



## Program Guidebook

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### Bachelor of Science, Health Information Management

*The Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management provides a solid foundation in computer information systems and technologies for healthcare organizations including healthcare regulation, project management of health systems, databases, and security. In addition to the health information management content, the degree program includes a broad collegiate education. The program is designed for those who have some technical or clinical knowledge in a health care environment and are ready to move to increased levels of expertise and knowledge in the health information management field. The health information management component of the Bachelor of Science program consists of the following areas of study: Healthcare Data, Health Information Technology, Medical Terminology, Pathophysiology and Pharmacology. There are a number of other areas of study that students master including Fundamentals of IT in Healthcare, Legal and Ethical Considerations in Healthcare, Leadership and Management, Anatomy and Physiology, Healthcare Compliance and Coding, Project Management, Financial Resource Management, and Healthcare Statistics. There are two professional practice experiences required with a portfolio project in each. At the end of the program students complete a capstone project.*

## Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, how do competency-based programs like those offered at Western Governors University (WGU) work? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts.

Progress through a degree program is governed not by the amount of time you spend in class but by your ability to demonstrate mastery of competencies as you complete required courses. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you review competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. To help you acquire the knowledge and skills you need to complete your courses and program, WGU provides a rich array of learning resources. Your program mentor will work closely with you to help you understand the competencies required for your program and to help you create a schedule for completing your courses. You will also work closely with course instructors as you engage in each of your courses. As subject matter experts, course instructors will guide you through the content you must master to pass the course assessments.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that enables students who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a degree, even if they lack college experience. You may have gained skills and knowledge of a subject while on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or already taken a course on a particular subject. WGU will award your degree based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate—not the number of credits hours on your transcript.

## Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have earned accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions. WGU's accreditation was awarded by (1) the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, (2) the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, (3) the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and (4) the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The university's accreditation status is now managed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), which reaffirmed WGU's accreditation in February 2017. The WGU Teachers College is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Information Management program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College of Business programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

## The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the courses you will need to complete in order to earn your degree. The Degree Plan also lays out the accompanying learning resources and assessments that compose your program. The list of courses in the Degree Plan is often referred to as the standard path. The amount of time it takes to complete your program depends on both the amount of new information you need to learn and the amount of time you plan to devote each week to study. Your program mentor and course instructors will help you assess

your strengths and development needs to establish a study plan.

Students vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some students may be highly knowledgeable in a particular subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Other students may find that portions of the program require them to learn new information and that they need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill program competencies in that area. Some individuals may be able to devote as little as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may need to devote more time. For this reason, pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

## How You Will Interact with Faculty

At WGU, faculty serve in specialized roles, and they will work with you individually to provide the guidance, instruction, and support you will need to succeed and graduate. As a student, it is important for you to take advantage of this support. It is key to your progress and ultimate success. Upon your enrollment, you will be assigned a program mentor—an expert in your field of study who will provide you with regular program-level guidance and support from the day you start until the day you graduate. Your program mentor will set up regular telephone appointments (weekly at first) with you, which you will be expected to keep. The mentor will review program competencies with you and work with you to develop a plan and schedule for your coursework. Your program mentor will serve as your main point of contact throughout your program—helping you set weekly study goals, recommending specific learning materials, telling you what to expect in courses, and keeping you motivated. In addition to regular calls, your program mentor is available to help you resolve questions and concerns as they arise.

You will also be assigned to a course instructor for each course. Course instructors are doctoral-level subject matter experts who will assist your learning in each individual course. When you begin a new course, your assigned course instructor will actively monitor your progress and will be in touch to offer one-on-one instruction and to provide you with information about webinars, cohort sessions, and other learning opportunities available to help you acquire the competencies you need to master the course. Your course instructor can discuss your learning for the course, help you find answers to content questions, and give you the tools to navigate the course successfully. In addition, you will communicate with course instructors by posting in the online learning community and participating in live discussion sessions such as webinars and cohorts.

For many of the courses at WGU, you will be required to complete performance assessments. These include reports, papers, presentations, and projects that let you demonstrate your mastery of the required competencies. A separate group of faculty members, called evaluators, will review your work to determine whether it meets requirements. Evaluators are also subject matter experts in their field of evaluation. If your assessment needs further work before it “passes,” these evaluators, who review your work anonymously, will provide you with instructional feedback to help you meet evaluation standards and allow you to advance.

## Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you will have direct contact with multiple faculty members.

These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in one-on-one discussions, chats in the learning communities, and live cohort and webinar opportunities. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal, which will provide a gateway to your courses of study, learning resources, and learning communities where you will interact with faculty and other students.

The learning resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments. These learning resources may include reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by course instructors who are experts in their field. You will access your program community during your orientation course to network with peers who are enrolled in your program and to receive continued support through professional enrichment and program-specific chats, blogs, and discussions. WGU also provides Student Services associates to help you and your program mentor solve any special problems that may arise.

## Orientation

The WGU orientation course focuses on acquainting you with WGU's competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize WGU program and course communities, participate in activities, and get to know other students at WGU. The orientation course must be completed before you can start your first term at WGU.

## Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, or if you have completed industry certifications, you may have your transcripts and certifications evaluated to determine if you are eligible to receive some transfer credit. The guidelines for determining what credits will be granted varies based on the degree program. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree verified before being admitted to WGU. To review more information in regards to transfer guidelines based on the different degree programs, you may visit the Student Handbook found at the link below and search for "Transfer Credit Evaluation."

[Click here for the Student Handbook](#)

WGU does not waive any requirements based on a student's professional experience and does not perform a "résumé review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically waive any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content relevant and current.

Remember, WGU's competency-based approach lets you take advantage of your knowledge and skills, regardless of how you obtained them. Even when you do not directly receive credit, the knowledge you possess may help you accelerate the time it takes to complete your degree program.

## Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

WGU is a "continuous enrollment" institution, which means you will be automatically enrolled in each of your new terms while you are at WGU. Each term is six months long. Longer terms and continuous

enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between terms that you would experience at a more traditional university. At the end of every six-month term, you and your program mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-month term.

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this “On-Time Progress,” denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a “B” grade or better.

WGU assigns competency units to each course in order to track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some courses may be assigned 3 competency units while others may be as large as 12 competency units.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. \*Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible for federal financial aid.

## Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the assessment(s) for each course. In general there are two types of assessments: performance assessments and objective assessments. Performance assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, essays, and research papers. Objective assessments include multiple-choice items, multiple-selection items, matching, short answer, drag-and-drop, and point-and-click item types, as well as case study and video-based items. Certifications verified through third parties may also be included in your program. More detailed information about each assessment is provided in each course of study.

## Learning Resources

WGU works with many different educational partners, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions, to provide high-quality and effective learning resources that match the competencies you are developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module,

study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning resources, as needed.

#### Mobile Compatibility:

The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU. It includes a list that can be referenced to determine the mobile friendliness of all core course materials used in a program.

[Student Handbook article: Can I use my mobile device for learning resources?](#)

## Standard Path

As previously mentioned, competency units (CUs) have been assigned to each course in order to measure your academic progress. If you are an undergraduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of 12 competency units each term. Graduate students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 8 competency units each term. A standard plan for a student for this program who entered WGU without any transfer units would look similar to the one on the following page. Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and your determination to proceed at a faster rate.

## Standard Path *for* Bachelor of Science, Health Information Management

Course Description	CUs	Term
Professional Leadership and Communication for Healthcare	2	1
Healthcare Ecosystems	3	1
English Composition I	3	1
Introduction to Healthcare IT Systems	4	1
English Composition II	3	2
Introduction to Communication	3	2
Survey of United States Constitution and Government	3	2
Health Information Law and Regulations	4	2
Healthcare Information Systems Management	3	3
Introduction to Humanities	3	3
Intermediate Algebra	3	3
Organizational Behavior	3	3
Foundations in Healthcare Information Management	4	4
Anatomy and Physiology I	4	4
Business Ethics	3	4
Principles of Management	4	4
Critical Thinking and Logic	3	5
Foundations in Healthcare Data Management	3	5
Medical Terminology	3	5
Introduction to Psychology	3	5
Introduction to Biology	3	6
Pathophysiology	3	6
Introduction to Pharmacology	3	6
Data Analytics and Information Governance	4	6
Classification Systems	4	7
Business of IT - Project Management	4	7
Healthcare Financial Resource Management	4	7
Introduction to Probability and Statistics	3	8
Healthcare Compliance	3	8
Healthcare Statistics and Research	3	8
Healthcare Reimbursement	4	8

Course Description	CUs	Term
Quality and Performance Management and Methods	4	9
Healthcare System Applications	4	9
Professional Practice Experience and Portfolio - Management Level	4	9
Professional Practice Experience and Portfolio - Technical Level	3	10
Health Information Management Capstone	4	10

## Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU's competencies and programs. As these changes are implemented, WGU will ensure that the length of the student's degree program (i.e., total competency unit requirements) will not increase and that competency units already earned will be applied to the updated program version. When program requirements are updated, students readmitting after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter into the most current catalog version of the program.



# Areas of Study for Bachelor of Science, Health Information Management

The following section includes the areas of study in the program, with their associated courses. Your specific learning resources and level of instructional support will vary based on the individual competencies you bring to the program and your confidence in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in each area of the degree. The Degree Plan and learning resources are dynamic, so you need to review your Degree Plan and seek the advice of your mentor regarding the resources before you purchase them.

## Foundations of Success

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### Professional Leadership and Communication for Healthcare

The Professional Communication and Leadership in Healthcare course is designed to help students prepare for success in the online environment at Western Governors University and beyond. Student success starts with the social support and self-reflective awareness that will prepare students to weather the challenges of academic programs. In this course students will participate in group activities and complete several individual assignments. The group activities are aimed at finding support and gaining insight from other students. The assignments are intended to give the student an opportunity to reflect about where they are and where they would like to be. The activities in each group meeting are designed to give students several tools they can use to achieve success.

This course is designed as a five-part intensive learning experience. Students will attend five group meetings during the term. At each meeting students will engage in activities that help them understand their own educational journey and find support and inspiration in the journey of others.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate evaluates and displays behaviors consistent with the process of self-discovery and mindfulness*
- *The graduate demonstrates appropriate patterns of effective communication.*
- *The graduate identifies and applies appropriate communication strategies to develop a supportive community of peers.*
- *The graduate demonstrates the ability to apply the concept of working styles to leadership skills.*

## Healthcare Management

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### Healthcare Ecosystems

Healthcare Ecosystems explores the history and state of healthcare organizations in an ever-changing environment. This course covers how agencies influence healthcare delivery through legal, licensure, certification, and accreditation standards. The course will also discuss how new technologies and trends keep healthcare delivery innovative and current.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes how relationships between clinical healthcare quality, reimbursement for services, and patient access to medical care influence the services that are provided at various levels of healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes how emerging technologies and trends in healthcare informatics and medical practice, as well as federal government initiatives, impact contemporary healthcare delivery.*
- *The graduate analyzes how the components and operation of healthcare delivery systems across the continuum of patient care influence cost, access, and quality of care.*
- *The graduate analyzes the implications of key historic, economic, social, and legislative events that influenced the evolution of medical care in the United States, including the roles of health professionals and technology in the organization of contemporary healthcare systems.*
- *The graduate analyzes how licensing, certification, and accreditation agencies for healthcare organizations impact healthcare delivery at federal, state, local, and organizational levels.*

- *The graduate analyzes how federal legislation and programs influence the provision of services at all levels of healthcare organizations.*

## Introduction to Healthcare IT Systems

Introduction to Healthcare IT Systems introduces students to information technology as a discipline. This course also exposes students to the various roles and functions of the health information manager to support the business of healthcare. There are no prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate examines functions of basic computer hardware components in a healthcare environment.*
- *The graduate examines health information technology systems and their role in converting data to organizational knowledge.*
- *The graduate explains how to utilize technology for health IT project management.*
- *The graduate examines the structure and function of databases in a healthcare setting.*
- *The graduate recognizes the impact of the history of computing on current healthcare technology infrastructure.*
- *The graduate evaluates ethical concerns involved in the use of technology in a healthcare setting.*
- *The graduate examines the role of different types of software in health information management.*
- *The graduate outlines the structure, function, and security associated with networks in a health information management setting.*

## Health Information Law and Regulations

Health Information Law and Regulations prepares students to manage health information in compliance with legal guidelines and teaches how to respond to questions and challenges when legal issues occur. This course presents the types of situations occurring in health information management that could result in ethical dilemmas and establishes a foundation for work based on legal and ethical guidelines.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate applies compliance requirements identified by government regulations and by accreditation, licensing, and certification agencies to mitigate legal risk to healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate evaluates the confluence of quality improvement and risk management practices that support favorable legal outcomes for healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes how ethics influence appropriate decision-making processes in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate evaluates management policies and practices for legal health records by recognizing consequences for healthcare organizations when records are used to substantiate healthcare law.*
- *The graduate applies common procedural and conceptual aspects of the law relating to health information management in situations that arise within healthcare organizations.*

## Healthcare Information Systems Management

Healthcare Information Systems Management provides an overview of many facets of information systems that are applicable to business and healthcare. The course explores how information technology (IT) is an organizational resource that must be managed so that it supports or enables organizational strategy. The course will discuss how decision support and communication are securely facilitated in a global marketplace. The course also explores current and continuously evolving technologies, strategic thinking, and issues at the intersection of management and technology.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate interprets approaches for managing information security and privacy, averting ethical issues, and minimizing negative societal effects in business.*

- *The graduate evaluates how health information exchanges and electronic exchanges, including telehealth and mobile health (mhealth), impact patient care, safety, and access to data.*
- *The graduate describes primary technologies and the application of telecommunications, wireless, and the internet in business.*
- *The graduate describes the characteristics, functions, and evolution of computer hardware and software in support of business functions.*
- *The graduate describes the role of information systems and the challenges of managing information technology in supporting essential business functions.*
- *The graduate describes effective techniques for managing databases and data warehouses for business optimization.*
- *The graduate describes effective strategies for systems development and the use of various decision support tools in business.*

## Foundations in Healthcare Data Management

Foundations in Healthcare Data Management introduces students to the concepts and terminology used in health data and health information management. This course teaches students how to apply data management and governance principles in the healthcare environment. There are no prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate applies the principles of data and information governance as they support the needs of the organization in managing health information systems and stakeholders' needs.*
- *The graduate evaluates data quality standards to meet regulatory requirements in a healthcare setting.*
- *The graduate analyzes how health information management professionals manage the components of the healthcare record.*
- *The graduate analyzes how healthcare databases and registries are foundational to health data management.*

## Medical Terminology

Medical Terminology focuses on the basic components of medical terminology and how terminology is used when discussing various body structures and systems. Proper use of medical terminology is critical for accurate and clear communication among medical staff, health professionals, and patients. In addition to the systems of the body, this course will discuss immunity, infections, mental health, and cancer.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate accurately identifies primary and secondary word parts and forms of basic medical terms.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with body structure in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the endocrine and nervous systems in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the urinary system in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the respiratory system in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the musculoskeletal system in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the integumentary system in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the cardiovascular and lymphatic systems in context*

*with anatomical, physiological and pathophysiological functions related to immunity and infections of the human body.*

- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the digestive system in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with reproductive systems in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*
- *The graduate accurately identifies medical terms associated with the special senses of the eye and ear in context with anatomical structures and physiological and pathophysiological functions of the human body.*

## **Pathophysiology**

Pathophysiology is an overview of the pathology and treatment of diseases in the human body and its systems. This course will explain the processes in the body that result in the signs and symptoms of disease, as well as therapeutic procedures in managing or curing the disease. The content draws on a knowledge of anatomy and physiology to understand how diseases manifest themselves and how they affect the body.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate examines common disorders of the respiratory system and associates appropriate diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures with these disorders*
- *The graduate examines common disorders of the digestive system and associates appropriate diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures with these disorders*
- *The graduate examines common disorders of the cardiovascular, circulation, lymphatic, and immune systems and associates appropriate diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures with these disorders.*
- *The graduate examines how the organization of the human body and body systems, including tissues, glands and membranes, relates to the physiological functions of the body and impacts disease processes.*
- *The graduate examines common disorders of the central nervous system, peripheral nervous system, and sensory organs and associates appropriate diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures with these disorders.*
- *The graduate examines common disorders of the musculoskeletal and integumentary systems and associates appropriate diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures with these disorders.*
- *The graduate examines common disorders of the urinary, endocrine and reproductive systems and associates appropriate diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures with these disorders*

## **Introduction to Pharmacology**

Introduction to Pharmacology provides information about drug development and approvals, pharmaceutical classifications, metabolism, and the effect of drugs on body systems. The course will introduce advancements in pharmaceutical technology, regulatory requirements within electronic health record systems, and the financial implications of pharmaceutical coding and billing. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate examines fundamental concepts associated with pharmaceutical agents that affect the body systems.*
- *The graduate analyzes the basic concepts, principles, and standards of general pharmacology.*
- *The graduate evaluates the financial and legal impact of accurate billing and coding for pharmaceutical services in a healthcare system.*
- *The graduate analyzes the medication module of an electronic health record (EHR).*

## **Classification Systems**

Classification Systems provides a comprehensive approach to learning about medical coding classification, coding audits and quality standards. Students will be exposed to electronic health record systems and leadership principles as they

relate to management of ICD and CPT codes. There are no prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate examines the purpose, content, and structure of SNOMED CT.*
- *The graduate recognizes the impact of coding quality for the maximum reimbursement of a given healthcare organization related to a coding compliance program.*
- *The graduate determines organizational and departmental readiness for change based on health records documentation requirements set forth by external agencies (e.g, certifications, accreditation, licensing, regulatory).*
- *The graduate evaluates electronic applications that support interoperability, daily audits, and provider technology.*
- *The graduate examines the functions and relationships between healthcare classification systems.*

## **Healthcare Compliance**

Healthcare Compliance examines the role of the coding professional within healthcare information management. The course covers compliance plans, issues that arise with noncompliance, and management of internal and external audits.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes the auditing process with internal and external agencies for coding compliance.*
- *The graduate analyzes the components of a compliance plan for implementation in a health information management department.*
- *The graduate determines how healthcare enforcement agencies or programs require reporting for coding noncompliance.*
- *The graduate explains how the charge description master (CDM) committee impacts the revenue cycle.*
- *The graduate evaluates candidate qualifications for the purpose of recruiting, hiring, and retaining health information management departmental staff.*
- *The graduate analyzes the role of the coding professional within a health information management department.*
- *The graduate designs a basic compliance training program for a health information management department.*
- *The graduate develops strategies for maximizing coding productivity and quality standards.*

## **Healthcare Statistics and Research**

Healthcare Statistics and Research explores the use of statistical data to support process improvement through health information research. Health information management (HIM) professionals use information systems to gather, analyze, and present data in response to administrative and clinical needs. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate evaluates health information research data for use in process improvements in a health information management (HIM) environment.*
- *The graduate analyzes ethical guidelines within health information management (HIM) research.*
- *The graduate audits statistical data to support health information management department process improvement through data measurement and research.*
- *The graduate evaluates data that is found in health information management (HIM) research to support leadership in improving standards and techniques for electronic health records (EHR) data collection, storage, and protection.*

## **Healthcare Reimbursement**

Healthcare Reimbursement explores financial practices within the healthcare industry as they relate to reimbursement policies. This course identifies how reimbursement systems impact the revenue cycle and a health information manager's role. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate assesses the technology used in identifying fraud and abuse in reimbursements.*
- *The graduate analyzes the impact of emerging technology on reimbursements.*
- *The graduate analyzes how third-party reimbursement payment calculations impact reimbursement in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes the impact of government policies on various government-sponsored healthcare programs.*
- *The graduate provides appropriate instruction for the critically-ill patient and their family based on standard educational principles and effective assessment of patient learning needs.*
- *The graduate analyzes the impact of changes in electronic health records (EHR) reimbursement incentive programs.*
- *The graduate analyzes models of quality reporting systems and how these models link quality to reimbursement.*
- *The graduate analyzes contemporary healthcare reimbursement methodologies and systems used in the United States.*
- *The graduate analyzes procedural and ethical guidelines, rules, and regulations for clinical coding within healthcare organizations.*

## **Quality and Performance Management and Methods**

Quality and Performance Management and Methods examines quality initiatives within healthcare. Quality issues cover human resource management, employee performance and patient safety. This course focuses on quality improvement initiatives and performance improvement with the health information management perspective.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate develops best practices and procedures to engage employees in professional development, promote employee satisfaction, and maintain appropriate disciplinary structures.*
- *The graduate develops professional skills to prepare for assuming supervisory responsibility.*
- *The graduate evaluates quality improvement projects to ensure they comply with both internal organizational processes and applicable standards established by external agencies.*
- *The graduate develops management techniques to monitor and promote productivity, teamwork, and regulatory compliance in a health information management environment.*
- *The graduate develops a quality improvement plan in a healthcare environment in order to promote patient-centered care, build effective work teams, and influence organizational change.*

## **Healthcare System Applications**

Healthcare System Applications introduces students to information systems. This course includes important topics related to management of information systems (MIS), such as system development and business continuity. The course also provides an overview of management tools and issue tracking systems. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate explains how information systems affect business processes within the healthcare industry.*
- *The graduate analyzes the different methods of system development for the purpose of recommending an appropriate method for a project.*
- *The graduate justifies the need for information technology support and ways to manage the support processes in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes the role of management in health information systems and the necessity for security and contingency plans.*

## **Health Information Management Capstone**

Health Information Management Capstone Project is the culmination of the student's degree program. It requires the demonstration of competencies through a deliverable of significant scope in the form of a research project. The capstone project consists of a technical work product applicable to the field of health information management. Students should consider creating this final product with the aim of expanding the body of knowledge within the profession. The topic of the Capstone must be presented to and approved by the Capstone Mentor before starting the project.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate integrates and synthesizes competencies from across the degree program, thereby demonstrating the ability to participate in and contribute value to the chosen professional field.*

## General Education

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### English Composition I

English Composition I introduces learners to the types of writing and thinking that are valued in college and beyond. Students will practice writing in several genres with emphasis placed on writing and revising academic arguments. Instruction and exercises in grammar, mechanics, research documentation, and style are paired with each module so that writers can practice these skills as necessary.

Comp I is a foundational course designed to help students prepare for success at the college level.

There are no prerequisites for English Composition I.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate integrates credible and relevant sources into written arguments.*
- *The graduate uses appropriate writing and revision strategies*
- *The graduate composes an appropriate argumentative essay for a given context.*
- *The graduate composes an appropriate narrative for a given context.*
- *The graduate appropriately uses a given writing style.*
- *The graduate selects appropriate rhetorical strategies that improve writing and argumentation.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate grammatical rules, sentence structure, and writing conventions.*

### English Composition II

English Composition II introduces undergraduate students to research writing. It is a foundational course designed to help students prepare for advanced writing within the discipline and to complete the capstone. Specifically, this course will help students develop or improve research, reference citation, document organization, and writing skills. English Composition I or equivalent is a prerequisite for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate applies steps of the writing process appropriately to improve quality of writing.*
- *The graduate composes an argumentative research paper.*
- *The graduate evaluates the quality, credibility, and relevance of evidence in order to integrate evidence into a final research paper.*

### Introduction to Communication

This introductory communication course allows students to become familiar with the fundamental communication theories and practices necessary to engage in healthy professional and personal relationships. Students will survey human communication on multiple levels and critically apply the theoretical grounding of the course to interpersonal, intercultural, small group, and public presentational contexts. The course also encourages students to consider the influence of language, perception, culture, and media on their daily communicative interactions. In addition to theory, students will engage in the application of effective communication skills through systematically preparing and delivering an oral presentation. By practicing these fundamental skills in human communication, students become more competent

communicators as they develop more flexible, useful, and discriminatory communicative practices in a variety of contexts.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate applies foundational elements of effective communication.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate communication strategies in interpersonal and group contexts*
- *The graduate utilizes appropriate presentational communication strategies in personal and professional settings.*

## **Survey of United States Constitution and Government**

This course is an introduction to the U.S. Constitution and the U.S. government. Topics include (1) structure and relevance of the U.S. Constitution, (2) structure and function of governmental branches, and (3) political participation and policy making.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes the role of individuals, interest groups, and political parties in the U.S. electoral system.*
- *The graduate analyzes the powers of each branch of government and the relationships among them.*
- *The graduate analyzes the formation of personal and collective political opinions and the influence of the media.*
- *The graduate analyzes the division of power between national and state governments.*
- *The graduate analyzes the development and protection of individual civil liberties and civil rights.*
- *The graduate analyzes the dilemmas and principles of government.*
- *The graduate analyzes the central themes and founding principles of the U.S. Constitution and the U.S. government.*

## **Introduction to Humanities**

This introductory humanities course allows students to practice essential writing, communication, and critical thinking skills necessary to engage in civic and professional interactions as mature, informed adults. Whether through studying literature, visual and performing arts, or philosophy, all humanities courses stress the need to form reasoned, analytical, and articulate responses to cultural and creative works. Studying a wide variety of creative works allows students to more effectively enter the global community with a broad and enlightened perspective.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes the primary contributions and characteristics of humanities during the Classical period.*
- *The graduate analyzes the primary contributions and characteristics of humanities during the Romantic period.*
- *The graduate assesses the development of humans through the study of key concepts, disciplines, and primary influences of the humanities.*
- *The graduate analyzes the primary contributions and characteristics of humanities during the Renaissance.*
- *The graduate analyzes the primary contributions and characteristics of humanities within the Neoclassical and Enlightenment period.*
- *The graduate analyzes the primary contributions and characteristics of humanities during the Realist movement.*

## **Intermediate Algebra**

This course provides an introduction of algebraic concepts and the development of the essential groundwork for College Algebra. Topics include: A review of basic mathematical skills, the real number system, algebraic expressions, linear equations, graphing, exponents and polynomials

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate solves linear equations and applications.*
- *The graduate translates, simplifies, and evaluates algebraic expressions.*



- *The graduate determines absolute values, adds and subtracts integers, multiplies and divides real numbers, and determines whether or not a particular integer is a solution.*
- *The graduate graphs ordered pairs and lines on the Cartesian coordinate system.*
- *The graduate identifies, evaluates, and multiplies exponents and polynomials.*

## Critical Thinking and Logic

Reasoning and Problem Solving helps students internalize a systematic process for exploring issues that takes them beyond an unexamined point of view and encourages them to become more self-aware thinkers by applying principles of problem identification and clarification, planning and information gathering, identifying assumptions and values, analysis and interpretation of information and data, reaching well-founded conclusions, and identifying the role of critical thinking in the disciplines and professions.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate recognizes the value of critical thinking in identifying and understanding the underlying structures of the disciplines and professions.*
- *The graduate evaluates different sources representing a range of perspectives on a problem in order to weigh the implications and consequences of different solutions to the problem.*
- *The graduate synthesizes information to understand a problem's complexities and potential solutions, and then evaluates the reasoning and evidence in support of these different solutions.*
- *The graduate identifies internal and external biases and assumptions related to a problem, and evaluates the influence and validity of these biases and assumptions.*
- *The graduate logically brings together information to arrive at a viable solution to a problem, and then clearly and accurately communicates the results.*
- *The graduate analyzes open-ended problems by learning about the problem and evaluating the accuracy and relevance of different perspectives on the problem.*

## Introduction to Psychology

In this course, students will develop an understanding of psychology and how it helps them better understand others and themselves. Students will learn general theories about psychological development, the structure of the brain, and how psychologists study behavior. They will gain an understanding of both normal and disordered psychological behaviors, as well as general applications of the science of psychology in society (such as personality typing and counseling).

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate examines the significant characteristics of major theories of emotion, motivation, and personality.*
- *The graduate examines the relationships between intelligence and memory.*
- *The graduate examines key developmental milestones across the lifespan.*
- *The graduate examines the processes of social cognition and their effects on social interactions.*
- *The graduate analyzes how the scientific method is used in psychology.*
- *The graduate analyzes the role and function of the brain, nervous system, and endocrine system in human psychology.*
- *The graduate examines the principle causes, prevalence, and basic treatments of psychological disorders.*
- *The graduate examines the relationships among classical, operant, and observational learning theories.*

## Introduction to Probability and Statistics

In this course, students demonstrate competency in the basic concepts, logic, and issues involved in statistical reasoning. Topics include summarizing and analyzing data, sampling and study design, and probability.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate applies theoretical or empirical probability to a situation to quantify uncertainty.*
- *The graduate evaluates the sampling methods used in studies including the effect they have on conclusions that can be made.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two variables through the creation and interpretation of numerical summaries and visual displays.*
- *The graduate determines the probability of events using simulations, diagrams, and probability rules.*
- *The graduate evaluates categorical and quantitative data using appropriate numerical measures and graphical displays.*
- *The graduate designs and conducts observational studies, controlled experiments, and surveys to explore population characteristics.*

## **Business**

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### **Organizational Behavior**

Organizational Behavior and Leadership explores how to lead and manage effectively in diverse business environments. The course requires students to demonstrate the ability to apply organizational leadership theories and management strategies in a series of scenario-based problems.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate can describe the effects of specified influences on individual behavior.*
- *The graduate can analyze leadership theories, methods, and tools in given situations and select the appropriate behavior of the leader.*
- *The graduate can develop and recommend how to implement effective performance evaluation processes.*
- *The graduate can determine which type of team and team leadership should be used to accomplish a task or project.*
- *The graduate analyzes the culture within an organization to determine how to work effectively within that organization.*
- *The graduate can recommend appropriate principles or techniques for guiding the development of a group.*

### **Business Ethics**

Business Ethics is designed to enable students to identify the ethical and socially responsible courses of actions available through the exploration of various scenarios in business. Students will also learn to develop appropriate ethics guidelines for a business. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes ethical and socially responsible courses of action in a given business situation.*
- *The graduate analyzes ethical considerations that shape business leadership.*
- *The graduate evaluates ethical policies in a given business scenario.*
- *The graduate applies ethical principles to employment.*
- *The graduate applies ethical principles to environmental concerns confronting business.*
- *The graduate applies ethical principles to international business.*

## **Health Information Technology**

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### **Foundations in Healthcare Information Management**

Foundations in Healthcare Information Management applies theories from business, IT, management, medicine, and consumer-centered healthcare skills. Students will learn to evaluate and analyze health information systems for implementation in health information management. There are no prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate evaluates various types of healthcare delivery systems to support the diverse requirements of each setting, including acute care, ambulatory care, health information exchanges, and the personal health record for healthcare consumers.*
- *The graduate applies the principles of project management for project planning and development, launch, and evaluating specific project ideas in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate evaluates a vendor negotiation strategy for the implementation of an electronic health record (EHR).*
- *The graduate evaluates an organization's medical practice workflow, functional needs of end-users, data infrastructure, and information technology systems and processes, specifically during adoption phases of health information systems.*
- *The graduate analyzes electronic health records (EHR) applications to support organizational leadership in the planning and implementation of a health information system.*

## Health Sciences

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### Anatomy and Physiology I

Anatomy and Physiology I examines the structures and functions of the human body. The course is designed to provide students with a thorough understanding of human anatomy and physiology, including the interdependent operational relationships among them. Students will use a dissection lab to study organ systems of the human body in their healthy state including the digestive, skeletal, sensory, respiratory, reproductive, nervous, muscular, cardiovascular, lymphatic, integumentary, endocrine and renal systems. By examining these organ systems in a healthy state, healthcare professionals are more adept to recognize when something is functioning abnormally, which is a key component to providing effective care to patients. For nursing students this is the first of two anatomy and physiology courses within the program of study. This course has no pre-requisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes the structures and functions of the human cardiovascular and respiratory systems.*
- *The graduate analyzes the structure and function of the human nervous system.*
- *The graduate analyzes the structure and function of the human digestive system.*
- *The graduate analyzes the structure and function of the human renal and reproductive systems.*
- *The graduate analyzes the structure and function of the human lymphatic and endocrine systems.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate terminology to communicate about body position and human anatomical features and relationships.*
- *The graduate analyzes the structures and functions of the human muscular, skeletal, and integumentary systems.*

## Leadership and Management

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### Principles of Management

This course addresses strategic planning, total quality, entrepreneurship, conflict and change, human resource management, diversity, and organizational structure.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate can recommend an organizational structure to match a given organization's situation.*
- *The graduate can recommend effective techniques for managing conflict and change.*

- *The graduate can describe how to establish and promote an entrepreneurial emphasis within an organization.*
- *The graduate can correctly apply principles of human resource management in a given situation.*
- *The graduate responds appropriately to diversity issues in the workplace.*
- *The graduate can explain the strategic planning process.*
- *The graduate can describe how to establish a total quality management program in a product operation and in a service operation.*

## General Science Content

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### Introduction to Biology

This course is a foundational introduction to the biological sciences. The overarching theories of life from biological research are explored as well as the fundamental concepts and principles of the study of living organisms and their interaction with the environment. Key concepts include how living organisms use and produce energy; how life grows, develops, and reproduces; how life responds to the environment to maintain internal stability; and how life evolves and adapts to the environment.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes interdependencies of organisms and their environments.*
- *The graduate analyzes the characteristics and classification of living organisms.*
- *The graduate analyzes different types of cells based on their structures and biological functions.*
- *The graduate analyzes the basic chemical composition of cells and the basic processes that happen at the cellular level.*
- *The graduate analyzes the biological basis for and patterns of heredity and gene expression.*

## Healthcare Data

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### Data Analytics and Information Governance

Data Analytics and Information Governance explores the structure, methods, and approaches for using health information in the healthcare industry. By focusing on quality data collection, analytics, and industry regulations, students will examine tools that ensure quality data collection as well as use data to improve quality of care. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate evaluates health record types and content for compliance with records storage policies.*
- *The graduate organizes healthcare data with the use of data structures and collection tools to support organizational needs.*
- *The graduate integrates key concepts and skills from health information management (HIM) standards and policies to ensure data quality and integrity in an HIM environment.*
- *The graduate ensures compliance with governing agency policies for health records documentation and storage.*

### Healthcare Financial Resource Management

Healthcare Financial Resource Management examines financial practices within healthcare industries to promote effective management at department and organization levels. Focusing on financial processes associated with facility operations in the healthcare field, this course will analyze the impact of strategic financial planning and regulatory control processes. This course has no prerequisites.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate analyzes how coding and billing cycle processes impact institutional revenue cycles.*

- *The graduate analyzes the general factors that influence healthcare pricing in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate evaluates financial information, organization classification, and financial decision-making processes in the operations of healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes financial statements for profitability and risk in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes how sources of operating revenue impact the revenue cycle in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate reviews the strategic financial process and financial plans for healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes the financial management control processes in healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate evaluates policies and procedures in healthcare organizations to ensure compliance with federal laws and regulations.*

## Business of IT

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### Business of IT - Project Management

In this course, students will build on industry standard concepts, techniques, and processes to develop a comprehensive foundation for project management activities. During a project's life cycle, students will develop the critical skills necessary to initiate, plan, execute, monitor, control, and close a project. Students will apply best practices in areas such as scope management, resource allocation, project planning, project scheduling, quality control, risk management, performance measurement, and project reporting. This course prepares students for the following certification exam: CompTIA Project+.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate determines project tools and documentation methods to measure and monitor project performance.*
- *The graduate applies communication methods and change control processes to maintain clarity of project plans, activities, and changes for stakeholders.*
- *The graduate determines the impact of project constraints and influences to manage risk.*
- *The graduate applies key project management processes to guide business initiatives.*

## Professional Practice Experience

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### Professional Practice Experience and Portfolio - Management Level

This course supports the assessment for Professional Practice: Management Portfolio II. The purpose of PPE II is to expound your experience by having you practice your future profession at the supervisory level. Any site where health information is used and you can be mentored by a department or facility manager is appropriate for PPE II.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate exemplifies high professional standards, upholds confidentiality requirements, promotes the guidelines of the American Health Information Management Association Code of Ethics, and demonstrates leadership skills as a health informatics professional at a healthcare organization.*
- *The graduate analyzes how the operational management of a healthcare organization adheres to government regulations, accreditation guidelines, and quality improvement initiatives.*
- *The graduate applies health informatics/information management skills at the managerial level at a healthcare organization.*

### Professional Practice Experience and Portfolio - Technical Level

The Professional Practice Experience (PPE) is your opportunity to put into practice all the health informatics/information management (HIIM) theories you have been studying. Any site where health information is managed in any form is a potential PPE site. PPE sites can be healthcare facilities, pharmaceutical firms, software vendors, regional health information exchanges, insurance companies, or healthcare research organizations. In addition, larger healthcare

organizations may have experiences available to you in their cancer registries, information technology department, finance/business offices, compliance office, quality assurance, utilization review, or risk management departments.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The graduate evaluates how operational components within healthcare organizations demonstrate adherence to government regulatory standards, accreditation guidelines, and quality improvement initiatives.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate basic health informatics and information management skills based on organizational needs within healthcare organizations.*
- *The graduate displays the qualities and demeanor of professionalism, practices reflection, recognizes the need for and adheres to requirements for confidentiality, and engages in ethical behaviors as an independently functioning health informatics professional.*

## Need More Information? WGU Student Services

WGU's Student Services team is dedicated exclusively to helping you achieve your academic goals. The Student Services office is available during extended hours to assist with general questions and administrative or accessibility issues. The Student Services team members help you resolve issues, listen to student issues and concerns, and make recommendations for improving policy and practice based on student feedback. The Student Services team provides a formal means by which you can express your views, which in turn will inform the decisions we make.

Student Services team members also assist with unresolved concerns to find equitable resolutions. To contact the Student Services team, please feel free to call 877-435-7948 or e-mail [studentservices@wgu.edu](mailto:studentservices@wgu.edu). We are available Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. Closed Sundays.

If you have inquiries or concerns that require technical support, please contact the WGU IT Service Desk. The IT Service Desk is available Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. To contact the IT Service Desk, please call 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) or e-mail [servicedesk@wgu.edu](mailto:servicedesk@wgu.edu). The support teams are generally closed in observance of university holidays.

For the most current information regarding WGU support services, please visit "Student Support" on the Student Portal at <http://my.wgu.edu>.