Faculty Article: From the shores of the Mediterranean to the beaches of Lake Michigan, Dr. Jose M. Palao (Continued)

Dr. Palao’s research and work area focus on the study of the aspects that affect performance, training, and coaching in sport (e.g. sport analytics, performance indicators at different levels of competition and age groups, specific strength training, etc.). He is also interested in how to apply technology and how to transfer information and work protocols between academics and professionals working in the field. Dr. Palao has experience as a coach (in track and field and indoor volleyball) and providing scientific support for athletes and teams in different sports (e.g. professional volleyball teams, Spain’s national beach volleyball team, among others).

Currently, he is involved in two research studies that are being carried out on campus, in which he collaborates with Dr. Penny Lyter. In these studies, Miranda DeMark, a senior exercise science major and Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP) recipient, and Jill Frideres, a volunteer researcher, are collaborating. In the first of the studies, they are studying how body satisfaction and healthy behaviors change in college students. In the second study, they are assessing the effect of education training and technology on physical activity and wellness in college students. In this study, they are studying the effect of wearing a fitness tracker when you are taking a course that promotes physical activity and wellness, such as the course “Lifetime Wellness”. This study is currently still in the first step of the process, and they are planning on assessing the benefits of fitness trackers to improve the physical activity and wellness of the students of our University.

Another focus of Dr. Palao’s is in giving exercise science and pre-health students the opportunity to collaborate and carry out research. An example of this is Connor Karwowski, a senior pre-health major (Exercise Science concentration), who first as part of his internship and now as part of the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP) is carrying out a study about the upper-body strength of female college athletes. This study is focused on the relationship of different tests to measure strength and power and how this correlates to the athletes’ ability to apply force in their sport actions. This type of opportunity allows students to expand their experience in assessing physical capacities, to learn to use equipment and follow protocols, to innovate in the field of exercise science, and to contribute to the increase in evidence-based knowledge about the use of these protocols.

Dr. Palao is an active researcher with over 150 peer-reviewed articles and more than 10 externally funded projects in Spain as the principal researcher. He has directed nine dissertations and 13 master’s theses. The Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation has twice recognized his research done over a six-year period (2002-2007 and 2008-2013). He is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist by the National Strength and Conditioning Association and has Level 4 Accreditation for Performance Analysts by the International Society of Performance Analysis of Sport.