Similarities and Differences in Full-Time Faculty Preceptors and Graduate Associate Preceptors
Pouliot LK *, Guyer MS†, Coulon SC‡; ‡Springfield College, Springfield, MA, †Springfield College, Springfield, MA, *Merrimack College, North Andover, MA

Context: Pedagogy is an integral component in assuring effective delivery of knowledge; however, a gap remains for many preceptors on how to actually deliver the knowledge effectively. Directly observing preceptors in the clinical setting would be useful for clinical education coordinators as well as preceptors to identify how areas of content are being delivered. Objective: The purpose of this study was to analyze teaching behaviors of full-time faculty preceptors and graduate associate preceptors during practice preparation and fieldwork experience during clinical practicum experiences. Design: Qualitative methodology was the mode of inquiry. Setting: The setting was an entry level Bachelor’s CAATE accredited athletic training education program at small private school in the Northeast. Patients or Other Participants: Current college staff members (faculty and graduate students) with varied years of work experience (N = 6) were purposively selected. Athletic training students (ATS) (n = 18) were purposively selected dependent on current preceptor and team assignment. Athletic training student class standing varied according to team assignment allocated by the Clinical Education Coordinator. Data Collection and Analysis: Qualitative methodology was used during data collection through semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and field observations. Interview transcripts and observational field notes were inductively coded using constant comparative methods. Combinations of open and axial coding were utilized to assist in further classification of categories and relationships between categories. The researcher coded field observations within Doyle’s Task Systems (1979): managerial, instructional, and social. The managerial task system included tasks that were necessary to create an environment where learning and instruction took place. The instructional task system included the presentation and practice of subject matter. The social task system involved ways the ATS sought social interactions. Trustworthiness was established through the use of member checks, peer debriefing, and prolonged engagement. Results: Distinct similarities and differences between full-time faculty and graduate associate preceptors during the instructional, managerial, and social task were noted. The frequency of instruction was consistent across settings; however, the type of instruction, management styles, and social interactions differed between full-time faculty and graduate associate preceptors. Conclusions: Knowledge of task systems may provide a focused evaluation on the programmatic components of the content and development of athletic training education programs. The results should be considered when evaluating preceptors. Word Count: 372