

**REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO IMPLEMENT A
MASTER OF SCIENCE in ATHLETIC TRAINING (MSAT)
AT UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN (UW)-Madison
PREPARED BY UW-Madison**

ABSTRACT

The University of Wisconsin-Madison proposes to establish a Master of Science in Athletic Training (MSAT). The new MSAT replaces the existing BS in Athletic Training and responds to student interest, changing national accreditation standards, and anticipated growth in the demand for athletic trainers. The MSAT seeks to be a leader in athletic training education by developing health care providers who exhibit the highest levels of clinical scholarship, are dedicated to patient advocacy and social responsibility in health care, practice patient-centered culturally competent care, and address the burden of injury through a public health lens. The curricular model for the 24-month, 58-credit program has been informed by current campus offerings in the health sciences, Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) Standards, analysis of future trends in athletic training, and adherence to the core competencies for health sciences outlined by the Institute of Medicine.

PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

Institution Name

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Title of Proposed Program

Master of Science in Athletic Training (MSAT)

Degree/Major Designations

Master of Science in Athletic Training

Mode of Delivery

The program will be offered in a single institution face-to-face residential format that includes a variety of didactic course work combined with immersive clinical experiences.

Projected Enrollments and Graduates by Year Five

Table 1 represents enrollment and graduation projections for students entering the program over the next five years. By the end of Year 5, it is expected that 64 students will have enrolled in the program and 44 students will have graduated from the program. The student retention rate is projected to be approximately 90%, which is based on the UW-Madison Graduate School's average completion rate for master's degrees (based on 2007-2015 entrance cohorts).

Table 1: Five-Year Degree Program Enrollment Projections

Students/Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
New Students	11	11	13	13	16
Continuing Students	0	10	10	12	12
Total Enrollment	11	21	23	25	28
Graduating Students	0	10	10	12	12

Tuition Structure

For students enrolled in the MSAT program, standard graduate tuition and fee rates will apply. For the current academic year, residential tuition and segregated fees total \$6089.74 per semester for a full-time graduate student enrolled in (8+ credits) per semester or \$761.21 per credit. Of this amount, \$5363.76 is attributable to tuition and \$725.98 is attributable to segregated fees. Nonresident tuition and segregated fees total \$ 12,753.18 per semester for a full-time student enrolled in (8+ credits) per semester or \$1,594.14 per credit. Of this amount, \$12,027.20 is attributable to tuition and \$725.98 is attributable to segregated fees. For the summer of year 1, students enrolled in 8 credits will pay \$3,352.35 in tuition and \$320.52 in required segregated fees. For the summer of year 2 of the program (4 credits) students will pay \$2,681.88 in tuition and \$320.52 in required segregated fees. The program does not accommodate part-time students. There are no program specific fees charged to students.

Department or Functional Equivalent

Department of Kinesiology

College, School, or Functional Equivalent

School of Education

Proposed Date of Implementation

Summer 2021

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Overview of the Program

The MSAT program is a 24 month (58 credit) campus-based health science program that includes capstone clinical preceptorships in local environments and locations around the country. The curriculum is front loaded in year one (Summer, Fall, Spring) with a heavy didactic schedule and limited clinical experiences. The second year (Summer, Fall, Spring) stresses immersive clinical field placements supported by innovative courses that include both face-to-face and online formats. The curriculum is built upon a foundation of competency-based training and clinical practice embedded in traditional for-credit coursework. The AT accreditation process ensures that programs provide educational experiences for athletic trainers to acquire and demonstrate competence in the areas of prevention, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions.

The MSAT curriculum integrates these competencies throughout the students' training to provide a strong evidence-guided, patient-centered approach to care. The program stresses the development of clinical scholarship that includes scientific inquiry, critical thinking, cultural competence and integrative learning. Principles of lifelong learning, professional leadership, advocacy, professionalism and ethical reasoning, guide the development of future leaders in athletic training who can meet the needs of patients and the athletic training profession.

The program will collaborate with other health science degree programs (e.g. Master of Public Health- MPH) and graduate certificate programs (e.g. Health Advocacy) to enhance the AT offerings through interprofessional learning/service activities. The ability to draw upon the advocacy and public health resources at UW-Madison are a point of distinction for the MSAT program. The MSAT has been designed with consideration of, and collaboration with, campus stakeholders, current Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) Standards, alignment with the 2015-2019 Campus Strategic Framework, and adherence to the core competencies for health sciences outlined by the Institute of Medicineⁱ.

Student Learning Outcomes and Program Objectives

The Athletic Training Professional Preparation Program (MSAT) at UW-Madison seeks to be a leader in athletic training education by offering a program that will develop health care providers in athletic training who exhibit the highest levels of clinical scholarship, are dedicated to patient advocacy and social responsibility in health care, practice patient-centered care, and strive to address the burden of injury through a public health lens. The program is dedicated to service, scholarship and developing socially responsible clinicians.

Upon completion of the Athletic Training MSAT students will:

- 1) Understand the role of the athletic trainer within the broader health care system.
- 2) Demonstrate appropriate oral and written communication skills.
- 3) Develop and apply strategies to prevent the incidence and/or severity of injury and illnesses.
- 4) Demonstrate the clinical skills needed to appropriately diagnose patients for treatment and referral.
- 5) Apply clinical and decision-making skills to respond to acute injury and illness, including emergencies.
- 6) Assess patient status and develop treatment and rehabilitation that are consistent with contemporary disablement models.
- 7) Demonstrate clinical scholarship in the form of evidence appraisal and application to influence athletic training practice.

8) Maintain the highest standards of clinical practice by examining the quality of patient care through the use of patient outcomes.

9) Apply research methods to develop and evaluate clinical questions applicable to practice-based research environments while demonstrating an understanding of ethical research practice.

Program Requirements and Curriculum

The MSAT program will engage students in a 24-month, 56-credit curriculum. Students will apply by completing a UW-Madison Graduate School application and the Athletic Training Central Application Service (ATCAS) available via the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). Admission requirements will include: a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from a regionally accredited institution of higher education by the start of the program, transcripts, Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores, observation of two Certified Athletic Trainers in different clinical practice settings, three letters of recommendation, a personal statement, and a C or better in prerequisite courses (or their equivalent). Well-prepared applicants will have an undergraduate background that includes foundational biology, chemistry, physics, statistics, psychology, nutrition, physiology, and anatomy. Curriculum requirements are outlined in Table 2 below. All of the courses included in the MSAT program are already approved and being offered or will be offered specifically for the MSAT program.

**Table 2: Master of Science in Athletic Training Program Curriculum
Academic program or major course requirements:**

Summer I

KINES 570	Anatomical Foundations in Athletic Training	3 credits
KINES 571	Emergency Procedures Athletic Trainers	2 credits
KINES 572	Foundational Skills in Athletic Training	1 credit
KINES 620	Clinical Field Experience in AT I	2 credits

Fall I

KINES 650	Foundations of Professional Practice in Athletic Training	1 credit
KINES 651	Public Health, Policy, and Practice	3 credits
KINES 652	Evaluation and Therapeutic Interventions I	4 credits
KINES 654	Clinical Medicine in Athletic Training I	3 credits
KINES 621	Clinical Field Experience in AT II	3 credits
KINES 670	Enhancing Performance and Wellness (online format)	1 credit

Spring I

KINES 658	Seminar in Athletic Training	1 credit
KINES 653	Evaluation and Therapeutic Interventions II	4 credits
KINES 655	Clinical Medicine in Athletic Training II	3 credits
KINES 656	Scientific Inquiry in Athletic Training	3 credits
KINES 671	Diagnostic Imaging in Athletic Training (online format)	1 credit
KINES 622	Clinical Field Experience in AT III	3 credits

Summer II

KINES 623	Clinical Field Experience in AT IV	3 credits
KINES 672	Pharmacology for the Athletic Trainers (online format)	1 credit

Fall II

KINES 624	Clinical Field Experience in AT V (Immersive)	6 credits
KINES 673	Informatics and Quality Improvement (online format)	1 credit
KINES 657	Professional Practice: Role Transition in Athletic Training	1 credit

Spring II

KINES 625	Clinical Field Experience in AT VI (Immersive)	7 credits
KINES 674	Practice Based Research in Athletic Training (online format)	1 credit

Total Credits 58 credits

Assessment of Outcomes and Objectives

The MSAT comprehensive program assessment plan is designed to provide the program with the information needed to maintain culture of continuous improvement in all aspects of the MSAT. The assessment measures, data analysis, and subsequent action plans aid the program in assessing the quality of instruction, student learning, and overall program effectiveness.

The program relies on a variety of direct and indirect assessment methods to gather the needed data described above. These tools include: program completion data, alumni surveys, program exit interviews, BOC board exam pass rate, board exam results analysis by domain, placement data, course evaluations, preceptor evaluations and clinical site evaluations.

The program is also subjected to outside accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Programs (CAATE) and is required as part of the CAATE Standards to maintain a comprehensive assessment program. The program is in good standing and subject to a scheduled self-study and site visit review in the 2025/26 academic year.

Diversity

The MSAT provides students with the knowledge and clinical skills to practice patient-centered, culturally competent care in a variety of healthcare settings. The program is committed to preparing health care providers who are dedicated to patient advocacy and social responsibility in health care. Greater dialog is needed across the health sciences to address gaps in access to care and to advance students understanding of inequities and barriers experienced by underrepresented groups.

Equity in student recruitment, retention, and completion.

The MSAT will be promoted through the Center for Pre-Health Advising and at orientation and registration events to educate undergraduate and incoming students with an interest in the health sciences about career options. The MSAT program will utilize available campus resources through the Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement (DDEEA) and the School of Education Student Diversity Programs (SDP) office to raise

awareness of the MSAT to specific underserved groups (e.g., racial or ethnic minorities; low-income and/or rural populations). Program faculty and staff will partner through the School of Education's new collaboration with the Madison Metropolitan School District using the LEAP Forward program. LEAP Forward brings high school students from underrepresented groups to campus for a summer event to learn about opportunities for university study in the health sciences. The Athletic Training Program has a record of success with current campus programs (POSSE, PEOPLE) and will continue to strengthen these ties to enhance the MSAT. The Athletic Training Program has an established advising structure with a strong history of student retention and timely degree completion that will continue in the new MSAT.

Equity in hiring of faculty and staff

The Athletic Training Program is committed to the campus diversity initiative that stresses our compelling university interest in the promotion of diversity as inextricably linked, and that allows it to serve the public good. The program is committed to using the resources provided by the Office of the Provost's Faculty Diversity Initiatives to recruit and retain a demographically representative faculty.

Diversity in the curriculum

The MSAT takes an "across the curriculum" approach to issues of culturally competent care. Required courses with that contain content specifically dedicated to culturally competent care and understanding group based disparities to healthcare include: KINES 572 Foundational Skills in Athletic Training; KINES 650 Foundations of Professional Practice in Athletic Training; KINES 652 Evaluation and Therapeutic Interventions I; KINES 654 Clinical Medicine in Athletic Training I; and KINES 651 Public Health, Policy, and Practice. The curriculum is designed to advance students' understanding of inequities and barriers experienced by different groups, and to prepare them to confidently and competently provide patient-centered care to diverse patient populations to enhance well-being.

Projected Time to Degree

The MSAT is designed to be completed in 24 months of full-time study. Courses will be offered on a predictable schedule, with enrollment priority given to MSAT students. As outlined in Table 2 above, students will need to meet basic prerequisite course requirements. However, a student who has a deficiency in Exercise Physiology or General Nutrition may be eligible to make up the deficiency during the MSAT program.

Program Review

Internal program reviews will be initiated by the program director annually. As for all new UW-Madison programs, the program will undergo a three-year check-in conducted by the Graduate School and formal program review conducted by the dean's office five years after implementation. Subsequently the program will be subject to the UW-Madison requirement for program review at least once within the subsequent ten years. The program will also take the lead in addressing recommendations arising from these periodic formal reviews, and will act as liaisons to the participating department chairs as needed to implement changes to program policies and practices.

Accreditation

The program is subjected to outside accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Programs (CAATE) and is required as part of the CAATE Standards to maintain a comprehensive assessment program. The program is in good standing and subject to a scheduled self-study and site visit review in the 2025/26 academic year.

JUSTIFICATION

Rationale and Relation to Mission

The proposed MSAT will provide rigorous and comprehensive preparation for students seeking a health care career in athletic training. Athletic trainers (ATs) are multi-skilled health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to provide preventative services, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical condition. ATs practice in a range of clinical practice settings. UW–Madison has a rich history in preparing professionals in athletic training and has long operated at a level of excellence consistent with the campus mission. Offering the MSAT is consistent with the campus commitment to a broad range of health science offerings. The Athletic Training program is already a well-respected member of this health sciences community and fully contributes to the research, instructional, and outreach missions of the campus. The transition from the BSAT to the MSAT degree will allow for greater collaboration as an interprofessional partner with existing health sciences programs. The goals of the proposed MSAT leverages the interprofessional and interdisciplinary environment to serve the Wisconsin Idea, and our ability to maximize our role in the generation and dissemination of new knowledge to meet the healthcare needs of society.

The MSAT is a health sciences program with a focus on the healthcare needs of active patient populations, the goals and desired outcomes of the MSAT are well aligned with the current graduate offerings in the Department of Kinesiology and the health focused programs in the School of Education. The Department currently awards four graduate level degrees: MS in Kinesiology, the PhD in Kinesiology, the MS in Occupational Therapy (MSOT), and the Doctorate in Occupational Therapy. The presence of a robust health science program like the MSOT provides the MSAT program with a logical interprofessional partner within the department.

Institutional Program Array

The proposed MSAT responds to the call for athletic trainers to be prepared at the master's level as identified by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) and the Board of Certification and National Athletic Trainers Association. Students will no longer enroll in BS-AT programs by fall of 2022ⁱⁱ. The transition to the MSAT is necessary for UW-Madison to continue an educational program for athletic trainers. The MSAT will complement health-related training programs at UW-Madison in the Department of Kinesiology (MS in Kinesiology, MS in Occupational Therapy) and in the School of Medicine and Public Health by expanding the range of graduate-level health science offerings at UW-Madison and increasing opportunities for interprofessional education.

UW-Madison's AT program has a 3-year aggregate first time pass rate of 98% and an overall pass rate of 100% for the Athletic Training Board of Certification (BOC) exam and an exceptional record of student placement. The BOC pass rate places the program in the top 10% of all programs for this time span. In addition, our ability to draw upon the advocacy and public health resources at UW-Madison will create a point of distinction for the MSAT program that will allow our graduates to address societal needs.

Other Programs in the University of Wisconsin System

Athletic Training at UW-Madison was the second program in the State of Wisconsin to secure national accreditation (2000). Since that time five additional programs have been accredited in the UW-System. In addition to UW-Madison, UW-LaCrosse, UW-Oshkosh, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Eau Claire, and UW-Milwaukee currently offer programs in athletic training. All are in the various stages of program planning for the BS-to-MS degree transition. UW-Stevens Point and UW-Milwaukee are already matriculating students. The presence of multiple AT programs within the UW System provides students with broad pedagogical and geographical choices for athletic training education in Wisconsin.

UW-Madison's MSAT will be the only such program at a UW situated in a comprehensive medical teaching and research university that houses a School of Medicine and Public Health, Pharmacy, Nursing, and other allied health profession programs.

Need as Suggested by Current Student Demand

Historical enrollment in the BS in Athletic Training has mostly ranged from 47 to 51 over the past five years. A decline in enrollment for fall 2018 (36 students) can be attributed to the expectation for students to need to be trained at the master's degree level. Since the MSAT program will replace the baccalaureate training program at UW-Madison, there will likely be sustained demand and minimal impact on the demand for related majors

Need as Suggested by Market Demand

The need for a graduate program in athletic training is evident within the post-graduation plans of undergraduate degree completers in athletic training. Recent data from the First Destination Survey suggests that more than half of undergraduate degree completers in athletic training over the past three years planned to attend graduate school (27 out of 33 survey completers), and the remaining survey completers found full-time or part-time work in settings such as personal training, healthcare, higher education, and full-time service.

The Bureau of Labor Statisticsⁱⁱⁱ predicts that employment of athletic trainers is projected to grow 23 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. Demand for athletic trainers is expected to increase as people become more aware of the long-term effects of sports-related injuries, and as a growing middle-aged and older population remains active. Increasing physical activity among the general population is frequently cited as a key mechanism to improve health and reduce the cost of care. Athletic trainers are well positioned to implement a public health perspective to the burden of sports injury. This public health and health advocacy approach to care are cornerstones of the new degree proposal. Increased licensure requirements and regulation has led to a greater acceptance of athletic trainers as qualified healthcare providers

in a range of clinical settings beyond traditional professional, university, and secondary school environments. As a result, third-party reimbursement is expected to continue to grow for athletic training services. Athletic trainers will benefit from this expansion because they provide a cost-effective way to increase the number of health professionals in office-based and clinical settings. Lastly, there continues to be a need for qualified health care professionals at the secondary school setting. The health disparities in access to athletic training services in these settings are well documented^{iv,v}. Innovative programs are needed to address these gaps in care; a program at UW-Madison with identified collaborators in the public health realm and access to the broadest range of interprofessional collaborators of any system institution is uniquely positioned to create leaders and care providers to address these societal needs.

ⁱ Institute of Medicine (2001). *Crossing the quality chasm: A new health system for the 21st century*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

ⁱⁱ NATA, BOC, CAATE, & NATA-REF. (2018). Joint announcement from Strategic Alliance on Professional Degree in Athletic Training: National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA), Board of Certification (BOC), Committee on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE), National Athletic Trainers Association Research and Education Foundation (NATA-REF). Retrieved from <https://caate.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Strategic-Alliance-CCATE-email-pdf.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019). Athletic trainers. *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/athletic-trainers.htm>

^{iv} Kroshus, E., Rivara, F.P., Whitlock, K.B., Herring, S.A., & Chrisman, S.P.D.. (2017). Disparities in athletic trainer staffing in secondary school Sport: Implications for concussion identification. *Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine*, 27(6), 542-547.

^v Post, E. G., Green, N. E., Schaefer, D. A., Trigsted, S. M., Brooks, M. A., McGuine, T. A., Watson, A. M, & Bell, D. R. (2018). Socioeconomic status of parents with children participating on youth club sport teams. *Physical Therapy in Sport*, 32, 126-132.