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2024

# ***Athletic Trainer Workforce***



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# Presenters

- Andrea Talentino, President, Augustana College.
- Steve Hillmer, Director of Sports Medicine, Wisconsin-Whitewater.
- Stevie Baker-Watson, Director of Athletics, DePauw University.



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# ***Athletic Trainer Working Group***



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# ***DIII Athletic Trainer Working Group***

- **Charge:** To identify the factors that impact Division III intercollegiate athletics department's ability to hire and retain athletics training staff and to create recommendations to help Division III institutions address those identified factors.



# ***Working Group Members***

## Members.

- Stevie Baker-Watson, AD, DePauw.
- Rick Burr, Director of Athletics Performance, Babson.
- Ryan Callahan, Assoc. AD, Head Athletic Trainer, Wartburg.
- Josh Dreher, Assoc. AD, Head Athletic Trainer, Texas-Dallas.
- Heather Grant, Assoc. AD, Bridgewater (VA).
- Lauren Haynie, AD, Brandeis.
- Steve Hillmer, Dir. Sports Medicine, Wisconsin-Whitewater.



# ***Working Group Members cont.***

## Members.

- Ashley Hodges, AD, Notre Dame (MD).
- Marybeth Lamb, AD, Bridgewater State.
- Steve Mauro, President (PC), Alfred State.
- Becky Roark, Athletic Trainer, Pomona-Pitzer.
- Mike Snyder, AD, Pacific Lutheran.
- Andrea Talentino, President, Augustana (chair).



# Data Collection

- The working group has met every four to six weeks since July 2023. It has reviewed and collected feedback from several sources:
  - NCAA Sport Science Institute and NATA stakeholder meeting. (July 2023).
  - NATA White Paper.
  - Division III membership survey of Division III ATCs and ADs.





# *Areas of Focus*

- The working group has identified three areas of focus for potential recommendations:
  - Workload.
  - Communication and Culture.
  - Recruitment and Retention.



# ***Athletic Trainer Working Group***

## Anticipated timeline.

- Spring 2024 – Working group begins to consider and develop potential recommendations. The working group will continue to engage the membership and SAAC during this period.
- April 2024 – Initial recommendations to the Councils.
- Summer 2024 – Anticipate presenting final recommendations to the Councils.



# ***Athletic Trainer Survey***

- Summary of findings.
- Response rate: 64% (278) of Head Athletic Trainers and 50% (218) of Athletics Directors responded.



# Key Findings

## Background.

- There is an average of four full-time certified athletic trainers at each Division III institution.
- A majority have been employed at their current institution seven or more years (61%).
- Most athletic trainers report to the athletics department (78%).
- Most athletic trainers are employed on a 10-or-12-month contract (89%).

# ***Emergent Themes***

## Workload.

- On average athletic training staffs are responsible for:
  - 489 student-athletes (25% are responsible for 600 or more).
  - Cover practices and competitions at 8 locations (25% are responsible for 10 or more).
  - Are responsible for 21 sports (25% are responsible for 24 or more).



# ***Emergent Themes cont.***

## Communication and Culture.

- 50% of athletic trainers verse 11% of athletics directors responded that the head athletic trainer is never or rarely consulted about scheduling of practices and competition.
- 41% of athletic trainers say they receive less than 24 hours notice regarding changes to practice and competition that are not due to inclement weather.
- 53% of athletic trainers verse 12% of athletics directors indicated that the athletic trainer is sometimes to never consulted on legislative and/or policy changes.



# ***Emergent Themes cont.***

## Recruitment and Retention.

- 62% of athletics directors indicated inadequate compensation as the top challenge in recruiting athletic trainers.
- 63% of athletic trainers indicated that staff culture was the most important variable when searching for their current position.
- When asked for the reasons they stay at their current position, 47% of athletic trainers identified culture of the sport medicine department, 35% identified department culture and 37% cited salary.



# ***Table Discussion***



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# ***FEEDBACK FORM***



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# Topic One - Workload

- What is the role of an athletic trainer at your institution?
- Are you aware of any steps/actions that have helped the athletic training staff cover practice, competition and the athletic training room?
- What actions have been taken by your institution to help the athletic training staff balance their work hours and take time off during the academic year?

Countdown clock – 15 minutes



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# ***Open Dialogue Workload***



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# **Topic Two – Communication/Culture**

- How is your head athletic trainer engaged in decision making regarding the scheduling of practice and competition?
- When there are changes to practice and competition schedules, how is the athletic trainer engaged in the decision making when approving these changes?
- How and when does your institution consult with the athletic training staff on proposed institutional, conference and/or NCAA legislative and policy changes?

Countdown clock – 15 minutes



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# ***Open Dialogue Communication/Culture***



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# **Topic Three – Recruitment and Retention**

- What adjustments has your institution made to job descriptions, terms of employment and/or compensation to increase the candidate pool for open athletic trainer positions?
- What items/benefits have candidates for athletic trainer positions been looking for?
- What else should the working group consider as it continues its work?

Countdown clock – 15 minutes



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# ***Open Dialogue*** ***Recruitment and Retention***



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***Thank you***



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