

## **Dear Prospective Adapted Physical Education Graduate Student:**

Greetings from the Department of Exercise and Sport Science and the Adapted Physical Education Graduate Program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Below is information about our many exciting professional development opportunities for eligible students interested in becoming a highly qualified adapted physical education (APE) teacher. Our program is led by three doctoral level faculty in APE, numerous other content experts in physical education, and a team of PK-12 school-based APE specialists. We offer a Master of Science degree; we do not have a doctoral program.

### **What is the Content of the Program?**

Our graduate curriculum combines study of general physical education with specialized APE course work with the goal of providing quality physical education services to PK-12 students with disabilities. Courses in APE include content in assessment and program evaluation; advanced study of the causes and impact of disabilities on physical and motor performance; instructional models and teaching strategies in APE programs; and leadership development in APE. These content courses are combined with school-based practicum/clinical experiences so graduates are familiar with and prepared to provide leadership for PK-12 APE service delivery. In addition to school-based practicum, our [Center on Disability Health and Adapted Physical Activity](#) serves persons of all ages and disabilities in a variety of programs. Graduate students obtain practical experiences and leadership skills in these on-campus programs.

Adapted physical education course work is supplemented by content in general physical education courses such as curriculum development; analysis and supervision of physical education instruction, adventure education programming, and diversity issues in physical activity settings. The goal of our graduate program is to prepare highly qualified APE professionals who can provide physical education services in a variety of instructional settings and to serve as resource specialists for physical educators who teach students with disabilities in general or inclusive classes. Successful completion of the program leads to attainment of the Wisconsin 860 add-on teaching license in APE (and generally meets the requirements for APE approval in Minnesota and other states that have separate licensure in APE). In addition to enhancing their teaching and leadership skills, many of our masters level program completers progress to doctoral study in APE. These persons most often become faculty members in higher education.

### **How and When Can I Pursue the Program?**

Our program provides several flexible options depending on how and when persons choose to pursue graduate study in APE. Programs include full-time on campus enrollment during the academic year and summers, “Summer-Only” study, and a longer course of study for those who need to enroll on a limited part-time basis. Each of these options is explained below.

**Full-Time On Campus Enrollment - Academic Year and Summer Terms:** Many graduate students pursue their master's degree full-time on campus during the academic year semesters and summer sessions. These full-time on campus students generally enroll in 10-15 credit hours during the Fall and Spring semesters, and 6-9 hours during the summer. Full-time on campus attendance makes it possible to complete your degree requirements in four consecutive semesters (e.g., Summer, Fall, Spring, and Summer).

**Summer Only Full-Time Enrollment:** To meet the needs of practicing teachers, we have an option referred to as the "Summer Only" program. This program can lead to a graduate degree and/or a Wisconsin 860 add-on certification in APE. A complete graduate degree could be finished in 4 consecutive Summers (summer enrollment only). Students can complete the APE certification only in 2-3 summers (depending on course load and class availability). We offer three separate 4-week sessions each summer from mid-May to mid-August. APE courses are offered from mid-June to mid-August for the convenience of practicing teachers. All courses take place on campus. No distance education is offered.

**Part-Time for Several Years:** In addition to our full-time programs during the Summer and academic year, we regularly have students who attend part-time on an intermittent basis in various semesters and complete their degrees over a span of 3-5 years. The length of this part-time degree program depends on how many courses a student can complete each semester or year, including summers.

### **What Types of Financial Assistance Exist for Qualified Graduate Students?**

Our program provides financial assistance in the form of APE fellowships and graduate assistantships to qualified students who are enrolled full-time in either the on-campus academic year or summer only programs. These funded students must enroll full-time, be on campus, and make a commitment to agree to teach APE after their academic program completion. This "service agreement" is part of an obligation to the United States Department of Education – Office of Special Education Programs that provides our grant funds for APE graduate student fellowships. Once students are admitted into the program and accept financial assistance, they sign a service agreement and understand that funds will need to be paid back if they don't meet the APE teaching requirements over several years once the degree program is completed.

All financial assistance is dependent upon a student's successful academic and practicum performances, and on availability of funding from the U.S. Department of Education. There are also funds available through many other graduate assistantships from the university.

**Nonfunded Students.** Not all students enrolled in our APE graduate program receive financial assistance. In addition to fellowship recipients, we have nonfunded students pursuing their degrees during the academic year and/or summer sessions on a part- or full-time basis.

## **How Do I Complete the Application Process?**

Prospective students must apply on-line for graduate academic admission. There is a processing fee for the application. To apply visit: <https://apply.wisconsin.edu/> Be sure to apply to UW-La Crosse from the list of possible university selections in Wisconsin. In the on-line application, students wishing to pursue the graduate level APE program should apply for admission to the **Exercise & Sport Science-Physical Education Teaching- Adapted option [SAH]**.

In addition to the on-line graduate academic admission application, those interested in graduate assistantship/fellowship funding, must complete the graduate assistantship application at: [www.uwlax.edu/sah/ess/pe/files/PETE\\_GA\\_Application.doc](http://www.uwlax.edu/sah/ess/pe/files/PETE_GA_Application.doc).

Finally, email an up-to-date resume and 1-page cover letter to: Dr. Garth Tymeson, APE Graduate Program Director at “[tymeson.gart@uwlax.edu](mailto:tymeson.gart@uwlax.edu)” Your resume and 1-page cover letter are emailed separate from the Graduate Assistantship application. Contact Dr. Tymeson if you have questions about the resume or cover letter (608-785-5415). Email these materials to Dr. Tymeson as soon as you begin your on-line application process.

**Please note:** Since we are preparing graduate level APE teachers, applicants for Fellowships and assistantships must be certified to teach physical education upon acceptance into the program. Non-certified students can be admitted, but their program of study will be longer in order to complete teacher certification prerequisites. In addition, non-certified applicants are not eligible for Fellowship funding.

**Deadlines:** We have a variety of flexible deadlines based on the semester in which you intend to start enrollment in the program. As a guideline, November 1st is the deadline for start of Spring semester; March 1<sup>st</sup> for start in the Summer Session; and April 1<sup>st</sup> for start in the Fall semester. It generally takes at least 4-5 weeks to process a complete application once it is received at the university. Therefore, it is your responsibility to submit all application materials in a timely manner.

We are very pleased that you are interested in APE graduate study at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. We look forward to being part of your future professional development. After reading this information and reviewing our web site, please call if you have questions.

Sincerely,

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