

**Request for Authorization to Establish a  
Master of Science in Athletic Training  
(M.S., CIP 51.0913) at  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte**

**I. Program Highlights**

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- The MS Athletic Training program will develop highly qualified, multi-skilled health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to provide preventative services, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions.
- Coursework in the program will include clinical practicum rotations and research.
- This is an on-campus program.
- This degree program requires a minimum of 59 SCH of didactic and clinical education. All students will participate in clinical rotations, as required by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE).
- 20 full-time students are projected in the first year and 20 full-time students are projected by the fourth year.
- One additional tenure-track faculty member will be needed to teach the additional new seven courses being offered by the program. A Faculty Program Coordinator will also be needed.
- No differential tuition supplements or program-specific fees are requested.
- Current library holdings are adequate to initially support the MSAT program's instructional and research needs.
- No new facilities and equipment will be needed.

**II. BOG Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)**

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1. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Three institutions in North Carolina currently offer the MS in Athletic Training (University of North Carolina at Greensboro, High Point University, and Lenoir-Rhyne University).

There are five UNC institutions (Appalachian State University, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, University of North Carolina Wilmington, and Western Carolina University) requesting to plan an on-campus Athletic Training Professional Master's Program. They are positioned to meet the needs and demands of their respective regions, the state of North Carolina, and surrounding states, without unnecessary duplication. The requests extend from a change in Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) policies that require students to graduate from a Master's program to be eligible to sit for the Board of Certification (BoC) Exam. Successful completion of the BoC is required for Athletic Trainer Certification, which makes graduates eligible for licensure by the North Carolina Board of Athletic Trainer Examiners.

2. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The current B.S. in athletic training program is engaged in community partnerships throughout the Charlotte region, which supports the University's and College's missions to be a community-engaged University. The B.S. in athletic training currently has students in clinical practicum rotations at 19 different sites, including local universities/colleges, high schools (both rural and urban), and clinical facilities. We would

## APPENDIX K

continue to maintain and increase these clinical practicum sites when we transition from a BSAT degree to an MSAT degree.

3. **Demand (local, regional, state).** Societal demand for Athletic Trainers is substantial and growing. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 7.8 million student-athletes participated in sports. Athletic Trainers are identified in state laws as key healthcare providers in the recognition, evaluation, and treatment of injuries, including concussions, which occur during sports participation. Having appropriate medical coverage in the middle school and high school setting is essential to prevent injuries and sudden death among student-athletes. A recent study on athletic training availability in North Carolina public high schools found that only 62 percent of the 394 public high schools have full-time Athletic Trainers. Some North Carolina counties currently have no Athletic Trainers serving their high schools. As the state works to expand athletic training services to all high schools, graduates from Athletic Training Professional Master's programs will be prepared to fill those positions.
4. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** Twenty-one institutions offer Athletic Training Professional Programs in North Carolina; three programs offer a Master's degree and eighteen programs offer a Bachelor's degree. Athletic Training Program Directors were contacted and asked to provide these data from their respective CAATE Annual Report; these data provided were self-reported. Five programs did not provide data. Overall, the total number of Athletic Training Professional Programs in North Carolina and the United States is expected to decrease as a result of the CAATE decision to require a Master's degree. Furthermore, each UNC Institution planning for the degree change is proposing to offer distinct areas of interest in their Athletic Training Professional Master's Programs. Therefore, the establishment of these programs would not create unnecessary duplication.
5. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Labor market information indicates strong projections for athletic training employment. The NC Works data projects a 1.8 percent annual percentage growth between 2012 and 2022. The Bureau of Labor and Statistics projects a 21 percent growth between 2014 and 2024. A 2011 article in the New York Times listed Athletic Trainers as one of the top ten fastest growing occupations, projecting 6,000 new jobs by 2018. In 2014, Business Insider identified Athletic Training as number five on their list of *The 20 College Majors That Lead To The Most Satisfying Careers*.
6. **Faculty Quality and Number.** One additional tenure-track faculty member will be needed to teach the additional new seven courses being offered by the program. A Faculty Program Coordinator will also be needed.
7. **Availability of Campus Resources (library, space, etc.).** Current library holdings are adequate to initially support the MSAT program's instructional and research needs. Current funds for Kinesiology library purchases may be used to purchase books, eBooks, and other monographs relevant to the program. New journal subscriptions may be purchased after a multi-departmental review of current subscriptions. Gaps in the collection can be managed through interlibrary loan until the core collection is complete. The transition to the MSAT degree will be supported by the newly completed Belk Gymnasium renovations. The program already has its own dedicated classroom and laboratory space and thus should not require any additional space during the next decade.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** Related lower-level programs include Exercise Science and Public Health. However, students can enter the MSAT with any bachelor's degree. We do not require students to have a specific degree, as long as they meet the pre-requisite course requirements.
9. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** No differential tuition supplements or program-specific fees are requested.
10. **Expected Quality.** Program success will include evaluations of student learning outcomes. In addition, measurement of program outcomes will include enrollments, three-year aggregate pass rate on Board of Certification (BoC) exam, graduation rate, programmatic attrition, and surveys of graduates and employers.
11. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Although accreditation requirements can create challenges that limit the level of practical partnerships, the five universities identified in this document (Appalachian State University, UNC Charlotte, UNC Pembroke, UNC Wilmington, and Western Carolina University) have discussed opportunities for collaboration. UNC Online course exchange could be a possible avenue for online courses such as pharmacology, organization and administration, psychosocial issues and behavioral health, and nutritional concepts. Guest lecturing across programs in our respective areas of expertise is another low-cost opportunity. Course sequencing could be developed appropriate to the respective institutions and faculty with content expertise could be scheduled to appear via distance learning technologies.
12. **Other Considerations.** None.

### III. Summary of Review Processes

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**Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal was reviewed by the UNC Charlotte faculty, department and university curriculum committees, the provost, and chancellor. Approval was obtained at all levels.

**UNC General Administration Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, UNC Charlotte provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support its statements. Reviewers evaluated the requests and did not require further responses.

### IV. Recommendation

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It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve UNC Charlotte's request to establish a Master's of Science (M.S.) in Athletic Training degree program (CIP 51.0913) to enroll students starting Summer 2019.