

**BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE**
(formerly CARE Conference)
Compliance and Regulatory Education:
Best Practices for Athletic Trainer Regulation



BOC Orthopedic Specialty Certification

Jason Graham and David Chen

boc BOARD OF CERTIFICATION
FOR THE ATHLETIC TRAINER

1

Objectives for the session

By the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Describe the purpose of the BOC Board Certified Specialist in Orthopedics (BCS-O®) credential within the athletic training profession.
- Evaluate the potential significance, benefits and clinical implications of earning the BCS-O® credential.
- Identify the importance of a practice analysis for credentialing organizations, specifically, knowledge of the Orthopedic Practice Analysis.
- Identify the eligibility criteria for the BCS-O® certification.

2 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026 August 20, 2026 **boc**

ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

2

**BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE**

Specialty Certification

3 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026 August 20, 2026 **boc**

3

What is Specialty Certification?

- The primary purpose of specialization in any health care profession is to **improve the quality of care** provided to patients, to **enhance clinical outcomes**, and ultimately, to **improve the patient's health related quality of life**.
- Specialties within a discipline arise in response to the development of **new knowledge and skills in a finite area of practice** that can positively affect clinical outcomes and patient quality of life.
- Specialization in a health care field requires significant clinical experience in a prescribed content area, a sustained training effort and culminates in a valid credential denoting clinical expertise.

BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

August 20, 2026

boc

4

ATC®

- Entry into the AT profession
- Interdisciplinary health care professional
- Generalist practice
- Domains of Practice
 - Risk, Reduction, Wellness and Health Literacy
 - Assessment, Evaluation and Diagnosis
 - Critical Incident Management
 - Therapeutic Intervention
 - Health Administration and Professional Responsibility

BCS-O®

- Post-professional education and training in specialty area of orthopedics
- Concentrated and advanced knowledge/skills in specific area of practice
- Advanced clinical decision-making
- Domains of Practice
 - Medical Knowledge
 - Procedural Knowledge
 - Professional Practice

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

August 20, 2026

boc

5

Latest Updates on Specialty Certification

75
Credential holders

- BOC received NCCA accreditation for BCS-O® program
- Specialty Council was formed
- Updated eligibility requirements
- BCS-O® credential mark was trademarked

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

August 20, 2026

boc

6

Value of BCS-O®

- Enhance quality of patient care
- Optimize clinical outcomes
- Increase cost-effectiveness
- Provide value-based care
- Improve orthopedic patients' quality of life
- Flexible expertise
- Increased efficiency
- Leadership and impact as a patient care/team liaison

BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE

ORTHOPEDIC
CREDENTIAL
COMPARISON MATRIX

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

August 19, 2026

boc

7

Professional Growth

Additional scope of practice privileges

Promotion

Increased salary

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

August 20, 2026

boc

8

Practice Analysis

BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

August 20, 2026

boc

9

What is a Practice Analysis?

- A systematic and empirical study used to evaluate the work performed in a profession, along with the knowledge and skills needed to perform the role competently.
- The practice analysis establishes a link between the content of the job and the content of the assessment
- The practice analysis study results in:
 - Test blueprint
 - Test specifications

10 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026
ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

August 20, 2026



10

Why is a Practice Analysis Needed?



Legal defensibility



Required by
accreditation bodies
and professional testing
standards



Demonstrates validity
evidence to support the
content of the exam

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026



11

Validity

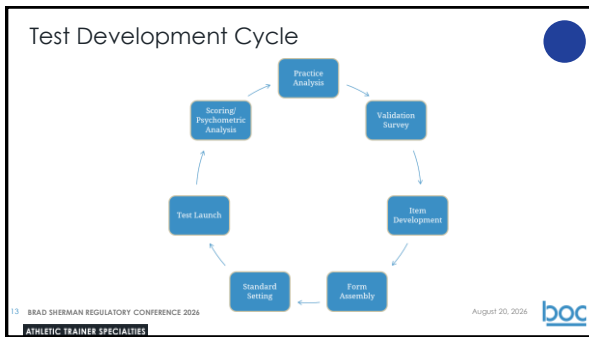
- The degree to which evidence supports the use and interpretation of test scores
 - Validity is a matter of degree
 - Validation involves gathering and evaluating evidence
 - Validation is an ongoing endeavor
- The practice analysis is the first step in the exam development cycle. But it is the most important because all other activities tie back to it.

12 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026
ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

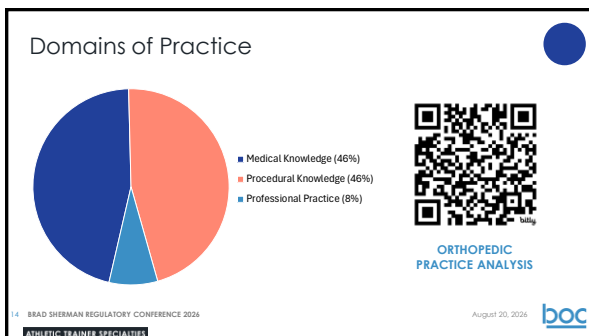
August 20, 2026



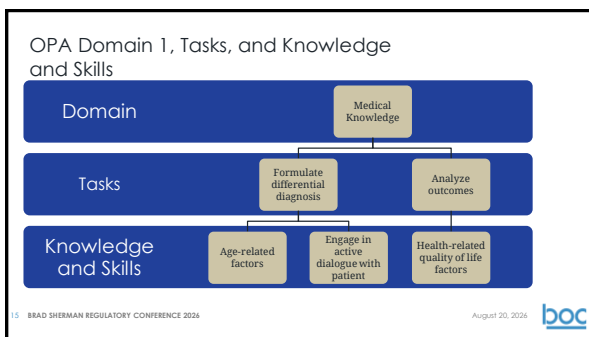
12



13



14



15

Orthopedic Practice Analysis Timeline

2017	2020	2021	2024	2026	2027
Specialty Council formed	- May – Orthopedic Practice Analysis 1 (OPA1) - Summer – validation survey administered	- Practice Analysis Report published - Item development - Form Assembly - Standard Setting - Exam launch	Granted NCCA accreditation	- July – Orthopedic Practice Analysis 2 (OPA2) - Fall – validation survey to be administered	- Practice Analysis report published - Item development - Form Assembly - Standard Setting - Exam launch

16 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

August 20, 2026



16

Orthopedic Specialty Exam

Eligibility and Renewal

BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE

17 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

August 20, 2026



17

Eligibility Requirements

- Path 1
 - Completion of a CAATE-accredited residency in orthopedics
- Path 2
 - At least 260 hours of professional development in orthopedics and three years of practice experience after BOC ATC® certification
 - Practice experience to include at least 3000 hours in orthopedic patient care
 - 1200 hours in a mentored relationship
 - 1000 hours in year preceding exam application

18 BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026

August 20, 2026



ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

18

Orthopedic Specialty Exam

- Aligned with the “BOC Orthopedic Practice Analysis”
- Developed by SMEs
- Exams – February and September each year
- Testing completed either at a testing center or by Live-Remote Proctor



19
BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026
ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

August 20, 2026


19

Specialty Certification Renewal

- Maintain ATC® credential
- Annual BCS-O® renewal fee
- At least 10 CEUs to maintain ATC® credential must fall in OPA



20
BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE 2026
ATHLETIC TRAINER SPECIALTIES

August 20, 2026


20

BRAD SHERMAN REGULATORY CONFERENCE

(formerly CARE Conference)
Compliance and Regulatory Education:
Best Practices for Athletic Trainer Regulation



Specialty@bocatc.org



Information on
Orthopedic Specialty



21
