WASHBURN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF APPLIED STUDIES

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND HEALTHCARE CODING CERTIFICATE

ADMISSION CRITERIA AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Dear Prospective Student:

I appreciate your interest in the Washburn University Health Information Technology and/or Healthcare Coding Certificate programs.

ONLINE COURSES:

Washburn University's Health Information Technology (HIT) and Healthcare Coding Certificate programs are offered online. Online courses require reliable access to the Internet and computer skills. See Washburn University Information Technology Services – Classrooms and Equipment (https://www.washburn.edu/its/) for minimum computer specs. Access to Office 365 programs (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) is free for students and is highly encouraged and recommended. For installing Office Programs on personal devices, visit Office 365 | Washburn University.

The Health Information Technology and Healthcare Coding online courses provide great convenience and flexibility for an optimal school-life balance. Both the HIT program and Healthcare Coding Certificate programs provide asynchronous learning, meaning that you can complete the coursework at your own pace, learning at the time of day that works best for you. The HIT program provides an on-site 40-hour project-based Professional Practice Experience/Internship during the last semester of coursework. The HIT and Healthcare Coding Certificate online courses require high motivation and self-discipline.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA:

1. Students must first be accepted at Washburn University (www.washburn.edu/apply). The next step is submitting a completed application packet to the HIT Program Director. The priority application deadline is February 1 of the application year. A secondary application deadline of June 1st is granted when enrollment is not at full capacity.
2. Students must submit an electronic letter of intent and two letters of recommendation via the electronic application link. The letter of intent should describe the applicant's interest in the Health Information profession and outline any experiences that pertain to the candidate's application. Limit the letter of intent to one page (max 275 words). Letters of reference must be from a professional reference & not a friend/family member.
3. The minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 is required for application.
4. A Criminal Background Check will be required of all accepted Health Information Technology students before entry into the Professional Practice II Course. Students must purchase their background check and provide required health clearance documentation (physical exam, immunization records, and evidence of health insurance) through Verified Credentials Scholar—the average background check fee is $70.10. Information about these requirements will be provided to students the semester before enrollment in Professional Practice II.
5. Official transcripts must accompany the Washburn University application. Transcripts must also be sent to the Health Information Technology Program Director if the applicant is not currently enrolled at Washburn University.

6.   It is strongly encouraged that students have documented evidence of observation or work experience in a Health Information Department. This information is recorded on the application to the program and should be mentioned in the letter of intent.

7.   **Application to Washburn University and Application to the Program DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ADMISSION**.

* Selection of students is based on the following:
    Completion of the application by the published deadline
    Letter of intent (content and grammar)
    Letters of Recommendation
    GPA
    Past relevant work experiences
    Previous relevant college courses completed.
* The maximum class size is 20 students.
* The program begins in the fall semester of each year.
* Completed applications received by February 1 will be prioritized for the following fall semester. Notification of acceptance or denial will be sent by mid-March. Late applications will be accepted with approval on a space-available basis.
* The Health Information Technology associate degree program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics & Information Management Education (CAHIIM).
* Students formally accepted into the program will be asked to complete a background check, physical examination, proof of required immunizations, and provide evidence of health insurance before enrolling in the professional practice courses.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS:

Upon successful completion of the Health Information Technology (HIT) associate degree program, the student is eligible to sit for the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) examination through the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). Health information technicians are employed by various healthcare organizations, including acute care hospitals, long-term care settings, outpatient clinics, physician offices, and business and legal settings.

All individuals admitted to the Washburn University health information technology program or coding certificate program will be asked to verify that they can meet these minimum technical standards with or without accommodation(s). If you believe you need accommodations to perform these essential functions as a student, please consult with Washburn's Diversity and Inclusion Office, Morgan Hall, room 105, (785) 670-1629, or email: diversity.inclusion@washburn.edu

1. Verbal communication: Includes speaking and listening using English and medical terminology. The individual must communicate clearly with teachers, fellow students, physicians, staff, patients, attorneys, third-party payers, government officials, and others. This individual must be able to listen and speak clearly over the telephone.

2. Written communication- reading and interpretation: Includes extensive reading ability using English and medical terminology when reviewing medical records and reference books (medical dictionaries, coding books, etc.) needed to perform jobs/duties. While going to school, this individual must be able to read and interpret textbooks, online computer materials, handouts, etc.

3. Written communication – writing: Includes using English and medical terminology for college assignments and job-related documents. Examples of writing required on the job include telephone

messages, memos, letters, professional e-mail messages, business proposals, job descriptions, policies, procedures, quality improvement reports, etc.

4. Visual needs: Includes the ability to read names and numbers on medical records, read medical records/health information in paper or computer form, read coding books and other reference materials, read health information in a variety of computer programs and databases, read handwritten or computer documents, and the ability to prepare office layouts, design forms, and computer screens.

5. Motor function: Includes the ability to keyboard at a minimum of 40-45 words per minute. Students must have gross motor, fine motor, and equilibrium functions reasonably required to access information from a computer using a keyboard or mouse, a telephone, and a copy machine. Some HIT positions require the ability to sort medical record forms, assemble records in the correct order, and file records in open-shelf files. This may include overhead reaching and stooping/bending/kneeling to the lowest shelves at or near floor level and the ability to move 20 pounds of paper records for a distance of 50 feet in an office.

6. Computer skills: The ability to work with various computer software programs following written instructions, reading, and inputting/responding to information displayed. This includes word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, database and flow-charting software, and specialized health information programs (e.g., electronic health records, encoders, chart tracking systems). Jobs may include up to eight hours per day of computer work.

7. Mathematical ability: Calculating mathematical information such as hospital statistics, productivity information, quality improvement studies, budgets, equipment and supply needs/costs, medical bills, etc. This individual must also be able to apply appropriate algebraic formulas when preparing computerized spreadsheets.

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9. Walking, sitting, and standing abilities: Includes walking or moving (50 feet minimum) from one job station to another in an office environment and sitting for long periods (two hours in succession) in an office job. A typical job is eight hours with a meal break and two short rest breaks during the shift. Many HIT positions require the ability to stand for average periods of time (one hour).

10. Intellectual or conceptual abilities: The ability to synthesize information from various sources and apply it in making decisions related to the class/lab assignment or performing work assigned on the job. Examples include taking the information learned in class and applying it in a lab or practice setting or taking the information learned in a previous class and applying it in a later class. Another example is the ability to read and interpret information in a patient's medical record, remember information learned regarding coding principles, check references when needed, and then code that patient's record independently with accuracy and speed. Students must have sufficient organizational skills necessary to meet deadlines and manage time.

11. Behavioral/Social abilities: Must be able to respond effectively in situations of stress and demonstrate emotional stability and flexibility. Examples of this behavior include functioning effectively as part of a team, expressing concern for the well-being of others during times of stress, maintaining composure when stressful events occur, and continuing to function with accuracy. This

person must be able to perform the assigned work according to the quality and timeliness standards required by the facility. The HIT student and professional must be able to work independently when needed. HIT students and professionals must respect themselves, their peers, instructors, fellow employees, physicians, patients, other professionals, and supervisors. HIT students and professionals must show dependability in attendance and completing work according to deadlines. Students must be able to maintain professional conduct and appearance.

12. Confidentiality, honesty, and ethics: The HIT student and professional must be able to protect the confidentiality and security of health records and facility/practitioner business information. These individuals must be able to comply with all laws, regulations, and standards regarding health information management. HIT students must demonstrate honesty and ethics in the learning environment, including not cheating on exams or assignments or plagiarizing. HIT professionals must demonstrate honesty and ethics as defined by the employer and the professional association (AHIMA).

It is your responsibility to notify the HIT program director if there is any reason why you cannot meet the expectations for health information technology students described above, with or without reasonable accommodations.

For questions regarding the Admission Criteria and Technical Standards for the HIT Program or Healthcare Coding Certificate, please contact Michelle Shipley at 785 670 – 2114 or michelle.shipley@washburn.edu