

NAKPEHE

National Association for Kinesiology & Physical Education in Higher Education

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The Chronicle of Kinesiology and Physical Education in Higher Education

■ From the President

Leah Fiorentino, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

I would like to extend my thanks to the NAKPEHE members who showed support for me this past year. I am excited about the opportunity you have provided me to serve in this leadership role, and I hope we can work together to continue building upon earlier stories of success. This is a time for NAKPEHE to celebrate the accomplishments of its current members and plan to meet the challenges that will present themselves over the next decade.

This past year, President Forbes has moved the association forward, and the entire NAKPEHE membership appreciates the commitment and energy that he devoted to tasks at hand. Over the past year, President Forbes has positioned NAKPEHE to continue as a well-respected professional association on many fronts. He has spearheaded an effort to restructure the Board of Directors to more closely reflect the size of the association membership; he has encouraged the launch of a new NAKPEHE publication, *Research Digest*, which will be available in an electronic format; he has initiated a fall teleconference meeting to provide a more efficient administrative operation of the Board of Directors; and he has endorsed a summer mini-seminar sponsored by NAKPEHE in concert with a local university. I will have a busy year following on these presidential initiatives. I thank President Forbes for his leadership and insights, and I look forward to his continued contributions to NAKPEHE.

This year will be a time to celebrate the accomplishments of NAKPEHE and build on our areas of strength including an interdisciplinary commitment and a focus on providing the best structure to develop the next generation of leaders in our profession. I hope to continue with the strong commitment that NAKPEHE has made to developing leaders at a variety of levels beginning with our Joanna Davenport Doctoral Student Award and our Hally Beth Poindexter Young Scholar Award, which will now be under the guidance of Dr. Camille O'Bryant. NAKPEHE continues to recognize leadership contributions through the Distinguished Service, Scholar, and Administrator Awards, as well as by hosting the named lecture series (Hanna, Homans, and Sargent). To encourage the intermingling of professional leaders connected with NAKPEHE, we will be inviting all past NAKPEHE lecturers to attend the 2010 conference in

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The Chronicle of Kinesiology and Physical Education in Higher Education is a publication for the NAKPEHE membership, and is a forum for interdisciplinary ideas, concepts, and issues related to the role of kinesiology and physical education in higher education with respect for social, cultural, and personal perspectives.

From the President, *continued*

Scottsdale, Arizona, for a special reception to be held in their honor. It will be a time to connect the newest leaders with the most senior leaders who have proudly connected with NAKPEHE.

The 2010 conference will also provide the membership with an opportunity to share professional stories of success, and we hope that the accomplishments of many successful programs will be showcased around a set of important themes. Vice President Alison Wrynn, in concert with the Future Directions Committee, has focused on the development of conference sessions that will align with the trendsetting book *Good to Great* by Jim Collins. Please be sure to check the NAKPEHE Web site for information within the next month. VP Wrynn has also planned to capture the sessions digitally and initiate a new data bank for NAKPEHE members to access after the conference concludes.

This year will also be a time for NAKPEHE to carefully consider what it takes to be a *great* professional association and begin to make our move from *good to great*. It is a time to focus on our strengths in terms of mission and vision and stay true to the path. NAKPEHE is a strong association that continues to provide a forum where interdisciplinary inquiry is encouraged. The annual conference provides an important venue where scholars can present their ideas in a supportive environment with feedback and open conversation on a topic extending past the presentation and spilling into the hallways. What a wonderful setting for leaders!

I encourage all leaders within the NAKPEHE membership to think about the role we play and engage in serious dialogue involving the following questions: Who will help current leaders move from *good to great*? When and from where will our new leaders emerge? Who will help mentor the next generation of leaders? I believe this is the role NAKPEHE has been waiting to play; we are a good association, and we have the potential to be great. I ask that you all consider taking part in this important mission; I will need you. ■

*Please make your plans now
to attend and/or present your
work or ideas at the
2010 NAKPEHE Conference,
January 6–9 in Scottsdale, Arizona.*

*For information, contact
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Upcoming Conventions

AAHPERD

March 31–April 4, 2009:
Tampa, Florida

NAKPEHE

January 6–9, 2010:
Millennium Resort
Scottsdale McCormick
Ranch, Scottsdale, AZ



Editor's Invited Column

Name Changes and Descriptors: Considering the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

John D. Massengale, University of Nevada, Las Vegas



After receiving a very kind invitation from the *Chronicle* editor to offer some personal reflections on my nearly 40 years in higher education, with 34 of those years as a NAKPEHE member, I decided to give my observations and opinions regarding a continuing and controversial topic: name changes and descriptors. First of all, I reviewed past NAKPEHE publications and presentations that addressed the topic, and then I did my best to recall the many highly charged and often spirited discussions and conversations that I had over the years with colleagues such as Stan Brassie, John Burt, Rob Carlson, Chuck Corbin, John Dunn, Mike Ellis, Steve Estes, Ron Feingold, Jan Harris, Don Hellison, Keith Henschen, Shirl Hoffman, Rainer Martens, Virginia Overdorf, Bob Pangrazi, Hally Poindexter, Jack Razor, Roberta Rikli, Dick Swanson, and Jerry Thomas.

When one considers the topic, he might ask himself, "How did we get into this dilemma (mess) in the first place?" Originally, we were a delivery system that provided educational services to children and youth, who were a captive audience, that came packaged and grouped, and we enjoyed tremendous public support. Most recently, we have evolved into a loosely organized discipline, composed of very loosely organized subdisciplines, that has the potential to provide almost unlimited services to an almost unlimited population, and we cannot reach agreement on what to call ourselves. As a profession, however, we do know some things for sure (facts), and as a profession, we often hold contrary opinions (notions).

Facts

No other name or descriptor has sustained the professional consensus enjoyed by the term *Physical Education*, and in spite of that fact, there are over 100 different names and descriptors currently used by academic units in our field. In addition, there are no documented cases in which academic units or professional organizations that have changed their name have changed back to *Physical Education* or have suffered negative repercussions resulting from a name change away from the term *Physical Education*.

When we consider our role and place in the academic community, we often discover a great deal of confusion about what we are called and what we actually do. To add to this confusion, we often promote names and descriptors that are not directly related to established departmental, college, or institutional missions. We hope that professional organizations, as well as academic units, that have recently changed their names, or are contemplating name changes, will finally settle on names that appropriately reflect their mission.

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Editor's Invited Column, *continued*

The 1988 Big Ten Conference invited representatives from 23 different leading research universities to attend their annual meeting to discuss the name-change issue, which resulted in overwhelming support for the term *Kinesiology*, rather than the term *Physical Education*. In spite of that result, the American public, as well as most of the academic community, continues to recognize the term *Physical Education*, continues to think they know what it means, and continues to be somewhat unclear and confused by the term *Kinesiology*. However, another result of the Big Ten meeting is the fact that now every major publisher in our field has developed an "intro" textbook that does not include the term *Physical Education* in the title.

Notions

As a profession, especially in higher education, we have created a perception that we will automatically get well-deserved stature and prestige if we avoid any association with the term *Physical Education*. This perception is strengthened by the belief that we will automatically increase respectability within the academic community for purposes of promotion, tenure, entry-level salaries, merit salaries, and competitive grant considerations. As a result, many of our colleagues are of the opinion that the term *Physical Education* has failed, or is dead, and should be replaced with something like *Physical Activity*.

Another notion is associated with both growth and quality. There are those in our profession who believe growth will always follow name change. In addition, there are others who believe that improved student quality will always follow name change. Finally, there are those who believe new marketing opportunities will always follow name change.

If marketing is a measure of success, then we have failed. The American public has been to *physical education class*, and in many cases, they did not like it. In spite of that notion, there are still many among us who believe that our audiences in government, education, and the community are not ready or prepared to relate to a term like *Kinesiology*. However, we continue to reorganize, restructure, and rename what we do, with the belief that it will always produce positive solutions.

It is relatively easy to find many in our profession who believe that we are killing ourselves as a result of the lack of a common label or a common identity. The lack of commonality is often viewed as the cause of increasing fragmentation, which results in a perceived lack of collegiality that seems to have developed in our field. In addition, the fragmentation, often blamed on our subdisciplines, is seen by many as the main source of producing specializations that are often not central to the mission of the institution.

Final Thoughts

According to contemporary organizational theory, an organization should be appropriately named and described so to be clearly understood by all, then structured in such a manner that it can function properly to meet the purpose and goals of the organization. When applied to our field, a professional organization or academic unit should be named and described so it is clearly

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"The American public has been to physical education class, and in many cases, they did not like it."

Editor's Invited Column, *continued*

understood by all, then structured in such a manner that it can function to meet the educational mission of the organization. Unless there is a high level of member satisfaction, along with a true feeling of ownership, with the name as well as the structure (program placement), function can actually become dysfunction, and achieving the central mission of any organization can develop into a serious organizational problem.

One might ask, are our departments, schools, colleges, universities, and professional organizations guilty of creating their own organizational problems and then trying to solve them by simply changing a name or descriptor? Or, are our departments, schools, colleges, universities, and professional organizations trying to avoid being reorganized, restructured, downsized, merged, or eliminated by simply changing their name? ■



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2010 Conference, January 6–9, 2010

Millennium Resort—Scottsdale McCormick Ranch, Scottsdale, AZ

**Theme: “Good to Great*:
Success Stories in Kinesiology and Physical Education”**

*Based on the book *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . and Others Don't* by Jim Collins.

Our field and this organization have confronted difficult times in the past; there have been many questions about how to survive and thrive in a changing academic environment. For this conference, however, we don't want to focus on the negative stories but on the positive. What is it that you are doing in your program and at your university that you can share that shows you have made the leap from “Good to Great”?

Possible topics include:

- What kind of leader are you? How do you know if you are a “Level 5” leader?
- Which should you do first? Select the right individuals for your program or decide which direction to go?
- In these tough economic times, how are we “facing the brutal facts” and still moving toward greatness?
- Are you a “hedgehog or a fox”? Does your program try to do too much instead of doing one thing very well?
- Does your program have a “Culture of Discipline”? Not authoritarianism, but determination and purpose?

Other topics are welcomed and encouraged.

To submit a program proposal:

www.nakpehe.org

Proposals are due October 1, 2009.

For information, contact:

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■ Research That Matters

Sharpening the Mind Through Movement: Using Exercise Balls as Chairs in a University Class

John Kilbourne, Grand Valley State University

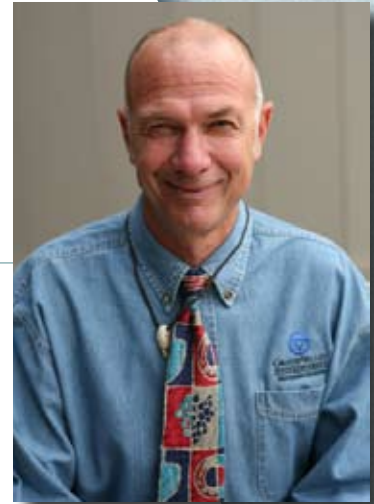
Objective

The objective of this project was to explore the use of UltiFit Antiburst Stability Balls (exercise balls) as seats for students in lecture classes at Grand Valley State University. The title of the course was MOV 101, "The History and Philosophy of Sport and Physical Education." The hypothesis was that using the exercise balls as seats would be a positive experience for students in a university lecture class. Quantitative data (questionnaires) and qualitative data (student comments) were collected from the students at the conclusion of the 14-week semester, fall 2008.

Literature Review

There is a growing body of scientific knowledge that affirms the positive benefits exercise has on teaching and learning. In his informative book, *SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, Harvard Professor John J. Ratey, M.D., said, "In addition to priming our state of mind, exercise influences learning directly, at the cellular level, improving the brain's potential to log in and process new information" (Ratey, 2008, p. 35). He went on to say, "Research from kinesiologists to epidemiologists shows again and again that the better your fitness level, the better your brain works" (Ratey, 2008, p. 247).

There is an increasing number of teachers using exercise balls as seats in classrooms. Many are reporting positive results in student attention and focus. Occupational therapist Sally Geerlings said, "The ability to pay attention increases when given the opportunity to move. These seats (exercise balls) give children tactile stimulation while they are working on balance, assisting their brains to be ready to learn" (Grandville Public Schools Board of Education, 2007). In addition, Bob Nellis of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, conducted a study on the benefits of chairless classrooms and said the following, "Kids move around. They're supposed to be active" (Pytel, 2007). His study showed that students with attention problems could focus better using the exercise balls for chairs in their classrooms. What is more, children in the classrooms who require extra movement could do so in a quiet manner without disturbing other students (Pytel, 2007). Also, in one private school in Minnesota, the teachers found the exercise balls so successful that they replaced all of the classroom chairs with balls. The principal, Deb Kelzer, said, "The kids were really excited to come back to school and sit on those balls" (Pytel, 2007).



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Research That Matters, *continued*

Corinne Westphal, in her article “Exercise Ball Moves to the Office: Just Sitting at Your Desk Is a Workout,” talked about the physiological benefits of using an exercise ball. She said using an exercise ball provides:

“Greater Balance—The body must constantly change its center of gravity in order to remain balanced and still. Greater balance promotes better posture and decreases risk of accidents from falls.”

“Core Strength Training—To maintain balance while sitting on an exercise ball, postural muscles (neck, upper and middle back, and shoulder girdle), abdominals, gluteals and leg muscles make constant tiny adjustments.”

“Improved Posture and Body Alignment—Sitting on an exercise ball, the body naturally assumes an upright, straight position. In fact, it’s very difficult and uncomfortable to slouch on an exercise ball” (Westphal, 2008).

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Research That Matters, *continued*

Project

The goal of the project at Grand Valley State University (GVSU) was to explore the use of exercise balls for college-age students in lecture classrooms and solicit student feedback about their experience at the end of the semester.

The project began in the fall of 2008 in four MOV 101 classes at GVSU. Students in the classes had the option of sitting on an exercise ball at their tabletop desks. A grant from the PEW Teaching & Learning Center at GVSU provided the funds to purchase 24 exercise balls and racks for easy and convenient storage. The balls came in three sizes appropriate for university-age students.

Following are the responses (in *italic*) to the questionnaires administered to the students at the end of the semester.

Survey: “Sharpening the Mind Through Movement—Exercise Balls”

This research project (09-27-H. Kilbourne) has been approved by the GVSU Human Research Review Committee as exempt from the federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

MOV 101—Fall 2008

By completing this survey you are consenting to participate in the research project.

1. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age (Circle One): Yes (52) No (0)
2. Sex (Circle One): M (26) F (26)
3. Year in School (Circle One): Freshman (22) Sophomore (12) Junior (11) Senior (7)
4. Number of days you used the exercise balls as a seat in a lecture class:
Mean: 11.6 days; Minimum: 1 day; Maximum: 28 days

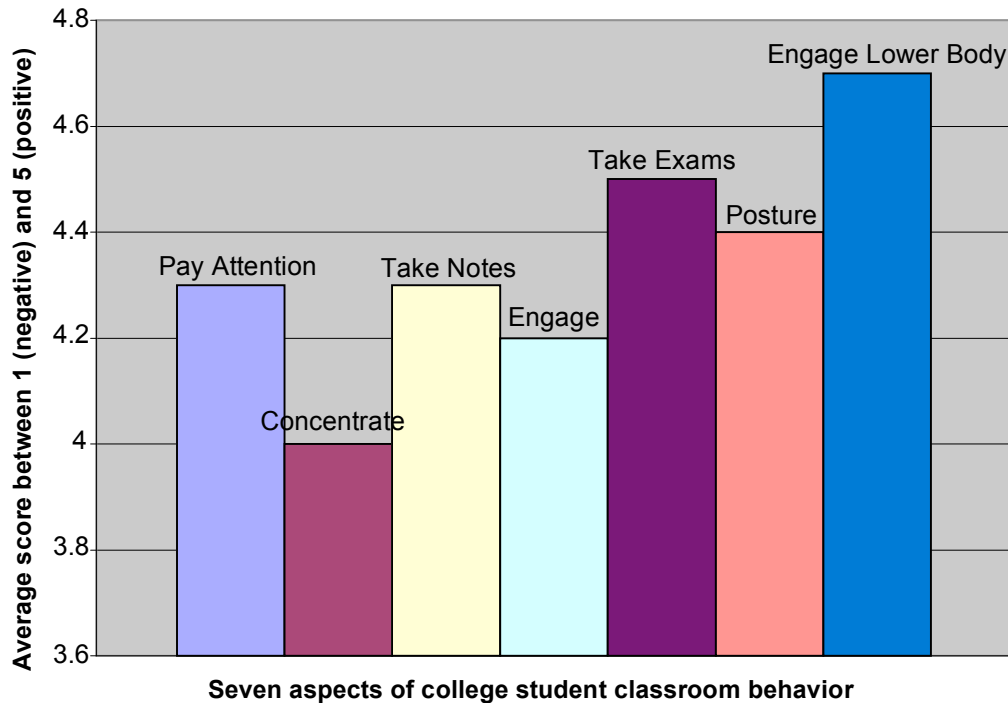
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being negative and 5 being positive), please rate using the exercise balls in a lecture class (Circle One):

- | | | |
|---|-----------|------------------|
| 5. Ability to pay attention in class | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.3</i> |
| 6. Ability to concentrate in class | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.0</i> |
| 7. Ability to take notes in class | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.3</i> |
| 8. Ability to engage in classroom discussions | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.2</i> |
| 9. Ability to take exams | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.5</i> |
| 10. Ability to maintain upright posture | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.4</i> |
| 11. Ability to engage the lower body | 1 2 3 4 5 | <i>Mean: 4.7</i> |
| 12. If given the opportunity, would you use an exercise ball as a seat in other classes at Grand Valley State University? (Circle One): Yes (51) No (1) | | |

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Research That Matters, *continued*

Mean score given to seven aspects of college student classroom behavior
after sitting on exercise balls instead of standard chairs



Comments:

Class I

- "This is a really great idea; I think it's wonderful!"
- "I really enjoyed it. I think it should be used more often in more places. I always used one when helping the athletes in high school do their rehab or evaluations."
- "Provided more cushion to a boney butt, even small adjustments were easy; posture was/has improved. Excellent project."
- "It's a good idea to engage one's body while sitting in class."
- "It keeps you awake and helps keep a good posture for paying attention in class."

Class II

- "I did not use an exercise ball while taking exams. I only would use them during lecture dates. I HIGHLY recommend that this experiment should be spread throughout the Movement Science department and throughout GVSU."
- "I think if balls were available in classroom, better results would be seen."
- "I felt that if the balls were readily available in the same classroom as the actual class, I would have sat on one every day."

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Research That Matters, *continued*

- “[The ball] helps my back a lot because I’m not sitting in a regular chair!”

Class III

- “It was a fun change in the classroom.”
- “My posture is very poor, and sitting on these exercise balls helped a lot. They were also fun to sit on.”
- “I enjoyed it very much, maybe even bragged a little to friends.”
- “I learn so much better when I am engaged in activities so this was a great way to learn.”
- “I liked it more the most part, but made my back hurt.”
- “I thought it was much more comfortable than a regular chair.”

Class IV

- “It was fun and enjoyable.”
- “I would have used it more if they were not upstairs. It was difficult to get to class on time when I had to go up to get one! I loved the idea and I am asking for one for Christmas for my desk at home!”
- “It was a lot of fun and was able to be more attentive.”
- “Excellent!”
- “All of this works very well for me as well because I do this at home every day.”
- “Very good! Much easier to always stay engaged.”
- “I really enjoyed them. If they were always in the class I would have participated every day.”
- “It’s fun, but got uncomfortable after an hour. As you can tell, popularity faded throughout the year. You have to incorporate other activities with the ball through the class time to make it more comfortable.”

Conclusions

The student’s responses to the questionnaires clearly demonstrated an excitement and enthusiasm for having the option to use an exercise ball for a seat in a lecture class. Responses to each question, from students’ ability to pay attention, take notes, engage in classroom discussions, and take exams, were all 4.0 (positive) or higher.

As the professor of the class, it was exciting to walk into the classroom and see students sitting on the brightly colored red and blue balls. Students would often gently bounce on the balls as they took notes or engaged in classroom discussions. What was most exciting was to see that 98% (51 out of 52 students) would use an exercise ball as a seat if provided the opportunity. Considering the costs of new classroom chairs and the students’ desires to sit on an exercise ball, it might be wise for colleges and universities to rethink their purchase of standard desk chairs.

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Research That Matters, *continued*

The exercise balls added an enhanced level of excitement for the students in class. Several students actually became attached to their ball seats, wanting to use their special ball in each class. Using the exercise balls required limited maintenance. Twice during the 14-week semester, air was added to the balls to maintain required firmness.

The results of the research project clearly demonstrate that additional research is needed to further establish the effectiveness of using exercise balls in a classroom setting. Research possibilities include examining student performance sitting on exercise balls versus sitting in traditional chairs and research examining students' ability to balance (pre and post). The aforementioned research project will be repeated with classes during the winter semester, 2009, at GVSU. Adjustments will be made so that students will have easier access to the balls before and after class.

References

- Grandville Public Schools Board of Education. (2007, October). *The Communicator*.
- Pytel, B. (2007, November 21). No more classroom chairs: Students are sitting on exercise balls. *Student Health Issues*.
- Ratey, J.J. (2008). *SPARK: The revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain*. New York: Little Brown & Co.
- Westphal, C. (2008). Exercise balls move to the office: Just sitting at your desk is a workout. *Fitness*. ■