



ATHLETIC TRAINING EDUCATION OVERVIEW

This document provides a brief overview of the education and credentialing process for entry-level athletic trainers. Athletic Training is an academic major or graduate equivalent major program that is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The minimum entry point into the profession of Athletic Training is at the baccalaureate level; by 2014-2015, all accredited education programs in Athletic Training will lead to a degree in Athletic Training. Upon completion of a CAATE-accredited Athletic Training Education program, students become eligible to obtain national certification granted by the NATA Board of Certification, Inc. (BOC).

ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION

Entry-level athletic training education uses a competency-based approach in both the classroom and clinical settings. Using a medical-based education model, Athletic Training students are educated to provide comprehensive preventive services and care in six domains of clinical practice: prevention, clinical evaluation and diagnosis, immediate care, treatment, rehabilitation, and reconditioning; organization and administration; and professional responsibility. The educational requirements for CAATE-accredited Athletic Training Education programs include not only cognitive (knowledge) and psychomotor (skill) content, but also a broad scope of foundational behaviors of professional practice, as well as a comprehensive clinical learning requirement that is embodied in the clinical proficiencies (professional, practice-oriented outcomes) as identified in the *Athletic Training Educational Competencies and Clinical Proficiencies*.

Students must receive formal instruction in the following specific subject matter areas:

Basic and Applied Sciences

- Human anatomy
- Human physiology
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Physics
- Statistics and research design
- Rehabilitation
- Exercise Physiology
- Kinesiology/Biomechanics

Professional Content

- Risk Management and Injury Prevention
- Pathology of Injuries and Illnesses
- Orthopedic Clinical Examination and Diagnosis
- Medical Conditions and Disabilities
- Acute Care of Injuries and Illnesses
- Therapeutic Modalities
- Conditioning, Rehabilitative Exercise & Pharmacology
- Psychosocial Intervention and Referral
- Nutritional Aspects of Injuries & Illnesses
- Health Care Administration

Clinical Education

Students are required to participate in a minimum of two years of academic clinical education. Through these experiences, students must gain clinical experiences associated with a variety of different patient populations defined but not limited to gender, varying levels of risk, utilization of protective equipment, and general medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, asthma) that address the continuum of care.

Clinical experiences provide students with opportunities to practice, under the direct supervision of qualified Clinical Instructors (i.e., Certified Athletic Trainer [ATC®] or other credentialed health care professionals).

THE ATC® CREDENTIAL

The ATC® credential and the BOC requirements are currently recognized by 45 states for eligibility and/or regulation of the practice of athletic trainers. The credibility of the BOC program and the ATC® credential it awards are supported by three pillars: (1) the BOC certification examination; (2) the BOC Standards of Professional Practice, and Disciplinary Guidelines and Procedures; and (3) continuing competence (education) requirements.

BOC certification is recognized by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies and is the only accredited certification program for athletic trainers. To be certified, an individual must demonstrate that he/she is an athletic trainer capable of performing the required duties without threat of harm to the public. The BOC traditionally conducts annual examination development meetings during which certified athletic trainers and recognized experts in the science of athletic training develop, review and validate examination items and problems. The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for competent performance as an entry-level athletic trainer fall into three categories:

1. Understanding, applying, and analyzing;
2. Knowledge and decision-making;
3. Special performance abilities.

BOC certified athletic trainers are educated, trained and evaluated in six major practice domains:

1. Prevention
2. Clinical Evaluation and Diagnosis
3. Immediate Care
4. Treatment, Rehabilitation and Reconditioning
5. Organization and Administration
6. Professional Responsibility

For more information regarding the educational, certification, and licensure requirements for athletic trainers visit:

The National Athletic Trainers' Association – www.nata.org

The National Athletic Trainers' Association Education Council – www.nataec.org

The Board of Certification – www.bocatc.org

The Commission on the Accreditation of Athletic Training Education Programs–
www.caate.net