



Preparing Future Faculty for Teaching in Athletic Training Programs

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CONTEXT

- Athletic training educational reform redefined education programs during the 2000's and also redefined a career path– the athletic training educator (ATE).
- A terminal degree, whether a PhD or EdD helped solidify the ATEs' role in academia, assuming the rights and responsibilities necessary for tenure/promotion, to affect policy, and for advancement.¹
- However, the degree itself does not necessarily guarantee a complete understanding of pedagogy, an integral component in assuring effective knowledge and skill delivery.^{2,3}

OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss the traditional route(s) to preparing faculty for positions in higher education (HE);
2. Examine how athletic training faculty are being prepared for their role in HE;
3. Recommend strategies to help better prepare future ATEs in HE and athletic training.

BACKGROUND

- Traditionally, graduate students prepare to become faculty members through the apprenticeship model.
- During graduate school, future ATEs might focus on research or clinical athletic training.
- Higher education is the only educational setting where classroom instructors are not required to possess any formal training in pedagogy or assessment.
- Thus, graduate students are not always fully prepared for their future roles as educators.^{4,5,6}

DESCRIPTION

After examining the related literature, six themes emerge related to developing future ATEs:

1. Developing student-educator communication⁵,
2. Modeling professionalism⁶,
3. Facilitating critical thinking⁷,
4. Developing professional mentors^{3,6,7},
5. Reflecting on teaching practice^{5,6}, and
6. Promoting teaching opportunities and best practices in classroom.^{3,4,7}

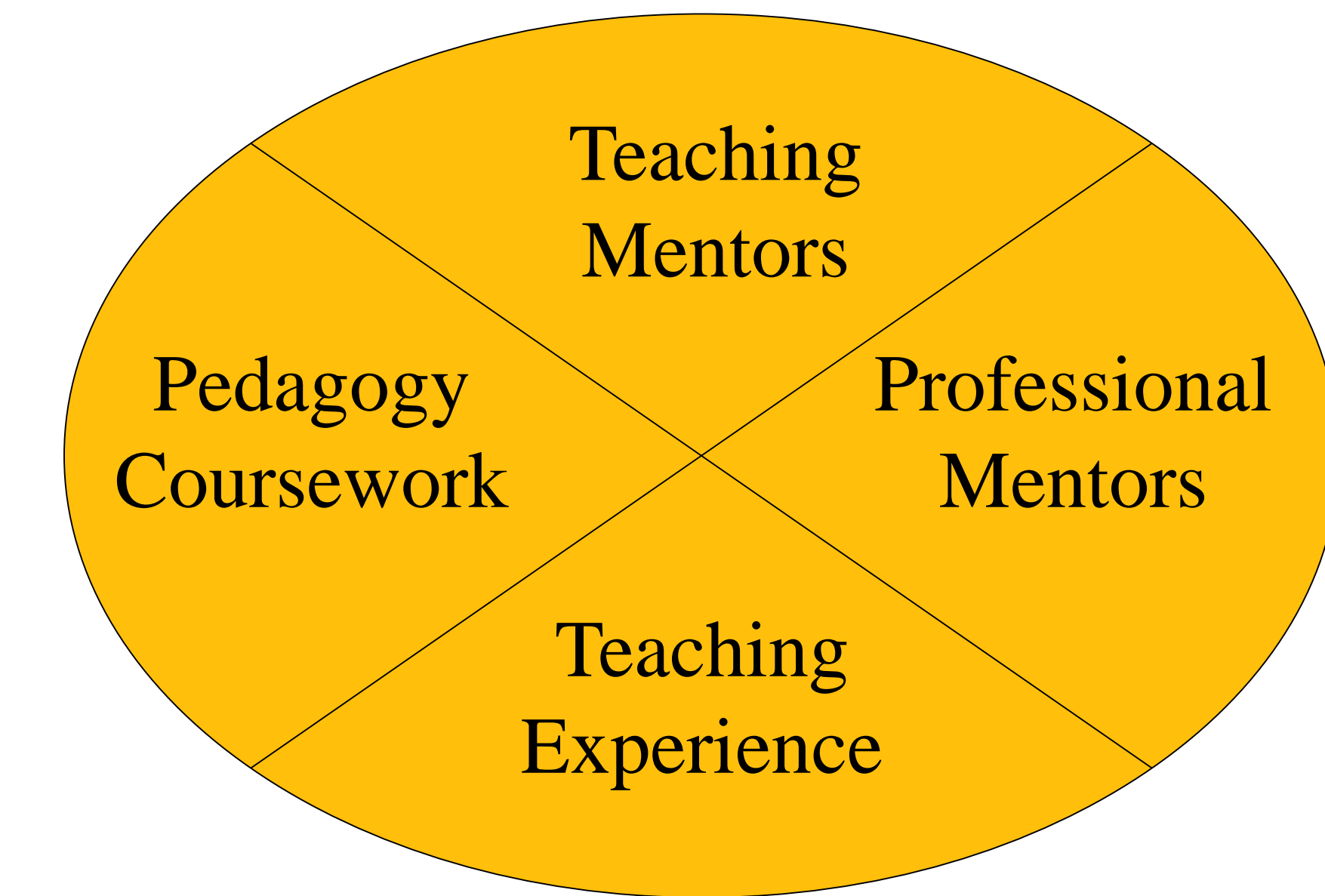
In response to calls for better preparation of future faculty members, some graduate programs have adopted faculty preparation programs in an effort to make their graduates more marketable and better prepared for roles in academia.

Tenants of Graduate Faculty Preparation Programs

1. Pedagogy and classroom teaching
2. Engaging in university and professional service
3. Acquiring skills beyond research

More recently, ATEs must now also be prepared to meet the need for understanding and engaging in interprofessional education initiatives to allow students to learn how to collaborate effectively and learn what areas of their own scope of practice might overlap with other professions.⁴

From this review of the literature, we recommend the following strategies to help in the preparation of future ATEs:



CLINICAL ADVANTAGE

- The CAATE does not set standards regarding training or experience in pedagogy. Rather, ATEs must be “qualified through professional preparation and experienced in their respective academic areas as determined by the institution.”
- Previous literature has called for more athletic trainers with doctoral degrees to become the “next generation” of leaders, researchers, and qualified educators in the field of athletic training.¹

CONCLUSION

More emphasis needs to be placed on pedagogy and on being effective educators, role models, and leaders to the next generation of athletic trainers during graduate education programs. Continued investigation of the recommendations to help prepare future ATEs should be the cornerstone in the development of any educators.

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