



program handbook 2011/2012

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
associate degree program

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize the student with the policies of the program, so as to give direction to the student throughout their course of study.

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MercyCollege

OUR MISSION

Mercy College of Ohio, a Catholic institution with a focus on healthcare, educates and inspires students to lead and to serve in the global community.

OUR VISION

We will be the leader in educating individuals committed to intellectual inquiry, social engagement, and life long learning.

OUR VALUES

Compassion - Displaying respect, empathy, and a willingness to listen.

Human Dignity - Respecting the significance of each individual.

Excellence - Pursuing distinction in our professional and personal lives through quality academics and intellectual inquiry.

Service - Engaging the college community to enrich the lives of students through professional and community service.

Sacredness of Life - Revering all life through our thoughts, words, and actions.

Justice - Acting with integrity, fairness, honesty, and truthfulness.

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Mercy College of Ohio

Who Are We?

Mercy College of Ohio is a Catholic, undergraduate institution of higher education founded by the Sisters of Mercy and sponsored by Mercy Health Partners. Our focus is to provide health care and health science related programs, continuing professional education programs, and other community services. We value and provide the integration of general and professional studies as the basis for successful career preparation. Excellence in the teaching and learning experience is rooted in the correlation of theory and practice.

Mission Statement

Mercy College is a Catholic institution of higher education dedicated to inspiring its students to a commitment to lifelong learning and social responsibility in the spirit of the Mercy heritage and values.

Vision

As a faith-based community of learners, we envision creating leaders who value intellectual inquiry and social responsibility by living the Mercy core values. We seek to nurture the whole person and to inspire our students to be of service and to mentor others through the twenty-first century and beyond.

Values

Compassion – Displaying respect, care, empathy, and consideration to everyone we meet

Human Dignity – Valuing the diversity and significance of each individual, rooted in our belief that all are created in the image and likeness of God

Excellence – Focusing on the areas of academics and intellectual inquiry to pursue distinction in our professional and personal lives

Sacredness of Life – Reverencing all life through our thoughts, words, and actions

Service – Dedicating ourselves to improving the lives of others through professional and community services

Justice – Acting with integrity, honesty, and truthfulness

Mercy College Institutional Learning Outcomes

The philosophy behind a Mercy College education is that an individual, regardless of his/her chosen profession, needs to possess both a broad knowledge-base and the core abilities which characterize an educated person. At Mercy College, this knowledge base and these core abilities are emphasized in all courses. Students demonstrate mastery of the Mercy College Institutional Learning Outcomes (formerly General Education Core Abilities) through the completion of a student portfolio, which enables the Humanities/Social Science Division, the College, and, most importantly, the student to assess student learning. This General Education Portfolio presents documentation which demonstrates the student's work, abilities, and growth throughout her/his academic career at Mercy College of Ohio.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

1. **Communication:** To develop fundamental literacy in reading, writing, speaking and listening in order to communicate effectively.
2. **Critical Thinking:** To reason logically, using data from appropriate disciplines in the process of problem solving and decision-making.
3. **Mathematics:** To understand mathematical concepts and perform mathematical and algebraic computations.
4. **Values and Catholic Identity:** To exhibit an understanding of Catholic values, beliefs, and the nature of faith as they impact ethical decision making within the professional and personal life of the graduate.
5. **Computer Technology:** To understand the use of introductory computer technologies with emphasis on instructional software and word processing.
6. **Science:** To understand scientific concepts, the scientific method, contemporary issues in science and technology, and apply these concepts to healthcare.
7. **Humanities:** To exhibit a broader awareness, interest and appreciation of the relevance of the humanities to current conditions of life while acknowledging the beauty of human endeavor as a universal characteristic of cultures.
8. **Social and Global Awareness:** To understand and respect the diversity of cultures and experiences that characterize the global community and enable graduates to be productive and responsible citizens in a democratic society.
9. **Life-Long Learning:** To be motivated and responsible for continual self-directed learning and development of skills needed for self-actualization.

Health Information Technology Program

WELCOME:

The faculty of the Health Information Technology Program welcomes you to an education experience in the expanding field of Health Information Technology. During your plan of study we will be working closely with you to prepare you to work independently as well as to work as an integral part of a healthcare team. If you need additional information or assistance while in this program we encourage you to ask.

INTRODUCTION:

The Handbook for Health Information Technology (HIT) is provided to give complete and accurate information for the students who have been accepted into Mercy College of Ohio's Health Information Technology Program. Students in this program are expected to be aware of ALL the material contained in this handbook.

DISCLAIMER:

Information contained in this handbook is subject to change at any time. The College will make every effort to inform students in the program of any changes in advance of implementation. Questions concerning policies and procedures not covered in this handbook should be referred to the Program Chair.

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:

Health Information Technology is a blend of technology, medicine and business. Health information technicians ensure the availability of health information to facilitate real-time healthcare delivery and critical health related decision-making.

Having skilled HIM professionals on staff ensures an organization has the right information on hand when and where it is needed while maintaining the highest standards of data integrity, confidentiality, and security.

Areas of specialization include: privacy laws and other healthcare regulation, coding diagnoses and procedures for reimbursement and research, ensuring the quality of health records and health care data by verifying their completeness, accuracy, assembly, analysis and proper entry into computer systems. In addition, the electronic health record (EHR) technology is now becoming reality. The future state of health information is electronic, patient-centered, accessible, and critical in providing quality outcomes to patients. Health Information Technician's will be vital to ensuring the successful implementation of the EHR and will play a key role in this process serving as information liaisons between clinical, financial, and IT users within their organizations and outside as information "bridges" between providers and consumers.

REGISTERED HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNICIAN:

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will be eligible to apply to write a national examination offered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) to become credentialed as a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT). This examination may be taken electronically five days per week with immediate determination of test scores and is offered at testing locations nationwide.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:

Health Information technology career opportunities continue to grow thanks to the explosion of health IT and the road toward the “medical information super-highway”.

AHIMA members perform diverse roles in healthcare and are employed in a variety of work settings, including hospitals, physician offices, ambulatory care facilities, managed care facilities, long-term care facilities, consulting firms, information system vendors, colleges and universities, insurance providers, pharmaceutical companies, rehabilitation centers, and other venues. (AHIMA, 2010)

ACCREDITATION STATUS:

Mercy College of Ohio is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.

The Associate of Science Degree Program in Health Information Technology at Mercy College of Ohio is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) in association with the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Associate of Science (A.S.) Degree in Health Information Technology is designed as a two (2) year full-time program of study. Classes are conveniently offered in a 2 day per week format on Tuesdays and Thursdays to accommodate a working professional and to allow for other evening commitments. In addition, there are several courses that are currently being offered online or slated for development in the near future, however, at this time, the program will remain partially land-based and will not be offered totally online due to the important nature of critical practical experiences afforded by hands-on experience working with Mercy Health Partner’s fully operational E.H.R. A part-time schedule is also offered to accommodate students and is adapted to fit individuals’ needs. The program is designed to train technicians to do a wide variety of tasks in a Health Information Technology setting with a minimal amount of direct supervision. In addition, this program of study is intended to aid the student in developing managerial and problem solving skills to compliment his/her technical training.

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:

In accordance with the college mission statement, the philosophy of the Health Information Technology program is to provide associate degree education based on the Christian values underlying the educational efforts of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and the Sisters of Charity of Montreal (Grey Nuns). It is a belief that the education of health management technicians is responsive to national and community needs that is clearly supported by the national agenda to improve patient safety through technology.

Course goals and objectives are determined for each student based on CAHIIM standards and required knowledge clusters and learning domains. The goal is to produce a competent practitioner who can function in a rapidly changing health care environment as well as pass the RHIT exam. In addition, the Health Information Technology program is based on the belief that the education of the associate degree graduate should not be limited to their professional/technical area of study, but include exposure to a diverse general education.

Education is a continuous process through which learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes resulting in cognitive, affective and psychomotor changes. The faculty facilitates the teaching/learning process through the sequential presentation of concepts, theories and experimental activities within an environment that promotes mutual trust, critical thinking and self-development.

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Health Information Technology Program to provide an educational experience which includes the professional and technical skills necessary to prepare students for entry-level positions in the field of health information management.

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of the Associate of Science in Health Information Technology program, the graduate will be able to:

1. Apply legal policies, regulations, principles and standards for the control and disclosure of protected health information.
2. Review health records for timeliness, accuracy, appropriateness and completeness of health care documentation.
3. Perform processes related to collection, storage and retrieval of health care data/records.
4. Code, abstract, classify and index diagnoses and procedures for the purpose of reimbursement, standardization, retrieval and statistical analysis.
5. Apply principles of supervision and leadership and the tools used to effectively manage human, financial, and physical resources.
6. Review, abstract, retrieve, and compile health data for reimbursement, quality assessment, patient care research, clinical registries and other informational needs.
7. Collect, organize, and apply quality management and quality improvement tools and techniques for performance improvement.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS PLAN

Both student learning outcomes and the program are assessed in the following ways:

1. Like all of the academic programs offered by Mercy College, the Health Information Technology program participates in the Mercy College institutional assessment and assessment of student learning outcomes plans.
2. The Health Information Technology Program also utilizes its own assessment plan to assess student learning and program outcomes.
3. The Program Advisory Committee is involved with the program planning, evaluation, and improvement.
4. Students complete evaluations of the course and the instructor at the end of each semester.
5. Students complete evaluations of the course learning objectives at the end of each semester.
6. Instructors participate in classroom assessment techniques (CATS) during each course.
7. Students assess the Professional Practice Experience component of the program.
8. Program graduates complete an Exit Survey.
9. Graduates are asked to complete a Six-Month Post Graduation Survey.
10. Employers of the Program Graduates are given a satisfaction survey to complete.

Health Information Technology (HIT) Essential Requirements for Health Information Technicians

In response to the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA, educators developed a list of abilities for health information technicians to supplement the academic essentials for admission and academic progression.

In order to meet the program competencies, and for successful completion of the objectives of each HIT course, a student must be able to meet the following requirements, listed in the HIT Program Handbook:

Language Arts/Communication:

Verbal

The HIT student must:

- speak clearly, concisely and employ correct vocabulary and grammar for communication with staff, physicians, other health care professionals, students, faculty, patients and the public effectively in English.

Written

The HIT student must:

- write utilizing a legible and concise style which is readable in the English language.

Reading

The HIT student must:

- read and comprehend technical and professional materials (i.e. textbooks, magazines, and journal articles, handbooks and instruction manuals.)

Visual

The HIT student must:

- be able to read and comprehend text, numbers, graphs displayed in print and on computer monitors (screens).
- follow verbal and written instructions in order to correctly and independently perform designated activities.

Auditory

The HIT student must be able to hear:

- verbal responses within the academic/professional setting
- the telephone

Body Mechanics and Physical Characteristics:

The HIT student must be able to:

- reach medical record shelving units
- bend, lift and carry stacks of medical records
- perform work often requiring prolonged sitting, over several hours.
- travel to Professional Practice Experience Sites.

Intellectual and Mental/Emotional:

Intellectual

The HIT student must be able to:

- possess these intellectual skills: comprehension, reasoning, integration, recall, analysis, problem-solving, comparison, self-expression and criticism.

Mental/Emotional

The HIT student must:

- be able to manage their time and systemize actions in order to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic constraints.
- possess the emotional health necessary to effectively employ intellect and exercise appropriate judgment.
- be flexible, creative and adapt to professional and technical change.
- support and promote the activities of fellow students and health care professionals. Promotion of peers, help furnish team approach to learning, task completion and problem solving.
- be honest, compassionate, ethical and responsible. The HIT student must be able to critically evaluate his/her own performance, accept constructive criticism, and look for ways to improve.
- demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills.
- have a positive, cooperative attitude during academic and Professional Practice Experiences and as practicing professionals.

Be poised, neat, well groomed, tactful, diplomatic and discreet.

Maintain confidentiality of patient information.

These attributes are also integrated into our educational process in the form of academic and professional practice experience objectives. If you feel that because of a learning, physical, or mental/emotional disability you would have a problem accomplishing these essential program requirements, then please make an appointment with the program chair or your academic advisor. Having a special need may not preclude you from entering the program. Any student with a special need should seek help through the Division of Student Formation.

Upon graduation from an accredited program, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) requires that all students have entry-level competence in the Domains, Subdomains and Tasks for the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT). The following Domains, Subdomains, and Tasks will be incorporated throughout the curriculum:

I. Domain: Health Data Management

A. Subdomain: Health Data Structure, Content and Standards

1. Manage 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 health data.
4. Contribute to the definitions for and apply clinical vocabularies and terminologies used in the organization's health information systems.
5. Verify timeliness, 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. Report compliance findings according to organizational policy.
4. Maintain the accuracy and completeness of the patient record as defined by organizational policy and external regulations and standards.
5. 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 using ICD-9-CM.
3. Apply procedure codes using CPT/HCPCS.
4. Ensure accuracy of diagnostic/procedural groupings such as DRG, APC, and so on.
5. Adhere to current regulations and established guidelines in code assignment.
6. Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.
7. Use and maintain applications and processes to support other clinical classification and nomenclature systems (ex. ICD-10-CM, SNOMED).
8. Resolve discrepancies between coded data and supporting documentation.

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. Support accurate billing through coding, chargemaster, claims management and bill reconciliation processes.
3. Use established guidelines to comply with reimbursement and reporting requirements such as the National Correct Coding Initiative
4. Compile patient data and perform data quality reviews to validate code assignment and compliance with reporting such as outpatient prospective payment systems

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

A. Subdomain: Healthcare Statistics and Research

1. Abstract and maintain data for clinical indices/databases/registries.
2. Collect, organize and present data for quality management, utilization management, risk management and other patient care related studies
3. Compute and interpret healthcare statistics.
4. Apply Institutional Review Board (IRB) processes and policies.
5. Use specialized databases to meet specific organization needs such as medical research and disease registries.

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 information system policies and procedures required by national health information initiatives on the healthcare delivery system.
2. Apply current laws, accreditation, licensure and certification standards related to health information initiatives from the national, state, local and facility levels.
3. Apply policies and procedures to comply with the changing regulations among various payment systems for healthcare services such as Medicare, managed care and so forth.
4. Differentiate the roles of various providers and disciplines throughout the continuum of healthcare and respond to their information needs.

B. Subdomain: Healthcare Privacy, Confidentiality, Legal, and Ethical Issues

1. Participate in the implementation of 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. Conduct privacy and confidentiality training programs.
6. Investigate and recommend solutions to privacy issues/problems.
7. Apply and promote ethical standards of practice.

IV. Domain: Information Technology & 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 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 (EHR), personal health record (PHR), public health, and other administrative applications

GRADING POLICY OF THE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM:

The grading scale used in Health Information Technology Program courses is as follows:

- 93-100% - A
- 85-92% - B
- 78-84% - C
- 72-77% - D
- 71% and below - F

TRANSFER STUDENTS:

A student may transfer to Mercy College of Ohio from another institution of post-secondary education by following procedures outlined in the **College Catalog**.

RETENTION CRITERIA/STANDARDS OF PROGRESS:

Once enrolled in the program the student is required to:

1. Maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA);
2. Earn a “C” grade, or higher, in all courses of the Health Information Technology Program. Any grade lower than a “C” is considered a failure and must be repeated. Students who fail a professional course or withdraw from a professional course failing may repeat the course one time only. ***If a student should fail two HIT courses, the student will be dismissed from the program.*** It is the expectation that HIT students should be maintaining grades far higher than the minimum requirements if they expect to be successful in passing the RHIT examination.
3. Please refer to the Mercy College Catalog for more information.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS:

General Requirements

- 70 semester hours – 1st time college student
- 68 credit hours – all others

Complete Health Information Technology course descriptions along with a curriculum plan can be found at the end of this handbook.

ACADEMIC DISMISSAL POLICIES:

Students in the Health Information Technology Program are subject to the “**Dismissal**” policy of Mercy College of Ohio as outlined in the **College Catalog**.

HONOR CODE:

As future professionals, it is expected that you will conduct yourself in an ethical, responsible and honorable manner at all times. Adhering to the American Health Information Management Association’s Code of Ethics, rules and regulations of the Health Information Technology Program, as well as those established by your Professional Practice Experience (PPE) sites is required. Failure to behave in a professional manner can result in a warning and/or removal from the program.

CIVILITY STATEMENT:

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn and respect for the professionalism of the faculty are maintained. Student conduct which disrupts the teaching/learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The purpose of education is to advance one's own intellectual skills and knowledge and to demonstrate the outcomes of these efforts. An essential and shared value in higher education is presenting one's own work and properly acknowledging that of others. Any violation of this principle constitutes academic dishonesty and is liable to result in disciplinary action. Forms of academic dishonesty include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

Plagiarism – submitting all or part of another's work as one's own in an academic exercise, such as an examination, computer file, or written assignment. This includes, but is not limited to, submitting papers written by someone else, such as a family member or friend, or downloading parts of, or entire, term papers, from the Internet, and then submitting them as your own work. It also includes use of another's words as one's own, be that paraphrasing or direct quotation, without proper citation.

Cheating – using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on an examination or assignment, such as using unauthorized texts or notes or improperly obtaining, or attempting to obtain, copies of an examination or answers to an examination. This also includes sharing or receiving content, from exams or quizzes, by way of another student. **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty** – helping another to commit an act of academic dishonesty, such as substituting for an examination, completing an assignment for someone else or sharing of computer files.

Fabrication – altering or transmitting, without authorization, academic information or records.

Multiple Submissions -- submitting the same paper/project for credit in multiple classes, without permission of the instructors involved.

"Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers, with all personally identifiable information removed, will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site."

REPORTING CASES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Each case of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate Division Director in a formal written charge by the faculty member with firsthand knowledge of the violation within 15 class days* after the incident occurs. The faculty member will have a face-to-face discussion with the student, which will be documented on the Academic Counseling form. Finally, the faculty member must inform the student of the charge via certified mail delivery. The written charge must contain the following:

The particular allegation;

The names of other participants or witness(es) where appropriate;

The date and time, location, and relevant circumstances of the incident; and

A copy of the relevant sections of the College Catalog concerning academic dishonesty and the appeal process.

PENALTY FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

During a student's entire academic career at Mercy College, each incident of academic dishonesty will be reported in writing to the appropriate Division Director. A disciplinary notation for academic dishonesty will be entered in the student's academic record.

A student found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty will not have the option to withdraw from the class in which the first incident occurred. A second finding of academic dishonesty shall exclude a student from consideration for academic honors.

The penalty for the first incident of academic dishonesty will be a score of zero on the particular item being submitted and a written warning. The second incident of academic dishonesty in the same course as the first incident occurred or any other course will result in a failing grade for the course in which the second infraction occurred. A third incident of academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary dismissal, unless appealed. This may be appealed as outlined in the “Student Academic Appeal Process” in the *Student Handbook*. The Division Director shall then notify the Registrar to enter the notation “dismissed for academic dishonesty” on the student’s academic record.

*Note: A college class day is defined as any day that the college holds classes including final examination week.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students are required to attend all HIT program classes and laboratory periods, field trips and PPEs, and to arrive on time! In the event of absence, the instructor must be notified in advance of class time. Acceptable excuses include: severe injury or illness, death in family, etc. Other emergencies will be dealt with on an individual basis. Doctors’ appointments, lack of transportation or conflicting work schedules do not constitute excused absences. ***The student who has been absent is responsible for contacting the instructor in regard to announcements, assignments, handouts, and/or makeup work as this is not the responsibility of the professor to bring missed hand-outs to class next session.*** Absence or tardiness may result in a reduction of the student’s grade for the course.

CLASSROOM AND ONLINE ETIQUETTE:

The HIT lab is equipped with computer availability for each student. Utilization of computers during lectures unless otherwise instructed by the professor is not tolerated (surfing the Internet, e-mailing, etc.). This is unprofessional and distracting to both your peers and to the professor. A student may be immediately dismissed from the classroom if the professor observes inappropriate computer usage.

Students are also encouraged to remain professional at all times in the classroom. Inappropriate outbursts, complaining publicly, etc., due to stress is unacceptable behavior and can result in immediate dismissal from the HIT program as deemed appropriate by the Program Chair. Students are expected to behave in the HIT classroom in a similar manner as they would in a professional job. For online classes, it is the student’s responsibility to stay on track with all assignments and weekly modules. In addition, it is important to remember that the professors are not available 24/7. Typically, the professor will visit the ‘Virtual Office’ feature in the online environment that you are encouraged to utilize, which is like a public discussion board (typically, if you have a question, chances are one of your fellow students has the same question and would benefit from the answer). Therefore, students are asked to plan their time appropriately for getting assignments in on time and have contingencies for alternate computers should there be a failure, virus, or power-outage.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS:

A report of sound health in conjunction with the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) is a requirement of the college and each PPE site. Students must meet all eligibility requirements and provide documentation prior to the start of the first PPE (HIT 233).

In addition to the health requirement, a criminal background check must be performed for each student. Students failing to complete this requirement will not be assigned to a PPE site. Please refer to the Mercy College of Ohio’s health requirement and criminal background check policy.

Please note that PPE facilities may have additional site-specific medical or legal requirements. Students assigned to those facilities must fulfill all requirements prior to starting their PPE.

ONGOING EVALUATION:

Students are evaluated on an ongoing basis. The HIT Lab/PPE Coordinator and Program Chair are kept informed of the student's progress. High academic performance does not assure continuance in the program or placement in a PPE site if the student is otherwise deemed unsuitable.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP:

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is the professional organization for those who are interested in the health information field. All Mercy College HIT students are required to become student members of both AHIMA and Northwest Ohio Health Information Management Association (NWOHIMA) during their first year in the program and renew annually. The professor will distribute application forms and facilitate dues renewal annually. It is the student's responsibility to insure continuity of membership as access to AHIMA's website (for members only) may be required for course assignments.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCES (PPEs):

Students should notify the designated instructor and PPE site supervisor if illness or emergency causes you to miss PPE time. Students may be withdrawn from the PPE sites due to excessive absences. All absences must be made up.

PPEs consist of two (2) semesters of practical experience. PPEs will be available in area acute care hospitals and/or in non-traditional facilities. PPEs are offered ONLY during morning/afternoon time frames. Supervision and instruction are provided by the PPE site's staff. Students are visited at least once a semester by a HIT Instructor. It is possible for PPEs to vary considerably from one site to another. However, PPE student objectives will be consistent for all sites.

Placement for PPEs requires "C" grades in all HIT Professional courses prior to placement. High academic performance does not, in itself, assure placement in the PPE site. Along with academic excellence, division approval is required for placement in the PPE facility. Inappropriate behavior may preclude PPE placement.

Misconduct which will prevent placement in PPE education includes, but is **NOT LIMITED TO:**

1. Any form of dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on written, oral or practical examinations.
2. Absenteeism.
3. Uses of profane or vulgar language.
4. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
5. Violation of any college, or Health Information Technology Program policy.
6. An incomplete or the omission of pertinent information from the health record.
7. Omitting pertinent information from the employment record.
8. Uncooperative, hostile, negative or non-constructive attitudes toward college faculty, PPE instructors, or fellow students.

Students are required to keep a daily log (diary) of activities during PPEs. These logs, which are a college requirement, are examined by the course instructor in accordance to the course syllabus.

The HIT Lab/PPE Coordinator is the College's authorized representative who is responsible for placing students at PPE sites. The College cannot assure any student placement in the PPE site of his or her choice with regard to geographical location of the facility or the student's residence. However, whenever possible the student may be placed in the site of his or her choice with the final decision being left to the PPE Instructor. The following criteria are used for placement: student's place of residence, compatibility of a student schedule with prospective site's schedule and grade point average. PPE sites may be up to one and a half hour driving distance from the college.

Students must accept the PPE placement the semester it is assigned. If the student is unable to accept the assigned PPE, or is not eligible for placement, he or she must direct a letter to the Program Chair stating the reason and a solution as soon as possible and before the end of the semester preceding the PPE. The HIT Lab/PPE Coordinator, Program Chair and Associate Dean will evaluate the situation and make recommendations. The student understands that placement is conditional on availability. If the student is unable to meet this commitment he or she may be dropped from the program.

EXPENSES:

Professional Practice Experience (PPE) expenses: Course tuition, fees, textbooks, transportation costs, site specific expenses (parking fees, physical examinations, drug screens, etc.), PPE-related conferences (NWOHIMA symposium, etc.) are the responsibility of the student.

WITHDRAWAL/REMOVAL FROM THE PPE FACILITY:

Students receiving instruction at affiliated PPE sites during the PPE experience are under the jurisdiction of the college. Students frequently have the false impression that assignment to a site is permanent. The college will immediately withdraw any student from PPE for reasons of **HEALTH** (physical and/or emotional which is impeding the student's ability to do the work required), **ATTENDANCE, PERFORMANCE, or at the request of the PPE site supervisor.**

Misconduct that will result in immediate withdrawal and course failure (and possible program dismissal) from the PPE facility includes, **BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:**

1. Failure to maintain required 2.0 "C" GPA in all HIT courses. Final letter grades of "D" are not permitted.
2. Absenteeism
3. Uses of profane or vulgar language.
4. Cheating on written or practical examinations. Dishonesty, avoiding responsibility and evidence of lying will not be tolerated as well.
5. Inconsiderate, unprofessional, discourteous and disrespectful treatment of patients, PPE instructors, or health information staff.
6. Entering the PPE site or college under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
7. Drinking alcoholic beverages on PPE site or College property.
8. Illegally obtaining, possessing, selling or using narcotics, amphetamines, or hallucinogenic substances.
9. Using abusive, obscene or threatening language to PPE instructor, health information staff, patients, visitors or fellow students.
10. Failure to maintain strict confidentiality of patient records.
11. Unsatisfactory technical performance.
12. Uncooperative, hostile, negative or non-constructive attitudes toward PPE instructor(s), site staff, visitor(s) or fellow students.
13. Failure to notify both PPE site and the college when absent.

SERVICE WORK POLICY:

No stipend is paid to Health Information Technology students during PPE. PPE is education and, as such, is just as important as time spent in the classroom. Students may not take the responsibility or the place of qualified staff. However, after demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake certain defined activities with appropriate supervision and direction. Students may be employed in the field of study outside regular educational hours, provided the work does not interfere with regular academic responsibilities. The work must be non-compulsory, paid, and subject to standard employee policies.

CELL PHONES AND CALLS DURING PPE:

No personal cell phones (includes phone calls, text messaging, email, etc.) are to be used during the PPE. Department or hospital business phones are not to be used to make or to receive personal phone calls except in the event of an emergency. Students may make personal calls on their scheduled break or during lunch from cell phones outside of the hospital.

DRESS CODE:

Professional attire is required for all PPE sites so that you will represent the college and the profession of Health Information Management well. The primary concern is that all students are **clean** and **neat**. All situations may not be covered in these guidelines and are left up to the discretion of the HIT Lab/PPE Coordinator, HIT Program Chair, or the PPE site supervisor. Wearing jeans, regardless of color; pajama pants, etc., athletic shoes, sandals or any type of shoes worn without hose/dress socks; sleeveless shirts, tank tops and facial/tongue jewelry (with the exception of one pair of professional earrings in the earlobes) at PPE are **prohibited**.

Suggested Dress Code. :

Females:

Suit; skirt/blouse; tailored dress; dress slacks with blouse or sweater
Nylon hose or dress socks. Dress shoes.

Males:

Suit; polo/dress shirt, a tie (optional), dress pants. Dress shoes/socks

Students must adhere to site dress code

When at the PPE site:

1. Name tags must be worn while on duty at the PPE site.
2. Makeup should be natural looking and appropriate for daytime.
3. Jewelry should be conservative and in good taste, facial jewelry must be removed if applicable.
4. Hair will be a "natural" color (not green, purple, blue, etc.) with hair accessories being small/tasteful.
5. Beards, mustaches, and side-burns must be clean and neatly trimmed.
6. Nails should be clean, of appropriate length and neutral/business appropriate shades of color.
7. Maintain a neat, clean, professional appearance at all times.
8. Chewing gum is prohibited during PPE sessions
9. Tattoos are not to be displayed. Care should be taken to cover tattoos.
10. Perfume/cologne is to be kept to a minimum and should not be worn if going to patient areas.

Dress in all PPE sites will be supervised/may be modified by the individual site.

Students may be dismissed from a (PPE) site if dress code is violated.

EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AWARD:

During the final semester, an Excellence in Health Information Technology Award is presented to an outstanding graduating student. The award is determined by a combination of the following:

1. A peer vote from other HIT students with emphasis placed not on popularity, but academic performance as well as professionalism, service, leadership, and dedication to the HIT profession.
2. HIT Program Chair and HIT faculty members
3. PPE Site Evaluations.

In the event of a tie, the highest academic GPA for HIT courses will be used as a tie-breaker. This graduate will have shown outstanding behaviors in the areas of: attitude, communication, initiative, technical skills and reliability. This award is open only to graduates of the Associate Degree program.

PHI THETA KAPPA:

Established by Missouri two-year college presidents in 1918, Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society serves to recognize and encourage the academic achievement of two-year college students and provide opportunities for individual growth and development through honors, leadership and service programming. Today, Phi Theta Kappa is the largest honor society in American higher education with more than 1.3 million members and 1,200 chapters located in the United States, U.S. territories, Canada and Germany. In 1929, the American Association of Community Colleges recognized Phi Theta Kappa as the official honor society for two-year colleges.

Membership eligibility is based on the number of hours completed with a minimum of 12 credit hours and a minimum GPA of 3.5; membership is a special honor afforded to a small group of outstanding students.

ACADEMIC ADVISING:

Upon admission to the HIT Program, each student is assigned to the Allied Health Academic Advisor to act as an advisor throughout the student's enrollment. The Academic Advisor will monitor the academic progress of the assigned student throughout the curriculum and advise/counsel the student as necessary. The Academic Advisor program is designed to promote growth and self-direction for students and to provide opportunities for optimal physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual growth and development. Academic Advisors believe that guidance and counseling is a continuous process and an essential part of the program. All students are encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunities provided within the college, such as self-defense seminars in relation to campus security, study skill seminars, chemical dependency recognition/guidance seminars, spiritual counseling and activities, and job counseling.

The Academic Advisor has posted office hours, and is also available by appointment, or by e-mail. Specific information about academic advising can be found in the Mercy College [Catalog](#)

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND GOVERNANCE:

It is the expectation that all Health Information students will get involved with Mercy College of Ohio, the HIT program, and the local health information professional organization.

Students may meet this requirement by participating in one of the following:

- Serve as the student representative on the HIT Advisory Committee (appointed by the program chair).
- Serve as Mercy College's student liaison to NWOHIMA's Board of Directors (elected position).
- Mercy College of Ohio Student Senate representative (elected position)
- Mercy College of Ohio open house volunteer (three opportunities per academic year)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY:

A student in good academic standing may request a leave of absence for health or other personal reasons. A “curriculum leave of absence” may be requested by a student needing a course that is not offered until a later term.

A leave of absence shall not exceed 12 months. After that, the student will be considered as a readmission applicant, unless an extension of the leave of absence has been granted. The student must request the leave of absence in writing through the registrar’s office after consultation with the vice president of academic affairs or the president.

The student on a leave of absence must satisfy any conditions of the leave before re-entering and must comply with the course sequence and/or any curricular changes at the time of re-entry. The student must inform the college one term before returning to enable orientation to be arranged. A student’s return is subject to available space at the time. The student might expect additional work in the lab/Professional Practice Experience areas in order to refresh the student’s skills.

REGISTRATION (SCHEDULING OF COURSES):

Registration is handled online through Empower with assistance from the academic advisor. New students, pre-HIT student (still needing program prerequisites), or post-secondary students are required to meet with their academic advisor prior to registering for courses. However, all HIT students are encouraged to meet with their advisor each semester. Complete information on how to register for classes can be obtained from the Mercy College of Ohio website (www.mercycollege.edu)

It is ultimately the student’s responsibility to make sure that they follow the HIT Program of Study carefully. Most HIT courses are offered only once per year, therefore, if a course is dropped, graduation can be delayed by one year.

DROP/ADD:

Information on how to drop or add a course can be found on the Mercy College website. If any HIT Program course is dropped, the Program Chair or assigned academic advisor should be notified immediately via e-mail or other communication by the student. This requirement is due to the fact that courses may be automatically dropped/added via Empower without advisor approval.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Any change in name and/or permanent address, telephone number, or local address (if different from the permanent address) should be changed in Empower immediately.

**Health Information Technology
Program of Study**

<u>Semester I – Fall</u>		<u>Credit Hrs.</u>
BIO 105	Human Structure and Function	5
ENG 101	English Composition I	3
GEN 101	Student Success Strategies (1 st time college student)	2
HIT 114	Orientation to Health Information Technology	3
ALH 120	Medical Terminology	<u>2</u>
		15/13
<u>Semester II –Spring</u>		
ALH 210	Introduction to Pharmacology	2
BIO 320	Pathophysiology	3
HIT 126	Clinical Coding/Classification Systems I	3
HIT 142	Legal Aspects in Health Information	3
ENG 102	English Composition II	3
CIS 104	Intro to Word Processing & Presentation Applications (5 weeks)	1
CIS 106	Introduction to Spreadsheet Applications (5 weeks)	1
CIS 108	Introduction to Database Applications (5 weeks)	<u>1</u>
		17
<u>Semester III –Summer</u>		
HIT 233	Professional Practice Experience I	2
HIT 140	Clinical Coding Lab I	1
CIS 230	Advanced Spreadsheet Applications (6 weeks)	1
CIS 231	Advanced Database Applications (6 weeks)	1
	Social Science Elective*	<u>3</u>
		8
<u>Semester IV –Fall</u>		
HIT 236	Health Care Systems and Technology	3
HIT 120	Health Records in Ancillary Facilities	2
HIT 243	Clinical Quality Management	3
HIT 238	Healthcare Registries and Statistics	3
HIT 234	Clinical Coding/Classification Systems II	3
	Humanities Elective*	<u>3</u>
		17
<u>Semester V –Spring</u>		
HIT 245	Professional Practice Experience II	3
HIT 246	HIT Capstone Seminar	2
HIT 244	Healthcare Data in Reimbursement	4
HIT 240	Clinical Coding Lab II	1
	Religion Elective*	<u>3</u>
		13

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS 70/68

* One Social Science, one Religion, and one Humanities elective required for graduation.

AHIMA'S CODE OF ETHICS

Ethical Principles: The following ethical principles are based on the core values of the American Health Information Management Association and apply to all health information management professionals.

Health information management professionals:

- 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 themselves in the practice of the profession so as to bring honor to themselves, 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.
- 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 accurately to the public.
- 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.

Source: AHIMA, Code of Ethics

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROTECTED INFORMATION (HEALTH/FACILITY/PHYSICIAN/EMPLOYEE)

By law, all information contained in a patient's medical record/electronic health record (protected health information) is considered to be confidential. Information pertaining to the facility or relating to physicians or employees is considered confidential as well. All information that is discussed or made available in class or in the clinical facilities is therefore considered confidential and may not be discussed outside of the classroom or clinic.

Students may not disclose confidential information to unauthorized individuals, including family and/or friends. Failure to respect confidential information will result in dismissal from the program.

All students are required to sign facility-specific privacy statements prior to participating in any laboratory or clinical activities that are held in a hospital, physician's office, ambulatory care facility, or other health-related agency that provides custodial care, diagnosis, treatment, surgery, therapy or any health-related care. Students who refuse to sign confidentiality statements will be dismissed from their program.

Health Information Technology Course Descriptions

HIT 114

Orientation to Health Information Technology

3 Credit Hours (2-2)

Introduction to the health information technology profession in the acute setting, its function, and how it relates to other departments. Orientation to the health record, numbering, filing, and storage media. This course also includes aspects related to medical staff, personnel requirements, licensing, certifying, and accrediting agencies. Laboratory practice in assembly, analysis, filing, and retrieval of health records. The student will also be exposed to the concept of the electronic health record and hybrid systems.

HIT 120

Health Records in Ancillary Facilities- Online

2 Credit Hours (2-0)

Introduction to medical record procedures in long term care, ambulatory, home health, hospice, psychiatric and other community health facilities. Includes aspects related to medical staff and personnel requirements such as licensing, certifying, and accrediting agencies controls.

Prerequisite: HIT 114

HIT 126

Clinical Coding/Classification Systems I

3 Credit Hours (2-2)

Introduction to various coding and classification systems used in healthcare. This course will focus on the current International Classification of Diseases (ICD) revision for acute care inpatient diagnosis and procedure coding. Laboratory practice time devoted to code assignment using computerized and manual methods.

Pre-requisite: HIT 114 and BIO 105

Co-requisite: ALH 210 and BIO 320

HIT 140

Clinical Coding Lab I

1 Credit Hour (0-2)

In this laboratory course, students will have hands-on experience with encoder software for code assignment. Students will also further their clinical coding skills through case studies and health records exercises.

Prerequisite: HIT 126

HIT 142

Legal Aspects in Health Information- Online

3 Credit Hours (3-0)

The student will evaluate health records for legal purposes. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) legislation is discussed with emphasis on privacy regulations. To provide a foundation in federal and state legislation regarding the release of health information, retention, authorizations, and consents. The importance of confidentiality and professional ethics will be emphasized.

Prerequisite: HIT 114

HIT 233**Professional Practice Experience I****2 Credit Hours (1-5)**

Practical and managerial aspects of health information management (HIM) are introduced in a clinical setting under the supervision of HIM management. This experience provides the students with hands-on exposure to various functions of HIM and the operational flow of the HIM department.

Prerequisites: ALH 210, HIT 114, HIT 126, HIT 142, CIS 104, CIS 106, and CIS 108

HIT 234**Clinical Coding/Classification Systems II****3 Credit Hours (3-0)**

Introduction to coding using Current Procedural Technology (CPT) and Health Care Procedural Coding System (HCPCS) classifications with emphasis on the basic skills required to code medical services and procedures. This course is offered in a hybrid format utilizing on-line learning supplemented by classroom learning. Incorporates the use of web-based learning modules along with computer encoding experiences.

Prerequisites: ALH 210 HIT 114, HIT 126, and BIO 320

HIT 236**Health Care Systems and Technology****3 Credit Hours (3-0)**

An extensive overview of information technology in the healthcare delivery system including: the role, purpose and use of health information system applications, the computer-based patient record, information life cycle, information technology planning and emerging technologies.

Prerequisite: HIT 114, CIS 104, CIS 106, and CIS 108

HIT 238**Healthcare Registries and Statistics- online****3 Credit Hours (3-0)**

Introduction to healthcare data, vital statistics, indices and registries. Statistics related to health information, including calculation of rates and percentages. In-depth instruction in cancer registries. Manual and automated techniques of maintaining completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness of data and data sources

Prerequisites: HIT 114, CIS 104, CIS 106, and CIS 108

HIT 240**Clinical Coding Lab II****1 Credit Hour (0-2)**

In this laboratory course, students will further develop their skills utilizing classification systems using coding scenarios and case studies. Students will enhance their clinical analysis skills through inpatient and outpatient practice exercises.

Prerequisite: HIT 126, HIT 140, and HIT 234

HIT 243**Quality Resource Management****3 Credit Hours (3-0)**

Emphasis is on current philosophy and methodology in conducting an effective quality improvement, utilization review/case management program for a health care facility. Requirements of various governmental, third party payers, and accreditation bodies regarding appropriate utilization of resources and continuous quality improvement will be included. Case studies and simulated chart reviews will be integrated in the course.

Prerequisites: All 100 level HIT courses, HIT 233, and CIS 104, CIS 106, and CIS 108

HIT 244**Healthcare Data in Reimbursement****4 Credit Hours (4-0)**

Theory and practice related to the prospective payment systems for inpatient (PPSs) and hospital outpatient prospective payment systems (OPPS) including DRG reimbursement, resource-based relative value scale for physician payment (RBRVS), fee schedule, ambulatory surgical center (ASC), and ambulatory payment classifications emphasizing data quality utilizing various computer applications. Further development of coding skills utilization classification systems through advanced coding practice.

Prerequisite: HIT 114, HIT 120, HIT 126, HIT 140, HIT 142, HIT 234

HIT 245**Professional Practice Experience II****3 Credit Hours (2-5)**

Practical and managerial aspects of health information management are emphasized with students demonstrating more advanced technical skills. Students are given a broader perspective of HIM and its use throughout various departments and health care settings through lecture, observation, and hands-on experience.

Prerequisites: All 100 level Health Information Technology courses. HIT 233, HIT 234, HIT 236, HIT 238, HIT 243, CIS 104, CIS 106, and CIS 108

HIT 246**HIT Capstone Seminar- online****2 Credit Hours (2-0)**

Overview of the managerial duties and responsibilities within the health information department including: principles of management, operational, human resource, financial management, and coding/compliance management. Opportunities for problem-solving, discussion of current trends/topics related to the health information management profession are discussed. Prepares students for the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) examination through a combination of lecture and independent study utilizing computer modules.

Prerequisites: All 100 level Health Information Technology courses. HIT 233, HIT 234, HIT 236, HIT 238, HIT 243, CIS 104, CIS 106, and CIS 108

**MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO
HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (HIT) PROGRAM**

Acknowledgment Statement

I, _____ have received a copy of the Student Handbook of the Health Information Technology (HIT) Program of Mercy College of Ohio.

I agree to abide by the regulations and the Confidentiality of Protected Health Information Policy described within. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification of all policies.

Date

Student's Signature

Student's Printed Name