



NATABOC:
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certification update Online!

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[Home](#) > [Certification Update](#) > Summer 2000

contents

Message from the President

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New Opportunities for ATC's

How does one write a legacy statement that marks the final transition from the old Board of Certification structure to its newer form? Athletic Training Director David Regier is leaving the board after ten years. When he 'retires', five years becomes the Board's longest memory. The Board will miss his wise counsel and pragmatism. We will also miss his memory, which often provided an understanding and appreciation for past Board actions. An accreditation program well respected by other agencies has been created through past decisions, policies, philosophies and its restructuring. Dave, you were instrumental in the NATABOC's evolution.

McKenzie Institute USA

He has also helped the Board embrace the basic principle: For every action, there is an opposite action...or for every advantage there is a disadvantage. Therefore, what does the certificate holder want: (a) a certification process that ensures quality and integrity or (b) accommodation to the holder? Accommodating is not inferring that the BOC should not provide good service, because service also reflects quality. I personally want to thank Dave for helping me understand the concepts that the BOC and the membership organization are not one in the same.

Athletic Training Internships Draw to a Close

There is a reason that the NATABOC is separate from the membership association and is apolitical. One of the cornerstones of the NATABOC credentialing process is that it is reliable. The process, and the credential "ATC", is recognized by 40 states for licensure purposes and by organizations such as, colleges, professional sports, and sports medicine clinics. The "ATC" credential defines excellence in athletic training. Through its standards (policies and requirements), certification examination, and continuing education requirements, the NATABOC assures the consumers of NATABOC certified athletic trainers' services that all candidates and certificate holders have satisfied these standards, passed the certification examination and/or successfully met the continuing education requirements in order to be awarded and permitted to use the "ATC" credential. Failure by the NATABOC to adhere to its policies and standards would raise questions about our reliability as a certifying entity and diminish the credibility of the "ATC" credential.

Annual Report on 1999 Exam

Finally, Dave: "No director retires - they become recruiters of future leaders, task force members, or are discovered by the membership association." Thank you for your dedication and service, we look forward to working with you in the future.

Continuing Education Opportunities for ATCs

Sara Brown will assume Dave's board position. Another change that Dave helped enact is Sara's appointment in January. Previously board members were elected and immediately assumed their position. However, Sara was involved in our winter meeting, Strategic Plan, monthly conference calls, and all correspondence; the only privilege not provided was her ability to vote. This transition period will help her remove the committee hat and assume one of policy governance. Welcome Sara.

New Approved Home Study Programs**

Passing Point

Continuing Education Update

New Approved Providers of Continuing Education

2000-2001 Certification Exam Schedule

On a lighter note, NATABOC will be relocating in Omaha. The five staff in nine hundred square feet and a shared technology line has adequately served the certificate holder. Yet to continue BOC's improvements, and meet future needs, will require more space, a better location, more technology lines, and many other

NEW ATCs!

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facility modifications. And you, the holder of the NATABOC Certificate, will benefit.

 [Return to top](#)

New Opportunities for ATC's

A new opportunity could allow certified athletic trainers to gain a credential in orthopedic care, called the orthopedic technologist certification. Learn more about this new avenue.

The National Board for Certification of Orthopaedic Technologists (NBCOT) will now be offering an eligibility route to allow currently certified athletic trainers (ATC) an opportunity to sit for the Orthopaedic Technologists (OTC) certification examination. Under the provision, an ATC demonstrating current certification with six-month experience in the field of orthopaedics will be qualified to take the OTC exam offered by NBCOT for certification as an Orthopaedic Technologist.

Orthopaedic Technologists are trained health professionals who assist orthopaedic surgeons with preventing or correcting disorders of the locomotor structures of the body, including the skeleton, muscles, joints, ligaments, and cartilage. Working in a variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, and private practice offices, orthopaedic technologists play a necessary role in patient care for orthopaedic conditions and anomalies.

The duties of an orthopaedic technologist include applying and removing casts, splints, and other orthopaedic appliances, maintaining traction configurations and preparing patients for surgery. Certified Orthopaedic technologists (OTC) demonstrate competency along several performance domains to include Assessment, Practice Management, Traction, Surgery and Casting, Splinting and Orthopaedic Appliances.

The NBCOT examination is administered in February and August of each year nationally with a regular special administration offered during the annual symposium for the National Association of Orthopaedic Technologists (NAOT). An ATC submitting for the exam must complete the application to register including a copy of a current ATC certificate as well as a physician signature verifying the six months experience needed for eligibility.

Please contact the NBCOT office at (919)-572-6880 ext. 150 for further information or for a copy of the examination application.

NBCOT
P.O. Box 14148
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
919.572.6880

 [Return to top](#)

McKenzie Institute USA Now Offers Full Certification to Athletic Trainers

The McKenzie Institute USA has announced that licensed athletic trainers are now eligible to complete its Program of Certification. The move is in response to changes in the healthcare environment and an increased appeal from certified athletic trainers (ATCs) to become certified in the McKenzie Method of Assessment and Treatment of Spinal Disorders.

"Before now, the McKenzie Institute course guidelines allowed ATCs to take only specific courses," said Stacey A. Lyon, Executive Director of McKenzie Institute

USA. "However, with changes to our curriculum, a reported 45 percent of ATCs are now working in non-traditional settings, and heightened requirements for the profession from the NATABOC, it became apparent that full exposure to the certification process would be appropriate and promote maximum patient benefit."

The revised McKenzie Institute's guidelines stipulate that only licensed healthcare professionals with a minimum bachelor's degree in the direct field of study can complete the certification process. Because licensure of athletic trainers does not exist in every state, some ATCs may only be able to complete Parts A-C.

"This will apparently only affect athletic trainers in 12 states. Hopefully these states will move to license these professionals and every athletic trainer will eventually benefit from our training," added Lyon.

"Even completing the Program of Certification does not imply that the participant can employ the many facets of the method," Lyon also stated. "We expect all healthcare professionals who take our courses to be responsible in reviewing their state regulations and scope of practice to determine to what extent they can utilize certain aspects of the McKenzie Method."

How Does MDT apply to the athletic population?

There are certainly many approaches to the care of the athlete. But for back, neck and even extremities, certification in the McKenzie Method of Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy, or MDT will give ATCs the best framework to guide assessment and treatment.

Establishing a mechanical "cause and effect" is essential in effectively assuring and treating the athletic population with spinal disorders. Given the growing research background supporting the use of MDT, especially as an assessment process, it would seem appropriate to integrate it into a more effective sports medicine paradigm.

The McKenzie Method has a very intuitive "fit" with an athletic population who are typically in the mindset of self-treatment and training. Athletes are people that want treatment methods to be active and patient-centered. They are also responsive to such measures and typically prefer approaches that facilitate empowerment and self-treatment.

"MDT is a functional approach to sports injuries as it involves dynamic movements as part of the assessment process and implements patient-centered self-treatment strategies," said Allan Besselink, PT, Dip.MDT.

The assessment process quickly establishes responders and non-responders with classification guiding the treatment intervention. Understanding the effect of the mechanical demands of the athlete's sport activity is similar to understanding a worker's normal activities of daily living. The mechanical assessment process becomes a process of clinical reasoning based on sound mechanical principles.

"The mechanical assessment not only guides treatment - it provides the basis for effective sports injury prevention as well," added Besselink. "An athlete may be ultimately preventing their optimal sport technique and performance by how they present mechanically. The concepts used in establishing a mechanical diagnosis will ultimately aid in keeping the athlete health and empowered.



[Return to top](#)

Athletic Training Internships Draw to a Close

Time is running out for students who want to gain athletic training certification via an internship rather than through an accredited curriculum.

This change, approved four years ago, has spurred debate, discussion - and in some cases, misunderstanding, said Northeastern University's Chad Starkey, PhD, ATC, chair of the National Athletic Trainers' Association Education Council.

The NATA Education Council, along with the NATA Board of Certification and the Joint Review Committee on Athletic Training, have identified and clarified five misconceptions concerning education reform and the end of athletic training internships.

#1: Internships will not be affected until 2004.

Reality: Jan. 1, 2004, is simply the cutoff date for interns to apply for the certification exam - the internships actually will be affected much earlier, said Russ Cagle, PhD, ATC, president of the NATA Board of Certification.

"Athletic training experience hours must be complete at the time of application, and they must have been accumulated in a period of no less than two academic years from the date of application," Cagle said.
"Essentially this means that students cannot begin an internship unless able to accumulate 1500 hours two academic years prior to Jan. 1, 2004."

In practical terms, no students will enter internships after 2001.

#2: Colleges that do not have an accredited athletic training curriculum cannot have students working in the athletic training program.

Reality: "No one is saying that students cannot be involved," Starkey said. "The only difference is if that student wants to go on to become an ATC, he or she will have to enroll in an accredited program elsewhere at some point."

Several schools are working to create entry-level master's programs in athletic training, allowing students to earn an undergraduate degree from a non-accredited site and enter the athletic training profession via a master's program.

Schools without an accredited curriculum can affiliate with an accredited program, Starkey said.

"Northeastern University, for example, uses Harvard, MIT and nine other sites - both high school and college - to place our student athletic trainers for the clinical experiences," he said.

Institutions that cannot affiliate with an accredited program can employ student assistants in the athletic training room, through a work-study program or other system.

#3: Students can fulfill the same roles as full-time, certified staff.

Reality: "Student athletic trainers must work under the direct supervision of an ATC," said Pete Koehneke, MS, ATC, chair of the JRC-AT. "At no time is a student to take the place of qualified staff."

In the case of student assistants - or students working in the athletic training program who are not enrolled in an accredited curriculum - even more caution must be used.

And new guidelines outlining appropriate medical coverage in intercollegiate athletics further define the minimum qualifications of those involved with sports health care.

The guidelines state all personnel who might be associated with medical coverage must be certified to provide CPR, first aid and the prevention of disease transmission.

Sports with moderate risk should have a certified athletic trainer present or able to respond within four minutes, and sports with higher risk should have an ATC

physically present.

#4: The NATA education reform limits the number of schools that can gain CAAHEP accreditation.

Reality: Every school that meets the accreditation standards of the JRC-AT and CAAHEP will gain athletic training accreditation, Koehneke said.

In early 2000, 113 schools in 43 states had accredited programs, and approximately 80 accreditation applications were pending.

#5: Athletic training education reform has not really begun and can be stopped.

Reality: "The process began years ago and is almost complete," Starkey said. "These decisions were first researched beginning in 1994, were finalized in 1996 and implementation began immediately. Our education reform process is much broader and deeper than simply eliminating the internship route to certification. Every aspect of entry-level, graduate and continuing education has been affected.

"It's not going to stop," Starkey added. "The bottom line is, professional preparation for certified athletic trainers is the responsibility of the NATA, the NATABOC and the JRC-AT, and we will make this happen."

For more information, visit the NATA Education Council website at www.cewl.com or call the NATA at (800) 879-6282; or contact the NATABOC at (877) BOC-EXAM.

 [Return to top](#)

Passing Point: Who Sets It? Who Changes It? Why Have It?

"What must I score on the NATABOC examination in order to pass it?" This common question asked by certification candidates will probably continue to be a topic of discussion as long as there are candidates who take the examination. However, for the most part, the information passed on from candidate to candidate about how the passing point is established has been misstated. The NATABOC has heard these comments and questions from candidates over the years: "The NATABOC grades on the curve."; "Why does each test site have a different passing score?"; "I took the examination last year and failed with a score of 104. Why is the passing point higher this year?"; and (our favorite) "Why does the certification exam even have a passing point?" To set the record straight, the following is an explanation of the NATABOC's passing point, excerpted from the NATABOC Credentialing Brochure.

The passing point used by the NATA Board of Certification in its certification examinations is a criterion-referenced approach called the Angoff Modified Technique. This technique is currently considered by testing professionals to be one of the most defensible criterion-references methods available for setting passing points. This method relies on the pooled judgements of numerous experts in the field being tested.

For example, in the Angoff approach, a group of certified athletic trainers (judges) is asked to judge each item on the examination. The criterion used to judge each item is, "What is the probability that a minimally acceptable candidate will answer this item correctly?" This question prompts the judges to consider a group of minimally acceptable candidates and what proportion of that group will answer each item correctly.

The average of the proportions is multiplied by the total number questions on the test. The result then represents the "minimally acceptable" score. The final passing point for the examination is based on this pooled judgement and the

calculation of the standard error of the mean. Item analyses for each question and reliability indexes are also calculated for each section of the examination. Since the NATABOC certification examination is revised annually, with items being replaced or revised, the content and difficulty level of the examination changes. These changes affect the passing point. As a result, the passing point for each new form of the examination must be adjusted.

So, does the NATABOC grade on a curve? No. Each candidate taking the same version of the examination is graded on the same scale and passing point. Is there a different passing point for each test site? No. The passing point is fixed for each version of the examination. The test location has nothing to do with how the passing point is assigned. Does the passing point change from year to year? It depends--Remember each version of the examination is judged by a group of experts whose pooled judgements set the passing point. Therefore, with each new version of the exam the pooled judgements may differ due to new questions being added or old questions being deleted. It is not very likely; then, that two groups of content-area experts will judge two different examinations in exactly the same way. Thus, the passing points will likely be different, depending on the difficulty of the exams.

And finally, why does the NATABOC even have a passing point? Quite simply, it is to protect the public. For instance, everyone has been to an amusement park and stood on tiptoes in front of a sign that reads, "You have to be this tall to ride." This sign is there to protect the public?to prevent those who don't meet a certain height requirement from falling out of the roller coaster as it careens down the tracks. The NATABOC passing point performs a similar duty; it prevents candidates who don't quite measure up to standards that are designed to protect the public from practicing in the athletic training field. Thus, the passing point distinguishes between the competent and the incompetent athletic trainer.



[Return to top](#)

Continuing Education Update

By Chris Dunn, ATC

ATTENTION: All ATCs planning on claiming CEU credit for post-certification college or university coursework!

According to the 2000-2002 NATABOC Continuing Education Guidelines, ATCs can utilize coursework completed at accredited colleges or universities for CEU credit.

What is an "accredited" college or university in this situation? In this situation, NATABOC is not referring to athletic training programs accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), but rather to the college or university itself being accredited by a nationally recognized association.

How do you know if a nationally recognized association accredits your college or university? You need to contact the registrar's office of your college or university. Specifically ask what association accredits the school. A nationally recognized association accredits the school if the answer is one of the following:

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

If my school is accredited, how do I determine which courses can be used

for CEU credit? Any course that falls within one of the six performance domains of athletic training, as defined by the NATABOC Role Delineation Study, 4th edition (RDS), may be used for CEU credit. It is recommended that any ATC claiming CEUs in Category C obtain a personal copy of the RDS. Specifically locating the site in the RDS where the course content falls eliminates any doubts as to the course's applicability. The RDS may be purchased online at www.nataboc.org or by calling NATABOC toll-free at 1-877-BOC-EXAM (1-877-262-3926).

How do I know how many CEUs my course is worth? 10 CEUs are awarded for each credit hour earned in any applicable course taken at any accredited college or university.

What documentation should I keep to verify completion of my coursework? ATCs completing post-certification college or university coursework are required to keep a copy of their official transcript from the accredited institution in their continuing education file folder.

Need CEUS?

New for the 2000-2002 NATABOC continuing education reporting term...
You are now able to obtain up to 75 CEUs via home study programming!

Why Home Study?

- *Convenience*
Home study programs can be completed at your convenience. Programs can be completed while "on the road," at home, or at the office.
- *Quality*
Each newly approved home study program has successfully passed the NATABOC peer-review process.
- *Topic Variety*
You can select home study topics pertinent to your own needs.
- *Assessment*
Each approved home study program includes an assessment. You will be able to verify your new knowledge through the program assessments.

CEU Reporting

Home study CEUs are claimed in Category A, just like conferences and seminars.

Program Availability

The list of over 270 NATABOC approved home study programs is available online at [Home Studies](#). The NATABOC Department of Professional Development is available to answer any questions toll-free at 1-877-BOC-EXAM (1-877-262-3926) or via e-mail to the [Professional Development Manager](#).

Attention: All International ATCs!

To access the most current continuing education information pertaining to international ATCs, visit the NATABOC website at [International ATCs](#). For additional information, international ATCs can contact NATABOC at 1-877-BOC-EXAM (1-877-262-3926), at (402) 559-0091, or via e-mail to the [Professional Development Manager](#)

State Licensure Contacts Available Online

There are currently 41 states that require licensure, registration or certification in order to practice athletic training. In order to obtain an application for state licensure, registration or certification, you need to contact your state regulatory agency. To access the most current contact information for the various state

regulatory agencies, access the NATABOC website at [State Licensure Contact Information](#). If you have any additional questions, please contact the NATABOC Department of Professional Development at 1-877-BOC-EXAM (1-877-262-3926) or via e-mail to the [Professional Development Manager](#).

 [Return to top](#)

Attention: Newly Certified Athletic Trainers

You are now eligible to participate in our Examiner Training Program. Upon successful completion of the program, your name will be added to our Qualified Examiner database and you will be eligible to assist with the practical examination by serving as an examiner or model.

Why would I want to become a qualified examiner?

- Becoming involved in the examination process is a great way to support the profession of athletic training.
- NATABOC has a growing need for examiner and models due to the growing pool of certification candidates. Our pool of qualified examiners will not only help determine exam sites, but it will allow for the greatest number of candidates to be tested.
- Each time you assist with the examination you earn 5 CEUs. You will also receive a per diem and mileage reimbursement (\$.30 per mile, maximum 300 miles round trip).

 [Return to top](#)
