

Features

ATHLETIC TRAINING

Athletic trainers learn about therapy, dedication

Stephanie Alexander
Pilot staff

Being at a five a.m. practice is dedication, especially if you are not an athlete. Athletic Training students know about dedication.

The Athletic Training program here at Gardner-Webb is a competitive program committed to educating students about recognizing and evaluating injuries occurring to athletes as set forth by the National Athletic Trainers' Association.

According to information provided by Ashley White, the Athletic Training Educational Program Director, admittance into the Athletic Training program occurs each year after a 10-week observation.

Next, the student must accumulate 80 hours of observation, and then begin the process to apply. After an application form, three letters of recommendation and an essay on the observation experience are received. An

entrance interview is then conducted. Total program enrollment is limited to a total of 24 students each year.

Two integral parts of the athletic training program are the hands-on education and field experience. Each Athletic Training student is assigned a major field experience for each year. Matthea Hungerford, a sophomore Athletic Training major was assigned to swimming this semester.

"I am at practice sometimes at 4:30 in the morning," Hungerford said. "The athletes treat us all with the up-most respect."

Practical experience is a valuable educational tool for the program. Senior Athletic Training student Darrin Wheeler said of his experience, "working with the athletes and actually seeing them get better being able to play is the best part of my job."

Athletic Training students are known for being very busy. An average day consists of treatments, practice, classes, studying and clinicals. "You never know what a day

is going to entail," Wheeler said. "I actually went to the emergency room last night with an athlete."

Wheeler is in his "senior capstone experience" also known as the next to last step to graduation. The capstone experience involves evaluating injuries and creating therapies with supervision from a certified clinical instructor.

Both Hungerford and Wheeler dedicate themselves 40 to 45 hours a week to athletic training outside of the classroom. "I don't feel like athletic training is taking away from my other classes," Hungerford said. "Making the connection between the classroom and applying what I learn is what I enjoy."

In 1999 the placement rate in athletic training careers was 92 percent. Athletic Training students select an interdisciplinary minor that consists of Kinesiology, Exercise Physiology and Anatomy and Physiology I and II.

"I can't see myself doing anything else," Wheeler said.



Junior Athletic Training major Alexis Inpy stretches out a football player's leg during the Gardner-Webb vs. Georgia Southern game.

Photo by
Stephanie
Alexander

You've got news

Get the Pilot in your inbox

Register now on at our Web site and automatically receive an email edition of the paper with every new issue.

Headline News • Sports • College events • Weather • Horoscope
It's the best way to stay informed and its free

www.gwupilot.com