

**Columbus State Community College**

**Health and Human Services Division**

**Health Information Management Technology (HIMT)**

**Student Handbook**

**2020-2021**

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# **MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Welcome to the Division of Health & Human Services at Columbus State Community College. We are delighted you chose to continue your education with us. We believe that you have made an excellent choice and cannot wait for you to experience the high-quality education and support that the faculty and staff in our division have been known to provide.

As Ohio’s premier community college, we deliver a variety of academic programs to meet the needs of the greater central Ohio area. The Division of Health and Human Services offers a wide range of learning opportunities to students. Made up of eight departments offering nearly 70 degree and certificate programs, we have something for everyone.

You will have the opportunity to learn from faculty who are experts in their field of instruction. They have years of experience as educators and as industry professionals. Our faculty know what it takes to succeed in the workplace, and, more importantly, are adept at passing their skills and knowledge on to students such as yourself. They will teach you, challenge you, and help you to grow as a learner, person, and professional.

The advisors, staff, and administrators in the Health & Human Services Division are on standby to help you along every step of your journey as well. Our doors are always open to help you schedule your courses, overcome non-academic barriers, and resolve issues.

We welcome you to participate in all that our fine institution offers. You will find that there are many opportunities that extend well beyond the classroom. There are numerous student clubs and organizations as well recreational and athletic opportunities that you can share in as a student. I hope you will take advantage of these opportunities.

On behalf of the Health and Human Services Division, I wish you the very best on your studies at Columbus State and for your future!

All the best,

Kirk Dickerson, Ed.D.

Dean, Health & Human Services

# **HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY (HIMT) STUDENT HANDBOOK PURPOSE**

This Student Handbook provides information specific to students in the HIMT Program. This handbook applies to all students in the HIMT Program who are pursuing the following: HIM Technician Certificate, Medical Coding Certificate, HIMT Associate’s degree, and the Health Data Analyst Certificate – Post HIMT Associate’s degree.

Each student must sign the Handbook Acknowledgement form. Be advised that even if a student fails to return a signed Handbook Acknowledgment Form, the student is still responsible for abiding by the content in this program specific student handbook, the Columbus State Policies and Procedures, course syllabi, the Columbus State Catalog, and the Columbus State Student Handbook.

# **STATEMENT ACKNOWLEDGING CHANGES TO THE HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY (HIMT) STUDENT HANDBOOK**

This student handbook is subject to federal, state, and local law as well as national and state governing bodies, Columbus State Policies and Procedures, and HIMTPolicies and Procedures. As changes in the law or policy by one or more of these entities occur, corresponding revisions to this handbook will be made periodically. Students are advised that these changes may occur with or without prior notice. Therefore, students should check for updates to program information at <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

# **COLLEGE POLICIES**

## Student Code of Conduct Summary

As an enrolled student at Columbus State, you have agreed to abide by the Student Code of Conduct as outlined in Columbus State Policy and Procedure 7-10. Columbus State has a high standard of conduct for members of its college community, including students. Consistent with the educational mission of the College, Columbus State students are expected to perform all work honestly, maintain prescribed academic standards, pay all debts to the college, and respect the property and rights of others. To ensure the maintenance of an environment conducive to the attainment of the educational mission of Columbus State, the President is authorized to establish such rules and regulations as are deemed appropriate and necessary for the orderly operation of the college. In addition to these rules, the behaviors enumerated under Academic and Behavioral Misconduct may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the college. Should the concern involve allegations sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, harassment, and/or violations civil rights by an employee the matter will be referred to the College's Title IX Coordinator.

The complete Columbus State Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure 7-10 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>. It is the student’s responsibility to read through the entire Student Code of Conduct. For more information about the Student Code of Conduct and the Office of Student Conduct, please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/student-conduct/>.

## Background Check and Drug Screening Disclosure for Students Pursuing Health and Human Services Programs

Students who are pursuing degrees or certificates leading to application for professional licensure or certification, and/or who will be participating in clinical placements, internships, practicums, or similar experience through their program, should be aware that Columbus State may require a criminal background check, fingerprinting, or drug screening prior to placement or acceptance into such a program.Please see the program specific policy in the Program Admission and Continuing Compliance Requirements Chapter to learn more about your academic program’s requirements.

## Individuals with Disabilities

It is Columbus State policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities as stated in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is also the policy of Columbus State to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the application, admission, or other terms and conditions of educational programs for qualified students, student applicants and other participants of College-sponsored programs or services who have disabilities. These acts can be found in Columbus State Policy 3-41, which can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

Columbus State offers a wide range of support to encourage the enrollment of people with disabilities. Located in Eibling Hall 101, the Disability Services Office provides services to qualified students with disabilities for all Columbus State locations. It is the student’s responsibility to request accommodations for access. If you would like to request such accommodations for access, please contact Disability Services: 101 Eibling Hall, (614)-287-2570. Delaware Campus students may contact the Disability Services Coordinator by stopping by the Student Services Center on the first floor of Moeller Hall, or calling (740) 203-8345 to begin the process of registering with Disability Services. Students can also visit the disability services website at: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/disability/register.shtml>. Email or give your instructor a copy of your accommodations letter from Disability Services as soon as possible. Accommodations do not start until the letter is received, and accommodations are not retroactive.

For more information about Disability Services at Columbus State please visit the Disability Services website at: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/disability/>.

## Student Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Columbus State complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Student rights under FERPA are published in the Columbus State Catalog. To view the Columbus State Catalog online please visit <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/catalog/>. Also pursuant to FERPA, Columbus State has designated certain information about students as directory information. To learn more about what information is considered directory information or how to request that your directory information be withheld from the public, please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/registrar/withhold-information.shtml>.

## Notice of Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment

While the college does not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment, the Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy and related procedures are intended to cover discrimination and harassment based on protected class. Protected classes for purposes of this policy are sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information (GINA), military status, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. The complete Columbus State Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy 3-43 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>. Any student found to be in violation of Policy 3-43 will be referred to the student conduct office for resolution in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure 7-10.

Columbus State uses a secure, online reporting system as the preferred way of reporting alleged incident(s) of discrimination based on a protected class, including harassment, sexual misconduct and retaliation. This form can be found at the following website cscc.edu/discriminationreport or by visiting the following website <https://www.cscc.edu/services/title-ix/> and clicking on “To Submit a Complaint.” For more information about resources, and to learn about Columbus State’s Office of Equity and Compliance please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/title-ix/>.

## Sexual Misconduct and Title IX

The Columbus State Sexual Misconduct Policy 3-44 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in education programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. “Education programs and activities” include all of a school's operations, including employment and school-sponsored athletics and activities (on or off campus).

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions, programs and activities. This includes, but is not limited to:

* Sexual assault
* Domestic, intimate partner and dating violence
* Gender-based stalking
* Sexual harassment (quid pro quo and hostile work environment)
* Failing to provide appropriate accommodations for a pregnant or parenting student
* Treating a person differently based on marital status.

Columbus State uses a secure, online reporting system as the preferred way of reporting alleged incident(s) of discrimination based on a protected class, including harassment, sexual misconduct and retaliation. This form can be found at the following website cscc.edu/discriminationreport or by visiting the following website <https://www.cscc.edu/services/title-ix/> and clicking on “To Submit a Complaint.” For more information about resources, and to learn about Columbus State’s Office of Equity and Compliance please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/title-ix/>.

## Campus Safety/Clery Act

A college campus offers an open, welcoming environment where many people congregate during the course of a day. To be safe, everyone should be aware of his/her surroundings at all times. If an emergency occurs, immediately call 911, then the Police Department Communications Center at 614-287-2525. You can also send a text through the Rave Guardian App or directly from your phone to 67283. In the text, type CSCCTIP and enter a space. Everything after the space will be sent as your tip. Criminal acts, accidents, medical emergencies, suspicious behaviors, or other emergencies must be reported to the Police Department. You can call the Police Department, visit in-person on the Columbus Campus in Delaware Hall, Room 047, activate an emergency phone, or you can call the local police department by dialing 911.

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (commonly referred to as the Clery Act), codified at 20 USC 1092 (f), is a federal law that requires colleges and universities to disclose certain timely and annual information about campus crime and security policies. The Police Department is responsible for completing the Clery Crime Statistics, and the Annual Security Report. Columbus State also complies with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE Act).

For more information about campus safety, how to sign up for emergency text alerts, and to view the Columbus State Clery Act Annual Security Report, please visit the Columbus State Police website at: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/police/>. The Columbus State Campus Safety Policy and Procedure 13-11 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

## Veterans and Service Members Support and Assistance

Columbus State seeks to assist service members and veterans as they pursue an advanced degree and/or certificate. In an effort to better serve this population, the College has adopted Columbus State Policy 7-15 as required by Ohio Revised Code Section 3345:421(B). The complete Columbus State Veterans and Service Members Support and Assistance Policy 7-15 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

The Columbus State Military and Veterans Services Department provides individualized enrollment and referral services to assist community members in successfully meeting their educational and career goals. The Columbus State Military and Veterans Services Department is committed to providing uncompromising service by adhering to the highest standards of compassion, commitment, excellence, professionalism, integrity, accountability and stewardship.

If you would like more information regarding Columbus State’s Military and Veterans Services, please contact Military and Veterans Services in Delaware Hall room 156 or by calling (614) 287-2644 or by visiting the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/military-veterans/>. Columbus State’s G.I Bill Office is located in Union Hall, Rm 48 and their phone number is: (614) 287-2644.

## Drug and Alcohol Free Campus

Under the Federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Columbus State has established a drug and alcohol prevention program for all students and employees. To access information on services and programming please visit the Columbus State Counseling Services website at: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/counseling/> and the Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Brochure at: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/counseling/pdf/alcohol_drug_prevention.pdf>.

Further, Students should be aware that the Columbus State Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure 7-10 prohibits the use, possession, or distribution of an alcoholic beverage; the use, possession, or distribution of a narcotic, inhalant or other controlled substances, as well as drug paraphernalia, except as expressly permitted by law; and the abuse or misuse of prescriptions or over-the-counter medication. The Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure 7-10 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

## Tobacco Free Campus

Columbus State strives to enhance the general health and wellbeing of its students, faculty, staff, and visitors. We desire to support individuals to be tobacco free, achieve their highest state of health, and to launch students into their careers at a high level of health and wellbeing. To support this commitment, we intend to provide a tobacco free environment. As of July 1, 2015, smoking and the use of tobacco are prohibited in or on all College-owned, operated, or leased property, including vehicles. The policy includes indoor and outdoor use of all tobacco products, smoke or smokeless, including e-cigarettes. For cessation resources, please visit <http://legacy.cscc.edu/about/tobaccofree/>.

To view the Columbus State Tobacco Free Campus Policy 13-13, please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

## Grade Grievance Procedure Summary

The purpose of the grade grievance procedure is to provide a method of recourse to students who reasonably believe that a final course grade was assigned in error. This is intended for students who believe the instructor made an error in computing the final grade, evaluated the student using different standards than applied to others in the class, or failed to follow the grading policy as stated in the course section syllabus.

It is the student’s responsibility to initiate the grade grievance procedure. The complete Grade Grievance Procedure can be found in Columbus State’s Grading and Academic Requirements Procedure 5-09(D) and can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>. It is the student’s responsibility to read through the entire Grade Grievance Procedure as it contains a detailed process and includes deadlines.

## Written Student Complaints

Columbus State Community College encourages student communication with the administration, faculty, and staff regarding college operations and procedures and encourages students to use existing policies, personnel, and departmental offices to express specific concerns. Should a student deem that the existing policies, personnel, and departmental offices cannot address his/her specific concern or complaint, Columbus State Community College, in accordance with federal regulations, accepts and maintains records of formal written complaints filed with the office of the President, a Vice-President, or the Provost. The complete Columbus State Written Student Complaints Policy and Procedure 7-13 can be found at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

## Image Release Acknowledgment

As a general rule under Ohio law, the use of a person’s persona (photo, image, name, voice, signature, or likeness) for a commercial purpose is not allowed unless the person consents in writing. However,institutions of higher education have an exception under the law, which allows the college to use a student’s, faculty’s or staff’s persona without consent, for educational purposes to promote the college, its educational or institutional objectives, s*ee* [Ohio Revised Code section 2741.09(A)(5)](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/2741.09v1). This educational exception also extends to former students, faculty, and staff. Students are advised that photos may be taken of individuals (or groups) associated with Columbus State, while on Columbus State property or at Columbus State events, and used as long as the use is to promote the college’s educational purposes.

## Additional Columbus State Websites

Below are the links to additional Columbus State websites:

* + For the current policies and procedures of Columbus State, please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>
  + For information about Columbus State services, resources, and policies and procedures (such as information technology, food services, college success resources, student leadership resources, and financial aid resources) please view the Columbus State Student Handbook, which can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/student-handbook.shtml>
  + To search for courses and plans of study, general information and directories, and Columbus State resources and policies and procedures (such as community and civic engagement, academic study abroad, and college testing services), please view the Columbus State Catalog, which can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/catalog/>
* Columbus State’s Social Media Guidelines can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>
* Institutional Disclosure-Student Right to Know can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/institutional-disclosure.shtml>

# 

# **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

## Overview

The Health Information Management Technology (HIMT) program prepares the student to become a professional responsible for maintaining components of health information systems consistent with medical, administrative, ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements of the health care delivery system.

Programs within the HIMT include the following: HIM Technician Certificate, Medical Coding Certificate, HIMT Associate’s degree, and the Health Data Analyst Certificate – Post HIMT Associate’s degree.

Students are advised that this overview is subject to change and the handbook may not be immediately revised, therefore students should check for the most current information regarding the program overview on the Columbus State Catalog website: <https://catalog.cscc.edu/>or on the academic program website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

## Mission

The mission of the HIMT program is to provide its students with the education and skills necessary to experience success as an HIM professional and to become life-long learners within the profession and beyond contributing to both the profession and their community.

## Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM)

The HIMT program is accredited by CAHIIM. CAHIIM accreditation offers employers assurance that graduates have received the expected professional knowledge and entry-level skills for employment marketability. CAHIIM accreditation is required in order for graduates to be eligible to sit for certification examinations such as the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) offered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

## Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for this academic program can be found on the Columbus State Catalog website: <https://catalog.cscc.edu/> or on the academic program website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

## Planof Study

The plan of study for this academic program can be found on the Columbus State Catalog website: <https://catalog.cscc.edu/> or on the academic program website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

## Course Descriptions

The course descriptions for this academic program can be found on the Columbus State Catalog website: <https://catalog.cscc.edu/> or on the academic program website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

## Faculty Directory

The faculty directory for this academic program can be found at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

## Health Risks and Working Conditions

As a student enrolled in this academic program, you may be required to participate in activities (i.e., PPE) that may present a risk to your health and you may be working with other students and patients in various states of health/illness. As stated in the contracts with our clinical partners, no patient is discriminated against in the provision of health care. Students may be exposed to significant risks including but not limited to various diseases, micro-organisms, pathogens, needle stick injuries, exposure to communicable diseases, infections, or exposure to blood and/or bodily fluids. However, it is important to understand that there is always a risk. Further, a student who is, or becomes pregnant while enrolled in a health related-program has the potential for exposure to a number of agents or conditions that could adversely affect the well-being of a fetus. This academic program is strongly committed to working with students who voluntarily choose to declare a pregnancy while enrolled in the program.

More examples of potential risks to students in clinical/laboratory placements include but are not limited to:

* Ionizing radiation may cause damage to a student or developing fetus, when the student does not use required shielding.
* Students may be exposed to communicable diseases. Students may be required to have immunizations and health exams prior to beginning some laboratory and all clinical courses.
* Risk of falling, especially on wet surfaces.
* Risk of injuries related to lifting heavy objects or moving patients.
* Risk of needlestick or instrument-related injuries.
* Risk of blood borne pathogen exposure.

Students are solely responsible for the cost of medical treatment due to exposure to the risks, illness, or injury. Please see the program specific policy in the Program Policies and Procedures Chapter which discusses health insurance.

# **PROGRAM ADMISSION AND CONTINUING COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Students are advised that the below admission and continuing compliance requirements are subject to change and the handbook may not be immediately revised, therefore students should check for the most current information regarding admission and continuing compliance requirements at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>

## Pre-Admission Requirements for the HIMT Associate’s Degree and the Medical Coding Certificate Programs

* High school graduate or GED equivalency
* Placement into ENGL 1100-Beginning Composition
* Placement into STAT 1350 or completion of MATH 1025
* Completion of the HIM Technician Certificate <https://catalog.cscc.edu/programs/HealthInformationManagementTechnicianCertificate>
* Students completing the HIM Technician Certificate with a final grade of “C” or higher in each of the courses will be eligible to apply to continue on to complete the HIMT Associate’s degree or the Medical Coding Certificate programs.
* The online application period for these programs is October 1 – December 30 with a program start date of the following autumn semester (provided that pre-admission requirements have been completed within published timeframe). Seats are limited in both the HIMT Associate’s degree and the Medical Coding Certificate programs. Students are admitted to the programs on a first-come, first-serve basis until both programs are full. Submission of an application does not guarantee admission into either the HIMT Associate’s degree or the Medical Coding Certificate programs. <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/health-information/>
* Students must pass a drug screen and background check before they can be accepted into either the HIMT Associate’s degree or the Medical Coding Certificate programs

## Pre-Admission Requirements for the Health Data Analyst – Post HIMT Associate’s Degree Program

* Completion of HIMT Associate’s degree program and possessing current RHIT credential; **or**
* Completion of Bachelor’s degree program in health information management (HIM) and possessing current RHIA credential; **or**
* Completion of other Allied Health or Nursing Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree program and possessing current certification/licensure in discipline of study. Note: Applicants may need to complete individual courses in the HIMT program to close the foundational knowledge gap that may exist between other Allied Health and Nursing education programs.

## Background Check and Drug Screening

Students are required to complete a criminal background check and drug screening as a requirement for admission and continuation in the academic program. Each student is responsible for paying for the background check and drug screening. Students should be prepared to submit to background checks and drug screenings as required by clinical/partner facilities, professional practice experience (PPE) sites, licensing agencies, and/or program accreditation.

Background checks and drug screenings are commonly required by the contracted clinical/partner facilities where students are required to perform a clinical, practicum, internship, professional practice experience (PPE), or other type of experiential learning experience to meet graduation requirements. It is acknowledged by the student that such background checks and drug screenings are necessary to successfully matriculate toward degree completion. Further, such background checks and drug screenings may require completion on an annual basis or immediately before the clinical, practicum, internship, or other type of experiential learning experience would start. Depending on the outcome of the background check and drug screening, students may be denied the ability to participate in clinical, practicums, internships, professional practice experiences (PPEs), or other type of experiential learning experiences. The academic program will make reasonable efforts to place students but this cannot be guaranteed. If a placement cannot be found this may result in the student being denied admission or continuation in the academic program.

Students are further advised that a criminal record may jeopardize licensure by the state certification body. Students should consult the licensing certification body corresponding with their intended occupation for details. Successful completion of a program of study at Columbus State does not guarantee licensure, certification, or employment in the relevant occupation. Standards may change during a student’s program of study.

Individuals who were previously admitted to Columbus State and wish to re-enroll must disclose to the Office of Student Conduct any felony convictions that occurred since their last term of enrollment. Current students with new felony convictions must report updated conviction history to the Office of Student Conduct within the semester in which the conviction occurs. For more information please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/student-conduct/criminal-history.shtml>.

Specific information regarding the background check process will be provided to students after they have tentatively been accepted into either the HIMT Associate’s degree program or the Medical Coding Certificate program*.* Specific information regarding the drug screening process will be provided to students via email notification after they receive tentative acceptance to either the HIMT Associate’s degree program or the Medical Coding Certificate program*.*

## Health Records, Health Requirements, and Immunizations

If you are accepted to, or take courses in this academic program, you may be required to submit a health record prior to attending a professional practice experience (PPE) in either HIMT 2870 or HIMT 2930. You may also be required to meet certain health requirements as specified by the PPE site including but not limited to the following: completion of health record form, proof of physical examination stating that you are “well” enough to participate in the PPE, proof of two-step Mantoux (intradermal) TB test and/or other immunizations such as flu shot, Tdap, MMR, HepB, varicella or documentation of chicken pox disease and the flu as required by the PPE site. The health record forms will be provided by the specific PPE site, if applicable. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the PPE site health requirements and submission deadlines*.*

Please refer to the “PPE Health Requirements” section in the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Policies and Procedures for additional information on the health records, health requirements, and immunizations requirements for PPE.

## American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Membership

Students are required to become a student member of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and maintain current membership status while in the HIMT program in order to access member-only areas of the AHIMA website for coursework, etc.

# **ESSENTIAL SKILLS/ABILITIES**

In order to assure safe and successful advancement through the HIMT Program, students must possess the following essential skills/abilities necessary to complete the entire curriculum, either with or without reasonable accommodations. These essential skills/abilities should be considered conditions for continuation in the HIMT Program,as they reflect the characteristics necessary for success as a student and to become a credentialed HIM professional (i.e., RHIT, CCA, CHDA, etc.). These essential skills/abilities are based on literature noting what it takes to be a successful online learner, the demands of the HIM profession, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Code of Ethics, and standards established by this academic program faculty and staff. Students must continually meet these essential skills/abilities throughout their course of study. Failure to maintain these essential skills/abilities may result in but is not limited to non-admission to the program or removal from the program.

It is the policy of Columbus State to make reasonable accommodations as defined in Columbus State Policy 3-41 which will provide otherwise qualified applicants, employees, and students with disabilities equal access to participate in opportunities, programs, and services offered by Columbus State. If you would like to request such accommodations, please contact Disability Services at 101 Eibling Hall or at (614) 287-2570. Delaware Campus students may contact the Disability Services Coordinator by stopping by the Student Services Center on the first floor of Moeller Hall, or by calling (740) 203-8345. Please visit the Disability Services website to learn more: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/disability/>. Columbus State’s Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Policy 3-41 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

The essential skills/abilities for the HIMT Program are categorized into the following categories: (1) Physical Essential Skills/Abilities; (2) Sensory/Observational Essential Skills/Abilities; (3) Cognitive Essential Skills/Abilities; (4) Communication Essential Skills/Abilities.

## Physical Essential Skills/Abilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Physical Essential Skills/Abilities *including but not limited to:*** | **Context and Reasoning behind Physical Skills/Abilities** |
| *Lifting* | * HIM professionals/students may have to lift paper records. |
| *Kneeling* | * HIM professionals/students may have to kneel to retrieve patient records. |
| *Reaching* | * HIM professionals/students may have to reach to retrieve patient records. |
| *Walking* | * HIM professionals/students may have to walk to floors in facility to collect patient records. |

## Sensory/Observational Essential Skills/Abilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sensory/Observational Skills/Abilities *including but not limited to:*** | **Context and Reasoning behind Sensory/Observational Skills/Abilities** |
| *Visual* | * HIM professionals/students have to be able to view information on computer screens and in paper format. |
| *Auditory* | * HIM professionals/students need to be able to respond to verbal requests from supervisors, medical staff, and other medical professionals and facility staff. |

## Cognitive Essential Skills/Abilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cognitive Essential Skills/Abilities *including but not limited to:*** | **Context and Reasoning behind Cognitive Essential Skills/Abilities** |
| *Critical Thinking* | * HIM professionals/students need to develop critical thinking skills that enable them to objectively analyze and evaluate complex subjects and situations. They must be able to assess, analyze, interpret, and apply problem-solving techniques to HIM scenarios. This includes applying foundational course content to HIM simulations. |
| *Decision Making* | * HIM professionals/students need to develop good decision making skills that enable them to objectively gather information, identify the principles to judge the alternatives, brainstorm and list possible choices, and evaluate each choice in terms of its consequences. |
| *Computer Skills* | * HIM professionals/students must be able to work at a computer for extended periods of time and use applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, and databases. * HIM professionals/students must have the ability to troubleshoot computer issues and appropriately seek assistance for computer problems when they occur. |
| *Reading and Comprehension* | * HIM professionals/students must be able to read and comprehend technical, legal (i.e., HIPAA, release of information), and college-level subject matter. |
| *Time Management* | * HIM professionals/students must be able to manage time so as to balance academic, professional, and social obligations. * HIM professionals/students must be able to meet productivity benchmarks in the HIM department (i.e., coding so many charts per hour). * HIM professionals/students must be able to work independently on most tasks. |
| *Knowledge* | * HIM professionals/students must have knowledge of safety practices (e.g., HIPAA, OSHA, infection control), office practices and procedures, skill in typing, equipment operation (e.g., computer, printer, addressograph, fax, copier, telephone). * HIM professionals/students must be able to collect, collate, analyze, interpret, and synthesize information about data, people, or things (i.e., disease classification, statistical data, and regulatory requirements). * HIM professionals/students must be able to apply knowledge to new scenarios and situations. |
| *Course Obligations* | * HIM professionals/students are expected to meet deadlines and submit work by posted due dates. * HIM professionals/students are expected to take proctored exams at approved testing center. * HIM professionals/students are expected to travel or participate in-person at professional practice experiences (PPEs) and class meetings. * HIM professionals/students are required to complete 90 hours of field experience in HIMT 2870 and 90 hours of field experience in HIMT 2930. * HIM professionals/students are required to become a member/student member of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and maintain current membership status while in the HIMT program in order to access member-only areas of the AHIMA website for coursework, etc.   HIMT professionals/students are expected to maintain the highest level of academic integrity in all courses (e.g., by not plagiarizing, not using unauthorized resources, not collaborating with other student on assignments/tests/quizzes unless otherwise authorized by the instructor). |

## Communication Essential Skills/Abilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Communication Essential Skills/Abilities *including but not limited to:*** | **Context and Reasoning behind Communication Essential Skills and Abilities** |
| *Speaking* | * HIM professionals/students are required to speak/communicate clearly in English with others in the work setting, etc. * HIM professionals/students are required to establish rapport with other team members for effectiveness and efficacy in the HIM work environment. Use of slang, profanity and other inappropriate communication is never acceptable. |
| *Non-verbal* | * HIM professionals/students are required to use appropriate non-verbal communication that are professional and *not* offensive or disrespectful of others. |
| *Listening* | * HIM professionals/students are required to possess good listening skills and attentiveness and ability to interpret and follow instructions. * HIM professionals/students must attend class meetings, WebEx sessions, PPE site visits, etc. without the distraction of electronic devices, such as phones. |
| *Writing* | * HIM professionals/students must communicate effectively in the written English language using correct grammar, spelling, and language. This includes recognizing grammatical and spelling errors. * HIM professionals/students are expected to be professional in their email communication. Use of slang, profanity and other inappropriate communication is never acceptable. * HIM professionals/students must be able to comprehend and record figures accurately. |
| *Interpersonal Skills* | * HIM professionals/students are expected to have professional interactions with supervisors, co-workers, others from diverse backgrounds, etc. |
| *Professionalism/Confidentiality* | * HIM professionals/students are required to follow the ethical principles based on the core values of the AHIMA Code of Ethics. * HIM professionals/students must be able to handle sensitive inquiries from contacts with officials and the general public with upmost confidentiality. |

# **PROFESSIONAL** **CONDUCT STANDARDS**

Professional conduct is required of students in the HIMT Program. Students are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the professional standards set forth by their profession and the standards established by their academic program faculty and staff. Professional conduct standards supplement the behavioral expectations for all students. Violating these professional conduct standards may result in discipline up to and including dismissal. The following professional conduct standards to which students are expected to adhere to are based on the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Code of Ethics and the standards established by this academic program faculty and staff.

**Students in the HIMT program are required to:**

* Uphold patient confidentiality pursuant to HIPAA
* Treat others with respect in all areas of the clinical and academic setting
* Comply with Columbus State’s Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure 7-10.
* Comply with requirements in course syllabi and the policies outlined in this handbook.
* Demonstrate accountability, responsibility, and maturity in the classroom, online, and in the professional practice experience (PPE) setting when engaging in conflict management and problem resolution

**Students in the HIMT program are also required to follow the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Code of Ethics as outlined below:**

The following ethical principles are based on the core values of the American Health Information Management Association and apply to all AHIMA members and certificants.

1. Advocate, uphold, and defend the individual'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, 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 regards 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. Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing education, research, publications, and presentations.
6. Recruit and mentor students, staff, peers, and colleagues to develop and strengthen professional workforce.
7. Represent the profession to the public in a positive manner.
8. 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.
9. State truthfully and accurately one’s credentials, professional education, and experiences.
10. Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting health information practice.
11. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.

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# **CONFIDENTIALITY**

## Confidentiality Statement

As an important part of a student’s education in this academic program, students will come into possession of confidential information concerning the health care services rendered to patients. All medical information is considered confidential and may not be released except by the patient’s own authorization or by state and/or federal law.

In the case of education, a student may view confidential information that is pertinent to their studies under the supervision of an instructor. The identity of the patient must be protected and the student must never disclose any confidential information linked to the identity of any patient to any person whatsoever for any reason.

Disclosure includes but is not limited to: verbally discussing confidential information of an identified patient; permitting an unauthorized individual to review the medical record; copying any part of the medical record for an unauthorized individual; making copies of medical documentation for education or research activities without obliterating the patient’s demographic information and abstracting medical data for education or research activities in which the patient’s identity is linked to the data.

It is a student’s professional responsibility and duty to protect the confidentiality of all patient medical records with which they are associated with. Failure to uphold patient confidentiality may result in discipline up to and including dismissal. All students are required to sign the Confidentially Acknowledgment form that is located in this handbook.

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# **PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## Student Responsibilities

The HIMT program is primarily a web-based program that offers the flexibility of working on course material and assignments any time of day. However, there are some time management and study skills you must have in order to be a successful web-based learner as the program is not self-paced and there are deadlines to meet in each course. In order to be successful in web-based courses, the student’s responsibilities are to:

1. **Set aside time weekly:** In order for you to be successful in web-based courses, you must set aside time weekly to learn the material, participate in course activities, complete assignments, readings, etc.
   * + The time set aside weekly should, at a minimum, be equivalent to the time you would be expected to spend in a traditional-based, on-campus classroom.
     + The minimum estimated study time that you should plan to spend on a course is 2 to 3 times its credit hours.
       - For example, HIMT 1255 (Introduction to CPT Coding) is a 3 credit hours (1 hour lecture + 4 hours lab) so the student should plan to spend 5 hours plus an additional 6-9 hours study time per week in that course.
2. **Start the first week of the semester:**  All courses start the first day of the semester unless it is a flex term course or otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are expected to start courses the first week of the semester. In some courses there may be an assignment or quiz due at the end of the first week. Although students typically have access to the course web site before the semesters starts, the HIMT courses are officially not ready for student access until the first day of the semester. Do not print information from the course web site before the first day of the semester. If the students access the web site prior to the start of the semester, they may be reviewing information that has not been updated for the new semester.
3. **Check announcements frequently:**  Important information is posted in the announcements located on Blackboard throughout the week for each course. You should plan on checking announcements on Blackboard at least two times each week. If you do not check announcements frequently, you will miss important information (i.e., course material or assignment clarifications, assignment and test deadlines, etc.). Reading announcements will answer many of your questions about a particular course. Be sure to click on “view all” and scroll down the screen to assure you see all posted announcements.
4. **Complete ALL assignments:** It is important that students complete all the assignments to learn the material (graded and ungraded). Reading assignments should be done in a manner that allows for comprehension of the content. Set aside quiet time, highlight the textbook, take notes, and complete all review/study questions. Complete all assignments and submit by the posted due date. There will be ungraded and graded assignments/quizzes. The ungraded assignments/quizzes are just as important as the graded material. Each assignment is designed to help you learn the material and reinforce concepts presented to you in your reading assignments. Additionally, when an answer key is provided, you are encouraged to answer the questions before looking at the answer key. Answering questions on your own first and then comparing your answers to the key is the only way for you to truly learn the course material and to self-assess your strengths and weaknesses which will help you to determine where you need to go back and study more.

Completing course readings and all assignments will help you perform better on the graded portions of the course. Students tend to get out of the course what they put into the course. More time and effort (effective studying) generally leads to higher levels of success and better grades.

1. **Meet deadlines:** Students that are successful in web-based courses submit assignments on or before the due and take the quizzes and exams by the posted deadlines. Assignments and testing not completed by the deadline will receive a score of zero. Assignments and testing dates are posted at least a week before they are due. Students are given ample time to complete assignments/quizzes/exams.
2. **Ask questions:** The main mode of communication with your instructor is via email. The instructor’s email address will be posted in the syllabus and on the course website. Part of being an active learner is to be prepared and to ask questions. Read announcements and discussion boards (if applicable) before emailing your instructor because many times a classmate has asked the same question and the answer has been posted to the course web site. Ask questions throughout the semester as you study the material.
3. **Do not procrastinate:** Students are encouraged to not wait until the last minute to complete assignments and tests. A technical difficulty is not an acceptable reason for assignments and tests not to be submitted by the due date. It is recommended that students complete and submit assignments, quizzes or tests at least two days before posted the due date. Campus-wide Blackboard system problems will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. **Textbooks:** Buy and use textbooks. Learning activities are often centered on information contained in the textbooks. Textbooks for HIMT courses should be kept after the semester is over so that the student can start to build a professional “library”. The reference books will be helpful after you complete the program in preparation for the certification examination offered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

1. **Other Student Responsibilities:** Generate and review a DARs each semester to track progress toward graduation or completion requirements.

## Graduation Requirements

Students must complete a petition to graduate form and submit it to the HIMT program coordinator by the deadline published on the academic calendar. Graduation information and the deadline for the petition to graduate can be found at <https://www.cscc.edu/services/registrar/pdf/petitiontograduate.pdf>

When completing the petition to graduate form, students must also run a degree audit. The degree audit will indicate any missing coursework and will provide the students with their GPA.

The petition to graduate form will be reviewed by HIMT program coordinator. If the student has any deficiencies, the HIMT program coordinator will contact the student to make them aware of the course deficiencies.

## Dress Code

The purpose of this dress code is to promote professionalism. This dress code has been formulated based on professional standards, clinical/partner facility policies, and the standards established by this academic program faculty and staff. To continue in this academic program students must adhere to this dress code policy when at PPE sites.

Further, some clinical/partner facilities may require a different dress code policy then the below policy. Students are expected to comply with the clinical/partner facilities dress code. Not following the clinical/partner facilities dress code policy may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

Varying circumstances may warrant a change in the dress code policy. If you have questions regarding this dress code policy or requests for exceptions including religious accommodations, please contact the program coordinator. For questions regarding disability services refer to the College Policies and Procedures Chapter.

1. Personal Hygiene
2. All students should observe high standards of personal hygiene in order to promote professionalism. This includes frequent bathing, shampooing, and oral hygiene to help guard against offensive body odors and bad breath.
3. Makeup, Fragrances, and Other Scented Products
4. Students should not wear strong colognes, highly-scented hair spray, or scented oils as others may have allergies to such fragrances.

1. Hair and Head Coverings
2. Hair should be neat and clean. Bangs should not extend below the eyebrows and interfere with your ability to see.
3. Hats are not appropriate at PPE sites.
4. Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition are permitted.
5. Hands and Fingernails
6. Hands and fingernails should be clean. Nails must be short in length. If wearing nail polish, nail polish must be freshly applied and not chipped.
7. Jewelry
8. Students wearing jewelry (including body piercings, rings, earrings, etc.) must abide by dress code policy of PPE site.
9. Tattoos

1. Students with tattoos must abide by dress code policy of PPE site in regard to exposure of tattoos on neck, arms, legs, etc.
2. Clothing

The following guidelines are based on professional expectations in the field. This is a general overview of appropriate business casual attire. Items that are not appropriate for the PPE site are also noted. No dress code can cover all contingencies, so students must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing at PPE. If you experience uncertainty about acceptable, professional business attire, please ask your PPE site supervisor.

* 1. Appearance of clothes: Clothes must be clean and neatly pressed, not faded, discolored or ripped, and not see through.
  2. Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants: Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as people wear for exercise or biking.
  3. Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits: Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at which you can sit comfortably in public. Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate. Mini-skirts, skorts, sundresses, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate.
  4. Skirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets: Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, golf-type shirts, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire. Most suit jackets or sport jackets are also acceptable. Inappropriate attire includes: tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.
  5. Shoes and Footwear: Conservative walking shoes, loafers, flats, dress heels, and leather shoes are acceptable. Wearing no stockings is acceptable in warm weather. Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops, slippers, and any shoe with an open toe is not acceptable.

1. Enforcement

Since the dress code is intended to nurture professionalism, the dress code will be enforced. Discipline action may be taken when a student deviates from the dress code up to and including dismissal.

## Health Insurance

Although health insurance is not a requirement for this academic program, as a student in a health related program you may be exposed to health risks in the classroom, clinical, practicum, or professional practice experience (PPE) setting. If incidents, exposures, or injuries occur, students are responsible for all costs associated with evaluation and treatment; for this reason it is highly recommended that all students have personal health insurance.

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## Attendance

The attendance policies for students enrolled in the HIMT program are as follows:

* Students are expected to uphold good attendance practices when attending scheduled professional practice experiences (PPEs) on or off-campus. Good attendance means being punctual to the PPE site and staying for the duration of the scheduled PPE session.
* Students shall not extend their professional practice experience (PPE) past week 15 of the semester they are enrolled in HIMT 2870-PPE Field Experience HIM Applications or HIMT 2930-PPE HIM Field Experience & Exam Prep. Students are required to complete 90 hours of field experience in HIMT 2870 and 90 hours of field experience in HIMT 2930.

Students in web-based courses are expected to have behaviors that are the equivalent to participation and attendance in the traditional classroom, including but not limited to:

Submitting assignments/tests/quizzes by the due date and time.

Participating on discussion boards.

Participating in and attending online meeting and presentations.

Responding to emails, voice messages and Starfish notifications in a timely manner.

* To learn about Columbus State’s severe weather policy, please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/severe-weather.shtml>.
* Students should refer to the course syllabus for course specific attendance requirements.

## Grading

Columbus State’s Grading and Academic Requirements Policy is found in Policy and Procedure 5-09 and can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>.

Additionally, HIMT students must earn a final grade of “C” or higher in all technical and basic related courses.

Students earning a final grade below “C” in any HIMT technical and basic related courses will *not* meet prerequisite requirements. Students are required to repeat each HIMT technical and basic related course in which they earn a final grade below “C” before they can proceed to the course requiring successful completion of that particular course. HIMT courses can only be taken twice.

A student who receives a final grade of “D” or “E” in any two courses from their plan of study, or twice in the same course, is dismissed from the program and must re-apply for program acceptance the following year.

Students should refer to the course syllabus for course specific grading requirements and grade evaluations.

HIMT Grading Scale:

*90-100% = A*

*80-89% = B*

*70-79% = C*

*60-69% = D*

*59% and below = E*

## Audio/Video Device, Imaging, and Electronic Devices Use

Audio- and video-recording, photographs, transmission, or distribution of class/lab content (e.g., lectures, discussions, demonstrations, etc.) is strictly prohibited unless a student has a Letter of Accommodation from Disability Services and has presented it to the course instructor or if the course instructor has provided written permission via the syllabus or a signed form. Authorization to record extends solely to students in that particular course. Transmitting, sharing, or distributing course content onto public, commercial, or social media sites is strictly prohibited.

Photographs, audio recording, and/or video recording during clinical, practicum, internships, or other type of experiential learning experience is prohibited. In accordance with legal and professional standards, regarding patient rights of privacy and confidentiality, students are strictly prohibited from taking photos, audio recording, and/or video recording any information regarding patients or information regarding the clinical, practicum, internships, or other type of experiential learning experience.

Unless specified as required for classroom activity, electronic devices such as cell phones, laptops, iPods, iPads, tablets, ear buds, etc. should not be used in on-campus class sessions during presentations or learning activities or at professional practice experience (PPE) sites, as use of such devices is distracting to the learning environment. CSCC nor PPE sites will be responsible for lost or stolen items. Use of electronic devices not otherwise required for participation in an online meeting/class session are prohibited.

Unless an accommodation is approved, the use of audio or video-recording devices is prohibited for recording exam reviews, other students, meetings with instructors, and general class discussion as class begins and concludes. Recordings are not permitted to be distributed to classmates who do not have accommodations or shared or transcribed electronically in any medium.

Failure to follow the above standards may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

## Social Media

Postings on social networking sites may be subject to the same professional and ethical standards as any other personal interactions. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination are prohibited by Columbus State Policy 3-43 and Policy and Procedure 7-10. Complaints or alleged violations of these policies and procedures will be referred to the Office of Equity and Compliance and/or the Office of Student Conduct. Students are prohibited from disclosing any of the following through social media including but not limited to:

* A patient’s protected health information and confidential information about the patient, as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other state and federal laws.
* Confidential, non-public, or proprietary information about patients and families, clinical facility staff, or clinical institutions; of the College, its employees and students.
* Class content, including but not limited to lectures, discussions, demonstrations, quizzes, exams answers.
* Comments that express or imply sponsorship or endorsement by the College, unless the individual is officially authorized to act in this capacity for this purpose on behalf of the College.
* Taking and displaying photos/videos/audio of patients, or photos depicting the body parts of patients.

Failure to follow the above standards may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

No matter what the platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.), be vigilant about *not* posting anything you would not want an employer or potential employer to see.

## Communication in the Health Information Management Technology (HIMT) Program

***Students*** are required to use their CSCC student email addresswhen contacting instructors. If the instructor initiates an original email, the student’s CSCC email address will be used. Communication can also occur via phone.

***Students*** should be professional in their email communication with instructors, PPE site supervisors, students, etc. Email etiquette requires students to take into account that there is a person on the receiving end of the email. Using all capital letters in an email, for example, is considered the same as “yelling” and also makes the message more difficult to read. Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation should be used as well as providing key information in your email (e.g., Cougar ID when requesting assistance in registering for HIMT courses, course number to identify the course you have questions about, page number in text where you have questions, assignment instructions you are unclear about, etc.). If you have many questions, it’s best to list and number them to help your instructor more efficiently and effectively assist you.

***Students*** are expected to check Blackboard and their CSCC student email at least twice a week. Typically, students enrolled in web-based programs check their email and Blackboard five (5) days per week.

***Students*** are expected to reply to their email within 48 hours of receipt.

Email communication is not real-time. Expected response time on email from ***faculty*** (course instructors) in the HIMT is generally the same day or next, Monday-Friday. If an email is received on the weekend or a holiday, course instructors will typically respond to the email the next working day.

***Faculty*** will post announcements and course information (i.e., assignments, course instruction, etc.) on Blackboard.

**Attendance Reporting:** Instructors will report students as not attending for financial aid reporting, if the student has missed more than one posted quiz, assignment, exam/test due date.

**Grading quizzes/tests/exams:** Quizzes/tests/exams will be graded within one week of testing deadline.

**Grading assignments:** Assignments are generally graded within one week of the due date. If the nature of the assignment requires additional grading time by the instructor, an announcement will be posted in Blackboard with the date students can expect the assignment to be graded.

**Grades posted on Blackboard:** Quiz/test/exam and assignment grades will be posted on Blackboard.

**Provide feedback/answer students’ questions:** Instructors will provide a means for students to submit questions about course content, course assignments, etc. The instructor will provide feedback and answer questions asked by the student in a timely manner. Questions will be answered within two days upon receipt of the question via email or discussion board. However; if the email or discussion board posting is received late on a Friday, on a weekend, or on a holiday, the instructor will answer the question on the next business day.

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## IT Student Support Center

The Student IT Student Support Center provides Information Technology (IT) related services and support to Columbus State Community College faculty, staff, and students.

If you are having trouble with Blackboard, email, or CougarWeb, contact the IT Support Center/Help Desk. You can reach the help desk at (614) 287-5050 or you can email them at [helpdesk@cscc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@cscc.edu). For more information about the IT support Center visit their website at <https://www.cscc.edu/services/itsc/>

## Health and Human Services Academic Advising

Students enrolled in any program in the Division of Health and Human Services may receive advising assistance in Union Hall 477. The Health and Human Services Advising Team can provide assistance with: course registration, academic planning, program admission requirements, academic restrictions, scheduling, placement test referrals, and a number of other advising related issues. Contact the Health and Human Services Advising Office for more information at (614) 287-2779 or [hhsadvising@cscc.edu](mailto:hhsadvising@cscc.edu) or by visiting them online at: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/advising/hhs-advising.shtml>.

The academic advisors for the HIMT program are Lisa Cerrato, Jane Roberts, and Melissa Helpman. Students with questions regarding how to progress through the HIMT program should email or call Lisa Cerrato at (614) 287-2541 ([lcerrato@cscc.edu](mailto:lcerrato@cscc.edu)), Jane Roberts at (614) 287-5459 ([jroberts@cscc.edu](mailto:jroberts@cscc.edu)), or Melissa Helpman at (614) 287-2216 ([mhelpman@cscc.edu](mailto:mhelpman@cscc.edu)).

## Registering for Courses

Students are strongly encouraged to register for courses within the first week that registration opens. If you meet the course prerequisites and are unable to register for an HIMT course, please contact the HIMT department for assistance. You will need to provide your name, phone number, Cougar ID, course name and section number in order to be registered for an HIMT course. Your prerequisite completion will be checked prior to registering you in an HIMT course. If you have completed the required prerequisite course(s), you will be registered for the course if a seat is available. If you are trying to register for a non-HIMT course (e.g., BIO, CSCI, etc.), you will need to contact that academic department for assistance.

## Plans of Study

The established plans of study for the programs within the HIMT department are published in the CSCC college catalog. <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/catalog/>

Please note that the CSCC college catalog is revised annually.

The published plans of study outline the courses students must complete each semester. The published plans assume that the student is beginning the program indicated as “semester one” in the catalog. Semester one for the HIM Technician Certificate and the HIMT Associate’s Degree is autumn. Semester one for the Medical Coding Certificate is summer.

Students who deviate from a published plan of study (i.e., attends part-time, drops out of school for one or more semester, etc.), must develop and submit a revised semester-by-semester plan of study for review by one of the HIMT department academic advisors, (Lisa Cerrato, Jane Roberts, or Melissa Helpman). Students who deviate from a published plan of study will delay their completion of the program by several semesters. Please refer to the CSCC college catalog for the most current information concerning required courses for a particular plan of study (i.e., course description, course prerequisites, semester course is offered).

## Catalog Year

Your catalog year is the semester in which you completed HIMT 1111-Introduction to Health Information Management with a final grade “C” or higher. For example, students who completed HIMT 1111 in autumn semester 2020, will have the catalog year of autumn 2020-2021. Your catalog year serves to indicate the published plan of study you are required to follow. For example, those students with a catalog year of autumn 2020-2021 are required to follow the published plan of study in the 2020-2021 CSCC college catalog.

All course descriptions published in the current CSCC catalog apply to all students registering for courses regardless of catalog year. Therefore, the current college catalog must be reviewed by the student to determine course prerequisites prior to registering for a course.

If a course appearing on the plan of study for a specific catalog year is deleted, the student must contact an HIMT department advisor to determine what course will be substituted for the one that was deleted.

In addition, all coding courses (HIMT1245, HIMT 1255, and HIMT 2275) that were completed over 3 years ago must be repeated in order for the student to remain current with coding guidelines. If a student’s catalog year is greater than three years, the student’s degree audit will be reviewed and student may have the current catalog year assigned. The requirements of the new catalog year must be completed in order for the student to meet current program and professional requirements.

## Tutoring and Assistance Contact Information

Tutoring for HIMT Students: Students should first contact the course instructor with questions on course content or for assistance with course assignments. Students are expected to first exhaust other means available for assistance within the immediate course environment (i.e., email to course instructor for clarification, discussion boards, coding roundtables, review sessions held by instructor, WebEx meetings, recordings from instructor, course embedded videos and learning objects, etc.) prior to seeking tutoring assistance.

Tutoring is available for most HIMT courses and is offered by appointment. Students interested in tutoring are required to email the HIMT Teaching Assistant at [himt@cscc.edu](mailto:himt@cscc.edu) to request an appointment. Students must include their full name and course number (i.e., HIMT 1255) in which they are seeking assistance when emailing [himt@cscc.edu](mailto:himt@cscc.edu) to request an appointment. They should include a brief summary of the specific reasons they are requesting a tutoring appointment (e.g., “I have worked on this week’s coding assignment in HIMT 1255 and have three questions about how to assign evaluation and management codes.”).

Students are expected to bring all textbooks, workbooks, coding books (if applicable), course handouts, etc. to the tutoring session. Students are expected to arrive at the tutoring appointment on time and having studied the course material and be prepared with specific content questions. The more specific the questions are for the tutor, the more beneficial the tutoring session will be. The tutor is provided to answer your specific questions. The tutor is *not* expected to provide a lecture of course material. Students arriving at tutoring appointments unprepared may be asked to reschedule.

Students are expected to submit professional, well-written reports and assignments. Students who need a review of a writing assignment for grammar, organization, and sentence structure should contact the writing center or Net Tutor. The writing center and Net Tutor information can be found at <https://www.cscc.edu/academics/departments/english/writing-center.shtml>

For courses where tutoring services are not available, the student is expected to contact the instructor via email for clarification regarding course content or assistance with assignments, etc.

Columbus State also offers all students a variety of other tutoring services. To learn more about these tutoring services, please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/tutoring.shtml>.

## Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference

Students who seek a letter of recommendation and/or a verbal reference from a Columbus State faculty/instructor should speak directly with that faculty/instructor. Once the faculty/instructor has agreed to write a letter of recommendation and/or provide a verbal reference for the student, the student should then fill-out the “Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference and FERPA Release” form, found in the forms section and then return it to the faculty/instructor. This “Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference and FERPA Release” form will allow the student: (1) to designate whether the faculty/instructor is to provide a letter of recommendation and/or a verbal reference; (2) to provide information about the recipient(s); (3) the opportunity to authorize the faculty/instructor to use information obtained from the student’s education records (such as course grades, GPA, documented attendance, or examination results) in the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference; and (4) if it is a letter of recommendation the form gives the student the opportunity to waive or not waive the right to read the letter of recommendation.

Pursuant to FERPA, students are not required to authorize the release of their education records in a letter of recommendation and/or a verbal reference. If the student does not authorize the faculty/instructor to use their education records in the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference, then the faculty/instructor may only share directory information (unless the student has requested the College to withhold their directory information) and/or the faculty/instructor’s personal observations and knowledge about the student (i.e. remarks about the student’s work ethic, dependability, and creativity). Further, pursuant to FERPA a student has the right to read a letter of recommendation, unless that right has been waived by the student. Students are not required to waive this right to review a letter of recommendation.

## Student Code of Conduct Action and Academic Performance

Students are responsible for understanding and complying with College, their academic program, and clinical/partner facility policies and procedures; College and Program academic standards; standards of student conduct in the learning environment; and expectations for professional behavior on and off campus. These policies and expectations can be found on Columbus State’s website, the academic program’s materials, and orientation. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action. Students subject to certain adverse actions will be afforded due process rights.

The policies and procedures related to student violations of the Columbus State Student Code of Conduct is outlined in Columbus State’s Policy and Procedure 7-10. The due process, within these procedures, assures timely written notice and a hearing before an objective decision-maker. The appeal process for violations of the Student Code of Conduct are also found within 7-10. (Policy and Procedure 7-10 can be accessed at the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>).

A student’s academic performance, professionalism, safety, and/or conduct in the classroom and learning environment, which is determined by the academic program as unsatisfactory, unprofessional, inappropriate, and/or interferes with the learning environment, will be addressed with notice to the student of the unacceptable behavior by the academic program. And the student may discuss the matter with the academic program staff. Further, the academic program has the authority to exercise control over the learning environment should a student’s behavior be found unsatisfactory, unprofessional, inappropriate, and/or interferes with the learning environment, including initiating a range of disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to, a warning up to and including dismissal.

Some violations may warrant dual processes through the academic program and the Student Code of Conduct.

## Dispute of Continued Participation Dismissal

In the event of a dismissal by the program, the student has the right to appeal through meeting with the program staff. Such appeals will pertain only to the continued participation requirements listed in this handbook.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a concept central to academic success, just as personal integrity is central to the development of a socially responsible student. CSCC does not tolerate academic misconduct as defined in College Policy and Procedure 7-10 in any form (including plagiarism and cheating), and the Student Code of Conduct process is used to educate students who violate this policy. Academic misconduct comes in two major forms: intentional and unintentional. Unintentional academic misconduct may occur due to a lack of familiarity with citation rules, misunderstanding course requirements or assignment instructions, or lack of preparation. It is important to note that any form of academic misconduct, whether intentional or unintentional, is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for alleged violations of academic misconduct. Definitions and sanctions for Academic Misconduct can be found in College Policy and Procedure 7-10 (<https://www.cscc.edu/about/policies-procedures.shtml>). For more information regarding Academic Misconduct, please visit <https://www.cscc.edu/services/student-conduct/academic-misconduct.shtml>.

* Tests and quizzes are to be completed independently without the use of reference books, textbooks, notes, websites, etc., unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Using textbooks, reference material, websites, notes, etc. on a closed book test/quiz is considered cheating and will be subject to the Student Code of Conduct.
* Examples of Cheating, include but are not limited to:
  + Using open textbooks, notes, electronic devices, Internet sites, or other assistance during an examination, except those that have been authorized by the instructor.
  + Copying from another person’s work during an examination.
  + Collaborating with another person on an assignment in a manner not authorized by the instructor.
  + Obtaining, distributing, or using the contents of an un-administered test.
  + Substituting for another student or permitting any person to substitute for oneself in an examination.
* Examples of Plagiarism, include but are not limited to:
  + Submitting an assignment purporting to be the student’s original work which has been wholly or partly created by another person. (i.e., material from website, textbook, etc.).
  + Presenting as one’s own the ideas, organization, or wording of another person without acknowledgment of sources.
  + Knowingly permitting one’s own work to be submitted by another student as if it were the student’s own.
  + Knowingly resubmitting work previously completed when retaking a course.
  + Knowingly resubmitting PPE time previously reported.

## Proficiency Testing/Credit (X Credit)

Permission is given for students wishing to take proficiency exams in HIMT 1121 – Advanced Medical Terminology and HIMT 1141- Pharmacology and only in cases when it is evident that previous experience or study warrants. A $50 non-refundable fee will be charged for each proficiency examination.

Examination/proficiency credit does not apply to meeting residency credit hour requirements.

The procedure for pursuing proficiency credit for HIMT courses is as follows…

* Complete the request for proficiency testing form and submit to HIMT program coordinator.
* Student pays the $50 fee at the cashier’s office and asks for receipt of payment.
* Student presents paid receipt and photo ID to the testing center (AQ002) at the time of testing.
* Student emails Lisa Cerrato (lcerrato@cscc.edu) when the student has completed the proficiency test.
* Student will be notified as to whether proficiency credit has been awarded within five (5) business days in which the proficiency exam was taken.

The student may only take a proficiency test once for a given course. If proficiency credit is not earned for performance on a proficiency test, the student will be required to complete the course for credit.

There are NO study guides provided for the proficiency tests. Upon request the student, will be provided with the title of the textbook last used in the course. The HIMT department does not provide copies of the textbooks for proficiency testing preparation. Students wishing to proficiency test for non-technical courses (non-HIMT) courses must contact the department that offers that course.

## Non-Traditional Credit (N Credit)

Non-traditional credit may be granted for work experience outside the typical classroom environment.

Non-traditional credit will be considered for the following HIMT courses with the required documentation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Course | Required documentation |
| HIMT 1255 CPT coding | Current certification CCS-P or CPC-H or CPC |
| HIMT 1245 ICD-10-CM/PCS | Current certification CCA or CCS |
| HIMT 2275 Intermediate Coding | Current certification CCS |
| HIMT 1265 Medical Reimbursement | Current certification CPC-P |

## Testing Center

The CSCC Testing Center is available for providing students with a testing environment where tests are administered securely according to the instructor’s guidelines. The CSCC Testing Center is also available for approving and verifying the appropriateness of remote testing proctors and testing sites for student in distance learning programs. To contact the CSCC Testing Center call (614) 287-2478. For more information about testing center services and policies visit their web site at <https://www.cscc.edu/services/testingcenter/>

## Proctored Testing

Proctored tests will be required for most of the courses listed on the HIMT plans of studies. There are several reasons why proctored tests/exams are required. Proctored exams…

* Encourage students to be more rigorous in their study of course content and in the completion of course assignments. By completing assignments and quizzes (graded and ungraded) students have the opportunity to learn the course material and ask questions to clarify content that they find difficult. Requiring students to take proctored graded test(s) encourages students to learn the course content to a level that will be needed to prepare them for future certification exams.
* Prepare students for certification examination. By taking proctored exams that are time limited, computerized exams, students are better prepared for the testing environment they will experience when taking the certification exams. Students gain experience answering various question types. Students who are able to successfully complete the proctored tests at the course level are better prepared for certification exams.
* Are considered assessment tools not learning tools. Student learning is to take place before the proctored exam through the completion of quizzes and assignments. The proctored tests provide CSCC and the student with an assessment as to whether or not learning has taken place.
* Provide integrity to the web-based learning environment. Proctored exams provide an assessment process that is comparable to the traditional learning environment. Proctored testing provides students with the opportunity to show that they are doing their own work and that they have learned the required material. For this reason and the other above mentioned reasons, proctored exams are weighted high in the calculation of the course grade.

As an assessment tool, HIMT exams are treated similar to how professional certification exams are handled. Students are not permitted to have copies of HIMT exams or write down specific test questions and answers. Once an exam is graded and all students have taken the exam, the student may request a summary of areas that he/she needs to improve based on the performance on the exam. Specific test questions will NOT be released to students. If the student feels that their test score is lower than expected, the student may request a second review of the exam by the instructor. The request for review must be received by the instructor within one week of the last day to take the exam.

Proctored exams will be available at the CSCC testing centers during the testing window specified by the instructor for the course. Information regarding the testing center policies and hours of operation can be found at http://cscc.edu/sstc/index.htm. If the student does not complete a test by the testing deadline, a score of zero “0” will be earned for the test.

Only the test score will be displayed on the Blackboard system.

## Remote Proctored Testing

If you live outside of Columbus State’s five-county service area and it is not convenient to drive to one of our testing locations, you will need to set up a testing location near your home. Please visit the following link for more information: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/testingcenter/academic-testing/distance-learning-testing.shtml>. Email your instructor for permission to test out of the area the first week of the semester.

Eligibility Criteria:

* The student is responsible for any fees associated with the remote proctoring service and for finding a suitable proctoring site.
* The testing site and proctor approval must be completed the semester prior to the semester the student is intending to use remote proctoring.
* Only sites that can accommodate testing on Blackboard will be approved (i.e. Internet access required at the testing site). Exams will be given on the computer. Paper and pencil exams are not given.
* The procedure for remote testing is as follows:
  + Notify your instructor the first week of the semester that you have made arrangements to test remotely. The testing site and proctor approval must be completed the semester prior to the semester the student is intending to use remote proctoring. Instructor will verify mileage requirement from the address listed for the student on the CSCC computer system.
  + After you receive approval from your instructor, you must contact the CSCC Testing Center at (614) 287-2478 or <https://www.cscc.edu/services/testingcenter/academic-testing/distance-learning-testing.shtml> and provide them with the following information:

The name of the testing site

The complete address of the testing location

The name of the contact person (proctor)

The telephone number for the contact (proctor)

The email address for the contact (proctor)

Whether or not the site has Internet access

Upon receipt of this information, verification of your site, and the exam being submitted by the instructor via Blackboard, the exam password will then be emailed to the testing proctor.

All tests will be taken on Blackboard. No paper tests will be sent. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the site to verify the receipt of the exam information and to schedule a testing time that will meet your instructor’s testing timeframe for remote testing.

## Testing Window for Remotely Administered Exams

Remotely proctored exams may have a specific limited testing window to take the exam in order to assure that technical support is available in the event a student’s test becomes locked. For example, there may be a specific day and time that the tests will be available for remote testing. The student wishing to test remotely must be able to arrange his/her schedule to meet the testing deadline set forth by the instructor.

# **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (PPE) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## Professional Practice Experiences (PPEs) - Overview

Professional Practice Experiences (PPE) provide students with the opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to an actual health care setting or equivalent experience. Students gain exposure to actual working conditions, HIM software applications and experience in various aspects of HIM services. Students are expected to have a good working knowledge of HIM concepts in order to perform relevant tasks at the PPE sites/simulations.

## Clinical/Partner Facility Admission and Policies

Clinical/Partner facility sites for clinical, practicums, internships, professional practice experiences (PPEs), or other type of experiential learning experiences, often have their own admission and participation requirements that students must meet before students can be placed at the clinical/partner facility. The clinical/partner facility will have admission requirements that exceed or are in addition to the admission requirements of Columbus State and the student’s specific academic program. Clinical/Partner facilities have the right to deny student participation even when the student is fully admitted into the academic program. Therefore, students should expect to meet the requirements of the clinical/partner facility in addition to their academic program’s requirements. If a student cannot be admitted into any of their academic program’s clinical/partner facilities, the following may occur but is not limited to the student being dismissed from the academic program. For more information, please consult with the HIMT program coordinator.

Further, students are expected to comply with all clinical/partner facility policies and Columbus State policies when completing a clinical, practicum, internship, professional practice experience (PPE), or other type of experiential learning experience. It is also an expectation that students comply with policy expectations off premises if any conduct pertains to the clinical/partner facility. Examples of such conduct could include, but is not limited to, work responsibilities that occur off premises, uniform and appearance expectations, social media usage, patient/client interaction, and any other activities related to the learning experience. Failure to follow the clinical/partner facility’s policies and Columbus State policies may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

## Background Check and Drug Screening for Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Placements

Some Professional Practice Experience (PPE) sites may have additional requirements for students assigned to their site, which may include another drug screening and/or another background check. Please see the “Background and Drug Screening” section under Program Admission and Continuing Compliance Requirements.

## Dress Code for Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Placements

Please see the “Dress Code” section under Program Policies.

## PPE Health Requirements

Students may be required to meet certain health requirements as specified by the PPE site including but not limited to the following: completion of health record form, proof of physical examination stating that you are “well” enough to participate in the PPE, proof of two-step Mantoux (intradermal) TB test and/or other immunizations such as flu shot, Tdap, MMR, HepB, varicella or documentation of chicken pox disease and the flu, etc. The health record forms will be provided by the specific PPE site, if applicable. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the PPE site health requirements and submission deadlines*.*

Note: TB test – Students may be required to have a two-step Mantoux intradermal test done in order to participate in a PPE at a healthcare facility. This involves two TB Mantoux tests at least 7 days apart and within the last year. Two or three days after each TB test is given it must be read by the physician, nurse, or physician’s assistant. TB tine tests are not acceptable per state regulations. Two Mantoux tests within the past year can be substituted per state regulations. If the student recently received an MMR or varicella vaccine, the tuberculosis test must be postponed until at least four to six weeks after the MMR.

**If this test or a previous test is positive:**

Submit documentation of positive PPD and a negative chest x-ray post-conversion according to PPE site policy. Documentation of TB test results are to be sent to the designated person at the PPE site.

## Other Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Requirements

Some Professional Practice Experience (PPE) sites may have additional requirements for students assigned to their site, including but not limited to, HIPAA training, and/or orientation.

## Removal Due to Health Risk and/or Safety Risk

Clinical/Partner facilities have an expectation that students completing a clinical, practicum, internship, professional practice experience (PPE), or other type of experiential learning experience at their site will not be a health risk and/or safety risk to their clients. Students are therefore expected to conform to all standard health and safety practices required by the clinical/partner facility. Being unsafe and/or a health risk includes but is not limited to a student that consistently fails to demonstrate competence in clinical patient/client care, a student who does not adhere to policies, and/or a student who behaves in any manner that compromises or threatens the well-being of the patient/client’s health and welfare. Students will be evaluated during their clinical, practicum, internship, professional practice experience (PPE), or other type of experiential learning experience and the evaluations may show student deficiencies that would deem them a health risk and/or unsafe. A student that is deemed a health risk and/or unsafe may result in discipline up to and including dismissal. In addition, the clinical/partner facility is under no obligation to allow or approve a student’s experience if a health or safety issue is identified.

## Professional Practice Experiences (PPE) – Description

Students completing the HIMT degree program are required to complete two PPE courses (HIMT 2870 and HIMT 2930). Students completing the Medical Coding Certificate program are required to complete one PPE course (HIMT 2930). Professional Practice Experiences (PPE) are only offered once a year. HIMT 2870 is offered autumn semester; HIMT 2930 is offered spring semester. Students who deviate from the published plan of study must plan accordingly to assure that all prerequisites are met prior to registering for a Professional Practice Experience (PPE) course (HIMT 2870, HIMT 2930).

Each Professional Practice Experience (PPE) is unpaid and requires the student to be on site (i.e., in the HIMT lab or assigned healthcare facility) for up to 6 hours per week for the 15-week semester. Ninety (90) hours of PPE time equals 6 hours of PPE time each week X 15 weeks. It is acceptable for students to complete 90 hours of PPE time in a period shorter than 15 weeks provided that the site is available for students to do so or other PPE opportunities are available for students. For example, a student might earn 14 PPE hours in one week from attending the OHIMA spring meeting and also 2 hours of PPE time for attending a PPE session on campus. In this example, the student would earn 16 hours of PPE time in one week (14 hours + 2 hours = 16 hours).

PPE hours are typically completed during day time hours, which are scheduled on week days and require you to attend specific hours and specified days (i.e., no evenings, no weekends). Some of the PPE hours may include online simulations and projects.

Students enrolled in HIMT 2870 are required to complete 90 PPE hours. Students enrolled in HIMT 2930 are required to complete 90 PPE hours. Of the 90 PPE hours completed in HIMT 2870, 40 hours must be completed face-to-face; 50 hours may include completion of approved virtual activities (i.e., AHIMA Virtual Lab, Neehr Perfect, etc.). Of the 90 PPE hours completed in HIMT 2930, 40 hours must be completed face-to-face; 50 hours may include completion of approved virtual activities (i.e., AHIMA Virtual Lab, Neehr Perfect, etc.).

PPE hours are completed throughout the semester and are varied depending upon what clinical sites are available during a particular semester. In the past, professionals working in healthcare have provided opportunities for students to work on projects or shadow employees at their sites. Students also earn PPE hours by completing online projects, attending professional conferences, and attending PPE sessions in the HIMT Computer Lab at CSCC.

The 90 PPE hours students are required to complete in HIMT 2870 and the 90 PPE hours students are required to complete in HIMT 2930 may be completed at multiple sites if single site placement is not available. Students are encouraged to gain a variety of PPE experiences throughout the semester if single site placement is not available.

## PPE Prerequisites

The prerequisites for each Professional Practice Experience (PPE) (HIMT 2870 and HIMT 2930) are specified in the Columbus State Community College Catalog. Students must complete all prerequisite coursework with a grade “C” or higher prior to registering for a PPE courses (HIMT 2870 or HIMT 2930). If at the time of registration for the PPE the prerequisites are being completed, students can register for the PPE courses; however, if the student does not earn a “C” or higher in those prerequisite courses, the student will be de-registered and will not permitted to complete the PPE course until the required prerequisite coursework has been completed with a final grade of “C” or higher.

## Registering for PPEs

Students are strongly encouraged to register for PPEs the first week of registration to facilitate possible site placement. Adequate notice of your intent to participate in the PPEs is necessary for the HIMT Program Coordinator to assist you in obtaining site placement.

## PPE Site Assignments

Students are required to select an appropriate site for PPE placement in consultation with the HIMT program coordinator. Students should provide the HIMT program coordinator (in writing, email accepted) with the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of possible facility PPE contacts.

The HIMT program coordinator will initiate a site specific Clinical Affiliation Agreement once the PPE site has been secured and facility representative(s) have agreed to take students for PPE placement.

Please note that students are not guaranteed PPE placement. PPE placement depends on site availability and possible site requirements (i.e., health screenings, TB test, orientation, etc.).

As noted above, students are encouraged to gain a variety of PPE experiences throughout the semester if single site placement is not available.

### Suggested Sites for PPE Placement

* Healthcare Facilities: hospitals, primary care and specialty physician offices, nursing homes or long-term care agencies, mental health facilities, dialysis centers, cancer registries, trauma registries
* Public Health Facilities: local, state, and federal health departments, medical clinics
* Government Agencies: Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation, Department of Health and Human Services, Veterans Affairs
* Other HIM/Healthcare Related Entities: insurance and billing companies, managed care organizations, veterinary clinics, dental offices, Health IT vendors, electronic health record (EHR) vendors, etc.

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## Transportation

Each student is responsible for providing his or her own transportation to and from professional practice experience (PPE) sites. Student parking is available at most sites at no cost. Students may be assigned to sites that do not provide parking; therefore, it is the student’s responsibility to pay for parking. At no time is a student permitted to use valet parking at any facility.

## Dismissal and Withdrawal

Students should only register for the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) courses (HIMT 2870 and HIMT 2930) if they are prepared to complete the requirements for the PPE (i.e., assignments and 90 PPE hours).

If a student is dismissed from a PPE site for misconduct, including but not limited to, unprofessional behavior, insubordination, confidentiality breach, and/or theft the student will not be assigned to another PPE site. The program coordinator may discuss with the student other options on how to complete the remaining PPE hour requirements.

If the student withdraws from the PPE due an extenuating circumstance (e.g., death in the immediate family, illness that prevents the student from continuing the PPE per doctor’s note) and the student then registers for the same PPE in a subsequent semester, all required hours must be repeated. No completed PPE hours will be carried to the new semester.

## Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Expectations

Students are expected to…

* Be present at the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) site for a minimum of 6 hours per week as noted in the course schedule (i.e., no weekends, no evenings) or according to PPE scheduled arranged with site. It is acceptable for students to complete 90 hours of PPE time in a period shorter than 15 weeks provided that the site is available for students to do so or other PPE opportunities are available for students.
* Be professional at all times. Be respectful to all patients, employees and supervisors. Keep expression of distressed personal emotions out of the presence of clients. Communicate respectfully to all. Treat your clinical experience as you would a real job.
* Maintain confidentiality at all times. Do NOT discuss patients or employees with any person(s).
* Do NOT remove any patient or facility specific information from the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) facility site.
* Abide by PPE site dress code and code of conduct.
* Submit assignments on or before the due dates posted in the course syllabus and/or course announcements.
* Participate in online, on-campus and on-site PPE activities.
* Complete 90 PPE hours in HIMT 2870 and 90 PPE hours in HIMT 2930.

Failure to follow the above may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

# **FORMS**

The following forms included in this section are:

1. Handbook Acknowledgment Form;
2. Graduation-Employment Relationship Acknowledgement Form;
3. Confidentiality Acknowledgment Form;
4. Acknowledgement of HIMT PPE and Web-based Policies;

Please read each of these forms carefully before signing. If you have any questions regarding these forms please contact Lisa Cerrato at (614) 287-2541 ([lcerrato@cscc.edu](mailto:lcerrato@cscc.edu)) or your course instructor for HIMT 1111. **All forms must be signed and returned to Lisa Cerrato by the end of week three (3) of autumn semester.**

**Lisa Cerrato, MS, RHIA**

**Professor/Coordinator**

**Room 310 Union Hall**

**550 East Spring Street**

**Columbus, OH 43215**

**Fax: (614) 287-5144**

**Division of Health and Human Services**

## Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the student handbook for the Health Information Management Technology (HIMT).

By signing below, I agree to abide by the requirements, standards, and policies and procedures contained herein, including by reference or hyperlink, and any changes that may occur from time to time. I also understand that I am responsible for understanding the information within this handbook. I acknowledge that any deviation from or violation of the requirements, standards, and policies and procedures contained herein will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to my removal from the academic program. In addition, I acknowledge that revisions to this handbook will be made periodically, with or without prior notice and that I am responsible for checking for updates to program information.

Furthermore, along with abiding by this academic program handbook, I agree to abide by the Columbus State Policies and Procedures, course syllabi, the Columbus State Student Handbook, and the Columbus State Catalog.

I acknowledge that my signature on this form does not guarantee my progression in the academic program.

(Student’s Printed Name) (Student’s CID)

(Student’s Signature) (Date Signed)

(Signature of Program Coordinator) (Date Signed)

## Acknowledgement of HIMT PPE and Web-based Policies

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge and understand that the Health Information Management Technology (HIMT) is a program that is primarily web-based and I agree to this type of learning methodology and the program’s policies and procedures.

I understand that I must be able to attend Professional Practice Experiences (PPEs) up to 6 hours per week, during the weekdays, and during daytime hours. I understand that there are no evening or weekend PPEs and that 90 hours of PPE time is required in both HIMT 2870 and HIMT 2930.

I agree to be honest, truthful, and respectful with CSCC faculty, staff, other students, and other individuals.

(Student’s Printed Name) (Student’s CID)

(Student’s Signature) (Date Signed)

(Signature of Program Coordinator) (Date Signed)

**Division of Health and Human Services**

## Graduation-Employment Relationship Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I am informed, I understand, and I agree that my graduation from the Health Information Management Technology (HIMT)and Columbus State does not guarantee my employment in my chosen field of study or otherwise. Furthermore, I also understand that neither the faculty nor staff of Columbus State is responsible for my employment or placement into a job. Therefore, neither Columbus State nor any individual employed by Columbus State is accountable for my employment in my field of study or otherwise. In signing this acknowledgement form I recognize and agree that employment is my own responsibility.

(Student’s Printed Name) (Student’s CID)

(Student’s Signature) (Date Signed)

(Signature of Program Coordinator) (Date Signed)

**Division of Health and Human Services**

## Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I am bound by federal and state laws regarding patient confidentiality, including where applicable the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and its policies.

I acknowledge that I may work with patients in a class, clinical, practicum, internship, or other type of experiential learning experience where I have access to patient’s protected health information. I understand that all medical information is considered confidential and may be protected by HIPAA. In addition, I acknowledge that I have read the confidentiality statements in this handbook and that it is my responsibility to abide by them. I understand that it is therefore unlawful to disclose a patient’s confidential health information and medical records without consent. I further acknowledge, that it is my professional responsibility and duty to protect the confidentiality of all patient medical records and protected health information with which I have access to.

My signature confirms that I understand and will abide by patient confidentiality and that I understand the consequences of any inappropriate actions regarding patient confidentiality.

(Student’s Printed Name) (Student’s CID)

(Student’s Signature) (Date Signed)

(Signature of Program Coordinator) (Date Signed)

# **APPENDIX A:**

## Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference and FERPA Release

Introduction

Pursuant to FERPA, a faculty/instructor may share the following about a student for a letter of recommendation and/or a verbal reference ***without a signed release*** from the student:

* Directory information[[1]](#footnote-2)
* The faculty/instructor’s candid assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the student based on the faculty/instructor’s personal observations or knowledge (examples include remarks such as the student’s work ethic, dependability, and creativity)
* Information about the College/academic program’s policies and practices

(Please note that if your letter of reference is/was submitted and maintained through a third-party online reference system, it will not be available for your review.)

A faculty/instructor **cannot share** a student’s education records (such as course grades, GPA, documented attendance, or examination results) in a letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference **without obtaining a signed release from the student** which 1) specifies the records that may be disclosed, 2) states the purpose of the disclosure, and 3) identifies the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure can be made. Additionally, pursuant to FERPA a student has the right to read a letter of recommendation, unless that right has been waived by the student.

Students who seek a letter of recommendation and/or a verbal reference from a Columbus State faculty/instructor should speak directly with that faculty/instructor. Students must also check with their program regarding whether the faculty/instructor will agree to be a reference. Once the faculty/instructor has agreed, the student should fill-out the following form, “Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference and FERPA Release,” and then return it to the faculty/instructor.

Part I of the below form allows the student to designate whether the faculty/instructor is writing a letter of recommendation and/or providing a verbal reference. It also allows the student to provide information about the recipient(s) of the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference.

Part II of the below form, is *optional* and only required if the student wants to authorize the faculty/instructor to use information obtained from the student’s education records for the purpose of the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference. If authorization is given the faculty/instructor may then choose to include some or all of the authorized information, in addition to providing their personal observations about the student. **Students are not required to authorize the release of their education records for a letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference. If a student chooses not to fill-out part II or chooses not to authorize the release of their education records on the below form, then no information from the student’s education records may be included in the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference.**

Finally, Part III of the below form, is to be filled out if student has asked the faculty/instructor to write a letter of recommendation. Part III provides the student with the opportunity to waive or not waive the right to review a copy of the letter of recommendation. **Students are not required to waive this right to review a letter of recommendation.**

**To Columbus State Faculty/Instructor:** You may not insist on a student’s release of education records or waiver of the right to review a copy of the letter of recommendation as a condition for writing a letter of recommendation and/or providing a verbal reference. If a student does not authorize you to use their education records then you may not include that information. Please maintain a copy of this Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference FERPA Release form in your files and if there is a letter of recommendation maintain this form with each copy of the letter of recommendation.

*Revised May 2018*

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**Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference and FERPA Release**

**Student:** *This form should be filled out and then returned to the Columbus State faculty/instructor who has agreed to write you a letter of recommendation and/or serve as a verbal reference. If you would like to authorize the faculty/instructor to use your education records in constructing their letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference please fill-out Part II, students are not required to authorize the release of their education records for this letter of recommendation/verbal reference. For letters of recommendation, please choose one of the options in Part III, students are not required to* *waive their right to review a letter of recommendation.*

**Part I:** (*Required*) **Letter of Recommendation/Verbal Reference Information**

**Student/Graduate Name:**

**I authorize the following Columbus State faculty/instructor (check one or both boxes):**

* To write a letter of recommendation on my behalf

and/or

* To serve as a verbal reference on my behalf

(Submit one form for each Columbus State faculty/instructor)

**I grant the Columbus State faculty/instructor named above to provide the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference to the following recipient(s):**

* All prospective employers, all educational institutions to which I seek admission, and/or all organizations considering me for an award or scholarship

OR

* To the following specific recipient(s)\*:

Recipient’s name:

Recipient’s address/email:

\*please list more specific references on the reverse side.

**Part II:** (*Optional*) **FERPA** **Release of Education Records**

I understand that, pursuant to FERPA, (1) I have the right not to consent to the release of my education records; (2) This consent shall remain in effect until revoked by me, in writing, and delivered to the above named person to whom this release is granted, but that such revocation shall not affect disclosures previously made by the above named person prior to receipt of any such written revocation.

**With this understanding and by checking below, I make the following decision:**

* I do NOT authorize the above named faculty/instructor to release my education records to the above named recipients.
* I do authorize the above named faculty/instructor to release information and provide an evaluation about any and all information from my education records at Columbus State Community College, including information pertaining to my education at other institutions I have previously attended that is part of my education records at Columbus State Community College, as deemed necessary by the above named faculty/instructor to provide the letter of recommendation and/or verbal reference to the above named recipients.

**Part III:** (*Only applicable for Letter of Recommendation*) **Right to Review a Copy**

**I understand that, under FERPA, I have a right to review a copy of this letter of recommendation upon request, unless I choose to waive that right. With this understanding and by checking below, I make the following decision:**

* I do NOT waive my right to review a copy of this letter of recommendation at any time in the future.
* I waive my right to review a copy of this letter of recommendation at any time in the future.

**Authorization:**

Student Signature Date:

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# **APPENDIX B:**

## Glossary/Acronyms

**American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)**: The national professional association for health information management professionals that promotes the standards of practice for health information. AHIMA offers the certification examinations for HIM professions.

**Blackboard**: The course management system used by Columbus State Community College for the delivery of web-based courses.

**Distance Education**: The delivery of educational programs where the instructor is not at the same location as the students (i.e., web-based courses).

**Health Information Management Technology (HIMT)**: The academic department at Columbus State that houses the following programs: (1) The CAHIIM accredited two-year associate’s degree HIMT program that prepares students to take the RHIT certification examination offered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), (2) The Medical Coding Certificate program, and (3) The Health Data Analyst Certificate program – Post HIMT associate’s degree.

**Neehr Perfect EHR:** HIM software applications used in PPE course.

**Ohio Health Information Management Association** (OHIMA): Ohio’s state professional association for health information management professionals that promotes the standards of practice for health information.

**Professional Practice Experience (PPE):** There are two PPE courses in the HIMT program. The PPE courses (HIMT 2870 and HIMT 2930) are intended to help students to bridge the gap between the classroom and work environment. Students are required to complete 90 PPE hours in HIMT 2870 and 90 PPE hours in HIMT 2930.

**Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)**: The certification credential available for graduates of four-year degree programs in health information management. Successful completion of a Bachelor’s degree (major in HIM) is required to sit for the RHIA certification examination.

**Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT):** The certification credential available for graduates of two-year degree programs in health information management. Successful completion of an Associate’s degree (major in HIM) is required to sit for the RHIT certification examination.

**Virtual Lab:** HIM software applications that are available through AHIMA. This software is used in the PPE and other HIMT courses.

1. If a student has requested the College to withhold their directory information, then a faculty/instructor is not allowed to release directory information about that student. To view the information Columbus State designates as directory information please visit the following website: <https://www.cscc.edu/services/registrar/withhold-information.shtml>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)