



## Grant Information Summary:

# Development of Standards and Criteria for the Selection, Training, and Evaluation of Athletic Training Approved Clinical Instructors

### Practical Significance Statement

**The standards/criteria developed in this research project for the selection, training, and evaluation of ACIs were: The accepted standards include the following: legal and ethical behavior, communication skills, interpersonal relationships, instructional skills, supervisory and administrative skills, evaluation of performance, and clinical skills and knowledge. They could be used to foster and augment quality clinical education and could be helpful in forming and shaping an impression not only about a particular ACI, but also about the requirements of clinical education in general. Program Directors and CIEs should be guided by these standards to select, trained, and evaluate their ACIs in order to help ensure that optimal clinical education is taking place. As a result, the clinical component of athletic training education can be more carefully designed to prepare students to be sensitive and proficient practitioners for physically active individuals.**

### Study Background

Clinical education is a critical component of allied health education programs, and athletic training is no exception. Athletic training clinical education involves the supervised acquisition, practice, and evaluation of the Entry-Level Athletic Training Clinical Proficiencies. The athletic training clinical education standards developed and regulated by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) reflect a qualitative orientation

to clinical education. These standards require a more standardized approach to clinical education content and increased accountability in the teaching and documenting of clinical proficiencies. These standards place more clinical teaching and evaluation responsibilities on BOC certified athletic trainers who may not have had a pedagogical focus in their professional preparation. Similar to the field of athletic training, it is not uncommon to find that other allied health clinical instructors,

in general, have not had formal preparation in education and have been selected because of their professional aptitudes rather than their teaching and student evaluation skills. While clinical expertise as an athletic trainer is important, it does not guarantee expertise as a clinical instructor. An increasing need has been identified within the profession of athletic training to provide training and development for clinical instructors. In order to bring credence and validity to the educational practices of athletic training clinical

instructors, it is imperative that these expectations be established and investigated by members of the profession rather than simply borrowing and adapting practices from other allied health care professions. The central problem that addressed in this research is that the athletic training profession does not have research-based and peer-reviewed clinical instructor standards and criteria on which to center the selection, training, and evaluation of ACIs who supervise students during their clinical education.

## Objective

To develop standards and associated criteria for the selection, training, and evaluation of athletic training Approved Clinical Instructors (ACIs).

## Design And Setting

A previously developed set of 7 physical therapy clinical instructor standards/criteria, and 2 additional standards/criteria developed through a review of the literature, were systematically adapted, judged and revised through a Delphi technique.

## Subjects

Athletic training education experts who were currently employed as program directors for an entry-level CAAHEP-accredited Athletic Training Educational Program and had the following: a doctoral degree, a minimum of five years of experience supervising athletic training students, and had familiarity/experience with clinical instruction in various athletic training clinical education settings.

## Measurements

Panelists' critiques and ratings were used to make sequential revisions in a series of three Delphi rounds. Standards were rated as to whether they were clear, necessary, and appropriate. Criteria for the associated standard were rated as to whether they were useful, helpful, clear, specific, and consistent.

## Results

A final set of 7 standards and 50 associated criteria to measure these standards were developed. The accepted standards include the following: legal and ethical behavior, communication skills, interpersonal relationships, instructional skills, supervisory and administrative skills, evaluation of performance, and clinical skills and knowledge.

## Conclusions

The 7 standards and associated criteria developed in this research project could be used not only for selecting, training, and evaluating an ACI, but also for developing an understanding of the requirements of clinical education in general. Further research should include validating these standards/criteria among athletic training ACIs representing different types of clinical settings. In an associated follow-up validation study, the Weidner and Henning standards were considered to be important and applicable across a variety of athletic training clinical education settings. Legal and ethical behavior was considered the most crucial standard.

## Principal Investigator:



**Thomas G. Weidner,  
PhD, ATC, LAT**

Dr. Thomas G. Weidner received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Health Education from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Following one year as the men's assistant athletic trainer as SIU (1984-1985), he was the Director of the Athletic Training Education Program at California State University at Northridge (1985-1991). He joined the athletic training faculty at Ball State University in 1991 and currently serves as the Program Director. Additionally, he serves as the Director of the Athletic Training Education & Research Laboratory. He has published numerous articles and made numerous regional/ national/international presentations regarding athletic training education, upper respiratory illness, and his primary research area of athletic training clinical education. Dr. Weidner has received national awards and recognition as an athletic training educator and researcher.

## Publication & Presentation List

Weidner, T.G. and Henning, J.M.. Approved clinical instructor standards and criteria are important and applicable to certified athletic trainers in different clinical education settings. *Journal of Athletic Training*. (2005);40, 326-332.

Weidner, T.G. and Henning, J. Development of Standards and Criteria for the Training, Selection, and Evaluation of Athletic Training Approved Clinical Instructors. *Journal of Athletic Training*. 2004; 38(4), 335-343.

Weidner, T.G. & Henning, J.M. Development and Validation of Standards and Criteria for the Selection, Training, and Evaluation of Athletic Training Approved Clinical Instructors. 2005. NATA Professional Educator's Conference, Montgomery, TX

Weidner, T. G. & Henning, J.M. Approved Clinical Instructor Standards are Important and Applicable to Certified Athletic Trainers in Different Clinical Education Settings. 2005 NATA Annual Meeting & Clinical Symposium, Indianapolis, IN.

Weidner, T.G. and Henning, J. Development of Standards and Criteria for the Selection, Training, and Evaluation of Athletic Training Approved Clinical Instructors. 2004. NATA Annual Meeting & Clinical Symposium, Baltimore, MD.

**Printing by:** Ellington Printery, Ellington, CT

**Funded by NFL Charities**



2952 Stemmons • Dallas, TX 75247  
214-637-6282

**Supporting and advancing the  
Athletic Training profession through  
research and education.**