

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Determining the Appropriate Selection and Development of Athletic Training Preceptors

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The purpose of this study was to explore how stakeholders determine what is most appropriate for the selection and development of athletic training preceptors. This study was founded on the qualitative paradigm using a phenomenological approach to inquiry. Nineteen stakeholders (preceptors or program administrators) for graduate, professional athletic training programs (12 program administrators, seven preceptors) participated in individual, semi-structured interviews. As a result of the guiding research questions, three themes emerged directly from participants' statements including their beliefs of ideal preceptors, views of preceptor development, and influences on their beliefs of preceptor selection and development. Preceptors should possess the qualities of an educator, a professional, and a leader. When designing preceptor development, administrators should use flexible delivery techniques, and these opportunities should be highly accessible given the many demands on preceptors' time. Furthermore, an emphasis on recognizing preceptors for the work they do to help students grow should be made. Finally, four factors appear to influence stakeholders' beliefs of the appropriate selection and development of preceptors, which include moments of adversity, support systems they have access to, professional development opportunities they have engaged in, and the advancement of the

athletic training profession they desire. The process of selecting and developing preceptors for athletic training professional programs is complicated. This study provides a deeper understanding of the beliefs of preceptors and program administrators and the influences which shape their views. This information will help professional organizations build best practices for the selection and development of athletic training preceptors.