



# Castleton University

## Athletic Training Policy on Professional Behavior

### Introduction

The Athletic Training Student is expected to meet all standards designed by the University, the Athletic Training Program (AT Program), the NATA Code of Ethics (attachment 1), BOC Standards of Professional Practice and Code of Professional Responsibility (attachment 2), and the NCAA. The primary goal of these guidelines is the assurance of high quality health care to the student athletes and the professional development and education for the Athletic Training Students. The following six essential behaviors are required for successful completion of the Athletic Training degree based on the aforementioned guidelines: integrity, respect, responsibility, competence, maturity, and communication.

Being an Athletic Training Student allows you certain benefits, but also holds certain obligations and responsibilities. As an Athletic Training Student you are expected to act with good judgment, discretion, and integrity in and out of the Athletic Training Room. As an Athletic Training Student, you not only represent yourself as an individual, but you represent Castleton University and specifically the Athletic Training Program; your behavior reflects on both you and all of us.

The AT Program's goal is to foster students' progress in their professional development as they enter and proceed through the professional phase of the curriculum and move on to clinical practice. Students are expected to be successful in all parts of their education, including academic, behavioral, and clinical. Just as there are standards and protocols established for students who require remediation for academic issues, we have established a similar process for professional behavior, as represented in this document.

This document includes the following sections:

1. Description of Professional Behavior
2. Athletic Training Student Code of Conduct
3. Plan for Remediation of a Professional Behavior Issue or Violation/Inappropriate Action of Code of Conduct

*(Acknowledgement: The Description of Professional Behavior and the Plan for Remediation have been adopted with permission from the Duquesne University Department of Athletic Training, 2014.)*

Attachments:

1. NATA Code of Ethics
2. BOC Standards of Professional Practice and Code of Responsibility
3. ATR Dress Code

### Description of Professional Behaviors



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1. **Integrity:** Represents one's own and others' abilities honestly; is truthful and sincere; accepts responsibility for one's actions; able to reflect on one's personal reactions to encounters with others.
2. **Respect:** Adheres to confidentiality and professional boundaries; works toward conflict resolution in a collegial way, demonstrates consideration for the opinions and values of others; shows regard for diversity.
3. **Responsibility:** Present and punctual for all learning experiences; able to cope with challenges, conflicts, and uncertainty; recognize one's limits and seeks help; recognizes the needs of others and responds appropriately; demonstrates willingness to discuss and confront problematic behavior of self and others.
4. **Competence:** Takes responsibility for one's own learning; participates equally and collegially in groups; demonstrates self- reflection and accurate self-assessment; able to identify personal barriers to learning; works with faculty to manage learning difficulties.
5. **Maturity:** Demonstrates emotional stability; appropriately confident yet humble; demonstrates appropriate professional dress, demeanor and language; accepts constructive criticism and applies it in a useful way; inspires confidence in others; displays appropriate emotions; is not hostile, disruptive confrontational, aggressive or isolated; does not engage in behavior that endangers or threatens self or others.
6. **Communication:** Able to communicate effectively with others; demonstrates courteous and respectful communication, even in difficult situations; uses active listening; communicates with empathy and compassion.

## Athletic Training Student Code of Conduct

1. Confidentiality of the student athlete's medical records and status is mandatory. The Athletic Training Student is NOT to discuss patient information with anyone (including other patients, administrators, press/media, fans, scouts, friends, family, student-athlete/athletic training students on that team, etc.) other than the healthcare providers that are directly involved with the patient's care. HIPAA standards must be maintained. If questioned by an outside individual follow these steps
  - a. Remain polite, and then inform the person that you are legally prohibited from sharing information regarding the athlete's health and status.
  - b. If the individual does not respect this answer direct him/her to the preceptor.



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2. Sexual Harassment and/or discrimination of any type (patient's gender, sexual preference, race, creed, sport, or status, etc.) will not be tolerated. This not only includes athletes, but other Athletic Training Students, Supervising Athletic Trainers, and Personnel of any kind (Coaches, Faculty, etc.).
3. Attendance is reflected in your Clinical Course grade. Absenteeism and tardiness will not be tolerated. At the beginning of the semester the student and Preceptor will discuss any scheduling conflict(s) that may arise (i.e. Class schedule vs. practice and game schedule). If you may not be able to attend a scheduled event you must notify your Preceptor a minimal 48 hours in advance and gain approval from the Preceptor for your absence.
4. An Athletic Training Student is considered part of the Athletic Training Staff, not a team member. You should conduct yourself accordingly. When attending games and/or practices, you should be watching play, not involved in any inappropriate behaviors (these vary from Preceptor to Preceptor) in which you are not paying attention to the practice/game. You should be the first to see an injury happen.
5. An Athletic Training Student's clinical responsibilities vary with clinical setting and clinical level. The Athletic Training Student shall sit down with the Preceptor and discuss clinical expectations and responsibilities prior to or at the start of each new clinical rotation. If the Athletic Training Student is unsure of a limitation he/she should ask the Preceptor if it is appropriate before performing the task, as this may be above the student's skill level.
6. The reputation of the Athletic Training Student is based on respect, responsibility, and maturity. Therefore, Athletic Training Students should be professional in their work habits and their relationships with all individuals involved in the intercollegiate athletic programs.
  - a. Athletic Training Student and Certified Athletic Trainer(s): The Certified Athletic Trainer (preceptor) is the ultimate authority in the Athletic Training Room. This individual reinforces, modifies, corrects, and supervises the skills learned in the classroom. The Certified Athletic Trainer (preceptor) is your immediate supervisor, and you are responsible to this person at all times. It is perfectly acceptable to feel free to discuss and ask questions (Ask, do not challenge in front athletes/patients) of your preceptor at any time.
  - b. Athletic Training Student and Team Physician: The medical director/team physicians are the ultimate medical authority of the college. They are highly qualified and should be treated with the utmost respect. Do not second-guess their decisions as this is extremely unprofessional, but you may engage in the physician in conversation to gain a full understanding of the decision. Always follow the physician's directions explicitly.
  - c. Athletic Training Student and Head Coach: The Certified Athletic Trainer (preceptor) is ultimately responsible for reporting injuries and/or status of athletes to the respective coach; however this may be a responsibility of



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yours during your clinical rotation. If a coach asks you about the athlete answer to the best of your knowledge, but do not speculate. If a question still remains, refer the coach to the Certified Athletic Trainer. A professional relationship with the coaching staff is very important to an athletic trainer. Students should pay particular attention to the interaction between the clinical site's medical staff and coaching staff. At no time should a student criticize or question a coach on issues related to the coaching of the team. If there is a problem dealing with a coach or athlete, consult with your clinical supervisor immediately.

- d. **Athletic Training Student and Athletic Training Student:** Students must treat their peers with professional respect. Students at various levels in the program may be at the same rotation at the same time. While upperclassmen will assist in the development of underclassmen, it is important that upperclassmen do not abuse their position by bossing around younger students. It is usually best to lead by example. *Open criticism of fellow students, regardless of class standing, will not be tolerated.* Athletic Training students must keep their personal life out of the clinical environment. Who you saw at a party with whom, what you did last weekend, and other such information has no place in our clinical settings. Keep discussions professional and wait until you are some place else to discuss your social life.
7. Traveling with the athletic teams is a privilege and valuable experience. ATS are allowed to travel only when a Preceptor is traveling, and when funding is available for travel through the Athletic Department. When traveling with a team you are responsible for the health and well being of that team at all times (i.e. from the moment that you depart from the campus until the time that you return). At no time should you engage in any activity that would render you less than 100% effective in making decisions and caring for your team. *Any use of alcohol or other substances while traveling with a team, despite age, is not permitted and will not be tolerated.* Each case will be handled accordingly. Also, any actions committed on or away from campus that are illegal or punishable by any law or infractions against the college in any capacity at all should be immediately reported to the Director of the ATEP and supervising Preceptor. Each case reported in this capacity will be handled accordingly and may lead to probation, suspension, or termination of enrollment in the AT Program.
8. The Athletic Training Student must always adhere to dress code and personal appearance policy (attached below). An Athletic Training Student may be asked to leave at any time if in violation of this policy by any Staff Athletic Trainer. Athletic Training Student's should also only wear Castleton Athletic Training apparel in appropriate settings. When volunteering for activities at another school or in social settings (i.e. parties, bars, etc.) the wearing of CU Athletic Training apparel is forbidden.



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9. You should not engage in “gossip”. Information heard in the Athletic Training Room should stay in the Athletic Training Room and not relayed to others (unless this information is dangerous or beneficial for the health and well-being of members of the CU community). Athletes count on your discretion. It is important to exercise professionalism while performing athletic training related responsibilities. Keep your personal relationships out of the Athletic Training Room.
10. Athletic Training Students are not allowed to date an athlete on a team that they are covering. This is a conflict of interest that may compromise your ability to carry out your duties as an athletic training student. Situations will be dealt with individually and may result in your removal from the clinical assignment and/or AT Program.

## Plan for Remediation of a Professional Behavior Issue or Violation/Inappropriate Action of Code of Conduct

If an academic or clinical faculty member identifies and documents a serious problem with a student's professional behavior or a violation/inappropriate action of the Code of Conduct, the following protocol will be followed:

1. The faculty member or Preceptor will meet with the student to identify the behavior and counsel the student to demonstrate behavior consistent with the professional standard.
2. If the faculty or Preceptor determines that the student has a recurrence of an unprofessional behavior prior to the completion of their professional program, both the student and faculty member or Preceptor will meet with the Professional Behavior Committee which will consist of the Athletic Training Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, and athletic training staff members. It is the responsibility of the Committee to create a remediation plan and contract with the student.
3. The remediation plan and contract will include the following items:
  - A description of the specific behaviors that the student is expected to demonstrate.
  - The specific tasks that the student is expected to accomplish.
  - Time frames related to accomplishing the tasks and behaviors.
  - Repercussions for unsuccessful remediation or inability to meet terms of the contract.
  - Who will monitor the terms of the contract.
  - How the terms of the contract will be monitored.



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4. The Committee will meet again, at a time stated in the contract, to determine if the student has successfully completed the remediation plan and has met the terms of the contract.
5. The following are the repercussions resulting from unprofessional behavior.
  - a. Immediate Dismissal: Felony conviction or pleading no contest for behaviors that would prohibit the granting of BOC certification and/or Athletic Training state license/certification. Other behaviors may be determined to be non-remedial and require immediate dismissal.
  - b. Probation: Behaviors that the Committee has determined are remedial. The terms of probation and remediation will be outlined in the contract.
  - c. Dismissal: Behaviors that the Committee has determined are remediable, however, the student has been unable or unwilling to remediate, as defined in the remediation plan and contract.
6. All documented cases of unprofessional behavior and Remediation Plan Contracts will be kept in the student Athletic Training Portfolio located in the Program Director's office.

## Attachments

### Attachment 1

#### **NATA CODE OF ETHICS** September 28, 2005

##### **PREAMBLE**

The National Athletic Trainers' Association Code of Ethics states the principles of ethical behavior that should be followed in the practice of athletic training. It is intended to establish and maintain high standards and professionalism for the athletic training profession.

The principles do not cover every situation encountered by the practicing athletic trainer, but are representative of the spirit with which athletic trainers should make decisions. The principles are written generally; the circumstances of a situation will determine the interpretation and application of a given principle and of the Code as a whole. When a conflict exists between the Code and the law, the law prevails.

##### **PRINCIPLE 1:**

Members shall respect the rights, welfare and dignity of all.

1.1 Members shall not discriminate against any legally protected class.



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1.2 Members shall be committed to providing competent care.

1.3 Members shall preserve the confidentiality of privileged information and shall not release such information to a third party not involved in the patient's care without a release unless required by law.

## **PRINCIPLE 2:**

Members shall comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of athletic training.

2.1 Members shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and institutional guidelines.

2.2 Members shall be familiar with and abide by all National Athletic Trainers' Association standards, rules and regulations.

2.3 Members shall report illegal or unethical practices related to athletic training to the appropriate person or authority.

2.4 Members shall avoid substance abuse and, when necessary, seek rehabilitation for chemical dependency.

## **PRINCIPLE 3:**

Members shall maintain and promote high standards in their provision of services.

3.1 Members shall not misrepresent, either directly or indirectly, their skills, training, professional credentials, identity or services.

3.2 Members shall provide only those services for which they are qualified through education or experience and which are allowed by their practice acts and other pertinent regulation.

3.3 Members shall provide services, make referrals, and seek compensation only for those services that are necessary.

3.4 Members shall recognize the need for continuing education and participate in educational activities that enhance their skills and knowledge.

3.5 Members shall educate those whom they supervise in the practice of athletic training about the Code of Ethics and stress the importance of adherence.

3.6 Members who are researchers or educators should maintain and promote ethical conduct in research and educational activities.

## **PRINCIPLE 4:**

Members shall not engage in conduct that could be construed as a conflict of interest or that reflects negatively on the profession.

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.

4.2 National Athletic Trainers' Association current or past volunteer leaders shall not use the NATA logo in the endorsement of products or services or exploit their affiliation with the NATA in a manner that reflects badly upon the profession.

4.3 Members shall not place financial gain above the patient's welfare and shall not participate in any arrangement that exploits the patient.



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4.4 Members shall not, through direct or indirect means, use information obtained in the course of the practice of athletic training to try to influence the score or outcome of an athletic event, or attempt to induce financial gain through gambling.

## Attachment 2

**Board of Certification  
Standards of Professional Practice  
Code of Professional Responsibility**  
Implemented January 1, 2006

The mission of the Board of Certification Inc. (BOC) is to provide exceptional credentialing programs for healthcare professionals. The BOC has been responsible for the certification of Athletic Trainers since 1969. Upon its inception, the BOC was a division of the professional membership organization the National Athletic Trainers' Association. However, in 1989, the BOC became an independent non-profit corporation.

Accordingly, the BOC provides a certification program for the entry-level Athletic Trainer that confers the ATC® credential and establishes requirements for maintaining status as a Certified Athletic Trainer (to be referred to as "Athletic Trainer" from this point forward). A nine member Board of Directors governs the BOC. There are six Athletic Trainer Directors, one Physician Director, one Public Director and one Corporate/Educational Director.

The BOC is the only accredited certification program for Athletic Trainers in the United States. Every five years, the BOC must undergo review and re-accreditation by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCCA is the accreditation body of the National Organization for Competency Assurance.

The *BOC Standards of Professional Practice* consists of two sections:

- I. Practice Standards
- II. Code of Professional Responsibility

### **I. Practice Standards**

#### **Preamble**

The Practice Standards (Standards) establish essential practice expectations for all Athletic Trainers. Compliance with the Standards is mandatory. The Standards are intended to:

- assist the public in understanding what to expect from an Athletic Trainer
- assist the Athletic Trainer in evaluating the quality of patient care
- assist the Athletic Trainer in understanding the duties and obligations imposed by virtue of holding the ATC® credential



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The Standards are NOT intended to:

- prescribe services
- provide step-by-step procedures
- ensure specific patient outcomes

The BOC does not express an opinion on the competence or warrant job performance of credential holders; however, every Athletic Trainer and applicant must agree to comply with the Standards at all times.

## **Standard 1: Direction**

The Athletic Trainer renders service or treatment under the direction of a physician.

## **Standard 2: Prevention**

The Athletic Trainer understands and uses preventive measures to ensure the highest quality of care for every patient.

## **Standard 3: Immediate Care**

The Athletic Trainer provides standard immediate care procedures used in emergency situations, independent of setting.

## **Standard 4: Clinical Evaluation and Diagnosis**

Prior to treatment, the Athletic Trainer assesses the patient's level of function. The patient's input is considered an integral part of the initial assessment. The Athletic Trainer follows standardized clinical practice in the area of diagnostic reasoning and medical decision-making.

## **Standard 5: Treatment, Rehabilitation and Reconditioning**

In development of a treatment program, the Athletic Trainer determines appropriate treatment, rehabilitation and/or reconditioning strategies. Treatment program objectives include long and short-term goals and an appraisal of those that the patient can realistically be expected to achieve from the program. Assessment measures to determine effectiveness of the program are incorporated into the program.

## **Standard 6: Program Discontinuation**

The Athletic Trainer, with collaboration of the physician, recommends discontinuation of the athletic training service when the patient has received optimal benefit of the program. The Athletic Trainer, at the time of discontinuation, notes the final assessment of the patient's status.

## **Standard 7: Organization and Administration**

All services are documented in writing by the Athletic Trainer and are part of the patient's permanent records. The Athletic Trainer accepts responsibility for recording details of the patient's health status.

## **II. Code of Professional Responsibility**

### **Preamble**

The Code of Professional Responsibility (Code) mandates that BOC credential holders and applicants act in a professionally responsible manner in all athletic training services and activities. The BOC requires all Athletic Trainers and applicants to comply with the Code. The BOC may discipline, revoke or take other action with regard to the application or



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certification of an individual that does not adhere to the Code. The *Professional Practice and Discipline Guidelines and Procedures* may be accessed via the BOC website, [www.bocatc.org](http://www.bocatc.org).

## **Code 1: Patient Responsibility**

The Athletic Trainer or applicant:

- 1.1** Renders quality patient care regardless of the patient's race, religion, age, sex, nationality, disability, social/economic status or any other characteristic protected by law
- 1.2** Protects the patient from harm, acts always in the patient's best interests and is an advocate for the patient's welfare
- 1.3** Takes appropriate action to protect patients from Athletic Trainers, other healthcare providers or athletic training students who are incompetent, impaired or engaged in illegal or unethical practice
- 1.4** Maintains the confidentiality of patient information in accordance with applicable law
- 1.5** Communicates clearly and truthfully with patients and other persons involved in the patient's program, including, but not limited to, appropriate discussion of assessment results, program plans and progress
- 1.6** Respects and safeguards his or her relationship of trust and confidence with the patient and does not exploit his or her relationship with the patient for personal or financial gain
- 1.7** Exercises reasonable care, skill and judgment in all professional work

## **Code 2: Competency**

The Athletic Trainer or applicant:

- 2.1** Engages in lifelong, professional and continuing educational activities
- 2.2** Participates in continuous quality improvement activities
- 2.3** Complies with the most current BOC recertification policies and requirements

## **Code 3: Professional Responsibility**

The Athletic Trainer or applicant:

- 3.1** Practices in accordance with the most current BOC Practice Standards
- 3.2** Knows and complies with applicable local, state and/or federal rules, requirements, regulations and/or laws related to the practice of athletic training
- 3.3** Collaborates and cooperates with other healthcare providers involved in a patient's care
- 3.4** Respects the expertise and responsibility of all healthcare providers involved in a patient's care
- 3.5** Reports any suspected or known violation of a rule, requirement, regulation or law by him/herself and/or by another Athletic Trainer that is related to the practice of athletic training, public health, patient care or education
- 3.6** Reports any criminal convictions (with the exception of misdemeanor traffic offenses or traffic ordinance violations that do not involve the use of alcohol or drugs) and/or professional suspension, discipline or sanction received by



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him/herself or by another Athletic Trainer that is related to athletic training, public health, patient care or education

**3.7** Complies with all BOC exam eligibility requirements and ensures that any information provided to the BOC in connection with any certification application is accurate and truthful

**3.8** Does not, without proper authority, possess, use, copy, access, distribute or discuss certification exams, score reports, answer sheets, certificates, certificant or applicant files, documents or other materials

**3.9** Is candid, responsible and truthful in making any statement to the BOC, and in making any statement in connection with athletic training to the public

**3.10** Complies with all confidentiality and disclosure requirements of the BOC

**3.11** Does not take any action that leads, or may lead, to the conviction, plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere (no contest) to any felony or to a misdemeanor related to public health, patient care, athletics or education;; this includes, but is not limited to: rape; sexual abuse of a child or patient; actual or threatened use of a weapon of violence; the prohibited sale or distribution of controlled substance, or its possession with the intent to distribute; or the use of the position of an Athletic Trainer to improperly influence the outcome or score of an athletic contest or event or in connection with any gambling activity

## **Attachment 3**

### **Dress Code and Personal Appearance Policy**

1. Professional looking Polo style shirts and Khaki style pants or appropriate dress clothes are the only acceptable attire while working.
2. All Polo's should be Castleton University or other appropriate logo and completely cover the midriff and be able to be tucked in.
3. Athletic Training Program logo t-shirts or long sleeve shirts are acceptable to wear during rehab hours.
4. Khaki shorts are acceptable but must be of mid thigh length and worn around the waist.
5. Footwear must be functional, closed toed, closed heeled, in good condition.
6. Hats must have a Castleton University logo or other appropriate logo and may be worn outside only. Stocking caps may be worn in the Ice rink as well.
7. Hooded sweatshirts will not be permitted in any circumstance.
8. Piercings are permitted in ears only. Body piercings or tattoos should be covered.



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9. Facial Hair must be trimmed and neat looking while on duty.
10. Watches must be worn while on duty. Cell phones are not acceptable time pieces but may be used for athletic training related issues only.
11. Professional behavior and strong work ethic may be rewarded with occasional dress down Fridays. Preceptors have the final decision.