



Opportunities for Independent Studies 2026-27

Independent Study Courses in Health Studies (HLTH 595, 491, and 456)* Independent Study Courses in Kinesiology (KNPE 595, 491, and 456)*

Please submit applications directly to the relevant researcher(s) whose area of research is of interest. There is no deadline for applications, however there are a limited number of positions available. More opportunities may become available closer to the term(s).

HLTH/KNPE 595, 491, and 456 are designed to provide opportunities for students in Kinesiology or Health Studies who may be interested in pursuing research in laboratories or on community-based projects. Students will gain experience with the research process as it applies to the various fields of Kinesiology and Health Studies. This process may include, but is not limited to experimental design, data collection and analysis, literature searches, manuscript writing, and presentation skills.

** Please note that HLTH/KNPE 491 and 456 are 3.0 credit unit courses which can be taken in either fall or winter terms (some opportunities may exist for doing these courses over both fall and winter terms, and also spring and/or summer terms). HLTH/KNPE 595 is a 6.0 credit unit course which spans across both the fall and winter terms and is not offered during the spring/summer terms.*

Questions can be directed to Robert Watering by e-mail at watering@queensu.ca.

Research Summaries for Participating Faculty Members

The following is a summary of research interests for the faculty members within the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies who have indicated their intent to supervise fourth-year independent courses next year. Further information on each faculty member can be found on the [SKHS website](#). Other faculty members may also consider supervising undergraduate students at a later point in time, and this document will be updated accordingly.

Dr. Jodi John (Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Community Health)

Dr. John's research broadly explores Indigenous health, community strengths, and addressing determinants of Indigenous health inequities with a focus on the following streams: Indigenous Food Sovereignty, food systems and health; Indigenous healthcare providers and community-based strengths in health and healthcare; Indigenous research sovereignty. Dr. John is pleased to supervise independent study projects in these or related areas. While students should identify a general area of interest, Dr. John is happy to discuss and finalize topics together with students. Opportunities include a 3-credit literature review (HLTH 456), a 3-credit special project (HLTH 491), and an honours thesis (HLTH 595).

Interested students should send a cover letter outlining your interest, an unofficial transcript, and résumé/CV to Dr. John at j.john@queensu.ca (c.c. watering@queensu.ca). Please title the email 'HLTH Independent Study Application' in the subject line.

Dr. Samantha King (Socio-Cultural Studies in Health and Kinesiology)

Dr. King is accepting applications for independent study positions (HLTH 456, 491 and/or 595) in the Fall and Winter of 2026-27. Fourth-year students will have the option to choose from a broad range of potential topics in qualitative research. Ongoing studies focus on critical approaches to nutrition, long COVID, and mental health.

Interested students should send a cover letter, an unofficial transcript, and their résumé to Dr. King at kingsj@queensu.ca (cc to watering@queensu.ca). Please use "Independent Study Application" in the subject line.

Dr. Courtney Szto – KNPE/HTLH 456/491/595 Fall 2026/Winter 2027

Dr. Courtney Szto is looking to support undergraduate students in either Kinesiology or Health Studies students who would like to (Option A) work on an existing project or (Option B) design a socio-cultural research project of their own.

Option A: [“If the Parks Could Talk”](#) is a mapping project that amplifies Indigenous histories, languages, and sovereignty in Canada. Students will choose a recreation area in Canada (e.g., national park, provincial park, municipal park, trail area, camp site etc.) to learn the Indigenous histories of that location, create a webpage specifically for that site, and add to the larger project map. See example of StoryMap [HERE](#). The timing of this option is very flexible; thus, students who would like to start some of their work earlier in the summer or would prefer to have control over their workload are invited to apply. Aside from meetings, the vast majority of this project will require independent and remote work.

Skills that students will practice include: literature review, data sorting, critical analysis, media analysis, writing for an accessible audience, experience with StoryMaps and ArcGIS, and/or media creation.

Students who select this option should indicate in their email what park(s)/recreation area(s) they are interested in researching.

Option B: Students may propose an independent socio-cultural project. Examples of previous projects that students have designed include: social media and body image issues, women’s professional sports, mega-events and environmental sustainability, sociological understandings of pain, audience reception, and cultural appropriation and social media. Students who create their own project may have to submit an ethics application depending on the course code. Students who select this option must include a 300 – 500 word explanation of their proposed idea, in addition to the other application documents listed below.

Interested students should send the following documents to c.szto@queensu.ca:

- current résumé
- unofficial transcript

Dr. Jean Côté (Sport Psychology)

Number of positions: **One** student in KNPE 595 for 2026-27

Are you interested in being involved in research exploring the elements of positive youth sport experiences? Research in the sport psychology lab at Queen's focuses primarily on the characteristics of the youth sport environment (e.g., coach-athlete relationships, teammate interactions, coach characteristics) that create favourable conditions for excellence and participation in sport. In addition, current projects also relate to group dynamics principles (e.g., cohesion, subgroups) and coaching behaviours (e.g., transformational leadership) in sport.

Those students accepted for these positions will have opportunities to contribute to several ongoing projects and will be working with data derived from observations (e.g., coding videos), interviews (e.g., transcription), and questionnaires (e.g., inputting data). Finally, students typically experience the research process within the field of sport psychology, from data collection (e.g., video-recording sport competition, questionnaire distribution) all the way to data analysis and writing.

Interested students should contact Dr. Jean Côté at jc46@queensu.ca (c.c. to watering@queensu.ca) and attach a cover letter, unofficial transcript, and résumé or CV. Including a recent ‘headshot’ photo would be appreciated as well, to assist with recognition from past undergraduate class discussions. Please title the e-mail ‘KNPE/HLTH Independent Study Application’ in the subject line.

Dr. Stuart Wilson and Dr. Luc Martin (PLAYS Research Group in Sport Psychology)

Number of positions: **One** student in KNPE 595 for 2026–27

The PLAYS Research Group at Queen’s University is seeking undergraduate students interested in contributing to exploring how **high-quality rest and recovery** contribute to positive sport experiences for youth athletes. This work will involve examining how athletes experience stress and rest around their weekly activities and how recovery is influenced by time along vs. within groups. In addition, students may expect to be involved in other ongoing projects in the sport psychology lab related to positive youth development through sport, including research on group dynamics principles, interest development, and coaching behaviours in sport.

Students accepted for these positions will be co-supervised by Dr. Stuart Wilson and Dr. Luc Martin. These students will have opportunities to contribute to several ongoing projects and may work with data derived from interviews (e.g., transcription and qualitative analysis), experience sampling methods (e.g., athlete reports of daily experiences), and questionnaires (e.g., data entry and organization). Students may also gain experience with different stages of the research process within the field of sport psychology, including data collection, data analysis, and research dissemination.

Interested students should contact **Dr. Stuart Wilson** at stuart.wilson@queensu.ca (c.c. watering@queensu.ca and luc.martin@queensu.ca) and attach a cover letter, unofficial transcript, and résumé or CV. Please use the following subject line: “**KNPE 595 Research Internship Application**”.

Dr. Jessica Selinger (Neuromechanics)

Number of positions:

- **One or two** positions each in KNPE 456 or 491 in Spring/Summer, Fall, or Winter terms.
- **One to three** positions in KNPE 595 in fall/winter terms.

The Neuromechanics Lab (<https://neuromech.queensu.ca>), headed by Dr. Selinger, works to understand the fundamental principles that underlie the neuromechanics of legged locomotion, and the application of these principles to wearable and assistive technologies that can improve human mobility and overall health. To do so, we combine biomechanical and neurophysiological approaches to understand how gait is adapted to changing tasks, environments, and bodies. Ultimately, the purpose of our work is to design novel rehabilitative strategies and wearable technologies to aid those with mobility impairments. Current research themes include:

- Understanding the mechanics and energetics of human locomotion
- Adaptation and learning in exoskeleton assisted walking
- Investigating ecological human movement through wearable tech

Interested students should send a cover letter, résumé or CV, and unofficial transcript to Dr. Selinger at j.selinger@queensu.ca (c.c. to watering@queensu.ca). Please title the e-mail 'KNPE Independent Study Application' in the subject line.

Dr. Gerome Manson– Fall/Winter KNPE or HLTH 491/595

Number of positions: **Four to five** students in HLTH or KNPE 491/595 for Fall/Winter 2026-27

The **Sensorimotor Exploration Lab** (colloquially known as SMEL) is a neuromechanics lab in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies at Queen's University. We study the processes underlying the planning, control, and learning of skilled movement in both neurologically healthy and neurologically impaired populations (e.g., spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, spinal muscular atrophy). Our scientific work is at the intersection of kinesiology, psychology, engineering, systems neuroscience, and rehabilitation. We use a combination of motion capture, brain imaging, and robotics to answer our scientific questions. Our lab thrives on the diversity and commitment of our members, and we welcome new members from a wide range of academic and cultural backgrounds.

Interested students should contact Dr. Gerome Manson (gm99@queensu.ca) with a cover letter, an unofficial transcript, and a résumé/CV (cc: watering@queensu.ca). The cover letter should indicate one's interest in one of the research themes outlined on the [lab webpage](#). You can also check out our Instagram page (@qu_senmolab)

IMPORTANT NOTE: We invest heavily in our undergraduate members, and students who have previously joined the lab have moved on to positions in graduate school, medicine, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy (see lab alumni on the website). Undergraduate students have also published peer-reviewed research articles and presented at national (in Montreal, Toronto, and Prince Edward Island) and international conferences in France and the UK (see the lab website and Instagram page). This level of achievement requires significant time and dedication to learning new skills and techniques (such as transcutaneous spinal stimulation, EEG, and markerless motion tracking). While high marks (e.g., above an A or 80%) are possible, they are relatively difficult to achieve in this research experience without initiative and time investment. Please consider this when applying, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Pouya Amiri (Biomechanics and Ergonomics)

Number of positions: **Two** students in KNPE 595.

My research focuses on understanding the underlying cause of movement impairment and applying this knowledge to prevent illness and optimize physical performance. To do this, I combine

computational musculoskeletal models and functional experiments to quantify muscle and joint forces and develop subject-specific interventions. I am particularly interested in ACL injuries and knee osteoarthritis, human balance control and fall prevention in the elderly, and lower limb amputation. Possible research projects are:

- Investigating the effect of electrical parameters on muscle strength and recovery after ACL reconstruction
- Initiation of knee osteoarthritis after ACL reconstruction
- Comparison of marker-less and marker-based motion capture systems for clinical applications
- The role of muscle intrinsic properties and co-contraction in human balance control

Interested students should send a cover letter, an unofficial transcript, and their c.v./ résumé to Dr. Amiri at p.amiri@queensu.ca (c.c. to watering@queensu.ca). Please use “KNPE/HLTH 595 Honours Thesis Application” in the subject line.

Dr. Elijah Bisung (Global Health Studies)

Dr. Elijah Bisung will accept applications for independent study positions this year (i.e.: HLTH 456, 491 and/or 595). Fourth-year students will be exposed to a broad range of potential global health research areas. On-going studies include examination of adolescent peer leadership and HIVD/AIDS education in Ghana, the role of trust in health promotion activities among marginalized groups, and “ad hoc” social welfare programs during COVID-19 and their implication for women’s health in sub-Saharan Africa.

Interested students should send a cover letter, an unofficial transcript, and their résumé to Dr. Bisung at elijah.bisung@queensu.ca (c.c. to watering@queensu.ca). Please use “Independent Study Application” in the subject line.

Dr. Lucie Lévesque (Community-Engaged Health Promotion Research Lab)

(<https://www.queensu.ca/cehpr/>)

Number of positions available: **Two** students in HLTH 595 for 2026/27

The Community-Engaged Health Promotion Research Lab (<https://www.queensu.ca/cehpr/>) conducts research on public health interventions that focus on physical activity and positive development in youth for the prevention of chronic diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes (T2D). Our team has a long-standing collaboration with the [Kahnawá:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Program \(KDSPP\)](#) working with Indigenous communities to mobilize for health promotion and T2D prevention where we combine implementation science with qualitative and quantitative methodologies to better understand and improve health promotion programs through an ecological lens.

Students will be immersed in the principles of the KSDPP Code of Research Ethics, and the 4 R's of research - Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity and Responsibility - and will have an opportunity to build

relationships with partnered Indigenous communities. Students will be assigned readings and guided through the development of a positionality statement to unpack their position relative to that of partnered community members. Students will have the opportunity to attend collaborative research team meetings (in person and virtually) and train in mixed methods research balancing Western and Indigenous knowledges, while contributing to the overall goals of the CIHR Team Grant "Mobilizing resilience through community-to-community (C2C) exchange: Seven Generations thinking for wellness and diabetes prevention" and related projects.

Interested students should send a cover letter including a brief statement of interest (~250 words), unofficial transcript, and a résumé/CV to Lucie Lévesque (levesgul@queensu.ca; cc. watering@queensu.ca),

Dr. Amy Latimer-Cheung – The Canadian Disability Participation Project 2.0 - Kinesiology and Health Studies Undergraduate Honours Thesis Research Project Opportunities (KNPE/HLTH 595)

The Canadian Disability Participation Project (CDPP) is a research partnership of 43 academics from across Canada, the United States and England and 31 partners from Canadian sport, exercise and play organizations. The goal of CDPP is to develop, test, implement and nationally disseminate, evidence-based programs that create quality sport, exercise and play participation for children, youth and adults with physical, intellectual, and sensory disabilities.

Dr. Amy Latimer-Cheung, the CDPP 2.0 Principal Investigator, is seeking committed and enthusiastic 3rd and 4th year undergraduate students from the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies to engage as members of a collaborative research team. Our team will undertake research to promote quality participation in disability sport.

Project Description: Quality Participation Enrichment Project (Q-PEP)

Overarching objective: Enhance quality of experience in physical activity programs among persons with disabilities through the application of the quality participation framework.

Research context: Our research team will be working with community organizations who either a) want to develop a new physical activity program for persons with disability or b) want to enhance the quality of an existing program

Research Method:

- *September - November*
 - a) Identify organizational needs for quality programming
 - b) Identify individual participant needs for quality programming
 - c) Co-develop a physical activity program that creates quality experiences for persons with disabilities that meets organizational and individual needs

- *November – December*
- d) Deliver training and education as necessary

- *January - March*
- d) Evaluate the program

- *April*
- e) Revise and iterate the program

Trainee Engagement:

In the 2026-27 academic year, we will be working with three organizations to support their programming needs. Each organization will be matched with a trainee working group. Each trainee working group will include: a) two 4th year Kinesiology or Health Studies Students completing undergraduate thesis courses; and b) one 3rd year research intern (KNPE 352). Dr. Latimer-Cheung, along with 2 graduate students will be overseeing the project.

Qualifications:

- 4th yr standing in a degree program within the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
- Meets eligibility to enrol in KNPE/HLTH 595
- Lived experience with disability is an asset
- Experience delivering physical activity or recreational programming is desirable
- Experience leading and/or supporting programming for persons with disabilities is desirable

Expectations of Trainees:

I am seeking undergraduate students committed to fully engaging in research. We will be working with community partners – commitment is essential. Fully engaging means committing 10-12 hrs/week (thesis students) and 5 hrs/week (interns) for the entire academic year. Research team meetings 1.5-2.0 hr/wk. Meeting deadlines will be critical. A focus on conducting high-quality research rather than on grade achievement is expected.

How to Apply:

- Please submit the following to Dr. Amy Latimer-Cheung via e-mail amy.latimer@queensu.ca :
 - a brief cover letter highlighting your passion and skill for promoting physical activity for persons with a disability and for research;
 - a résumé; and
 - an official copy of your transcripts
- **Applications will be accepted until suitable candidates are identified.**