

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University Proposal 32-26

Proposal to Rename the PhD in Integrative Physiology to the PhD in Kinesiology & Integrative Physiology¹

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Program/Degree Type: Ph.D.

Program Title: PhD in Kinesiology and Integrative Physiology

Planned Implementation Date: Fall 2026

Program location/modality: In-person, Michigan Tech Houghton Campus

Target Student Population: Potential PhD students who hold an undergraduate or Master's degree in Kinesiology, Human Physiology, or a related health sciences or applied health field.

General Description and Characteristics of the Program: The Department of Kinesiology and Integrative Physiology currently offers a PhD in Integrative Physiology, focusing primarily on a systems-level approach to understanding the role of physiology in health.

General Rationale: Since the initial development of the PhD in Integrative Physiology, the Department of Kinesiology and Integrative Physiology has expanded the breadth of its research capabilities. Research in the department has grown to represent the broader core disciplines of Kinesiology, including but not limited to biomechanics and motor behavior. Consequently, the proposed name change is needed to better reflect the breadth of research performed by the department's research faculty, and the core requirements of the existing degree. The name change also aligns more directly with the department's existing MS degree in Kinesiology, which will improve visibility of the PhD program for students interested in completing both an MS and PhD.

Specific Rationale:

- a. The proposed name better promotes the University's strategic initiative of One Hundred PhDs by providing greater diversity of potential student research interests with the goal of increasing PhD student enrolment.
- b. Domestically, this name change will improve visibility, including recognition as an approved program by the National Academy of Kinesiology. This increased visibility is essential for recruiting students eligible for fellowships like the Health Research Institute's recently awarded NIH T32 grant.

¹ National Academy of Kinesiology, "What Is Kinesiology?," accessed January 16, 2026, <https://nationalacademyofkinesiology.org/what-is-kinesiology/>.

- c. The proposed name better aligns with other similar programs with which we can compete while still providing some differentiation to promote its uniqueness.

Related Programs: Within Michigan Tech there are no other Kinesiology PhD programs. Neither of the other two universities on Michigan's Upper Peninsula (Northern Michigan University and Lake Superior State University) offer PhD programs. Several regional American Kinesiology Association member programs directly include "Kinesiology" or Human Movement Science in the title of their PhD program, including:

- Michigan State University's Department of Kinesiology: PhD in Kinesiology
- Wayne State University's College of Education: PhD in Kinesiology
- University of Michigan's School of Kinesiology: PhD in Human Movement Science
- Oakland University's Department of Human Movement Science: PhD in Human Movement Science
- University of Wisconsin's- Madison Campus Department of Kinesiology: PhD in Kinesiology
- University of Minnesota's School of Kinesiology: PhD in Kinesiology
- University of Illinois-Chicago's College of Health

Projected Number of Students: Based on enrollments in the current PhD in Integrative Physiology, enrollment in the new Ph.D. program is expected to initially be on the order of 6-10 students.

Specialized Accreditation Requirements: No change

Professional Licensure Requirements: None