



WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

***Health Information
Technology***

***Student Handbook
2020-2021***



Waubonsee Community College Health Information Technology Contact Information

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I. Introduction

This handbook is for students in Health Information Technology (HIT) program at Waubensee Community College. It contains information about administrative and academic policies, curriculum, and course work. It is essential that you become familiar with the information contained in the handbook in order to facilitate your progress in the program. Hopefully, the information presented here will prevent or minimize misunderstandings and inaccurate expectations. Therefore, every student is required to read, and become familiar with the contents of this handbook. Please sign and submit Appendix VI as directed.

Note: This handbook does not replace the Waubensee Community College Student Handbook.

Philosophy

It is our belief that excellence in teaching, service to the community, an emphasis on ethical, professional behavior, a high-quality academic program that offers innovative curricula and the latest advancements in technology, will prepare students for health information careers in a global economy.

Mission

The program provides instruction and professional practice experiences to assist students in developing the entry-level competencies of a health information technician. These competencies were developed by the American Health Information Management Association and are included in this handbook. The program also provides instruction for the Health Care Coding and Medical Office Certificates of Achievement. The Health Information Technology program staff is committed to providing the best possible learning environment for the student. Every effort will be made to meet the individual needs of the student within the framework of the college requirements and professional standards. The Health Information Technology program at Waubensee Community College has an experienced, professional, and well-trained faculty who facilitate your learning experience. The faculty can provide the tools and guidance. Each student is expected to accept responsibility for his/her own education and to make full use of the learning opportunities offered by the College. Together, faculty and students can make this an enjoyable experience.

II. Welcome

Welcome to the Health Information Technology program at Waubonsee Community College. Your decision to become a part of the Health Information Technology profession will prove to be rewarding as it is one of the fastest growing occupations in one of the fastest growing industries. A career in health information technology places you right where the expanding arena of health care meets the cutting edge of information technology.

What is Health Information Technology?

Health information professionals play a critical role in maintaining, collecting and analyzing the data that doctors, nurses and other health care providers rely on to deliver quality health care. They are experts in managing patient health information and medical records, administering computer information systems and coding the diagnosis and procedures for health care services provided to patients. The Health Information Technology (HIT) professional is a key player on the health care delivery team. This is one of the few health occupations in which there is little or no direct contact with patients. In an ordinary day, the HIT professional is responsible for the managing and processing of health information. This can involve collecting, assembling, analyzing, coding, transcribing, filing, retrieving, querying it; displaying it in various formats, releasing it legally, all while complying with state and federal statutes and regulatory guidelines. As the world moves from a paper-based to an electronic society, so does the health care field. The health information profession is at the forefront of this movement. Advances in medical science, legislative reforms, computerization, and the need to manage health care delivery systems and health care costs have enhanced the roles of the health information manager. Health information technology professionals work in a multitude of settings throughout the health care industry including hospitals, physician offices and clinics, long-term care facilities, insurance companies, government agencies and home care providers.

Nature of the Work

Every time health care personnel treat a patient they record what they observed and how the patient was treated medically. This record, whether paper or electronic, includes information the patient provides concerning their symptoms and medical history, the results of examinations, reports of x-rays and laboratory tests, diagnoses, and treatment plans. Medical records and health information technicians organize and evaluate these records for completeness and accuracy.

Medical records and health information technicians begin to process patients' health information by first making sure their initial medical charts are complete. They ensure all forms are completed and properly identified and signed, and all necessary information is in the computer. Sometimes, they communicate with physicians or others to clarify diagnoses or to get additional information.

Technicians who specialize in coding patients' medical information are called coding specialists or medical coders. These technicians assign a code to each diagnosis and procedure based on information given by the treating physician or healthcare provider. They consult classification manuals/software and rely, also, on their knowledge of disease processes.

The implementation of electronic health records (EHRs) has broadened and altered the job responsibilities of health information technicians. For example, with the use of EHRs, technicians must be familiar with EHR computer software, maintaining EHR security, and analyzing electronic data to improve health care information. Health information technicians use EHR software to maintain data on patient safety, patterns of disease, and disease treatment and outcomes. Technicians also may assist with improving EHR software usability and may contribute to the development and maintenance of health information networks.

Training, Qualifications and Advancement

Health information technicians entering the field have an associate degree. Employers prefer to hire Registered Health Information Technicians (RHIT). This credential is awarded to a person who has passed a written examination offered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). To qualify for the examination, a person must graduate from a two-year associate degree program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The Health Information Technology program at Waubensee Community College was accredited by CAHIIM as of October of 2013. Only graduates of an accredited health information management program are eligible for the national American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) certification examination to become RHIT certified.

The uniqueness of entry-level associate degree education for health information management is found in the environment in which the curriculum is taught, the employment setting of its graduates and the blending of course work that comprises health information management.

The associate degree curriculum represents a synthesis of curricular content drawn from general education and coupled with a unique understanding of the biomedical sciences, health data content and uses, and health data classification and reimbursement systems. It is important to note that the expertise of the associate degree graduate lies in the application of data management processes in support of health care information operations.

The focus is on preparing expert technical staff (AHIMA Framework for HIM Education, 2005)

In addition, AHIMA offers coding credentials. These include the certified coding assistant credential (CCA) and the certified coding specialist credential (CCS) and CCS-P for physician office specialization.

Health information encompasses a wide range of job functions and settings. Among these are medical records management, privacy officer, risk management, medical coding, corporate compliance, and data analysis and reporting.

Growth and Income

Constantly evolving regulations and technologies allow for lifelong learning and continued professional development. As health care advances, health information provides the patient data needed to successfully navigate the changes. As a result, health information professionals can expect to be in high demand as the health sector continues to expand. Demand is on the rise at all levels of education and credentialing. The Bureau of Labor Statistics cites medical records and health information technicians as one of the 20 fastest growing occupations in the US. They anticipate 27,800 new jobs between 2016 and 2026.

Companies with an increased demand for health information professionals include hospitals, physician's offices, academic institutions, consulting agencies, government agencies, and health care software companies. As health information technology becomes more prevalent, health information practitioners will continue to be critical components of the electronic health record (EHR) workforce. According to the US Department of Labor, health information technology will grow to encompass new support positions, including mobile support adoption positions, public health informatics, implementation support specialists, and information management redesign specialists (<http://www.hicareers.com>).

In addition to strong job prospects, competitive salaries also await graduates. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of health information technicians is projected to grow 13 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. The demand for health services is expected to increase as the population ages. Job prospects should be very good; technicians with a strong understanding of technology and computer software will be in particularly high demand.

The median annual wage for Health technologists and technicians \$42,750 in May 2016. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$25,070, and the top 10 percent earned more than \$62,840. Sources: U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm#tab-5>

III. Health Information Technology at Waubonsee Community College

Health Information Technology Program

The Health Information Technology program is open to all students. In order to be successful in the program and later in the work place our students must possess the following general qualities: interest, motivation, critical thinking skills, basic computer skills, sound judgment integrity, emotional stability and maturity, empathy, interpersonal skills, physical and mental stamina, and the ability to learn and function in a wide variety of didactic and clinical settings. The program courses are primarily offered at the Aurora Campus with evening and online scheduling options.

A combination of approaches are utilized to meet the Domains, Subdomains, and Tasks for the RHIT – off-campus activities, library research activities, technology based activities, and simulated health information technology activities which incorporate the use of health records.

During the semester prior to taking the Professional Practice Experience courses, students meet the health, immunization and security requirements of the site before registering for HIT 299.

The criminal background check and the health and immunization certificate is at the student's expense.

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Location	Health Professions and Public Service, Aurora Fox Valley, Room 107
Phone	(630) 585-7900, ex. 3900
Fax	(630) 966-4860
Homepage	http://www.waubonsee.edu/HIT

Health Information Technology Faculty

The Health Information Technology program has an exceptional group of full-time and adjunct faculty. The adjunct instructors are practicing professionals known for their expertise in their area of instruction. They complement the educational and professional experience of the full-time faculty to continually enhance the Health Information Technology program and assuring that our graduates are well equipped for the ever-changing health care environment.

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Health Information Technology Associate in Applied Science Degree Curriculum The health information technology degree provides the academic foundation necessary to prepare students to be competent health information technology professionals and meet the entry-level competencies that will enable them to apply data management processes in support of health care information operations regardless of the setting or environment. The degree is aligned with the entry level competencies defined by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

General Education Requirements

BIO260 Human Structure and Function	4
COM100/COM 121 Fundamentals of Speech Communication	3
ENG101/ENG 151 First-Year Composition I	3
ENG102/ENG 152 First-Year Composition II	3
Social Science Elective	3

Health Information Technology Core Program Requirements

CIS110 Business Information Systems	3
HIT100 Introduction to Health Information Technology	3
HIT110 Medical Terminology	3
HIT135 Health Care Delivery Systems	2
HIT140 Legal and Ethical Issues in Health Care	2

Health Information Technology Major Program Requirements

HIT210 ICD Coding	3
HIT212 Inpatient Medical Coding	3
HIT215 CPT Coding	3
HIT216 Advanced Clinical Classification Systems	3
HIT 218 Reimbursement Systems	3
HIT220 Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for the Health Information Technology Professional	3
HIT230 Data Applications and Health Care Quality	3
HIT240 Health Information Processes	3
HIT245 Health Information Data Analysis	2
HIT248 Organization Resources	2
HIT299 Professional Practice Experience	3
Total Semester Hours	60

Academic Support Services

Students may seek academic advising, career planning and personal counseling at any time during the year and are encouraged to make appointments for services. The Counseling Center provides services at all campus locations. For more information contact (630) 466-7900, ex.2361. The Health Information Technology faculty serve as mentors, advisors and role-models. Final responsibility for meeting certificate and degree requirements rests with the student.

Access Services

The Technical Standards and Essential Functions (See Appendix I) can be accomplished through direct student response, the use of prosthetic or orthotic devices or through personal assistance, e.g., readers, sign language interpreters, or note-takers. Reasonable accommodation in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act will be provided on an individual basis. The Access Center for Disability Resources is available to provide college level program appropriate and reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities who are registered with and have documentation supporting their accommodation request to the Access Center. Students seeking accommodations should initiate their requests with the Access Center for Disability Resources, Sugar Grove Campus, Student Center, Room 201, (630) 466-7900, ext. 2564, Video Phone: (630) 405-6110, by email at accesscenter@waubonsee.edu. Additional information is found on the Waubonsee Community College website: <http://www.waubonsee.edu/learning/academicSupport/access/>

Accreditation

The Health Information Technology Associate in Applied Science Degree program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

Graduates of a CAHIIM-accredited program are eligible to take the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) exam.

Health Information Technology Advisory Committee

The Health Information Technology Advisory Committee advises the Waubonsee Community College Health Information Technology program on current trends in addition to providing review and provide input into the program goals and objectives and support the program as speakers, providing practice affiliations and referrals to the program. It is composed of practicing health information managers and other professionals within the community of interest.

Career Guidance

The college often receives notices of position openings in the health information management field. These notices are posted on the college's electronic job board (www.collegecentral.com/Waubonsee) and on file at the Career Services Center located in the

Student Center. Other excellent resources for positions in health care organizations are the job banks at www.careerassist.ahima.org/careers and www.ilhima.org/careers. LinkedIn is a great place to network with professionals in your field. Note that this is a professional website, rather than a social networking site like Facebook and Twitter. If you are a member of AHIMA, be sure to add the organization in your LinkedIn network because members of the AHIMA network send updates of job postings to all members of their network.

Waubonsee Health Information Technology Student Association (WHITSA)

The Waubonsee Health Information Technology Student Association is an opportunity for students to come together outside of the classroom. Health Information Technology students are encouraged to join WHITSA to gain access to opportunities for success within the Health Information Technology field. WHITSA offers workshops to benefit the student professionally, networking opportunities from guest speakers and association events, opportunities for leadership, and active participation in community service events.

Professional Organization (AHIMA) Student Membership

The health information technology professional organization is the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). The association's professional publication is the *Journal of AHIMA*, published monthly. An informative web site is maintained which can provide valuable information to enhance student learning at www.ahima.org. Health Information Technology students are encouraged to join AHIMA after completion of the Core Program requirements. Student membership comes with a subscription to the *Journal of AHIMA*, access to a wealth of information on the AHIMA web site, and automatic membership in the Illinois Health Information Technology Association. See Appendix II for additional information.

Academic Ethics

The Waubonsee Community College standards are addressed in the following documents and can be found in the Waubonsee Community College Student Handbook:

- Waubonsee Community College Student Conduct
- Waubonsee Community College Plagiarism Statement
- 3.170.01 Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Network User Rules

Professional Ethics

Codes of Ethics are commonly created by professional organizations to guide its members' behavior and practice when carrying out professional work. In addition, Codes may serve as a basis for judging the merit of a formal complaint pertaining to violation of professional ethical standards. This handbook includes the *Codes of Ethics from American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA): Professional Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical Coding*.

AHIMA CODE OF ETHICS 2011

Ethical Principles: The following ethical principles are based on the core values of the American Health Information Management Association and apply to AHIMA members and certificants.

A health information management professional shall:

- I. Advocate, uphold and defend the individual's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information.
- II. Put service and the health and welfare of persons before self-interest and conduct oneself in the practice of the profession so as to bring honor to oneself, their peers, and to the health information management profession.
- III. Preserve, protect, and secure personal health information in any form or medium and hold in the highest regard the contents of the records and other information of a confidential nature, taking into account the applicable statutes and regulations.
- IV. Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical practices or procedures and report such practices.
- V. Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing education, research, publications, and presentations.
- VI. Recruit and mentor students, peers and colleagues to develop and strengthen professional workforce.
- VII. Represent the profession to the public in a positive manner.
- VIII. Perform honorably health information management association responsibilities, either appointed or elected, and preserve the confidentiality of any privileged information made known in any official capacity.
- IX. State truthfully and accurately their credentials, professional education, and experiences.
- X. Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting health information practice.
- XI. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.

Adapted with permission from the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers, 2011.

Confidentiality

The doctrine of confidentiality is a cornerstone of the Health Information Technology profession. It is our responsibility to ensure that confidential information is protected and that data security measures are in place to prevent unauthorized access. Students will be exposed to this concept throughout their Health Information Technology academic career and will have opportunities during their Professional Practice Experience to demonstrate their understanding of it. Students will also be asked to sign confidentiality statements before beginning the Professional Practice Experience courses.

IV. Academic Expectations and General Information

Curriculum

The Health Information Technology curriculum is designed to provide students with the opportunities to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes of a health information technology professional as specified in the Entry Level Competencies, Domains and Subdomains in Appendix II. Domains represent major areas of responsibilities or duties involved in the profession at the Associate Degree levels. A domain is divided into Subdomains that is further divided into tasks. Tasks specify the activities performed the goal of the work activity and how it is accomplished. The Domains, Subdomains, and Tasks list the abilities expected of a health information technology graduate upon entry into the profession. These statements serve many purposes. They are used to design and evaluate the Health Information Technology curriculum to assure that the graduates will be prepared to practice in today's health care field. The curriculum sequence is planned to allow students the greatest chance for success and graduation. The Entry Level Competencies, Domains and Subdomains illustrate in which course the Subdomains are covered. They also serve as the basis for the formulation of the national certification exams. Hence, it is extremely important that Health Information Technology students be knowledgeable of the abilities that will be expected of them upon entry into the career.

Progression and Retention

Satisfactory progress in the Health Information Technology program promotes and enhances retention and expansion of knowledge and skills. Therefore, once HIT courses are begun, students are advised to progress each semester. The student must complete prerequisites of each course prior to enrolling in the next course. Students must attain a minimum grade of "C" in all HIT and supporting courses as specified in the college catalog and must repeat any HIT or supporting course in which (s)he receives a final grade of less than a "C". The student must have achieved this grade level in the prerequisite classes before being eligible to enroll in the Professional Practice Experience courses. *Please review the college catalog and Appendix IV for course prerequisites.*

Grading

Please refer to Waubonsee Community College student handbook for details on the Grading System for Waubonsee Community College.

Attendance

You are expected to attend classes and to arrive at or before the designated starting time. Arriving late disturbs the class, especially during testing. If you have more than two consecutive unexcused absences for illness, you may be required to provide a physician's excuse to return

to class. **Note:** It is *your* responsibility to obtain the class notes, homework, etc. for any day you are absent.

Class Participation

You are expected to be an active participant in the teaching and learning process.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Each student is responsible for knowledge of and compliance with the Waubonsee Community College Code of Student Conduct which is available through the Student Activities Office (Student Center, Room 126), from the Dean for Counseling and Student Support (Student Center, Room 274), or from the Counseling and Student Support Center (Student Center, Room 262). The Student Handbook is also available in the Health Professions and Public Service

Dean's office at the Aurora Fox Valley Campus, Room 107 and at the Aurora Downtown and Plano campuses.

Computer Skills

It is expected, at minimum, that students beginning the Health Information Technology program have the necessary skills to be effective in an online supported learning environment. All face-to-face courses will have an online supplement and many are offered totally online. During the program you will learn and use the Microsoft Suite and learn and use vendor specific Health Information Technology related software. Prior to HIT 100, at minimum, a student should be able to:

- Send and receive emails
- Attach a file to an email
- Download files from an email
- Perform an Internet search
- Create folders and folder data structures
- Move/copy files from one folder to another
- Zip/unzip files

If you cannot do the above there are additional courses that will help you learn these skills. Please see a counselor for advice on gaining these skills.

Ethical Behavior

It is expected that each health information technology student will engage in ethical behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, the avoidance of cheating and plagiarism on tests and in papers and that patient and facility proprietary information will remain confidential (no discussion with persons without a need to know).

Credit by Exam

If you have training or work experience that you think has sufficiently covered the material in an HIT course; you may consider taking a proficiency exam to be awarded credit for that class. This might apply to someone who attended a non-accredited school or training program or someone who has long-time, direct experience in the field.

Proficiency exams are available for several HIT classes, except for the Professional Practice Experience courses. If you have discussed the option with a faculty member or program coordinator and have determined that you are prepared to earn credit by exam, please email the program coordinator, Andrea Brus abrus@waubonsee.edu with your full name, student ID number (X00...) and the course(s) you would like to test.

The rules for credit by exam:

1. Credit by proficiency examination may be granted to students who are registered and in good standing (2.0 GPA) at Waubonsee Community College for proficiency in subject matter.
2. Students must achieve 80% or better to receive proficiency credit for the class.
3. A maximum of 6 semester hours of coursework may be received through proficiency.
4. Proficiency credit is posted on the transcript.
5. Students can only take an exam one time.
6. Students must NOT be enrolled in the course that they are testing or previously taken the course and received a D or F.
7. Exams are offered on an as needed basis.

Proficiency Credit Based on Active/Current Credentials

The Health Information Technology program has established standard policies regarding which courses will be granted proficiency credit based on different health-related active/current credentials. A maximum of 12 semester hours can be granted.

Please see the dean for the form to request proficiency credit.

Credential	Courses Waived
CCS	HIT 110, HIT 210, HIT 212, HIT 220
CCS-P	HIT 110, HIT 215, HIT 220
CPC-H, CPC-A, CPC-P	HIT 110, HIT 215, HIT 220

Length of Time in Program

Students are encouraged to complete the Health Information Technology program courses in two to five years.

Professional Practice Experience

An important part of your education is gaining professional practice experience (PPE) prior to graduation. In HIT 299 Professional Practice Experience, students will complete duties that are career related, progressive and challenging under the direction of a facility employee. HIT 299 requires 160 clock hours of application of theory to practice. The PPE may take place in any type of facility related to health information management. These organizations may include hospitals, nursing facilities, home health agencies, health maintenance organizations, insurance companies, health information educational programs, state health departments, health care consulting, billing offices, contract research organizations, and quality improvement organizations. All activities required in the program must be educational and students must not be substituted for paid staff. The practice experience is arranged cooperatively between the student and the Health Information Technology program coordinator. Prior to participating in professional practice activities at a health care facility, students must meet the applicable health requirements set by the facility and additional requirements such as criminal background checks and drug screening. There is no proficiency allowed for the PPE courses. Please refer to the Appendix V for more information.

Service Work Policy

All activities required in the PPE must be educational. Health Information Technology PPE students must not be substituted for paid staff. This policy does not prohibit a paid PPE but is designed to assure that students gain experience to reinforce the competencies and skill sets, and are not used simply for backlog work in the absence of appropriate paid staff.

Appendix I

Technical Standards and Essential Functions Technical standards and essential functions are developed to ensure that students have the abilities required to participate and potentially be successful in all aspects of the respective programs. Students are required to meet technical standards and essential functions for the Health Information Technology programs as indicated below. If an applicant or student is unable to meet all of the outlined standards, he/she may be advised to consider another program of study and/or denied permission to enroll in HIT 299, Professional Practice Experience.

Waubonsee Community College Health Information Technology Technical Standards and Essential Functions

The following technical standards and essential functions outline reasonable expectations of a student in the Health Information Technology programs for the performance of these functions. (See the table on page 15)

The student must demonstrate the following abilities:

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard (Not Limited to)
Observation	Ability to participate actively in all demonstrations, laboratory exercise, and clinical experiences in the professional program component. Such observation usually requires functional use of visual, auditory, and somatic sensations.	<p>Visual (Corrected as necessary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Able to visually discriminate alphanumeric numbers for entering into database. ❑ Able to visually discriminate different numbers. ❑ Able to not transpose numbers. ❑ Recognize and interpret diagnosis codes. ❑ Recognize and differentiate between ICD and CPT codes. <p>Auditory (Corrected as necessary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Recognize and respond to voices. ❑ Distinguish between direct orders and instructions. <p>Tactile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Turn pages using thumbs and fingers on both hands.
Communication	Ability to communicate effectively in English using verbal, non-verbal and written formats with faculty, other students, clients, and all members of the healthcare team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Able to elicit information. ❑ Assess nonverbal communications. ❑ Transmit information to fellow students, faculty and staff, and members of the health care team. ❑ Receive, write, and interpret written communication in both academic and clinical settings.

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard (Not Limited to)
Motor	Sufficient motor ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective emergency exiting from building, corridors, file areas and tight spaces. Sufficient motor ability to perform basic filing, shifting and moving records from various locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Demonstrate adequate coordination, balance, and speed when entering data into computer. ❑ Move, adjust and position oneself to bending, stooping, sitting, and squatting for long periods of time without standing or moving around. ❑ Lift up to 30 pounds. ❑ Sit for long periods of time (6-8 hours). ❑ Possess finger and manual dexterity necessary to manipulate computer equipment and adding machine.
Intellectual	Ability to collect, interpret and integrate information and make decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Read and comprehend relevant information in textbooks, medical records and professional literature. ❑ Measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize. ❑ Utilize intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment and complete tasks within required time limits. ❑ Retain information. ❑ Apply knowledge to new situations and to problem solving scenarios.

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard (Not Limited to)
Behavioral and Social Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Possess the emotional health and stability required for full utilization of the student’s intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with members of the health care team. ❑ Possess the ability to tolerate taxing workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical settings. ❑ Possess compassion, integrity, concern for others, and motivation. ❑ Possess the ability to demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Manage heavy academic schedules and deadlines. ❑ Perform in fast-paced clinical situations. ❑ Display flexibility. ❑ Sustain professional activities for prolonged periods under conditions of physical and emotional stress. ❑ Demonstrate emotional health required for full utilization of intellectual abilities and exercise of good judgment. ❑ Demonstrate integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation. ❑ Accepts responsibility and accountability for one’s own actions. ❑ Develop mature, sensitive and effective relationships with clinical team. ❑ Comply with the professional standards of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

Appendix II

AHIMA-American Health Information Management Association

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is the dynamic professional association that represents more than 100,000 specially educated health information management professionals who work throughout the healthcare industry. Health information management professionals serve the healthcare industry and the public by managing, analyzing, and utilizing data vital for patient care -- and making it accessible to healthcare providers for real time decision-making. Information about AHIMA is available at their web site of www.AHIMA.org.

To promote continued competency, AHIMA requires mandatory continuing education. Registered Health Information Technicians are required to earn 20 continuing education hours every two years in order to retain credentialed status. AHIMA also offers coding and other credentials.

Associate Degree Entry Level Competencies

I. Domain: Healthcare Data Management

A. Subdomain: Health Data Structure, Content and Standards

1. Collect and maintain health data (such as data elements, data sets, and databases).
2. Conduct analysis to ensure that documentation in the health record supports the diagnosis and reflects the patient's progress, clinical findings and discharge status.
3. Apply policies and procedures to ensure the accuracy of the health data.
4. Verify timelines, completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of data and data sources for patient care, management, billing reports, registries and/or databases.

B. Subdomain: Healthcare Information Requirements and Standards

1. Monitor and apply organization-wide health record documentation guidelines.
2. Apply policies and procedures to ensure organizational compliance with regulations and standards.
3. Maintain the accuracy and completeness of the patient record as defined by the organizational policy and external regulation standards.
4. Assist in preparing the organization for accreditation, licensing and/or certification surveys.

C. Subdomain: Clinical Classification Systems

1. Use and maintain electronic applications and work processes to support clinical classification and coding.
2. Apply diagnosis/procedure codes according to current nomenclature.
3. Ensure accuracy of diagnostic/procedural groupings such as DRG, MSDRG, APC and so on.
4. Adhere to current regulations and established guidelines in code assignment.
5. Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.

6. Use and maintain applications and processes to support other clinical classification and nomenclature systems (ex. DSM IV, SNOMED-CT).
7. Resolve discrepancies between coded data and supporting documents.

D. Subdomain: Reimbursement Methodologies

1. Apply policies and procedures for the use of clinical data required in reimbursement and prospective payment systems (PPS) in healthcare delivery.
2. Apply policies and procedures to comply with the changing regulations among various payment systems for healthcare services such as Medicare, Medicaid, managed care and so forth.
3. Support accurate billing through coding, charge master, claims management and bill reconciliation processes.
4. Use established guidelines to comply with reimbursement and reporting requirements such as the National Correct Coding Initiative.
5. Compile patient data and perform data quality reviews to validate code assignments and compliance with reporting requirements such as outpatient prospective payment systems.
6. Ensure accuracy of diagnostic/procedural groupings such as DRG, APC and so on.

II. Domain: Health Statistics, Biomedical Research and Quality Management

A. Subdomain: Health Statistics, Biomedical Research and Quality Management

1. Collect, maintain and report data for clinical indices/databases/registries to meet specific organization needs such as medical research and disease registries.
2. Collect, organize and present data for quality management, utilization management, risk management and other related studies.
3. Comprehend basic descriptive, institutional and healthcare vital statistics.

B. Subdomain: Quality Management and Performance Improvement

1. Abstract and report data for facility-wide quality management and performance improvement programs.
2. Analyze clinical data to identify trends that demonstrate quality, safety and effectiveness of healthcare.

III. Domain: Health Services Organization and Delivery

A. Subdomain: Healthcare Delivery Systems

1. Apply current laws, accreditation, licensure and certification standards related to health information initiatives from the national, state, local and facility levels.
2. Differentiate the roles of various providers and disciplines throughout the continuum of healthcare and respond to their information needs.

B. Healthcare Privacy, Confidentiality, Legal and Ethical Issues

1. Adhere to the legal and regulatory requirements related to the health information infrastructure.
2. Apply policies and procedures for access and disclosure of personal health information.
3. Release patient-specific data to authorized users.
4. Maintain user access logs/systems to track access to and disclosure of identifiable patient data.
5. Apply and promote ethical standards of practice.

IV. Domain: Information Technology and Systems

A. Subdomain: Information and Communication Technologies

1. Use technology, including hardware and software to ensure data collection, storage, analysis and reporting of information.
2. Use common software applications such as spreadsheets, databases, word processing, graphics, presentation, email, and so on in the execution of work processes.
3. Use specialized software in the completion of HIM processes such as record tracking, release of information, coding, grouping, registries, billing, quality improvement and imaging.
4. Apply policies and procedures to the use of networks, including intranet and internet applications to facilitate the electronic health record (EHR), personal health record (PHR), public health and other administrative applications.
5. Participate in the planning, design, selection, implementation, integration, testing, evaluation and support for EHRs.

B. Subdomain: Data, Information and File Structures

1. Apply knowledge of the database architecture and design (such as data dictionary) to meet departmental needs.

C. Subdomain: Data Storage and Retrieval

1. Use appropriate electronic or imaging technology for data/record storage.
2. Query and generate reports to facilitate information retrieval using appropriate software.
3. Apply retention and destruction policies for health information.

D. Subdomain: Data Security

1. Apply confidentiality and security measures to protect electronic health information.
2. Protect data integrity and validity using software or hardware technology.
3. Apply departmental and organizational data and information system security policies.
4. Use and summarize data compiled from audit trails and data quality monitoring programs.

V. Domain: Organizational Resources

A. Subdomain: Human Resources

1. Apply the fundamentals of team leadership.
2. Participate in and work in teams and committees.
3. Conduct orientation and training programs.
4. Monitor and report staffing levels and productivity standards for health information functions.
5. Use tools and techniques to monitor, report and improve processes.
6. Comply with local, state and federal labor regulations.

B. Financial and Resource Management

1. Make recommendations for items to include in budgets and contracts.
2. Monitor and order supplies needed for work processes.
3. Monitor coding and revenue cycle processes.
4. Recommend cost-saving and efficient means of achieving work processes and goals.
5. Contribute to work plans, policies, procedures and resource requisitions in relation to job functions.

Communities of Practice

Student members have access to the Communities of Practice (COP), the Health Information Technology Body of Knowledge (BOK) and the job bank. The COPs are virtual communities that address topics of interest and areas of specialization. Communities of Practice feature chat, email, problem solving capabilities in threaded discussions, research functionalities and more. With over 135 communities to choose from you can network with members across the U.S. and beyond.

Here is just a sample of the communities you can join:

- Ambulatory Care Physician Practice
- Students
- Recent graduates
- HIT Professionals in IT Roles
- Coding

The Body of Knowledge is part of Communities of Practice. It is an online library devoted to health information management including articles from the Journal of AHIMA, practice briefs, position statements, job descriptions, and more. Always current and always comprehensive, the FORE Library: HIT Body of Knowledge is always available, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Mentoring Program

The AHIMA Mentor Program links and promotes ongoing dialogue between Health Information Technology students and experienced, enthusiastic, and committed Health Information Technology professionals who are willing to contribute to the future excellence of the Health Information Technology profession. AHIMA mentors share their experiences with students, offer advice and encouragement, answer questions, and act as the leaders and advisors that we all wish we had access to at the beginning of our careers. The mentoring program will be primarily through the Student Community of Practice

Professional Credentials

Health Information Technology professionals use the following AHIMA credentials. They are earned by completing the necessary education and passing of national certification examinations. For additional information on the eligibility requirements and certifications, reference this link <http://www.AHIMA.org/certification>.

Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)

This credential requires an associate degree from an AHIMA accredited program and successful performance on the RHIT certification exam. RHITs are health information technicians who ensure the quality of medical records by verifying their completeness, accuracy, and proper entry into computer systems. They may also use computer applications to assemble and analyze patient data for the purpose of improving patient care or controlling costs. RHITs often specialize in coding diagnoses and procedures in patient records for reimbursement and research. An RHIT's responsibilities also typically include: maintaining and using health data; controlling the use and release of health data and aggregate information; and supervising staff.

The **RHIT** exam is computer based and can be taken year-round. Students in CAHIIM-accredited programs are eligible to apply for and take the RHIT certification exam while enrolled in their final term of study. Refer to <http://www.AHIMA.org/certification/rhia.asp> for additional information on the exam.

Certified Coding Associate (CCA)

The CCA is the first credential for entry-level coding professionals. It allows new coders to demonstrate their competence and provides recognition for coders who have coding training but lack significant job experience. For employees in the job hunt, it offers an advantage over non-certified coders. For employers, it is a way to guarantee the coders working for you have the training necessary to code diagnostic and procedural data. CCA holders are ready to perform basic coding, billing, and abstracting in a healthcare facility. Possible job titles include coding associate, coder, medical record analyst, or health data analyst. They work in any organization that hires entry-level coders, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, physician offices, ambulatory care facilities, home health agencies, and in other areas such as durable medical equipment providers, insurance companies, and medical billing companies.

To be eligible to take the CCA exam, candidates must have earned a United States high school diploma or the equivalent. Although not required, it is strongly recommended that candidates have at least six months experience in a healthcare organization applying ICD-9-CM and CPT coding conventions and guidelines, or have completed either an AHIMA-approved coding certificate program, or other formal coding training program. The CCA exam is not linked to any formal education or training in coding.

The Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) or Certified Coding Specialist-Physician (CCS-P)

The CCS or CCS-P is the recognized expert in analyzing and classifying health data using nationally accepted systems. Clinical coding is used to report information for reimbursement purposes, research, statistical reporting, and health policy decision-making.

The CCS or CCS-P is earned by passing a national certification exam. For eligibility specific requirements refer to <http://www.AHIMA.org/certification/ccs> or [ccsp.asp](http://www.AHIMA.org/certification/ccsp).

There are other professional organizations, in addition to AHIMA which are relevant to the health information professional. The American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC) offers coding credentials. The Board of Medical Specialty Coding (BMSC) and Professional Association of Healthcare Coding Specialists (PAHCS) both offer credentialing in specialty coding. The National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA) offers a credential as a Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR). To learn more about the credentials available and their specific requirements, contact the credentialing organization directly.

Health Information Professionals Week

Health Information Professionals Week, (recognized in the month of March), is designed to raise awareness among healthcare professionals, their employers, and the public of the importance of protecting the privacy, confidentiality, and security of personal health information. Health Information Professionals Week is a showcase for the thousands of health information management (HIM) professionals who perform their duties masterfully throughout the year. The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is honored to provide support, representation, and training to HIM professionals for these valuable contributions to the healthcare industry.

The AHIMA National meeting is held in the fall of each year. The meeting is held throughout the United States in various cities.

Appendix III

American Health Information Management Association Standards of Ethical Coding

The Standards of Ethical Coding are based on the American Health Information Management Association's (AHIMA's) Code of Ethics. Both sets of principles reflect expectations of professional conduct for coding professionals involved in diagnostic and/or procedural coding or other health record data abstraction.

The AHIMA Code of Ethics is relevant to all AHIMA members and credentialed HIM professionals and students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Coding is one of the core HIM functions, and due to the complex regulatory requirements affecting the health information coding process, coding professionals are frequently faced with ethical challenges. The AHIMA Standards of Ethical Coding are intended to assist coding professionals and managers in decision-making processes and actions, outline expectations for making ethical decisions in the workplace, and demonstrate coding professionals' commitment to integrity during the coding process, regardless of the purpose for which the codes are being reported. They are relevant to all coding professionals and those who manage the coding function, regardless of the healthcare setting in which they work or whether they are AHIMA members or nonmembers.

These Standards of Ethical Coding have been revised in order to reflect the current healthcare environment and modern coding practices. The previous revision was published in 1999.

Coding professionals should:

- Apply accurate, complete, and consistent coding practices for the production of high- quality healthcare data.
- Report all healthcare data elements (e.g. diagnosis and procedure codes, present on admission indicator, discharge status) required for external reporting purposes (e.g. reimbursement and other administrative uses, population health, quality and patient safety measurement, and research) completely and accurately, in accordance with regulatory and documentation standards and requirements and applicable official coding conventions, rules, and guidelines.
- Assign and report only the codes and data that are clearly and consistently supported by health record documentation in accordance with applicable code set and abstraction conventions, rules, and guidelines.
- Query provider (physician or other qualified healthcare practitioner) for clarification and additional documentation prior to code assignment when there is conflicting, incomplete, or ambiguous information in the health record regarding a significant reportable condition or procedure or other reportable data element dependent on health record documentation (e.g. present on admission indicator).

- Refuse to change reported codes or the narratives of codes so that meanings are misrepresented.
- Refuse to participate in or support coding or documentation practices intended to inappropriately increase payment, qualify for insurance policy coverage, or skew data by means that do not comply with federal and state statutes, regulations and official rules and guidelines.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting proper coding practices.
- Advance coding knowledge and practice through continuing education.
- Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical coding or abstraction practices or procedures.
- Protect the confidentiality of the health record at all times and refuse to access protected health information not required for coding-related activities (examples of coding-related activities include completion of code assignment, other health record data abstraction, coding audits, and educational purposes).
- Demonstrate behavior that reflects integrity, shows a commitment to ethical and legal coding practices, and fosters trust in professional activities.

Revised and approved by the House of Delegates 09/08

Appendix IV

Health Information Technology Course Prerequisites and Recommended Prerequisites

	Course Title	Pre-req.	Recommended Prerequisite
HIT100	Intro to Health Information Technology	None	
HIT110	Medical Terminology	None	HIT100 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT135	Health Care Delivery Systems	None	HIT100 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT140	Legal and Ethical Issues in Health Care	None	HIT100 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT210	ICD Coding	HIT100 HIT220	HIT 110 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT 212	Inpatient Coding	HIT 100 BIO 260	HIT 220 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT 215	CPT Coding	HIT100 HIT220	HIT 110 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT216	Advanced Clinical Classification Systems	HIT210 HIT215	
HIT218	Reimbursement Systems	HIT135 HIT216	HIT216 as prior or concurrent enrollment
HIT220	Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for the HIT Professional	BIO272	
HIT230	Data Applications and Health Care Quality	HIT240	
HIT240	Health Information Processes	HIT100	
HIT245	Health Information Data Analysis	HIT100	
HIT248	Organization Resources	HIT100	
HIT299	PPE	Approval	See page 27 for approval information.

Appendix V

Professional Practice Experience

An important part of your education is gaining professional practice experience (PPE) prior to graduation. The PPE is designed to provide students with practical work experience in the Health Information Technology Degree competencies and domains. In the Professional Practice Experience, students gain actual observation and work experience under the direction of a facility employee. The practice experience is arranged by the PPE Coordinator or designee. The internship may take place in any type of facility related to health information management.

These organizations may include hospitals, nursing facilities, home health agencies, health maintenance organizations, insurance companies, health information management educational programs, state health departments, health care consulting, billing offices, contract research organizations, and quality improvement organizations. Prior to participating in professional practice activities at a health care facility, students must meet the applicable health requirements set by the facility and additional requirements such as a criminal background check and drug screening. If there are concerns about passing the requirements, it is recommended that the student complete the screening prior to beginning the Health Information Technology program. All activities required in the PPE must be educational and students must not be substituted for paid staff; your PPE can be a paid experience. If you are currently working at the same place you wish to do your PPE please contact the PPE faculty as early as possible.

Health and safety hazards are associated with participating in internships as a student in a health related program. They include, but are not limited to needle sticks, inhalation of microorganisms, and contact with infected body fluids. The student is responsible for following infection control guidelines in the clinical facilities, maintaining safe practices, and providing their own health insurance.

Expectations

The 160-hours are to be completed during the scheduled 16-week (typical) semester that the student enrolls in HIT 299. The PPE provides students with concentrated, uninterrupted time to observe and demonstrate the process from problem identification to resolution/identification of alternate solutions. All students are required to complete a written report on the experience.

Approval

In order to obtain PPE approval, each student must schedule a meeting with the Program Coordinator. It is recommended that the meeting be initiated one semester prior to all completed course work. The Program Coordinator may be reached at abrus@waubonsee.edu or (630) 801-7900, ext. 4242.

Professional Practice Attendance

Absenteeism and tardiness are considered unprofessional and undesirable traits; every effort should be made to attend each practice experience. Absences must be kept to an absolute minimum since these create a hardship on the facility and reflect on the student's dependability. All absences must be for legitimate or emergency reasons.

The following is the procedures for reporting absences:

- Notify the PPE Site Supervisor prior to the scheduled time of arrival to explain the absence.
- Notify the PPE coordinator to report the absence

In case of emergencies and the student cannot attend the assigned practice experience, the student is to notify the coordinator and PPE Site Supervisor as soon as possible. You will need to schedule the make-up date with the PPE Site Supervisor. This will be at the convenience of the PPE Site Supervisor. Absences must be made up prior to the end of the semester. Do not ask to leave early—you are expected to complete a certain number of hours in the field to complete your PPE experience.

Appearance

Students must be cognizant that they represent the profession of Health Information Technology and Waubonsee Community College. A general rule is to adhere to the facility's dress code. If there are questions regarding proper attire and appearance, discuss them with the PPE coordinator and Site Supervisor.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Through your coursework you have learned how vital the concept of confidentiality is in the Health Information Technology profession. The internship is where this knowledge is put into practice. You must be especially aware of the confidential nature of the information to which you will have access. Students are expected to:

- Adhere to the ethical guidelines set forth by AHIMA
- Abide by the Waubonsee Community College Code of Student Conduct
- Abide by applicable facility policies and procedures
- Abide by HIPAA rules

Disciplinary Action

The PPE facility and/or coordinator shall have the right to immediately exclude any Health Information Technology student from a PPE when it deems that the performance or conduct of the Health Information Technology student is disruptive or unethical. Any violations recorded

by the PPE Site Supervisor shall be reported to the PPE Coordinator. Further action may be taken as referenced in the Waubensee Community College Student Handbook.

****Refer to the course syllabus for additional details and expectations. ****

Appendix VI

It is the student's responsibility to read, understand and abide by all policies and requirements listed in the Student Handbook for the Health Information Technology Program, the Waubensee Community College Catalog and the Waubensee Community College Student Handbook.

A copy of this agreement will be returned to you and the original kept in your file held by the Program Coordinator.

I have read and understand the policies in the attached Handbook and understand that it is my responsibility to know and follow these policies. A copy of this agreement has been given to me. I agree to abide by these policies.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

X-Number

Please return this form via email, fax, or mail to the Health Professions and Public Service Division (information on page 5).