



# ATHLETIC TRAINING EDUCATION OVERVIEW

This document provides a brief overview of the education and credentialing process for entry-level athletic trainers. Athletic training education programs, an academic major or the equivalent, are accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) via the Joint Review Committee – Athletic Training (JRC-AT) and lead to a bachelor's or master's degree. Certification is granted by the NATA Board of Certification, Inc. (NATABOC).

## 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 serve in the role of physician extenders with an emphasis on clinical reasoning skills. Educational content is based on cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skill), and affective (professional behaviors) competencies and clinical proficiencies (professional, practice-oriented outcomes).

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

### Foundational Courses

- Human anatomy
- Human physiology
- Exercise physiology
- Kinesiology/biomechanics
- Nutrition
- Statistics and research design
- Strength training and reconditioning
- Acute care of injury and illness

### Professional Courses

- Risk management and injury/illness prevention
- Pathology of injury/illness
- Assessment of injury/illness
- General medical conditions and disabilities
- Therapeutic modalities
- Therapeutic exercise and rehabilitation
- Health care administration
- Weight management and body composition
- Psychosocial intervention and referral
- Medical ethics and legal issues
- Pharmacology
- Professional development and responsibilities

## Clinical Education

Students are required to participate in a minimum of two years of academic clinical education. A segment of the clinical education experience must be directed toward a patient population having general medical ailments (e.g., cardiorespiratory, metabolic).

Using an outcomes-based approach, students are instructed and evaluated by approved clinical instructors or physicians in the following venues:

Colleges/universities  
Secondary schools  
Professional sports  
Clinics

Industrial settings  
Hospitals  
Olympic sports

## THE ATC® CREDENTIAL

The ATC® credential and the Board of Certification, Inc. requirements are currently recognized by 43 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: the BOC certification examination; BOC Standards of Practice and Disciplinary Process; and continuing competence requirements. These three areas will be addressed.

BOC certification is recognized by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies **and is the only accredited certification program for athletic trainers, who are allied health care professionals.** 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 Board of Certification 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. Recognition, Evaluation and Assessment
3. Immediate Care
4. Treatment, Rehabilitation and Reconditioning
5. Organization and Administration
6. Professional Development

For more information, visit the National Athletic Trainers' Association at [www.NATA.org](http://www.NATA.org) and the Board of Certification, Inc. at [www.BOCATC.org](http://www.BOCATC.org).

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