



Associate of Applied Science in Health Information Technology Program

Student Handbook 2011

Welcome by Program Chair

Welcome to National American University Online and to the Associate of Applied Science in Health Information Technology (HIT) program! You have selected an exciting career that offers many options. Job opportunities for credentialed health information professionals are growing. There are many different positions that you will be qualified to perform once you complete the HIT program.

This handbook has been developed with you in mind and will acquaint you with the program and the field of HIT. It should be used as a supplement to the information found in *the National American University Student Handbook* and the *National American University Undergraduate Catalog*.

In addition to the handbook, you will be oriented to the HIT profession by your courses, lab assignments, and professional practicum experience. All of these activities have been designed to assist you in coping the challenges and problems of your professional career.

I am excited that you have joined our HIT program and look forward to working with you throughout your academic experience.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Shawna Sweeney, MSHI, RHIA, CCS

Allied Health Program Coordinator & System Chair

ssweeney@national.edu

Preface

National American University reserves the right to make changes in this handbook at any time at the discretion of the university and in its policies and regulations that contribute to the improvement of the university and HIT program. Changes made will be provided in oral and/or written format to the student body. Students are required to inform themselves of and to comply with HIT program policies and regulations as stated and distributed. Failure to comply with the policies and regulations may result in warning or withdrawal from the program.

National American University
5301 South Highway 16, Suite 200
Rapid City, SD 57701
1-800-209-0182
www.national.edu

Note: The HIT Student handbook is supplemental to the NAU student handbook. Updates may be added; see NAU public Web site for the updated version of the HIT student handbook. The HIT Handbook is also available in all HT courses under course Information.

Health Information Technology Program Contact Information:

National American University
Shawna Sweeney, MSHI, RHIA, CCS
Health Information Technology and Healthcare Program Chair
5301 South Highway 16, Suite 200
Rapid City, SD 57701
P: 605-394-5010
F: 888-878-1585
ssweeney@national.edu

National American University

Mission Statement

National American University welcomes students of diverse interests, cultures and abilities and prepares them for careers in health care, business and business-related fields by providing quality higher education in a caring and supportive environment.

The university builds learning partnerships with students and other institutions locally, nationally and internationally through its private, regionally-accredited system of campuses and education centers offering courses in traditional, accelerated and distance learning formats.

As a comprehensive technical and professional institution of higher learning, the university responds to the changing needs of students, employers, and their communities by providing undergraduate and graduate programs and continuing education opportunities to serve our evolving global society.

Core Values

Offer high quality instructional programs and services.

Provide a caring and supportive learning environment.

Offer technical and professional career programs.

Purposes

1. Offer quality technical and professional degree programs as documented by institutional and academic assessment processes at the associate, bachelor's and graduate level, diplomas, certificates, and adult degree completion programs to traditional, adult, and international learners.
2. Provide a general education program to build awareness, abilities, and interests to empower life-long learners as knowledgeable citizens of the global community.
3. Provide a collegiate experience through instructional and support services that creates a stimulating, caring and supportive learner-centered environment in which students are encouraged to achieve the educational goals established by the university.
4. Promote learning and working environment by providing new technologies, methodologies, and practices that enhance and extend quality programs and services.
5. Prepare students to provide leadership and services for the employment needs of business, industry, and government worldwide.
6. Pursue communication, cooperation, and alliances with educational institutions, organizations and associations on a local, regional, national, and international basis.

7. Respond to the ever-changing societal demands for personal and professional development and continuing education through flexible scheduling and convenient access via traditional, accelerated and distance delivery methodologies.
8. Assist students in the development of ethical values and behaviors.
9. Foster an environment that encourages involvement by employees in the innovation and solution-seeking processes and provide an opportunity for personal and leadership development.
10. Provide a stable institutional environment where human, financial and physical resources are sufficient to accomplish its educational and institutional goals as a sound basis for continued growth and development.

Adopted by the National American University Board of Governors - February 2007.

NAU Guidelines for Student Conduct

Academic Integrity

The National American University mission and purpose describe the university's commitment to assist students in further development of ethical values and behaviors. A significant aspect of one of the purposes relates to academic integrity and the encouragement of honesty and ethical behavior on the part of students and graduates.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and cheating on assignments, tests or projects, or assisting someone in these actions. Student dishonesty is considered in the context of classroom conduct and faculty member standards and/or the university's policy on student conduct and behavior.

Students

Students are encouraged to model behaviors that reflect honesty and integrity, and therefore may not engage in or tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty and/or related misconduct. Students should work harmoniously with each other to accomplish educational objective; however, they are also responsible for their own work.

The most common forms of academic dishonesty include:

Cheating:

1. Submitting material that is not the student's as part of his/her course performance, such as copying from another student's exam or allowing a student to copy from the student's exam.

2. Using information or devices that are not allowed by the faculty, such as using formulas or data from a computer program, or using unauthorized materials for a take-home exam.
3. Obtaining and using unauthorized materials such as a copy of an exam before it is given.
4. Fabricating information, such as data for a lab report.
5. Violating specific procedures prescribed to protect the integrity of an assignment, test or other evaluation.
6. Collaborating inappropriately with others on assignments without the faculty member's consent or knowledge.
7. Cooperating with or helping another student cheat.
8. Other forms of dishonest behavior, such as having another person take an exam.
9. Altering exam answers and requesting that an exam be re-graded.
10. Communicating with any person during an exam other than the faculty member or the exam proctor.

Plagiarism:

1. Directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them, consistent with the university's approved style guidelines.
2. Using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying the sources.
3. Paraphrasing materials or ideas of others without identifying the sources.

Students are responsible for seeking information and clarification about accurate documentation of citations and references for specific content areas. Students who are unclear about the cheating and plagiarism examples listed above should seek clarification from a faculty member, learner services coordinator or academic dean. There shall be no "statute of limitations" that precludes faculty from acting on the discovery of alleged acts of academic dishonesty, either during the term when the course in question is being offered or after the course has ended (and after a student has graduated).

The Field of Health Information Management

The field of HIM is a diverse professional field that offers many challenges and opportunities to those who choose it as a career path. Traditionally, the field was focused on medical record processes and reimbursement issues for acute care medical facilities. Today, the focus of the field extends to outpatient facilities, physician offices, medical insurance companies, the pharmaceutical industry, and consulting firms. HIPAA, privacy, compliance, performance improvement, electronic health record and electronic health information management (e-HIM) are current topics that are today's focus for professionals of the field. Career paths include medical coding, data analyst, cancer registrar, and many more.

NAU's Health Information Technology Program

The health information technology program is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in analytical, technical and management skills associated with health information. Through practical approaches and professional domains, students will acquire the essential entry-level competencies to support the principles and management of health information and technologies.

The health information technology occupation is one of the fastest growing professions in one of the fastest growing industries. Health information professionals provide reliable and valid information that drives health care. Health information technicians are specialists in managing medical records, coding and reimbursement, and possess the skills to critically think and problem solve. These professionals play a key role in preparing, analyzing and maintaining health records and are considered experts in assuring the privacy and security of health data.

The health information field is increasingly focusing on electronic patient records, database management and information privacy and security. HIT professionals work in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, physician practices, long-term care, home health care, insurance, managed care, health technology firms, and pharmaceutical companies.

Health Information Technology Program Goals

- Prepare learners to attain university core abilities and program learning outcomes by utilizing performed-based curriculum in a caring and supportive learning environment.
- Measure and assess student learning and implement improvements, as needed, to ensure high quality academic programs and services.

- Prepare learners to create plans for the pursuit of graduate studies and/or continuing professional development activities, membership in professional and community organizations, and a life of learning.
- Confirm that faculty members meet university qualifications guidelines, utilize effective and innovative teaching methods that promote academic excellence, and pursue opportunities for professional development.
- Monitor the needs of the program's community of interest and maintain the currency and relevancy of program curriculum through regular and advisory committee meetings and academic program reviews.
- Achieve and maintain specialized program accreditation.

Student Learning Outcomes

The graduates of the program will:

- Apply healthcare laws, regulations, and ethics to the health information technology profession.
- Collect, analyze, and maintain health record content in paper or electronic mediums.
- Assign ICD-9-CM and CPT codes accurately on inpatient and outpatient records.
- Apply healthcare billing and reimbursement processes for inpatient and outpatient encounters.
- Show proficiency in written and oral communication skills.
- Comply with CAHIIM APAR (Annual Program Assessment Report) requirements.
- Score at or above the national average on all RHIT examination competencies.

The health information technology program is in candidacy status for accreditation review by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

CAHIIM is the accrediting body for health information degree-granting educational programs. Additional information may be found at <http://www.cahiim.org>.

Graduates of an accredited program are eligible to sit for the Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIT) certification exam which is administered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). The RHIT credential assures employers and others that the professional is competent in daily administration

of professional duties and adheres to the AHIMA Code of Ethics. Certification information may be found by visiting the AHIMA website at <http://www.ahima.org>.

HIT Program Admission

Admission to the HIT Program is based on the National American University Undergraduate Admission Requirements, which can be found in the NAU Undergraduate Catalog.

HIT Program Curriculum

The average length of time for a student taking a full course load is eight quarters (24 months). A minimum of 99 quarter credit hours is required for graduation. A minimum of 27 of the following 54 credits must be earned at NAU.

HIT MAJOR CORE (54) CREDIT HOURS (A minimum of 27 of the following 54 credits must be earned at NAU.)

HA3220D	Health Information Systems	4
HT1000D	Intro to HIM & Health Care	4
HT2110D	ICD Coding I with Lab	3
HT2115D	ICD-10 Coding I w/Lab	3
HT2125D	ICD-10 Coding II w/Lab	3
HT2130D	CPT Coding with Lab	3
HT2210D	Healthcare Data Quality and Management	4
HT2230D	Healthcare Reimbursement	3
HT2240D	Health Information Mgmt and Supervision	3
HT2500D	Health Information Technology Practicum	6
ME1150	Medical Terminology	4
ME2211	Human Pharmacology	4
ME2250	Medical Law and Ethics	4
ME2510	Essentials of Pathophysiology I	3
ME2520	Essentials of Pathophysiology II	3

General Education Core (45) CREDIT HOURS

COMMUNICATIONS		
EN1150	Composition I	4.5
EN1300	Composition II	4.5
EN2100 or EN2140	Speech or Interpersonal Communications	4.5
SCIENCE		
SCI221 or SCI1222d	Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology w/Lab or Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology	6
MATHEMATICS		
MA<	Algebra Elective	4.5

	HUMANITIES	
HU2000	Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	4.5
	BEHAVIORAL / SOCIAL SCIENCE	
	Behavioral / Social Science Elective	4.5
	GENERAL EDUCATION	
CS1500	Strategies for Success	4.5
CS2080	Career Management	3
	COMPUTER LITERACY	
CI1150	Introduction to CIS or CI Elective	4.5

HIM Curriculum Outcomes and Competencies

In 2005, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) published the Standards for Health Information Management. These quality standards are the framework we use to ensure successful preparation of the student for today's ever-changing workforce.

Appendix A lists the AHIMA Domains, Subdomains and Tasks. These items are developed by the Council on Certification of the AHIMA through a job analysis study that is conducted approximately every 2 years. The domains, subdomains and tasks serve as the template for constructing the certification exams. They also assist accredited HIM programs in developing and updating the HIM course curriculum to ensure students are meeting the minimum entry-level HIM job requirements.

The AHIMA also requires accredited programs, or those seeking accreditation, to adopt a model curriculum as part of the Standards. See Appendix B for the HIM Associate Degree Knowledge Cluster Content and Competency Levels which is the foundation for curriculum development for our HIM Program.

Grading Scale

In most cases letter grades are awarded using the **following scale**, unless a specific course syllabus outlines a different scale.

Overall Grading Scale

90 - 100%	A
80 - 89%	B
70 - 79%	C
60 - 69%	D
Below 60%	F

Academic Standards

In addition to the academic standards required by National American University, the HIT program has the following requirements: A minimum grade of C is required for all HIT and professional courses.

Microsoft Office

Health Information Technology students are **required** to use Microsoft Office applications to complete assignments. Students should contact their Learner Services Advisor for additional information on student discounted software.

The Online Course

The online courses are organized by learning plans. Each learning plan provides an overview, assignments, and other learning plan activities. Students should review all learning plan material as it is imperative to understanding the weekly topics.

The online course also contains several types of graded items. These items may include discussion questions, quizzes, exams, research papers and written assignments.

Discussion Boards

Every learning plan in the online courses includes discussion threads. The student should review the Discussion Rubric in each course for specific grading details.

Attendance

Regular participation in online classes is essential to academic success. To be counted as present, students must **log into their online class at least once each week** (Monday AM - Sunday PM) during the academic term. Logging into a course is constituted by completing weekly assignments.

A student who does not log into class for 2 consecutive weeks:

- Is subject to being administratively dropped for non-attendance
- May be placed on academic probation or suspension
- May still be obligated to pay tuition (please see Refund Policy in NAU Catalog)
- May jeopardize future federal financial aid funding

If a student is out of attendance for 2 consecutive weeks, the student will be administratively dropped from the course.

For further information about attendance, academics, and financial policies, please see the NAU Catalog on the web site at www.national.edu.

Due Dates/Late Assignments

All graded activities are due no later than midnight Sunday night (MT) of the week in which it is due, or as otherwise directed in the course or by the instructor. Any graded activity submitted after its due date is subject to a 10% deduction of the total possible points for the first week it is late, 50% of the total possible points for the second week it is late, and 0% of the total possible points if it is more than 2 weeks late. Extenuating circumstances may justify exceptions, which are at the sole discretion of the instructor.

*Note: The following policy does NOT apply to exams. Exams MUST be taken during the prescribed times to receive ANY credit.

Textbooks

All HIT courses require hard copy manuals of books. **Ebooks are not available.** Students should contact their Online Learning Services Advisor for additional information on ordering textbooks prior to the start of the quarter.

Online Course System Requirements

To ensure the student's online learning experience is as smooth as possible, NAU recommends the following minimum hardware and software requirements:

Computer:	Windows Pentium-class or Macintosh PPC
Operating System:	Windows 2000 or Mac OS 8 or above Hard Drive with at least 150 Megabytes of free space
RAM:	128 MB or more recommended
Software:	Microsoft Office 2007 Professional Some courses (especially IT) may require additional software
Internet Browser:	Internet Explorer 6 or Firefox 2.x or higher Disabled pop-up blockers
Internet Service Provider:	MSN, AT&T, Earthlink, AOL, etc. DSL, cable, or satellite connection is highly recommended
Audio/Visual:	Speakers CD-ROM player Recent video and sound card

Technical Assistance

NAU provides a variety of technical support services for both campus-based and online students. To resolve your issue as quickly as possible, please use the FAQ database to guide yourself through technical issues, or contact Technical Assistance via telephone or email during the hours listed below.

FAQ Database:	http://www.national.edu/knowledgebase/default.aspx
Telephone:	1-800-548-0602
Hours:	Monday – Thursday :: 7 AM – 7 PM MST Friday :: 7 AM – 5 PM MST
Email:	nausupport@national.edu
Hours:	Monday – Thursday :: 7 AM – 7 PM MST Friday :: 7 AM – 5 PM MST Sunday :: 4 PM - 8 PM MST

Immunizations

Under South Dakota law, students (born after 1956) who are entering a postsecondary institution in South Dakota for the first time after July 1, 2008, must submit, within 45 days after the start of classes, certification from a licensed physician that the student has received or is in the process of receiving the required two doses of immunization against measles, rubella, and mumps. As an alternative to the requirement for a physician's certification, the student may present: (1) Certification from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of the student would be such that immunization would endanger the student's life or health; (2) Certification from a licensed physician stating the student has experienced the natural disease against which the immunization protects; (3) Confirmation from a laboratory of the presence of adequate immunity; or (4) A written statement signed by the student that the student is an adherent to a religious doctrine whose teachings are opposed to such immunizations. If the student is under the age of 18, the written statement shall be signed by one parent or guardian. Please see an admissions representative for further details.

Under Minnesota law, students need to submit a complete immunization record or meet one of the legal exemptions before being admitted to NAU. Students are exempt if they graduated from a Minnesota high school in 1997 or later, were previously enrolled in another college in Minnesota, or were born before 1956. Other exemptions include religious or philosophical objections to being immunized, in which the student needs to submit a notarized statement of his/her beliefs, or if the student has already had one of the diseases covered in the state immunization requirement. A doctor may sign an exemption if the student has another medical reason, for example, immune to the disease or currently pregnant. Please see an admissions representative for further details.

What are other state requirements for NAU?

As students may be completing the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) in a hospital/clinical setting, the Hepatitis B vaccination series may be required in addition to the usual immunizations.

Professional Practice Experience (Practicum)

Students will participate in a Professional Practice Experience (PPE) during their last quarter (HT2500D). The PPE will consist of 90 hours of internship, a presentation, and completion of the HT2500D online course. Students may complete the hours on a full-time or part-time basis, if allowed by the PPE site and if completed within the allotted time frame. HT2500D culminates in a presentation, which the students will complete during the PPE. Students may also complete projects. Examples of projects might include performance improvement, quality assurance, etc. Additional information regarding the PPE can be found in the HIT Student Practicum Guide, which is provided to students upon enrolling in HT2500D / HIT Practicum.

Students are responsible for providing contact information on three potential PPE sites. Students should complete the Practicum Request Form at least two terms prior to enrolling in the practicum course. Students are also responsible for complying with all immunization verifications, health screenings and criminal and background checks as mandated by the PPE site. **The expense of these items will be incurred by the student.**

Once the potential PPE site has been submitted to the Allied Health Practicum Coordinator, students will be contacted regarding the placement after it has been secured. Students should note that local facilities are not required to host students, therefore, additional potential sites may be requested if a student cannot be placed at one of their three choices.

Liability insurance will be provided for the students by National American University for the PPE.

Professional Membership

Founded in 1928, **AHIMA** began as the Association of Record Librarians of North America. Today, AHIMA has more than 46,000 members who are uniquely educated and credentialed in the field of health information. AHIMA holds career and professional development as one of its core missions. Additional areas of focus for the organization are education, public policy on health information issues, and communication. AHIMA has also been and continues to be a resource for its members, a source of strong advocacy for the field of health information, and a steadfast professional organization that stands as a leader for its members.¹

Students enrolled in accredited HIT programs are invited to become student members of AHIMA for a nominal fee. AHIMA membership automatically enrolls the student in their state's component association (e.g. SDHIMA: South Dakota Health Information Management Association). Involvement in these associations is strongly encouraged as they provide large professional networks which may enable the student to find a job post-graduation.

Benefits of joining AHIMA include access to online articles of the Journal of AHIMA, access to the Communities of Practice (CoP) and a discount when sitting for the RHIT certification exam. There is a CoP just for students in which a student can choose to be mentored by someone in the HIM profession, network with students from other programs, and find valuable information about the profession. Further information regarding this process can be obtained from the HIM Program Chair or by visiting www.ahima.org/membership/.

The Foundation on Research and Education (FORE) is a charitable affiliate of AHIMA. FORE supports advances to the health information field through research, education and public awareness initiatives. It also offers a student scholarship program and maintains a professional library to which student members have access. Additional information can be found at www.ahima.org/fore.

¹ www.AHIMA.org

AHIMA Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics 2004

Ethical Principles: The following ethical principles are based on the core values of the American Health Information Management Association and apply to all health information management professionals.

Health information management professionals:

- I. Advocate, uphold and defend the individual's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information.
- II. Put service and the health and welfare of persons before self-interest and conduct themselves in the practice of the profession so as to bring honor to themselves, their peers, and to the health information management profession.
- III. Preserve, protect, and secure personal health information in any form or medium and hold in the highest regard the contents of the records and other information of a confidential nature, taking into account the applicable statutes and regulations.
- IV. Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical practices or procedures.
- V. Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing education, research, publications, and presentations.
- VI. Recruit and mentor students, peers and colleagues to develop and strengthen professional workforce.
- VII. Represent the profession accurately to the public.
- VIII. 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.

- IX. State truthfully and accurately their credentials, professional education, and experiences.
- X. Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting health information practice.
- XI. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.

As Health Information Management students, this Code of Ethics binds you too.

Professional Journal Subscriptions

ADVANCE for Health Information Professionals

Website - <http://health-information.advanceweb.com/>

Subscriptions: Subscriptions are free to qualified health information professionals. More information can be found under the Subscribe portion of their website.

For the Record

Website - www.fortherecordmag.com

Subscriptions: Subscription is FREE if you reside in one of the endorsing states AND you are a member of that state's HIMA, or are a member of AAPC. The endorsing states can be found on the website. If you do not reside in one of the endorsing states, US \$13 annually.

Journal of AHIMA

Website - http://www.ahima.org/membership/member_benefits.asp

Subscription: Subscription is **FREE** if you are a member of AHIMA. Non-members pay a \$100 annual fee.