

Graduate Research Assistantship Position Available!

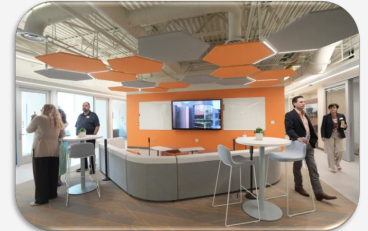
Fall 2026 | University of Tennessee, Knoxville

PhD: Kinesiology (Specialization: Physical Activity Epidemiology)



Dr. Danielle Ostendorf [Bio Link] is seeking a **highly motivated** doctoral student for **Fall 2026** in the Department of Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport Studies (KRSS) at the **University of Tennessee, Knoxville**. Dr. Ostendorf is the director of the **ActiveChange Lab [lab website]**. The mission of the ActiveChange Lab is to help all individuals improve their health and wellbeing by changing their lifestyle habits (physical activity and nutrition) to prevent the many chronic diseases that are associated with unhealthy lifestyles such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and Diabetes.

The ActiveChange lab is housed in the University of Tennessee's **Center for Precision Health (CPH)**, a state-of-the art, collaborative research facility.



Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) Responsibilities

- **Support the conduct of an ongoing NIH-funded clinical trial (K01 HL161417):** Attend weekly study meetings, assess outcome measures, enter data, conduct semi-structured interviews, and upload interview recordings for transcription.
- **Analysis of Qualitative Data:** Conduct a grounded theory analysis using a team-based approach in ATLAS.ti to elucidate theoretical constructs that explain how adults with overweight or obesity transition from physical activity adoption (6 months) to maintenance (12 months). Our goal is to develop an integrated theory of behavior change maintenance.
- **Skill Development:** Attend relevant workshops and trainings to develop research skills (mixed methods, behavioral theory, statistical analysis, oral and written communication) and professional skills (networking, leadership).
- **Apply for Predoctoral Grant Funding:** Submit grant applications to receive individual funding.
- **Present Abstracts and Publish Manuscripts:** Attend and present research at scientific conferences and submit manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals.
- **Submit Project Reports:** Project reports are due at the end of each semester.
- **Maintain Good Academic Standing**

Applicant Qualifications

- **Degree(s) and GPA:** Hold a Master's degree in kinesiology or other movement/health-related field and have a GPA that meets program standards.
- **Research Interests:** Demonstrate passion and interest to learn and grow in areas aligned with ActiveChange lab (development and optimization of interventions, community-engaged research methods, behavior change theory, dissemination and implementation science).
- **Prior Research Experience** involving development of independent research questions, qualitative methods, development and/or delivery of physical activity interventions, application of behavioral theory, data collection and analysis (quantitative and qualitative), professional presentations, and writing manuscripts is highly valued.
- **Skillsets:** Highly motivated, passionate, independent, strong time management and analytical skills, and the ability to thrive in an interdisciplinary environment.

Applicant and Assistantship Information

Applications will be accepted until **January 1, 2026**. Please refer to the **Graduate School [Link]** and **KRSS [Link]** websites for application information requirements. Competitive assistantships **includes a monthly stipend, tuition mandatory fee waiver, and health insurance**. The GRA is renewable for up to three years based on adequate student academic progress and meeting position expectations. Funding in years four and five (if needed) will be sought via grant applications. **The GRA is a 12-month appointment; thus, the GRA is expected to work over summers**. Early Applications (before Thanksgiving) are encouraged to be eligible for additional scholarships. Please contact Dr. Ostendorf [dostendo@utk.edu] to set up a Zoom meeting prior to submitting an application and share a current CV, copies of transcripts, and a writing sample.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

DEPARTMENT OF KINESIOLOGY,
RECREATION & SPORT STUDIES