2014 CAATE Accreditation Conference
The CAATE Code of Ethics and A Discussion on the Proposed CAATE Code of Professional Conduct

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Excellence
Assurance
Value

The proposed CAATE Code of Professional Conduct and its Open Comment Period

Sometimes the idea is a good one, but the installation has problems…
Proposed draft of the CAATE Code of Professional Conduct

• Background
  – No existing ethical code is applicable in AT education

• Purpose
  – To ensure ethical practices of all those engaged in AT education

• Process
  – Developed as part of a charge to the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee
  • Members are the foremost experts in AT Ethics
  – Developed in a logical way using an existing structure
  – Open Comment period held in mid-September

Open Comment Period

• Too Brief
  – Trying to get feedback in time for action at Commission’s fall meeting

• Too Little Information
  – Inadequate Background, Purpose, and Process

• Responses (N=128)
  – Demographics: 56% program administrators, 28% faculty, 10% preceptors, 6% students, 5% AT’s not associated with ATEPs
  – Some positive, most identified significant questions and concerns with purpose, language, and tone

Next Steps

• The proposed draft is **NOT** being implemented
• We still have a glaring need however...
• Feedback from the open comment period and this session are being shared with the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee
• Committee will consider feedback and options and prepare a new draft
• New draft (and rationale behind it) will have another open comment period (at least 30 days)
CAATE Ethics and Professional Standards Committee

- **Members**
  - Michael Hudson, PhD, ATC (chair)
  - Matthew Kutz, PhD, ATC, CSCS
  - Michael Miller, PhD, EdD, AT, ATC, CSCS*D, FNATA
  - Kimberley Peer, EdD, ATC, FNATA
  - Gretchen Schlabach, PhD, ATC

- **Term**
  - Must be reappointed every 2 years

CAATE Ethics and Professional Standards Committee

- **Purpose**
  - Recommend changes to the CAATE Code of Ethics
  - Review complaints regarding the Code of Ethics and related acts according to the procedures outlined in the CAATE Policy and Procedure Manual
  - No oversight of the accreditation Standards
Historical Perspectives

- June 2006
  - Joint Review Committee - Athletic Training separates from the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Educational Programs
  - Renamed the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education

- September 2006
  - Ethics Committee formed and given its first charges

Initial Charges Assigned to Committee

- Any other needed tasks
- Examine Conflict of Interest Form and Confidentiality Statement
- **Develop a CAATE Code of Ethics**
- Develop a plan of action to address violation(s) of the CAATE Code of Ethics
- Develop roles and responsibilities to more fully include the ethical practices of the commission, its committees, site visitors and sponsoring institutions and their program officials/administrators

What is the CAATE Code of Ethics?

- Describes the expected values and conduct/behaviors of CAATE members
- **Who are CAATE members?**
  - CAATE Commissioners
  - CAATE paid staff
  - CAATE committee chairs and members
  - Site visitors
  - Anyone else conducting services on behalf of the CAATE

- **Who are not CAATE members?**
  - Program instructional staff (e.g., faculty, preceptors)
  - Program officials (e.g., director, institutional administrators)
  - Program support staff
  - Program students, residents
Developing the Code of Ethics

The primary question: What are the key values of the CAATE?

1. Drawn from the NATA Code of Ethics

2. Compared with value-focused documents of other professions (e.g., physical therapy, nursing)

3. Surveyed the CAATE Commissioners using the “choosing” criteria described by Rath et al.

Developing the Code of Ethics

- CAATE Commissioners Survey (8 of 9 completed survey)
  - 5 items:
    1. How important are professional values?
    2. How important is it for the Commission to explicitly articulate our professional core values?
    3. Identify values that are unfamiliar to you.
    4. Select five important values to you.
    5. Rank the top 3 values

- Values in survey came from sources identified in previous slide
  - Caring, honesty, accountability, promise keeping, excellence, loyalty, altruism, and others

Findings from survey of CAATE Commissioners

Findings from ASPA Code of Good Practice

The findings from this work were filtered through the Code of Good Practice for the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA)

- CAATE Code of Ethics needed to be consistent with ASPA code upon its application to the organization

- NOTE
  * While not considered when we created the Code of Ethics, it is also consistent with the ethical standards of the Council for Higher Education (CHEA)
CAATE Code of Ethics

Principle 1 • Honesty
CAATE members shall be truthful and transparent in relationship with institutions.

Principle 2 • Respect
CAATE members shall convey a courteous and professional regard toward institutions.

Principle 3 • Accountability and Responsibility
CAATE members shall be trustworthy and carry out their duties within legal and ethical limits.

Principle 4 • Integrity
CAATE members shall convey steadfast and genuine interest in upholding their duties.

Principle 5 • Fairness
CAATE members shall recognize the complexity of the accrediting process and shall be considerate and impartial.

Conduct statements for each principle were developed from the CAATE Policy and Procedure manual and related processes.

Reporting and Investigating a Code of Ethics

Complaint: 4 Foundational Steps

Only for the conduct of a CAATE member

Complaint must provide all information requested in the form
• Anonymous complaints = rumors
• Any investigation requires facts/evidence

Complaint from individual with direct knowledge of the incident

If needed, contact the CAATE for clarification
• CAATE President and Ethics Chair will review all questions

The Complaint Form

Name of individual being accused

Position of the accused in CAATE at the time of the alleged violation

Identification of the specific principle(s)/conduct statement(s) allegedly violated

Detailed description of all relevant facts and documents, including all attempts (when appropriate) to resolve the issue prior to complaint
The Complaint Form (cont’d)

- Names and contact information of witnesses
- Name and contact information for the complainant
- Date complaint submitted
- Submit form online or mail hard copy to the CAATE office

Reporting and Investigating a Code of Ethics Complaint

- Complaint, when received (must be within 2 weeks of incident), given to CAATE President and Ethics Committee Chair
- If complaint has merit, President convenes an Ethics Review Panel (3 members of the Ethics Committee)
- Ethics Review Panel contacts the accused to inform him/her about the allegation, confirm their full cooperation, and inform that they may request a hearing
- CAATE President/Commission may accept, reject, or modify the opinion
- Investigation will begin within 30 days after submission of all materials that are needed to begin the investigation
- Ethics review panel will write an advisory opinion based on their findings
- If the panel believes a violation occurred, it will recommend a sanction
- Investigation may include interviews and other reasonable activities to fully investigate the complaint
Reporting and Investigating a Code of Ethics Complaint

The defendant may appeal the decision of the CAATE President/Commission.

A second, independent Ethics Appeal Panel will be formed for the appeal process.

Sanctions can range from a basic admonishment to suspension from the CAATE for a designated period.

What Remains of the Initial Charges?

- Any other needed tasks
- Examine Conflict of Interest Form and Confidentiality Statement
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Develop roles and responsibilities to more fully include the ethical practices of the commission, its committees, site visitors and sponsoring institutions and their program officials/administrators.
Ethics Committee has received a total of 2 complaints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 complaint</th>
<th>Both complaints</th>
<th>Both complaints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Addressed issues of program compliance with the Standards</td>
<td>We referred to the Commissioners to evaluate compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-sentence, typed letter mailed with no return address</td>
<td>We provided recommendations for future complaints</td>
<td></td>
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Issues with Managing the Ethical Practices of Accredited Programs

- **NATA Code of Ethics and BOC Standards of Professional Practice**
  - Not directly relevant to all education practices
  - DSHA Standards require CAATE be independent

- **Strategic Alliance of CAATE, BOC, Foundation, and NATA**
  - We have a duty to report to protect patients and profession
  - Groups are independent but work towards a common goal

- **Goal of Site Visitors is to Objectively Assess Standards**
  - Judging ethical practices is more subjective than objective

What options are available to the CAATE for addressing conduct issues?
Thank you.

Questions?