

Kinesiology Honours student talks about lessons learned outside the classroom and Acadia's "magic feel"

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Researchers work with student-athletes inside the mLab

Fourth year Kinesiology Honours student, Carolyn Tan, didn't expect to like biomechanics when she chose to major in Kinesiology, but it was after her first class with Dr. Scott Landry that she realized biomechanics was a lot more than math and physics. She was always interested in applied sciences because she wanted to work closely with people and she found this program would give her the opportunity to do so.

Carolyn was first encouraged to apply to Acadia by her Acadia alumni parents, who both had great experiences as students. After doing some research, Carolyn was particularly interested in the Sports Injury Assessment & Management (SIAM) program, knowing she'd get to work with student-athletes.

"This program was something I didn't necessarily see in any other schools," she says. "I thought for two years I would gain experience as a student therapist and work with student-athletes – both beneficial for my future career choices."

After being accepted to the SIAM program headed by Dr. Jim Macleod, Carolyn has had the opportunity to do research for her Honours thesis (under the supervision of Dr. Landry) in the John McIntyre Motion Laboratory of Applied Biomechanics (mLAB). There she collects and studies the biomechanical data recorded during athletic movements where, she says, she's realized that there's much more than theory when working with people. Although she's learned a lot in the classroom, Carolyn says that when working face to face with someone there are many skills students need to have that they don't consider.

Carolyn's thesis focuses on studying the biomechanics of the lower extremity (hip, knee and ankle joint) of pre- and post-pubescent athletes during single and double-leg drop jump landings and how it relates to non-contact ACL injury. Following graduation, she plans to pursue a Masters' degree in Physiotherapy.

Referring to the SIAM program, she points out that “student-athletes are very focused and goal-oriented, and sometimes when you don’t have the best of news, you have to address it properly. The work we do is about empathy and communication. You need one-on-one experience and it’s something you definitely might not learn through textbooks.”

Carolyn says being close to her professors is essential because it allows for an open discussion between professors and students about how to communicate and approach people for research.

“I appreciate the connections we have with professors here at Acadia,” she says. “Professors are always there and open to having discussions on how to manage a situation with student-athletes. They know you and they want to know how you’re doing or if something is stressing you out and how you’re progressing.”

Just like her parents, Carolyn says she’s had a great experience at Acadia and describes it as having a “magic feel.”

“It’s great to know you can walk anywhere on campus and people will say hello and be welcoming everywhere you go.”

To learn more about the mLAB at Acadia [click here](#).

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