



Weber State
University

COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATION OF SERVICE-LEARNING THROUGHOUT AN ATHLETIC TRAINING PROGRAM

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OVERVIEW

- ◉ WSU AT Program model
- ◉ Guided reflections
- ◉ Results of survey of recent graduates
- ◉ Comments from students
- ◉ Most/least valuable experiences
- ◉ Suggestions for improvement
- ◉ Challenges

WSU ATHLETIC TRAINING PROGRAMS

- ◉ Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training
- ◉ Master of Science in Athletic Training



ATHLETIC TRAINING PROGRAM MODEL

- All students take a clinical class during each semester after acceptance (4-6 semesters)
- Each clinical class requires a certain number of service-learning hours
- Number of hours required increases throughout the program
- Minimum of 50% each semester must be done off-campus

SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Students choose from a multitude of options each semester
- Choices based on personal interests & goals
 - Local sporting events - marathons, triathlons, High school tournaments, rodeos, etc.
 - Special Olympics
 - Free Medical Clinic at local homeless shelter
 - Health Fairs
 - Assisting in lower-division courses
 - High school sports physicals
 - Volunteering with American Red Cross
 - Volunteering at AT conferences



GUIDED REFLECTIONS

- Give details about the experience including what your role was.
- What did you learn through this experience?
- Did the experience impact you personally?
- What would you do differently if you repeated the experience?
- If you repeated a past experience, what did you do differently?
- How does what you learned relate to the content in your clinical class?
- Did your assistance make a difference?



GUIDED REFLECTIONS

- ◉ What injuries/illness did you observe? How were they treated?
- ◉ Were the treatment protocols used different than what you learning class? If so, how? What technique would you use if in the same situation again and why?
- ◉ Were you able to assist? How? Were you effective?
- ◉ Was everyone on the medical staff a volunteer? If so, do you think they should have been paid? Why or why not?

GUIDED REFLECTIONS

- ◉ Did you interact with patients from different cultural/socioeconomic backgrounds?
- ◉ How is their background different than yours?
- ◉ How should this affect the way you interact with them?
- ◉ Are you satisfied with the way you interacted with them? Why or why not?



SURVEY METHODS

- Given to graduating seniors in their last semester of the AT program
- Likert Scale
 - 5 = strongly agree
 - 4 = agree
 - 3 = neutral
 - 2 = disagree
 - 1 = strongly disagree

ACADEMIC BENEFITS

- ◉ Improved my AT course grades: $2.79 \pm .70$
- ◉ Improved my problem-solving skills: $3.0 \pm .68$
- ◉ Will help me pass certification exam:
 $2.86 \pm .66$
- ◉ Will improve my chances of getting a job or getting accepted into graduate school:
 $3.64 \pm .84$
- ◉ Conclusions: While students don't perceive an immediate benefit, they do see future benefits



ATHLETIC TRAINING SKILLS

- Learned new skills: $3.57 \pm .76$
- Improved existing skills: $3.57 \pm .85$

- Conclusion - students are learning and honing skills somewhat, but they don't perceive this as a major benefit.



PATIENT POPULATIONS

- ◉ Worked with unique patient populations: $4.14 \pm .77$
- ◉ Improved acceptance of patients of different races and backgrounds: $3.6 \pm .74$
- ◉ Conclusion: Good exposure to varying patient populations, but students perceive that they are already accepting of differences. May be different in younger students.



VARYING SUPERVISORS

- ◉ Worked with athletic trainers and other health care professionals whom they had not worked with previously: $4.29 \pm .61$
- ◉ Conclusion: This is a strength of our program. Students gain varying perspectives from other health care professionals AND get the added benefit of networking.



PERSONAL BENEFITS

- ◉ Personally enriching: $3.57 \pm .76$
- ◉ Improved interpersonal skills: $3.71 \pm .73$
- ◉ Increased awareness of personal values: $3.43 \pm .76$
- ◉ Discussed S-L experiences with other students: $3.21 \pm .80$

- ◉ Conclusions: Students were impacted personally by their experiences, but improved reflections and classroom discussions are needed.

LOGISTICS/WORKLOAD PERCEPTION

- Ample S-L opportunities for me: $3.14 \pm .77$
- Too many hours required: $4.21 \pm .80$

- Conclusions:
 - Students want more options/opportunities for service learning experiences
 - Allied health care students, such as AT, already have a very packed schedule between coursework and clinical rotations

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

- Made me feel more connected to my community: 3.36 ± 1.08
- Felt good about making a difference in the community: $3.62 \pm .87$



SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- S-L was a worthwhile part of my AT education: $3.36 \pm .50$
- Will continue to provide service once certified: $4.0 \pm .78$
- Conclusions:
 - Need to spend more time on reflection in class
 - Students do learn the value of service and will continue doing so in their professional lives

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Students who stated that they learned new skills and/or improved existing skills also felt that they:
 - Improved their course grades
 - Improved their problem-solving skills
 - Expect to score higher on their certification exam
 - Increased their awareness of personal values

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Students were more likely to discuss their S-L experiences with other students if:
 - They learned new skills
 - They improved existing skills
 - Worked with unique patient populations
 - Worked with ATs or other healthcare providers who they had not worked with before
 - It positively impacted their interpersonal skills and/or awareness of their personal values

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Strong correlations between:
 - Increased acceptance of patients of different races and backgrounds and:
 - Feeling good about making a difference in the community
 - Feeling more connected to the community
 - Improvement of interpersonal skills
 - Increased awareness of personal values



RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Strong positive correlation between:
 - Too many hours required AND:
 - S-L experiences will improve chances of getting a job and/or getting accepted into graduate school
- Conclusion:
 - Students found the workload challenging, but still saw value in building their resumes



RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Improved AT Course Grades correlated highly with:
 - Improved acceptance of patients of different races and backgrounds
 - Felt good about making a difference in the community
 - Increased awareness of personal values

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- S-L Experiences being personally enriching related to:
 - Making a difference in the community
 - Feeling more connected to the community



RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Students noted improved interpersonal skills when they also:
 - Improved acceptance of patients of different races and backgrounds
 - Worked with different ATs and other healthcare providers that they hadn't worked with before
 - Felt good about making a difference in their community
 - Discussed experiences with other students

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

- Age, gender, and ethnicity were not related to any of the survey items



COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- Most valuable experiences
 - Rodeo school
 - High School events
 - Off-campus where I could network
 - Free medical clinic - “I learned a lot and I felt good helping the local community.”
 - Volunteering at a professional conference
 - Marathon and Xterra Games - new population
 - Special Olympics - new population
 - Any experience where they really got to help and use their skills



LEAST VALUABLE EXPERIENCES

- ◉ Dew Tour - “didn’t get to do anything”
- ◉ Experiences where you “didn’t get to do anything”
- ◉ Pumping up swiss balls at conference - busy work
- ◉ Figure skating - disorganized and didn’t get to do anything
- ◉ Women’s basketball - “they don’t need help”

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ◉ **Decrease number of hours required**
- ◉ **Allow service outside of AT/medical**
- ◉ **Provide more opportunities**
- ◉ **Allow time out of class to attend S-L experience**
- ◉ **More worthwhile experiences**

INTERESTING COMMENT

- “It ruins the profession because with so many service hours people begin to think we will always work for free.”



OVERALL BENEFITS

- ◉ Richer educational experience
- ◉ Connecting the programs to the community
- ◉ Has resulted in new clinical education sites
- ◉ Networking for students
- ◉ Resume-building for students
- ◉ Having students learn the value of professional service

CHALLENGES

- ◉ No two students get all of the same experiences - difficult to have discussions
- ◉ Students don't always choose the best options
- ◉ Risk management - ensuring supervision
- ◉ Accreditation issues
- ◉ Making time in class for discussion/reflection
- ◉ Finding enough opportunities for students
- ◉ Finding quality opportunities for students

WHY INTEGRATE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM?

- ◉ More opportunities for service-learning
- ◉ Viewed as a vital component of the program, rather than a discrete project
- ◉ Reinforce key concepts
 - Service can build skills - AT and interpersonal
 - Service connects me with my community
 - Giving back is personally enriching
 - Service provides an opportunity to network and build my resume
 - Service makes me a better AT!



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QUESTIONS?

DISCUSSION?

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Access this presentation at:

www.weber.edu/communityinvolvement