



**NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE**

Master of  
Athletic Training

*NCC Athletic Training  
Pre-Professional  
Admission Handbook  
(effective Fall 2025)*



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Welcome to the Direct Admit Pathway to the Master of Athletic Training (MAT) Program at North Central College!

This handbook will provide you with the information you need to apply to and be retained in the direct admission program for the MAT Program at NCC.

This accelerated pathway program is designed for North Central undergraduate students who complete a specially designed program for the first three undergraduate years of a B.S. degree in Exercise Science or Health Science, followed by two years in the Master of Athletic Training Program. The program has limited spaces and a maximum of 16 students will be admitted each year. This program has two phases: the **pre-professional phase** (undergraduate) and the **professional phase** (graduate).

If you are accepted to the pre-professional phase of the direct admit pathway, you will complete select requirements for a bachelor's degree in exercise science or health science during the first three years and then begin the MAT program during the fourth year. You'll complete the master's program at the end of the fifth year. If you prefer a four-year undergraduate experience, as opposed to an accelerated three-year plan, you can defer the start of the MAT program for a year. You'll be able to connect with athletic training faculty, preceptors, and students through our mentorship program during your pre-professional years to support your success.

### **Pre-professional Phase (Undergraduate) Admission Requirements**

You can apply to the pre-professional phase before or as you enter NCC or after completing one or more semesters at NCC. It is best to apply early as entry is limited to no more than 16 students/cohort. To be accepted to the professional phase, you will need to:

Applying as a high school senior, before entering NCC:

- You will need to have been admitted to the College.
- You will need to have obtained a high school GPA of 3.0 or better (upload unofficial transcripts).
- You will need to write and upload a personal statement describing why you want to become an athletic trainer.
- You will need to agree to declare and follow an exercise science or health science major at North Central College (if admitted to the Pre-Professional Phase)

**Timeline to apply:** Between October 1 of your senior year and May 1 of your senior year. Applications are considered as they are received and admissions decisions are communicated to the applicant within 2 weeks of submission of the application.

**High school seniors use this [LINK](#) to apply to the pre-professional phase.**

Applying as a current NCC student:

- Declare an exercise science or health science major at North Central College.
- Have obtained an institutional GPA at NCC of 3.0 or better (upload unofficial transcripts).
- Write and upload a personal statement describing why you want to become an athletic trainer.

**Timeline to apply:** By October 1 of fall semester or Feb 1 of spring semester. Applications are reviewed at this point and admissions decisions are communicated to the applicant within 2 weeks.

**Current NCC students use [this link](#) to apply to the pre-professional phase**

If more than 16 students apply for pre-professional admission by the October 1 deadline, applicants will be ranked using the following rubric and the top ranking 16 students will be admitted:

North Central College MAT Pre-Professional Admission Scoring Rubric												Points Scored:
High School GPA or Institutional GPA	3.0 1	3.1 2	3.2 3	3.3 4	3.4 5	3.5 6	3.6 7	3.7 8	3.8 9	3.9 10	4.0 11	
Essay Score												
Knowledge of Athletic Training	Very Poor 1		Poor 2		Fair 3		Good 4		Excellent 5			
Desire to become an athletic trainer	Very Poor 1		Poor 2		Fair 3		Good 4		Excellent 5			
Quality of Writing	Very Poor 1		Poor 2		Fair 3		Good 4		Excellent 5			
												/26

Admissions decisions are not made on any criteria other than those stated above. Please see the [non-discrimination statement](#) for additional information.

### Pre-Professional Phase Application Due Dates and Process

You should apply as early as you know you want to be considered for direct admission to the program. Applications from high school seniors will be accepted between October 1 and May 1 each year. Applications for current students will be accepted up to and reviewed on October 1 and February 1 each year. Notifications of acceptance will be sent to you within two weeks of application. Your pre-professional acceptance packet will include retention criteria, connection to your program mentor, an academic plan, and will assign you to a cohort year for beginning the MAT program.

### Retention Criteria for the Pre-Professional Phase

In order to remain admitted to the pre-professional phase, you'll need to:

- Meet with your program faculty mentor at least one time each semester. This may be in an individual or small-group format. You will be contacted by the faculty mentor upon admission.
- Maintain a 3.0 overall GPA (reviewed at the end of each academic year) by your faculty mentor.
- Complete the following courses with a "C" or better before the end of your 3<sup>rd</sup> year:
  - Biology (e.g., BIOL 104 or other biology course)
  - Chemistry (e.g., CHEM 121)
  - Physics (e.g., PHYS 131)
  - Anatomy or Anatomy & Physiology I (e.g., BIOL 201 or KINE 247)
  - Physiology or Anatomy & Physiology II (e.g., BIOL 202 or KINE 280)
  - Psychology (e.g., PSYC 100)
- Meet all annual milestones on your Academic Plan. This will be confirmed by your faculty mentor during your meetings.

Students may be dismissed from the pre-professional phase if they do not meet the above criteria. **Dismissal from the pre-professional phase of the program does not indicate dismissal from the institution.** Retention and dismissal decisions are not made on any criteria other than stated above. Please see the [non-discrimination statement](#) for additional information. Students who are dismissed from the pre-professional phase will be notified by email between the end of the spring semester and May 15. Students who are dismissed from the pre-professional phase may reapply to the pre-professional program one time if they feel that they meet the retention criteria in a subsequent semester.

### Continuation requirements for the Professional Phase (Graduate Program Phase)

To continue into the professional phase of the program, students will be required to:

- Submit a Notification of Intent using [this link](#) to begin the Professional Phase by October 1<sup>st</sup> of the third year
- Demonstrate completion (or in-progress registration) of the required academic plan
- Demonstrate completion of prerequisite courses with minimum grade of C
- Have an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year spring semester
- Complete 25 observation hours under the supervision of an athletic trainer
- Complete the matriculation requirements for MAT program (see below)

### **Matriculation Requirements for Professional Phase**

Matriculation refers to the formal process of entering the program as a candidate for the MAT degree.

Once you are admitted to the professional program as an athletic training student, you will submit the following materials:

- Signed Matriculation Agreement (provided with your Offer of Professional Admission letter)
- Institutional transcript and transcripts from all institutions attended
- Signed [Technical Standards Form](#) requiring a physician signature
- Proof of compliance with institutional immunization requirements (Hepatitis B, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Tetanus, and Diphtheria)
- Federal Background Check: Students who refuse to consent to or have findings on the background check that would preclude certification or licensure will be dismissed from the program
- Acknowledgement of student handbook policies

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How do I know if I will be admitted to the professional phase of the MAT program if I follow this plan?**

Students that are accepted to the pre-professional phase of the MAT program who also meet the continuation requirements will be admitted to the professional phase. If you meet the continuation requirements, you'll begin the MAT program the summer following your third year. You can defer your admission for one year if you prefer.

### **What happens if I don't meet the continuation requirements for the professional phase?**

If you are not admitted to the professional phase because you do not meet the continuation requirements, you will continue your undergraduate degree during your fourth year and will still be on schedule to graduate with a bachelor's degree in four years. You may reapply to the professional phase of the program as a 4+2 student if you feel you have remedied the prior deficiency. You will need to complete the remaining courses in the 4-year degree plan.

### **How do I know my timeline? 3+2 or 4+2?**

Students who wish to accelerate the undergraduate curriculum down to 3 years, completing 18 credits each of the 6 semesters, can enter the MAT program after their junior year. The MAT curriculum spans 24 months. Thus, both degrees can be earned in 5 years instead of 6, saving a year of undergraduate tuition. Students will be placed on the timeline of their choosing upon admission to the program, and 3+2 students may defer their admission for one year if needed.

There are several reasons why someone might want to opt for a 4-year undergraduate timeline, instead of the accelerated timeline. These include preferring to schedule only 16 credits each semester or wanting to compete in an NCAA sport for four years. (As a rule, the MAT program does not allow master's students to be student-athletes, however we will consider petitions to do so on an individual basis.) See below for more information for student-athletes.

### **What if I am a student-athlete and want to participate in my sport for 4 years? Can I still do this program?**

You can be admitted to the direct admit program as any other student would. During your third year, you would notify the program that you intend to defer the start of the professional phase for one year. You would schedule the pre-professional phase courses over a 4-year timeframe rather than a 3-year timeframe, and would begin the professional phase of the program in the summer after your 4<sup>th</sup> year, rather than the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Be sure to notify your faculty mentor and student success coach of this so that we can ensure your individualized academic plan is customized.

### **What happens if I change my mind and no longer intend to apply to the professional phase?**

Simply notify the athletic training program director of this and you will be removed from the pre-professional admission cohort. You will then be required to complete the full list of degree requirements for a bachelor's degree in exercise science or health science.

### **When will I earn my bachelor's degree?**

Students who have successfully completed the summer, fall, and spring semesters of the first year of the professional phase will have earned their bachelor's degree in exercise science or health science. You will be invited to participate in the commencement ceremony after the first year of the professional phase, and your bachelor's degree will be conferred according to registrar procedures.

### **How do I obtain observation hours?**

Students in the pre-professional program are invited to complete observation hours in the athletic training clinics on campus following a brief training session. Additionally, we encourage students to experience different settings, and we can assist you in contacting those sites. We also invite students to observe our classes and join us during programmatic events and speakers, many of which will be able to count toward observation hours.

### **What is the non-discrimination statement for the Program?**

The North Central College Athletic Training Program and North Central College ("College") is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, social, and residential environment. The College does not discriminate or allow discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin (including ancestry), color, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy (and parenting for students), religion, creed, physical or mental disability (including perceived disability), age, marital status, veteran or military status, unfavorable military discharge (except dishonorable discharge), predisposing genetic characteristics, order of protection, or any other protected category under applicable local, state, or federal law, including protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any resolution process on campus, with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or other human rights agencies in both employment and access to educational opportunities.

# MAT PRE-PROFESSIONAL PHASE EXERCISE SCIENCE (23-24 CAT)



	Fall 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
<b>Classes</b>	EXSC 101: Foundations of ExSci (4) Gen Ed COMM or CARD 101(4) BIOL 104/Lab Human Biology (4) (MAT PR) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed (2)	BIOL 201/Lab: A&P I (MAT PR) (4) Gen Ed ENGL or CARD 102 (4) PSYC 100 (MAT PR) (4) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed (2)	
<b>Milestones</b>	Submit your pre-professional application by October 1; meet with MAT faculty mentor this semester	Meet with MAT faculty mentor Complete 18 credits both semesters for 3 year plan. Maintain a 3.0 minimum GPA and C or better in PR courses.	Determine if a summer course is needed to meet 36 credits by end of year 1. Consider beginning engagement hours.
	Fall 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
<b>Classes</b>	BIOL 202/Lab: A&P II(MAT PR) (4) KINE 247/Lab: Functional Anatomy (4) PSYC 250: Statistics (4) Gen Ed (4) EXSC 255: Org. and Admin. in ExSci (2)	KINE 317: Kinesiology (4) CHEM 121/Lab: General Chemistry I (MAT PR) (4) NUTR 101: Introduction to Nutrition (4) Gen Ed (4) HTSC 100: First Aid & Personal Safety (2)	
<b>Milestones</b>	Meet with MAT faculty mentor Begin engagement hours	Meet with MAT faculty mentor Continue engagement hours Should have 72 credits by the end of this year for 3 year plan Maintain a 3.0 minimum GPA and C or better in PR courses.	Determine if a summer course is needed to meet 72 credits by end of year 2
	Fall 3	Spring 3	Summer 3
<b>Classes</b>	EXSC 347/Lab (4) EXSC 410 (4) PHYS 131/Lab (MAT PR) (4) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed/Independent Study (2)	EXSC 420 (4) EXSC 447 (4) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed/Independent Study (2)	Begin the MAT program with no deferral: MAT 515 (4) MAT 530 (3)
<b>Milestones</b>	Letter of Intent to Enter MAT program (or defer) due by 10/1	Must have 108 credits by the end of this year for 3 year plan	
	Deferral Year?	Deferral Year?	Summer 4
<b>Classes</b>			Begin MAT program if deferred.



# MAT PRE-PROFESSIONAL PHASE HEALTH SCIENCE (23-24 CAT)

## Pre-Professional Advising Plan: B.S. in Health Science

	Fall 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
<b>Classes</b>	HTSC 155: Introduction to Health Sciences (2) HTSC 156: Medical Terminology (2) Gen Ed COMM or CARD 101 (4) BIOL 104/Lab Human Biology (MAT PR) (4) Gen Ed (4)/GenEd (2)	BIOL 201/Lab: A&P I (MAT PR) (4) Gen Ed ENGL or CARD 102 (4) PSYC 100: Introduction to Psychology (MAT PR) (4) HTSC 210: Evidence Based Practice(2) Gen Ed (4)	
<b>Milestones</b>	Submit your preprofessional application by October 1; meet with MAT faculty mentor this semester	Meet with MAT faculty mentor Complete 18 credits both semesters for 3 year plan. Maintain a 3.0 minimum GPA and C or better in PR courses.	Determine if a summer course is needed to meet 36 credits by end of year 1. Consider beginning engagement hours.
	Fall 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
<b>Classes</b>	BIOL 202/Lab: A&P II(MAT PR) (4) KINE 247/Lab: Functional Anatomy (4) PSYC 250: Statistics (4) Gen Ed (4) HTSC 100: First Aid & Personal Safety (2) (recommended)	HTSC 230: Community Health(4) CHEM 121/Lab: Gen Chemistry I (MAT PR) (4) HTSC 310: Principles of Epidemiology for the Health Sciences (4) KINE 280: Human Pathophysiology (2) Gen Ed (2)	
<b>Milestones</b>	Meet with MAT faculty mentor Begin engagement hours	Meet with MAT faculty mentor Continue engagement hours Should have 72 credits by the end of this year for 3 year plan	Determine if a summer course is needed to meet 72 credits by end of year 2
	Fall 3	Spring 3	Summer 3
<b>Classes</b>	PHIL 213: Health Care Ethics (4) PHYS 131/Lab (MAT PR) (4) PSYC 385 - Health Psychology-OR- SOC 343 - Health, Illness and Care (4) Gen Ed(4) Gen Ed/Independent Study (2)	HTSC 370 (4) HTSC 315: Research Methods in the Health Sciences (4) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed (4) Gen Ed/Independent Study (2)	Begin the MAT program: MAT 515 (4) MAT 530 (3)
<b>Milestones</b>	Letter of intent to Enter MAT program (or defer) due by 10/1	Must have 108 credits by the end of this year for 3 year plan	
	Deferral Year?	Deferral Year?	Summer 4
<b>Classes</b>			Begin MAT program if deferred.



# MATR CURRICULUM AND CLINICAL MAP



	Summer 1 10 weeks (June-August)	Fall 1 16 weeks (August-December)	Spring 1 16 weeks (January-May)
<b>Classes</b>	MATR 515 - Foundations of Athletic Training (4 hours) MATR 530 - Principles of Musculoskeletal and Medical Assessment (3 hours)	MATR 500 - Clinical Experiences in Athletic Training I (1 hour) MATR 541 - Diagnosis and Management for Athletic Trainers I: Upper Extremity, Head, and Neck Injuries and Conditions (4 hours) MATR 550 - Medical Aspects of Athletic Training (4 hours) MATR 525 - Therapeutic Interventions in Athletic Training I (4 hours)	MATR 505 - Clinical Experiences in Athletic Training II (1 hour) MATR 540 - Diagnosis and Management for Athletic Trainers II: Lower Extremity and Spine Injuries and Conditions (4 hours) MATR 535 - Therapeutic Interventions in Athletic Training II (4 hours) MATR 551 - Administration and Management in Athletic Training (4 hours)
<b>Clinical</b>	None	8 Weeks with NCC Fall Sport 8 Weeks with NCC Winter Sport 100 hour minimum	10 Weeks with High School Athletics 6 Weeks with NCC Winter or Spring Sport 100 hour minimum
	Summer 2 10 weeks (June-August)	Fall 2 16 weeks (August-December)	Spring 2 16 weeks (January-May)
<b>Classes</b>	MATR 600 - Clinical Experiences in Athletic Training III (1 hour; online) MATR 620 - Principles of Nutrition and Strength and Conditioning for Athletic Training (3 hours; online)	MATR 605 - Clinical Experiences in Athletic Training IV (2 hours; blended) MATR 625 - Psychosocial Aspects of Athletic Training Practice (4 hours) MATR 640 - Special Topics in Athletic Training (4 hours) MATR 655 - Applied Research Project (2 hours)	MATR 610 - Clinical Experiences in Athletic Training V: Immersive Experience (4 hours; online) MATR 650 - Decision Making in Athletic Training (2 hours; online)
<b>Clinical</b>	10 Weeks in Practice Setting of Your Choosing 100 hour minimum	8 Weeks with Equipment Intensive Sport 8 Weeks in Practice Setting of Your Choosing 200 hour minimum	16 Weeks in Practice Setting of Your Choosing 400 hour minimum

**55 credit hours**

**900 clinical hours**

## PRE-ADMISSION OBSERVATION HOUR VERIFICATION FORM

**To the Student:** The purpose of performing observation hours is to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the scope of athletic training practice prior to applying to the program. You should take an active role in seeking settings (high schools, colleges, industrial settings, clinic settings, classroom sessions, speakers) so that you understand the places that athletic trainers work and what we do. A separate form should be completed for each athletic trainer that you observe.

**To the Supervising Athletic Trainer:** Thank you for supporting this candidate's application for the MAT program. This observer is not intended to have any athletic training knowledge or skills, and is not expected to engage in any patient care. They are expected to ask you questions about your practice, communicate proactively, and be responsible for maintaining a schedule. You may be asked to recommend this applicant at the end and we ask that you do so after evaluating these areas.

Candidate (Observer) Name:				
Location of Observation:				
Name of Certified Athletic Trainer (AT)				
BOC Number of AT:				
Email Address of AT:				
Dates of Observations	Time Started	Time Ended	Hours Observed this Date	Signature of Supervising AT
e.g., 1/1/2019	12:00 pm	3:15 pm	3.25	(signature here)

## Example Personal Statement

As an athlete I have a passion for sports and a commitment to wanting to help others. I'm also fascinated with human physiology and sports medicine, which has led me to want to study athletic training.

Ever since playing \_\_\_\_\_ in high school, I have seen the transformative power of athletic trainers. Their expertise not only helped me recover from injuries but also inspired me to understand the human body. This personal experience started my desire to pursue a career where I can make a positive impact on athletes' lives by helping them stay active.

I am choosing to major in \_\_\_\_\_ because it will help me understand more about what is needed to be successful as an athletic trainer. My favorite class in high school was \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm excited to continue to study in a related area. I worked as a student aide during my sports medicine class, which helped me understand that this is the profession for me.

In conclusion, I am passionate about athletics and am eager to begin the path to becoming an athletic trainer in the direct admit program, if accepted. Thank you for considering my application.

### Tips for your personal statement:

- Let us hear how you became interested in athletic training. Study up at [NATA.org](http://NATA.org) to learn more.
- Let us know if you've had experiences with your high school athletic trainer and how those affected you
- Tell us what you're excited to learn about and why you want to be an AT.
- Tell us about where you see yourself working in athletic training. For example, do you want to go to the professional level? Do you want to work with high school athletes? Do you have an interest in a certain injury or body region you'd like to specialize in?
- Review your essay for grammar and spelling. Consider having someone else help you review it.