



Wharton County Junior College

911 Boling Highway • Wharton, Texas 77488 • (979) 532-4560

Health Information Technology Program

AAS Degree

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in Wharton County Junior College's Health Information Technology (HIT) Program. Information on the program and the requirements necessary to apply for admission to the program are in this packet.

This is a two-year (4 semesters) associate degree program that begins in the fall of each year. The HIT coursework is all online, except for the practicum courses. Since most of the coursework is online, I highly recommend that you go to the WCJC website, Distant Education Page and take the [Online Learning Assessment survey](#).

In order to apply and be considered for acceptance into the program the following paperwork must be submitted by the **last Thursday in June**. Applications will continue to be accepted until the class is full. Emails will go out the beginning of July in regards to acceptance into the program.

Please read the following information carefully. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to make sure all required paperwork and information are received by the Health Information Technology Department. Mandatory Orientation is held in August.

Please send all program information, including unofficial copies of transcripts to:

Wharton County Junior College
Health Information Technology Program
911 Boling Highway
Wharton, TX 77488

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact my office at (979) 532-6491 or 1-800-561-9252, ext. 6491.

Sincerely,

Debbie Lutringer
Debbie Lutringer, RHIA, CTR
Program Director
(979) 532-6363



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Information Pertaining to Admission

All students are required to speak with the program director prior to enrolling in the program.

To apply to the program, students must be a current fully accepted student at WCJC. Students must be TSI satisfied.

Consideration for acceptance into the Health Information Technology Program is based upon the submission of the following items directly to the Health Information Technology (HIT) Program:

1. Complete the Health Information Technology AAS Degree Program application.
2. A transcript from each college you have attended sent to:
 - a. Registrar's Office (Official Copy)
 - b. Health Information Technology Program (Unofficial Copy)
3. Signed Technical Standards Form. (Attached)
4. Applicants must show proof of completion of the Hepatitis B vaccine series or serologic confirmation of immunity to Hepatitis B virus prior to enrolling in the practicum courses. (2nd year) Applicants must also enroll in Castle Branch Immunization Tracking. The cost of Castle Branch will be at the applicant's expense. The anticipated cost is \$30.00. More information will be given prior to the practicum course.
5. Applicants must have a completed physical examination by their personal physician prior to enrolling in the practicum courses. The practicum courses are in the second year of the program. The cost of the physical examination will be at the applicant's expense. The physical exam forms will be emailed to students prior to the practicum course.
6. Criminal Background Checks - Most practicum facilities require that criminal background checks be completed prior to allowing students to participate in training at their facilities. Applicants conditionally accepted into the Health Information Technology Program will be required to complete a satisfactory criminal background check from a college approved agency prior to enrolling in the practicum courses. The practicum courses are in the second year of the program. The cost of the criminal background check will be at the applicant's expense. The anticipated cost for the criminal background check is approximately \$ 53.00.

7. Drug Screening - Applicants conditionally accepted into the Health Information Technology program will also be required to complete a drug screen with negative results prior to enrolling in the practicum courses. The practicum courses are in the second year of the program. Only drug screens conducted through a college approved agency will be accepted. The cost of the drug screen will be at the applicant's expense. The anticipated cost for the drug screen is \$50.00.
8. Travel - Students will be required to travel to practicum sites during the program. The program reserves the right to send the student to any of the sites the director deems appropriate. The cost of travel will be at the student's expense.
9. Computer Requirements for Brightspace

Click the blue, underlined links on this page to go to the URL.

A. Make sure your computer is ready to go.

- 1) **Computer** – A computer with a reliable internet connection is a must. Please take the time to review our Computer Requirements listed on the [Distance Education Student Resources page](#).
- 2) **Internet access** - A satellite, DSL, or cable connection or higher is best. Dial-up connections are not recommended and will be problematic. If relying on an employer's Internet connection, be aware that firewall restrictions and policies may exist that prevent access to all or part of the course, and use of the college's online tools.
- 3) **Pop-up blockers** -While using Brightspace, if you are unable to view discussion postings, quiz windows, and download links, you may need to disable pop-up blocking for the WCJC Brightspace website.
- 4) **Third Party Plug-ins** - Some content within courses may require the installation of third party plug-ins such as Adobe Flash 11 or 18, Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, and many others. In each case there should be a notification and link informing you that you need to install a new plug-in. Be careful that you only install trusted plug-ins that are necessary for the course content. Malicious plug-ins can be dangerous to your computer.
- 5) **Administrative Rights** - If you are not using a computer provided by Wharton County Junior College, you must have the administrative rights necessary to download and install required programs and plug-ins on the computer you use to access your online courses.

B. AHIMA e-HIM Virtual Lab requirements

1) System Requirements

The AHIMA VLab is completely internet-based, requiring minimal set-up on the user's PC, or in your school PC lab.

Use the following AHIMA VLab system requirements for individual user PCs (subject to change). Applications are hosted and maintained by the AHIMA VLab and their application partners.

- Depending on the application, Windows 7, 8, 10 & 11 are supported, as well as Mac OS, but each AHIMA VLab application has different compatibility requirements.
- Internet access required is: Broadband High-Speed, Cable, or DSL.
- Depending on the application, Internet Explorer 9 and above, Firefox and Google Chrome are supported.
- Again, each program has different requirements. Some are browser – and OS-agnostic while others may only work with a specific browser or OS; this information is provided to all users.
- AHIMA websites requiring login, including the AHIMA Learning Center where the AHIMA VLab course is hosted, no longer support Internet Explorer. In some cases you may need to access the AHIMA VLab course through one browser, and an application that requires Internet Explorer in the browser.
- Additional requirements for individual applications and instructions for changing computer settings or installing software are provided in the lessons, the FAQs and by request.

2) Hardware

- 1Ghz Intel or AMD processor (minimum)
- 2 GB of RAM (minimum)
- In most cases the AHIMA VLab course and applications are best viewed at a screen resolution of at least 1024 x 768. Otherwise you may experience clipping or pixelated content.

11. Preference for admission will be given to applicants who have college credit in the following courses:

BIOL2401 (Anatomy & Physiology I)
BIOL2402 (Anatomy & Physiology II)
COSC1301 (Introduction to computing)

Due to a limited number of spaces available, meeting all of the criteria does not guarantee anyone admission to the program.



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STUDENT APPLICATION FOR THE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AAS DEGREE PROGRAM

Date_____

Name: Last First Middle Maiden or Previous Name

Permanent Address: Street Number City, State Zip

Mailing Address: Street Number/PO # City, State Zip

Date of Birth_____ Social Security Number_____

Telephone – Home_____ Work_____

Telephone – Cell_____ Email_____

Emergency Contact_____

Completed WCJC application on file in the Registrar's Office? Yes No

Have you previously applied to/attended this program? Yes No

Are you planning on attending on a part-time or a full-time basis?

(Full time = graduate in two years; Part time graduate in 2+ years)

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony? Yes No

(If you check yes, please contact Program Director for further instructions regarding the application process).

Do you have a Service Animal? (Not Emotional Support Animal) Yes No

EDUCATION: List name and location of all schools attended (most recent first), including high school.

Name of School	Location	Hours Earned	Dates Attended

Signature_____

Date_____

Wharton County Junior College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, marital status, national origin, religion, sex, or disability.



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Technical Standards for Students in the Department of Health Information Technology

The goal of the Wharton County Junior College's Department of Health Information Technology (HIT) is to prepare students for the practice of the profession of health information management. Modern allied health education requires that the accumulation of scientific knowledge be accompanied by the simultaneous acquisition of essential skills, functions and professional attitudes and behavior. The HIT faculty of Wharton County Junior College has a responsibility to graduate the best possible practitioners; therefore, admission to the HIT educational program in the College is offered only to those who present the highest qualifications for education and training in the art and science of the profession.

Applicants to the HIT program of the College must possess the following general qualities: critical thinking, sound judgment, emotional stability and maturity, empathy, physical and mental stamina, and the ability to learn and function in a wide variety of didactic and clinical settings. Graduates of the HIT program must have the minimal skills, essential functions and knowledge to function in a broad variety of clinical settings.

The faculty of WCJC's HIT program has a responsibility for the welfare of the patients treated or otherwise affected by students enrolled in the College as well as for the educational welfare of its students relative to the educational programs of the College. In order to fulfill this responsibility the Department Head for the HIT program of the College maintains that certain minimal technical standards must be present in applicants to the HIT educational program of the College. Candidates for the associate of applied science degree must have the following essentials: motor skills; sensory/observational skills; communication skills; intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities; and behavioral/social skills and professionalism.

The Department Head will consider for admission applicants who demonstrate the ability to perform, or to learn to perform, the essential skills listed in this document. The College must ensure that patients are not placed in jeopardy by students with impaired intellectual, physical, or emotional functions. Students will be judged not only on their scholastic accomplishments, but also on their physical and emotional capacities to meet the full requirements of the College's curricula and to graduate as skilled and effective practitioners.

The essential abilities listed in this document can be accomplished through direct student response, the use of prosthetic or orthotic devices, or through personal assistance, e.g.,

readers, signers, note-takers. The responsibility for the purchase of prosthetic or orthotic devices serving a student in meeting abilities noted remains with the student and/or agency supporting the student. The College will assist with this accomplishment, as required by law and institutional policy.

Upon admission, a student who discloses a properly certified disability will receive reasonable accommodation but must be able to perform the essential functions of the curriculum and meet the standards described herein for the program in which the student is enrolled. Possible accommodations include opportunities for individual and group counseling, peer counseling, linkages with community services, faculty advisory committees whose members are aware of disabled students and their needs, career counseling, assistance with job searches and interview skills, and extended test taking time, if and when appropriate. Students seeking accommodations should initiate their request in the Office of Counseling & Disability Services at WCJC.

In addition to the general standards described above, the HIT program requires additional specific standards as follows:

Empathy, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities necessary to function in the health information management field in working with other health professionals and supervising employees. Candidates must possess the emotional well-being required for the full use of their intellectual abilities: the exercise of sound judgment; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with their peers, supervisors, subordinates as well as the medical staff and other users of health information management department services. Candidates must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to perform under stress.

Students in the health information technology program must have the following minimum abilities:

- Ability to acquire and apply information from classroom instruction, laboratory experience, independent learning and team projects.
- Ability to communicate effectively in English in oral and written form with colleagues, clerical employees in health information management departments and other health professionals as part of the health care team.
- Ability to communicate effectively in English in oral and written form with patients, attorneys, workers' compensation representatives, insurance companies and other third party payers and other individuals and agencies who need information from patient records or data bases maintained in health information departments.

- Ability to use computers and complete computer-based assignments.
- Ability to function (consult, negotiate, share) as part of a team.
- Ability to delegate.
- Ability to read materials used in HIM settings such as coding manuals, policies and procedures, patient medical records.
- Ability to calculate mathematical information such as hospital statistics, budgets, and productivity information.
- Manual dexterity necessary to file and prep paper-based medical records.
- Visual ability and manual dexterity necessary to prepare office layouts and to design forms and computer screens.
- Ability to operate equipment, word processors, transcription equipment, electronic movable files, copiers, etc.
- Ability to synthesize information regarding healthcare outcomes for formal, verbal and/or written presentation to healthcare professionals.

By signing below, I verify that I have read the list of Required Technical Standards and attest that I am able to carry out these tasks.

Signature

Date

Wharton County Junior College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, marital status, national origin, religion, sex or disability.