

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ATHLETIC TRAINING**  
**ACCREDITATION REPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Receive the accreditation report from the Bachelor of Arts in Athletic Training Program in the College of Education at the University of Northern Iowa.

**Executive Summary:** The Bachelor of Arts in Athletic Training program prepares students for the National Athletic Training Board of Certification Examination, as well as for eligibility to earn an athletic training license in the state of Iowa. The program (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the standards defined by the accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The program was accredited for the maximum period of seven years. This report addresses the Board's Strategic Plan objective (1.1) to "offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students."

**Background:**

- ◇ **Description.** The American Medical Association (AMA) recognizes athletic training as an allied health care profession. The AMA also recommends certified athletic trainers for all high schools because they are recognized as experts in the prevention, evaluation, and care of injuries suffered by the physically active population.
- ◇ **Purpose of Accreditation.** An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met national standards for its development and evaluation. In order to qualify for licensure, individuals must have graduated from an accredited program.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE).
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the Athletic Training Program contained the responses to the appropriate standards required by the accrediting body – sponsorship; personnel; resources; physical resources; operational policies and fair practices; health and safety; student records; outcomes; curriculum and instruction; clinical education; and program and sponsoring institution responsibilities.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In April 2006, the visiting team determined that the Athletic Training Program was in substantial compliance with the standards for accreditation.
- ◇ **Sample Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.**
  - ☑ "The program has strong administrative and institutional support. It has more than the necessary resources to offer a high level educational experience."
  - ☑ "The research agendas of the faculty, the board of certification pass rate, placement, performance of current students, and interest from prospective students are all evidence of the stature of the program."
  - ☑ "The new, privately-funded facility is further evidence of the administrative support the program receives. The partnerships created with the entities to be housed in the new facility substantiate the strides that have been made."

- ☑ “Since the last site visit, three tenure-track faculty members have been added. Six clinical sites and 10 field experience supervisors have also been added.”
- ☑ “Students have the benefit of interacting with six team physicians with expertise in family practice, sports medicine, and orthopedics during formal classroom encounters and clinical rotations.”

◇ Concern Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “While the program was found to be in compliance with the fair practices standard, there still remains a concern regarding the use of the Black Hawks ice hockey facility again in the future. Since there are plans to use this facility again during hockey season, the program is required to document the actual calibration and electrical check of the equipment at this facility in the form of a CAATE progress report.” **This concern has been resolved.**

◇ Recommendations Relevant to the Program Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “One concern is the rapid growth of the program. Providing 60-70 students with a quality experience is a tremendous challenge given the number of clinical placements and overall structure of the program. The program and institution should continually revisit their aspirations to ensure a continued ability to serve the large number of students effectively while maintaining quality.”
- ☑ “Be mindful of the clinical coordinator’s load. Stability in this position is important for the continued growth and development of the program. It is imperative that support in the form of a line-item budgetary allocation is maintained given the large number of students, clinical instructors, and sites.”
- ☑ “The program should explore creating minimum criteria for upper extremity, lower extremity, and equipment intensive experiences, not limited to consideration of the injury patterns of these respective sports. They should also publish those criteria so they are clear to all constituents of the program.”
- ☑ “Encourage staff and students that all verbal references to the athletic training profession and elements of the program reflect contemporary professional terminology.”
- ☑ “Encourage the program to follow through with efforts to coordinate regular opportunities for contacts for every student with medical and allied health professionals both didactically and clinically. Students benefit from informal as well as formal interaction.”
- ☑ “Implement minimum objectives for all field experiences. Ensure those objectives are applied consistently to students according to level regardless of setting.”
- ☑ “Encourage program to create a system that an appropriate university representative, independent of the program, has means to verify completion of program requirements other than those for which academic credit is awarded. Consider following the computer database model currently existing for teacher education candidates.”

◇ Accreditation Status. In February 2007, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education awarded accreditation to the Athletic Training Program at UNI for the maximum period of seven years.

Details about the accreditation report are available in the Board Office.