to get exposure to a variety of PT experiences as early as possible (e.g., in-patient, out-patient, senior citizens, children, people with disabilities, athletes, workers’ compensation) and to seek out opportunities for hands-on experience to improve the quality of the hours they are completing.

Students should develop their own log for tracking their hours of experience. This log should include dates, contact information and PT license number, type of facility, and how many hours were completed. The experiences can be paid or volunteer.

MOVSC students must complete 3 practicum courses – KINES 295B, 395B, and 495B. These will provide additional opportunities to gain experience in PT settings.

ADVISING DISCUSSION POINTS:

- We encourage campus students to take BIOL 129, BIOL 141, BIOL 142 (if offered), CHEM 110, CHEM 112, PHYS 250, and PHYS 251 at their campus (it is not critical that they take CHEM 111 and 113 prior to University Park relocation, but it is fine if they do). If these sciences are delayed until relocating to University Park students may find themselves tripling up on sciences in a single semester (including demanding KINES courses like 202, 350,
360, and 384). Such overloads can greatly interfere with the adjustment to and success at University Park, where class sizes are likely to be significantly larger. Larger class sizes will typically mean less interaction with faculty and grades based more heavily on multiple choice exams.

- The Fitness Studies option of the Kinesiology major is now closed to further enrollment. Therefore, it is critical to help students assess whether or not Movement Science is a good fit for them since they no longer have Fitness Studies as a back-up option.

- We discourage campus students from taking the first science in a sequence at their campus, and then the second science in that sequence at University Park. For example, if CHEM 110 is taken at the campus, CHEM 112 should be taken there as well.

- Some students opt to take science courses in the summers at a community college. We typically recommend they not take more than 2 science courses at a community college if they plan to apply to a PT graduate program, as some PT schools consider courses taken at community colleges to be less rigorous.

- It is common for students to experience an adjustment period during their first semester at University Park. During this adjustment period, grades may drop. If prior to relocating a student’s GPA is not competitive for PT school admission (e.g., 3.2), please encourage them to consider if PT school is realistic, if they should continue pursuing a science-oriented major like Kinesiology, etc.

- Students should consider joining the Pre-Physical Therapy Club when relocating to University Park so that they can be kept informed about the application process, GRE testing, etc. Information can be found at studentaffairs.psu.edu/hub/studentorgs/orgdirectory/.

4. Relocating to University Park

Students can typically relocate to University Park after 4 semesters at their campus. Some exceptions will need to be made based on course availability at the campus.

5. Questions?

On behalf of your advisee, please contact the Department of Kinesiology Advising Center at University Park with questions. It is important that we talk directly with campus advisers so that the information we share can be passed along to your other students. The Department of Kinesiology Advising Center at University Park can be reached at 814-863-4493.