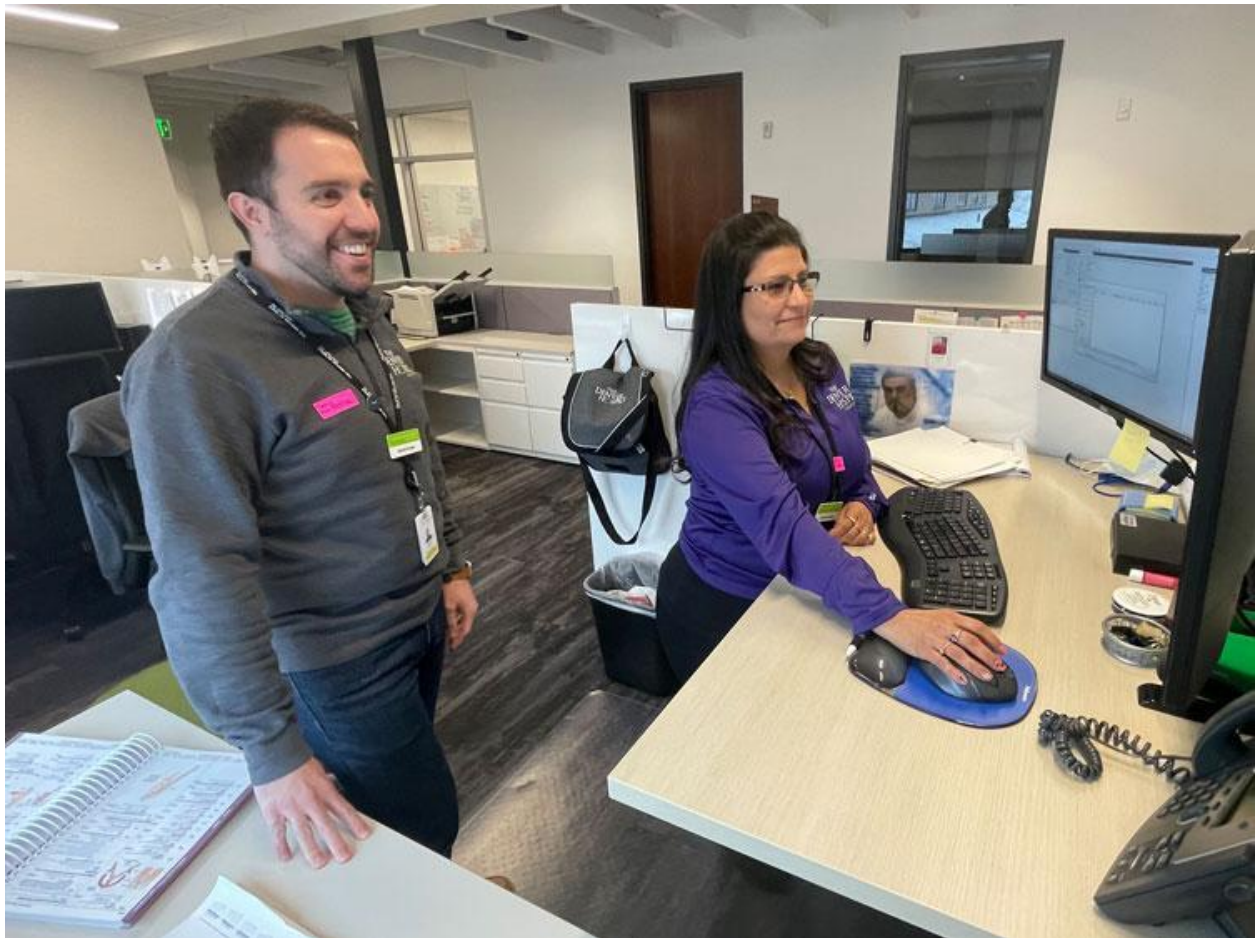




Health Information Technology (HIT) AAS & Health Information Management (BAS) Student Handbook



Program Director: Christine Tomas, MPM, RHIA

 Christine.Tomas@arapahoe.edu

 **303-797-5603**

Table of Contents

Welcome Message	3
Mission	4
Vision	4
Guiding Principles	4
Program Overview	5
Accreditation.....	6
Advisory Committee	6
Professional Organizations.....	7
AHIMA Core Values & Code of Ethics	7
Competency-Based Education (CBE).....	8
Program Goals	9
AAS HIT Curriculum Structure.....	10
AAS HIT Course Descriptions	11
BAS HIM Curriculum Structure	13
BAS HIM Course Descriptions	14
Practicum Experiences.....	15
Program Policies	17
Catalog and Student Handbook.....	17
Admission Requirements & Application Process	17
Progression	19
Grading	20
Student Responsibility in the HIT and HIM Programs.....	20
Communication and Conflict Resolution	20
Student Evaluations	21
Reasonable Accommodations.....	21
Pregnancy	21
Essential Skills and Functional Abilities.....	21
Guidelines for Student Conduct.....	22
Standards of Professional Behavior	22
Non-Discrimination and Title IX.....	23
Reporting Unprofessional Conduct.....	23
Disciplinary Procedures	23
Academic and Student Misconduct	24
Student Due Process	24
“Reasonable Suspicion Based” Drug Testing	25
Health Information Technology (AAS) & Health Information Management (BAS) Student Handbook Attestation.....	25

Welcome Message

Welcome to the ACC HIT (AAS) & HIM (BAS) Programs

Welcome to the Health Information Technology (AAS) and Health Information Management (BAS) programs at Arapahoe Community College. Whether you are just beginning your academic journey or returning to continue your education, you've chosen a field at the intersection of healthcare, technology, and data-driven innovation.

The world of health information is constantly evolving, and our programs are designed to prepare you for what's next. The AAS in Health Information Technology (HIT) is a fully online, CAHIIM-accredited program that builds the technical foundation needed for entry-level roles. The BAS in Health Information Management (HIM) is a fully online bachelor's program that expands into leadership, informatics, data governance, and compliance. The BAS HIM program is seeking CAHIIM accreditation; accreditation has not yet been granted.

Our faculty are experienced HIM professionals who bring real-world expertise to the virtual classroom. They are committed to your success through mentorship, engaging coursework, and timely, actionable feedback. You will be challenged, supported, and equipped to thrive across diverse health information roles.

This handbook is your guide to program expectations, policies, and opportunities. Please use it alongside the ACC College Catalog, the ACC Student Handbook, and your course syllabus. We're proud to have you in our community and look forward to all you will accomplish.

Welcome to your future in health information management!

Program Leadership and Faculty

Program Director & Faculty: Christine Tomas, MPM, RHIA

 Christine.Tomas@arapahoe.edu

 303-797-5603

 Office Hours: By Appointment
Courses – HIT1005, HIT2089

HIT Faculty: Andrew Gonzales, MBA, RHIT

 Andrew.Gonzales@arapahoe.edu

Courses - HIT1001, HIT1011, HIT1012, HIT1022, HIT1088, HIT2022, HIT2025

HIT Instructor: Aydee Erle, BSN RN, RHIT, CCS, CDIP, AHIMA-approved ICD-10-CM/PCS Trainer

 Aydee.Erle@arapahoe.edu

Courses – HIT2020/2021, HIT2031, HIT2041

Mission

The ACC Health Information programs—HIT (AAS) and HIM (BAS)—prepare diverse learners for success across entry-level and leadership roles in the health information field. We deliver competency-based, workforce-aligned education grounded in industry partnerships, experiential learning, and technology integration (EHR, informatics, analytics). Our commitment to excellence, equity, accessibility, and continuous improvement (aligned with CAHIIM standards and AHIMA values) ensures students gain the knowledge, skills, and professional habits to advance quality care and data-driven decision making.

Vision

ACC's Health Information programs—HIT (AAS) and HIM (BAS)—will be nationally recognized for excellence in competency-based education, innovation, and student success. We will graduate workforce-ready professionals at the technical and baccalaureate levels who are adaptable, ethical, and skilled in health data management, informatics, compliance, and information governance.

By integrating experiential learning (aligned to Miller's Pyramid), digital health tools (EHRs, analytics, interoperability), and employer-driven training models, we will prepare students to excel in entry-level roles (RHIT-ready) and advanced leadership roles (RHIA-aligned) across diverse healthcare settings, while continuously improving through stakeholder feedback and program evaluation.

Guiding Principles

- **Student-Centered, CBE Pathways:** We meet learners where they are and provide flexible, competency-based routes to success across HIT (AAS) and HIM (BAS).
- **Equity, Access, and Inclusion:** We advance diversity and accessibility in HIM education, using clear language, inclusive design, and WCAG-aligned materials so every student can thrive.
- **Professionalism and Ethics:** We model and expect integrity, confidentiality, and ethical practice consistent with AHIMA values and the Code of Ethics.
- **Collaboration and Community Partnership:** We partner with employers, practitioners, and our advisory committee to keep curriculum aligned with real-world workforce needs.
- **Innovation in Digital Health:** We leverage EHRs, informatics, analytics, and emerging tools to prepare students for a rapidly evolving health data ecosystem.
- **Accountability and Continuous Improvement:** We make data-informed decisions, assess outcomes regularly, and uphold high academic standards to ensure career readiness (RHIT-ready at the AAS level; leadership-aligned at the BAS level).

Program Overview

ACC's Health Information programs include the long-standing Health Information Technology (HIT) AAS and the fully online Health Information Management (HIM) BAS. The HIT program has served Colorado since 1969 (originally as Medical Record Technology) and evolved alongside the profession's shift to digital, data-driven healthcare. Today, both programs combine flexibility with academic rigor to serve a diverse online student population.

HIT (AAS)

The HIT AAS prepares students for dynamic roles that ensure the accuracy, accessibility, security, and use of health data to support patient care and operational efficiency. Graduates are workforce-ready for roles such as medical coder, health data analyst, release-of-information specialist, privacy/compliance technician, and informatics support.

- Emphasis: technical competencies, digital fluency, and applied learning.
- Learning experiences: real-world case studies, coding labs, professional interviews, virtual panels, and a capstone.
- Credential pathway: completion of this CAHIIM-accredited program fulfills one of the eligibility requirements to apply for AHIMA's RHIT exam; additional criteria apply (see AHIMA for details).

HIM (BAS)

The HIM BAS builds on an AAS/associate foundation and advances into leadership, information governance, data analytics, informatics, compliance, and care coordination. It prepares students for elevated responsibilities across diverse healthcare settings (health systems, ambulatory networks, payers, consulting, public health, and health tech).

- Emphasis: management/leadership, project management, analytics, interoperability, and strategy.
- Learning experiences: authentic, outcomes-based projects, employer-informed assignments, and a culminating capstone demonstrating independent performance.
- Accreditation status: the BAS HIM program is seeking CAHIIM accreditation (accreditation not yet granted). Upon accreditation and meeting all other criteria, graduates may be eligible to apply for AHIMA's RHIA exam.

Shared Educational Approach

Both programs align with the AHIMA definition of HIM and CAHIIM's Future Education Model through a competency-based education (CBE) framework mapped to Miller's Pyramid (Knows → Knows How → Shows How → Does). Students engage in authentic assessments, technology-enabled learning (EHR simulations, analytics tools), and employer-driven activities that mirror real practice. As healthcare continues to expand hybrid and remote services, we offer flexible practicum and project options that reflect current workforce realities.

Whether students aim to launch a career or advance into leadership, ACC's Health Information programs provide a strong, outcomes-focused pathway to succeed in a rapidly evolving health data ecosystem.

Accreditation

Accreditation Statement — HIT (AAS)

The Health Information Technology accreditor of Arapahoe Community College is the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College's accreditation for the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Health Information Technology has been reaffirmed through the 2028–2029 academic year.

All inquiries about the program's accreditation status should be directed to:

CAHIIM, 200 East Randolph Street, Suite 5100, Chicago, IL 60601

Phone: (312) 235-3255 | Email: info@cahiim.org | Web: www.cahiim.org

Accreditation Status — HIM (BAS)

The Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Health Information Management is seeking CAHIIM accreditation; accreditation has not yet been granted.

Why Accreditation Matters

Programmatic accreditation assures students and employers that a program meets industry-recognized quality standards through periodic, peer-review evaluation. For HIT (AAS), CAHIIM accreditation supports eligibility pathways for the RHIT credential through AHIMA and signals that curriculum, faculty, resources, and outcomes align with professional expectations.

Accreditation also drives continuous improvement, ensuring programs remain current with workforce needs, technology, and best practices.

Advisory Committee

The ACC Health Information Programs—Health Information Technology (HIT) AAS and Health Information Management (HIM) BAS—are guided by a dedicated Advisory Committee made up of employers and practitioners from our communities of practice, along with program faculty, alumni, and a student representative from each program. Members reflect the breadth of the field (acute and ambulatory care, long-term/post-acute, payers, consulting, informatics/IT, coding/auditing, compliance/privacy, public health, and education).

The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to:

- Review and provide input on program curriculum to ensure alignment with current industry practices, technological advances, and regulatory changes.
- Recommend strategies for integrating emerging competencies and innovations, particularly those reflected in CAHIIM's Competency-Based Education (CBE) standards and Miller's Pyramid.
- Assist in identifying workforce needs and supporting program goals to improve student readiness, job placement, and employer satisfaction.
- Provide feedback on program effectiveness, accreditation initiatives, practicum experiences, and overall student preparedness.
- Support professional networking opportunities and help connect students with the broader HIM community.

The committee meets regularly to support continuous quality improvement and strategic alignment with national HIM educational standards. Their insights are critical in ensuring that ACC's HIT graduates are workforce-ready and equipped with the competencies necessary for success in today's rapidly evolving health information environment.

Professional Organizations

As a future HIM professional, students are strongly encouraged to engage with their national, state, and regional professional associations. These organizations offer opportunities for education, networking, advocacy, and leadership development, and they support the values and competencies embedded throughout the HIT Program.

Student Membership Benefits

- Discounted registration for national and state conferences
- Access to professional development tools and industry publications
- Scholarship opportunities and financial aid resources
- Peer networking and mentorship

Recommended Organizations:

- **American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)**
 - National professional association for the HIM industry
 - www.ahima.org
- **Colorado Health Information Management Association (CHIMA)**
 - AHIMA membership automatically includes CHIMA membership for Colorado residents.
 - www.chima.org

Supporting your professional organizations demonstrates your commitment to ethical practice, lifelong learning, and professional growth in the HIM field.

AHIMA Core Values & Code of Ethics

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is the leading voice for health information professionals and sets national standards for professional practice, ethics, and education. As a CAHIIM-accredited program, the HIT program at ACC aligns its instruction and student expectations with AHIMA's mission and core values.

AHIMA Core Values

- **Integrity:** We have integrity in our work and relationships. Our passion for doing the right thing and sharing knowledge and resources makes us trustworthy, credible, and accountable leaders.

- **Bold:** We act boldly with intention. We go after big ideas and big challenges with purpose because we recognize the influence and impact of our work on people's health, safety, and well-being.
- **Inclusion:** We are inclusive so that humans are at the center of everything we do. We see the whole person and respect the inherent dignity of every human. We make space for different voices and opinions to help us get the best results.

These values are embedded in every aspect of the HIT curriculum and faculty expectations, supporting a respectful, ethical, and innovative learning environment.

AHIMA Code of Ethics

The AHIMA Code of Ethics serves six essential purposes:

1. Promotes high standards of HIM practice.
2. Summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values.
3. Establishes a set of ethical principles to guide decision-making and actions.
4. Provides a framework for professional behavior and responsibilities, particularly in complex or uncertain situations.
5. Allows the public to hold HIM professionals accountable to ethical conduct.
6. Mentors new practitioners by introducing them to the mission, values, and principles of the HIM profession.

The code includes both **enforceable** and **aspirational** principles. HIM professionals are expected to use professional judgment to interpret and apply these standards as part of their ongoing commitment to ethical practice.

Students are encouraged to review the full AHIMA Code of Ethics at:

<https://www.ahima.org/about/code-of-ethics/>

Competency-Based Education (CBE)

The ACC HIT and BAS HIM Programs are actively transitioning to a Competency-Based Education (CBE) model, in alignment with CAHIIM's 2026 accreditation requirements and the Future Education Model for Health Information Management. CBE is a student-centered approach that measures learning by how well students demonstrate mastery of defined skills, rather than time spent in a classroom. This model emphasizes learning outcomes that reflect real-world job roles and industry standards.

CBE in the HIT program is structured using **Miller's Pyramid of Competence**:

- **Knows** – foundational knowledge.
- **Knows How** – application of knowledge.
- **Shows How** – demonstration of learning through practical experiences.
- **Does** – independent performance in real-world or simulated settings

All courses in the program are aligned with CAHIIM's **Performance Indicators (PIs)** and **Competence Statements**, ensuring that students gain knowledge and skills that are directly applicable to health information roles. Each course includes **formative assessments** (practice, drafts, concept checks) to support learning, and **summative assessments** (final projects, presentations, and practicum work) to demonstrate mastery.

This approach allows students to:

- Progress once mastery is demonstrated.
- Engage in meaningful, real-world learning activities.
- Track their progress against transparent outcomes.
- Prepare confidently for certification and employment.

CBE implementation in the HIT Program is ongoing, with full adoption scheduled for **Fall 2026**. During the transition, students will see increasing use of self-assessment tools, milestone tracking, authentic assessments (like professional memos and reports), and structured feedback aligned with Miller's Pyramid.

Faculty are committed to supporting students throughout this model shift, ensuring that each learner develops the knowledge, skills, and professional habits needed to succeed in modern health information environments.

Program Goals

The ACC Health Information programs—HIT (AAS) and HIM (BAS)—prepare students for a changing health information workforce. Our goals align with CAHIIM expectations, AHIMA professional standards, and our competency-based education (CBE) model.

1. Graduate competent, workforce-ready professionals
 - HIT (AAS): Prepare students for entry-level roles (e.g., coding, ROI, data quality, compliance support, informatics support).
 - HIM (BAS): Prepare students for advanced and leadership roles (e.g., information governance, analytics, compliance/privacy, informatics, operations).
 - Demonstrate competency at the appropriate Miller's Pyramid level, with emphasis on Shows How/Does.
2. Integrate a competency-based education model
 - Use transparent outcomes, rubrics, and mastery checkpoints aligned to CAHIIM Performance Indicators and Competence Statements.
 - Design learning so students know, apply, demonstrate, and perform in real or closely simulated settings.
3. Support certification and credentialing success
 - HIT (AAS): Prepare students to meet RHIT eligibility requirements and provide exam-readiness resources.

- HIM (BAS): Deliver RHIA-aligned competencies. *(The BAS HIM program is seeking CAHIIM accreditation; eligibility to apply for RHIA depends on accreditation and AHIMA criteria.)*
- 4. Promote student engagement, retention, and belonging
 - Provide an accessible online environment with proactive advising, tutoring, and timely instructor feedback.
 - Build community through advisory-informed events, webinars, mentoring, networking, and authentic projects/capstones.
- 5. Advance ethical and professional standards
 - Embed AHIMA's Code of Ethics, confidentiality, privacy/security, and professional communication across courses and practicum/capstone.
 - Encourage professional membership, continuing education, and reflective practice.
- 6. Maintain and improve program quality
 - Use data-informed program evaluation (advisory input, student/graduate/employer feedback, outcomes dashboards) to drive continuous improvement.
 - Update curriculum promptly for regulatory changes, technology advances, and workforce needs; support ongoing faculty development.

These goals are built into our curriculum, assessments, and student supports to ensure alignment with national standards and evolving healthcare demands.

AAS HIT Curriculum Structure

The associate degree curriculum emphasizes the technical component of health information services. This curriculum is designed to prepare entry-level graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to use, analyze, abstract, code, present, and retrieve data in a variety of health care settings.

The curriculum of the Health Information Technology program incorporates appropriate content, reinforced by structured experiences to apply learned principles that include:

General Education Requirements for the A.A.S. degree

Professional course content, at the appropriate level, to support entry-level competencies as identified by AHIMA to include:

- Biomedical sciences, including anatomy, physiology, language of medicine, pharmacology, and medical science
- Information Technology
- Health Data Content and Structure
- Healthcare Delivery Systems
- Organization and Supervision
- Healthcare Statistics and Data Literacy
- Clinical Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement

- Clinical Classification Systems
- Reimbursement Methodologies
- Legal and Ethical Issues

This program's curriculum is designed to emphasize the Domains, Subdomains, and Tasks (DSTs). The DSTs are identified by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) as the necessary abilities of a practitioner upon completion of formal education. A complete listing of the Domains, Subdomains and Tasks (DST) is included in this handbook. In addition to guiding HIT curriculum development, the DST statements also form the basis for formulation of the national certification examination questions.

AAS HIT Course Descriptions

BIO1006 – Basic Anatomy and Physiology (4 Credits) Focuses on basic knowledge of body structures and function, and provides a foundation for understanding deviations from normal and disease conditions. This course is designed for individuals interested in health care and is directly applicable to the Practical Nursing Program, Paramedic Program, and the Medical Office Technology program.

CIS1018 – Introduction to PC Applications (3 Credits) Introduces basic computer terminology, file management, and PC system components. Provides an overview of office application software including word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and presentation graphics. Includes the use of a web browser to access the Internet.

HPR1032 – Disease Process and Treatment (5 Credits) Covers disease processes and drug therapy used to treat commonly found pathological conditions. Normal anatomy and physiology of each body system is reviewed. Conditions that disrupt homeostasis are examined. Conditions considered are both acquired and congenital. Diagnostic methods, management, treatment modalities and prognosis are discussed. Classifications of drugs are introduced. A general understanding of the actions; absorption, metabolism, and excretion; and reasons for use of various groups of pharmacologic agents are introduced.

HPR1040 – Comprehensive Medical Terminology (3 Credits) Provides an in-depth study of the structure of medical terms with emphasis on using and combining common prefixes, roots, and suffixes. This course includes terms related to major body systems, oncology, and psychiatry as well as clinical laboratory and diagnostic procedures, and imaging, and provides accepted pronunciation of terms and relative use in the healthcare setting.

HIT1001 – Health Information Management Science (3 Credits) Introduces the student to the health record, from inception to completion. Emphasis is on content and regulations impacting the health record in the various settings. Other areas to be discussed include the electronic health record and the responsibilities of the Health Information Department. This course also examines various healthcare delivery systems and healthcare practitioners. Professional and practice-related ethical issues are discussed and evaluated.

HIT1005 – Principles of Healthcare Reimbursement (3 Credits) Provides students with the knowledge needed to perform necessary tasks involved in healthcare reimbursement systems including payment methodologies, use of clinical data, and compliance.

HIT1011 – Health Data Management & Information Systems (3 Credits) Introduces the electronic health record (EHR) components and health informatics including infrastructure, privacy, security, and legal implications. Federal involvement and its impact on information technology regarding health data will be discussed. Students will study the roles and relationships in the transformation of data into meaningful information through research, vital statistics, and epidemiology. Data quality, integrity, collection, access, and retention will also be emphasized.

HIT1012 – Legal Aspects (2 Credits) Introduces the student to the legal system and defines the role of healthcare professionals. Specific Federal and State laws are identified and discussed as they relate to the release of medical information.

HIT1022 – Workflow Fundamentals of Healthcare (3 Credits) Introduces the fundamentals of healthcare workflow, process analysis, and redesign in various healthcare settings. Health information technology culture changes and project management, including HIT system selection, design, implementation, and support, will also be covered. Electronic health record/practice management systems will be evaluated for quality and process improvement, clinical decision support, health information exchange, public health, and population health management.

HIT1088 – Health Information Practicum I (2 Credits) Provides a directed clinical experience that focuses on the practice of skills related to the application of legal principles, record analysis and abstraction, and record retention and retrieval.

HIT2020 – ICD Coding I (3 Credits) Introduces the ICD coding classification system and provides a basic understanding of ICD structure, conventions, and principles utilized in code assignment. The student will be introduced to the official coding guidelines and apply knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and pharmacology in the assignment of diagnostic and procedural codes.

HIT2021 – ICD Coding II (2 Credits) Focuses on the intermediate application of ICD structure, conventions, and principles utilized to code case scenarios and complex diagnostic and procedural statements. The students will utilize advanced applications of coding and reporting standards as they apply to coding.

HIT2022 – Quality Management (3 Credits) Introduces the student to the basic concepts of quality management in the healthcare environment. Requirements by regulatory agencies regarding quality documentation, utilization, and risk management are discussed. Data collection, verification, analysis, descriptive statistics, and presentation techniques will be

studied. Emphasizes the ongoing use of objective data and feedback to improve processes, systems, and patient outcomes.

HIT2025 – Health Information Management (3 Credits) Concentrates on the principles of management as they relate to the administration of the health information management department as part of a healthcare organization.

HIT2031 – ICD Coding III (5 Credits) Provides an advanced study of ICD coding conventions and principles. DRG and case mix logic and regulations regarding their use with optimization and compliance issues will be discussed. CPT/HCPCS in both the hospital-based outpatient and physician office settings will be studied.

HIT2041 – CPT Coding (3 Credits) Provides the student with skill sets to apply the current procedural terminology (CPT) and HCPCS code set principles and guidelines for application in reporting/communicating information and data about clinical services provided to patients by healthcare providers. Includes understanding CPT nomenclature, its use, and application of service representation.

HIT2089 – Health Information Capstone (2 Credits) Offers students a comprehensive review of all HIT courses in preparation for the national exam, utilizing study guides and mock exams. Includes a 40-hour professional practicum experience (PPE) to apply classroom knowledge in a clinical setting, demonstrate professionalism, complete assigned projects, and reinforce understanding of health information management concepts.

BAS HIM Curriculum Structure

The bachelor's curriculum advances students into leadership and higher-order competencies, emphasizing independent performance at the Shows How/Does levels of Miller's Pyramid. Students complete upper-division general education and professional courses that deepen expertise in:

- Data structures, data integrity, and information systems
- Information governance (IG) and strategy
- Privacy, security, and compliance
- Health law and regulatory frameworks
- Revenue cycle and financial stewardship
- Health data analytics and visualization
- Data use and management for decision-making
- Organizational management, leadership, and HR
- DEI leadership and change management
- Capstone/experiential learning demonstrating integrated competence

BAS HIM Course Descriptions

HIM3000 – Data Structure and Design in HIM (3 credits) Compares diverse stakeholder perspectives of the delivery of healthcare services and analyzes corporate strategies for the management of information.

HIM3005 – Health Record Compliance and Data Integrity (3 credits) Evaluates policies and strategies to achieve data integrity and examines recommended health record content across the healthcare system.

HIM3010 – Health Information Governance (3 credits) Utilizes classification systems, clinical vocabularies, and medical nomenclatures and evaluates data dictionaries and datasets for compliance with information governance standards.

HIM3015 – Health Privacy and Security (3 credits) Examines health information privacy and security strategies for recommended implementation in the healthcare organization and analyzes corporate compliance requirements throughout the health information life cycle.

HIM3020 – Health Information Systems (3 credits) Analyzes technologies for health information management and introduces health informatics concepts for the management of health information.

HIM3025 – Data Analytics and Visualization in Healthcare (3 credits) This course examines healthcare findings using data visualizations and the comparison to research methodologies pertaining to healthcare by interpreting statistics for health services.

HIM3030 – Data Use and Management in Healthcare (3 credits) Examines data management techniques and identifies standards for the exchange of health information. This course includes assessment of systems and recommendation of appropriate systems to meet organizational needs.

HIM4000 – Revenue Cycle Management (3 credits) Evaluates the assignment of diagnostic and procedural codes and groupings in accordance with official guidelines. This course examines techniques for management of components of the revenue cycle; and evaluates compliance with regulatory requirements and reimbursement methodologies.

HIM4005 – Health Law and Compliance (3 credits) Examines regulatory compliance with legal processes impacting health information; evaluates corporate compliance with external regulatory forces; analyzes components of risk management for compliance with local, state, and federal policies.

HIM4010 – Management and Leadership in Healthcare (3 credits) Examines fundamental leadership skills and assesses the impact of organizational change.

HIM4015 – Human Resources and Financial Management in Healthcare (3 credits) Analyzes human resource strategies for organizational best practices; identifies data-driven performance improvement techniques for decision-making; analysis of financial management processes for staffing.

HIM4020 – Organizational Leadership for DEI in Healthcare (3 credits) Examines leadership behaviors that embrace cultural diversity, assesses ethical standards of practice, and facilitates consumer engagement activities.

HIM4089 – HIM Capstone Course (3 credits) Synthesizes baccalaureate-level competencies in leadership, information governance, data analytics, privacy/compliance, revenue cycle, and health information systems. Students plan and complete an applied capstone project for a healthcare organization or a closely simulated environment, producing professional deliverables (e.g., project charter, analysis, policy/IG artifacts, dashboard/report, and executive presentation) that demonstrate independent performance at the “Does” level. Includes an experiential component supervised by an external professional and a portfolio review of program outcomes. RHIA-related concepts may be reinforced as appropriate; eligibility to apply for RHIA depends on CAHIIM accreditation status and AHIMA criteria.

Practicum Experiences

Students in the Health Information Programs will participate in two structured practicum experiences for the AAS HIT: HIT 1088 and HIT 2089 and one structured practicum experience for the BAS HIM: HIM4089. These courses are designed to provide meaningful, real-world engagement in the field of Health Information Management (HIM), supporting competency development and professional growth.

HIT1088 – Health Information Practicum I

This course offers a *virtual practicum* experience that simulates real-world HIM functions using structured online exercises. Students will apply their learning to scenarios that reflect practical job responsibilities and foundational competencies.

HIT2089 – Health Information Capstone Practicum II

This course includes a comprehensive review of the HIT curriculum and a structured *40-hour practicum* experience. This professional practice experience (PPE) is designed to provide students with hands-on exposure to HIM functions in a clinical or administrative setting. Whenever possible, this practicum is completed **in person**. However, the HIT program recognizes the growth of remote work and now offers additional options including:

- Capstone projects
- Virtual webinars
- Professional interviews with HIM experts
- Alternative remote practicum assignments

While in-person field experience remains the preferred method for capstone completion, these alternative opportunities ensure students can fulfill requirements even when traditional site placement is unavailable.

HIM4089 – Health Information Management Capstone (BAS)

Culminating experience that synthesizes baccalaureate-level competencies (leadership, information governance, analytics, privacy/compliance, revenue cycle, information systems). Students complete an applied capstone project for a healthcare organization or closely simulated environment—producing professional deliverables (e.g., project charter, analysis, IG/compliance artifacts, dashboard/report, and an executive presentation)—and demonstrate independent performance at the “Does” level.

An experiential component supervised by an external professional is required and may be completed on-site, hybrid, or remote depending on project scope and site availability.

Important: Due to the professional nature of these experiences, **Disability Access Services (DAS) accommodations do not apply to HIT practicum courses (HIT1088 and HIT2089).**

Students must meet all site requirements independently and without modification by the college.

Service Work Policy in Practicums

- Students may not be substituted for paid staff or assume the duties of employees.
- After demonstrating proficiency, students may pursue paid employment **outside** of regular course hours, as long as it does not interfere with academic responsibilities.

Required Documentation for HIT2089 and HIM4089 Practicum Placement

To comply with clinical site contracts, the following items must be submitted **before** placement:

1. Background check result (valid within 2 years)
2. Hepatitis B vaccination (3-dose series), titer, or signed waiver
3. MMR (2 doses or titer)
4. Varicella (vaccine, titer, or provider documentation)
5. Flu shot (current season)
6. Tuberculosis (TB) test result (within 1 year)
7. Chest x-ray if TB test is positive
8. Covid vaccine (as required by site)
9. Drug screen (as required by site)
 - *Note: Students using medical marijuana may be disqualified even with a prescription.*

Student Responsibilities During Practicum

1. Adjust personal schedules to accommodate typical practicum hours (Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.). Students working full-time may need to take vacation or unpaid time off.
2. Childcare must be arranged; **children may not accompany students to practicum sites.**

3. Follow all facility policies and procedures.
4. Maintain strict confidentiality with all patient information.
5. Demonstrate respect and professionalism with all staff.
6. Remain drug- and alcohol-free. See ACC's Drug/Alcohol Policy in the ACC Student Handbook (<https://www.arapahoe.edu/acc-student-handbook.pdf>).
7. Exhibit professional behavior: arrive on time, call if absent, dress appropriately, be respectful, and uphold ethical standards.

Attendance Policy

Attendance and punctuality are essential and graded. Students are responsible for transportation and must:

1. Arrive on time. Tardiness will impact the grade.
2. In case of emergency or absence, notify the practicum site **and** HIT Program Director.
3. Record the name of the person receiving the message and log it appropriately.
4. Get approval in advance for planned absences.
5. Provide a doctor's note for absences exceeding two days.
6. Unexcused tardiness or absences >2 hours/week result in **5% grade deduction per incident**.
7. Failure to complete required practicum hours = **failing grade**. Sites are not obligated to offer make-up time.

Students should treat practicum experiences as professional opportunities to demonstrate their readiness for the HIM workforce. Professionalism, accountability, and preparation are key to success.

Program Policies

Catalog and Student Handbook

Students will be held accountable to the HIT Student Handbook, [ACC Student Handbook](#) and College Catalog, including all outlined college policies, procedures, and Colorado Community College System policies.

Admission Requirements & Application Process

ACC offers two related—but distinct—entry pathways. Review the requirements and steps for your program below.

AAS HIT

Admission Requirements

To be considered for admission into the HIT Program, students must:

1. Hold a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

2. Meet minimum placement requirements:
 - **English:** CCPT Reading 96+ and Essay 5+; or Reading 80 and Essay 6
 - **Mathematics:** Completion of MAT050 with a “C” or better, or Accuplacer Elementary Algebra 36+
 - Equivalent ACT/SAT scores or prior college-level coursework may waive placement tests (submit documentation with your ACC application).
3. Complete a **criminal background check** and **drug screen** through an ACC-approved vendor.

Application Process

1. Apply to **Arapahoe Community College** and select **Health Information Technology (AAS)**.
2. Complete required placement testing (unless waived) and submit documentation.
3. Upload required documents (background check and drug screen results; high school diploma/GED or equivalent) to the application portal.
4. When your file is complete, schedule your **HIT Program Entrance Interview** with the Program Director.
5. Send all **official college transcripts** to the ACC Records Office.

BAS HIM

Admission Requirements

Applicants to the BAS in Health Information Management must:

1. Be admitted to **Arapahoe Community College**.
2. Possess a **relevant associate degree (64+ credits)** from a **CAHIIM-accredited program** (or a closely related degree).
3. Complete a **criminal background check** and **drug screen** through an ACC-approved vendor.
4. Complete a **HIM Program Entrance Interview** with the Program Director/Chair or designee.

Note: A **transfer/GAP analysis** will be conducted to verify lower-division HIM competencies. If bridge coursework is needed, it will be mapped into an individualized program plan.

Application Process

1. Apply to **Arapahoe Community College** and select **Health Information Management (BAS)**.
2. Request **official transcripts** from all colleges attended (including a final transcript showing associate degree conferral).
3. Complete the **background check** and **drug screen** (instructions provided after application).
4. Schedule and complete the **HIM Program Entrance Interview** (after required materials are received).

5. Participate in **advising and program planning** based on the transfer/GAP analysis; any bridge requirements will be identified before registration.

New Student Orientation

- Required for students who are **new to college-level coursework**.
- Online orientation is available: <http://www.onlineorientation.net/arapahoe>
- Questions: orientation@arapahoe.edu | 303-797-5668

Timing tip: Begin early. Transcript evaluation, background/drug screen processing, and advising can take several weeks. Students must complete all required steps **before** enrolling in any **HIT** or **HIM** prefix courses.

Progression

These standards apply to all students in the Health Information programs. Read them carefully before registering each term.

1) Minimum Grades & Prerequisites

- You must earn a C or higher in every HIT/HIM-prefix course and in required support courses:
 - HPR 1040 Comprehensive Medical Terminology
 - BIO 1006 Basic Anatomy & Physiology
 - HPR 1032 Disease Process and Treatment
- If you do not earn a C or higher in a prerequisite, you may not enroll in the dependent course until the prerequisite is successfully completed.

2) Course Attempt Limits

- A course may be attempted no more than two (2) times.
- An unsuccessful attempt includes:
 - a grade below C, or
 - a Withdrawal (“W”) or administrative withdrawal.
- After two unsuccessful attempts in the same course, you will be dismissed from the program.

3) Withdrawals

- Talk with your instructor (for non-HIT/HIM courses) and the Program Director before withdrawing.
- The last date to withdraw with a “W” is listed in your syllabus and myACC schedule.
- Reminder: a “W” counts as an attempt toward the two-attempt maximum.

4) Readmission

- Not guaranteed. Considered case-by-case based on space, progression history, and readiness.
- Students dismissed for progression (two unsuccessful attempts in a course) may request readmission once within one calendar year of their last HIT/HIM course and must complete a faculty-approved success plan.
- Any further unsuccessful attempt after readmission = permanent dismissal.

5) Leave of Absence (LOA)

- You may request an LOA for documented reasons (e.g., extended illness, family emergency).
- LOAs require Program Director approval and are subject to cohort capacity and recency rules.
- Upon return, you must meet the current curriculum and site/compliance requirements.

6) Appeals

- You may submit an Extenuating Circumstances appeal under College policy.
- Appeal approval does not automatically waive these progression rules unless explicitly stated in writing.

Keep in mind: Seat availability is limited. These standards ensure fairness, workforce readiness, and timely progression for all students.

Grading

Students must earn a **C (75%) or higher** to pass HIT courses.

Grading Scale:

- A = 92–100%
- B = 83–91%
- C = 75–82%
- D = 68–74%
- F = below 67%

Course syllabi define specific grading and assessment policies.

Student Responsibility in the HIT and HIM Programs

Students must communicate directly with their instructors regarding:

- Grading concerns
- Course materials
- Special needs
- Accommodations from Disability Access Services (DAS)

Students are responsible for initiating all such conversations in a **timely manner**.

Communication and Conflict Resolution

Mutual respect is expected. Students should:

1. Discuss concerns directly with their instructor first.
2. If unresolved, escalate to the HIT Program Director.

If still unresolved, students may follow the [Student Grievance Procedure](#).

Note: Grade disputes are **not grievable** unless discrimination or harassment is alleged, in which case students should follow the **Civil Rights Grievance Process**.

Student Evaluations

Students will evaluate each course and instructor at the end of the term. Feedback is **anonymous** and used for course and faculty improvement.

Reasonable Accommodations

Students seeking accommodations must contact Disability Access Services (DAS) at 303.797.5937 **before** the program begins, if possible.

Key Points:

- Students must meet program objectives with or without accommodations.
- Temporary conditions (e.g., pregnancy, injury) should also be discussed with DAS.
- Accommodations in the classroom does not automatically extend to clinical/practicum settings.
- Practicum-related accommodations are not available due to the nature of the environment and the need for patient and student safety.
- Faculty implement accommodations only after receiving an official DAS letter.

Pregnancy

Pregnant students or those with related conditions may qualify for accommodations. ACC:

- Grants accommodations equivalent to other temporary conditions
- May offer flexibility such as online learning, extended deadlines, or excused absences.
- Will protect student privacy and return students to the same academic standing post-leave, if possible

Important: Accommodation requests should go through **DAS**, not faculty or clinical supervisors.

Essential Skills and Functional Abilities

All HIT and HIM students must be able to perform the following skills, with or without reasonable accommodation:

Functional Area	Examples
Observation	Read charts, codes, and screens; distinguish colors and voices
Motor Abilities	Use keyboard, lift up to 10 lbs., squat, sit, or stand for extended periods

Behavioral/Emotional	Manage stress, respond to feedback, act ethically, work with diverse populations
Safety	Recognize risks, prioritize tasks, ask for help when needed
Communication	Speak and write clearly; use professional tone; interact across settings
Cognition	Analyze and interpret data; use basic math and software tools
Work Habits	Adhere to policies; complete assignments on time; maintain punctuality

For assistance, contact the HIT/HIM Academic Program Coordinator or [Disability Access Services](#).

Guidelines for Student Conduct

Students enrolled in specialized programs, such as the Health Information Technology (HIT) and Health Information Management (HIM) Programs are required to follow the standards outlined in:

- The HIT/HIM Student Handbook
- The [Arapahoe Community College \(ACC\) Student Handbook](#)
- The ACC College Catalog
- Applicable local, state, and federal laws

All students are subject to both college and civil/criminal jurisdiction.

Standards of Professional Behavior

Students in the HIT and HIM Programs are expected to exhibit professionalism, integrity, and respect for others. These expectations apply in academic, professional practice, and clinical settings. The following competencies define professional conduct:

- **Confidentiality** – Respecting the privacy of clients and protecting privileged information.
- **Commitment to Learning** – Demonstrating self-assessment, self-direction, and lifelong learning.
- **Interpersonal Skills** – Building effective relationships with diverse individuals and teams.
- **Communication Skills** – Conveying information clearly in verbal, written, and non-verbal formats.
- **Time & Resource Management** – Using time and resources efficiently and effectively.
- **Constructive Feedback** – Seeking and applying feedback for continuous improvement.
- **Problem Solving** – Analyzing situations and developing effective solutions.
- **Professionalism** – Demonstrating accountability, reliability, and ethical conduct.
- **Responsibility** – Meeting commitments and accepting accountability for outcomes.
- **Critical Thinking** – Engaging in logical reasoning and evidence-based decision-making.
- **Stress Management** – Employing healthy coping strategies under pressure.

- **Punctuality** – Being timely and prepared for all academic and practicum activities.
- **Professional Appearance** – Adhering to dress codes in clinical and professional settings.
- **Civility** – Practicing empathy, respect, and professionalism in all interactions.

Non-Discrimination and Title IX

Arapahoe Community College (ACC) prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment as defined by federal and state law and State Board Policy. ACC does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, age, creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran or military status, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy status, genetic information, or any other protected class.

ACC will also take steps to ensure that the lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in vocational education programs.

Contact for Inquiries:

Angela Johnson, Human Resources Director
Affirmative Action Officer / Equal Opportunity / Title IX Coordinator
303.797.5715 | 5900 S. Santa Fe Drive, Littleton, CO 80120

Title IX: Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, no person shall be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any education program receiving federal financial assistance on the basis of sex. Title IX also protects against discrimination due to pregnancy or related conditions and ensures equal treatment regardless of marital or parental status.

For more details, refer to the [ACC Student Handbook](#).

Reporting Unprofessional Conduct

If students observe violations of academic or professional integrity—or behaviors that endanger others—they are required to report these incidents to the HIT/HIM Program Director, Academic Program Coordinator, or faculty.

Disciplinary Procedures

HIT and HIM students who violate the guidelines in this Handbook, or the ACC Student Code of Conduct are subject to ACC's official disciplinary procedures. Relevant policies include:

- [Student Rights and Responsibilities: Student Code of Conduct, AP 4-30a](#)
- Student Disciplinary Procedure, SP 4-30
- Student Grievance Procedure, SP 4-31
- Civil Rights Grievance & Investigation Process for Students, SP 4-31a
- Sexual Misconduct Procedure, SP 4-120a

Violations may result in discipline up to and including **dismissal from the HIT and HIM programs** or **expulsion from the college**.

Academic and Student Misconduct

Students are expected to uphold high standards of academic integrity. Prohibited behaviors include (but are not limited to):

- Plagiarism
- Cheating
- Possessing or using exams without authorization
- Falsifying academic or official records

Refer to the [ACC Student Handbook](#) for full details.

The following actions may result in immediate disciplinary action:

1. Creating a safety threat to patients or practicum sites
2. Damaging the college's relationship with partner facilities
3. Demonstrating disrespectful or unprofessional behavior
4. Violating patient confidentiality
5. Disregarding facility policies and procedures
6. Ignoring instruction or feedback
7. Arguing with peers, faculty, or healthcare personnel
8. Using offensive or inappropriate language
9. Refusing to complete assigned duties
10. Failing to meet attendance expectations
11. Misrepresenting one's competency or qualifications
12. Repeating misconduct after warning or feedback
13. Failing to meet professional behavior standards
14. Appearing under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Student Due Process

All students are entitled to due process when accused of academic or student misconduct. When an incident is reported:

- The faculty member will report the behavior to the **Dean of Students Office**.
- The student will receive written notice and an opportunity to respond.
- A fair investigation will be conducted following ACC's [disciplinary policies](#).

If a clinical failure is upheld, the student will receive an academic consequence of an **"F" grade** for the practicum course.

“Reasonable Suspicion Based” Drug Testing

The use of alcohol or drugs—including medical marijuana—is prohibited while participating in any practicum experience. Drug testing may be initiated if a student appears impaired or if there is reasonable suspicion of use. Behaviors may include:

- Odor of alcohol
- Slurred speech
- Unsteady gait
- Confusion or altered mental status

Process:

- The student is removed from the practicum setting.
- Drug/alcohol screening is arranged immediately.
- The student must cover all costs of testing.

If test results are negative: A meeting with the Program Director will determine the next steps and possible return to the practicum site.

If test results are positive: The student will be **suspended** from the HIT program and **withdrawn from all courses**.

Refusal to test will be treated as a **positive test** and subject to disciplinary action. The student may not return to the program until an investigation is completed, and clearance is granted by the Program Director.

Health Information Technology (AAS) & Health Information Management (BAS) Student Handbook Attestation

I have reviewed and acknowledge receipt of the HIT/HIM Student Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to follow the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____