



AAS DEGREE – CODE #1969

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Health information technology (HIT) professionals play a key role in the planning, implementation, and management of the electronic health record (EHR), and with today's growing reliance on computer-based records, this profession has become one of the fastest-growing in the nation. HIT professionals are educated in the leadership and management of health information, and are considered the custodians of health information. In this career, your primary function will be to make sure all the medical information collected about an individual is complete, accurate, and protected, while, at the same time, readily available for health care providers when it is needed. Alfred State offers an online Associate in Applied Science degree in health information technology, which combines a profession in health care with information technology. As an HIT professional, you will be responsible for maintaining components of health information systems consistent with medical, legal, accreditation, and regulatory requirements of the health care delivery system. You will also maintain, collect, and analyze data crucial to the delivery of quality patient care.

ADVANTAGES

- Graduates are eligible to take the national certification examination to become a registered health information technician (RHIT). Since the program was created in 1968, Alfred State HIT graduates have traditionally achieved a passing rate above the national average.
- Teaching faculty in HIT curriculum have real-world Health Information Management (HIM) industry experience.

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/grouping 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

Students complete non-paid professional practice experiences (PPEs) in the Health Information Department of a health care facility (160 hours) in their study. PPE arrangements are made in consultation with each student to identify locations considered to be within a reasonable distance. Students are not a substitute for paid staff during PPEs, which means they are expected to receive appropriate supervision and mentoring during completion of all tasks. The professional practical experience (PPE) includes the completion of on-site hours in the Health Information Management (HIM) Department of a hospital (or other health care facility) with adequate facilities to provide varied work opportunities in HIM.

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 prior to placement at the facility.

The PPE facility may require students to undergo a physical examination (on-site at the facility or by the student's primary care provider) prior to beginning the professional practice experience. The physical examination includes drug screening, a TB test, and/or DTB, hepatitis B, and/or MMRV immunization or status. Students may be required to incur costs associated with the criminal background check and/or physical examination. Be advised that a prior felony conviction may impede a student's ability to participate in a required professional practice experience. Students may be required to attend an on-site orientation at the professional practice facility, which could be several days in length beyond the 160 PPE hours. NOTE: Students must make appropriate arrangements with their current employer to complete the 160 hours at the PPE host site.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

One-plus-one transfer agreements exist among Alfred State and Jamestown and American Samoa Community Colleges. Students complete their first year of study at the local community college and transfer to Alfred State for their second year. Transfer is guaranteed if a student successfully completes the prescribed first-year schedule of courses with a 2.0 cumulative index.

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 B.Tech, the interdisciplinary studies B.Tech, or the technology management BBA degree program.

NOTE: This 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 are eligible to take the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT), Certified Coding Specialist (CCA, CCS, CCS-P), and Certified Professional Coder (CPC, CPC-A, CPC-H-A, CPC-H, CPC-P) 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 – 91 percent are employed; 9 percent continued their education.

RHIT EXAMINATION

The RHIT examination pass rate for the August 2021 - July 2022 reporting period is 86 percent. Twelve of fourteen first-time RHIT examination test-takers passed on their first attempt. One repeat test taker also completed their RHIT exam with a passing score on their second attempt.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Required: Biology, Algebra

Recommended: Keyboarding and knowledge of Microsoft Office Professional

Must be able to attend Professional Practice Experience (PPE) courses including 160 hours at a health care facility within reasonable driving/travel distance to their home.

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.

GENERAL NOTES

- Working in the Health Information Management HIM profession requires long periods of standing and/or sitting.
- Job duties typically include handling paper documents and use of computer screens.
- Near vision reading of paper records or computer screens, including the use of multiple computer applications, is required 95 percent of the time.
- Documents are handwritten on paper, and other documents and information used are on computer screens, including scanned documents and images.
- The computer screen fonts may be small. The extensive use of a computer keyboard and mouse is required.
- HIM professionals spend the greater portion of the work day reading and analyzing both handwritten and computerized documents and use multiple software applications such as the electronic health record.
- Individuals should assess their personal limitations and abilities within these working environments, as HIM candidates will be assessed in all of these skill sets during the hiring process.

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).

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	Freshman Composition	3
MEDR	1133	Medical Terminology	3
MEDR	1132	Essentials of Pharmacology	2
MEDR	1114	Intro to Health Info Managemnt	4
			16
Second			
BIOL	2214	Human Anat & Physiology II	4
BIOL	4403	Pathophysiology	3
MEDR	3114	Electronic Health Record Mgmt	4
MEDR	1234	ICD-10-CM & ICD-10-PCS Coding	4
GLST	2113	Global Perspectives:Spcl Topic	3
			18
Third			
MEDR	1223	Hlth Data Mgmt & Hlthcare Stat	3
MEDR	1244	CPT & HCPCS Level II Coding	4
MEDR	4214	Insurance&Reimbursmt Processng	4
MEDR	3414	Quality & Legal Aspects of HIM	4
MATH	1113	Statistical Concepts	3
			18
Fourth			
MEDR	4514	Alternate Care Hlth Info Mgmt	4
MEDR	4213	Leadership in Health Info Tech	3
MEDR	4312	HIM Operations PPE	2
MEDR	4322	Coding PPE	2
MEDR	4111	Health Informatn Tech Seminar	1
			12

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.