BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs   **NO**: AAC 14-14

COMMITTEE DATE: December 3, 2013

BOARD DATE: December 10, 2013

APPLICATION OF MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO AWARD THE ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE IN HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of **Mount Wachusett Community College** to award the **Associate in Science degree in Health Information Management.**

Upon graduating the first class for these programs, the College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b)

Contact: Carlos Santiago, Senior Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Academic Policy

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

December 2013

Mount Wachusett Community College
Associate in Science in Health Information Management

INTENT AND MISSION

This proposed A.S. degree in Health Information Management (HIM) aligns with the Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) mission and is designed to prepare students for the professional and technical roles of a health information technology practitioner. The proposed program will provide relevant, high quality learning opportunities and services that respond to diverse student and community needs, foster student success and stimulate civic, workforce, and economic vitality. The HIM program is designed to respond to meet the growing demand for skilled management of electronic medical records, documents and medical codes

MWCC has filed an expedited application for the approval of a proposed Associate in Science in Health Information Management. The proposed Associate in Science in HIM has obtained all necessary governance approvals on campus and was approved by the MWCC Board of Trustees on February 21, 2013. The required letter of intent was circulated on February 6, 2013. No comments were received.

NEED AND DEMAND

According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH), employment of medical records and health information technicians is expected to increase by 21 percent from 2010 to 2020. The demand for health services is expected to increase as the population ages. An aging population will need more medical tests, treatments, and procedures. This will mean more claims for reimbursement from private and public insurance. It is anticipated that additional records, coupled with widespread use of electronic health records by all types of healthcare providers, will lead to an increased need for technicians to organize and manage the associated information in all areas of the healthcare industry. The OOH ranks the Health Information Technician, twelfth out of thirty occupations in the category of fastest growing occupations with some education in Massachusetts and tenth out of thirty-three occupations in the category of most openings with some education in Massachusetts.

According to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, the projected trends of job growth and openings within Massachusetts will increase by 19% between 2008 and 2018.

Student Demand

The proposed program was developed based on the identified needs of the industry within the service area surrounding MWCC. Following an internal evaluation of the job outlook and needs assessment, MWCC began actively working to develop a 2 year associates program that would enable students to become skilled and qualified for HIM positions in the industry. The top ten largest program areas at MWCC include pre- health

(795), Computer Information Systems (138), and Allied Health (110)[1].   The proposed program in Health Information Management would provide another option for students with an interest in health and allow students to link interests in health and computer information systems to enter a growing industry. Using enrollment and admissions data collected since spring 2011, MWCC identified over 170 students who have expressed interest in the current MWCC Medical Coding and Billing certificate program. Successful students in this program are viewed by MWCC as excellent candidates for the proposed AS in HIM.

The proposed program provides an option for students with interest in the health sciences who do not desire direct patient care positions. It will also provide individuals with information technology skills with upward further access in the health care industry. MWCC has a history of completers of a Medical Office Certificate, and Medical Coding and Billing Certificate. Students who have previously completed either of these certificates will be candidates for laddering into the proposed HIM program.

Duplication

The proposed program would be the only HIM Associate's Degree program in central Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. MWCC projects students from the college's service area as well as students in the Worcester, Middlesex counties and southern New Hampshire will enroll in this program. The proposed program will be housed at the main campus in Gardner and offer online and hybridized options, which will make it accessible to students from outside the college's service area.

ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS

Admission

The proposed HIM program is designed to have selective enrollment. Eligible students must complete a four-credit lab science and a mathematics course in order to apply. Applicants will be reviewed and ranked based on the grades and courses completed. Additionally, students will be required to provide verification of completion of high school or its equivalency. Students with a primary language other than English, who have completed their high school education or requested transfer of credits from a bachelor's degree earned outside of the United States, would be required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL). This admission policy would ensure that prospective candidates' English language skills are proficient to meet the demands of the proposed degree program.

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[1] According to MWCC February 2013 Data Scoops, Volume 9, Issue 1

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

	# of Students Year 1	# of Students Year 2	# of Students Year 3	# of Students Year 4*
New Full Time	15	30	30	30
Continuing Full Time	0	0	0	0
New Part Time	10	20	20	20
Continuing Part Time	0	0	0	0
Totals	25	50	50	50

Curriculum (Attachment A)

The proposed program will consist of 7 credits of admission requirements, 30 credits of general education courses and 37 credits in HIM-specific courses. This blend of coursework will insure that students have an adequate foundation upon which to build technical courses. The proposed program will include capstone experiences facilitated through use of a virtual classroom and a professional practice experience as well as a course designed specifically to achieve success in the registered health information technician examination.

Field Resources and Internships

Professional Practice Experiences (PPE) will be developed with community stakeholders providing clinical sites that include acute care hospitals, satellite campuses, clinics and physician offices. The two largest systems represented are expected to be University of Massachusetts Memorial Healthcare and St. Vincent's Hospital

RESOURCES AND BUDGET

Fiscal (Attachment B)

The HIM proposed budget will be included with the MWCC Division of Health Professions, Public Service Programs and Social Sciences. The program will require initial costs to establish a computer lab. In addition, annual budget costs would be necessary for American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) memberships for faculty, professional development funds for faculty, the AHIMA virtual lab, and encoder simulator software. The budget projects the need for a second full time faculty member in the second year of the program. The proposed program is planned to be tuition-driven with revenues calculated by enrolling 25 students during the first year and 50 students in the second year. The program and the college will seek other revenue sources in the form of grant funds.

Faculty and Administration (Attachment C)

MWCC is currently recruiting a full-time faculty member and program director for the proposed program. All interviewed candidates must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in Health Information Technology and have the registered health information technician (RHIT) or registered health information administrator (RHIA) credential. Once a program director is hired, a second full-time faculty member will be hired in accordance with the Commission on Accreditation in Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM) requirements. The position will be an MWCC full time faculty position and will have all the same rights and privileges of other full-time faculty.

In collaboration with the Dean and Assistant Dean of Health Professions, the HIM program director will be responsible for the proposed HIM program. Some of the current faculty in the medical assisting and computer information systems (CIS) programs will serve as adjunct faculty members. An administrative assistant is already in place working with the School of Health Professions, Public Service Programs and Social Sciences. The admissions and marketing departments will also support the program.

Facilities, Library and Information Technologies

MWCC has budgeted funds to create a classroom lab on campus to serve as dedicated space for the proposed HIM program. This space will meet the requirements outlined to be in compliance with CAHIIM accreditation standards. Based on the insight of external reviewers, this specific software will include: AHIMA Virtual Lab, 3M, Cerner, or an additional encoder simulator. The physical campus has adequate free computer space for students to utilize.

All prerequisite courses are available in multiple delivery methods. The proposed core HIM course will be offer in hybrid and online formats. Students will be required to purchase a laptop with specific features such that they can access the required software applications and the virtual lab. Students who cannot afford a laptop will be eligible to apply for scholarship to acquire their laptops.

The LaChance Library is fully staffed and supported by a head librarian, two reference librarians and additional clerical support. Faculty and students in the proposed program will have full access to data bases and reference material online or at the Gardner campus. The information technology department supports classroom instruction through multimedia equipment and training. Blackboard course management program is available to all instructors, and will be used to supplement instruction in the proposed HIM courses. Multimedia classrooms are also available. The college has a director of Instructional Design who can work with faculty to incorporate multimedia and other technologies into instruction.

Affiliations and Partnerships

The advisory committee for the proposed program is comprised of MWCC administrators, faculty and health information professionals from area clinical facilities. These providers represent the acute care and teaching hospitals within the college service area. The two large systems represented in this group, UMASS Memorial Healthcare and St. Vincent's Hospital, involve acute care hospitals, satellite

campuses, clinics and physicians' offices. MWCC provided a list of facilities and position titles of the individuals who comprise the advisory committee.

MWCC and Heywood Hospital are discussing the development of a collaborative effort to staff the proposed program. There is potential for the director position to be a shared one between the hospital and MWCC proposed program. The concept of a shared position is reported to add value for MWCC and its students by providing an available network of people managing changes within the HIM field daily and in real time. The Heywood Hospital proximity to the MWCC Gardner Campus has been conducive to a history of successful collaborations and provides a beneficial professional practice experience site for MWCC HIM students. PPEs are also expected to be developed with University of Massachusetts Memorial Healthcare and St. Vincent's Hospital.

Program Effectiveness

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
Students will communicate effectively and accurately through oral, written and electronic means.	-Successful completion of assignments based on established rubrics within the following courses: -Through graduate and employer survey data, it will be determined that each graduate will demonstrate professional communication skills during classroom and professional practice experiences. - Each graduate will demonstrate entry level presentation skills per use of a rubric.	-During classroom, laboratory and practicum experiences students will be evaluated on oral, written and electronic communication. -Students will participate in presentations throughout the program with the culmination at their final professional practice experience utilizing rubrics that will provide feedback to promote development.	- Student should demonstrate developing skills with the presentation of entry level skills at program completion.
Graduates will collaborate as a member of the health care team in the organization, analysis, evaluation, compilation, and coding of health records utilizing state of the art software applications.	- Graduates of the program will demonstrate at minimum 79% success on the RHIT certification exam. -Upon successful completion of the RHIT certification exam, graduates should achieve 90% employment within 6 months. - Through graduate and employer survey data, each graduate will demonstrate the required technical skills to manage health records. -Through performance evaluations, each graduate will	-Curriculum will be progressive and lead students to mastery of more challenging skills. -curriculum will require collaborative work each semester -Students will be exposed to current products as they come to market through their education.	Students will begin with simpler aspects of health records and progress to more advanced analysis and evaluation of health records through more complex and challenging experiences.

	demonstrate the time management and prioritization required to coordinate with all team members. -Graduates will have demonstrated knowledge of current software and will gain insight as to changing software as it becomes available. -Upon grate survey, there will be 90% agreement that resources (including software) was adequate and current to meet the needs of contemporary practice.		
Curriculum will demonstrate evidence based practice that integrates research and expertise in health information technology.	- Through progressively challenging curricular assignments in HIM 100, 140, 180 related to HIM topics, students will demonstrate a development of research skills and use of evidence-based practice. -Through graduate and employer survey data, graduates will be able to access information and evaluate the quality of the information through print and electronic means. - Through graduate and employer survey data, graduate will use and properly cite current information in all presentation both in writing and orally.	-Students will be required to use current literature throughout their academic preparation for assignments as directed by faculty. -Students will be provided with instruction and will be required to use and cite current information in assignments.	Curriculum will introduce and continue to reinforce information literacy to insure that upon program completion, graduates have developed necessary skills for the work place.

Through input with the advisory board and communities of interest, graduates will apply quality improvement and utilization review principles to ensure the highest quality of information management according to professional standards.	-Graduates of the program will demonstrate at minimum 79% success on the RHIT certification exam. -Upon successful completion of the RHIT certification exam, graduates should achieve 90% employment within 6 months. - Through graduate and employer survey data, student will demonstrate professional standards 100% of the time.	-Curriculum will be progressive and lead students to mastery of more challenging skills.	Curriculum will introduce and continue to reinforce qualify improvement and utilization review principles to insure that upon program completion, graduates have developed necessary skills for the work place.
Curriculum will demonstrate participation in patient- centered care and information management within the legal, ethical, and regulatory framework of the health information technology profession.	- Through satisfactory performance in the professional practice experiences, utilizing objective clinical evaluation of their performance, students will demonstrate skills consistent with legal, ethical and regulatory requirements. -Graduates of the program will demonstrate at minimum 79% success on the RHIT certification exam. -Upon successful completion of the RHIT certification exam, graduates should achieve 90% employment within 6 months. - Through graduate and employer survey data, student will demonstrate proper legal, ethical and regulatory processes 100% of the time.	-Student will be required to use proper legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks throughout their academic preparation for assignments as directed by faculty. -Students will be provided with instruction and will be required to proper legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks in assignments.	Curriculum will introduce and continue to reinforce legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks to insure that upon program completion, graduates have developed necessary skills for the work place.

Faculty will demonstrate current knowledge, skills, qualifications, and professional development in the content areas they teach.	Director will have at minimum a Bachelor's degree and the credential of RHIT. Faculty will have credentials and qualifications to match the needs of the content areas in which they teach.	Personnel files will maintain faculty credentials with current resume and copy of AHIMA membership cards.	Qualifications will be verified at the time of hire.

EXTERNAL REVIEW AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

The program was reviewed by Marie T. Conte, MPA, RHIA, CCS, FAHIMA; Program Director, Health Information Technology Program at City College of San Francisco, CA and Joy Rose, MSA, RHIA, CCS Program Director, Health Information Management Program, Bristol Community College, Fall River, MA.

The reviewers found strong support from the MWCC administration for the new HIM program. They identified that faculty ratios meet the credentialing requirement for full-time faculty in HIM A.S. programs. Reviewers found that the plan to utilize the virtual laboratory with publisher materials and online electronic study assistance also demonstrates MWCC commitment to the students learning the requisite technology skills they will need to be successful. They also found that transferability of program credits will provide students with the opportunity to pursue higher degrees and advanced credentials.

Reviewers made several recommendations including changes to nomenclature, improvements to the alignment of program goals and outcomes with CAHIIM requirements as well as the mission of the college, and an increase in affiliation agreements for PPE sites with community stakeholders. They also suggested that future growth and a rapidly changing healthcare environment may necessitate planning for additional technology, faculty, or other operating needs. The number of faculty members was reported to be adequate to begin the program, however the addition of one faculty member was recommended by the fall of 2015.

The institution responded to the review in appreciation for the expertise and recommendations therein and made changes to the proposal to include the recommendations to the program. The current program title reflects updated nomenclature. Additional professional practice sites will be added as the program develops. One of the first tasks of the program director will be to increase affiliation agreements and this has been included as a duty within the job description. The institution clarified that compliance with the CAHIIM standards is planned to be achieved as the program is launched and works towards earning external accreditation. MWCC asserted that while all stakeholders will provide input regarding program outcomes, the intent was not to demonstrate compliance with CAHIIM standards. Rather, compliance with accreditation is designed to be a duty of the program director and it is included within the job description.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by Moun**t Wachusett Community College** and external reviewers. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed **Associate in Science in Health Information Management**.

Attachment A: Curriculum Outline

Required (Core) Courses in HIM (Total # courses required =15)		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
HIM 001	HIM Professional Survey Course	1
MAS 102	Medical Terminology	3
CIS 123	Microcomputer Database Management	3
HIM 100	Introduction to Health Data	4
HIM 110	Healthcare Statistics, Data literacy and Quality management	4
HIM 130	Diagnostic Coding: ICD-10-CM	4
HIM 140	Medical Legal Aspects	3
MAS 203	Computers in the Health care Setting	3
HIM 150	Patho-pharmacology	4
HIM 160	Procedural Coding: ICD-10-PCS	4
HIM 170	Physician Coding: HCPCS/CPT	4
HIM 180	Health Information Financial Management and Reimbursement Methods	4
HIM 190	Compliance and Supervision	2
HIM 200	Professional Practice Experience	2
HIM 210	RHIT Exam Review	1
	Sub Total Required Credits	**46**
Elective Courses (Total # courses required = 0) (attach list of choices if needed)		
[Course Number]	[Course Title]	[0]
[Course Number]	[Course Title]	[0]
[Course Number]	[Course Title]	[0]
[Course Number]	[Course Title]	[0]
[Course Number]	[Course Title]	[0]
	Sub Total Elective Credits	[0]
Distribution of General Education Requirements Attach List of General Education Offerings (Course Numbers, Titles, and Credits)		# of Gen Ed Credits
Arts and Humanities, including Literature and Foreign Languages		9
Mathematics and the Natural and Physical Sciences		16
Social Sciences		3
	Sub Total General Education Credits	28
Curriculum Summary		
Total number of courses required for the degree		
Total credit hours required for degree		74
Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:		

Attachment B: Budget

One Time/ Start Up Costs		Annual Expenses			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	Full Time Faculty *(Salary & Fringe)*	$94,500.00	$162,000.00		
	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty *(Salary & Fringe)*				
	Staff				
	General Administrative Costs				
	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions	$365.00	$730.00		
	Facilities/Space/Equipment	$22,000.00 (computer lab and 3MEncoder)	$200.00 (3MEncoder)		
	Field & Clinical Resources	$2500.00 (annual AHIMA virtual lab)	$2500.00 (annual AHIMA virtual lab)		
	Marketing	$5,000.00	$1,000.00		
	Other (Professional Development for Faculty)	$1,000.00	$2,000.00		
	TOTALS	$123,865.00	$168,430.00		

One Time/Start-Up Support		Annual Income			
	Revenue Sources	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	Grants				
	Tuition	$351,500.00	$703,000.00		
	Fees				
	Departmental				
	Reallocated Funds				
	Other (specify)				
	TOTALS	$351,500.00	$703,000.00		

Attachment C: Faculty Form

<table>
<tr><td colspan="9" align="center">Summary of Faculty Who Will Teach in Proposed Program</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="9" align="center">Please list full-time faculty first, alphabetically by last name. Add additional rows as necessary.</td></tr>
<tr>
<th>Name of faculty member (Name, Degree and Field, Title)</th>
<th>Check if Tenured</th>
<th>Courses Taught Put (C) to indicate core course. Put (OL) next to any course currently taught online.</th>
<th>Number of sections</th>
<th>Division of College of Employment</th>
<th>Full- or Part- time in Program</th>
<th>Full- or part-time in other department or program (Please specify)</th>
<th colspan="2">Sites where individual will teach program courses</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatro, Brenda
BA in
Associate Professor</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>• MAS 102, MAS 203</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Health Professions</td>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td colspan="2">• Main
• Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General English Faculty
MA in English
Professor</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>• ENG 101, 102, humanities elective</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Fulltime or Part time</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td colspan="2">• Main Campus
• Leominster
• Devens
• Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor, Susan or General CIS Faculty
MS in Computer Information Systems
Professor</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>• CIS 127, CIS 123</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>Science, technology and Math</td>
<td>Full or Part time</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td colspan="2">• Main Campus
• Leominster
• Devens
• Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Math Faculty
MS in Mathematics
Professor</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>• MAT 126</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>Science, technology and Math</td>
<td>Full or Part time</td>
<td>No</td>
<td colspan="2">• Main Campus
• Leominster
• Devens
• Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Biology Faculty
MS in Biology/Education
Professor</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>• BIO 199, BIO 204</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>Science, technology and Math</td>
<td>Full or Part time</td>
<td>no</td>
<td colspan="2">• Main Campus
• Leominster
• Devens
• Online</td>
</tr>
</table>