

Master of Athletic Training – Frequently Asked Questions

- Where do I find the requirements to apply to the MAT?** If students intend to apply for the MAT degree, they should select a relevant bachelor's degree and complete the admissions standards for the MAT Program. Information about the admissions standards and curriculum for the MAT Program can be found at <https://healthprofessions.ucf.edu/kpt/athletic-training-program/>.
- How competitive is the admissions process? How do I apply?** The Master of Athletic Training degree program generally accepts approximately 28 students each year. The AT Program has stringent entrance criteria but meeting the minimum requirements for admission does not ensure acceptance. Students are evaluated on each of the criteria set forth in the admission requirements and a final score is used to determine which students are accepted. All application materials need to be submitted through the ATCAS system - <http://caate.net/apply-now/>.
- What bachelor's degree is required?** There is not a certain bachelor's degree required by the MAT Program; rather students should seek a bachelor's degree that is relevant and that provides them the opportunity to complete the prerequisite courses and other admissions requirements. Suggestions are provided:

Suggested Major	Pros	Cons
Health Sciences Advising: https://healthprofessions.ucf.edu/healthsciences/advising/ College of Health Professions and Sciences (formerly COHPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the MAT prerequisite courses are included in this major (as GEP, core or electives). This major is very versatile as it has course options that prepare students to meet the admission requirements for several health professions (MAT, MD, PT, PA, AT, DC, etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This major prepares students to enter graduate programs in the medical and health professions. The degree is not designed to give students a specific credential.
Kinesiology (formerly Sport and Exercise Science) Advising: https://healthprofessions.ucf.edu/kpt/kinesiology/bachelors/ College of Health Professions and Sciences (formerly College of Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of the MAT prerequisite courses are included in this major (as GEP, core or electives). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This major is not focused on medicine/health professions – it is more focused on fitness/wellness/sport performance.
Interdisciplinary Studies Advising: https://www.is.ucf.edu/ College of Undergraduate Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This major allows student a great deal of flexibility to design an educational path that meets their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students would need to take great care to include the MAT prerequisite courses in their plan and select minors that assist them with their goals.

Note: Health Services Administration is a relevant minor to consider during the bachelor's degree and it can be completed online at UCF.

- Are there equivalent courses for the prerequisites?** We cannot determine the courses that would satisfy the requirement at every university, that said we have compiled a list of courses that should meet the prerequisite course expectation at UCF and according to the State of Florida course numbering system. Any number can replace "X". This list is not exhaustive of all possible courses.

General Bio/Biology I 4 credits (incl. lab)	BSCX010, X010L, or X010C (courses for non-science majors and non-human biology courses are not acceptable.)
Human Anatomy 4 credits (incl. lab)	ZOO3733C; ZOO3736C
Human Physiology 4 credits (incl. lab)	PCB3703C
Gen Chm/Chemistry I 4 credits (incl. lab)	CHMX045C or X045L; CHM2040 + CHM2041; CHM1030+L or 1031+L; CHM1032+L (courses for non-science majors are not acceptable.)
Physics I 4 credits (incl. lab)	PHYX053, X053L or X053C; PHYX048, X048L or X048C (courses for non-science majors are not acceptable.)
Statistics 3 credits	STAX023; STAX122; STAX201
Human Nutrition /Clinical Nutrition 3 credits	HUNX201; HUN3011; HUNX941; HUNX002; HSC4572; PET3361 (should be for science, medicine, health, kinesiology, and/or nursing majors)
General Psychology 3 credits	PSYX012 (any course within a psychology department will be accepted)
Exercise Physiology 3 credits	PET3510C; APK4110C
Biomechanics / Kinesiology 3 credits	PET4312C; PET4325

- If I am a UCF undergraduate student, how can I get involved before I gain admittance to the MAT Program?** There is a club associated with the AT Program called SATO. This club is open to students interested in getting into the program and those who are already in the program. To find out more and get on an email list write to Carlos.Gual@ucf.edu. The program also has a Facebook page. You can join our Facebook group through "UCF Athletic Training Program".

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6. **How do I complete the observation hour requirement?** The observation requirement is an opportunity to observe an athletic trainer (AT) in action. The person being observed must hold the credential of ATC®. The aim of the observation hours is to show the student what a “typical” athletic trainer position entails and to give the student an idea of what clinical practica will be like once in the program. The hour requirement must be complete before the time of application. The 50 required hours must be completed at a high school, college, and/or professional sports team setting.

The hours do NOT need to be completed at UCF or a local facility. Possible local locations to complete observation hours include the Sports Medicine Department of the UCF Athletics Association (contact Alex Warne at awarne@athletics.ucf.edu), the UCF Recreation and Wellness Center (contact Gabrielle Bell at gabrielle.bell@ucf.edu) and area high schools (OCPS, SCPS, private).

Documentation of completed observation hours is required and must be in the form of a verification letter from the athletic trainer(s) observed. The verification letter must meet the following requirements: 1) be on company letterhead; 2) include the name and credentials of the athletic trainer(s) observed; 3) include the nature of the experience and total hours observed; and 4) include contact information and a signature of the athletic trainer. If multiple ATs were observed at the same setting, a letter from one athletic trainer that provides the necessary information is sufficient. If ATs were observed at different settings, a letter from each setting is required. Most ATs will want the student to use a spreadsheet to track their observation hours.

Students must complete training in bloodborne pathogens prior to beginning observation hours with an athletic trainer. The American Heart Association offers an online course that can be found at <https://www.onlineaha.org/courses/27>. Other companies offer online instruction as well. The course chosen must meet OSHA’s Bloodborne Pathogens standard. Students should be prepared to show proof of course completion in order to complete their observation hours. Students completing observation hours may NOT engage in any activity that they are not trained for and/or that might be in violation of licensure laws.

7. **What is the time requirement for the practicum courses?** Students engage in clinical practica during five semesters of the six semester program. The AT Program will ensure that students gain exposure to: individual and team sports; sports requiring protective equipment (e.g., helmet and shoulder pads); patients of different sexes; non-sport patient populations (e.g., outpatient clinic, emergency room, primary care office, industrial, performing arts, military); and a variety of conditions other than orthopedics (e.g., primary care, internal medicine, dermatology). Clinical practica provide students the opportunity to use knowledge and skills they learned in the classroom. Clinical education experiences are assigned by the Clinical Education Coordinators.

The time requirement varies with the semester of the clinical practica. You can view the approximate number of hours on the curriculum tab of the MAT website (ex. A course listed as 3(0, 20) is 3 credits, 0 classroom time, and approximately 20 hours of clinical time per week). Students must understand that time requirements are outside of the standard university calendar and outside of standard class hours. Clinical practica often require attendance on late nights, early mornings, weekends and semester breaks. Once admitted, students are expected to consult their Clinical Education Coordinator before planning to be out of the area. Family vacations, jobs and other outside activities are not considered adequate reasons to miss AT Program requirements. While the AT Program does not forbid students from working or engaging in outside activities, those activities are not allowed to interfere with AT courses or practicum requirements. Only students with exceptional time management skills will be able to do both.

8. **Are there fees/other expenses associated with the MAT degree?** Current expenses for graduate tuition are listed in the UCF Graduate Catalog; the fees associated with the degree will not be approved and published until the 2019-2020 graduate catalog but will approximate \$420.00 in year 1 and \$300.00 in year 2. Other expenses specific to the AT Program can include the following: books (variable); membership to professional organizations; NATA (\$60/yr); nametags (\$10.50); registration to conferences (optional); certification in CPR/First Aid/AED (\$55); transportation/gas/tolls to clinical facilities (variable - but can be significant); background and fingerprint fees (\$60-80 1-2 times); club dues (optional, \$20-40/yr); professional attire for clinical sites (variable); Board of Certification (BOC) application and exam fees.

9. **What is the difference between a physical therapist (PT) and an athletic trainer (AT)?** Many people are confused about the difference between AT and PT. While there are some similarities in the disciplines, students should understand that there are major differences in patient population and scope of practice. An AT usually works with a population that includes physically active individuals who are young adult to middle aged. The job of an athletic trainer includes prevention of injury, recognition and evaluation of injuries and illnesses, emergency care, rehabilitation, and administration. ATs very often treat musculoskeletal conditions, but they are also trained to identify and treat/refer general medical conditions (e.g. ENT, dermatology), mental health concerns (e.g. eating disorders, depression), and provide acute care on-the-field for trauma (e.g. spinal cord and brain injury). ATs provide immediate care for those who sustain injuries, and often continue providing care as the patient goes through surgery, rehabilitation, and return-to-participation. ATs perform on-field evaluations and make “return to play” decisions during competitive events. By contrast, physical therapists (PTs) treat individuals in a wider age range (e.g. newborn, geriatric) who have medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. Their patients have a wider diversity of physical concerns (ex. neuro, burns, MS, CP). Students must also understand that the work settings are very different in many cases. Although some ATs work in a hospital, medical office, or outpatient rehabilitation environment (like a PT might), most ATs work in high schools, colleges, professional sports, performing arts, and other settings where working hours are more varied (e.g. holidays, weekends), environment can be harsh at times (e.g. rain), and their patients are often engaging in the sport/activity.

10. **What is the difference between a personal trainer and an athletic trainer (AT)?** ATs primarily deal with medical issues. Personal trainers mainly deal with strength and conditioning, aerobic fitness, and nutrition. However, there is some overlap because ATs also use principles of strength and conditioning and nutrition when rehabilitating athletes. ATs must possess a 4 year degree from an accredited institution (in 2022, bachelors programs will stop admitting students and the MAT will become the entry-level degree for the AT profession) and sit for the Board of Certification (BOC) examination. To be a personal trainer, one only needs to sit for an examination. No formal academic training is required (for certain certifications).