



Seeking Greater Relevance for Athletic Training Within American Higher Education and the Healthcare Professions

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Outline for Presentation

- Major challenges facing higher education
- Value of a liberal education for our students
- Importance of interprofessional education and practice
- Rationale for diversity and inclusive excellence
- Evolution of athletic training as a healthcare profession
- Debate over the appropriate academic level for the professional degree in athletic training



Major Challenges Facing Higher Education

- Declining state support
- Increase in the cost of a public higher education
- Increased level of accountability
- Questions about the value of a higher education



Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP)

- Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
 - Global cultures, diversity, and sustainability
- Intellectual and practical skills
 - Critical and creative thinking; written and oral communication
- Personal and social responsibility
 - Ethical reasoning and foundations/skills for lifelong learning
- Integrative and applied learning
 - Application and integration of learning



Percentage of Employers Who Want Colleges to "Place More Emphasis" on Essential Learning Outcomes (AAC&U/LEAP)

- 89%: more written and oral communication
- 81%: more critical thinking and analytic reasoning
- 79%: more applied knowledge in real-world settings
- 75%: more ethical decision making
- 75% more complex problem solving
- 71%: more intercultural competence
- 70%: more science and technology
- 67%: more global issues



High-Impact Educational Practices (AAC&U/LEAP)

- First-year seminars
- Learning communities
- Undergraduate research
- Capstone courses and projects
- Writing-intensive courses
- Collaborative assignments and projects
- Diversity/global learning
- Service learning and community-based learning



Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Practice (IPP)

- "...a group of diverse health care providers from differing health professions or disciplines working together to provide health care to individuals and communities. Team members collaborate, plan, and coordinate an interdisciplinary program of care."
- "...when two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes"
- Teams comprised of occupational therapists, physician assistants, physical therapists, human movement specialists, ...and athletic trainers



Examples of IPE Courses

- Professional ethics
- Multicultural competency
- Scientific writing
- Grantsmanship
- Medical aspects
- Entrepreneurship



Challenges to IPE and IPP (ACICBL)

- **National**
 - Lack of interprofessional accreditation standards
 - Insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of IPE and IPP
 - Lack of resources for dissemination of best practices
 - Reimbursement policies that provide disincentives
 - Lack of interoperable information technology
- **State**
 - Lack of knowledge regarding scope of practice of other professions
- **Locally or Institutionally**
 - Insufficient faculty and curriculum development
 - Differing or changing views of power, status, and authority



Purpose of NATA ECE Interprofessional Workgroup

- To inform the profession regarding IPE and IPP, including appropriate terminology, definitions, best evidence and the important role it plays in the future of health care
- To inform institutions, academic units and other professions about our profession and the advantages of including AT in IPE and IPP initiatives
- To inform educators and clinicians regarding best practice, giving practical examples of how to get involved in IPE and IPP
- To inform the CAATE, providing evidence for inclusion of IPE and IPP in educational competencies



Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

- To become more diverse as a profession is to become more inclusive and accepting of colleagues, athletes, and patients regardless of:
 - Race
 - National origin
 - Color
 - Religion
 - Sex
 - Age
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender identity/expression
 - Status as a person with a disability
 - Genetic information
 - Protected Veteran status



Benefits to Racial and Ethnic Diversity Among Health Care Providers (IOM)

- Racial and ethnic minority health care providers more likely to serve minority and medically underserved communities, thereby increasing access to care
- Racial and ethnic minority patients report greater levels of satisfaction with care provided by minority health care professionals
- Racial and ethnic minority health care providers can help health systems in efforts to reduce cultural and linguistic barriers and improve cultural competence



Diversity of Athletic Training, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Language Pathology

	Caucasian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander
AT	81%	3.5%	4.2%	3.5%
PT	86%	2.0%	2.8%	6.4%
OT	88%	2.2%	3.9%	4.2%
SLP	72%	2.7%	3.7%	1.7%



Interested in a profession in
Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Physician Assistant,
Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Audiology, Speech
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1997 NATA Education Task Force Recommendation

- “The NATA should encourage new athletic training education programs to consider aligning themselves in colleges of health-related professions.”

Health Professions Degree Terminology

- Professional master’s degree
 - Entry-level; to enter the profession
- Clinical doctorate (e.g., DPT, AUD, DOT)
 - Develops knowledge and skills to provide service or care
- Clinical doctorate
 - Professional (entry-level; to enter the profession)
 - Post-professional (advanced level; to acquire advanced skills)
- Academic doctorate (e.g., PhD, EdD)
 - Develops proficiency in scholarship and scientific inquiry



Potential Implications of the Professional Master’s Degree

- Richness of a liberal education might be enhanced
- Greater opportunities for interprofessional education and practice
- Migration of ATEP’s to the health professions might be accelerated



Questions to Ask about the Professional Master's Degree

- What happens to post-professional master's degree programs?
- Is the Doctor of Athletic Training appropriate for our profession?
- What would be the implication of a post-professional doctoral degree on research-prepared PhDs in athletic training?
- How would the DAT be viewed by deans and department chairs?



Summary

- American higher education is undergoing a major transformation
- Interprofessional education and practice has left the station
- Diversity and inclusive excellence can enhance our standing among the healthcare professions
- Align our academic programs with the other healthcare professions



**"If we teach today's students as we taught
yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow"
John Dewey**

