

**SAN DIEGO
MESA COLLEGE**



**HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
HANDBOOK**

CREATED: 2020



Preface

The purpose of the San Diego Mesa College (SDMC) Health Information Technology (HEIT) Program Handbook is to provide pertinent information pertaining specifically to the HEIT program. *This is a supplement to the San Diego Mesa College Catalog and the Allied Health Policy Manual* which can be found on the Mesa website: [Allied Health Handbook](#)

Please read this handbook carefully. Direct any questions related to the content of this handbook to the Program Director (PD).

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Mission Statements

College: San Diego Mesa College empowers our diverse student body to reach their educational goals and shape the future. As a comprehensive community college committed to access, success, and equity, we promote student learning and achievement leading to degrees and certificates in support of transfer education and workforce training, and lifelong learning opportunities. Faculty and staff collaborate with our students to foster scholarship, leadership, and responsibility to effect positive change within our community.

School: The School of Health Sciences/Public Service provides high quality, student-centered instruction with a focus on currency and relevance in all disciplines and programs.

Program: The mission of the Health Information Technology Program at San Diego Mesa College is to prepare students for employment as successful Health Information Technicians.

The HEIT program is accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education](#) (CAHIIM), therefore, graduates are qualified to sit for the national board examination to obtain the Registered Health Information Technicians (RHIT) certification. The curriculum is designed to meet the increasing need for professionally trained Health Information Technicians in acute-care hospitals, outpatient clinics, long term care facilities and governmental and private agencies.

The two-year program provides emphasis in the areas of storage and retrieval of records, quantitative analysis of medical records, coding and indexing the medical records, legal aspects of medical records, supervision of medical records, department personnel, calculation of healthcare statistics, performance of healthcare quality improvement studies, implementation of the electronic health record and an introduction to health care delivery systems.

Program Goals

Apply all required health care documentation policies and procedures that ensure the highest quality of healthcare delivery.

Utilize the evolving information technology in the completion of health information management processes.

Ensure compliance with all payment systems, such as Medicare, Medicaid, managed care, and other sources of reimbursement.

Produce data required for healthcare quality improvement, utilization management, risk management and other related activities.

Protect the privacy, confidentiality, and security of health information as well as promote legal and ethical standards of practice for health information professionals.

Program Standards of Ethical Practice

1. The educational experiences directed toward the accomplishment of stated course objectives shall be stressed at all times.
2. Per the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Guide published by AHIMA in 2017
 - a. Students are expected to adhere to AHIMA's Code of Ethics and AHIMA's Standards of Ethical Coding
 - b. Students are expected to abide by the school's [Student Code of Conduct](#)

- c. Students are expected to abide by applicable facility policies and procedures
- d. Students are expected to abide by HIPAA and other regulations as appropriate
3. At no time shall students be utilized in lieu of paid employees.
4. All student and public information shall accurately reflect the Health Information Technology curriculum and admission requirements, fees, course objectives and employment opportunities.
5. Selection of students for this program with limited enrollment is non-discriminatory with respect to race, socio-economic background, age, religion, sex, or national origin.
6. Classroom, laboratory and clinic regulations and procedures shall ensure the health and safety of students, faculty, industry partners and patients with the consideration of the possible need for reasonable accommodation without the loss of program integrity.
7. Academic credit for all courses is assigned according to the policies of the San Diego Community College District as published in the catalog and outlined in the San Diego College District policies.

Application and Entrance Requirements

Admission of students to all Allied Health programs follows non-discriminatory policies outlined by the San Diego Community College District. Prospective students need to consult the specific program information available for a given admission year, as well as the college catalog. Any prerequisite courses or other requirement discrepancies may reflect recent mandatory changes or curriculum changes, so the student is strongly advised to consult the Program Director in such cases.

Students submit a completed application packet with appropriate documentation to the Special Admissions Clerk in the Admissions Office by the specified dates.

Program applicants are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Students with complete applications who have submitted transcripts (verifying completion of MEDA 055 (or BIOL 160), MEDA 110 and MEDA 115 or their equivalent, will be placed on a “qualified applicants” list. Complete applications will be stamped according to the date and time of receipt. It is the responsibility of the applicant to assure that all supportive documentation is in their file – incomplete applications will NOT be considered. The program admits up to 64 students in the fall semester each year. Completion of all designated prerequisites does not guarantee admission.

All applicants are responsible for maintaining a current e-mail address with Special Admissions to receive requests for confirmation of continued interest in admission into the program sent during the year. The applicant must return each such notice by the stipulated date to maintain the admission status.

A candidate’s name will be withdrawn from the wait list if the applicant cannot be reached for notification of admission. Any candidate wishing to withdraw or cancel their application or postpone admission must provide immediate written communication to the college’s Special Admissions Clerk.

Readmission

Guidelines for readmission into the program can be found in the Allied Health Policy Manual

Readmission Criteria: If a student fails to pass one or more of the classes within the program during the second through final semesters, they will need to submit a general petition for readmission into the program. Students who need to withdraw on their own initiative, may be considered for readmission into the program under very limited conditions.

- Students who are eligible for readmission consideration MUST initiate the process within the appropriate

deadlines. Contact the program director or department chair for details and timelines.

- The general petition must be submitted to the Allied Health Department Chair for approval.
- A student may only petition for readmission to the program one time.
- Readmission is never guaranteed.
- Readmission, even if approved, is subject to clinical space availability, and thus might not be possible.
- Clinical affiliates are not required to readmit students.
- If a student fails one or more classes following readmission to the program, the student will be dismissed from the program and they are not allowed to readmit or reapply.
- Students dismissed due to illegal, unethical, unprofessional conduct, or unsafe practices that compromise patient care are ineligible for readmission and they are not be allowed to reapply to the program.

Tuition and Fees

Per the 2019-2020 San Diego Mesa College Catalog, the enrollment fee is assessed of all students, including nonresidents. The fee is currently \$46.00 per unit. Enrollment fees are subject to change.

While in the program, the student are required to complete and pay for a physical exam, TB skin test (or equivalent), required immunizations, a background check and drug screening required by the clinical sites and additional clinic-specific requirements to begin clinical experiences. A reliable means of transportation is necessary while in the program. In addition to the cost of textbooks, there is a fee for use of educational software used in some of the coursework.

Scholarships & Financial Aid

A full list of scholarships can be found in the college catalog or on the website. Always check with Student Affairs for application criterion and qualifiers associated with each scholarship. The goal of the Student Affairs Office is to assist with financial concerns so that you might obtain maximum benefit from the educational opportunities available. For more information go to [Student Services Scholarships](#)

The goal of the Financial Aid Office is to assist with financial concerns so that you might obtain maximum benefit from the educational opportunities available. The Financial Aid Office recognizes that your situation is unique, and your application is carefully analyzed with complete confidentiality regarding your personal and financial information. For more information go to [Financial Aid](#)

Non-Discrimination Policy

SDCCD prohibits discrimination in accordance with state and federal laws. Students wishing to file complaints based upon discrimination should contact the campus Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) site compliance officer.

Grievance Procedures

1. The academic and professional structure for resolution and due process is as follows:
 - A. Program:
 - a. Classroom instructor →Program Director →Allied Health Department Chair
 - b. DCP Instructor →DCP Faculty Instructor →Clinical Coordinator →Program Director
 - B. School: Program Director →Allied Health Department Chair→ Dean of Health Sciences
 - C. College: Dean of Health Sciences →Vice President of Instruction (or Student Services)→College President

D. District: College President →Vice Chancellor →Chancellor

2. If the problem is at a clinical affiliate site, the student should discuss it first with their Clinical Instructor, if possible. If the student feels more comfortable, they may present the issue to the DCP Instructor.
3. The student must follow due process, as most issues are quickly resolved at the instructor or Program Director level. If the student skips the appropriate order of steps, they will be redirected to the appropriate level

Administrative Policies

It is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Pay all fees and process ADDs or DROPs within the established time frame.
2. Meet with the instructor before dropping a course, so that the instructor is aware of the reason(s) and can give guidance or direction regarding other career options, etc.

Disability Support Services and Programs (DSPS)

Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations are encouraged to discuss their authorized accommodations from Disability Support Programs and Services (DSPS) with their professors early in the semester so that accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible.

- a) The faculty member will work with the DSPS Office to ensure that proper accommodations are made for each student. By law, it is up to the DSPS Office, through the interactive process with the student, to determine which accommodations are appropriate, not the instructor.
- b) Students that need evacuation assistance during campus emergencies should also meet with the instructor as soon as possible to assure the health and safety of all students.
- c) Instructors may contact DSPS if they have any questions related to authorize accommodations in their classroom.
- d) ANY request for academic accommodations or auxiliary aids must be first evaluated and approved by the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) Department or the Campus 504 Officer.
- e) Students requesting accommodation must be able to present documentation of their identification of need to the DSPS office.
- f) Students must complete the DSPS intake appointment before accommodations can be given, which the student should complete well before classes begin.
- g) Once students have met with a DSPS Counselor, they may present their Authorized Academic Accommodations letter to the instructor of a course at any time during the course. However, it is recommended that the student communicate these needs early in the course to promote maximum success.

h) All accommodations are subject to maintaining instructional integrity. Where there are concerns, a joint effort and dialogue by the student, DSPS counselor, instructor, Program Director and Department Chair may be necessary to identify the accommodations that can be made, while maintaining instructional integrity.

i) Students who may benefit from utilizing accommodation measures, but have not been previously identified, are encouraged to contact the campus DSPS Department prior to or early in the semester to participate in the DSPS processes.

For more information, you may contact the DSPS Office on your campus or the website at <http://dsps.sdccd.edu> or refer to Administrative Procedure, AP 3105.1 Academic Accommodations and Disability Discrimination for students with Disabilities.

In accordance with Title IX, absences due to pregnancy or related conditions, including recovery from childbirth, shall be excused for as long as the student's doctor deems the absences to be medically necessary. Students must notify the instructor in a timely manner and shall be afforded the opportunity to establish make up work or other alternative arrangements. If a student elects to withdraw from the course on or after census, a "W" shall be assigned and the district will work with the student to ensure that the W is not considered in progress probation and dismissal calculations.

Title IX:

Mesa College faculty are committed to supporting students and upholding the San Diego Community College District's non-discrimination policy. Most employees of [Mesa College] are considered "responsible employees" who must report to the District's Title IX Coordinator when they receive a report of, or become aware of, sex-based or gender-based discrimination or harassment. This obligation is based in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 which prohibits discrimination based on sex in all areas of education.

- Sexual assault, sexual harassment, and intimate partner violence are some examples of conduct that fall under Title IX.
- When the Title IX Coordinator receives a report, they will promptly contact the individual with information about their options and rights, in order for the District to take corrective action and provide remedies.
- If you would like to speak to someone confidentially, you can contact mental health counselors on campus or the campus Victim Advocate, Myisha Ibawi, 619-541-5970, mbutler@ccsd.org ([Links to an external site.](#)). Those individuals are not obligated to report to the Title IX Coordinator and may preserve confidentiality.
- The Acting Title IX Coordinator is Leslee Morris, who can be reached at 619-388-6660 or lmorris@sdccd.edu ([Links to an external site.](#))
- For more information about the Title IX office please see the following website: <https://www.sdccd.edu/students/titleix.aspx> ([Links to an external site.](#))

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity

Students are expected to be honest and ethical at all times in the pursuit of academic goals. Students who are found to be in violation of Administrative Procedure 3100.3 Honest Academic Conduct, will receive a grade of zero on the assignment, quiz, or exam in question and may be referred for disciplinary action in accordance with Administrative Procedure 3100.2, Student Disciplinary Procedures. While the usual sanction is grade modification (4-b and c), students in certain instructional departments/programs (including Allied Health) have policies which state that cheating can show unsuitability for continuation in the program and/or professions (4-d).

Student Code of Conduct:

- Students are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct at all times. Students who violate the Student Code of Conduct may be removed from class by the faculty for the class meeting in which the behavior occurred, and the next class meeting.
- Incidents involving removal of a student from class will be reported to the college disciplinary officer for follow up.
- Make-up work will not be accepted during time of removal from class.
- The Student Code of Conduct can be found in Board of Trustees Policy, BP 3100, Student Rights, Responsibilities and Administrative Due Process posted on the District website at: <http://www.sdccd.edu/public/district/policies/index.shtml> (Links to an external site.)

[Academic Calendars](#)

ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

Curriculum

The following is a listing of the curriculum by semester:

SEMESTER I (FALL)

TOTAL UNITS: 9

HEIT 110	Introduction to Health Information	4
HEIT 130	Basic Pharmacology	1
HEIT 135	Computer Basics for Health Information	1
HEIT 140	Fundamentals of Law for Health Information	3

SEMESTER II (SPRING)

TOTAL UNITS: 6

HEIT 155	Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Coding	3
HEIT 256	Statistics for Healthcare	3

SEMESTER III (FALL)

TOTAL UNITS: 7.5

HEIT 214	ICD Coding I	3
HEIT 220	Principles of Leadership	2
HEIT 266	Directed Clinical Practice A	2.5

SEMESTER IV (SPRING)

TOTAL UNITS: 10.5

HEIT 215	ICD Coding II	3
HEIT 160	Healthcare Reimbursement	2

HEIT 258	Healthcare Quality Management	3
HEIT 267	Directed Clinical Practice B	2.5

TOTAL UNITS FOR CORE CURRICULUM: 33 UNITS

DIRECTED CLINICAL PRACTICE (DCP)

Clinical Affiliation Agreements

A written contract between the clinical facility and the San Diego Community College District is attained. These agreements are renewed every five years if both parties are in agreement.

Student Requirements to be Cleared for DCP

1. All Allied Health Programs include DCP/WE courses that are designed to give students supervised hands-on clinical experience in their field. Students are NOT to be paid for DCP hours nor are students to be used in lieu of site employees. WE hours may be paid or unpaid however a higher number of hours are required to meet the requirement if the hours are paid.
2. Even though DCP/WE takes place off campus, the student must understand that clinic courses are college courses held off campus. Students must adhere to all Program, Department, College and District policies in addition to the policies of the clinic site to which they are assigned.
3. Any violation of policy will result in a negative impact on the student's course grade and program status.
4. Student placement at a clinical affiliate will be determined by the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator based on clinic availability and program goals. In order to provide optimal learning experiences without conflicts of interest, students may not also be employees at their clinical site.
5. Students must adhere to a clinical training schedule approved by their program. There are no special placements, customized hours or other accommodations that would not be typically given to an employee in the same situation.
6. Students are expected to be on-time, dressed appropriately and ready to train at scheduled hours.
7. Students cannot attend until they have fulfilled all Program requirements for DCP/WE placement.
8. Students cannot attend until they have enrolled and paid all course fees, including liability insurance. The student will not be required to train in excess of 40 hours/week. Students may not attend clinic on unscheduled days, or on District holidays. Scheduled days must be in compliance with college and program policies.
9. Students are required to have a drug test, background check, physical and provide proof of immunizations required by program and facility. All information is to be uploaded to the American Data Bank.

Relevant Student Policies

Students enrolled in a San Diego Mesa College Allied Health Program will be responsible for observing the policies, procedure and regulations of several entities:

1. Course policies set by the instructors in their syllabi
2. Program Policies
3. School of Health Sciences, Allied Health Department Policies
 - a. [Allied Health Department](#)
4. College/District Policies
 - a. [Student policies](#)
 - b. [Current college catalog](#)
5. Hospital policies of their assigned clinical site
 - a. Clinical facilities are locations at which college campus DCP courses occur.
6. Professional standards and ethical codes, if applicable, that apply to professionals and students clinically practicing within a given field. See your Program Director.
7. Any state or federal laws that regulate the professional discipline and apply to professionals and students clinically practicing within a given field. See your Program Director.

Physical Exam, Immunizations and TB Tests

1. Students are responsible for providing proof of physical examination, tuberculosis clearance (according to CDC guidelines; www.cdc.gov) within the last year and required vaccinations by the appointed dates. Occasionally, clinical affiliates will mandate additional vaccinations and/or influenza shots, depending on community health needs. Any change in health status requires an updated physical examination.
2. Generally, the required immunizations are as follows:
 - a) Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (DTaP or TdaP) within the last 5-10 years.
 - i. Pertussis (whooping cough) is a community health concern in San Diego.
 - b) Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) within the last 5-10 years.
 - i. Measles immunity often declines in certain persons after several years.
 - c) Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccination or medical documentation of the disease
 - d) Hepatitis B series of vaccinations completed or begun.

Insurance/Injury Procedure

1. The student will not attend Directed Clinical Practice (DCP) unless enrolled in the specifically applicable DCP course and the course fees (which include liability insurance) are paid. Students may not attend clinic on unscheduled days, or on District holidays. Scheduled days must be in compliance with college and program policies. (Students are not covered when school is NOT in session).

2. INJURY AT THE CLINICAL AFFILIATE SITE

- In the event of an injury to the student, emergency care should be initiated per facility policy. Notification of either the HIM Program Director or Dean of Allied Health should take place as soon as possible.
- Injuries that occur at the affiliate site are covered by the San Diego District Student Insurance Policy known as HSR (Health Special Risk).
- The INJURED STUDENT has the following responsibilities when an injury occurs.
- Student should notify the supervisor or onsite instructor as well as Program Director immediately via telephone and/or email. It is the student's responsibility to report the injury. The student must report the following:
 - i. The day, time and location of the student during the injury.
 - ii. The activity or task the student was performing during the injury and how the student was injured.
 - iii. Clinical staff witnesses, if any.
 - iv. What actions were taken to tend to the injury.
- The Program Director will notify the District Risk Management Office immediately, and complete the necessary forms. (619-388-6953; fax: 619-388-6898). Worker's Compensation forms and the district injury report must be filled out by the Program Director or DCE and submitted to District Risk Management. Risk Management will then provide insurance information to the medical facility at which care was sought.
- For emergency care REQUIRING THE EMERGENCY ATTENTION of a physician, the student should be directed to the clinical site Emergency Room (ER). If it is a work/clinically related injury, the ER should be notified that the student has insurance through San Diego Community College District.
- For a clinic-related URGENT or MINOR CARE situation, in which the student is safe to travel, the student should go to the nearest designated occupational health services facility.
- For any other non-work related situations, the student should seek their own medical care and may utilize Mesa College Student Health Services on campus in the I-400 Student Services building (619-627-2774).

Program Contacts

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**HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
DIRECTED CLINICAL PRACTICE STUDENT
CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

The health information management profession is founded upon core professional and ethical principles. Because of the sensitive nature of health information, members of the health information management profession take pride in being the foremost advocate of a patient's right to confidentiality.

As a student in the Health Information Technology Program you will be working with health records of actual patients. You are asked to comply with:

- The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Ethical principles set forth by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)
- Mesa College's Allied Health Department policy on code of conduct for confidentiality
- Other laws, regulations, and standards governing the confidentiality and security of protected health information.

Legally any violation of the confidentiality of patient information in the health record is punishable in a court of law. Any disclosure of protected health information by you will result in your dismissal from the Directed Clinical Practice.

Having read and understood the above, I _____, hereby agree to accept and maintain the foregoing requirements of confidentiality and security of protected health information and the penalty for unauthorized disclosure.

Student: _____

Date _____

**SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE
HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
STUDENT DIRECTED CLINICAL PRACTICE AGREEMENT**

I have reviewed and understand the information in the San Diego Mesa College Health Information Management Directed Clinical Practice Student Guide.

I understand that once I have been placed at a clinical site, I am making a commitment that I will complete my DCP in that semester.

I understand that I must be available to work 135 hours (approximately 10 hours per week) and that I may only work the weekdays on the day shift – NO legal holidays per the SDCCD district policy

I understand that clinic sites require students to have a recent physical, proof of immunization, criminal background check and drug screening prior to participating in directed clinical practice and I understand that any fees involved are at my expense.

I understand that it is my responsibility to provide my own transportation to and from my directed clinical practice and any parking fees are at my expense.

I agree to comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding appropriate workplace behavior.

I understand that any unauthorized release of confidential information will result in dismissal from my directed clinical practice and the health information technology program.

I understand the method used for evaluating my performance and the grading system for directed clinical practice.

I understand that I will not be paid, nor am I to take the place of a paid employee while assigned to the clinical practice site.

Student Name _____

Date_____