

ATHLETIC TRAINING RESOURCES

- When considering athletic training programs, it is important to note that current requirements necessary for obtaining a license to work as an athletic trainer are in the process of changing. Be sure to check current resources to make sure that you are meeting the requirements that you will need for the time you sit for your licensing exams, not the requirements currently in place. A good place to begin with is the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education ([CAATE](#)).
- Soon you will have to receive a Master's Degree in Athletic Training to qualify to sit for the [Board of Certification \(BOC\) Exam](#). Prior to this change, a degree in exercise science, strength and conditioning or others disciplines were acceptable to sit for the exam, but the national governing body is currently altering the requirements which are expected to be enforced Fall 2022. If you have any doubt whether a prospective program may, or may not, meet the requirements, check with the program you are interested in or with the CAATE.
- You must thoroughly read the requirements that each school has for admission including **required hours or experiences, GRE requirement, application process, etc.** The National Athletic Training Association ([NATA](#)) has a list of accredited schools you may find helpful.
- The number of shadowing hours required varies from school to school, but most will only accept hours supervised by a licensed practitioner.
- Most programs require applicants to take the **GRE**, and required scores vary from school to school. Check with each program's requirements on minimum scores and if the test is required for admission.
- Most schools require applications to be submitted through the **Athletic Training Centralized Application Service, or ATCAS**. You can make your account and seek more information [here](#). However, **not all programs use ATCAS**. Check the admission procedures for each school to ensure you apply in the correct location.

PREREQUISITE COURSES

*Most common **prerequisite courses**:* *

Human Anatomy and Physiology I – BIOL 2160

Human Anatomy and Physiology II – BIOL 2170

Principles of Biology I & II – BIOL 1107/L & 1108/L

Principles of Chemistry I & II – CHEM 1211/L & 1212/L

Medical Terminology – KINS 2331

Nutrition – KINS 2323

Structural Kinesiology – KINS 3103

Physiology of Exercise – KINS 3203

Principles of Physics – PHYS 2211

Intro to General Psychology – PSYC 1101

*Other **highly suggested courses** are:*

Genetics – BIOL 2100

Cellular and Molecular Physiology – BIOL 3200

Histology – BIOL 4140

Microbiology – BIOL 4180

Intro. to Exercise Biochemistry – KINS 2200

Exercise & Sports Nutrition – KINS 3200

Biomechanics – KINS 3223

Exercise Prescription – KINS 4203

Clinical Exercise Physiology – KINS 4233

Abnormal Psychology – PSYC 3200

Intro to Human Development – PSYC 2103

Further, required prerequisites can vary from program to program. Be sure to check with each school of interest for their required courses.

** The Sports Medicine Concentration within the B.S. Exercise Science at GCSU will allow students to successfully attain all of the aforementioned prerequisites for entry into the MSAT at GCSU.*

*** This is not a complete list of GCSU courses. Talk with your academic advisor before choosing courses!*

GRE PREPARATION

Most athletic training programs require perspective students to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). It is important that you thoroughly read each school's website to ensure that you have followed their procedure and that you meet their specific qualifications. The GRE is made up of **3 sections including: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing**. You can register for the GRE [here](#). It is highly suggested that you spend time prior to your test date familiarizing yourself with the types of questions in each section, which you can do through taking a course with a company like Kaplan or Princeton Review, or you can buy study books online that contain practice tests and examples. Applications should be submitted during the summer between junior and senior year, so be sure to take the test in enough time to make the deadlines.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Personal statements used to apply to programs being submitted through ATCAS should be a general overview as to why you chose this profession. When applying through a common application service, they will forward your information to the schools you select including your general personal statement. Pay attention to the character count allotted for the essay, and remember that this could take spaces into account! Follow the instructions listed carefully to ensure that you follow all of the parameters set. You should start writing your personal statement early so that you can get adequate feedback prior to submitting your application. **Some programs will require an additional supplemental materials**, and they could cost an extra fee. It is important to read each program's admission requirements and procedures so that you are prepared to submit the needed materials in a timely fashion.

OBTAINING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Developing meaningful relationships with faculty is vital when seeking letters of recommendation. Begin thinking about faculty who you have or will have taken several classes with, have similar research interests with, or that you feel a connection to, so that you can begin building those relationships from day 1. Remember that a person's title is not near as important as how well they know you as a student and as a person. When requesting letters of recommendation, quality highly outweighs quantity. Most programs are seeking **1-4 letters from licensed athletic trainers, science faculty, advisors, or other professionals that can adequately speak on your behalf**. However, certain schools may only accept a certain number or have specifications on letter writers, so **it is vital to check the website of each program you are applying to**. In addition to faculty, **you should seek trainers, coaches, and other industry professionals with whom you have worked**. This could include a supervisor for an internship or volunteer experience.

When asking for letters, remember to be gracious and *ask* for the letter. "Would you be willing to," is usually a good way to start the conversation rather than demanding that they write you a letter. Faculty and professionals expect you to ask, and they will most likely agree as long as they feel comfortable speaking on your behalf. Be sure to give the faculty member, licensed professional, or whomever you plan to ask plenty of notice, generally a month is suggested. Providing a resume, CV, personal statement, or some other document will show that you are serious about obtaining a letter and give the faculty member some reference as to what you want them to talk about. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO THANK YOUR REFERENCES!

INTERVIEWING PREPARATION

When preparing for professional school interviews, a lot of the same rules apply as with most job interviews. Remember to dress according to interview etiquette and conduct yourself in a professional manner. On Handshake, you can view the Career Center's "Dress for Success" handouts by clicking on the *Resources* tab. In addition, you want to be sure that you practice ahead of time. "Why athletic training?" or "Why our program?" are common types of questions that you want to be sure to prepare for. **Not all programs require interviews and the process varies from school to school**, so read the program's webpage thoroughly.

Also, you will want to prepare your own questions to ask. Much like job interviews, you are interviewing the school and program just like they are interviewing you. Finding a good fit is important for you to thrive in a program. Once the interview is over, it is always a good idea to write thank you notes. These can be via email or hand written. Making it to the interview stage is a huge feat, so you want to make sure that you make the best impression!

MAJORING IN SOMETHING OTHER THAN SCIENCE/EXERCISE SCIENCE?

You do not need to have a degree in a science discipline to be an athletic trainer! This is a misconception that many have about the majority of health professions. Professional programs are seeking out students that will bring a different perspective to their program and a major other than a STEM field or exercise science could help you stand out. However, you must consider the required prerequisites that will need to be worked into the curriculum of your chosen major. Also, consider seeking out additional challenging exercise science, science and/or industry related courses as electives to make yourself a well-rounded candidate. But be sure to consult with your academic advisor before choosing courses!

TIMELINE

<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Meet with a pre-professional advisor to start building your timeline and to explore options and opportunities available to you.</p>	<p>Use the Learning Center for Supplemental Instruction to maintain a strong GPA from day 1 <i>especially in science/exercise science courses!</i></p>	<p>Get involved with a student group that will both strengthen your application and apply to your interests.</p>	<p>Explore professional healthcare careers using Focus2 and Occupational Outlook Handbook, as well as attending the Graduate & Professional School Fair.</p>
<p>Summer 1</p>	<p><i>*Work with the Career Center to start building your resume or CV to prepare your applications for summer experiences*</i> Volunteer at training facilities or settings with inpatient OR outpatient therapy and keep a journal about your experiences. Other summer experiences could include: research with a faculty member, summer enrichment programs, participate on campus with community science education or sports programs for youth, or apply at summer camps for children or people with special needs.</p>			
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Assess academic standing and plans for completing prerequisite courses with Academic Advisor.</p>	<p>Identify and connect with faculty for mentorship, research opportunities, and professional advice. Also seek out professional mentors and potential internship opportunities.</p>	<p>Seek out campus leadership opportunities and community involvement. Be strategic in choosing settings that could make you a competitive candidate.</p>	<p>Continue gaining experience in your field as mentioned above. Attend the Graduate & Professional School Fair to continue growing your network and knowledge of programs available.</p>
<p>Summer 2</p>	<p><i>*Work with a pre-professional advisor to begin looking at schools/programs of interest and choose several*</i> Start familiarizing yourself with what each program of interest requires. Consider the amount of experiential hours required, GRE requirements, etc. Continue to gain meaningful shadowing and volunteer hours. Create a budget that will include GRE, test preparation, and application fees for each program of interest including secondary application fees.</p>			
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Begin preparing for the GRE by buying study materials or registering for a course with companies such as Princeton Review or Kaplan. Choose test date and be registered by second semester.</p>	<p>Consider what faculty, advisors, and mentors could potentially write your letters of recommendation and consult with them so that you can include their names on your ATCAS application. Speak with letter writers in person.</p>	<p>Keep regular contact with your pre-professional advisor to fine tune your application strategy, schools of interest, personal statement, and create your ATCAS Account.</p>	<p>Discuss alternatives with your pre-professional advisor in case of needed gap year or change in career plans. Attend the Graduate & Professional School Fair to explore your options.</p>
<p>Summer 3</p>	<p>By the beginning of summer 3, you should have your final GRE score and be ready to start applying. Complete and submit your ATCAS application and any secondary application requirements. Continue involvement, research, and/or meaningful volunteering, shadowing, or internships that can be added to your experiences when applying.</p>			
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>Prepare with the Career Center for interviews.</p>	<p>If not done already, complete any secondary applications/essays requested.</p>	<p>Evaluate acceptance offers and talk with your pre-professional advisor for guidance.</p>	<p>Consider if a gap year would be in your best interest to acquire the needed shadowing or volunteer hours, practical experiences, or prerequisites.</p>