

Pathways to the Pillars

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the popularity of kinesiology as a college major.
2. Identify two of the most highly valued qualities that employers look for in new college graduates.
3. Describe three important skills that you will be expected to master during the course of the major in kinesiology.
4. Explain the differences between teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches to learning.
5. List the five principles of the learner-centered approach and describe how these principles may be used in class to enhance learning.
6. Describe the differences between the dualistic and holistic views of human beings.
7. Describe how actions, such as running, holistically involve all of the subdisciplines of kinesiology.
8. Describe how both “good” and “bad” (pleasant/unpleasant) movement experiences can deepen your commitment to bring kinesiology and movement activity to everyone.

KEY TERMS

American Kinesiology Association (AKA)	holistic interpretation of a person
communication	interpersonal skills
competency approach	learner centered
competency skills	learner-centered strategies
desired skills	learning skills
dualistic interpretation of a person	mentor
empowered learner	physical activity
experiences of physical activity	prepared
focus	professionalism
guiding principles	self-assessment
holistic approach	teamwork
	unprofessional qualities

Introduction: Guiding Principles**guiding principles**

Core ideas and concepts that direct and influence a plan of action.

When we set out to write an introductory textbook to the field of kinesiology, we discussed what our **guiding principles** would be. Some of the principles we identified apply to us as authors and teachers. Some of the principles we identified apply to you as readers and learners. Our decision to incorporate these principles was based on our combined experiences as teachers and learners. Our hope is that we have written, through our collective wisdom, a text that is as interesting and engaging as it is informative. Our goal is to start you off on the right path as you begin your journey into the field of kinesiology. Therefore, we believe it is important to share our principles with you so that you can understand why the text is written the way it is and how you can get the most out of it.

mentor

An individual who will guide and support you on various aspects of your life journey.

Four principles guided our writing of this text. First, we want you to think of us as **mentors** who respect and support you and your pursuit of kinesiology. Although we bring several combined decades of experience and knowledge to this text, we are not merely presenting information about kinesiology. In this spirit, we encourage you to become apprentice learners by engaging with the activities we have incorporated throughout the text. Second, we have written a text that is accessible but rigorous. We have attempted to write in a manner that is not too technical but that prepares you for advanced levels of study. Although this is an introduction to kinesiology, it is important that you be properly prepared for the challenging

road ahead. Third, we want to make manifest that we have a deep regard for the field of kinesiology. We love **physical activity**, the different ways we can examine it, and the ways it can provide meaning in both personal and professional contexts. Just as our mentors shared this passion with us, we now pass it on to you. We hope that you will share this passion with others as you become more involved in the field of kinesiology in practical settings. Last but not least, we have written this text in a shared voice that incorporates the above principles and speaks to you directly in both a personal and professional way. We have selected many different authors to contribute to this book so that you get the best introduction possible. In one sense, each author has a unique voice because of his or her unique history within the field of kinesiology. However, all the authors recognize the importance of mentoring, maintaining rigorous standards, and loving the field of kinesiology. We hope that you can hear this as a consistent voice, like the beautiful song of a choir. The individuals may have different parts and different voices, but they join together in a way that the whole is more than the parts.

In addition to our own guiding principles, we have also identified guiding principles for you. These principles are intended to prepare you to be successful both inside and beyond the classroom. If you can incorporate these guiding principles into your education, then you will be well prepared upon graduation. These guiding principles are (1) developing **competency skills**, (2) becoming **learner centered**, and (3) maintaining a **holistic approach** to the

physical activity

Any bodily movement that requires the use of energy by the individual.

competency skills

The set of skills required to efficiently and successfully participate in a professional setting.

learner centered

Information exchange and knowledge enhancement produced through the shared effort of the professor, student, and classmates.

holistic approach

View that different course experiences and practical applications are parts of a whole, with each part interacting with and influencing the others.



field of kinesiology. Because we want you to adopt these principles, we will explain each one in detail, starting with the competency approach.

A Competency Approach

POPULARITY OF KINESIOLOGY

People choose to seek a college degree for a variety of reasons, but one important objective is generally to prepare to be marketable for, and successful in, their desired career. According to the **American Kinesiology Association (AKA)**, 820 U.S. institutions of higher education offer a bachelor's degree in kinesiology (AKA, 2013). Twenty-one (2.5%) of those 820 institutions are in the California State University (CSU) system, the largest and most diverse university system in the United States (The California State University, 2016). Student enrollment in CSU kinesiology programs alone was more than 17,000 in 2014, and more than 2,400 students received bachelor's degrees in kinesiology in the 2011–2012 academic year (The California State University, 2013). Kinesiology has also been identified as one of the fastest-growing majors in academia today (AKA, n.d.). These numbers translate into hundreds, if not thousands, of new kinesiology graduates each year, adding rapidly to the hundreds of thousands of other individuals who already hold kinesiology degrees. With so many people meeting the minimal qualification of a degree in kinesiology, what will make you stand out among the numerous other job candidates you will compete with for jobs once you graduate?

Recent surveys of U.S. employers reveal valuable information in this regard. One survey of 225 employers from a pool of 100,000 companies found that two of the most **desired skills** are in the areas of **communication** (98%) and **teamwork** (92%) (Millennial Branding, 2012). Communication, in this context, was defined to include the ability to write, compose emails, give presentations, and have conversations with people across the generations. Interestingly, the same survey revealed that these skills are also among the hardest to find among job candidates. The York College of Pennsylvania's (YCP) Center for Professional Excellence conducts an annual survey of professionalism in the workplace (YCP, 2013). In 2013, it surveyed more than 400 human resources professionals nationwide, with questions focusing on their experiences with recent college graduates. Almost half of those surveyed reported that less than 50% of new employees exhibited

American Kinesiology Association (AKA)

Professional organization whose mission is to promote and enhance "kinesiology as a unified field of study and advances its many applications."

desired skills

The ability to do something through practice or training that is highly valued in professional settings.

communication

The ability to write, compose emails, give presentations, and have conversations with people across the generations.

teamwork

The ability to work with other people to accomplish a shared task.

professionalism during the first year on the job. This statistic has risen 10% since 2009. College is traditionally thought to be a place to learn content knowledge, but perhaps just as important it should be a place to learn how to become a successful professional.



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SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Many of the skills and characteristics valued by employers can be learned and practiced during the college years as part of coursework. You might be wondering what characteristics contribute to **professionalism**. **TABLE 2-1** lists the professional and **unprofessional qualities** mentioned most consistently by YCP survey respondents.

One of the objectives of this text is to consistently use a competency approach to present the material and guide you through the course. A **competency approach** involves an emphasis on skill development. Throughout your years as a kinesiology major, you will learn the core competencies of kinesiology within multiple subdisciplines, such as biomechanics, exercise physiology, exercise prescription, human and functional anatomy, motor learning and development, sport/kinesiology history, sport/kinesiology philosophy, and sport psychology. Kinesiology competencies include kinesiology-specific content knowledge and skills. This text will additionally

STOP AND THINK



The competency approach in this text takes seriously the notion that each student is concerned with his or her chances for a successful career with this major. At this point you should be asking yourself a number of different questions regarding a person's marketability in the field:

- What are employers looking for when hiring, retaining, and promoting?
- What makes one person more hireable than another?
- What makes one person more successful than another?

professionalism

The demonstration of conduct, behavior, and qualities that are expected in a professional setting.

unprofessional qualities

A failure to demonstrate conduct and behavior that is expected in a professional setting.

competency approach

An emphasis on skill development that will help you become an exceptional professional.

TABLE 2-1 Perceived Professional/Unprofessional Qualities

Qualities of a Professional	Unprofessional Qualities
Work until a task is completed competently	Inappropriate appearance
Interpersonal skills including civility	Poor work ethic
Appropriate appearance	Unfocused
Punctuality and regular attendance	Apathetic
Communication skills	Sense of entitlement
Honesty	Disrespectful and rude
Focused/attentive	Lack of time management

Reproduced from Center for Professional Excellence at York College of Pennsylvania. (2013). 2013 National Professionalism Survey Workplace Report. Retrieved from <http://www.ycp.edu/media/york-website/cpe/York-College-Professionalism-in-the-Workplace-Study-2013.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2016).

help you to begin to learn about the competencies involved in becoming an exceptional professional. First, you need to know what it is to be such a professional, and then you need to have opportunities to learn and practice those skills. Specifically, this text focuses on enabling you to learn and practice your communication skills (listening, verbal, and written), interpersonal and teamwork skills, work ethic and quality, and time management. Other skills from **TABLE 2-1** will also be woven into the chapters.



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It is your responsibility to take advantage of the opportunity to begin the process of becoming an exceptional professional. Skills are not mastered overnight. You are now early in your college career, with years ahead to practice and refine your professional skills. If you take this seriously you will graduate with a degree in kinesiology and possess the qualities of a good professional, making you a more desirable candidate in the job market.



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STOP AND THINK

- From a boss's (administrator's) perspective, what are potential negative outcomes when a person acts in an unprofessional manner?
- What are the outcomes when a person acts professionally?
- What steps can you take to maximize your professional qualities?



Learner-Centered Approach

TEACHER-CENTERED VS. LEARNER-CENTERED APPROACHES

This text takes a learner-centered approach; that is, the emphasis is on learning: “Learning should be seen as a qualitative change in a person’s way of seeing, experiencing, understanding, conceptualizing something in the real world—rather than as a quantitative change in the amount of knowledge someone possesses” (Weimer, 2002). Rather than simply *covering* the course content, you will *use* it to expand your knowledge base; while doing so, you will simultaneously improve your **learning skills** and heighten your learner awareness. Examples of common learning skills include time management, study skills, and computational skills. More sophisticated learning skills involve “the ability to apply theoretical information to complex practical problems and integrate information from different areas creatively in order to explain particular phenomena better” (Weimer, 2002, p. 54). Learner awareness focuses on your ability to reflect on how you learn—what your tendencies and preferences are. Also important is your ability to assess your own strengths and weaknesses. All of this is geared toward you developing your confidence as a student.

This particular format is often contrasted with that of teacher-centered delivery. In the teacher-centered approach, the focus is primarily on what the teacher *does* compared to what the students are *learning* (Blumberg,

learning skills

Skills such as time management, study skills, and computational skills that facilitate engagement with course content to expand one’s knowledge base.

STOP AND THINK

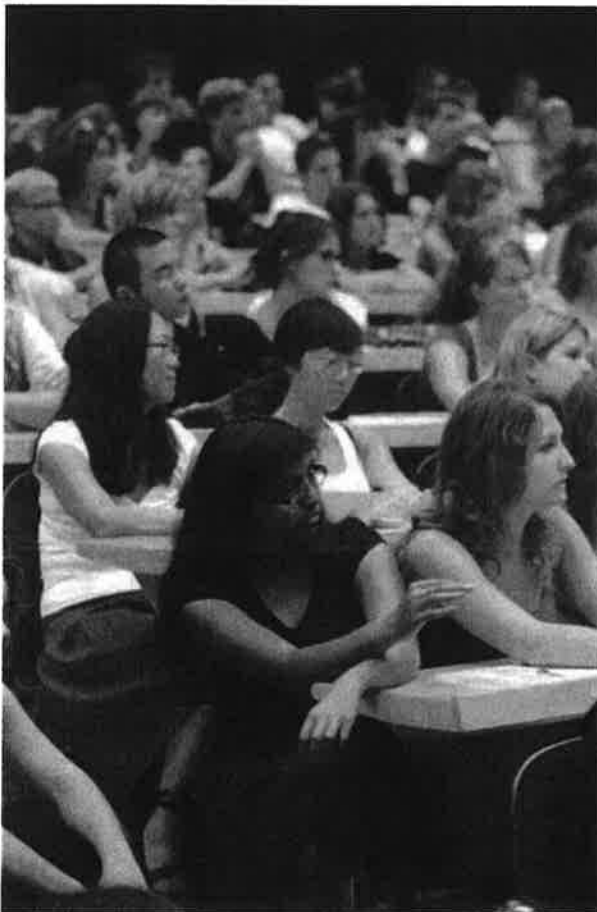


Reflect on your past physical activity experiences (e.g., physical education classes, sport teams, dance groups, recreational activities, etc.). What factors contributed to high levels of engagement and promoted participation? What factors contributed to low levels of engagement and discouraged participation?

2004). As a student, you may be most familiar with a traditional teacher-centered approach that uses lectures accompanied by a series of exams as a process for learning the course material. Although this pattern of learning has certain advantages, you may have noticed yourself sitting passively in your seat taking some notes while the teacher was *on stage* for most of the class period. In the learner-centered approach, you have the opportunity to play a much larger role in the learning process by actively participating both inside and outside the classroom (**TABLE 2-2**).

FIVE BASIC PRINCIPLES

In order to achieve this deeper level of learning, you will utilize the five principles of the learner-centered approach



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TABLE 2-2 Comparison of Teacher- vs. Learner-Centered Paradigms on College Campuses

Teacher-Centered Paradigm	Learner-Centered Paradigm
Knowledge is transmitted from professor to students.	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and so on.
Students passively receive information.	Students are actively involved.
Emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used.	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address enduring and emerging issues and problems in real-life contexts.
Professor's role is to be primary information giver and primary evaluator.	Professor's role is to coach and facilitate. Professor and students evaluate learning together.
Teaching and assessing are separate.	Teaching and assessing are intertwined.
Assessment is used to monitor learning.	Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning.
Emphasis is on right answers.	Emphasis is on generating better questions and learning from errors.
Desired learning is assessed indirectly through the use of objectively scored tests.	Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performances, portfolios, and the like.
Focus is on a single discipline.	Approach is compatible with interdisciplinary investigation.
Culture is competitive and individualistic.	Culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive.
Only students are viewed as learners.	Professor and students learn together.

Reproduced from J. E. Huba & M. E. Freed. (2000). *Learner-centered assessment on college campuses*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

as they relate to kinesiology: (1) the balance of power, (2) the function of the content, (3) the role of the teacher, (4) the responsibility for learning, and (5) the purpose and processes of evaluation (Weimer, 2002). Although the balance of power, the function of the content, and the role of the teacher are primarily determined by your instructor, there are still steps you can take to develop a more learner-centered approach for yourself. This is because the responsibility for learning and the purpose and processes of evaluation rests on changes you, the student, can and will undertake. During this course, you will personally interact with your peers and the course content in ways that will result in better retention of the information, increased motivation, higher achievement, greater school satisfaction, and ultimately becoming

a better-prepared professional (Blumberg, 2004). This results in a cooperative learning environment versus a competitive one. The following paragraphs cite examples of how these principles might translate to everyday life in the classroom.

The balance of power principle leans heavily on who is making decisions about learning. In a teacher-centered classroom, the teacher makes most, if not all, of the decisions about learning. This can be readily seen in most course syllabuses. Topics controlled by the teacher usually include what textbook will be used for the course, what assignments will be completed, or what constitutes participation. A teacher committed to a learner-centered classroom may seek your input regarding topics such as these. For instance, the teacher may solicit your help in determining what textbook will be used for the course. To do this, the teacher might select five textbooks that would accomplish the course expectations and then create student textbook review committees and as a group project ask students to make and justify a textbook recommendation (Weimer, 2002). The teacher could also provide you with an opportunity to choose from a menu of course assignments designed to reach the total point value for the course. This means that each student would have the chance to select what items he or she wanted to be evaluated on. Additionally, the teacher could involve you in classroom policy making, such as determining how points are earned for classroom participation. In groups, your teacher would ask you to address specific questions that relate to credit for participation, such as “What behaviors should count positively toward participation credit? Should some participation behaviors count more? And if so, which ones?” (Weimer, 2002). After answers are generated, class discussions follow to resolve any disagreements as well as provide needed refinements. The process concludes with a class vote. The participation policy then becomes a part of the course syllabus.

Even when a teacher does not engage in these types of strategies, you can still do a number of things to be an **empowered learner**. Knowing the difference between adequate and inadequate preparation for assignments and exams, you can take responsibility for your own preparation. Once given a course outline, you can develop your own schedule that allows you time to meet deadlines. Rather than waiting until the last minute to complete assignments or projects, you can plan ahead. Something as simple as becoming familiar with the course syllabus and schedule can empower you to take responsibility for and develop strategies for meeting your goals for the class.

empowered learner

A learner who can take responsibility for preparing for course requirements and distinguish between being adequately prepared and being underprepared.

With regard to the function of the content, you should be prepared to interact with the course material differently than you may have experienced in past classes. Even if little attention is given to teaching learning skills (e.g., note-taking, summarizing) and learner awareness (e.g., self-assessment, personal learning style) while building your knowledge, a learner-centered approach links these two concepts intimately with the course content. A learner-centered approach means you will experience the content firsthand through active-learning strategies that are designed to engage and motivate you throughout the class. For instance, when learning about career possibilities in kinesiology, you might elect to observe and interview a working professional. During this activity, you will practice vital learning skills such as note-taking, generating meaningful questions, and summarizing what you have found. In terms of learner awareness, you would complete a self-assessment that discusses your strengths and weaknesses as they relate to performing successfully in that job. Active-learning strategies do not need to be developed by the teacher. You should always be thinking about ways you can better engage the material. If you find an active-learning strategy particularly helpful in one class, perhaps you can incorporate that strategy into your other classes.

Some teachers assume that students know what learning strategies work for them. This may not be a good assumption to make, because we can always refine and improve our learning strategies. In contrast, some teachers provide so many different learning strategies that it can feel overwhelming. When trying to understand new learning strategies interferes with our ability to understand course content, it is as much as a problem as not having enough resources or appropriate strategies to enhance learning.

STOP AND THINK



Identify someone who works in a professional setting related to kinesiology. What qualities does the person believe contribute to professional and personal success? What qualities does he or she believe create problems that can inhibit success?



It is important that you become critically engaged in and self-aware of how your own strategies and habits promote successful learning of the content.

STUDENT IS CENTER STAGE

In a traditional college course, the role of the instructor is that of an actor—on stage and the center of focus for students. In other words, in traditional instruction, teachers dominate the activities that occur in the classroom, such as selecting and preparing the materials; leading and controlling discussions; and providing notes, diagrams, and graphs (Weimer, 2002). When you are committed to a learner-centered approach, you can situate the teacher's role as a guide who facilitates learning. With this approach, you are putting yourself alongside the teacher as a partner in the learning process. When a teacher sets up guidelines to conduct a debate in class, it is you, rather than the teacher, who is at the center of the activity. During the debate, the teacher is positioned *off center stage* by recording the arguments each side constructs on the board. Once the arguments are cited, the teacher may have each side meet and discuss the strongest argument on their side as well as how to address the best arguments from the opposing side. Finally, volunteers from each side role-play these arguments. Time can be taken at the conclusion of class to enhance your learner awareness by completing a peer-assessment on each of your group members (Weimer, 2002). Even if these latter steps are not part of the formal classroom activities, you can still adopt these **learner-centered strategies**.

learner-centered strategies

Activities and behaviors that enable you to take responsibility for and maximize your learning.

Our discussion here highlights that the responsibility for learning ultimately lies with you, the student. A teacher can facilitate your learning by setting up an environment that is welcoming and productive—an atmosphere that helps to maximize learning. This may include fewer rules and requirements than you may be accustomed to, but the idea is to help you move toward becoming a responsible class member who understands that there are logical consequences involved when making decisions about your learning. You do not need your teacher to ask you to write about your experiences in classes where you believed you learned a lot and classes you may have not. You can identify these conditions on your own and discuss them with other students outside of class. It would be an interesting experience to discuss and summarize in the classroom these conditions and use them to

establish a set of guidelines that promote learning (Weimer, 2002). Regardless of whether these guidelines become part of the syllabus and course website or become your own personal guidelines, they can serve as daily reminders about how learning can be promoted rather than simply a list of disciplinary procedures.

Letter grades are part of learner-centered classrooms just as much as they are in teacher-centered classrooms. Although the purpose and processes of evaluation may be different, if you are committed to a learner-centered approach, then you are concerned about the larger picture. Rather than focusing on the grade itself, you should focus on how evaluation and learning are closely linked so that your grade more accurately reflects what you have learned throughout the semester. Oftentimes, students take a course and receive a high grade but find out that this knowledge is forgotten soon after the final exam. You can adopt a learner-centered approach through the use of a variety of strategies to generate opportunities to deepen your knowledge by applying it later in the course and throughout your academic career.

Imagine your teacher designs a self-assessment activity after the first exam to help you reflect on your study skills. You are asked to respond to the following set of prompts:

1. What content did you know best? Why?
2. What content did you struggle with? Why?
3. Discuss three strategies you used to prepare for this exam. Which ones worked? Why do you think they worked?
4. Which ones did not work? Why?
5. Outline a plan to improve your preparation for the next exam.

Completing this exercise should not only improve your next exam score, but also point out any content you may need to relearn as well as enlighten you on the best ways that you learn.

If you have not experienced the learner-centered approach before, then you may be hesitant or resist when asked to participate in this way. You are not alone. Resistance is a natural occurrence when dealing with these sorts

STOP AND THINK



The purpose of a course is to learn/master content. The letter grade is only symbolic of the learning that has occurred. What would happen if students did *not* receive a grade in a teacher-centered environment? Would the outcome be different in a learner-centered environment?

self-assessment

An activity that allows you to reflect on how well you are learning and identify what learning-centered strategies work best for you.

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of changes. Keep in mind that being a successful learner requires many of the same features as excelling in sport: consistent training, development of advanced skills, acquisition of good habits, and evaluation of performance. You can seek guidance from your teachers and classmates on the process, but be patient, because the journey will be slow and gradual.

In a classroom environment that focuses on the learner-centered approach, your teacher will put several things in place to ease your transition from a traditional to a learner-centered classroom so that you become a fully independent and self-directed student. First, your teacher will communicate with you frequently and clearly about what is going on in class. Second, this communication will positively encourage and reinforce what you will be asked to do in class. Third, your teacher will often solicit feedback from you, especially at the end of an assignment or exam or during a semester-long project (Weimer, 2002). Your teacher wants to know how things are going, what is working well, what is not, and

how these activities are affecting your learning. Be ready; learning is hard work. It will require you to take on more responsibility than you may be comfortable with, but the rewards are far-reaching.

Commitment to a Holistic Approach

Although interdisciplinary in nature, kinesiology is best understood from a holistic approach. The term holistic approach is used to refer to many different things, so it is important to understand the specific context used here. Simply put, a holistic approach considers the whole to be greater than the sum of its parts. For kinesiology, the “whole” refers to all forms of human movement/physical activity; not only sport, dance, exercise, or rehabilitative forms. A holistic approach influences how we understand experiences

of physical activity, the nature of persons, and the field of kinesiology. Our commitment to a holistic approach will enable us to improve how we get people moving.

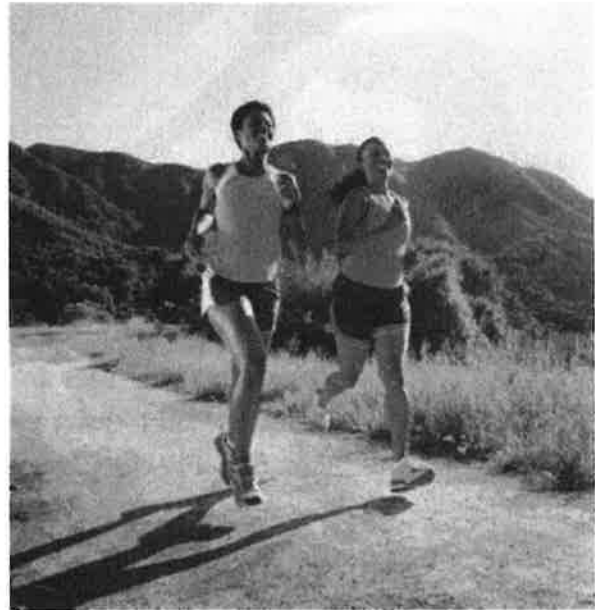
The first step is to recognize how **experiences of physical activity** are holistic in themselves. Many of us chose kinesiology because of the meaningful experiences we had with physical activity. Our own passion for physical activity is something that we want to share with others. Because physical activity has made a difference in our lives, we want to help others learn how it can make a difference in their lives. But it is important to recognize that it is the coherent, complex, and unique experiences we have with our physical activity that make it so meaningful. We have to recognize the dynamic social and cultural forces that are at play when people decide to be physically active. We have to be careful not to diminish or discredit other people's experiences because we could mistakenly discourage them from an activity they already enjoy or deter them from taking up a new movement form.

experiences of physical activity

The variety of ways that people participate in physical activity that are coherent, complex, diverse, and meaningful.



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SUCCESSFUL KINESIOLOGY EXPERIENCES MUST BE AS DIVERSE AS THE PEOPLE WHO MOVE

Having a holistic approach means that we recognize the need for a variety of physical activity experiences based on the variety of personal experiences. We need to recognize and appreciate people's diverse interests and



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of physical activity, the nature of persons, and the field of kinesiology. Our commitment to a holistic approach will enable us to improve how we get people moving.

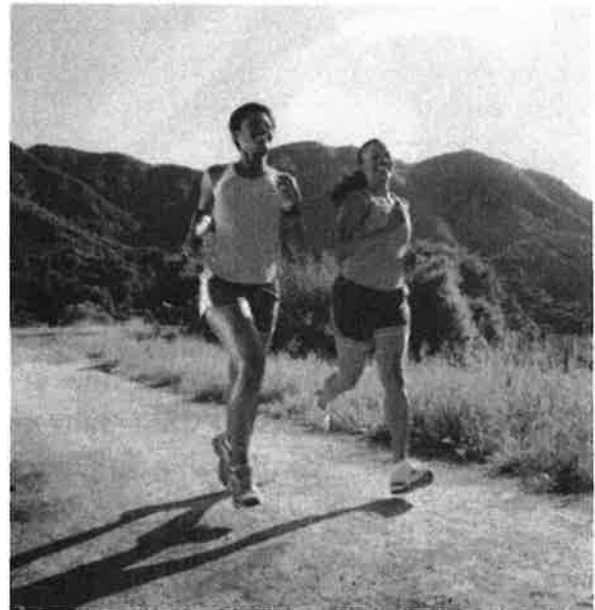
The first step is to recognize how **experiences of physical activity** are holistic in themselves. Many of us chose kinesiology because of the meaningful experiences we had with physical activity. Our own passion for physical activity is something that we want to share with others. Because physical activity has made a difference in our lives, we want to help others learn how it can make a difference in their lives. But it is important to recognize that it is the coherent, complex, and unique experiences we have with our physical activity that make it so meaningful. We have to recognize the dynamic social and cultural forces that are at play when people decide to be physically active. We have to be careful not to diminish or discredit other people's experiences because we could mistakenly discourage them from an activity they already enjoy or deter them from taking up a new movement form.

experiences of physical activity

The variety of ways that people participate in physical activity that are coherent, complex, diverse, and meaningful.



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SUCCESSFUL KINESIOLOGY EXPERIENCES MUST BE AS DIVERSE AS THE PEOPLE WHO MOVE

Having a holistic approach means that we recognize the need for a variety of physical activity experiences based on the variety of personal experiences. We need to recognize and appreciate people's diverse interests and

capabilities. Some people like competition, whereas others do not. Some people are energetic, whereas others are not. Some people love to dance, while others do not. Some people have many skills, whereas others have few. Some need social support and encouragement, whereas others need time and space to figure it out on their own. Some are enthusiastic; others are intimidated. Some require special accommodations. Some require access. When rehabilitating from an injury, some require motivation just to do the minimum, whereas others may need to be restrained so that they do not do too much. This list is by no means exhaustive. The list illustrates that the physical activity experiences of those we will be working with, and for, are often very different from our own. We do not need to ignore, or deny, that our experiences of physical activity are personally meaningful, but we need to be thoughtful about how we can help others develop new experiences so that they can find richer and more meaningful experiences as well.

holistic interpretation of a person

The view that we must take seriously and account for all aspects of a person's experience, realizing that mind, body, and spirit are interconnected.

dualistic interpretation of a person

The view that body and mind are separate and distinct parts of human beings and that we can isolate one aspect from the other within a person.

If we are able to consider experiences of physical activity holistically, then we are well on our way to having a **holistic interpretation of a person**; mind, body, and spirit interrelated and interconnected. Unfortunately, a more common view is the **dualistic interpretation of a person**; that is, seeing people as being composed of two parts: a body and a mind. From a dualistic perspective, the kinesiologist is thought to work on the body. This perspective can lead to several negative consequences, the most important being that our field is undervalued because it does not deal with the mind. This pressure is usually exerted from people outside our field, but within our field, we need to worry about a reductive, materialist interpretation that views people as nothing more than their material substance. Investigating the matter (or material body) of persons to see how they respond to different types of training can lead to important findings, but it is insufficient. In order to determine the best training program, taking a reductive account of the training responses of bodies is insufficient. Although it tells us important information, we need to remember that people's experiences matter, too. The best training program is based on the individual's needs and values. A holistic interpretation of a person requires us to take seriously all aspects of a person's experience. Although there might be things we can rule out (e.g., because they are unsafe) or rule in (e.g., the need to achieve a minimum fitness level) across the board, the specifics of how to engage people in physical activity requires that we know who they are and who they want to become.



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THE PARTS OF KINESIOLOGY ARE CRITICAL TO THE WHOLE

This leads us to the importance of taking a holistic approach to the field of kinesiology. As you progress through your major, you will likely take specific classes in subdisciplines such as exercise physiology, motor learning,

STOP AND THINK

- Review your campus and/or community newspaper over the course of a few weeks. How often are references made to different forms of physical activity?
- What topics received the most attention?
- What forms of physical activity did not receive adequate coverage?
- In your view, how does this media coverage influence how people think about physical activity?
- Does media coverage generally make the work of kinesiology professionals easier or more difficult?



biomechanics, and sport psychology. It is important to remember that the insight and knowledge that these subdisciplines bring to our understanding of physical activity are interconnected. If we are serious about promoting meaningful physical activity experiences and we understand those experiences holistically, then we cannot help but recognize that subdisciplines are mutually informing. As an example, consider a basic physical activity experience such as running. There are lessons to be learned from all the subdisciplines. People do not need to know about any of the subdisciplines to experience running or experience meaningful running, but if they are curious or interested, then they could turn to any or all of the subdisciplines to learn more and deepen their experience. As professionals, it is important for us to have some sense of how the subdisciplines are interrelated. As we deepen our own knowledge, it is important to recognize ways in which one subdiscipline informs another. For example, exercise physiologists often say that fitness should be fun. Unfortunately, how they operationalize fun often does not hold for everyone. Exercise, such as running on a treadmill, may never be fun for some people. Thus, many trainers are at a loss to figure out how to make it fun. Physical educators can help

people develop skills in activities that meet demands for fitness but that are also fun. Sport philosophers can help define concepts that allow us to better understand how physical activity is personally meaningful. But exercise physiologists can also inform sport philosophy. When developing ethical arguments relating to the fairness of a Paralympic athlete using a prosthetic device to compete in the Olympics, it is necessary to understand the physiological and biomechanical aspects of the issue. Are the physiological attributes of the Paralympic athlete equivalent to the other runners? Do the mechanisms of the prosthetic device enable the Paralympic runner to achieve similar results by doing more or less work? Exercise physiologists and biomechanists must answer these questions, and their answers should inform the sport philosophers' analysis. On your own, as you read this text, you should identify ways in which the subdisciplines are mutually informing and interconnected.

A commitment to a holistic approach in kinesiology begins with recognizing the importance of people's experience of physical activity. In large part, our good (and sometimes bad) experiences are what made us want to be involved in a profession that focuses on forms of movement. We recognize how our physical activity experiences can make our lives more meaningful and want to help others



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experience that same enthusiasm for physical activity. Based on the holistic approach to physical activity, we now recognize how we should assume a holistic approach to persons and the field of kinesiology. In doing so, we best prepare ourselves to utilize the insight and knowledge of kinesiology to help others achieve their goals and experience meaningful forms of physical activity.

Implementing the Approaches

It is one thing to know what the three different approaches are. It is quite another thing to adopt these approaches as guiding principles and implement them in academic preparation. So as you get started on your journey in this introduction to the field, make sure to practice these approaches on a regular basis. Once you incorporate these approaches into your

STOP AND THINK



Coach A thinks the main function of a coach is to get the

players physically ready to play at the highest level possible.

Coach B thinks the main function of a coach is to get the players holistically ready (as individuals and as a team) to play at the highest level possible.

- Identify all the differences between Coach A and Coach B in regards to their coaching philosophy. How would their different approaches and beliefs shape their coaching decisions?
- Identify the differences between coaching practices between Coach A and Coach B.
- How might they structure their day-by-day interactions with athletes differently?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of their different approaches?

daily study habits, your initial hard work will pay off by making future hard work easier and more manageable. So how can you implement these strategies?

focus

Directing sustained attention toward an area of interest.

prepared

Making an organized effort to skillfully or knowledgeably engage in an activity.

interpersonal skills

The ability to effectively relate to and communicate with other people in a given context.

You can develop your competency skills in a number of different ways through your use of this text. You can set aside time to actively **focus** on both the content and the activities in each chapter. You can do assigned readings and activities before class so that you are **prepared** to actively engage in classroom discussions. You can develop your communication and **interpersonal skills** by discussing your answers to Stop and Think activities and Discussion Questions with other students. You can identify your strengths and weaknesses in regards to competency and professionalism (see Table 2-1) and take time to improve upon your weaknesses now in order to be better prepared for advanced classes.

You can develop your learner-centered skills by engaging in features that are part of every chapter. Note the Learning Objectives at the beginning of each chapter and check that you can meet them after reading the chapter. Take time to understand the bold key terms in your own words. Use the Discussion Questions to think more about the course content and take time to discuss your answers with other students. Most important, take time to complete the Stop and Think activities. Although these activities vary, they all have several things in common. First, they prevent you from being a passive reader by asking you to actively engage the chapter content. Second, they challenge you to think about the content in ways that deepen your comprehension and promote your ability to apply that content in different settings. Most important, they promote learning strategies that are learner centered, because ultimately you are responsible for engaging with and completing the Stop and Think activities. If you find some Stop and Think activities particularly helpful, you can modify them for the content of other chapters or implement them in other classes. For example, a chapter does not need to have a Stop and Think activity that asks you to locate a research article focused on its content. You can take the initiative to find a research article related to the main content of each and every chapter. This activity can serve to deepen your understanding of the field of kinesiology. Another learner-centered approach you could adopt is to look for additional academic and educational resources that inform the course content. For example, the website “The Science of Sport” (sportsscientists.com) is a good example of a resource that applies

“sports science concepts and insights to the sports news you see every day, and to the training and performance challenges you face.” Finding and reviewing resources like these not only improves your research skills, but also informs you about different ways that the course content can be put to practical use. You are not only learning new information, but also new applications of that information.

You can develop a holistic approach by thinking seriously about how the multiple subdisciplines inform each other. Every chapter on the subdisciplines identifies several ways that a particular subdiscipline relates to other subdisciplines. Every Case Study not only discusses an issue central to the field of kinesiology, but also demonstrates how a holistic approach is the best strategy for addressing that issue. Many of the Stop and Think



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activities and Discussion Questions challenge you to holistically integrate your knowledge. Although you will likely specialize or focus on a few subdisciplines by your senior year, it is important to remember and value how the subdisciplines are mutually informing. Potential solutions to difficult issues facing the field of kinesiology may actually require an integrated, holistic approach rather than a limited, specialist approach. Ultimately, if we have a deep respect and love for physical activity, then we should have a corresponding respect and admiration for the contributions that each subdiscipline provides to a comprehensive understanding of kinesiology.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

We used four guiding principles in writing this text. First, we sought to be mentors in your development as kinesiology students. Second, we sought to provide rigorous standards so that you are prepared for your future academic work. Third, we sought to share our love for physical activity and the field of kinesiology. Finally, we sought to use a shared voice that is personal yet professional in conveying the above principles and the necessary content for an introduction to the field of kinesiology.

We also had three guiding principles for you as readers. First, that you develop professional competency skills. Second, that you practice learner-centered strategies. Third, that you adopt a holistic understanding of the field of kinesiology.

The popularity of kinesiology as a major was described, and the growing numbers in the field provide the justification for a competency approach. Developing competency skills and qualities are essential for career success and finding fulfillment in your personal and professional dealings with kinesiology.

The essential qualities of a learning-centered approach were presented. The special responsibilities and powers of students in promoting a learning-centered environment were also described.

What it means to approach kinesiology in a holistic manner and how this differs from dualistic approaches was discussed. The importance of each element of kinesiology was emphasized, as well as how the integration of these elements enables kinesiology professionals to serve students and clients in the most effective manner possible.

Finally, strategies for implementing each of these approaches were explained. Actively engaging with the activities in the text has benefits not only for this course, but also for establishing the skills, strategies, habits, and perspectives that will lead to success in your academic pursuits.

