

Use this form to request authorization to plan a new baccalaureate major, associate degree program, or graduate program; formal approval or waiver of an Intent to Plan is required before a university may submit a related full proposal request for a new program. The Executive Director and/or their designees may request additional information. After the university President approves the Intent to Plan, submit a signed copy to the Executive Director through the System Academic Officer through the proper process. Only post the Intent to Plan to the university website for review by other universities after approval by the Executive Director, System Academic Officer or designee. This form is meant to capture critical elements for stakeholders to review prior to a full proposal.

University NSU - Northern State University

Degree MS : Master of Science

Name of Major X999 : New Major Requested

Sports Sciences

Specialization Required? *Note: If the new proposed program includes specific specializations within it, complete and submit a New Specialization Form for each proposed specialization and attach it to this form. Since specializations appear on transcripts, they require Board approval.*

College/Department 5E : NSU School of Education/NHPE : Sports Sciences

Intended Date of Full Proposal Fall 2024

Planned CIP Code 31.0501

Program Description

1. Provide the working program description that may appear in the university catalog.

The Master of Science in Sports Sciences provides a flexible and dynamic educational experience by offering students the choice among four specializations: biomechanics & exercise physiology, strength and conditioning, sport management, and athletic coaching. These tailored options align with emerging trends in the sports industry and with standards set forth by national accrediting bodies in sports sciences. This approach empowers students to customize their education, ensuring alignment with their unique interests and career aspirations. This program is an excellent option for students interested in health, fitness, strength and conditioning, sports performance, sport management, biomechanics, or coaching careers. Courses offer a well-rounded curriculum that combines classroom learning with hands-on practical experiences. The program's versatility ensures that students are well-positioned to meet the evolving and dynamic landscape of the sports industry.

Strategic Impact

2. Describe how the program fits in with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities.

The Master of Science in Sports Sciences aligns seamlessly with Northern State University's mission by offering a specialized academic opportunity that combines rigorous education in exercise physiology, biomechanics, strength and conditioning, sport management, and athletic coaching. This program not only prepares students for future endeavors in health, wellness, and sports-related fields but also enriches the local and regional community by fostering expertise that contributes to the overall well-being and success of individuals within the community. Through this innovative offering, Northern State University continues to fulfill its commitment to providing diverse academic experiences that bridge the gap between professional education and community enrichment.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The Master of Science in Sports Sciences strongly aligns with Northern State University's strategic plan, particularly with priorities one, three, and five. [1] By offering an advanced academic program in Sports Sciences, NSU contributes to Priority 1 by expanding student access and success in a specialized field, fostering socioeconomic mobility, and serving the public good through education. Priority 3 is addressed through the program's potential to establish collaborative public/private partnerships, enhancing opportunities in the realms of health, recreation, and regional economic development. Furthermore, the Sports Sciences program inherently supports Priority 5 by providing a comprehensive educational experience focusing on experiential learning, aligning seamlessly with NSU's commitment to outstanding regional liberal arts and professional studies. This strategic alignment ensures that the proposed program contributes significantly to the university's overarching mission and goals.

Existing Program Array

The proposed MS in Sports Sciences represents a financially prudent investment, replacing the current Sports Performance & Leadership MEd program while seamlessly integrating into the existing academic framework. The revamped program is poised to attain accreditations in Sport Management and Strength & Conditioning, elevating academic standards and ensuring long-term viability. With a current enrollment of forty-four students in the MEd in Sports Performance & Leadership, the program has consistently grown since its inception in 2012. The transition to a new degree and specialized tracks offers a strategic marketing advantage and opportunities for an accredited program to a broader student network, enriching post-graduate outcomes.

[1] <https://northern.edu/sites/default/files/2023-11/strategic-plan-northern-state-university-2023.pdf>

If the program does not align to the strategic plan, provide a compelling rationale for the institution to offer the program.

N/A

3. How does the program connect to the Board of Regent's Strategic Plan?

The MS in Sports Sciences aligns with the South Dakota Board of Regents strategic plan goals in the following ways:

Goal #3 Academic Excellence, Students Outcomes, and Educational Attainment

The proposed program is driven by a commitment to align our programs with the rigorous demands of advanced studies in sports sciences, ensuring that our graduates are well-equipped for the complexities of their chosen field. The move responds to the evolving landscape of the sports industry, where specialized knowledge is increasingly crucial for meeting the dynamic needs of diverse career paths. By tailoring our programs to fit specific areas within the sports domain, we aim to better prepare our students for success in their chosen fields. The Sports Sciences MS is an improved and further advanced version of the current Sports Performance & Leadership MEd program.

The proposed program would include four specializations to which students can receive advanced curricula in Biomechanics and Exercise Physiology, Strength and Conditioning, Sports Management, or Athletic Coaching and Leadership. The specializations directly align with student outcomes - 35% of graduates in the last five years (2017-2022) have careers in coaching, 16% pursue careers in sports management, 15% go into strength and conditioning, and 14% pursue careers in health care (e.g., DPT, Chiropractic). Two of the four specializations would go through accreditation by outside agencies. The strength and conditioning specialization would be accredited through the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE). The sport management specialization would be accredited through the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA).

Goal #4 Workforce Development & Economic Development

There is a growing demand for well-trained athletic coaches and leaders in various sports and organizations. Graduates with this degree will be well positioned to pursue a wide range of career opportunities in the sports industry. Industries related to sports performance are expected to grow 28% in South Dakota. Data projections nationwide expect fitness industry professionals to grow by 14% by 2032. Nationwide, careers in coaching are expected to grow 9% and the need for officials will grow by 10%. Careers in sports are competitive, allowing specializations enables graduates to remain viable.

This strategic move reflects our commitment to providing students with programs that meet and exceed industry standards, ensuring their readiness and competitiveness in the ever-evolving sports sciences landscape. For example, the decision to offer a strength & conditioning specialization aligns with the accreditation standards set by the Commission of Accreditation in Strength & Conditioning Education (CASCE), ensuring that students seeking Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) certification benefit from a curriculum that meets the rigorous criteria set by the accrediting body. This accreditation is necessary for students to obtain the CSCS after 2030. The accrediting body required the program to be titled 'Strength and Conditioning.'

Goal #5 – Financial Health and Competitiveness

The proposed Sports Sciences MS program will replace the existing Sports Performance & Leadership MEd program. No new infrastructure would be needed. Even with the addition of specializations, there are only three new courses introduced to the curriculum: Introduction to Sport Analytics, Neuromuscular Exercise Physiology, and Advanced Biomechanics Lab Techniques. The faculty lines are in place and can cover all courses with a one- or two-year rotation. The Sports Performance & Leadership MEd program has seen steady growth of enrollment, with record enrollment this fall at 44 students. Allowing the new program with specializations to replace the existing MEd program would enhance recruitment opportunities for faculty. Our current program is too broad limiting our reach for students looking for specific fields (e.g., strength and conditioning, sport management).

Program Summary

4. If a new degree is proposed, what is the rationale?

This question refers to the type of degree, not the program. For example, if your university has authorization to offer the Bachelor of Science and the program requested is a Bachelor of Science, then the request is not for a new degree.

Northern State University is already authorized to award the Master of Science (MS) degree.

This program will be a MS in Sports Sciences to replace the MEd in Sport Performance and Leadership. The requested program modifications encompass two key elements. First, the proposed Sports Sciences MS degree in replacement of the current Sports Performance & Leadership degree MEd. This shift reflects a deliberate acknowledgment of the inherently scientific nature of the sports sciences field, aligning the program more closely with the academic rigor required for advanced studies. There is an expectation of educational or teaching components with an MEd degree. Unlike the beginning of the Sports Performance & Leadership MEd, the department and field have increasingly grown toward business and science and further from education. An MS program is the appropriate graduate degree for our field.

Additionally, the proposed program includes the structure of the curriculum paths with specializations. This aims to provide students with a more focused and tailored academic experience, allowing them to concentrate on specific areas within the sports sciences domain. These proposed modifications collectively aim to enhance the program's academic standing, aligning it more closely with industry standards and ensuring students' more tailored and effective educational experiences.

5. What modality/modalities will be used to offer the new program?

Note: The accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) require Board approval for a university to offer programs off-campus and through distance delivery.

	Yes/No	Intended Start Date
On Campus	Yes	Fall 2025

	Yes/No	Location(s)	Intended Start Date
Off Campus Location	No		

	Yes/No	Delivery Method(s)	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery	Yes	Two of the four specializations, Strength & Conditioning and Biomechanics & Exercise Physiology, will be offered on campus. The other two specializations, Athletic Coaching & Leadership and Sport Management, will be offered both online and on campus. Classes will be taught in an asynchronous online environment or HyFlex.	Fall 2025

	Yes/No	Identify Institutions
Does another BOR institution already have authorization to offer the program online?	Yes	There are similar existing programs, but not the same: University of South Dakota – Kinesiology and Sport Management, MS South Dakota State University – Sport and Recreation Administration, MS and Nutrition and Exercise Science, MS

6. If the program will be offered through distance delivery, identify the planned instructional modality:

Both / HyFlex

Academic Quality

7. What peer institutions and current national standards will be referenced to develop the curriculum for this program? Include links to at least 3 comparable programs at peer institutions and links to national or accreditation standards, if any.

For the Sports Sciences MS program, the curriculum has been drafted using the CASCE accreditation standards, Commission on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAES), and COSMA accreditation standards.

Springfield College in Springfield, MA is a like sized institution (2000 students) with graduate programs similar to the proposed Sports Sciences, MS. Curriculum to reference is their Athletic Leadership MA, which includes courses in coaching methods, legal issues, sport psychology and more. [2] The Strength & Conditioning MS at Springfield is a graduate program going through the CASCE accreditation process. [3] The Springfield College program has courses in Neuromuscular exercise physiology, strength and conditioning theory, and nutrition, similar course alignment and structure to our drafted program.

The University of Northern Colorado has a similar master's program to the proposed Sports Sciences, MS program. They have a MS in Sport and Exercise Science with specializations in Biomechanics, Exercise Physiology, Sports Administration, and Social Psychology of Sport. UNCO's biomechanics specialization has courses including neuromuscular physiology, and laboratory techniques. [4] UNCO's specialization in sport administration includes courses in administration and organization, sport marketing, financial management, event management, and legal aspects. [5] Additionally, UNCO has an MA in Sport Coaching. Similar to the proposed Sports Sciences, MS program, courses include sport psychology, administration, coaching methods, and more. [6]

Montana State University has students of similar demographics as NSU and a MS in Exercise and Nutrition Sciences with a specialization in Sport and Coaching Sciences. The program for Sport and Coaching Sciences includes courses in sport psychology, coaching methods, and more. [7]

All programs evaluated included a research methods and data analysis course. In turn, the core of the Sports Sciences MS includes a research methods course and sport analytics course. The proposed program also includes a sport leadership class reflecting from the department values and charge to prepare professionals. Additionally, many of the MS programs had thesis and non-thesis options. Three of the four specializations have the option or thesis, research project, or internship. Strength and Conditioning, based on accreditation standards, will have two internship experiences at the capstone.

[2] <https://springfield.edu/programs/athletic-leadership>

[3] <https://springfield.edu/programs/graduate/strength-and-conditioning>

[4] <https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/graduate-catalog/graduate-programs/masters-degrees/sport-and-exercise-science-ms-biomechanics-concentration/>

[5] <https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/graduate-catalog/graduate-programs/masters-degrees/sport-and-exercise-science-ms-sport-administration-concentration/>

[6] <https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/graduate-catalog/graduate-programs/masters-degrees/sport-coaching-ma/>

[7] <http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/education-health-human-development/health-human-development/exercise-nutrition-sciences-option/>

8. What program accreditation is available, if any?

Yes, Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) for the Sport Management specialization and Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE) for the Strength and Conditioning specialization. The department submitted accreditation requests for both agencies (COSMA and CASCE) in AY 22-23, and the department is proposing the new MS in Sports Sciences degree to reflect best practices of these accrediting bodies.

9. Will the proposed program pursue accreditation or certifications?

Yes

If no, why has the department elected not to pursue accreditation for the program?

N/A

Duplication and Competition

10. Do any related programs exist at other public universities in South Dakota?

*A list of existing programs is available through the university websites and the RIS Reporting: Academic Reports Database. If there are no related programs within the Regental system, indicate **none**.*

There are similar existing programs, but not the same.

A. If yes, defend the need for an additional program within the state, Include IPEDS enrollment data and additional data as needed.

The University of South Dakota offers a Kinesiology and Sport Management MS program with two specializations (Kinesiology, Sport Management). IPEDs data for USD show 21 master's degrees awarded in this program in the most recent year of data.

South Dakota State University offers Nutrition and Exercise Science MS programs. IPEDs data for SDSU's masters in Nutrition is 12 in the most recent year data are available.

Northern's program will specialize in four areas, two of which will be accredited: Strength & Conditioning (accredited through CASCE) and Biomechanics & Exercise Physiology. Strength & Conditioning is not a graduate program at either SDSU or USD, nor are there advanced biomechanics courses offered.

The Sport Management specialization at USD and the Sport and Recreation Administration MS program at SDSU would be like our Sport Management specialization. IPEDs data for the MS in Sport and Recreation at SDSU is not easy to discern, but the University reports 9 master's degrees in organizational leadership. However, the operations of the athletic department and growing need for professionals in sport depends on these programs at NSU, USD, and SDSU.

Learning Sport Management from a Division I institution is different than from a Division II institution. The NCAA Divisions and their respective departments operate differently. At Northern, students get exposed to all areas of the athletics department and get to work alongside athletic directors and head coaches. The hands-on training in combination with course work prepared students to step into a variety of roles within an intercollegiate athletics department at any institution regardless of governing body (NAIA, NCAA, NJCAA), Division (I – FCS, I – FBS, II, III), or size.

Northern State University's MS in Sport Sciences will have 4 specializations that reflect the 4 major fields where NSU alumni of the MEd in Sport Performance and Leadership build careers, including:

Sport Management

The Sport Management Specialization prepares graduates for roles in sports management, covering areas such as professional sports, athletics administration, sports facilities, sports media, and marketing agencies. The program balances theory and practice, providing a comprehensive understanding of business, socio-cultural, ethical, and legal aspects in sports environments. Graduates are equipped for various roles in intercollegiate athletics, professional sports, sports facilities, recreation management, youth sports, and sports media. The curriculum integrates theoretical insights with hands-on experiences, site visits, and collaborative projects for practical and applicable skills in sport administration.

Strength & Conditioning

The Strength and Conditioning Specialization prepares you for a successful career as a coach in various settings, including secondary schools, colleges, professional programs, and private settings. This program focuses on developing the skills and knowledge necessary for creating effective training programs that enhance athletic performance. You'll also refine your coaching abilities for program implementation. With hands-on learning experiences and coursework grounded in current research, this program ensures a seamless transition to the professional realm. Upon graduation, you'll be well-equipped to make meaningful contributions to the field of strength and conditioning.

Biomechanics & Exercise Physiology

The Biomechanics & Exercise Physiology Specialization explores the intricate relationship between human movement and physiological responses. This specialized track delves into the fundamental principles of biomechanics and exercise physiology, providing students with an in-depth understanding of how the human body responds to sport and physical activity. Through a blend of theoretical coursework and hands-on laboratory experiences, students will gain practical skills in biomechanical analysis and exercise prescription. Topics covered include biomechanical assessments, neuromuscular control, cardiovascular and respiratory responses to exercise, and the application of these principles in designing tailored exercise interventions. This specialization prepares graduates for impactful roles in research, sports performance, rehabilitation, and exercise science, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the intricate mechanisms governing human movement and physiological adaptations.

Athletic Coaching & Leadership

The Athletic Coaching & Leadership Specialization is designed for individuals passionate about fostering excellence in athletic performance and cultivating effective leadership skills within sports organizations. Through a blend of theoretical and practical coursework, students will delve into coaching methodologies, leadership strategies, team dynamics, and sports psychology. Emphasis will be placed on developing effective communication, decision-making, and mentorship skills crucial for success in coaching and leadership roles. The program integrates hands-on experiences, case studies, and discussions to provide a holistic understanding of the contemporary issues and challenges faced by sports leaders. Graduates of this specialization will be well-equipped to navigate the complex landscape of athletic coaching and leadership, making impactful contributions to the advancement of sports organizations and athlete development.

B. If yes, would this program be a candidate for Regental system collaboration?

Northern State University offers the MEd in Sport Performance and Leadership and has a robust enrollment in that program already. The MS in Sports Sciences will replace that program and enable us to grow enrollments beyond current students. The Sports Sciences department at Northern is looking to collaborate with SDSU on their Athletic Training MS program.

11. Do any related programs exist at any non-Regental college or university within 150 miles of the university?

List those programs here:

No. Within 150 miles are Jamestown University in Jamestown, ND (105 miles) and Valley City State University (125 miles). Neither offers graduate degrees in sport sciences.

A. If yes, use IPEDS to identify the enrollment in those programs.

N/A

B. What evidence suggests there is unmet student demand for the proposed program, or that the proposed program would attract students away from the existing program?

Through student interview and feedback, the department has received a call from students to have a more science focused track to advance career and doctoral level pursuits. Through the post graduate outcomes research, we found that 35% of graduates are coaching at the collegiate level, and approximately 15% go into strength and conditioning coaching roles, sport management, or healthcare. With the specializations and accreditation, we are meeting the needs of our students and aiding in their success post-graduation. For example, seeking accreditation in CASCE for the strength and conditioning specialization. Accreditation is a certification mandate by 2030. Being one of very few graduate programs accredited in CASCE will increase demand and enrollment numbers.

The department has progressively seen increases year to year in the Human Performance BS and Sports Performance and Leadership MEd (see table below). This trajectory is due to committed faculty and a call to excellence. Establishing the proposed Sports Sciences MS program with specialization will provide great recruitment opportunities across the department.

Market Demand

This section establishes the market demand for the proposed program (eg Regental system need, institutional need, workforce need). Use the following sources for your data:

- [South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation](#)
- [O-Net](#)
- [US Department of Labor Projections Central](#)
- SDBOR Workforce and Degree Gap Analysis Report

12. What is the expected growth of the industry or occupation in South Dakota and nationally?

Include the number of openings, as well as the percentage of growth when possible.

Career projections that the Sport Management Specialization would prepare students for include:

South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation statistics [8]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota – long term data, by 2030 careers in

- Miscellaneous Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers will increase by 10%
- Arts, Design, Sports, and Media will increase 6%.

According to industry employment projections – long term data, by 2030 careers in

- Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries will increase by 28%
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores will increase by 12%

O-NET Online [9]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2032 careers in

- Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers, and Athletes will increase by 8% - 17% of the job market requires a master's degree

United States Department of Labor Projections Central [10]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Miscellaneous Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers will increase by 6%

SDBOR Workforce and Degree Gap Analysis [11]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, & Related Industries will increase by 18%
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, & Book Stores will increase by 9%

Career projections that the Athletic Coaching & Leadership Specialization would prepare students for include:

South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation statistics [8]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota – long term data, by 2030 careers in

- Coaching and Scouting will increase by 11%

O-NET Online [9]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2032 careers in

- Umpires, Referees, and other Sports Officials will increase by 10%
- Athletes and Sports Competitors will increase by 9%
- Coaches and Scouts will increase by 9% - 19% of the job market requires a master's degree

United States Department of Labor Projections Central [10]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Coaches and Scouts will increase by 11%

SDBOR Workforce and Degree Gap Analysis [11]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Umpires, Referees, & Other Sports Officials will increase by 16.9%

Career projections that the Biomechanics & Exercise Physiology Specialization would prepare students for include:

O-NET Online [9]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2032 careers in

- Exercise Physiologists will increase by 10% - 32% of the job market require a master's degree
- Fitness and Wellness Coordinators will increase by 4% - 50% of the job market require a master's degree
- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary will increase 3% - 21% of the job market require a master's degree

United States Department of Labor Projections Central [10]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Exercise Physiology will increase by 13%
- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary will increase by 10%

SDBOR Workforce and Degree Gap Analysis [11]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Exercise Physiology will increase by 25.5%.

- o 45% of Exercise Physiologist have a master's degree

Career projections that the Strength & Conditioning Specialization would prepare students for include:

O-NET Online [9]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2032 careers in

- Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors will increase by 14%
- Coaches and Scouts will increase by 9% - 19% of the job market requires a master's degree
- Fitness and Wellness Coordinators will increase by 4% - 50% of the job market require a master's degree
- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary will increase 3% - 21% of the job market require a master's degree

United States Department of Labor Projections Central [10]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors will increase by 19%
- Coaches and Scouts will increase by 11%
- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary will increase by 10%

SDBOR Workforce and Degree Gap Analysis [11]: According to occupational employment projections for South Dakota, by 2030 careers in

- Exercise Trainers & Group Fitness Instructors will increase by 12%

Not all career projections require a masters degree. However, job descriptions or careers in these fields often state that a masters degree is preferred. For example, a full time strength and conditioning coach position at Avera in Brookings, SD requires a bachelors degree but prefers a masters degree,

[8] https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/menu_projections_occupation_statewide.aspx

[9] <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/39-9031.00>

[10] <https://projectionscentral.org/Projections/LongTerm>

[11] https://www.bhsu.edu/Faculty-Staff/Sponsored-Programs/_docs/EmsiGapAnalysis.pdf

[12] <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:7c09526f-975c-43be-9693-a7457370db0d>

13. What evidence, if any, suggests there are unfilled openings in South Dakota or nationally?

South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation statistics [13] : According to job opening data by occupation in South Dakota, in the past six months (June-December) of 2023 in

- Coaches and Scouts had 124 job openings, 69 new postings
- Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors had 50 job opening, 35 new postings
- Recreation Workers had 83 job openings, 60 new postings

Nationwide, LinkedIn lists positions available for 1,668 personal trainers, 829 fitness trainers, 2,051 coaches, and over 9,000 jobs in sport management on one date in March 2024. [14]

[13] <https://www.southdakotaworks.org/vosnet/default.aspx>

[14] <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/fitness-trainer-jobs/?currentJobId=3821899539>

14. What salaries can program graduates expect to earn in South Dakota and nationally?

According to the South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation, in the following occupations, graduates can earn [15]

- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary, mean \$60,010, median \$58,900 - Eastern South Dakota, mean \$64,130, median \$64,520
- Coaches and Scouts, mean \$45,790, median \$38,930 - Eastern South Dakota, mean \$47,720, median \$40,810
- Recreation Workers, mean \$39,940, median \$37,450 - Eastern South Dakota, mean \$40,460, median \$37,650
- Umpires, Referees, and Other Sports Officials, mean \$36,210, median \$31,730 - Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors, mean \$36,130, median \$33,280 - Eastern South Dakota, mean \$33,720, median \$30,150
- Entertainment and Recreation Managers, mean \$77,120, median \$75,430 - Eastern South Dakota, mean \$73,210, median \$ 73,060

According to the United State Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the following occupations, graduates working in the US can earn [16]:

- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary, mean \$82,020, median \$72,650 - South Dakota is ranked 3rd for highest concentration of jobs
- Coaches and Scouts, mean \$57,450, median \$44,890 - Montana (1), Iowa (2), and North Dakota (4) are among the top five states for highest concentration of employment for coaches/scouts
- Exercise Physiologist, mean \$55,820 , median \$51,350
- Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors, mean \$50,170, median \$45,380- Montana has the highest concentration of jobs
- Umpires, Referees, and Other Sports Officials, mean \$49,030, median \$36,010 - Minnesota is one of the top states, mean \$62,760
- Entertainment and Recreation Managers, mean \$79,750, median \$67,220 - Iowa is the ranked 3rd among the highest concentration of jobs

For reference, according to O*Net, average salary in South Dakota is \$67,220

[15] https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/documents/wages/sd_statewide_occupational_wages_2022.pdf

[16] <https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>

15. Optional: Provide any additional evidence of regional demand for the program.

e.g. prospective student interest survey data, letters of support from employers, community needs...

According to the United State Bureau of Labor Statistics, regional need in the following occupations is [17]:

- Recreation and Fitness Studies Teachers, Postsecondary, South Dakota is ranked 3rd for highest concentration of jobs
- Coaches and Scouts, Montana (1), Iowa (2), and North Dakota (4) are among the top five states for highest concentration of employment for coaches/scouts
- Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors, Montana has the highest concentration of jobs
- Umpires, Referees, and Other Sports Officials, North Dakota is one of the top states, for highest concentration of sports officials. Bismark, ND and Sioux Falls, SD rank among the top ten metropolitan areas highest in concentration of sports officials' jobs
- Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Iowa is the ranked 3rd among the highest concentration of jobs

[17] <https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>

Student Demand

16. Provide evidence of student completers/graduates at that degree level at peer institutions that offer the same/similar program using data obtained from IPEDS.

Choose programs not already listed in question 11. Use the most recent year available.

University Name	State	Program Name	Number of Degrees Conferred in Program	Total Number of Conferrals at Level (Undergrad or Grad)
Minot State University	ND : North Dakota	Sport and Fitness Administration/Management	14	29
University of Texas Permian Basin	TX : Texas	Exercise Science and Kinesiology	5	67
Western Colorado University	CO : Colorado	Exercise Physiology and Kinesiology	11	46

17. What evidence suggests there is interest from prospective students for this program at the university?

The program reflects our graduate outcomes. For example, from AY 22-23, 60% of graduates pursued a master's level education. In the past five years (2018-2023), students from our Human Performance undergraduate program:

- 15% went on to become a strength and conditioning coach
- 13% went on to pursue a career in coaching
- 24% went on to pursue a career in healthcare
- 28% went on to graduate school

In the past five years (2018-2023), students from our Sport Marketing and Administration undergraduate program:

- 10% went on to pursue careers in Sport Management
- 12% went on to pursue careers in coaching
- 14% went into the business sector
- 19% went on to graduate school

Students in our programs go to pursue graduate level degrees to advance their education in the field. The Sports Sciences field is set up much like the physical sciences (e.g., Biology). The undergraduate program is broader, providing a general scope of the field. Students then pursue a masters, to specialize or certify in an area of Sports Sciences (e.g., dietician, athletic trainer).

The proposed Sports Sciences, MS aligns with the graduate outcomes of students in our programs, providing:

- An accredited strength and conditioning program
- An accredited sport management program with opportunity for graduate assistantships in athletics
- Biomechanics and Exercise Physiology, the perfect bridge between undergraduate and a healthcare degree program (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, sports medicine physician)
- Athletic Coaching and Leadership, inline with our greatest graduate outcomes, providing students an opportunity for coaching graduate assistantships – a necessity for career development

Enrollment

18. Are students enrolling in this program expected to be new to the university or redirected from existing programs at the university?

Include the number of openings, as well as the percentage of growth when possible.

New and existing. The proposed Sports Sciences, MS would replace the current Sports Performance & Leadership, MEd. Therefore, redirecting students from one graduate program to the new program. Right away the program will have enrollment numbers close to 30 students. The department is committed to producing a 25% enrollment growth over five years.

New student growth is expected, as recruiting can be targeted toward student interest versus a broad and vague spectrum as in the current program. Additionally, the Biomechanics and Human Performance lab adds a recruitment angle, as most small universities programs do not have the high-tech access available at Northern.

Annual growth in the Sports Sciences graduate program is expected to increase 5% each year, with no more than a 5% fluctuation rate. The below table shows Fall to Fall enrollment from the past five years and projections for the next five. From 2019 to 2023, enrollment increased 65%.

Realistically, the department aims to increase growth 25% over five years. This is comparable to the growth rate from 2014 (enrollment = 17) to 2018 (enrollment = 23, 27% increase).

19. Narrative Description of the preliminary estimates on annual enrollment in this program by year six

Include all students within the program, not just those new to the program.

New student growth is expected, as recruiting can be targeted toward student interest versus a broad and vague spectrum as in the current program. Additionally, the Biomechanics and Human Performance lab adds a recruitment angle, as most small universities programs do not have the high-tech access available at Northern.

Annual growth in the Sports Sciences graduate program is expected to increase 5% each year, with no more than a 5% fluctuation rate. The below table shows Fall to Fall enrollment from the past five years and projections for the next five. From 2019 to 2023, enrollment increased 65%.

Realistically, the department aims to increase growth 25% over five years. This is comparable to the growth rate from 2014 (enrollment = 17) to 2018 (enrollment = 23, 27% increase).