South Dakota State University
Athletic Training Program
Application Process – General Overview for a Qualified Transfer Student

The Athletic Training (AT) Program at South Dakota State University is one of the athletic training curriculums in the United States accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAATE). Our program is designed to meet the criteria to maintain accreditation while preparing students to become athletic training professionals and take the national certifying examination for athletic trainers. In addition to the completing the courses required for the major, students must successfully complete the proficiencies associated with clinical education and clinical experience. Students will complete clinical experiences under the direct supervision of preceptors who are appropriately credentialed healthcare professionals.

Application for admission into the athletic training major can begin during or after a student’s sophomore year (approximately 32 credit hours). The program employs a secondary selective admissions process, thus, admittance into the program is on a competitive basis. Each year the AT Program admits (1) new cohort of students who begin their plan of study during the Fall semester. The number of students accepted into the AT program each year is based on the availability of faculty and preceptors.

Who is a “Qualified Transfer Student” (QTS)
A Qualified Transfer Student (QTS) is an individual who is not currently attending South Dakota State University, but would like and is able to complete an application process for the athletic training major that is comparable to the application process for students currently enrolled at SDSU. The ability to complete a parallel application process would enable the QTS to qualify for an interview and acceptance directly into the fall semester of the professional program. Students who are not able to complete the parallel application process will be asked to complete the full year application process while enrolled at South Dakota State University. The QTS is a student who has a strong interest in athletic training as their chosen profession, can complete the required coursework for the athletic training education major, and have access to a certified athletic trainer to assist them with observation hours and taping competency completion. These students preferably have some experience as an athletic training student at their current institution.

The basic selection criteria are as follows:
1. Interest and desire of student to become an athletic trainer.
2. Acceptance into South Dakota State University.
3. Sophomore status (>32 credits)
4. Successful completion (C or better) of courses equivalent to following which are provided at SDSU:
   - AT 164: Introduction to Athletic Training (2 credits)
   - BIOL 221: Anatomy (4 credits)
   - BIOL 325: Physiology (4 credits)
   - PE 354: Prevention and Care of Athletic Injuries (2 credits)
5. Letter of recommendation from sponsoring Athletic Trainer
6. Two letters of reference.
7. Cumulative GPA of 2.75 or better
8. Completion of Verification of observations. (See Below)
9. Verification of Technical Standards
10. Completed Health Assessment
11. Completed application process
12. Formal Interview

If accepted, the following criteria are necessary to continue in the athletic training major:
1. Normal progress towards completion of required courses and clinical experiences.
2. Maintain cumulative GPA of 2.75.
3. No grade of a D or F will be accepted in any athletic training assignment or course work.
4. Personal performance evaluation each semester.
Program Policy on Extracurricular Activities:
The clinical experience design for athletic training students (ATS) involves regular daily, evening and weekend commitments by the ATS. Should a student choose to continue in an extracurricular activity, it is the student’s responsibility to adjust their extra-curricular activity according to their clinical experience schedule. If a student plans on continuing with an extracurricular activity, including work, club sports, intramural sports, University sanctioned clubs, etc., the student should meet with the clinical coordinator to discuss this issue. Although extracurricular activities are not prohibited, they have to be redirected to avoid direct conflict with completion of the clinical experience.

Program Policy on Participation in Varsity Athletics:
This policy pertains to individuals who are interested in entering the professional phase of the SDSU AT Program and continue participation in varsity athletics. The faculty recognize that students involved in athletic participation may have a high interest in entering the profession of Athletic Training. However, the demands of participation in varsity athletics directly conflict with the clinical experience available to students entering the clinical portion of the major. In general, we ask that students who wish to continue playing a sport, delay their application into the program so that their first year in the SDSU AT Program is within their last year of eligibility. Therefore, they would complete their final year in the SDSU AT Program after their eligibility is completed. In essence, we are asking for one full year dedicated to the AT Program after their eligibility is finished. Students who wish to continue in Varsity Athletics should meet with the Program Director to discuss this issue early in the application process.

Timeline of the Application Process
The application process for the AT Program should take place over the entire school year (September through April). However, the last opportunity for a student to begin the application process would be in January (a QTS should have their pre-application and unofficial transcript to the clinical coordinator no later than January 31). Deadlines for specific activities and requirements are included below along with explanations of why and what is expected. Final application materials will be due by April 15. Successful candidates will be given an opportunity to sign up for an interview that will be completed before the end of the semester.

Goals of the Application Process
1. To actively assist students in their decision to become an athletic trainer and an athletic training student at South Dakota State University.
2. To allow the selection committee an opportunity to determine student desire and readiness to begin a professional program in athletic training.

Objectives of the Application Process
1. Increase the student’s awareness about the profession of Athletic Training.
2. Increase the student’s awareness about the Bachelor of Science degree in Athletic Training at SDSU.
3. Improve the student’s readiness for entry into the clinical experience.
4. Allow the student an opportunity to positively reflect on experiences and observations regarding their decision and desire to become an athletic training student.

Overall Student Outcomes of the Application Process
At the completion of this application process, the student should be able to:
1. Positively reflect on their experiences and observations regarding their decision and desire to become a student athletic trainer.
2. Describe characteristics of athletic trainers and the profession of athletic training and relate their reflections towards their own personal characteristics and desire to become an athletic trainer.
3. Describe the athletic training program as it exists at SDSU, what they will bring to the program as well as their expectations of what they hope to gain from the program.
4. Compare and Contrast the diversified practice settings for athletic trainers and discuss their career goals within the potential of practicing in these settings.
5. Demonstrate readiness to begin the academic and clinical experience of the AT program.
Requirements and Directed Observations

I. Initial Meeting and Visit to the South Dakota State University Campus

Students interested in applying to the SDSU AT Program are encouraged to arrange a meeting on campus to visit with faculty and students, tour facilities and campus and visit with individuals that may help you make your decision to attend SDSU. During this time, SDSU AT faculty can answer questions the student might have relative to the application and/or acceptance process. If the student is unable to select a time during the school year, this can become a part of the interview process.

If you wish to arrange a visit, please contact:

For Information about the University:
Admissions Office
Box 2201
Brookings, SD 57007-0649
1-800-952-3541 (toll free)
605-688-4121
E-Mail: SDSU_Admissions@sdstate.edu

For Information about the SDSU AT Program:
Mary Beth Zwart EdD, ATC
South Dakota State University
SIM 116 Box 2203
Brookings, SD 57007
605-688-5325
E-Mail: Marybeth.zwart@sdstate.edu
Website: www.sdstate.edu

* Students are encouraged to contact and work through the Admissions Office. Admissions can answer any and all questions about the University and if the student mentions that they are specifically looking at the Athletic Training Program, admissions can set up a faculty appointment visit.

II. Pre-Application Form and Unofficial Transcripts:

Purpose: To establish student interest, open correspondence and communication with the student and examine transferability of courses.

Outcome Measure: Pre-application form and unofficial transcript mailed to:

Mary Beth Zwart EdD, ATC
South Dakota State University
SIM 116 Box 2203
Brookings, South Dakota 57007

Due Date: This should be submitted as early in the academic year as possible, but no later than January 31.

III. Outside Observations

Purpose: Encourage students to observe or shadow a certified athletic trainer(s) in a practice setting outside of their current institution. In this effort, students should become aware of the variety of professional settings for the athletic trainer.

How: Students should accumulate a minimum of (10) hours over the year of observation time with a certified athletic trainer from one or more of the different practice settings. Certified athletic trainers may practice in a variety of settings including, but not limited to: High School/Teacher, College/University, Clinic/Hospital/Outreach, Industrial and Professional Sport.

Arranging Observations: Students are responsible for arranging their own observations of practicing certified athletic trainers. If a student is not sure of where to observe a certified athletic trainer, they can consult with SDSU staff for suggestions of whom might be available in their area.
**How to Observe:**

1. When arranging observation times, the student should identify himself or herself by name and as a prospective student for the athletic training major at South Dakota State University.
2. Arrange a time that is convenient with the athletic trainer.
3. Be on time or slightly early for the observation.
4. Dress appropriately, i.e. nice slacks, khaki pants, dress T-shirt, polo shirt, etc. – please remember what may be fashionable may not be professional.
5. As an observer, you are not expected to be an active participant, but you may have some questions, etc. for the athletic trainers. Please remember that it may be difficult for the athletic trainer to discuss specific cases because of confidentiality issues.
6. Be prepared to follow the rules and regulations as described by the host certified athletic trainer.

**Outcome Measures:**

1. Verification sheet with phone number and signature of certified athletic trainer observed.
2. One-page reflection which should include the following:
   A. Items you learned during your observations.
   B. Items you are still unsure about following your observations.
   C. Did this (these) observations enhance or change your idea of athletic training and how.

**Note:** You may be deciding among different medical and/or allied health professionals and may choose to shadow other professionals – HOWEVER – only hours with a certified athletic trainer will count towards these (10) hours of outside observation.

Due Date: April 15

**IV. Institution Observations**

**Purpose:** Allow students to become familiar with the daily duties of an athletic trainer and athletic training student.

**Minimum Guidelines**

(1) **Overall:** Students will be asked to spend a minimum of 25 hours observing the activities of a certified athletic trainer at their institution.

**What constitutes an observation?** An observation for a sport includes being present at pre-practice, through practice and post practice activities. Although not required, one of your observations may include observing at a competition.

**Arranging Observations:** Students should establish a supervising and sponsoring certified athletic trainer to observe. This individual will also be asked to submit a letter of recommendation for the student into the athletic training education program. Students are responsible for arranging their own observations.

**Outcome Measures:**

1. Students will maintain signatures on the verification form.
2. The student should produce a written reflection about the observation time. The reflection should be 1-3 pages in length. The reflection should include comments about:
   A. Items you learned during your observation.
   B. Items you are still unsure about following your observation.
   C. Did the observation block enhance or change your idea of athletic training? Why or Why not?
3. At the completion of the observations, the student will ask the supervising/sponsoring certified athletic training to write a letter of recommendation into the athletic training program.

Due Date: April 15
V. Psychomotor Competencies

Purpose: Athletic Trainers perform a large variety of psychomotor skills during their practice. Prospective students should be able to demonstrate a satisfactory level of proficiency for the selected skills of Athletic Training in order to:

A. Be prepared to begin clinical experience portion of the AT Program.

Guidelines: A proficiency packet is included with the application material. Students should seek the assistance of a certified athletic trainer who will teach them the necessary skills, allow the student to practice as well as provide feedback to the student. Taping techniques may vary, however, the student should be proficient in the taping skills described in the proficiency packet. The certified athletic trainer should sign on the bottom of each skill that the student can perform the skill as if to use it in the practical setting. Should the certified athletic trainer have any questions regarding what is expected of the student, they can contact the clinical coordinator at the address below.

Outcome Measures:

1. Proficiency packets will be submitted as a part of the final application.
2. Proficiencies should have the required certified athletic trainer signatures.

VI. Completion of the Application Process

Submission of Application Materials
The application process to the SDSU AT Program will be completed by the last week of classes at SDSU. Students will be asked to submit the following items to the clinical coordinator by April 15th.

1. Formal Application Form
2. Letter of Interest/Essay Format
3. Journal: Items should be computer generated:
   Reflection of Observation Hours
   • Outside Observations: (10) Hours/Signatures
   • Institution Observations: Verification Form/Signatures - One to three pages in length
4. Letters of Recommendation (3) – One letter from sponsoring certified athletic trainer and two from other choices (sent directly to the clinical coordinator from recommenders)
5. Proficiency packet containing wrapping and taping procedures (may be submitted at time of interviews)
6. Completed Health Assessment
7. Submission of an official transcript after grades for the current semester have been recorded for the spring semester.

** Note: Students should also have made formal application to South Dakota State University.**

VII. Interview

Granting of and signing up for an Interview
Qualified candidates will be granted an interview, which will take place during the last week of the SDSU spring semester. The interview consists of a verbal interview. Students will be able to sign-up for a time once all materials have been submitted.

Interview Committee
The interview committee generally will consist of the following people:

Host: 1-2 First Year Athletic Training Students

Verbal Interview:

(4) AT Faculty Members
(1) Preceptor
(1) Graduating Senior ATS’s
(1) HNS Faculty Advisor
Release of Grades
Since the QTS is not a student currently enrolled at SDSU, the student should send a copy of their final grade report to the designated faculty member upon receipt.

Confidentiality
We ask that interviewing candidates not discuss their interview (including questions, answers, skills, etc) with other candidates until all interviews are completed. Also, if any candidate has questions about their interview, selection or any part of the process, they should visit with the AT faculty rather than other members of the interview committee. Candidates will be asked to sign an Agreement of Confidentiality prior to the start of their interview.

VII. Notification

Prospective students will be notified of acceptance or non-acceptance to the Athletic Training Program approximately one – two weeks following the release of final grades and upon notification that the student has been accepted into South Dakota State University.

Contact Information:

PROGRAM DIRECTOR:
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Brookings, SD 57007
Phone: 605-688-5824
Email: Trevor.roiger@sdstate.edu

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