

# PhD Students Present Research

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Pictured: Youngwook Kim, Mike Vakula, & Joonsun Park

Students pursuing their Ph.D.s in Kinesiology and Health Science (KHS) presented their research at the Disability Disciplines Doctoral Student Research Colloquium on Friday, March 25, 2022. KHS students Youngwook Kim, Mike Vakula, and Joonsun Park participated in this event.

Youngwook Kim is a post-doctoral fellow who earned his Ph.D. in disability disciplines at USU. Kim's research is centered on reactive balance in older adults. His findings show that focusing on task-specific reactive balance can be an important intervention for improving reactive balance in older adults, as well as the importance of power training.

Mike Vakula, a graduate assistant in Kinesiology, is pursuing a Ph.D. in disability disciplines, specializing in pathokinesiology. His research presentation regarded how the quadriceps function when individuals with obesity have impaired gait and muscle function. Vakula's findings reveal that having extended support could be a good way to help these individuals find more stability.

Joonsun Park is working towards his Ph.D. and is also specializing in pathokinesiology within the Disability Disciplines doctoral program. He presented on whether an aquatic environment has a greater effect on college students performing an isometric mid-thigh pull than a land environment. His findings so far indicate that there are significant differences between the two environments and that a between-subject design ought to be considered for future studies.

Student research in disability disciplines encompasses many topics concerning disabilities and different strategies to help people improve their overall health. KHS research into these topics often crosses into other health disciplines, such as behavior analysis and pathokinesiology.