Background and purpose:
All High Point University students are bound by the University Honor Code and University Conduct Code. In addition, the student is expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner during their educational experiences and clinical rotations. The student should also conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the NATA Code of Ethics. The specific guidelines for the student include but are not limited to:

Professional Interactions
Interactions with patients, coaches, administrators, fellow students, staff, etc. can take many forms. The following guidelines help to identify appropriate and inappropriate interactions and offer some guidance as to working relationships; however, the information is not all-inclusive:

While development of a good rapport and relationship with patients is conducive to a good working and learning environment, students must be sure to keep the rapport and relationship at a professional level. Patient /athlete interaction must be professional at all times so as not to undermine the patient’s confidence in the student or the staff. Students are expected to report any problems or concerns with patients / athletes, especially those of a hostile nature, to their clinical instructor AND Program Director immediately.

Students should be especially mindful of their social interactions with patients / athletes. Social and romantic relationships are highly discouraged. In the event that a relationship develops, the student must notify the clinical instructor and Program Director of the relationship as soon as the relationship begins. This is to avoid a potential conflict of interest or distraction in the clinical environment. Students will be immediately removed from the clinical site if they develop an unprofessional relationship with a patient / athlete at that site.

The athletic trainer – coach relationship necessitates a daily interaction with the coaches. A professional relationship with the coaching staff is very important to an athletic trainer. Students should pay particular attention to the interaction between the clinical site’s medical staff and the coaching staff. Their interaction can provide clues as to the environment; some relationships are congenial while others are not. Usually the clinical instructor will have the most interaction with the coaches including informing the coach of the status of injured players. However, there may be an occasion where the student will be put in this role. Students are expected to maintain a professional interaction with the coaches and act according to the guidelines set forth by the clinical instructor. Details on how and when to address coaches, how to respond to questions from coaches, and how to handle potential conflicts should be addressed with the clinical instructor early in the rotation. At no time should a student criticize or question a coach on issues related to the coaching of the
team. Students are expected to report any problems or concerns with a coach, especially those of a hostile nature, to their clinical instructor AND Program Director immediately.

Students will typically have very limited interaction with athletic administrators. However, in the event that a student does have an opportunity to interact with an administrator the interaction must be of a professional nature. Students are to be cordial and are to address the administrator as Mr. or Ms. and /or sir or ma’am. Often times an administrator will ask questions about an athlete’s injury or status, the student is required to refer the administrator to the appropriate clinical instructor.

Professional relationships between students are a very important aspect of the ATP and the clinical rotations. Students will interact with one another on an almost daily basis. These interactions are expected to remain professional regardless of personal likes or dislikes of one another. Romantic relationships between students are discouraged because of the potential for breakups which can cause conflict in the clinical setting. Students, as young adults, are expected to be able to work out problems between themselves. The clinical instructors and Program Director are available for consultation and will intervene as needed, but learning how to work with others and resolve conflicts is a very important aspect of one’s education.

Students at various levels in the program may be at the same rotation site at the same time. The relationship between “older” students or upperclassmen and “younger” students or underclassmen is to remain professional. While upperclassmen will assist in the education and professional preparation of underclassmen and often times will help direct underclassmen in their clinical responsibilities, it is important that upperclassmen do not abuse their position by bossing around younger students. It is usually best to lead by example. Open criticism of fellow students, regardless of class standing, will not be tolerated. With this being said, underclassmen should recognize that upperclassmen typically know what needs to be done in the clinical setting. Underclassmen should accept the direction and criticism from upperclassmen in a positive light. However, students should inform a clinical preceptor or the Program Director if they feel that they are being mistreated by another student.

Faculty/Staff: Student Relationships
Perhaps the most important relationship a student will have is with the clinical staff and program faculty. While the staff and faculty typically attempt to keep the classroom and clinical environments somewhat relaxed, it is important that students do not become too relaxed or unprofessional. Students are to maintain a professional approach to their interactions with the staff and faculty. It is important to remember that the staff and faculty are not student’s peers. Students are to show the staff and faculty an appropriate amount of respect, regardless of personal likes or dislikes. Students must not criticize or openly disagree with a staff or faculty member’s decision or action, particularly when it concerns the care of a patient / athlete. If the student has a question about a decision or action, they should approach the staff or faculty member in a respectful manner, away from others, to ask their question or voice their concern.
It is the responsibility of the staff and faculty to prepare the students to be a successful professional. This often requires frank criticism and guidance from the staff and faculty. As up and coming professionals, students must learn that constructive criticism is a part of the professional world and it should not be taken as a personal attack. However, if a student feels that they are being mistreated by a staff or faculty member they are expected to bring their concerns to the attention of the offending staff or faculty member. If the student brings their concerns to the staff or faculty member’s attention and the problems persist, the student is expected to inform the Program Director of their concerns. The above information regarding interactions with clinical staff and faculty members also pertains to interactions with other medical and allied medical professionals.

Off-campus Social Networking Policy
The HPU ATP promotes professional interactions between clinicians and patients. In maintaining this professional interaction, the program prohibits athletic training students from interacting with current patients or student-athletes, not associated with High Point University. Athletic training students should not accept nor request any interaction involving social networking websites with any current patient or non-HPU student-athlete, regardless of whether the athletic training student is directly responsible for the patient’s care. This includes refraining from social networking with student-athletes from athletic teams with whom the athletic training student has no direct contact and patients being treated by another clinician at the athletic training student’s clinical education site. This policy further prohibits social interaction with patients and student-athletes by text messaging and electronic mail. Furthermore, it is unacceptable for athletic training students to interact through social networking websites, text message, or electronic mail with patients or student-athletes who are minors, no matter if they are currently working with the minor or if they are no longer providing healthcare for the minor.

Absenteeism and tardiness
Absenteeism and tardiness will not be tolerated. This includes punctuality and attendance for classes, in-services, clinical rotations, meetings, and appointments. Students must notify the appropriate supervisor or instructor of any absences and tardiness. This should be in a timely manner, preferably prior to their occurrence.

Harassment and / or discrimination
Harassment and / or discrimination, of any kind, will not be tolerated. This includes actions against peers, athletes, patients, staff, administrators, etc. Types of harassment and discrimination include, but are not limited to, inappropriate actions or comments based on the patient’s sex / gender, sexual preference, race / ethnicity, religion, and the patient’s sport or status.
Professional Membership

While not mandatory, membership in athletic training related professional and student associations is strongly encouraged as is attendance at athletic training and sports medicine educational conferences. Early involvement in the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) will assist the student in learning about and supporting the athletic training profession. Students are also encouraged to join the Mid Atlantic Athletic Trainers’ Association (MAATA) – the District 3 organization of the NATA. Both the NATA and MAATA have a category for student members and both hold annual educational symposiums which offer excellent educational and professional networking opportunities for students. The Athletic Training Majors Club is the ATS organization at HPU. Student involvement with the Athletic Training Majors Club only helps to strengthen the organization whose purpose is to support and benefit the students.

ATP Associated Forms: Declaration of Understanding Form

CAATE Associated Standards: 88

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