Doctor of Athletic Training

University of Idaho

What is a Doctor of Athletic Training?

A Doctor of Athletic Training (DAT) is a healthcare professional who is certified as an athletic trainer by the Board of Certification, Inc. and has completed advanced coursework, research and a dissertation in the discipline of athletic training. The curriculum includes advanced didactic coursework and a residency experience that allows for reflective patient care guided by the collection of disease-oriented and patient-oriented evidence designed to improve clinical practice. As part of this process, this athletic trainer will also establish a Plan of Advanced Practice (PoAP) that serves as a self-reflection of current practice and as a plan that sets a framework for advanced practice focus areas, continued professional development, and research pursuits. The Dissertation of Clinical Practice Improvement (DoCPI) provides the opportunity for the student to study their patient care while producing original research that advances knowledge in healthcare.

Upon completing doctoral training and earning the highest degree in the profession, this clinician embarks on the path of becoming an expert clinician in the chosen focus areas. A DAT clinician has the skill set to work in multiple paradigms and combine various rehabilitative theories to produce meaningful and effective patient-centered care. Additionally, this purposeful clinical practice produces practice-based evidence that can be utilized to inform future practice and create future research questions for basic scientists. Ultimately, this clinician is empowered to effectively evaluate, recognize, and rehabilitate various acute and chronic musculoskeletal dysfunction and pain at an expert level. The combination of advanced clinical skill, a priori clinical practice, and research training prepares the DAT clinician to be an integral part of the translational research team that changes clinical practice to improve patient outcomes and create foundational knowledge for evidence-based practice.