

CAATE ANNOUNCEMENT

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April 27, 2020 CAATE COVID-19 Update: Delayed Program Completion

The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) continues to monitor the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on all levels of our accredited programs. Additionally, the CAATE is monitoring the responses from the Department of Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the Association of Specialized and Programmatic Accreditors (ASPA), and those of our peer health care accreditors. The Commission recognizes the significant difficulties of operating athletic training programs during these challenging times. The CAATE is working diligently to afford programs appropriate flexibility to deal with these difficulties while at the same time being vigilant in enforcing the standards we have set forth to assure programmatic quality and protect students and the public.

As programs continue to be impacted by restricted campus access, campus closures, and restricted clinical site access, they are increasingly challenged to deliver and assess the psychomotor skills necessary to prepare students for contemporary athletic training practice. While the Commission recognizes this challenge, please be advised that programs **MUST** adequately teach and assess the necessary psychomotor skills. If programs are unable to adequately teach and assess psychomotor skills or deliver appropriate clinical experiences, they may be forced to consider a strategy for delayed program completion until such time as it is safe to bring students back to campus and send them out to clinical sites. Therefore, the Commission offers the following with regards to delayed program completion:

- Each program determines how psychomotor skills are taught and assessed. The Commission has previously approved the use of both [simulation](#) and [telemedicine/telehealth](#). So, programs will have varying degrees of need related to in-person teaching and assessments. However, if a program's assessment plan calls for certain skills to be learned and taught in person, then the plan must be appropriately altered, or the skills must actually be learned and taught in-person.
- While the Commission has promoted maximum flexibility regarding distance learning and clinical education, there is no circumstance in which ALL elements of in-person/face-to-face clinical learning and psychomotor skills assessments can be supplemented via distance learning/technology solutions.
- Therefore, if campus closures and/or lack of access to adequate clinical experiences precludes the adequate teaching and assessment of psychomotor skills, then programs **MUST** delay

program completion until such time as access to in-person training allows for the adequate teaching and assessment of psychomotor skills.

- o For example, if an institution remains exclusively online with limited clinical placements through the Fall 2020 – 2021 semester, it may deem it is necessary to extend the program length by an additional semester.

- o As long as the program has appropriate institutional, state, and regional accreditor approval to do this, prior Commission approval or notification, at this time, will not be required. Additionally, the Commission will not govern under what circumstances programs determine when or how they will extend program length. Issues such as tuition costs, fees, etc, are largely institutional issues. However, programs are responsible for articulating such changes in a clear and timely manner to students.

- o Programs who choose to implement a delayed program completion strategy who have a self-study due, or on-site visit scheduled, in 2020 – 2021 or 2021 – 2022 should notify the Commission immediately. A letter describing the delayed program completion plan that is signed/dated by the Provost must be submitted through the Substantive Change tab within eAccreditation.

- o The Commission reserves the right to seek additional information pertaining to changes in program length at a later date, such as during the completion of future Annual Reports.

The Commission remains committed to the health, safety, and well-being of our stakeholders and volunteers and appreciates your ongoing commitment to student/resident learning and quality assurance. Additional information will be disseminated by the Commission as deemed appropriate. Should you have specific questions or additional concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the CAATE Office (512-733-9700). CAATE Coronavirus updates are posted on a dedicated [Coronavirus Updates and FAQs](#) landing page on the [CAATE website](#).