

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

Observation Hours (Revision) (January 10, 2008 – 14 postings)

The content in this discussion had two parts: (1) OSHA requirements for observation students, and (2) Student:ACI ratios for observation students. It should be noted that CAATE makes all decisions relating to the accreditation standards; and there is an internal review process available for anyone who may have an issue, problem, or concern.

Programs may wish to talk to an OSHA expert on their campus regarding standards and training new employees. Some schools' indicated that these university policies only cover employees and not students. Since students may only be observing, how much exposure and risk do they really have according to OSHA (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/select_agent/29CFR_Bloodborne_Pathogens.pdf)? Programs may need to have their own OSHA policy to meet the CAATE standard. Dr. Paula Sammarone-Turocy indicated that in 2006, the CDC developed a position statement that was supported by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices requiring all teens and college students to be vaccinated against vaccine-preventable diseases prior to school enrollment (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/ACIP-list.htm>).



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With regards to student:ACI ratios, the programs may need to obtain permission from their clinical instructors to assign additional observation students beyond the CAATE limit. If there are several observation students, it may be possible to send them to clinical instructors on alternating days (i.e., Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday, and alternating Friday/Saturdays) to ensure every student has equal exposure. Observation students who observe ATCs get a real picture of what this profession requires. Another option may be to assign observation students to upper-class AT students rather than clinical instructors to foster peer mentoring as well as observation.

Concept Mapping Software and Resources (February 12, 2008 – 3 postings)

A concept map is a graphical and cognitive tool that enables learners to link together interrelated concepts using propositions or statements which answer or define a posed problem. Concept mapping can be a tool for student engagement and can be used as a method to evaluate the individual or group's grasp of a complex topic or problem. The following links have more information:

Software:

<http://cmap.ihmc.us> (Free for educators)
<http://compendium.open.ac.uk/institute/>
<http://ltsnpsy.york.ac.uk/conceptmapping/conceptmapping/html/software.html>
<http://bubbl.us/>

Resources:

<http://cmap.ihmc.us/Publications/ResearchPapers/TheoryConcepts/TheoryUnderlyingConceptMaps.htm>
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/mapping/mapping.htm>
<http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~best/html/learning/concept.htm>
<http://pages.cpsc.ucalgary.ca/~kremer/papers/ICCS94.html>
<http://groups.google.com/group/teachAndLearnOnline/web/concept-mapping-and-mind-mapping-resources>

New Online Competencies Program – ATrack (February 19, 2008 – 5 postings)

For more information on the program go to:

<http://www.nata.org/atepsoftwarepromo.htm>

Young Professionals (March 15, 2008 – 4 postings)

The NATA Board of Directors has released their Involve and Evolve (NATA News, February 2008; pp. 12-15). One of these changes involved limiting the length of term for individuals to serve or chair committees within our profession at the national, district, and state levels. For years, some individuals have served or lead committees for prolonged periods because they were doing an excellent job volunteering their time and expertise or may have had connections that secured their position. Limited position vacancies made it challenging for some young professionals to become politically active in the profession.

One part of the responsibilities of program faculty and clinical instructors is to motivate students to become excited and involved with the profession outside of their campuses. It is important for these individuals to be positive examples to their students by modeling professional development through active involvement themselves.

Another change meant to stimulate young professional involvement was the reduction of professional dues for the first year after obtaining BOC certification. Ideally the reduced “career starter” dues will encourage new or young professionals to join and become active members of this association. While money and personal budgeting of expenses are issues for all members, lack of fresh membership could eventually weaken the NATA into extinction.

Student Point System (April 1, 2008 – 4 postings)

Similar to the BOC CEU requirement, Concordia University (WI) has developed a professional development unit (PDU) program which requires students to earn 25 PDUs each school year. Some program categories include: professional association involvement or membership, outside volunteer ATS experience, paid ATS experience, attending conferences, and volunteer tutoring assistance for exams. Students must document and verify all of their PDUs.

At a second school, the University of South Carolina, students earned professional points each semester by attending various conferences, service events, and other activities. The points were integrated into their clinical education courses so that if a student does not earn enough points they are given an incomplete. A copy of this system can be found in *Athletic Therapy Today* (July 2004).