AAS DEGREE – CODE #1969

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Health information technology (HIT) professionals play an integral role in modern healthcare organizations. They are experts in information management technology and understand the workflow processes across various healthcare settings. HIT professionals ensure patients' electronic health records are complete, accurate, and secure. They are essential to bridge the gap between clinicians, administrators, legal/regulatory bodies, and IT professionals. HIT professionals standardize disease and treatment classifications for clinical, financial, and legal purposes in healthcare. Their core responsibility is maintaining the quality, integrity, and security of patients' medical data, which directly impacts patient care. In essence, HIT professionals care for patients by meticulously managing their health information.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Health Information Technology (HIT) program at Alfred State College is to empower students with the knowledge, skills, and hands-on experience necessary in the dynamic field of health information management. The program provides a technical education that fosters critical thinking, ethical practices, commitment to lifelong learning, and prepares graduates to excel in health information management career paths that align with their strengths and interests while improving patient care and healthcare outcomes.

ADVANTAGES

- The HIT program emphasizes hands-on experience with industry-standard technologies, enabling students to develop practical skills that employers highly value from faculty with industry experience. Graduates emerge as well-rounded HIT professionals, equipped with the knowledge and abilities to drive innovation, enhance patient care, and thrive in diverse healthcare settings.
- Alfred State College's associate degree in health information technology is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College's accreditation status has been reaffirmed through the year 2026, demonstrating its commitment to maintaining the highest standards of educational excellence and ensuring graduates are well-prepared to meet the evolving demands of the healthcare industry.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Apply biomedical knowledge (including medical terminology, anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology, and pharmacology) to apply diagnosis/procedure codes (ICD-9-CM, ICD-10-CM, ICD-10-PCS, CPT, and HCPCS level II according to current nomenclature.
- Use established federal guidelines, accreditation standards, and APC and DRG calculator/grouper software to comply with health care documentation (review), reimbursement, and reporting requirements.
- Apply HIM knowledge as defined by organizational policy and external regulations (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, managed care) and standards to maintain the accuracy and completeness of the patient record.
- Apply HIM knowledge of policies and procedures for confidentiality and security measures regarding the access and disclosure of protected health information (PHI) to authorized users.
- Apply HIM knowledge in the collection, maintenance, and reporting of data for clinical indices/databases/registries to meet specific organizational and regulatory needs for the purposes of medical research and education.
- Organize and present data for quality management, utilization management, risk management, and other related studies.
- Apply HIM knowledge of legal, ethical, accreditation and certification standards as appropriate for the management of patient information.
- Apply basic methods when calculating descriptive, institutional, and health care vital statistics.
- Apply the use of common software applications (e.g., spreadsheets, databases, word processing, graphics, presentation, email, and so on) and HIM-related software applications (e.g., release of information, electronic health record, patient record abstracting, and so on).
- Apply HIM knowledge to promote ethical standards of practice to health information management and coding.
- Demonstrate effective written and oral communication as appropriate to health information management and coding practices. Communicate effectively with consumers, providers, and other health care professionals.
- Demonstrate critical thinking to problem solving and reasoning skills to health information management and coding practices.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCES

The Joint Commission Hospital Accreditation Standards Manual requires hospitals to implement "a process to ensure that a person's qualifications are consistent with their job responsibilities." This standard "applies to staff, students, and volunteers," and it further states the hospital is responsible for verifying "the following according to law, regulation, or hospital policy: information on criminal background." As such, Alfred State students who complete PPEs in the HIT program may be required to undergo a criminal background check before placement at the facility. Be advised that a prior felony conviction may impede a student's ability to participate in a required professional practice experience. The PPE facility may require students to undergo a physical examination (onsite at the facility or by the student's primary care provider) before beginning the professional practice experience. The physical examination may include drug screening, a TB test, and/or DTB, hepatitis B, and/or MMRV, influenza, and/or COVID immunization or status. Students may be required to incur costs associated with the criminal background check and/or physical examination.

NOTE: Students must make appropriate arrangements with their current employer to complete the 160 hours at the PPE host site.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Although not limited to these schools, common transfer institutions for HIT bachelor's degree programs include SUNY Polytechnic, Stephens College, St. Scholastica, Regis University, University of Cincinnati, and Saint Joseph's College of Maine.

DIRECT ENTRY INTO BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

Alfred State health information technology AAS graduates may enter directly into the healthcare management BTech, the interdisciplinary studies BTech, or the technology management BBA degree program.

Alfred State's Healthcare Management program is not accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) and will not yield RHIA eligibility.

CERTIFICATION

Graduates of the HIT program have pursued certification through AHIMA as Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT), Certified Coding Specialist (CCA, CCS, CCS-P), and AAPC as Certified Professional Coder (CPC, COC, CIC) and Certified Professional Biller (CPB) exams.

OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Hospitals and other health care facilities
- Clinics and physicians' offices
- Insurance companies
- State and federal agencies
- Law firms
- Software companies

- Consulting

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Employment and continuing education rate of 100 percent – 100 percent are employed; 0 percent continued their education.

RHIT EXAMINATION

The RHIT examination pass rate for the August 2023-July 2024 reporting period is 100% based on 7 graduates completing the exam within 1 year of graduation.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Required: Algebra and Biology

It is essential that students are able to fully participate, with or without a reasonable accommodations, in the professional practice experience.

- Ability and dexterity necessary to navigate the online classroom and professional practice experience.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and reasoning skills in evaluating health information.
- Ability to communicate verbally, non-verbally and in written form.
- Capacity to exercise good judgement and interact with a diverse population which includes varied races, ages, socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, and mental health, and/or medical problems.
- Ability to demonstrate professionalism, adapt to change quickly, and work independently or in teams.
- Adhere to the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Code of Ethics.

Recommended: Keyboarding and knowledge of Microsoft Office Professional

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

A tier 1 laptop computer is required for students entering this degree program. Laptop specifications are available at www.alfredstate.edu/required-laptops. (A desktop of similar specifications can be used instead of a laptop for specified courses).

OFFICE OF ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Students who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to properly participate in this program may contact Melanie Ryan in the Office of Accessibility Services. This office may be contacted by email at oas@alfredstate.edu or by phone at 607-587-4506. Please keep in mind that some accommodations may take time to implement, so students seeking accommodations are encouraged to contact OAS as early as possible.

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - AAS DEGREE

TYPICAL FOUR-SEMESTER PROGRAM - Full-time (12 credit hours or more)

This program is offered as an internet-based program only

First			
BIOL	1114	Human Anat & Physiology I	4
COMP	1503	Writing Studies	3
MEDR	1133	Medical Terminology	3
MEDR	1114	Intro to Health Info Managemnt	4
BUAD OR	4403		3
CISY	1003	Intro to Microcomputer Appl	3
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Second			
BIOL	2214	Human Anat & Physiology II	4
BIOL	3403	Essentials - Pathopharmacology	3
MEDR	3114	Electronic Health Record Mgmt	4
MEDR	1234	ICD-10-CM & ICD-10-PCS Coding	4
MATH	1113	Statistical Concepts	3
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Third			
MEDR	3124	Hlth Data Mgmt & Hlthcare Stat	4
MEDR	1244	CPT & HCPCS Level II Coding	4
MEDR	4214	Hlthcare Reimb & Rev Cyc Proc	4
MEDR	3414	Quality & Legal Aspects of HIM	4
			16

Fourth			
MEDR	4002	Advanced Coding Applications	2
MEDR	4213	Leadership in Health Info Tech	3
MEDR	4312	HIM Operations PPE	2
MEDR	4111	Health Informatn Tech Seminar	1
MEDR	4322	Coding PPE	2
GLST	2113	Global & Diverse Perspectives	3
SPCH	1083	Public Speaking	3
			16

HIT students are required to earn a grade of at least a "C" or better in each BIOL and MEDR prefix course prior to placement in the PPEs. Students must also earn a grade of at least a "C" in all BIOL, MEDR, and COMP 1503 courses to graduate from the HIT program. Students receiving a grade of D/F in MEDR or BIOL courses may attempt the course a second time. If the second attempt results in the grade of D/F, the student will be dismissed from the program.