

Column: AT Education Listserv Highlights

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The following is a brief review of selected topics discussed on the Athletic Training Education listserv. It is not necessary to be a member of this listserv to access the archived messages and discussions. To view this listserv, go to:

http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/athletic_training_education. To post messages you must join the listserv.

AT Student Dating and Fraternalization Policy (February 28, 2007 – 7 postings)

Should athletic training educational programs have a formal policy for professionalism specifically related to AT students having romantic relationships with athletes and/or coaches during the student's clinical rotation? Many programs have a policy addressing this issue in their AT Student Handbooks. In most cases, romantic relationships are discouraged or forbidden. If it occurs, AT students should discuss the situation with their faculty or staff member and they will most likely be removed from the clinical education assignment. Surprisingly, students agree with the policy regarding dating athletes because they see the conflicts that could potentially occur.

Students should not be dating coaches who are who are full-time employees of the institution. This is inappropriate and unprofessional behavior for both individuals and should be addressed immediately. The clinical experience is for educational purposes and should not be interrupted by unprofessional behavior.

Mr. John provided some insight related to the NATA Code of Ethic 4.1 – “Members should conduct themselves personally and professionally in a manner that does not compromise their professional responsibilities or the practice of athletic training.” He also provided the following resources: (1) Student's professional behavior (<http://www.sbuniv.edu/cosm/at/P04.11.pdf>); (2) NATA Code of Ethics (<http://www.sbuniv.edu/cosm/at/NATACod.pdf>); (3) Faculty - Student Relations (<http://www.sbuniv.edu/cosm/at/P06.24.pdf>).

Another interesting point mentioned was that these individuals are college students who spend a lot of time with other college students, including athletes. There is a good chance that these encounters will become friendships or even relationships due to the amount of time spent at practices, games, etc.. AT students must

remember, at all times, to be professional and mature in order to separate work from play.

BOC Exam as a Graduation Requirement (February 28, 2007 – 7 postings)

Are programs using the BOC exam as a graduation requirement? The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor (TX) has such a policy. Their students voted on this and pay \$120 per practicum/lab course fee, which is collected for 5 courses. The university sends the student a check to the Texas Advisory Board and/or the BOC, which the student can include with his/her test application. Some students may also be using their financial aid and grants to pay for these lab fees. Unfortunately, if students drop out of the program or do not sit for either exam, they lose the money. This further encourages them to sit for the exam(s).

Some schools require their students to take and pass the mock BOC exam as part of their last clinical education or other class. They must pass the mock exam to pass the class, which is required for graduation.

The BOC exam is a very expensive exam. Who is going to pay; the students, college, or program? If a student decides to take the exam after their graduation when they can afford to pay for it, how does this effect their graduation? Another concern was the difficulty of the BOC exam, which may require students to take it multiple times (at greater expenses). The passing rate on the old BOC exam format was not very high for first time takers on all sections. By taking the exam multiple times in order to pass it, this could potentially delay the students' graduation, graduate school, internship, and/or employment.

Practicing When School is Officially Closed (February 28, 2007 – 5 postings)

At times the school closes full or partial days for various reasons. Some schools have a policy, especially for inclement weather. Students and ACIs are informed of this policy. Since the clinical education experiences are related to academic courses, students would not be required to go to their clinical education sites, just like they wouldn't go to their academic courses if school is closed. If the school (or city) is bad enough to close their streets, it is not worth the risk to even try to get to practices. It may be the athletic directors and coaches who may need to be informed of the policies and safety. When the school is closed, for what ever

reason, everyone should respect this decision and go or stay home. These don't happen on too many occasions, especially for athletic trainers or students.

Below is a list of some interesting educational websites:

1. Medical Terms: <http://www.imgsrv.com/glossary/>
 2. The Biomechanics Lab: <http://www.thebiomechanicslab.com>
 3. Seahawk Sports Medicine Monthly Quizzes:
<http://www.seahawksportsmedicine.com>
 4. On-Line Surgical Observations: <http://www.or-live.com/> or
<http://www.youtube.com/>
 5. NATA Subscription for High School Students:
<http://www.nata.org/highschoolconnection>
 6. NATA Student Members and AT Students' Clubs/Associations:
http://www.nata.org/members1/documents/educator_contest.cfm
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