CONTINUING AND ONLINE EDUCATION FORUM

Market Analysis for Online EdD Programs with a Focus in Kinesiology

Custom Research Brief

Research Associate
Leah Finn

Research Manager
Lisa Geraci
Burning Glass – The Education Advisory Board’s Partner for Real-Time Labor Market Data

Part of the data included in this report made possible through our partnership with Burning Glass, a Boston-based firm specializing in use of web spidering technology and Artificial Intelligence engines to mine more than 80 million online job postings for real-time employer demand data. Under the partnership, the Education Advisory Board may use certain features of Burning Glass’s proprietary tool called Labor/Insight™ to answer common member questions about employer demand for specific educational requirements, job titles, and competencies over time and by geography. A fuller description of the tool is available at http://www.burning-glass.com/products/labor.html.

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I. Research Parameters

**Project Challenge**  
Leadership at a member institution approached the Forum with the following questions:

- What is the demand among national and regional employers (in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia) for graduates of a doctoral program in kinesiology education?
- What positions and employment settings are projected to experience the most demand for graduates of this type of program?
- What are the characteristics of online EdD or master’s in kinesiology programs with respect to required credit hours, time to completion, cost, delivery format, and dissertation requirements?
- What resources are required to support online EdD or master’s degree programs, in terms of staff, faculty, technology, and facilities? How do institutions leverage existing resources to develop and maintain the program?
- What demographic and professional characteristics describe the target audience for EdD or master’s degree programs at other institutions?
- What marketing strategies do institutions use to recruit this audience? Which tactics are most effective?
- How successful are other institutions in recruiting students to EdD or master’s in kinesiology programs? Do programs enroll the desired number of students?
- What trends in student demand for EdD or MS programs do administrators observe over time?
- What professional development and employment outcomes have program graduates experienced? What types of careers do graduates of the program pursue?
- What data do administrators collect on alumni outcomes (e.g., employment rates, compensation, etc.)?
- What feedback have institutions received from alumni of the EdD program?

**Project Sources**

- Education Advisory Board’s internal and online (www.educationadvisoryboard.com) research libraries
- College and university websites
The Forum interviewed directors of online EdD programs and/or master’s degree programs in kinesiology at institutions across the country and reviewed data from the Burning Glass Labor/Insight™ job posting analysis tool.

A Guide to the Institutions Profiled in this Brief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Approximate Enrollment (Total/Undergraduate)</th>
<th>Carnegie Classification</th>
<th>Relevant Online Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Carolina University</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>27,000/22,000</td>
<td>Doctoral/Research Universities</td>
<td>Master of Arts in Education – Physical Education Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University B</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>50,000/40,000</td>
<td>Research Universities (very high research activity)</td>
<td>Executive EdD in Curriculum and Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Woman’s University</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>15,000/8,000</td>
<td>Doctoral/Research Universities</td>
<td>Master of Science in Kinesiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Southern Mississippi</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>17,000/14,000</td>
<td>Research Universities (high research activity)</td>
<td>Master of Science in Sport Coaching Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
II. Executive Overview

Key Observations

Between August 2011 and August 2012, employers posted a total of 3,846 advertisements for jobs that require kinesiology education nationally, most commonly for fitness trainers/aerobic instructors and postsecondary teachers. Texas had the greatest number of kinesiology job listings compared to other states, although both North Carolina and Virginia rank among the top 10. Nationally, employers most frequently seek skills in physiology, fitness, and first aid in candidates for kinesiology-related occupations.

Employers in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia posted a total of 365 advertisements for jobs that require kinesiology education between July 2011 and August 2012, mostly for fitness trainers/aerobic instructors and postsecondary teachers. According to job advertisements for kinesiology occupations in this region, employers most often seek candidates with physiology, first aid, and equipment cleaning skills. The employer Lifetime Fitness posted the greatest number of jobs in the region, followed by Boars Head Inn. Colleges and universities represent other common employers of kinesiology-trained positions.

Very few institutions offer online EdD or PhD programs in kinesiology. Only one institution offers a fully online doctorate program in kinesiology, although many universities offer similar programs face-to-face. Sixty-one U.S. universities offer classroom-based doctorate degrees in kinesiology, including eight EdD programs with a kinesiology focus.

Institutions experience rapidly growing student demand for online master’s degree programs in kinesiology as well as online EdD programs. Administrators at one institution increased the cohort size for their online EdD program from 15 to 25 students to meet the rising number of student applications. Another institution has experienced continued growth in demand for the online master’s in physical education although applications for the face-to-face version have declined.

Online master’s degree programs in kinesiology require completion of 36 credits and can be completed in one to two years; doctorate programs take four years to complete. Students can finish online master’s degree programs in less than two years on a full-time schedule, but most students complete programs on a part time schedule. The EdD program examined in this report requires completion of 64 credits and takes four years to complete, including summer terms.

Institutions’ master’s in kinesiology programs cost between $13,200 and $28,512 total and between $212 and $792 per credit, considering different rates for resident and non-resident students. The EdD program at Texas A&M University costs between $13,322 and $18,240 for resident students and between $18,480 and $35,090 for non-residents. The University of Southern Mississippi charges equivalent tuition for resident and non-resident students, and the program at Texas Woman’s University does not admit non-residents to the program.

Most institutions require either a professional internship or a problem-based research project as the culminating exercise for online graduate programs. Master’s in kinesiology programs require students to choose between either an internship or a research project, while the EdD program requires both. Contacts caution that the online setting may impede
successful thesis research because it can limit collaboration between students and research advisers.

**Four or fewer dedicated faculty members support contact institutions’ online programs.** Faculty from outside the program, including those from other areas of the kinesiology department and/or the education department, teach courses within examined programs.

**Instructors use the Blackboard learning management system, video and audio recording technology, and collaborative online tools to support online programs.** The Blackboard platform supports programs at contact institutions; at the University of Southern Mississippi, a grant from Blackboard funds all program technology. Instructors also use Centra, Skype, Camtasia, Voiceboard, Google Calendar, and Blackboard Collaborate.

**Administrators recruit students to programs through face-to-face interactions at professional conferences, word of mouth, and some online advertising.** Program administrators recruit many students at national and regional coaching conferences. The University of Southern Mississippi also invests in online advertising through an external marketing firm. Contacts from all institutions believe many of their students learn about the program through word of mouth.

**Most students enroll in online graduate coaching/education programs at contact institutions part-time while teaching or coaching in a K-12 setting.** Students enter programs to gain additional credentialing, leadership roles within their current employment setting, and higher salaries. Most programs serve students in the U.S. only, though the EdD program at Texas A&M University serves some students living abroad.
III. Industry Analysis

Employer Demand for Kinesiology Education

Fitness Trainer and Postsecondary Teacher Jobs In Greatest Demand

In a scan of national and regional (including North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia) job postings from July 2011-August 2012, fitness trainer and postsecondary teacher positions most frequently list kinesiology/exercise science education as a requirement. Nationally, fitness trainers are in significantly greater demand than other positions; 1,342 job postings appeared for this title, while 270 advertisements appeared for the next most listed type of position, “Postsecondary Teachers, All Other.” Although the demand for fitness trainers in the North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia is still higher than for postsecondary teachers, advertisements for postsecondary teachers represent a slightly higher percentage of total jobs advertised (24 percent, versus 37 percent nationally).

Top Occupations Requiring Kinesiology/Exercise Science Education

National, August 2011-August 2012

Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™

Top Occupations Requiring Kinesiology/Exercise Science Education

North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, August 2011-August 2012

Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™
**Most Job Postings Require Skills in Physiology and First Aid**

Both nationally and regionally, listings for positions requiring kinesiology education most frequently require skills in physiology and first aid. Fitness, first aid, training programs, health promotion and sales are also popular required skills among national and regional postings.

![Bar chart showing demand for skills in physiology, fitness, first aid, training programs, health promotion, sales, and other related fields.](chart)

Source: Burning Glass Labor/Insight™

**North Carolina and Virginia Rank among Top States for Kinesiology Jobs**

According to job posting patterns, Texas has the greatest demand for jobs that require kinesiology education. Over 250 job advertisements were posted over the past year, significantly more than the number listed in Minnesota, the state with the second highest demand. North Carolina and Virginia rank among the 10 states with the highest demand for kinesiology jobs between 2011-2012, but South Carolina has the 31st highest demand, with 26 postings over the past year.

![Bar chart showing demand for skills in physiology, fitness, first aid, training programs, health promotion, sales, and other related fields for jobs in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.](chart)
Lifetime Fitness, Boars Head Inn, and Universities Post Most Kinesiology Jobs

The top employers of individuals trained in kinesiology education within the North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia region are Lifetime Fitness and Boars Head Inn, which listed 53 and 30 opportunities respectively over the past year. A number of universities in the area, including High Point University, George Mason University, and the College of William and Mary, also listed jobs with kinesiology education requirements.
IV. Trends in Peer and Competitor Programs

Competitive Landscape for Online Kinesiology Doctorates

No Institutions Offer Online EdD in Kinesiology Programs

Although a number of institutions nationwide offer face-to-face EdD programs with a focus in kinesiology and/or online master’s degree programs in kinesiology, only one online EdD or PhD in kinesiology program exists. The United States Sports Academy offers a related program, an online Doctor of Education in Sports Management.

61 Institutions Offer Face-to-Face Doctorate Degrees in Kinesiology, Including Eight EdDs

The National Academy of Kinesiology recognizes a total of 61 U.S. institutions that offer doctoral programs in kinesiology. Eight of those institutions offer EdD in kinesiology programs (as opposed to PhD or other doctoral degrees), including:

- Auburn University (AL)
- University of Arkansas (AK)
- University of Idaho (ID)
- University of Kentucky (KY)
- Columbia University (NY)
- University of Texas at Austin (TX)
- Texas A&M University (TX)
- University of Virginia (VA)

Overview of Profiled Programs

Since so few online EdD in kinesiology programs exist, the Forum examined online master’s degree programs in kinesiology and online EdD degrees without a kinesiology focus to gauge potential student demand for the proposed program.

Overview of Examined Programs at Contact Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Program Requirements</th>
<th>Schedule, Format, and Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| East Carolina University MA in Education: Physical Education | 36 total credit hours, including:  
  - 13 required courses, including two practicum experiences and two research-focused courses (one introducing research techniques and one research seminar)  
  - One additional course chosen from an option of three approved courses | Schedule: Program typically takes two years on a part-time schedule  
Format: All courses are delivered online  
Cost: $7,632 total ($212/credit) for residents; $28,512 total ($792/credit) for non-residents |
Programs Require 36-64 Credits, Can be Taken Partly or Fully Online

Contact institutions’ master’s degree programs in kinesiology require 36 credits, which students can complete in one to two years on a full time schedule or two to four years on a part time schedule. The EdD program at University B requires 64 credits and can be completed within four years including summer terms.

Programs Cost Between $212 and $792 Per Credit

In total, master’s in kinesiology programs cost between $7,632 and $13,200 for state residents and between $13,200 and $28,512 for non-residents. Per credit, state residents pay between $212 and $366, while non-residents pay between $366 and $792. Only East Carolina University charges a different tuition rate for state non-residents; the University of Southern Mississippi charges an equivalent rate for in-state and out-of-state students taking online programs, and Texas Woman’s University does not accept non-residents into online programs.
Students May Complete Some Courses On-Campus

Although all institutions offer programs online, students in master’s degree in kinesiology programs at the University of Southern Mississippi and Texas Woman’s University may complete some courses on-campus. Students at Texas Woman’s University may enroll in face-to-face versions of statistics and research methods courses. Additionally, students may choose from several on-campus course options to fulfill the six-credit elective requirement. At the University of Southern Mississippi, some courses that count towards the online MS in sport coaching education are sometimes available on-campus.

Programs Require Internship Experience or Culminating Research Project

Online master’s in kinesiology and EdD programs require students to complete either a professional internship experience or a thesis/culminating research project; the executive EdD program at University B requires both. Students at the University of Southern Mississippi and Texas Woman’s University choose between a thesis or an internship experience for their culminating exercise. Students who select the internship option must find the professional opportunity independently and gain approval from program administrators. This framework allows online students located far away from the university to gain work experience in their own geographic region.

Online Doctoral Programs Should Include Problem-Based Research

Some contacts worry that the online delivery format is unsuitable for the advanced level of research typically included in a doctoral program of study. Contacts at the University of Southern Mississippi and East Carolina University believe that a successful doctorate program should include face-to-face collaboration among students, faculty, and research advisors, especially in support of research projects. The online format deprives students of access to research laboratories and equipment essential to doctorate-level scientific research.

To address this challenge, several programs require students to conduct a problem-based research project within a professional internship setting. For example, EdD students at University B complete a “Record of Study” that can include either a curriculum development project validated through pilot testing or a field research study on a problem observed in the student’s professional internship. Research projects use empirical data to examine a curricular, instructional, supervisory, or administrative problem. Students in the online MS in kinesiology program at Texas Woman’s University may complete a similar problem-based research study within a professional internship context. For example, one student in the master’s in kinesiology program with a sport management focus led a study on female attendance rates at baseball games within the context of an internship with a baseball team.

Contacts find that this type of research suitable to an online program since students conduct the study within the setting of an internship experience and require less support from their home institutions. Students interact with research advisors using email, videoconferencing technology, or telephone.
Supporting Online Programs

Four or Fewer Dedicated Faculty Members Support Programs

Between zero and four dedicated faculty members support contact institutions’ online EdD and master’s in kinesiology programs. Two full-time faculty support the MA in physical education at East Carolina University, and administrators are hiring a third. At Texas Woman’s University, one full-time faculty member is dedicated to the MS in kinesiology with a focus in sport management, and another faculty member teaches several program courses. Four full-time faculty support the online MS in sport coaching education at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Faculty Resources Dedicated to Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Dedicated Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MA in Education: Physical Education at East Carolina University</td>
<td>3 FTE faculty; support from education faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdD in Executive Education at University B</td>
<td>0 FTE faculty; support from other education faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS in Kinesiology: Sport Management at Texas Woman’s University</td>
<td>1 FTE faculty member; 1 part-time instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS in Sport Coaching Education at University of Southern Mississippi</td>
<td>4 FTE faculty; support from outside faculty as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty from Other Divisions Provide Program Support

Most institutions leverage faculty resources in other divisions of the kinesiology department and/or the education department to instruct program courses. For example, students within the MA in physical education program at East Carolina University complete nine of the 36 required credit hours through classes in the education department. Professors from other kinesiology programs, including sport management and motor learning, also teach courses approved for the physical education program. The online executive EdD program at University B receives all personnel support, including that of faculty instructors and administrative staff, from members of other divisions of the education department; the program employs no dedicated faculty or staff.

Instructors Use Blackboard and Enhance Courses with Video and Audio Technology

All contact institutions use the Blackboard LMS to support online course delivery, although administrators at Texas A&M University are testing other systems through a pilot program. Instructors use video and audio recording technology to record course content and facilitate virtual interaction in class and group work settings. For example, administrators of the MA in physical education program at East Carolina University use Centra video technology to support synchronous virtual course meetings; the tool enables instructors to “spotlight” students who speak in class. Instructors in the kinesiology master’s program at Texas Woman’s University record podcasts of course content and administrative announcements.

Commonly Used Technology

- **Video Recording:** Centra, Skype, Camtasia
- **Audio:** Voiceboard, podcasts
- **Support for group work:** Google Calendar, Blackboard Collaborate, blogs, wikis
Marketing Online Programs

Programs Recruit Students through Word of Mouth, Interactions at Conferences, and Online Advertising

Word of Mouth and Online Advertising Attract Many Students

Although institutions invest in some marketing efforts to promote coaching and education programs, prospective students active in the coaching and teaching community often learn about the program from colleagues and research details online.

Institutions maintain updated program websites and engage in some online advertising. The University of Southern Mississippi outsources online advertising to an external firm using funding from the Blackboard grant; ads for the program appear on gradschools.com and the Peterson’s Guide websites.

Program Administrators Recruit at Professional Conferences

Institutions also promote online coaching and teaching programs at professional conferences. Program administrators at the University of Southern Mississippi, Texas Woman’s University, and University B appear at coaching and education conferences such as the National Coaching Conference to distribute program brochures and talk to prospective students. A survey of program applicants during the admissions process at the University of Southern Mississippi found that 85-90 percent of students originally learned about the program through a face-to-face interaction with a recruiter at a conference.

Blackboard Technology Grant Supports Program at the University of Southern Mississippi

The online MS program in sport coaching education at University of Southern Mississippi receives funding and technology support through a grant from Blackboard that the University administration awarded to the program three years ago. The grant of $150,000 funds ongoing training opportunities for instructors new to teaching online, technology support through Blackboard products, and marketing, which is outsourced to an external firm. The award includes several lines of funding to support program growth, which may fund additional faculty positions in the future.
V. Student Demand and Career Outcomes

**Common Career Paths of Target Audience**

*Most Students Teach or Coach Full-Time in K-12 Setting*

Most students complete online master’s in kinesiology or EdD programs part-time as they continue to work as a coach and/or teacher in a K-12 setting. Since the EdD program at University B requires applicants to have over five years’ teaching experience, many students occupy leadership positions in schools, districts, or educational service centers. Common titles include assistant principal, principal, or curriculum coordinator.

*Growing Minority of Students Enroll Immediately After College*

At East Carolina University, a growing number of students enroll in the master’s in physical education program immediately after completing undergraduate study. Contacts believe that these students enter the program because they cannot find a job and seek additional training to enhance their competitiveness. Although this group represents a minority of students within the program, administrators observe that more and more students fit this profile each year.

*K-12 Administrators, Not Classroom Teachers, Seek EdD Program*

Administrators of the online executive EdD program at University B changed the focus of the program in response to student needs. Education department leaders initially designed the program to serve K-12 classroom teachers seeking leadership degrees including the state principal licensure; several classes within the program prepared students to take the licensure exam. However, the program experienced more demand from experienced educators working in leadership positions such as assistant principals, principals, or coordinators who did not seek the state principal licensure. In response, administrators eliminated the classes preparing teachers for the principal licensure and shifted the focus of recruitment efforts.

**Graduate Assistants at University of Southern Mississippi Provide Steady Stream of Students**

Each year, the online MS in sport coaching education at East Carolina University enrolls a number of students who work as graduate assistants (GAs) in the University’s athletic department and/or sports teams. The master’s degree program is suitable for this population because it provides education and training to complement the hands-on experience GAs receive in assistant coaching positions. GAs receive tuition assistance benefits from the University that they can apply to the program. Because the University hires new graduate assistants frequently, this population provides the program with a steady stream of new students.

**Programs Serve Mostly Domestic Students, Primarily In-State**

Students across the country enter programs at the University of Southern Mississippi and University B. The EdD program at University B also serves a few American students teaching internationally in locations including Azerbaijan and Nicaragua. In contrast, the audience for programs at Texas Woman’s University and East Carolina University resides in-state. Administrators at Texas Woman’s University discourage out-of-state students from enrolling in the online kinesiology program due to federal regulations for operating distance education programs across state lines. As a result, 85 percent of students in the program reside in the nearby Dallas-Fort Worth area.
Students Seek Leadership Roles, Higher Salaries, and/or Board Certification

Students often seek master’s degrees in kinesiology in order to earn a higher salary; in many states, including North Carolina, public school districts automatically award a salary raise to physical education teachers that hold a master’s degree. Many students enter the MA in physical education program at East Carolina University to prepare for national board certification in kinesiology. Three courses within the program include curricula that align with the learning outcomes required by the board certification exam. Although not required for practice as a coach or physical education teacher, national board certification prepares practitioners for leadership roles such as athletic director or department chair.

Trends in Student Demand

Administrators Experience Growing Demand for Programs

Student demand for online coaching and education programs has grown in recent years; contact institutions meet enrollment goals for programs and in some cases have expanded the size of cohorts. For example, administrators at University B increased the cohort size of the EdD program from 15 to 25 to accommodate rising student interest. Contacts at the University of Southern Mississippi observe growing market demand for coaching education programs as the field emerges as an increasingly academic and research-focused discipline. In response to this evolution, administrators recently developed a new doctoral program in coaching education to serve professionals seeking postsecondary coaching positions, although this program is only available face-to-face.
VI. Networking Contacts

**East Carolina University**
Dr. Dana Espinosa  
Associate Professor, Physical Education Program  
Phone: (252) 328-2976  
Email: espinosad@ecu.edu

**Texas Woman’s University**
Kimberly Miloch  
Associate Professor and Coordinator, Kinesiology  
Phone: (940) 898-2592  
Email: kmiloch@twu.edu

**University of Southern Mississippi**
Melissa Murray  
Assistant Professor of Sport Coaching Education  
Phone: (601) 266-4369  
Email: melissa.murray@usm.edu