

ETHICS: FROM PAPER TO PRACTICE – PREPARING MSAT STUDENTS FOR THE WORKPLACE

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ATHLETIC TRAINER DEFINED

- “Athletic trainers (ATs) are highly qualified, multi-skilled health care professionals who render service or treatment, under the direction of or in collaboration with a physician, in accordance with their education, training and the state's statutes, rules and regulations. As a part of the health care team, services provided by athletic trainers include **primary care, injury and illness prevention, wellness promotion and education, emergent care, examination and clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions**. The **NATA Code of Ethics** states the principles of ethical behavior that should be followed in the practice of athletic training.”

Accessed April 9, 2024. <https://www.nata.org/about/athletic-training>



SPORTS MEDICINE ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Roles & responsibilities of an AT
- Medical assessment process, diagnosis
 - Access to services
- Performance services vs diagnostic/care services
- The AT individual as part of a larger team
- Patient centered care
- Leadership & administration/organization

FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE FIELD OF PLAY

- Students complete courses focused on
 - Prevention
 - Assessment
 - Care/management
 - Legal, organization & administration
 - Interprofessional practice
- Required to complete clinical rotations to put didactic content into practice



FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE FIELD OF PLAY

- Often overlap of ethical principles in practice
 - Students need to critically think in the gray zone
 - Challenging for some students (the “it depends” factor)
- UCCS MSAT Core Values
- NATA Code of Ethics
- Athletic Training’s Shared Professional Values

MSAT CORE VALUES

- **Empathy** – the ability to understand and share the feelings of one another, thereby enhancing collaborative practice and patient centered care
- **Humility** – a modest view of one’s own importance, thereby being an ideal team player and patient centered practitioner
- **Integrity** – the quality of being honest with strong moral principles, thereby demonstrating ethical and quality care
- **Respect** – honor the rights, freedoms, views, and property of others, thereby honoring those with whom we interact
- **Zeal** – Energy, devotion, and enthusiasm in pursuit of a cause or objective, thereby striving to learn for the sake of learning, and ascending towards expertise as a leader & practitioner


NATA CODE OF ETHICS

- **PRINCIPLE 1.** In the role of an athletic trainer, members shall practice with compassion, respecting the rights, well-being, and dignity of others.
- **PRINCIPLE 2.** Members shall comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of athletic training, National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) membership standards, and the NATA Code of Ethics.
- **PRINCIPLE 3.** Members shall maintain and promote high standards in their provision of services.
- **PRINCIPLE 4.** Members shall not engage in conduct that could be construed as a conflict of interest, reflects negatively on the athletic training profession, or jeopardizes a patient's health and well-being.

ATHLETIC TRAINING'S SHARED PROFESSIONAL VALUES

- **Caring & Compassion** is an intense concern and desire to help improve the welfare of another
- **Integrity** is a commitment that is internally motivated by an unyielding desire to do what is honest and right.
- **Respect** is the act of imparting genuine and unconditional appreciation and value for all persons
- **Competence** is the ability to perform a task effectively with desirable outcomes.
- **Accountability** is a willingness to be responsible for and answerable to one's own actions.

NATA Code of Ethics, 2022





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PRINCIPLES

Integrity

Act with honesty in all situations

Trust

Build trust in all stakeholder relationships

Accountability

Accept responsibility for all decisions

Transparency

Maintain open and truthful communications

Fairness

Engage in fair competition and create equitable
and just relationships

Respect

Honor the rights, freedoms, views, and property of others

Rule of Law

Comply with the spirit and intent of laws and regulations

Viability

Create long-term value for all relevant stakeholders

STUDENT GOALS & CHALLENGES

- Goal = prepared to function as a Certified Athletic Trainer within 2 yrs.
 - Professional work setting varies – independent or collaborative
 - Thrown to the wolves – sink or swim
- Limited previous life exposures
- Absolutes thought process – good/bad, right/wrong
- Avoidance - not feeling safe or feeling triggered
- Emotional intelligence
- Group dynamics
- Two-year graduate program – compressed mentoring timeline compared to previous bachelor programs

PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

- Ethical principles and concepts woven into courses
 - Care plans – didactic course, hypothetical case, writing assignment
 - Leadership projects – community projects
 - High fidelity simulations – practical component of didactic course, controlled setting
 - Standardized patients - practical component of didactic course, controlled setting
 - Clinical cases – evidence-based reflections

- ** NEW ** spring semester Case Competition

CASE COMPETITION OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate ethics-based decision making in common clinical practice scenarios
- Model the **DFEI Principles, NATA Code of Ethics, UCCS MSAT Core Values** and **BOC Standards of Professional Practice**
 - direction
 - prevention
 - immediate care
 - evaluation & diagnosis
 - therapeutic intervention
 - program discontinuation
 - organization & administration
 - patient care
 - competency
 - professional responsibility

CASE COMPETITION

- Scenario development
 - Personal and peer experiences
 - Professional group social media postings
 - Sports Medicine Legal Digest
 - Examples from previous student experiences at clinical sites

CASE COMPETITION

- Cohorts blended into multiple teams
- Presented with assignment and scenario 2 months in advance
 - Discouraging the “right” answer concept
- DFEI Principles presented and discussed
- Students encouraged to discuss their ideas with preceptors
- Judges – recruited ATs from the community and faculty
 - presentation date challenge

CASE COMPETITION OUTCOMES

Successes

- Realistic, awakening
- Feel more prepared
- Critical thinking
- Student collaboration across the cohorts
- Preceptor input

Challenges

- Timing in the curriculum
- “Getting started”
- “Navigating the grey”

Opportunities

- Student development of scenarios
- Growth with other MSAT programs
- IPE
- Sports medicine community involvement

LONG-TERM PLAN

- Annual assignment
 - Promotes collaboration between cohorts and regional peers
- Case competition between MSAT programs
 - Virtual
 - State AT Conference
 - District AT Conference



THANK YOU