

## Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) in Canada

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to provide a description of physical education teacher education (PETE) programs presently offered at undergraduate degree-granting Canadian universities as well as highlight the instructors that work within these PETE programs. The investigation was conceptualized by issues related to the dislodging of PETE from a central to a marginal role in higher education, contrasting discourses, and the education of children and youth in a post-modern society. In an effort to examine the worldview orientation, underpinning discourses, curricula, structure, and organization of Canada's programs, 36 physical education (PE) teacher educators from 20 universities completed an online survey; results enabled a profile of Canada's PE teacher educators and the PETE programs in which they work. Collectively, the findings suggest a need for critical consideration and/or revisiting of programs in light of changing societal and student needs for global, socially, and culturally responsive PETE.

**Key words:** physical education teacher education (PETE), teacher education.

### Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude était de fournir une description des programmes de formation des professeurs d'éducation physique et sportive, actuellement offerts dans les universités canadiennes dispensant des diplômes de premier cycle universitaire, ainsi que de mettre l'accent sur les professeurs qui travaillent au sein de ces programmes. L'enquête a été conceptualisée par des questions liées au déplacement de la formation des professeurs d'éducation physique et sportive, d'une place centrale à un rôle marginal dans l'enseignement supérieur, aux discours contrastés, et à l'éducation des enfants et des jeunes

dans une société post-moderne. Afin d'étudier la tendance actuelle, les discours sous-jacents, les programmes, ainsi que la structure et l'organisation de ces programmes au Canada, 36 éducateurs dans la formation des professeurs d'éducation physique et sportive de 20 universités ont rempli un questionnaire en ligne. Les résultats ont permis d'établir un profil des éducateurs et des programmes de la formation des professeurs d'éducation physique et sportive. Collectivement, les résultats suggèrent un besoin pour un examen critique et /ou une révision des programmes à la lumière des changements sociétaux et des besoins des étudiants, pour une formation réceptive socialement et culturellement.

**Mots clés :** formation des professeurs d'éducation physique et sportive, formation des enseignants.

## **Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) in Canada**

### **Introduction**

#### **Context for the Study**

The recent shift in physical education (PE) in higher education toward specialization with an increased discipline focus has dislodged physical education teacher education (PETE) from a central to a marginal role in the PE field (Macdonald, Kirk, & Braiuka, 1999; McKay, Gore, & Kirk, 1990; Newell, 1990a, 1990b, 1990c). Over the past 25 years, PETE has become more closely aligned or amalgamated with “other” (e.g., Sport Sciences, Kinesiology) faculties, schools, or departments, or has ceased to exist altogether (Collinet & Terral, 2007; Kirk, Macdonald, & Tinning, 1997). Along with this realignment and relocation, many former PE programs have engaged in name-changing exercises, coming to be known by a multiplicity of alternative labels including Kinesiology, Human Movement, Human Kinetics, Sport Sciences, Sports-Exercise Science, Science of Physical Activity, and Sport (Macdonald et al., 1999). Kirk and Macdonald (2001) have suggested that such name-changing practices are functionally a front for deep-rooted underlying issues that have festered for many years; they further offer that this is the first step in PE’s eventual demise—as controlling the ways of thinking about education, health, PE, and the work of contemporary schooling is taken up by others.

Due to the prevailing scientific basis of PETE and the existing tension between the discipline versus professionalism confrontation (Wiegand, Bulger, & Mohr, 2004), Corbin (1993) suggests that university academic programs have elected to change their names to avoid the stigma attached to the label “Physical Education.” Some believe that the renaming and/or relocating of PE programs will better position the field of PE pedagogy. For example, if PE pedagogy is housed within a Faculty of Kinesiology, it may receive preferential treatment in order to attract external research dollars, faculty, and university funding (Becher & Trowler, 2001). In this respect, researchers might believe it necessary to figuratively “jump ship” to obtain health dollars as they consider what is significant to society, what results will be valued, and what will be published. This discipline focus tends to be more prominent at larger and more research-intensive universities where funding comes easier (Corbin, 1993; Kirk & Macdonald, 2001).

PETE is typically recognized as a professional or vocational stream, rather than the study of pedagogy as an academic equal of the various sub-disciplines within kinesiology. In such an environment, PE teacher educators might find themselves searching for academic respectability as their research related to practice appears to be relatively devalued; consequently they may ask themselves, “Should I sell out?” Programs and research activities organized around knowledge pertaining to biomechanics, exercise physiology, or motor control may not be conducive to the development of the sophisticated understanding of some sociological and health-related outcomes that underpin many recently developed PE curricula across Canada and abroad (Luke, 2000; Tinning, 2004).

According to Park (as cited in Gill, 2007), the field of kinesiology has become a house divided with a researcher/practitioner split, a sub-disciplinary hierarchy with natural sciences on top, and psychosocial knowledge on bottom (or omitted altogether), reflecting a failure to maintain an integrative academic discipline. To this, Corbin (1993) advocates for

a collective commitment to both the components within the *discipline* of physical education and the components comprising the *professionalism* affiliated with being an educator of physical education. Gill (2007) continues to reiterate the necessity of the integration of scholarship and practice to sustain kinesiology in higher education as a professional discipline with an emphasis on inclusion and social justice.

The discourses that underpin the education of future PE teachers dictate what is valued and important, or preferred knowledge. As Rink (2007) notes, knowledge development in sub-disciplinary kinesiology courses has resulted in overspecialization with basic knowledge being replaced with specialized knowledge that has limited relevance for future PE teachers. Future PE teachers are being educated through the privileged discourses of performance (e.g., exercise physiology, anatomy, sports medicine) while participation discourses (e.g., inclusion, equity, social justice) are effectively neglected (Tinning, 2004; Tinning, Macdonald, Wright, & Hickey, 2001). Knowledge acquired through a sports science degree may not be what is needed to educate students about total well-being as is emphasized within recent PE school curricula (Kilborn, 2011; Luke, 2000); it also may not be what is needed to educate pre-service teachers who need to acquire knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to educate a cultural mosaic of post-modern children and youth living in an increasingly globalized world (Tinning, 2004).

Silverman (2007) recommends that pedagogical knowledge and skills should be an integral part of the undergraduate kinesiology curriculum, as

pedagogy knowledge provides a context for the application of many health and physical activity goals of our field. An understanding of pedagogy by those in sub-disciplines other than physical education will assist them in understanding and promoting physical activity. (p. 98)

These changes would help to ensure that future teachers “receive” pedagogy within their undergraduate programs and perhaps also that courses would be taught in sound, appropriate pedagogical ways.

Historically, physical literacy, as it relates to the teaching of physical education, has centered on the practices of physical activity and the development of sports skills. Siedentop (2002) recommends that universities’ PE programs develop undergraduate programs that focus more on the performance of skills, as do programs in music where performance is unapologetically permitted to take centre stage. He suggests that PETE programs should insist that pre-service teachers acquire a range of movement skills far more extensive than they will be called upon to teach in schools. Others are critical of PETE focused on improving performance, legitimized through courses such as exercise physiology and fitness training. Those opposed to Siedentop’s philosophy do not support a program adhering to a technocratic and performance-oriented ideology (Kirk, 1990; Tinning, 1997) with the orientation of many being based on the concept of educating the physical body for its own sake, or as Fernandez-Balboa (1997a) reiterates, “teaching knowledge about sport and physical activity and rendering it beneficial for all” (p. 124). Within this orientation, the main core of study for future PE teachers consists of learning the technical skills of sport and physical activity, traditional classroom management/control strategies, and the basic principles for planning and organizing instruction (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997a). Fernandez-Balboa (1997a) suggests that, although times have changed

since the Modern Industrial era, the PE profession and PETE programming still operate within a technocratic orientation. To this, he asks, “if achieving freedom and justice is one of the main projects of the post-modern era, should we not, as a profession, aspire to achieve them, too?” (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997a, p. 121). The need to practice critical pedagogy in tune with post-modern times demands that pre-service teachers learn to interrogate traditional discourse, personally and socially, from a perspective that is both historical and futuristic. This, according to Lawson (1993), can be done by problematizing our traditions and basic assumptions and creating more inclusive and equitable alternatives. Through participation discourses, whose knowledge is drawn from the social sciences and education with regard to teaching and learning, and whose language is about inclusion, equity, and involvement, PE teachers can begin to think about the nature of knowledge and (alternative) ways of thinking about the world. PETE programs can help equip pre-service and in-service PE teachers with requisite skills and knowledge, while also developing teachers who can understand the diversity of contemporary children and youth within the current global context (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997b; Tinning, 2004). As well, with the emerging use of the term *physical literacy*, both in new PE curricula (Ontario) and current literature, the time may be now to invest in educating our physical education undergraduates about how the term is defined and why it is becoming more in vogue and referenced in the media and by national agencies that are focused on improving the health and wellbeing of today’s children and youth. Physical literacy focuses on the development of the whole child, meaning it is not just about the understanding and practice of physical activity; it also includes a child’s knowledge and understanding of *why* physical activity is important and its resulting benefits, as well as the development of attitudes and habits to practice these skills on a regular basis.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study was conceptualized by issues related to the dislodging of PETE from a central to a marginal role in higher education, the relationship between competing discourses, and the educating of children and youth in a post-modern society (Tinning, 1997, 2004). The purpose of the study was to provide a description of PE teacher educators and PETE programs presently offered at degree-granting Canadian universities. Within the context of this study, a PETE program was considered to be a degree-granting program in which undergraduates are able to receive a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree with a major, minor, or specialization in teaching primary and/or secondary PE. The investigation was framed by criteria presented by a PETE accreditation body, The Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators’ (CCUPEKA) Accreditation Council. The following research questions helped to shape the investigation:

- What is the structure of the faculties/departments/schools offering PETE programs in Canada?
- Which discourse(s), performance-oriented and/or participation-oriented, form the basis of the programs?
- What similarities and differences exist among PETE programs?
- Who is preparing future PE teachers?

### **CCUPEKA Accreditation Council**

Over the past 30 years, CCUPEKA (2009a) has continued its efforts to lobby nationally and internationally on behalf of physical activity and health. It has evolved as a business-oriented organization with separate accreditation processes for kinesiology and PE. Since 2001, of a potential 52 institutions, PETE programs at 9 institutions have received formal accreditation (CCUPEKA, 2009b). However, as this council does not accredit teacher certification degree status, administrators representing Faculties/Schools/Departments of Education are *not* members of CCUPEKA. Rather, administrators of academic programs that offer accredited degrees in several disciplines may work with those from education programs to offer combined BKin/BEd or BPE/BEd degrees as well as post or after-degrees in education. There are approximately 52 institutions across Canada offering kinesiology and/or physical education undergraduate degrees that could apply for accreditation if they became CCUPEKA-member institutions. Accreditation is intended to evaluate whether reviewed programs meet the minimum standards of education and training for graduates. While maintaining diversity of individual programs, the institution's achievement of minimum standards is intended to guarantee the basic quality of programs and to also serve as an incentive for further improvement and creative growth. The Minimum Disciplinary Accreditation Standards (MDAS) offer a framework for the development and organization of disciplinary knowledge and practical skills for graduates, forming a basis for a university's curriculum design and mission statement.

Essentially, there are two structurally different systems of PETE programs in Canada. In a *sequential system*, pre-service teachers complete coursework within a PE/kinesiology/sports science program before beginning coursework in an education program (CCUPEKA, 2009b). The responsibility for fulfilling the minimum disciplinary accreditation standards in the sequential system is divided between the undergraduate pre-education teacher preparation program and pedagogical education provided through a BEd program (commonly referred to as an after-degree program). In an *integrated system*, pre-service teachers essentially simultaneously complete coursework within both programs. Students are generally admitted to an integrated program after senior high school matriculation or after one or two years of pre-professional undergraduate study. In such a program, the teacher preparation program is responsible for fulfilling all minimum disciplinary accreditation standards (though many courses are often taken from within a separate program). Undergraduate sequential PE programs are primarily responsible for CCUPEKA Standards I through VI and BEd programs are responsible for Standard VII. Alternatively, undergraduate integrated BEd teacher preparation programs bear responsibility for all seven standards (CCUPEKA, 2009b).

### **Methods and Procedures**

#### **Survey Construction**

The survey was designed for collecting profiles of current PE teacher educators and PETE programs across Canada. Initially, the principal investigator (PI) designed the survey using the accreditation standards established by CCUPEKA as a guiding framework. Hard



copy survey questions were then pilot-tested by the PI with a group of six PE teacher educators. After this process, pilot participants' suggestions for improvement were discussed, resulting in a small number of minor changes to the survey. Further refinement to this tool occurred by the PI and four additional research team members (PE teacher educators from universities in the provinces of Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia). This revised survey was then taken to a contracted external agency who applied technical expertise in designing and hosting the survey online. Participants who agreed to be part of the study completed the survey online and all results were submitted electronically.

The final survey consisted of four sections that required a brief response to a total of 31 questions. The first three sections all required closed responses while the final section required open-ended responses. These four sections were: PETE Instructors' Professional Information (18 questions), PETE Program General (5 questions), PETE Program Specific (5 questions), and Final Comments (3 questions). The three concluding open-ended questions that intended to obtain additional information and further insights were: 1. In your opinion, within a PETE program, what types of courses must be included? What could be eliminated? What should be emphasized? 2. What is (or what should be, if you do not have a PETE program currently) the structure of the PETE program practicum experience for your students? 3. Do you have any additional comments about PETE at your institution?

## Participants

The entity in this investigative research was limited to PE teacher education programs at post-secondary institutions across Canada with BEd undergraduate degree-granting status. To systematically determine the potential participants meeting this specification, Statistics Canada's (2009) register of *Postsecondary and Adult Education Institutions* was initially consulted. Developed by the Centre for Education Statistics of Statistics Canada, the register was "designed to identify the universe of all public and not-for-profit postsecondary and adult education institutions in Canada and their programs of study" (Statistics Canada, 2009, Descriptive section, ¶1). An initial search of this register resulted in the identification of 126 parent institutions and no fewer than 180 additional affiliated or federated campuses. Of the parent institutions, a large majority are members of either the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) or the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC). It is notable that of this large number of Canadian universities and degree-granting colleges, most of the institutions do *not* currently have BEd programs.

Those institutions whose faculties, schools, or departments offered BEd degrees with a PETE focus were identified, and contacted by both email and telephone by one member of the research team. To delimit the sample using this criterion, Education Canada's Resource Centre (2008) was consulted as it includes a list of Canada's current education programs. Within that list, 48 different institutions are named, representing all of Canada's ten provinces and one of the three territories (Yukon Territory). An invitation to participate was subsequently offered to these 48 institutions. However, of the 48 institutions that were asked to share their PETE instructors' contact information, 6 reported that their education programs did not have such instructors, and 3 failed to respond to repeated

requests (by both email and telephone). Therefore, of the 48 institutions contacted, 39 institutions replied with lists of names of instructors and their contact information. Included within the 39 institutions were a total of 99 instructors (as potential participants), made up of professors, sessional instructors, and contract lecturers. All 99 potential participants were sent an email with a letter of invitation and consent form to complete an online survey. Of the 99 individuals from the 39 institutions with PETE degree programs, 36 respondents from 20 institutions completed the survey, resulting in a 39% response rate.

### **Data Analysis**

All data from the 28 quantitative survey questions were stored, recoded, and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS®) 16.0 software. Using the recoded data and SPSS, basic descriptive statistics (i.e., means, frequencies, and distributions) were calculated. All qualitative data were originally analyzed by the PI who looked for key issues, similarities, differences, recurring ideas, clustering, patterns, and relationships in the written responses to the three concluding, open-ended questions. By coding and categorizing this verbatim data according to methods outlined by Creswell (2005) and Miles and Huberman (1994), dominant themes emerged, allowing for analysis and interpretation. To confirm and/or disconfirm the identified themes and supporting comments, another member of the research team also analyzed the written responses.

## **Results**

### **Profile of PE Teacher Educators in Canada**

Although initially the survey was to be completed by full-time permanent instructors, administrators and heads of departments indicated others who represented the institution's PETE instructors, and thus, these additional names were included in the list of potential respondents (and are included in the previously mentioned 99 potential participants). Of the 99 potential participants, 36 PE teacher educators, representing 20 BEd degree-granting institutions in Canada, completed the online survey. Survey results profile the PE teacher educators as 55% being female, 45% being male. The employment status of the respondents indicated that the majority were employed full time. More specifically, participants classified their current position as 53% full-time tenured, 14% tenure track, 6% full-time sessional lecturers, and 25% part-time sessionals.

Table 1 shows the degree type and percentage of participants attaining each degree. At the undergraduate level, the bachelor degree qualifications achieved by the teacher educators indicate that the majority achieved either a Bachelor of Education as a first degree or a consecutive Bachelor of Physical Education followed by a Bachelor of Education. The remainder of the participants completed physical education degrees in isolation or in combination with an education degree; a few respondents completed an arts degree, with 11% indicating "other" (for example, Recreation Management) as their first undergraduate degree. As a result of their undergraduate work, the majority of participants obtained a valid teaching certificate. Also, as can be seen in Table 1, the majority of respondents held both a master's and doctoral degree.



Survey responses indicate that 85% of respondents received their bachelor degree in Canada. The majority (70%) of them also completed their master's degree in Canada, while 21% stated that they had completed their graduate work in the USA and 2% indicated Australia. Many (76%) doctoral degrees were similarly completed in Canada, with 10% having been completed in the USA, and 4% in Australia. Ten percent of the PE teacher educators do not possess a doctoral degree.

Table 1  
*Type and Percentage of Undergraduate Degrees*

Undergraduate Degree	Percentage of respondents attaining the degree
Bed	39
Consecutive BPE/Bed	24
BPE	10
BA	10
Combined BPE/Bed	6
Other	11
Hold a valid teaching certificate	88
Graduate Degree	
Masters	93
Doctorate	90

As mentioned above and visible in Table 1, the majority of PE teacher educators possess a valid teaching certificate. Table 2 outlines the amount of teaching experience and the grade levels taught, by the teacher educators. As Table 2 indicates, the PE teacher educators have a wide variety of teaching experience, teaching at both the public school level and the post secondary level.

Table 2  
*Teaching Experience at Various Levels.*

0 years	1-5 years	6-10 years	10+ years
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Elementary	42	36	11	11
Junior / Senior High	22	33	33	10
College	83	11	0	6
University	3	22	25	50

Examining the post-secondary teaching experience, data revealed that the university courses currently taught (or taught within the past three years) by PE teacher educators show a predominance of curriculum and instruction courses being taught (96%), followed by courses focused on physical activity (38%), disciplinary content (24%), health education (22%), and humanities (18%).

In comparing the PE teacher educators' beliefs regarding their most important role to their perceived institution's belief, differences occurred: 94% believed that their most important role was to educate future professionals to effectively teach children and youth in schools, whereas only 56% thought that their institution believed this to be their most important role. Forty-one percent of the educators perceived that their institutions believed their most important role was to engage in research related to PE pedagogy, whereas *none* believed that this research focus was their most important role.

### Discourses and PETE

For the purposes of this study, the discourses associated with PETE programs were defined as representing performance-oriented or participation-oriented discourses. According to Tinning (1997, 2004), performance-oriented discourses characterize subjects such as biomechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology, tests and measurement, sports medicine, and fitness training, while participation discourses focus on language about inclusion, equity, involvement, enjoyment, social justice, cooperation, and movement. To avoid misunderstanding, these particular definitions preceded the survey questions pertaining to discourses. When asked on the survey to indicate the focus of their institution's PETE program, 57% of the respondents stated that their undergraduate programs were focused on both participation and performance discourses. It should be noted that although each institutions PETE focus has a particular underpinning, it is not always that same focus that teachers who graduate from there will employ in the schools where they secure employment. Twenty-eight percent believed that the focus was predominantly performance-oriented, 8% believed that their program focus had a predominantly participation focus, and 8% thought that the focus of their program was exclusively participation based. In reporting the belief of what the discourse focus of an institution PETE program should be, 76% indicated that it should include participation and performance discourses, 18% said that the program should reflect a predominantly participation discourse focus, and 9% said an exclusive participation discourse focus. The perceived current focus of each participants PETE program in comparison to what they believed should be their institutions focus, is presented in Table 3.

Table 3  
*Discourses in PETE programs*

	Currently	Believe it should be
Exclusively performance	0	0
Predominately performance oriented	28	0
Predominately Participation Oriented	8	18
Exclusively Participation	8	9
Combined	57	76

PETE programs in Canada are comprised of courses offered by a Faculty/School/Department of Education as well as by Faculties of Kinesiology (or such others as Physical Education or Human Kinetics). Although the majority perceived their current program as offering a combination of performance and participation courses and even more believed a combination of such courses should be offered, when asked to indicate required courses for their respective undergraduate programs, the majority of the courses listed were performance oriented courses (See Table 4). Two thirds of the participants indicated that motor learning and human anatomy were two required disciplinary content course within their PETE programs followed by biomechanics and human physiology. Fifty-eight percent reported the psychology of physical activity as being required and 56% stated that exercise physiology was also a required disciplinary course. In relation to physical activity courses, 72% indicated dance and basic movement courses, including gymnastics and track and field, were required while 68% indicated the requirement of exercise and health courses, with 30% stating recreation as compulsory and 3% claiming an aquatics physical activity course requirement.

Table 4  
*Required Disciplinary Content*

Course	Percentage	Course	Percentage
Motor Learning	75	Dance/basic movement	72
Human Anatomy	73	Exercise and Health	68

Biomechanics	67	Recreation	30
Human Physiology	67	Aquatics	3
Sport Psychology	58		
Exercise Physiology	56		

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Of the 30 comments made in response to the open-ended survey question, “What must be included in a PETE program?” nine teacher educators stated that “activity courses” are a necessity. However, specific comments suggested that the activity courses be of a “more diverse nature” and be included as a “basis for learning effective teaching” while “students should not be assessed on personal performance.” Others stated that the physical activity courses “need to be taught with a pedagogy focus rather than treated as recreational activity” and taught “from a conceptual basis.” Another participant suggested, “activity classes should have a more holistic approach to them versus the traditional football, basketball, or track classes that have been offered for the past 50 years.” Other comments stated that the “activities [should] be consistent with more contemporary curriculum” and “less familiar” so as to enable communication “in the language they will be using.” Eighteen of the responses related to the compulsory inclusion of courses in “pedagogy” or “critical pedagogies” with some citing “effective teaching techniques, styles and strategies with applied experiences,” “a conceptual approach,” and learning to become a “reflective practitioner” as important. Others mentioned “planning, assessment, instruction, multiple teaching models,” “curriculum and instruction,” and “inquiry based teaching pedagogy” content and/or courses as essential. “Growth and development” was stated as necessary several times (11) “so that the pre-service teachers would know how to match activities to the developmental abilities of kids.” *Minimal* reference was made toward the inclusion of “motor skill acquisition,” “anatomy and physiology,” and “human movement science.” Few (5) comments related to the inclusion of “philosophy” and “history of PE,” with one stating a “global focus with a consideration of social context issues as they relate directly to the teaching of PE in schools” was required.

Forty-six percent reported that a course on special populations is a requirement, compared to 36% who said that it was not, whereas 18% were not sure if such a course was required. In response to the same previously mentioned open-ended question regarding necessary courses, five comments related to including a required course on “diverse student populations” with one respondent stating that the focus should be on “how to build relationships with all students across diverse gender, class, race, cultures, religions, sexualities... This is a big omission in our current delivery of teacher education in my view.” Two others referred to “adaptive PE” as a necessary inclusion. One teacher educator suggested that a “socio-cultural course that helps pre-service students understand the role of culture in socially constructed realities through critical thinking” be included. Another wrote an extensive response reiterating the need to “provide educational experiences that augment an individual’s awareness and genuine understanding of current and future global circumstances which are inextricably coupled with sustainability.”

### **Kinesiology-Pedagogy Challenge**

In response to the final open-ended question asking for additional comments, almost all suggested changes to PETE programs. Sixteen of the 24 comments focused on the problematic relationship between Faculties/Departments of Kinesiology and pedagogy, and the neglect and overshadowing of pedagogy within kinesiology, stressing the “need to work better together for the benefit of its clients (the undergrad students).” There was a strong belief expressed that “pedagogy continues to be “overrun” by the scientific research faculty in our school. I feel that we are (and have been for many years) fighting for survival.” Another offered, “I think an issue is if KIN programs should be more or less involved in pedagogy. I am in a KIN college. Pedagogy is not valued at all. This is a big issue I face.” “The design of the program is controlled by people who do not know anything about physical education. Therefore, there is a lot of disconnect in the program” commented another. Recognizing the previously mentioned perception of differing relative values, another participant shared,

I hope that someday “physical education teacher education” will be viewed as equal value to “health research.” I am convinced that inspiring physical education teachers in elementary, middle and high schools can make a difference in the “health status” of children across Canada. We have seen what has happened in schools everywhere as the support for physical education teachers in school settings has been “devalued.” Physical Education Teacher Education should be one of the main pillars of college and university education.

Other participants focused on structure as they addressed the kinesiology-pedagogy challenge. One suggested she/he had a preference for participation-oriented discourses and was a “strong advocate for combined degrees to educate PE specialists for all school levels; with some background in sport and sciences but with emphasis on “teaching students in diverse activities and environments.” Providing further commentary on this challenge, one tenured faculty member shared,

PE pedagogy exists between Faculties of Education and Faculties or departments of Kinesiology (Recreation, Health and PE) - we need to establish ourselves in one place or the other, or institutions need to change to allow cross department structures to form naturally and as needed. The philosophy in Education is focused on service and education whereas the philosophy in Kinesiology is around research and self-promotion. As a PETE faculty member I have to do both and feel under-valued in both camps. I find success when I work in schools with student teachers and teachers around educational needs of school students, however that is not highly valued within my School of PE.

### **Professor Shortage**

The second most popular written responses to the final question related to the limited number of tenured faculty with pedagogical interest, expertise, and experience, and

to the reality of several nearing retirement, as well as the limited number of doctoral students specializing in the area of PE pedagogy. As one stated,

PETE is in crisis because a large percentage of faculty working in this area are near retirement age and will not be replaced with like individuals; in education there is little or no emphasis on physical education at any level, with only one tenured faculty working in this area and most others being seconded or part-time (retired teachers) who do a great job but are somewhat transient.

These same concerns were reported several times with such comments as,

Pedagogy continues to be “overrun” by the scientific research faculty in our school. I feel that we are (and have been for many years) fighting for survival. Now, there is one pedagogy person left on faculty. Thus, the “master plan” of the kinesiologists has worked.

Similarly, another faculty member shared, “one PETE professor just retired leaving only one full time professor for both the elementary and secondary program. There are no plans to replace the retired person.” Finally, another offered,

While I work in the PE faculty (undergraduate degree), I do have some insights regarding the PETE program in the Faculty of Education. PE has been marginalized over the past number of years, due to budget cuts to post secondary education... stated simply, when the PE person retires/leaves, that position goes back into the general pot, where all faculties compete for their own strategic priorities. Over the past eight years, there have only been sessional teachers teaching the after degree programs (mostly retired PE teachers, mostly male). Some sessional teachers are fantastic, some less so ... and some not so familiar with our new PE and Health provincial curriculum. This affects the quality of instruction and students do not receive the best training ... without a full time tenure track position. Once the PE person retires, who advocates for PE?

### **Discussion**

Research into Canada’s PETE programs and instructors comes at a time when increased research is also occurring south of the border (see Boyce & Rikard, 2007, 2008, 2010; Housner & Ayers, 2008). Boyce and Rikard’s (2010) study of 23 doctoral-granting institutions in the USA, investigating the preparation of PE pedagogues, reported 114 teacher educators who work directly in PETE programs: 28 full-time professors, 33 associate professors, 31 assistant professors, and 22 lecturers. Their study also reported that 58% were female and 42% were male. As noted previously, the majority of the PETE teacher educators within Canadian universities have experience teaching public school physical education (this is true for both sessional instructors and faculty). As most PETE teacher educators at Canadian universities have such school-based teaching experiences, are primarily educated in education (with a pedagogy focus), and work within programs with some balance between sport/human science and socio-cultural courses, it is curious



that a socio-cultural focus remains foreign within many in-service PE teachers' classes. One might conclude that the emphasis on performance-oriented discourses and kinesiology outweighs the potential influence and impact of pedagogy courses.

The current and upcoming continuing shortage of PETE teacher educators is also worthy of focused attention. While participants were not asked to share information about their ethnicity, it is readily observable that few-to-none are from *visible* minorities. To this, Halas (2006) suggests,

Currently, the physical education profession represents white, middle-class hegemony: there are few physical education teachers of colour (including aboriginal teachers), fewer physical education professors of colour, and little to no evidence of an effort by faculties of physical education to diversify the make-up of their student bodies. Ignoring the problem that this lack of diversity presents in building a more equitable society that reflects the Canadian cultural mosaic, physical educators (both current and future) who develop activity programs based on white, middle-class values will experience difficulty when trying to connect with an increasingly diverse high school student population. (p. 158)

The present shortage of pedagogues in Canada and the USA (Boyce & Rikard, 2010) is a major concern for PETE programs and the preparation of future PE teachers. In 2007, Boyce and Rikard reported that 10 out of 90 pedagogues at 27 USA doctoral-granting institutions preparing graduate students in PE pedagogy planned to retire within five years (50% of the professors are male, 50% female, and 91% Caucasian). Boyce and Rikard also suggest that of the 73 posted positions in "Higher Education" in 2005-2006, 25 of the pedagogy positions were not filled and 11 were filled but not with pedagogues. Judging from the lack of advertisements for tenure-track academic positions specifically in PE pedagogy or positions advertised being filled by academics other than those with a pedagogy specialty, it is apparent that the future of PETE is not stable, nor strong. Consequently, several PETE programs, although accommodating large numbers of undergraduate students, are administered and taught by one full-time academic, complemented by several temporary instructors.

The present imbalance between the privileged performance-oriented discourses and the undervalued participation-oriented discourses (obviously more so at some institutions than others) needs to be addressed immediately. While only 57% of the PETE teacher educators work within institutions where both discourses have equal focus, a full fifth of them could only wish for such a scenario. Furthermore, as 28% of these educators teach in PETE programs where performance-oriented discourses are privileged, none of them believe this should be the case and 25% of them believe that participation-oriented discourses ought to be given such privilege. It is, then, not surprising that the PETE teacher educators' comments reveal a sense of dissonance as they recognize that PE teacher education programs are failing to prepare soon-to-be teachers to engage with children and youth in a post-modern world; they knowingly are sending pre-service teachers into schools without adequate education related to the demands and challenges of the contemporary context. As long as PETE programs continue to focus on sciences as dominant disciplinary content at the expense of humanities and social sciences, pre-service teachers will continue to have such a deficit. With this deficit, it is likely that PETE graduates will continue to

experience a disconnect between their teacher preparation courses and the “real” world in which they soon find themselves. Only when PETE programs begin to offer knowledge about inclusion, equity, involvement, enjoyment, social justice, cooperation, and movement, will these pre-service teachers be adequately prepared to face the challenges and promises of 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms.

With CCUPEKA providing accreditation standards (and, consequently, guidelines to aspire towards), physical education teacher education programs are encouraged to hold steadfast to the performance-oriented discourses already established to be characteristic of kinesiology-type programs. CCUPEKA’s emphasis on academic, scientific, technocratic, specific, and mechanic solutions/programs contrasts with other suggested foci. For example, the principles of The Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) Accord on Initial Teacher Education stresses more live, holistic, professional, cross-subjects, societal, and contextual (e.g., school, community, global) aspects (ACDE, 2007). To illustrate this point, consider one of the Accord’s guiding principles:

An effective initial teacher education program promotes diversity, inclusion, understanding, acceptance, and social responsibility in continuing dialogue with local, national, and global communities. (ACDE, p. 8)

These differences may exist between these two bodies as a result of the educational, academic, and professional background of the actual members (i.e., policy-makers) within each organization. Conceivably, these are often the same individuals who engage in decision making about courses to be included and/or excluded within their institutions’ own PETE programs.

Education as a profession must be at the centre of concern for PETE, particularly in CCUPEKA’s future accreditation development. PETE teacher educators are educating teachers, not coaches, or physical activity instructors—this may partially explain why 59% of this study’s participants do not believe CCUPEKA accreditation enhances the quality of PETE programs in Canada. The at-times tense relationship between Faculties of Education and Faculties of Kinesiology require decisions about “housing” courses in both faculties; both “sides” might think the courses they propose are more important for their institutions’ PETE programs. Similar to the joint or collaborated programs in other teachable subjects (e.g., music, mathematics, history, geography) in teacher education between Faculties of Education and other faculties/departments, both sides should try to understand each other, and the issues in current PETE development; the different worldviews (e.g., participation/performance preferences, theoretical/professional orientations) can be balanced and reconciled.

### **Conclusion**

According to CCUPEKA (2009b), in order to establish minimum standards for university PE Teacher Preparation programs it is necessary to identify the needs of the teaching profession in terms of competencies. Such an identification exercise includes determining what a PE teacher should be able to do, understand, and value. General Educational Outcomes (GEOs) of teacher preparation must reflect the competencies required by professional practice. GEOs are affected by three main forces: educational

experiences, research, and professional practice. Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada) and CCUPEKA might cooperate to continuously redefine the General Educational Outcomes for graduates of PETE programs in order to meet the practical demands of the provincial education systems. Furthermore, these same university programs ought to consider the ACDE Accord when defining essential knowledge, skills, and attributes of PE teachers. At present, the CCUPEKA accreditation standards are failing to address some of the most important components of PETE. Perhaps through collaboration and/or alignment with the outcomes envisioned by PHE Canada and/or the ACDE Accord can future PE pre-service teachers be purposely prepared to connect with the needs and interests of contemporary society so that they may become enabled to educate post-modern children and youth.

Traditional essential knowledge of PETE programs may not be appropriate for recent graduates who are working with post-modern children and youth and new curriculum. PETE programs need to equip pre-service teachers with requisite skills and knowledge, but also develop certain types of PE teachers who can understand new children and youth and the context of new times (Kirk, 1997), preparing them for a global context (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997a). With these global perspectives, future PE teachers may “become” different types of teachers from their in-service colleagues. As discourses of performance lose their perpetual primary placement (Tinning, 1991; Tinning et al., 2001, Whitson & MacIntosh, 1990), pre-service teachers might be able to recognize the potential benefits when viewing the world through a more critical lens. What is important is that our contemporary PETE programs be oriented towards the understandings, ways of thinking, and competencies that new teachers will need to assist post-modern children and youth to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become healthy citizens within a global context (Tinning, 2004).

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