



Athletic Training Programs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Professional Athletic Training Program

What is the ideal student for your program?

We are looking for students who want to be outstanding clinicians. Students that embrace having diverse clinical experiences, working with a diverse population of patients. We want students looking to advance the profession of athletic training, by embracing a scope of practice for ATs that includes advanced clinical skills. A USC AT student understands the value of research and how it must be used to influence clinical practice. Finally, we want students looking to be a part of a family-type atmosphere where they can flourish as members of the Gamecock AT professional network.

Is the AT Program at South Carolina CAATE accredited?

Yes. In the spring of 2020, we were awarded full accreditation for 10 years. Our next accreditation review is in 2028.

Is a bachelor's degree required for admission?

Yes, completion of a bachelor's degree is required. But the degree can be in any discipline, as long as the pre-requisite class requirements are met.

I am already a certified athletic trainer, looking for a GA assistantship. Is this program for me?

No. This is a professional program designed for those who would like to become an athletic trainer. However, we do have a post-professional degree option that includes GA assistantships. For more information on that program, please contact Dwaun Sellers (AT Administrative Coordinator) at: dsellers@mailbox.sc.edu or 803-777-7075

Must I apply through ATCAS?

Yes, admission to the MS in AT program must be completed through ATCAS: <http://atcas.liasoncas.org/>

Do I also need to apply to the USC Graduate School?

No, you will only need to apply through ATCAS. Once ATCAS has verified a student application, the USC graduate school will import the applicant file into the graduate school portal for review.

Can I submit my application in ATCAS even though I am still completing my prerequisite courses?

Yes, courses taken in the spring semester do not need to be in by the application deadline. However, all prerequisite classes must be completed by the start of the program which is typically around May 26 each year.

Are 50 hours of observation required?

Yes, observation hours are meant to help assure us that applicants understand the profession of athletic training and have a good idea of what an athletic trainer is and does. Contact Dr. Mensch if you have specific questions or concerns related to your observation hours: jmensch@mailbox.sc.edu

Can I submit my application in ATCAS even though I am still completing my required observation hours?

Yes, all 50 hours of observation do not need to be completed by the application deadline. However, all 50 hours must be completed by the start of the program.

Can prerequisite courses be taken at a community college?

Yes, community college and online courses from accredited institutions are acceptable.



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How do I know for certain that a class I've taken fulfills a prerequisite course requirement?

Questions regarding pre-requisite classes can be sent directly to the AT Program Director (jmensch@mailbox.sc.edu). Please include a course description with your inquiry. Additional information, such as a course syllabus, may be requested.

What GPA do I need for my application to be considered?

Candidates with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher will be considered for unconditional acceptance. Candidates with less than a 3.0 GPA will be considered for conditional acceptance, which may require a probationary semester. Typically, this requires a student to obtain a 3.0 in their first semester to continue matriculation in the program.

Does USC AT Program require the GRE?

No, the GRE is optional. Students may submit scores as part of their application if they feel it will strengthen their application.

Is an interview required for admission?

Yes, select students will be offered a zoom/virtual-based interview as part of admission to the AT program.

Can someone speak with me about the AT program at USC?

Yes, Dr. Mensch loves to set up zoom chats with anyone that is interested in athletic training and the University of South Carolina. He does them all the time. Email him at: jmensch@mailbox.sc.edu to set it up.

Can I come and visit campus?

We encourage all students to schedule a visit to our campus to meet the faculty/staff and students and see the AT facilities. If you would like to schedule a visit, please contact Brenn Hartley (AT Administrative Coordinator) at hartleya@mailbox.sc.edu or 803-777-5267 to make arrangements.

When should I apply?

The AT program at USC is very competitive. We encourage students to apply by November 15th for our priority application review and admission decision. All application materials must be received in ATCAS no later than February 15, 2025 for consideration for the cohort starting in Summer 2025.

How many students are accepted into the AT program?

We anticipate a cohort of 25-30 students which will be filled on a rolling basis with the most qualified applicants!

What else can I do to learn more about the AT program at USC?

Follow us on social media and reach out to our current students. There are so many things going on in our program for you to learn about.

Facebook - University of South Carolina Athletic Training Programs

Twitter: @UofSC_AT

Instagram: @uscathletictraining

When are admission decisions made?

We begin our early admission review on November 15 each year. We fill our cohort on a rolling basis and students are informed within 2 weeks of our deadline. Students are encouraged to apply by November 15 for our priority application review and admission decision. All application materials must be received in ATCAS prior to February 15, 2025 to start the program in Summer 2025.

When does the program start?

The two-year program starts at the end of May (typically around May 26).



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Can I be a part-time student?

No. The program is designed to be completed in a specific curricular sequence, with each semester of classes building on the previous semester.

Can I work while in the program?

Yes, students that are great time managers have been able to find jobs, attend classes, and attend clinical education. It is not easy, but it is possible.

Do I need a car?

No, but a car it is highly recommended as you will complete clinical experiences all around Columbia.

Where do graduate students live?

While USC does have graduate student housing, most graduate students prefer to live off campus in surrounding communities. Our AT Program will work closely with all admitted students to make sure they find appropriate housing/roommates.

Where can I find information on financial aid?

The University of South Carolina has a central financial aid office. In order to be considered for financial aid, applicants should file the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form as early as possible, even before filing an application for admission. This form is available at any U.S. college or university. Applicants may also take advantage of the FAFSA Express program, which allows students to complete the form electronically through the U.S. Department of Education's web site. Visit the USC Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships for more information.

https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/paying_for_graduate_school/index.php

How much does this program cost?

We understand graduate school can be expensive, which is why it is important for us to be clear on exactly how much money it will cost for a MS in Athletic Training here at USC. Exact information can also be obtained at the USC Bursar page:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/bursar/index.php

Does the AT program have a student handbook or manual with detailed information about all aspects of the program?

Yes, please look through our AT student handbook for in-depth information about all aspects of the AT program

https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/documents/ms_at_student_handbook.pdf

Does the USC AT Program offer any specific scholarships?

Yes, the AT Program has a limited number of AT Fellowships. These fellowships are \$750 annually and include an out-of-state tuition/fee waiver for non-South Carolina residents. See our AT student handbook for more information or reach out to Dr. Mensch (Program Director).

Does your program have research requirements like a thesis or project?

No. Our AT Program does not require a research thesis. However, we believe research and evidence-based practice is and should be integrated across the entire curriculum within both didactic and clinical classes. For our AT program final comprehensive assessment, students are required to disseminate some form of research to a professional conference, workshop, journal, etc.. This process is embedded into multiple courses in the curriculum and begins the very first semester in ATEP 701 Principles of Evidence-Based Medicine.



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Where will I complete clinical experiences?

Clinical experiences begin in the fall of your first year and continue each semester throughout the program. Students will be placed in a variety of clinical settings, including USC Athletics, Prisma Health Orthopedics, local high schools, USC campus recreation, USC band and dance, Sports Medicine clinics, Emergency Departments, youth sports, and athletic performance centers. In addition, all students will complete unique clinical experiences including; EMS ride-a longs, scrubbing into surgery with our team surgeons, seeing non-orthopedic patients at the student health center, and shadowing our team physicians in the orthopedic office.

When will I be eligible to take the BOC certification exam?

You will be eligible to take the BOC certification exam during the testing window in February/April during your year of graduation.