Biomechanics Position

Current description:
The Kinesiology department announces a tenure-track position at the assistant professor level, with specialization in Biomechanics, to begin August 2008. Applicants must have a Ph.D. and demonstrated excellence in scholarship and classroom teaching. Strong preference will be given to candidates with demonstrated abilities in coaching, swim instruction and/or pool management. Applicants should send cover letter describing research experience and interests and teaching experience along with vita. Letters of recommendation and additional materials will be requested after the initial screening process. Please send letter of interest and vita to Dr. Gregg Afman.

Proposed description:
The Kinesiology department announces a tenure-track position at the assistant professor level, with specialization in Biomechanics, to begin August 2008. Applicants must have a Ph.D. and demonstrated excellence in scholarship and classroom teaching. In addition to biomechanics, strong preference will be given to candidates with demonstrated abilities in motor behavior, prevention/treatment of athletic injuries, research and statistics and possibly sport and movement psychology. Applicants should send cover letter describing research experience and interests and teaching experience along with curriculum vita. Letters of recommendation and additional materials will be requested after the initial screening process. Please send letter of interest and curriculum vita to Dr. Gregg Afman.

Justification: This move to seek a fulltime Kinesiology person is the result of two key issues. The first is the difficulty in finding a candidate who is both a teacher and a coach. Since launching the Biomechanics position in early fall 2007, we have not been able to find a single candidate suitable for even a phone interview. More importantly, our department desires to attract a diverse candidate to fill this position. With such a small pool of biomechanists, this is difficult at best. With the added requirement of coaching expertise, it appears to be almost an impossibility. Second, with the resignation of Rebecca Mouw, we now have need for expertise in Motor Behavior, a sub-specialty easily found in scholars trained in biomechanics. In addition, the teaching load of the two open positions (Jorden plus Mouw) totals 24 units. The available coaching load of these two positions totals 16 units, with eight additional units of administrative load (Mouw). Combining the coaching and administrative units (24) allows our athletic director to pursue his needs with a fulltime person as well.

Teacher/Coach model. Does this change the department’s commitment to the overall philosophy of the teacher/coach model? This question is valid, given that we are dissolving one teacher/coach position within our department. Historically, the teacher/coach model fit well when our department’s emphasis was physical education. Those trained as teachers were also trained as coaches. With our current emphasis in kinesiology (the study of human movement), our core curriculum has dramatically shifted toward the sciences. Biomechanists are trained in anatomy, physics and biology, not in coaching. The Kinesiology department remains committed to the teacher/coach model where appropriate. Our five teacher/coaches (LeSage, Smelley, Smoot, Moore, Wolf) demonstrate excellence in both the teaching and coaching domains. Should any of these positions become vacant, we would look to replace with similar expertise.