

**DEPARTMENT REPORT  
OF  
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

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Department: Health Information Management

Program (Degree): Health Information Management (HIM)

Type of Degree:  X  AAS        AA        AS        ATS        AIS

Chairperson: Barbara Wallace                      Date: 1/26/06

Person(s) Interviewed: Barbara Wallace

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- I. Program Curriculum:** *A description of the basis for the program curriculum (i.e., how it is derived and validated). Include accreditation organizations, advisory committees or external groups that influence curriculum. Describe curriculum review activities including the review of course master syllabi.\**

The program learning outcomes for the Health Information Management (HIM) are based on the American Health Information Management Association Council on Accreditation's delineation of competencies and knowledge clusters for entry-level health information technicians.

The Health Information Management Program (HIM) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). Program requirements and standards can be accessed on their web page at <http://www.cahiim.org/>. CAHIIM had changed their accreditation process beginning October 1, 2005 to an outcomes-based program. Sinclair's HIM program has been given ongoing accreditation status under the new program. In October 2005, Sinclair submitted their Annual Program Assessment Report (APAR) which focuses on graduate placement, graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction and program outcomes as measured by graduate performance on the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) certification examination. Ongoing accreditation is performance-based on these measures.

The present curriculum was initiated in Fall 2001. The American Health Information Management Association has issued new competencies and knowledge clusters for programs to implement Fall 2006. These new competencies will be included on the certification exam beginning in 2008. The HIM faculty completed a comprehensive gap analysis of the HIM curriculum during 2005. New program outcomes (effective Fall 2006) were written based on these changing accreditation requirements. A major revision of the HIM curriculum has been drafted and is now under review. Master course syllabi for all new and revised courses in the HIM degree program were updated in CMT.

**II. Program Learning Outcomes:** *A description of what you intend for students to know (cognitive), think/feel (affective), or do (psychomotor), when they have completed your degree program. A suggested manageable number of outcomes should be in the range of five to ten. Describe Program Learning Outcomes review activities.\**

The HIM learning outcomes are based on AHIMA's domains, tasks, and sub-tasks which delineate competencies and knowledge clusters for registered health information technicians. These outcomes are based on five levels of competency.

Additional input for learning outcomes is garnered through regular communication with our community of interest represented on the HIM Advisory Committee. Membership on the committee includes program graduates, HIM managers and employees from hospitals and long term care facilities, HIM consultants and a student member.

An entry-level graduate with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Health Information Management from Sinclair Community College will be able to:

Program Outcomes	Courses
1. Demonstrate the ability to design, organize and implement changes in the evolution of health information to electronic formats.	HIM 110, 111, 178, 246, 250, 251, 252, 258, 278 BIS M85, CIS 265,
2. Evaluate and appropriately apply principles of confidentiality and privacy congruent with the standards and ethics of the health information profession.	HIM 110, 111, 135, 178, 220, 246, 250, 251, 252, 265, 278 ALH 103
3. Apply effective skills in the areas of written and oral communication, critical thinking, and problem solving in the practice of health information management.	HIM 110, 111, 231, 235, 236, 244, 245, 250, 251, 252, 260, 261, 265, 278 COM 206 or 211, ENG 111 or 131, 112 or 132, MAT 106 or 101, PSY121 or SOC 111, HUM Elective, Portfolio Elective HIM 110, 111, 178, 240, 241, 244, 245, 249, 250, 251, 252, 260, 261, 265, 278
4. Demonstrate proficiency in classifications and nomenclatures sufficient to support reimbursement in multiple patient care environments.	HIM 122, 220, 240, 241, 250, 251, 252, 258, 260, 261, 265, 278 BIO 162; ALH 142, 201
5. Demonstrate competency and skill in the technology used by the healthcare information environment.	HIM 178, 228, 240, 241, 244, 246, 250, 251, 252, 258, 265, 278 BIS M35, M45, M55, M85, CIS 265
6. Demonstrate the ability to perform the health information associate degree entry-level competencies as identified by the American Health Information Management Association.	ALL courses
7. Demonstrate personal behaviors, attitudes and values consistent with and appropriate to the entry-level health information management professional.	HIM 110, 111, 122, 135, 178, 220, 228, 240, 241, 244, 245, 246, 249, 250, 251, 252, 258, 260, 261, 265, 278

**III. Assessment Method(s):** *A measurable indicator of success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s). The methodology should be both reliable and valid. Please describe in detail.*

- a. **Formative Assessment Method(s) and Description:** *a measurable indicator of student in-progress success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s).*

Formative assessment is accomplished primarily through successful course completion of all HIM courses. Within each HIM course, major projects and check-off sheets are used to assess student progress. Students must achieve a 77% or higher mastery level in all HIM courses.

Student progress is also monitored through HIM 250, HIM Supervised Professional Practice I and HIM 251, HIM Supervised Professional Practice II. These professional practice courses are two credit hours and three credit hours respectively. These courses are project based and require students to complete the activities on site in the healthcare facility. An evaluation is conducted by the site supervisor which emphasizes student ability to complete projects and the assessment of student behavioral skills (affective). A checklist form is used by faculty members to assess student performance on specific projects in the Supervised Professional Practice experience. Furthermore, HIM faculty provide individualized counseling directly to each student in the program. Issues are addressed directly and afford students formative opportunity for improvement.

- b. **Summative Assessment Method(s) and Description:** *a measurable indicator of end-of-program success in attaining the stated program learning outcome(s).*

HIM 278, a three-credit-hour class consisting of six hours of laboratory, is a capstone course required of all HIM majors. Students perform a series of projects involving higher-level health information management tasks such as inpatient coding and Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) assignment. They must also deliver a twenty-minute oral in-service presentation including use of PowerPoint. They must also take two mock credentialing examinations. A portfolio is developed as part of HIM 278 during the student's second year. Assignments are clear-cut and provide proof of competencies. A final written project is titled "Professional Pursuit Paper" requires the student to reflect on their professional development, the future of their career, and their experiences in the SCC HIM program. Faculty assess the level of each student's written communication skills, not the content, utilizing criteria sheets standardized for the course. The National Accreditation Examination results are also used for summative assessment. Graduates may take the exam at any time following graduation and student results are reported to programs semiannually. Exam results are organized by domains allowing close scrutiny of curriculum coverage.

HIM 252, HIM Supervised Professional Practice III, a four-credit-hour class consisting of 120 contact hours, is required of all HIM majors. Students are required to demonstrate their clinical knowledge and skills in this final professional practice experience in the areas of coding, quality improvement, utilization review and cancer registry.

The format of our graduate and employer surveys are standardized by our accrediting body and administered by the department yearly. Survey results are shared with faculty and advisory committee members and are reported each year on our APAR report.

**IV. Results:** *A description of the actual results of overall student performance gathered from the summative assessment(s). (see III.b.)*

Since 1992, there has been a 100% pass rate of HIM graduates who take the national exam for the RHIT credential. Over 30 years, 351 students of 357 have passed for an overall pass rate of 98.3%. Students can re-take the national examination as many times as they wish.

The major writing assessment administered during the last quarter routinely reveals that students entering the HIM program with satisfactory or better writing skills exhibit high levels of written communication at the program end. Approximately 10% of the students enter the program with poor or inadequate writing skills and do not appear to improve significantly during their course of study.

On graduate surveys administered in August 2005, 100% of graduates indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their HIM education. A number of graduates indicate they plan to pursue more education. Students have provided many constructive suggestions that the department faculty have used in making changes/modifications. On employer surveys administered in August 2005, 100% of employers who responded indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with SCC HIM graduates performance.

**V. Analysis/Actions:** *From analysis of your summative assessment results, do you plan to or have you made any adjustments to your program learning outcomes, methodologies, curriculum, etc.? If yes, describe. If no, explain.*

The rate of success on the national credentialing examination suggests the program is mature and producing well-trained graduates. Analysis of 2004 graduate exam scores indicated one domain where our graduates scored below the national average. This area was addressed in our curriculum revision effective Fall 2006.

In our new curriculum, we have included a new summative assessment course, HIM 178. This course will be offered during Summer Quarter following the first year courses. It will include a mock credentialing exam and five projects covering first-year material. It was felt by the faculty that this would help reinforce early curriculum coursework prior to the first professional practice course.

The program continues to make efforts to maintain the viability of the HIM lab hardware and software. All computerized simulations are updated regularly to remain state of the art. During 2006, the Sinclair HIM program will participate in a pilot project with AHIMA to develop a Virtual Lab for educational programs. AHIMA is working with software and hardware vendors to centralize access to expensive database management, document imaging, transcription, coding, grouper and deficiency tracking software. A library of laboratory activities and simulations are being developed which will be available to all HIM academic programs. This virtual lab will greatly expand the program's ability to offer more realistic simulation activities.

The department has implemented Preception testing in many courses in the curriculum. The national exam is now computerized, so this gives students exposure to the computerized testing process.

VI. **General Education:** A description of where and how within the major the three primary general education outcomes\* (communication, thinking, values/citizenship/community) are assessed.

- a. Where within the major do you assess written communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Students are required to write research papers in HIM 111, 228 and 204. In HIM 110 and 265, students write journal article summations. Additionally in HIM 111, they write a summation of an interview with a community professional. In HIM 278, students write a professional pursuit paper. In HIM 244, students produce written assessments of clinical quality data. A course specific writing checklist is used to assess student-writing skills. Examinations incorporate writing skills in short answer essay.

- b. Where within the major do you assess oral communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Oral skills of HIM majors are assessed in various courses throughout the curriculum. Students in HIM 111 do an oral presentation of their interview with a community professional. They also make oral presentations in HIM 204 and 228 regarding research they have done. In the Capstone, HIM 278, students develop an oral presentation on a continuing education topic. All are assessed with a course-specific checklist.

- c. Where within the major do you assess thinking? Thinking might include inventing new problems, seeing relationships and/or implications, respecting other approaches, demonstrating clarity and/or integrity, or recognizing assumptions. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Many of our advanced courses stress critical thinking and reasoning in their laboratory assessments. Criteria evaluation sheets for required projects assess the student's ability to critically analyze and problem solve. Medical coding by its nature is a critical thinking process requiring the student to analyze documentation, locate clinical information deficiencies or contradictions, and decide how to proceed. In HIM 244, students are required to critically analyze clinical quality data and draw conclusions from it.

- d. Where within the major do you assess values/citizenship/community? These activities might include behaviors, perspective, awareness, responsibility, teamwork, ethical/professional standards, service learning or community participation. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Values and Citizenship are inherent in the management and treatment of health related concerns. Students are encouraged beginning with the early HIM courses to consider issues of appropriateness. Students are required join the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) so they gain a sense of what being a professional means. Additionally, they gain access to the large body of knowledge available through the organization regarding professional standards in health information.

Ethical issues are addressed throughout the curriculum. A general code of ethics for HIM is introduced in HIM 110. A specific code of ethics for coders is introduced and explained in HIM 231. Ethical and legal issues are addressed in other course-related discussions as well. Students take an entire HIM course on the legal and ethical aspects of health information.

- \* Note: The oral communication checklist and the written communication checklist developed by the General Education Committee were adopted for college-wide use during the 1997-98 academic year by Academic Council. Thinking Guidelines developed by the General Education Committee are being piloted by faculty during the 1998-99 academic year.