Health Information Management
Student Handbook
The goal of the Health Information Management (HIM) Program at Collin College is to graduate competent health information management professionals for the healthcare workforce. The program follows the guidelines set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM), the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), Collin College mission, and the Advisory Committee for the Health Information Management Program.

All students are treated with respect and dignity. Collin College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability or veteran status.

This handbook outlines many issues that are of interest to students enrolled in this program. The HIM program is a 60-credit hour program of online and professional practice experience instruction. Students who successfully complete all requirements are awarded the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Health Information Management degree and are eligible to take the Registered Health Information Technology (RHIT) national credentialing exam given by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

Please note that to be eligible for an AAS-HIM degree, a student must complete the requirements set forth by the college catalog. Please consult the college catalog for complete degree requirements.

This handbook is intended to serve only as a general guideline for the program. More specific policies may be found in several sources including the Collin College Catalog and the Collin College Student Handbook. In the absence of specific practices and procedures, the program director and/or college administration will decide various issues based on, but not limited to, the following guidelines:

1. Preservation of academic standards.
2. The present and future integrity of the program.
3. The ability of the program to carry out its goals and objectives.

The program may, at any time, enact new practices or procedures deemed necessary to maintain the above guidelines. Therefore, the information in this handbook is subject to change without prior written notice.
Collin Mission Statement
Collin County Community College District is a student and community-centered institution committed to developing skills, strengthening character, and challenging the intellect.

Philosophy and Purpose Statement
Through its campuses, centers, and programs, Collin College fulfills community and industry needs and its statutory charge by providing:

- Academic courses in the arts and sciences to transfer to senior institutions
- Programs leading to baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees or certificates, including technical programs, designed to develop marketable skills and promote economic development
- Continuing adult education programs for academic, professional, occupational and cultural enhancement
- Developmental education and literacy programs designed to improve the basic skills of students
- A program of student support services, including counseling and learning resources designed to assist individuals in achieving their educational and career goals
- Workforce, economic, and community development initiatives designed to meet local and state needs
- Other purposes as may be directed by the Board and/or the laws of the State of Texas

Collin Core Values
We have a passion for:
- Learning
- Service and Involvement
- Creativity and Innovation
- Academic Excellence
• Dignity and Respect

• Integrity

ACCREDITATION

The HIM (associate degree) program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

Students can apply for student membership with AHIMA using the Educational Program Code of 725.

Associate HIM Curriculum Competencies – Domains and Subdomains

I. Data Structure, Content, and Information Governance
   1. Healthcare Organizations and Key Stakeholders
   2. Policies, Regulations, and Standards for the Management of Information
   3. Policies and Strategies to Achieve Data Integrity
   4. Compliance of Health Record Content Within the Health Organization
   5. Classification Systems, Clinical Vocabularies, and Nomenclatures
   6. Data Dictionaries and Data Sets

II. Information Protection: Access, Use, Disclosure, Privacy, and Security
   1. Privacy
   2. Security
   3. Compliance Requirements throughout the Health Information Life Cycle

III. Informatics, Analytics, and Data Use
   1. Informatics Concepts
   2. Technologies
   3. Statistics
   4. Graphical Representations of Health Care Data
   5. Research Methodologies
   6. Data Management
   7. Health Information Exchange Standards

IV. Revenue Cycle Management
   1. Diagnostic and Procedural Coding Validation
   2. Revenue Cycle Management and Clinical Documentation Improvement
   3. Regulatory Requirements and Reimbursement Methodologies

V. Health Law and Compliance
   1. Legal Processes Impacting Health Information
2. Compliance with External Forces  
3. Risk Management  
4. Policy  
VI. Organizational Management and Leadership  
   1. Fundamental Leadership Skills  
   2. Organizational Change  
   3. Human Resource Strategies  
   4. Data-Driven Performance Improvement Techniques for Decision Making  
   5. Financial Management  
   6. Cultural Diversity  
   7. Ethical Standards of Practice  
   8. Consumer Engagement  
   9. Workforce Training

The curriculum for accredited programs can be found at:  
https://www.ahima.org/education/academic-affairs/academic-curricula

GENERAL GUIDELINES

To facilitate the development and mastery of skills required of a Registered Health Information Technician, the following guidelines are mandated for all students enrolled:

I. Program Eligibility

Students should take the 3 pre-requisite classes BIOL 2404, HITT 1305, HITT 2471, and complete the TSI Math/English Assessment (unless otherwise exempt) through Academic Advising for placement in the appropriate level of Math and English courses. Students will need to be at the College Algebra level to take HITT 2443 and complete ENGL 1301 for program completion.

Once pre-requisites are complete, or you are finishing your last
semester of pre-requisites (BIOL 2404, HITT 1305, and HITT 2471),
students should complete an application. The application contains a
number of forms including photo release, Success in HIM, Functional
Abilities and Core Performance. Students will also be interviewed by
HIM faculty/staff prior to admission into the program. Due to placement
limitations at professional practice experience sites, the program is
capped at 25 students a semester. You will be notified, via your college
email, of your status in the program once the application process is
complete.

If students are under current discipline action by the college, they are
not eligible for admission into the program.

Students who have a history of disciplinary action, not currently active,
are eligible to apply to the program provided they agree to conditional
acceptance, in writing.

II. Program Progression

Students’ progress through the AAS HIM curriculum should be in
accordance with the Collin College catalog. A student should plan on
accomplishing at least 18 hours in an academic year until program
completion. Any student who is unable to complete the semester due to
temporary disability or condition may rejoin the program the next
semester. A grade of F or W may be applied, depending on the
circumstance.

If a student, for various reasons, does not satisfy the 18 hours per
academic year criteria they will be categorized as “inadequately
progressing”. In order to move into active status, a student **MUST** meet
with the Director to re-formulate a succession plan to graduation. This
may include taking courses again depending on circumstances.

Students must maintain a GPA of 2.5 or better. Any student who falls
below that number will not receive a permit for PPE placement.

The scheduled times for academic classes are listed in the college class
schedule. All courses for the degree are offered in an online format. The Professional Practice Education component requires the student to participate at a healthcare facility. Student participation based on instructor syllabus and web course guidelines are mandatory. The program adheres to an online Code of Conduct and students are required to follow those policies.

**III. Program Expectations**

Students are committed to timely completion of the program, once admitted (no more than 3 years). Students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner, regardless of setting. Students will sit for the RHIT exam or continue their education.

**IV. Attendance and Tardiness**

Professionalism requires accountability and responsibility in on-site and online courses, as well as professional practice experience attendance. In order to meet professional practice experience objectives, absences are discouraged. See individual instructor syllabus for specific criteria.

**V. Student Employment**

Off campus employment is the student’s responsibility. Students in the HIM Program are frequently offered opportunities for employment in local healthcare facilities. Students should consider all commitments before agreeing to employment.

**VI. Professional Organizations**

Membership in the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is not required but highly recommended. Please visit www.ahima.org for more details. The EPC is 725.
VII. **Transfer Credit**

Any student, who may have completed health information coursework at another accredited institution, may be able to obtain transfer credit. Students wishing to apply for consideration of prior coursework should contact the Program Director.

VIII. **Grades**

The final grade for HIM classes will be determined by the method shown on the syllabus. The final grade for professional practice experience practice will be determined by the method shown on the professional practice experience packet for the course.

The grading scale for all Health Information Management Program courses is as follows:

i. 100 - 90 A
ii. 89 - 80 B
iii. 79 - 75 C*
iv. 74-60 D
v. Below 60 F

*The minimum competency level in all HIM courses is a grade of a C. Students scoring a grade of “D” or “F” in any HIM course may not progress to the next course(s) until that course is repeated, and passed with a minimum grade of C.*

IX. **Grade Reporting**

The Program will adhere to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and college guidelines when reporting grades. Grades will be disclosed only to the student. No electronic notification will be provided.

X. **Academic Honesty**

XI. **Code of Conduct**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Below are a few guidelines that apply to the Health Information Management program:

**Teamwork**

Being part of a team means performing alongside persons of varying ethnic backgrounds, national origin, political and religious beliefs, as well as other differences. By communicating effectively, and working together smoothly, the group carries out its goals successfully. Many studies show that collaborative efforts improve outcomes, and therefore teamwork is often superior to individual efforts.

The cooperative and collaborative group is one that we will model in health information courses. “**Team First**” is our goal in order to foster a learning environment of excellence. Here are some dos and don’ts regarding teamwork in the program:

**Do:** Put the needs of the group first.

**Don’t:** Ask for special considerations.

**Do:** Speak to fellow students in a respectful manner.

**Don’t:** Bring personal feelings about other students to the academic setting.

**Do:** Tell someone appropriately if you think the group is being negatively impacted by their behavior.

**Don’t:** Criticize an individual.

**Do:** Help fellow students struggling to understand a difficult concept.
Don’t: Add extraneous information that confuses the topic.

Do: Stop and ask relevant questions-- if you don’t understand, chances are others are wondering the same thing!

Don’t: Waste group time on off topic questions or issues that involve only you.

XII. Chain of Command

Students in the program will follow the chain of command for grievances. *Failure to respect the chain of command is considered unprofessional behavior.*

The chain of command is as follows:

1. Take a complaint to the instructor first. *It is unprofessional to discuss issues or problems with those that are not directly involved.*
2. The instructor will follow-up and give you a report.
3. If the grievance remains unresolved, take the issue to the Program Director. After a period of investigation, the appropriate person will report to you on the issue.
4. If the situation remains unresolved, contact the Dean of Health Sciences.
5. In the event that an individual is believed to have violated the code of conduct, that individual is subject to disciplinary action. The individual may be asked to participate in specific training geared toward helping the individual deal with difficult or challenging situations more appropriately. Repeated incidences may result in written advising, and/or (depending upon the seriousness of the problems) dismissal from the program.

Professional Practice Experience (PPE)

The Health Information Management student will receive instruction in the fundamentals of areas involved in health information management. To
complement academic training, the student will rotate through an area healthcare facility for a total of 80 hours (HITT 2361 - 80 hours). This will help the student with his/her skills previously learned in the classroom/lab and is an unpaid professional practice experience rotation. The Director of the HIM Program or Professional Practice Experience Site Coordinator will make every effort to place the students at a facility near their home or work. If you are currently working at a healthcare facility, you will be placed in an alternate site. **Only students that have satisfactory standing in all course work will be eligible to begin professional practice experience training.**

**Professional Practice Experience Objectives (General)**

1. To introduce the student to the healthcare environment and to familiarize him/her with the Health Information Management function.

2. To allow the student to develop rapport with members of the healthcare team.

3. To develop the student’s knowledge of medical ethics.

4. To develop psychomotor skills necessary to perform tasks effectively and efficiently.

5. To learn procedures and techniques used in the administration of health information.

6. To understand professional behaviors necessary to succeed in the workplace.

**Responsibilities of the PPE Facility**

*Collin College has current affiliation agreements with all the professional practice experience facilities where our students conduct professional practice experience rotations. The professional practice experience affiliation agreement is the legally binding document that sets the guidelines for both the college and the facility. The following is merely a reflection of the agreement for clarification purposes and does not supersede the agreement:*
1. The Facility will permit students of Collin College to practice under the supervision of College faculty or designated individuals in the department. The individual faculty member will be responsible to the liaison person designated by the Facility for health information management student activities.

2. The period of assignments shall be during regular Collin College academic sessions.

3. Collin College will provide the Facility with the names of students who are entitled to use the resources of the Facility under the terms of their agreement.

4. The student agrees to abide by rules, regulations, and policies set forth by the professional practice experience site’s HIM department. The student is to respect the authority of the supervisor and chain of command while functioning in the professional practice experience facility. In the event professional practice experience affiliate policies or procedures seem to conflict with college policy, please notify the Program Director of the college immediately.

5. The Facility further agrees:

   a. To maintain the criteria for accreditation as established by the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations or other appropriate accrediting agencies.

   b. To provide Collin College the necessary space or facilities for conference and classroom areas for student teaching, as available.

   c. To allow students and faculty members of Collin College to utilize the Facility’s eating facilities at the student and faculty’s personal expense (in some instances at a reduced rate consistent with employees).
I. **Dress Code for PPE**

In keeping with the professional atmosphere of the healthcare institution, the student will adhere to the PPE Site dress code:

1. The name badge or ID, purchased from student activities, must be worn to PPE sites.
2. Any nametag supplied by the PPE affiliate must be worn according to that affiliate’s policy.
3. Clean and professional attire during all PPE hours. Most PPE sites require business casual attire.

If ANY of the policies listed above are not adhered to, the student will receive ONE WARNING ONLY. The next time, he/she will be sent home and counted absent from PPE. A student determined to be in violation of the dress code by a PPE preceptor or faculty member may be sent home from PPE assignment. The Collin College HIM faculty must be notified of any violation in the dress code. If a student is sent home, the time will be recorded as unexcused.

II. **Liability Insurance**

All students must carry malpractice liability insurance while enrolled HITT 2361. It is assessed as a fee when you register for the class.

III. **Health Insurance**

Collin County Community College District does not make personal health insurance coverage available to its students; therefore, it is the student’s responsibility to provide for his/her own health needs. The college and the PPE affiliates (per our agreement with the facilities), have no responsibility for the student’s health care. Any personal, health related expenses incurred during professional practice experience training are the responsibility of the student.

Students are required to have health insurance coverage while in PPE and will be asked to provide proof of personal medical coverage before starting
IV. Immunizations

State law and Collin College Health Information Management Program require the following immunizations prior to assignment in PPE:

- Mumps, Measles, Rubella (two shot series) or titer showing immunity.
- Varicella (two shot series), or titer showing immunity.
- Tetanus/Diphtheria (within past ten years).
- Influenza (one dose seasonally as stated by the DFW Hospital Council).
- Hepatitis B series. Please note that it may take 6 months to complete the series. The student will not be allowed to attend professional practice experiences until documentation of Hepatitis B is provided.
- All students must have a TB skin test annually. The results of these tests must be submitted to the Program Director to be eligible to enroll in HITT 2361. The cost of these tests/immunizations is the student’s responsibility.
- Other vaccinations may be required of certain individuals, particularly those with health concerns. Please refer to the Texas Department of Health’s website http://www.tdh.texas.gov/immunize/vischart.htm

V. Drug Testing

Hospitals, in conjunction with The Joint Commission (an organization that accredits hospitals) require pre-employment drug testing. Collin College Health Information Management program requires students to be drug screened prior to entering PPE. No student will be admitted to PPE that has either a positive test, fails to take the test, or has taken the test at some place or time other than prescribed by the program. Previous drug screens are unacceptable. Random drug screens may be done during the PPE. Students may also be required to retest following any PPE incident or infraction of PPE affiliate policies or regulations. Students are responsible for the cost of the drug screen test (approximately $30).

Students must submit to a drug screening on the date notified by the Program Director. The program may only give 24 hours’ notice to complete any drug screen. Failure to complete the drug test on the assigned date
may be considered equivalent to a positive test.

A positive test means the student tested positive for THC, Cocaine, or other illicit substance. In the case of a positive test, the Medical Review Officer (MRO) of the participating lab may contact the student for information related to current and valid prescription drug use. The MRO will verify valid and current prescriptions with the student’s attending physician. In the case of a positive test, students may request a retest. Please note that hair analysis may be used for the retest and at the financial responsibility of the student.

VI. **Background Check**

Students must submit to a criminal background check. Any criminal records are a matter of public record and are subject to disclosure to all facilities where students participate in professional practice experience. It will be the burden of the PPE site to reject or accept a student based on the information in the background check.

VII. **Badges**

As stated in the section on Dress Code, the ID badge identifying the student as a Collin College Health Information Management student must be visible at all times when in professional practice experience. In hospitals that require a badge for the facility, the student must wear the college identification badge as well as the badge hospital policy requires.

Students must return professional practice experience affiliate ID badges to the Program Director upon completion of the experience, or if terminating the program for any reason. Lost badges must be immediately reported to the Program Director.

VIII. **Endorsements**

The naming of specific product, procedure, or item of equipment does not constitute an endorsement of the same by Collin College.
IX. Parking at Professional Practice Experience Sites

Students are strongly encouraged to utilize parking facilities provided by hospital. Failure to follow the guidelines may result in the student’s vehicle being towed.

X. Professional Practice Experience Attendance

Attendance at PPE sites is an essential component of the student’s education. The student must be in his/her assigned area of assignment and prepared for instruction at the scheduled time for that experience. If a student is unable to be present at professional practice, it is his/her responsibility to report the absence to the instructor prior to the scheduled time for the rotation. All absences must be reported to the designated site coordinator. If this does not occur, there will be a five (5) percent deduction from the final grade in the PPE course.

Lastly, if the student is unable to complete his/her professional practice experience objectives, a failing grade will be given for the course.

XI. Professional Practice Experience Evaluation

A PPE Evaluation Form will be used by your site coordinator to set up and monitor your professional practice experience. You will meet with your site coordinator in the first week to discuss performance objectives. It is important for you to demonstrate satisfactory performance on the program exit competencies. An additional aspect of the professional practice experience is the Student Portfolio. Materials added to your portfolio during professional practice should demonstrate your accomplishments to the program and future employers.

X. PPE Incidents

Violations occurring during PPE will be recorded on the Professional Practice Experience Incident Form. A copy of this form is included in this handbook.
PPE Incident

I. Any student committing any of the following offenses will be subject to immediate removal from the program (not necessarily Collin College).

   a. A deliberate action, which has or has the potential to cause serious physical or emotional harm to patients or personnel.

   b. Coming to the PPE sites under the influence of any non-prescribed drug that adversely affects the student’s performance during the professional practice experience rotation or bringing said drugs into the hospital or consuming drugs on hospital property.

   c. A verbal or physical act of aggression against another person on hospital premises.

   d. Theft of hospital, patient, student, or visitor property.

   e. Deliberate destruction or damage to hospital, patient, student, or visitor property.

   f. Deliberate falsification of hospital records either by omission or addition.

   g. Any HIPAA violation at the PPE site.

II. The student committing any of the offenses listed will be subject to the following disciplinary actions: First incident: probation (probationary status will continue for the duration of the student’s enrollment in the program), Second incident: dismissal from the Program (not necessarily Collin College).

   a. Causing damage to hospital, patient, student, or visitor property through negligence.
b. Causing injury or potential harm to patient through negligence.

c. Insubordination or refusal to obey an order from a superior or supervisor. There are two exceptions to insubordination.

1. The student is not qualified to perform the task.
2. When proper supervision is lacking.

III. A student committing the offenses listed below will be subject to the following disciplinary actions: First incident: verbal warning, Second incident: written reprimand, Third incident: dismissal from the Program (not necessarily Collin College).

a. Failure to follow published departmental rules or policies.
b. Failure to follow published program rules and policies.

NOTE: During professional experiences, it is important that serious incidents be documented at the College. A Professional practice experience Incident Form is included in this student handbook and must be completed and submitted to the Program Director within 24 hours of occurrence.

**APPEAL PROCEDURE**

The student may appeal PPE Incident action to the Program Director. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may initiate the Collin College Grievance Policy through the office of the Dean of Health Sciences. A copy of this policy can be found in the Collin College student handbook.

REVISED April 2020
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE INCIDENT FORM

Student Name ____________________________ CWID ____________________________

Date of Incident ____________________________ PPE Site ____________________________

Description of Events: _______________________________________________________

(Use additional sheet(s) if necessary)

Student Response: ____________________________________________________________

(Use additional sheet(s) if necessary)

Category of Incident: ______ I _____ II _____ III

This section for college use only.

Incident appealed: _____ Yes _____ No ____________ Date of Appeal

If yes, attach results of appeal and the action taken by the college to this sheet.

______________________________  ____________________________
Student Signature                 Date

______________________________  ____________________________
Preceptor/PPE Instructor Signature Date

REVISED April 2020
I have reviewed this handbook and understand all the practices included within. I agree to abide by these practices while enrolled as a student in the Health Information Management Program at Collin College (CCCD). I also agree to abide by procedures outlined in the Collin College (CCCD) Student Handbook, as applicable to all Collin College (CCCD) students. I authorize the release of my driver’s license and social security number to hospitals as is required to issue a badge for the facility.

__________________________
CWID

_______________________________________  _____________________________
Student Signature  Date

_______________________________________
Student Name (Printed)

_______________________________________  _____________________________
Program Director  Date

This page must be returned to the Program Director upon declaration of the student as a major in Health Information Management.

Revised April 2020
AHIMA Code of Ethics

Preamble

The ethical obligations of the health information management (HIM) professional include the safeguarding of privacy and security of health information; appropriate disclosure of health information; development, use, and maintenance of health information systems and health information; and ensuring the accessibility and integrity of health information.

Healthcare consumers are increasingly concerned about security and the potential loss of privacy and the inability to control how their personal health information is used and disclosed. Core health information issues include what information should be collected, how the information should be managed, who should have access to the information, under what conditions the information should be disclosed, how the information is retained, when it is no longer needed, and how is it disposed of in a confidential manner. All of the core health information issues are addressed in compliance with state and federal regulations, and employer policies and procedures.

Ethical obligations are central to the professional's responsibility, regardless of the employment site or the method of collection, storage, and security of health information. In addition, sensitive information (e.g., genetic, adoption, substance use, sexual health, and behavioral information) requires special attention to prevent misuse. In the world of business and interactions with consumers, expertise in the protection of information is required.

Purpose of the American Health Information Management Association Code of Ethics

The HIM professional has an obligation to demonstrate actions that reflect values. The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Code of Ethics sets forth these principles. (See also AHIMA Mission, Vision, Values) The
code is relevant to all AHIMA members, non-members with the Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM) certifications, and students enrolled in a formal certificate or degree granting program directly relevant to AHIMA’s Purpose regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. These purposes strengthen the HIM professional’s efforts to improve overall quality of healthcare.

The AHIMA Code of Ethics serves six purposes:

- Promotes high standards of HIM practice.
- Summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values.
- Establishes a set of ethical principles to be used to guide decision-making and actions.
- Establishes a framework for professional behavior and responsibilities when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
- Provides ethical principles by which the general public can hold the HIM professional accountable.
- Mentors practitioners new to the field to HIM's mission, values, and ethical principles.

The code includes principles that are enforceable and aspirational. The extent to which each principle is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical principles.

**Principles**

The following principles are based on the core values of the American Health Information Management Association and apply to all AHIMA members, non-members CCHIIM certifications, and students.

A health information management professional shall:

1. Advocate, uphold, and defend the consumer's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information.
2. 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.

3. Preserve, protect, and secure personal health information in any form or medium and hold in the highest regard health information and other information of a confidential nature obtained in an official capacity, taking into account the applicable statutes and regulations.

4. Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical practices or procedures and report such practices.

5. Use technology, data, and information resources in the way they are intended to be used.

6. Advocate for appropriate uses of information resources across the healthcare ecosystem.

7. Recruit and mentor students, peers and colleagues to develop and strengthen professional workforce.

8. Represent the profession to the public in a positive manner.

9. Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing education, research, publications, and presentations.

10. 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.

11. State truthfully and accurately one’s credentials, professional education, and experiences.

12. Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting ethical health information principles.

13. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.