

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST TO TERMINATE THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN ATHLETIC TRAINING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Consider recommending approval of the request by the University of Iowa to terminate the Bachelor of Science Program in Athletic Training in the Department of Health and Human Physiology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

**Executive Summary:** The request to terminate the Program is necessary as a result of new accreditation requirements identified by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CATE). This request was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan Priority 1 (Ensuring Access to Education and Student Success); Priority 2 (Promoting and Supporting Innovation in Teaching, Research, and Economic Development); and Priority 3 (Promoting Effective Use of Resources to Meet Institutional Missions).

**Background:**

- ◇ **Description of program.** Athletic Trainers (ATs) are healthcare professionals who collaborate with physicians to provide preventive services, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention, and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions to active patients, including athletes. The Bachelor of Science Program in Athletic Training requires a minimum of 120 semester hours, including 60-61 semester hours of coursework for the major. The program has a secondary admissions process that occurs once a year during the spring of the freshman year; students are not admitted in the fall or summer. The professional phase of the program provides a hybrid of three years of concentrated didactic and clinical experiences that lead to eligibility for the national certification examination. Admission to the professional phase of the athletic training program is very competitive with a maximum of 18 admitted for each cohort. The Iowa program has been accredited since 1974 and has had a strong national presence. In addition, it has a strong academic and clinical relationship with the university's Department of Orthopedic Surgery and Rehabilitation. The program operates with two full time instructors (the Program Director and the Clinical Education Coordinator), one adjunct instructor, and over 30 clinical preceptors supervising students during practicum courses.
  
- ◇ **Reason for proposed termination.** The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) oversees education in the field of athletic training. According to the Commission, the knowledge base related to athletic training has been increasing during the last decades and that the healthcare system has likewise been evolving toward a greater complexity. Therefore, the Commission ruled that adequate education in athletic training should build upon a solid education in the natural sciences and/or in allied health-related areas. The Commission announced on May 20, 2015, that the Strategic Alliance<sup>1</sup> has determined that the professional degree for athletic training be a master's degree. The Alliance also requires the termination of undergraduate programs in athletic training.

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<sup>1</sup> The Strategic Alliance is a group of four leading organizations committed to the athletic training profession and to the delivery of quality health care to the public. The four member organizations are the Board of Certification, Inc. (BOC), the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE), the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) and the NATA Research & Education Foundation (NATA Foundation)." <https://www.nata.org/about/strategic-alliance>.

The new accreditation Standard 2 will read: “CAATE accredited professional athletic training programs must result in the granting of a Master Degree in Athletic Training. The program must be identified as an academic athletic training degree in institutional academic publications. The degree must appear on the official transcript similar to normal designations for other degrees at the institution. In order to comply with Standard 2, baccalaureate programs may not admit, enroll, or matriculate students into the athletic training program after the start of the fall term 2022.”

To meet these national accreditation standards, the Bachelor of Science Program in Athletic Training at the University of Iowa must be terminated. To prepare for the termination, the Board of Regents approved the creation of the Master of Science Program in Athletic Training in October 2016 (ASAC 4a).

- ◆ Five-year trend in enrollments and graduations. Between 2012 and 2016, there were 16 applicants and 29 enrollees. During that period, there were no graduates.

	Applications	Admitted	Total Enrollment	Graduations
2012-13	35	16	93	11
2013-14	52	17	137	15
2014-15	49	18	142	In progress
2015-16	35	18	151	In progress
2016-17	44	18	157	In progress

- ◆ Effect on current students. The program will offer all necessary courses to students admitted into the program before its closure. The course, Exploring Athletic Training, which is required for admissions to the Athletic Training program, will be offered for the final time in Fall 2017, which will allow the last cohort to be admitted in Spring 2018 with expected graduation in Spring 2021. Those who are unable to graduate by 2021 will continue to be accommodated by the program until graduation.

SEMESTER	PROGRAM ACTION
Spring 2017	Admit new undergraduate cohort
Fall 2017	Last time “Exploring Athletic Training” will be offered
Spring 2018	Admit the last undergraduate cohort
Spring 2019	Admit first graduate cohort
Summer 2019	First semester with graduate cohort
Spring 2021	Last undergraduate cohort graduates

- ◆ Impact on resources. The proposed termination is expected to have little or no effect on costs. Resources from the undergraduate program will be reallocated to the new graduate program as will tuition revenue for the graduate program.
- ◆ Impact on workforce. Job demand for athletic training education is expected to remain high in the coming decade. There is considerable need for athletic trainers in a variety of allied health care settings. This fact, coupled with the anticipated decline in the number of programs preparing athletic trainers, should result in good employment outlook for graduates. According to the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Employment of athletic trainers is projected to grow 21% from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations. As people become more aware of sports-related injuries at a young age, demand for athletic trainers is expected to increase, most significantly in colleges, universities, and youth leagues.”

- ◇ Alternative programming. Currently, there are 13 undergraduate athletic training programs in the state. While some are in the process of transitioning from an undergraduate to a graduate program, none offer the graduate program.

Buena Vista University	Likely to pursue the master's degree, but no proposal has been made.
Central College	Will not pursue master's degree; plan to drop undergraduate program.
Clarke University	Undecided.
Coe College	Will not pursue master's degree.
Graceland University	In early stages of proposal to transition to master's degree.
Iowa State University	Will develop master's degree to replace undergraduate program.
Loras College	Will propose entry-level master's degree.
Luther College	Unknown.
Northwestern College	In early stages to transition to master's degree.
Simpson College	Will not pursue master's degree; plan to drop undergraduate program.
University of Northern Iowa	Has proposed entry-level master's degree.
Upper Iowa University	In process to develop master's degree to replace undergraduate program.

- ◇ Anticipated impact on other programs. There will be no foreseeable impact on other undergraduate Athletic Training programs across the state if the University of Iowa program is closed because students will be allowed to matriculate through the entire program at the University of Iowa and will not thus transfer to another school. Additionally, all undergraduate programs across the nation will be phased out in the next five years, with students in this field required to complete a Master's program because of new board standards. All programs will be affected by the profession requiring an advanced degree.
- ◇ Effective date of termination. If the proposed program termination is approved by the Board, termination of the program will become effective upon completion of the program by the last admitted undergraduate program cohort. Information about the termination of the program will be reflected on the department website and University Catalog.