

Admission Guidelines for the Athletic Training Education Program
Department of Kinesiology
Towson University

An athletic trainer is a qualified health care professional educated and experienced in the management of health care problems associated with physical activity. In cooperation with physicians and other health care personnel, the athletic trainer functions as an integral member of the health care team in secondary schools, colleges and universities, professional sports programs, sports medicine clinics, and other health care settings. The athletic trainer functions in cooperation with medical personnel, athletic personnel, individuals involved in physical activity, parents, and guardians in the development and coordination of efficient and responsive athletic health care delivery systems.

The athletic trainer's professional preparation is directed toward the development of specified competencies in the following domains: risk management and injury prevention, pathology of injuries and illnesses, assessment and evaluation, acute care of injury and illness, pharmacology, therapeutic modalities, therapeutic exercise, general medical conditions and disabilities, nutritional aspects of injury and illness, psychosocial intervention and referral, health care administration, professional development and responsibilities. Through a combination of formal classroom instruction and clinical experience, the athletic trainer is prepared to apply a wide variety of specific health care skills and knowledge within each of the domains.

Initiating the Process

Students desiring to major in athletic training are admitted to the "Pre Athletic Training" program. During the fall semester all Pre-AT students will meet with the Coordinator of the ATEP who will explain and review the requirements for admission into the ATEP. During the Pre-AT program, students will need to complete several requirements to be considered for admission to the ATEP. At the completion of the Pre-AT program, students seeking admission into the athletic training major are required to have completed the following courses:

BIOL 190	Biology for the Health Care Professional (4)
PSYC 101	Introduction to Psychology (3)
KNES 235	Individualized Fitness (3)
KNES 291	Introduction to Athletic Training (3)
HLTH 101	Wellness for a Diverse Society (3)
HLTH 103	EMC, First Aid, and Safety (3)

These courses are used to calculate the *Prerequisite Courses GPA*.

Transfer students must submit a copy of an official transcript to show completion of coursework similar to the above classes at their previous institution.

The Pre-AT student will make formal application, which includes all of the materials stated below, to the Coordinator of the ATEP no later than the 2nd Friday in May.

1. Official transcripts
2. Directed observation hours
3. Two Letters of Recommendation
4. Essay
5. Clinical Skills Worksheet

Plan

Seven criteria are evaluated as part of the admission process in accepting students into the ATEP:

1. Overall GPA
2. Prerequisite Courses GPA
3. Directed Observation Hours
4. Letters of Recommendation
5. Interview
6. Essay
7. Clinical Skills Worksheet

Along with the above evaluation criteria the following must be completed and turned into the program coordinator to begin clinical hours:

1. Program Application
2. Acceptance of Technical Standards
3. Verification of Health Status Form completed

In evaluating the criteria, different ranking scales (1-5, 1-10, etc) are used. For each criterion, the student with the lowest ranking receives the highest number awarded. Students are evaluated under the seven criteria in the following manner:

1. Overall GPA – A student must have a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 in their college courses to be able to apply to the ATEP.

For purposes of scoring on this criterion, students are first divided into groups, with group size based on the size of the applicant pool. To determine group size, the total number of candidates applying for admission to the program is divided by 10. For example, if 20 students apply, 20 is divided by 10 and the result is 2. In cases where the result falls between whole numbers, (e.g. 2.6), the number is rounded up or down depending on where it falls on the scale. A result of 2.5 is rounded upward, for a score of (3), whereas 2.4 is rounded downward for a score of (2). We then rank the overall GPAs of the applicants from high to low. If group size has been determined to be 2, the student applicants are then placed in groups of 2, with the 2 students with the highest GPAs receiving a score of (1). The students with the next 2 highest GPAs receive a score of (2). We continue scoring the students until everyone receives a score.

2. Prerequisite Courses GPA – Six classes (KNES 291, KNES 235, BIOL 110, HLTH 103, HLTH 101 and PSYC 101) are used to calculate the *Prerequisite Courses GPA*. The candidates' GPAs are ranked from high to low. The student with the highest GPA receives a score of (1); this number is then multiplied by a weighting factor of 2, (1 X 2=2), for a score of 2. We continue scoring the students until everyone receives a score. We weight this criterion more heavily than others because we believe the *Prerequisite Courses GPA* is a very good predictor for success in our program. Transfer students must show comparable course work at the college level. These courses must contain similar material as demonstrated by syllabus review by the ATEP admissions committee. Community colleges interested in partner programs will have comparable course approved before the student makes application to Towson University.

3. Observation Hours – Students are assigned by the ATEP Coordinator or Clinical Coordinator of Education to a variety of clinical settings at Towson University which include athletic training rooms, athletic practices, and competitive events, to gain valuable directed observation hours.

Students who obtain between 40-80 directed observation hours receive a score of (4). Students who obtain between 80-100 directed observation hours receive a score of (3). Students who obtain between 100-120 directed observation hours receive a score of (2). Students who obtain over 120 directed observation hours receive a score of (1).

Each student will maintain an hours log which will be signed on a weekly basis by a clinical instructor.

4. Letters of Recommendation – Students seeking admission into the ATEP will be asked to secure two letters of recommendation from individuals who can attest to their personality, academic success, intellectual abilities and clinical abilities. Letters of recommendation are evaluated with scores of (1-5), with 1 being best. Each athletic training

faculty member reads and scores each of the three letters of recommendation. All letters of recommendation are read independently. The scores from all the evaluators are added together and then divided by the total number of evaluators. The averaged score is then recorded on the admission ranking form. The evaluators will consist of ATEP faculty members and two clinical instructors. A minimum four and a maximum of six evaluators will be utilized.

5. Interview – Candidates seeking admission to the ATEP are given a formal interview conducted by the athletic training admission committee. Each evaluator uses a standardized form, worth 100 points. At the end of the interview process the score for each candidate is totaled and then divided by the number of evaluators to get an average interview score. The evaluators will consist of ATEP faculty members and two clinical instructors. A minimum four and a maximum of six evaluators will be utilized.

The student with the best average interview score receives a score of (1), next highest is given a score of (2), and soon, until everyone has a score. This score is then multiplied by a weighting factor of 2 (i.e. $1 \times 2 = 2$, $2 \times 2 = 4$, etc.). We weight this criterion more heavily than others because we believe the *Interview* is a very good predictor for success in our program.

6. Essay – Applicants will submit a one-page essay stating why they would want to pursue the profession of Athletic Training. The essay is scored using the same method as was described for Letters of Recommendation.

7. Clinical Skills Worksheet – Students are expected to complete the “Clinical Skills Worksheet” during the course of the academic year (September - March). The worksheet will consist of skills that each student should be proficient in performing (i.e. making an ice bag, taping an ankle, wrapping a thigh etc.). Athletic training staff members and 3rd year students selected by the staff will verify that a particular skill has been met. A percentage of “check-offs” is calculated by dividing the total number of possible “check-offs,” (i.e. 100) by the number of skills checked off as having been completed. For example, if a student completes 75 skills, $75/100 = 75\%$. The percentage scores for each student are ranked in order from highest to lowest. The *Clinical Skills Worksheet* criterion is then scored using the same procedure described for *Overall GPA*.

When all the criteria have been scored, the 7 scores are added together, to make a grand total score. The candidate with the lowest grand total score is ranked as the first candidate who will be offered admission to the ATEP. Acceptance into the program is based upon the stated criteria and the number of available openings in the program. Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the program. Offers of admission into the ATEP are presented on a competitive basis to those individuals who are most qualified. Students must apply for admission to the program by the 2nd Friday of May in the spring semester. Candidates will be notified of acceptance/rejection in the first week of June by mail.

Appeal procedures

Students who are not admitted into the program can reapply, but it will still take six semesters to complete the required class and clinical workload. Students can also appeal the decision of the ATEP admissions committee to the Coordinator of the ATEP, then to the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology, and finally to the Dean’s Office of the College of Health Professions.

Students may reapply to the ATEP three times.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Michael Higgins
Coordinator, Athletic Training Education Program
Department of Kinesiology
Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252
410-704-2772
mhiggins@towson.edu

ATHLETIC TRAINING EDUCATION PROGRAM
TOWSON UNIVERSITY
TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION

The Athletic Training Education Program at the Towson University is a rigorous and intense program that places specific requirements and demands on the students enrolled in the program. An objective of this program is to prepare graduates to enter a variety of employment settings and to render care to a wide spectrum of individuals engaged in physical activity. The technical standards set forth by the Athletic Training Education Program establish the essential qualities considered necessary for students admitted to this program to achieve the knowledge, skills and competencies of an entry-level athletic trainer, as well as meet the expectations of the program's accrediting agency (Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education – ("CAATE"). The following abilities and expectations must be met by all students admitted to the Athletic Training Education Program (ATEP). In the event a student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, the student will not be admitted into the program.

Compliance with the program's technical standards does not guarantee a student's eligibility for the Board of Certification (BOC) examination.

Candidates for selection to the Athletic Training Education Program must demonstrate:

1. the mental capacity to assimilate, analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts and problem solve to formulate assessment and therapeutic judgments and to be able to distinguish deviations from the norm;
2. sufficient postural and neuromuscular control, sensory function, and coordination to perform appropriate physical examinations using accepted techniques; and accurately, safely, and efficiently use equipment and materials during the assessment and treatment of patients;
3. the ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds; this includes, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport with patients and communicate judgments and treatment information effectively. Students must be able to understand and speak the English language at a level consistent with competent professional practice;
4. the ability to record the physical examination results and a treatment plan clearly and accurately;
5. the capacity to maintain composure and continue to function well during periods of high stress;
6. the perseverance, diligence and commitment to complete the athletic training education program as outlined and sequenced;
7. flexibility and the ability to adjust to changing situations and uncertainty in clinical situations;
8. affective skills and appropriate demeanor and rapport that relate to professional education and quality patient care.

Candidates for selection to the Athletic Training Education Program will be required to verify that they understand and meet these technical standards or that they believe, with certain accommodations, they can meet the standards. The Office of Disability Support Services will evaluate a student who states he/she could meet the program's technical standards with accommodation and confirm that the stated condition qualifies as a disability under applicable laws.

If a student states he/she can meet the technical standards with accommodation, then the University will determine whether it agrees that the student can meet the technical standards with reasonable accommodation; this includes determination as to whether the accommodations requested are reasonable, taking into account whether accommodation would jeopardize clinician/patient safety, or the educational process of the student or the institution, including all coursework, clinical experiences and internships deemed essential to graduation.