

**Weber State University
Evaluation Team Report
of
Master of Science in Athletic Training Program
March, 2014**

Overview/Introductory Statement

The program review for the Master of Science in Athletic Training (MSAT) revealed an excellent, research-based program for those people seeking initial certification as athletic trainers. The program was formally reviewed and accredited in 2010 by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE), which is noted by the reviewers. Following a thorough review of faculty, students, preceptors, administration, curriculum, and resources, we commend the director, faculty, and administration on: (a) addressing the recommendations of the 2010 CAATE report; (b) partnerships created in the athletic training community that result in quality clinical rotations for students with qualified preceptors; (c) the exceptional first-time pass rates of the students on the national Board of Certification exam; and (d) the excellent campus facilities and resources available to faculty. Specific details about the program's strengths, challenges, and recommendations are listed below; however, overall, the team found the MSAT to be a quality master's degree program.

Program Strengths

1. **Faculty Members.** The qualifications of the faculty members in the program are excellent. Each of the current four, full-time faculty members possess terminal degrees and are certified athletic trainers. All are either tenured or on a tenure-track. Two adjunct faculty members are currently hired as athletic trainers on the Weber State campus. With the addition of another full-time faculty member beginning during the 2014-2015 academic year, the MSAT program will have one of the largest faculties in the western United States; although it should be noted, that these faculty members teach in an undergraduate athletic training program as well.
2. **Facilities.** The facilities are excellent and include several classrooms and labs. The faculty and students have access to biomedical and human performance labs as well as a computer lab. Equipment is up to date, and there seems to be a plan in place to replace equipment as it is used or wears out.
3. **Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment.** CAATE requires that 351 competencies be addressed and assessed in the curriculum. Using the Board of Certification exam as a benchmark, it is noted that this program exceeds the national average of first time pass rates. The program has a three-year aggregate pass rate of 93.75% when the national average is 81%. The two students who did not pass on the first time, passed on a subsequent attempt. This pass rate is exceptional.

4. **Clinical Sites.** The faculty and more specifically, Dr. Matthew Donohue, the clinical coordinator, have developed a large variety of appropriate clinical sites, including collegiate, high school, clinical, and hospital sites. Each site has at least one qualified preceptor who oversees the clinical work of the students using a rubric designed by the AT faculty.
5. **Thesis.** Each student is required to work with a faculty member to complete a thesis. The thesis sets this program apart from other athletic training master's degrees. The faculty are available and supportive of the thesis process.
6. **Administrative Support.** The dean from the Moyes College of Education, Dr. Jack Rasmussen is supportive of the program. Funding for additional faculty members comes from the dean's office, and three new faculty member in the program have been added in three years. The college has two major endowments which can be accessed to support faculty with funds for travel, equipment, technology, and scholarship. Additionally, the department chair of Health Promotion and Human Performance, Jennifer Turley, is supportive of the program and its faculty.

Program Challenges

1. **Program Director's Load.** In her role as director, Dr. Valerie Herzog is responsible for checking all the incoming students' applications, including GPAs, letters of recommendation, IELTS/TOFEL scores, and prerequisites. She also conducts pre-admission interviews with each prospective student. After the student is admitted, she serves as the main advisor for the students. She teaches several courses each semester and is responsible for the inventorying and ordering of all equipment and expendable materials. All of this is accomplished with little secretarial help. It is also noted that currently the program director is also the director of the undergraduate Athletic Therapy program.
2. **Communication among Faculty, Students, and Preceptors.** With 53 different clinical sites and one faculty member designated to visit each site, it was indicated by the students and preceptors that on occasion the lines of communication are broken.
3. **Lab Access for Students when Faculty are not Available.** Students are unable to access the labs to practice. Faculty will open certain labs on occasion when they are in the building, but the students must seek out a faculty member to get into a lab.
4. **Overly Long Clinical Evaluations.** The preceptors noted that the four page rubric/evaluation can be somewhat tedious to fill out while giving appropriate feedback to the student. Many of the items do not fit certain clinical sites so many items are skipped.

Program Recommendations

1. **Lab Coordinator Position.** This person could be available to open the lab and monitor it for the students who wish to practice. Additionally, the person could do much of the inventory and restocking of materials in the lab.
2. **Streamline Clinical Evaluations.** Although it is understood that there are many competencies that a student must meet, not all competencies can be met at each clinical site. It is suggested that the current evaluation forms be refined and possibly even tied to a specific preceptor or site, so that preceptors are not overly burdened by the evaluation.
3. **Preceptor Training.** In conjunction with streamlined evaluations, it is suggested that a more formalized preceptor annual training workshop or seminar be conducted by the MSAT faculty. It would be a time for all to gain a better understanding of what the faculty are trying to accomplish as well as opening a more direct channel of communication with the designated preceptors.
4. **Establish a Formal External Committee.** Much can be gained from listening to constituents from outside the university setting. An external committee that meets at least annually can give a practitioner's viewpoint, concerns, and suggestions to the faculty of the MSAT program.
5. **Focus on Graduate Students' Needs.** This recommendation is three-fold: (1) to establish a dedicated space for the grad students to congregate, study, collaborate, and practice their burgeoning skills in athletic training; (2) to seek funds for students to conduct and disseminate their research agendas; and (3) allowing students to create their own research agendas rather than always being tied to one of the professor's agendas.

Ratings Based on the Program Review Rubric

STANDARD A - MISSION STATEMENT

	Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a.	The expected outcomes of the program need to be clearly defined.	A	The team felt the mission statement lacks specificity; however, it was stated that it meets the requirements for CAATE accreditation.
b.	A process by which these accomplishments are determined and periodically assessed based upon the constituencies served by the program.	S	
c.	A clearly defined educational program, including a curriculum that enables graduates to achieve the mission.	S	
d.	The program mission statement must be appropriate to and support the mission statements of both the college housing the program and the university.	S	

STANDARD B - CURRICULUM

	Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a.	The program should demonstrate that the curriculum for each degree and for any general education/service courses offered by the program is the result of thoughtful curriculum planning and review processes.	S	The team cites the program's extraordinary pass rates on the BOC.
b.	The curriculum should be consistent with the program's mission.	S	
c.	The program should be able to demonstrate that there is an appropriate allocation of resources for curriculum delivery that is consistent with the mission of the program, the number of graduates, and the number of major/minor and general education SCHs produced.	S	
d.	Courses to support the major/minor/general education/service programs are offered on a regular basis to ensure students are able to complete graduation requirements in a timely manner.	S	

STANDARD C - STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

	Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a.	Learning outcomes should describe the expected knowledge, skills, and behaviors that students will have achieved at the time of graduation.	S	Outcomes and assessments are tied to CAATE standards. All 351 CAATE competencies are addressed in the curriculum.
b.	Learning outcomes must support the goals of the program and the constituencies served.	S	
c.	Learning outcomes are directly linked to the program's curriculum.	S	
	Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a.	The program has developed a set of measures for assessment that are clearly defined and appropriately applied.	S	The faculty participate in curriculum mapping and are well aware of the CAATE standards which inform their curricular decisions.
b.	Demonstrate that they are using these measures in a systematic manner on a regular basis.	S	
c.	Demonstrate that the assessment of the program mission and student outcomes is being used to improve and further develop the program.	S	

STANDARD D - ACADEMIC ADVISING

Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a. The program has a clearly defined strategy for advising their major/minor, or BIS students that is continually assessed for its effectiveness.	S	Although the review team could not find evidence of a formalized assessment of advisement, it is well-assured that the advisement by the program director and the designated HPHP department advisor is adequate to support the students at this time.
b. Students receive appropriate assistance in planning their individual programs of study.	S	
c. Students receive needed assistance in making career decisions and in seeking placement, whether in employment or graduate school.	S	

STANDARD E - FACULTY

Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a. Faculty size, composition, qualifications, and professional development activities must result from a planning process which is consistent with the program's mission.	S	Faculty has a broad understanding of the issues around AT.
b. The program maintains a core of full-time faculty sufficient to provide stability and ongoing quality improvement for the degree programs offered.	S	See strengths above.
c. Contract/adjunct faculty who provide instruction to students (day/evening, off/on campus) are academically and professionally qualified.	S	
d. The program should demonstrate efforts to achieve demographic diversity in its faculty.	A	Target specific programs that traditionally have diverse Ph.D.-candidate populations.
e. The program should have appropriate procedures for the orientation of new contract/adjunct faculty.	A	More training opportunities for preceptors.
f. Processes are in place to determine appropriate teaching assignments and service workloads, to guide and mentor contract/adjunct faculty, and to provide adequate support for activities which implement the program's mission.	A	Undue burden on director.
g. Teaching is systematically monitored to assess its effectiveness, and revised periodically to reflect new objectives and to incorporate improvements based on appropriate assessment methods. For both contract and adjunct faculty, there is evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective creation and delivery of instruction. Ongoing evaluation and improvement of instruction. Innovation in instructional processes. 	S	
h. A formal, periodic review process must exist for all faculty.	S	The college's rank, tenure, and post-tenure reviews are appropriate.

STANDARD F - PROGRAM SUPPORT

Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a. The number and capabilities of the support staff are adequate to meet the mission and objectives of the program.	C	Program should have designated secretarial support. Additionally, a lab coordinator would be useful
b. Administrative support is present in assisting in the selection and development of support staff.	S	
c. The facilities, equipment, and library support needs are adequate to meet the mission and goals of the program.	S	

STANDARD G - RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL COMMUNITIES

Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a. If there are formal relationships between the program and external communities of interest they should be clearly defined.	S	Good relationships with preceptors. Large range of preceptors which broaden the scope of experiences that the students have.
b. Such relationships should have a clearly defined role and evidence of their contribution to the program (curriculum, equipment, faculty, budget, etc.) should be demonstrated.	S	
c. If the program has an external advisory committee, it should meet regularly and minutes of the meetings be made available.	C	No such committee exists.

STANDARD H - PROGRAM SUMMARY

Element	Rating	Comments and/or Recommendations for Change
a. The program must show how it has implemented any recommendations from the previous review and what effect these changes had on the program. If any recommendations were not implemented the program should explain why they were not put into place.	S	Met CAATE standards and recommendations in their 2010 accreditation visit.

Ratings: S = Strength; A = Adequate; C = Concern; W = Weakness

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