



VIEW

Advancing the Value of Health Informatics and Information Management Practice through Quality Education

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Welcome to CAHIIM VIEW, a periodic, online publication of the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). CAHIIM VIEW is designed to share news, viewpoints, observations, useful information, updates from the CAHIIM Commissioners, helpful tips, FAQs and new developments in the realm of accreditation and academe. A copy of each issue will be archived on the CAHIIM Web site for your reference. We look forward to your comments and questions.



Message from the CAHIIM Chair—C. Jeanne Solberg, RHIA

I began my term as an elected CAHIIM Commissioner three years ago as an HIM practitioner ready to volunteer for my professional association (AHIMA) and its educational efforts. I had no idea I would be obtaining an invaluable education myself. Orientation to CAHIIM responsibilities seemed daunting. As a practitioner, I understood policies and procedures; as a guest lecturer in an HIM

APAR Launches ...

The next reporting cycle for the Annual Program Assessment Report (APAR) is open for data input through February 27, 2007. It is important that all accredited programs have their data in the APAR system in order to run useful reports reflecting the breadth of HIM academic programs. You will notice some cosmetic and functional changes to the APAR this year. Many of your practical suggestions were implemented and we thank you.

Beginning this year, a new one year *Cumulative Certification Scores Summary Report* from Thomson-Prometrics will provide your program's certification examination results from October 1, 2005, through September 30, 2006. The report has been sent to all programs. Please check over the student names and data for accuracy and report any errors or problems to the AHIMA Certification staff as the cover letter indicates. A model of the new report with highlighted indicators of the specific information to be reported in Section V of your APAR report is posted on the CAHIIM Web site on the APAR home page at www.cahiim.org.

You can start right now by printing out a copy of last year's APAR report, organizing a file in which to place all relevant information and data summaries needed for input. Where possible, involve other HIM faculty and your Advisory Committee in your Annual Report process, particularly with review and updating of your Program Evaluation Plan. Consider the analogy of filing your income tax return (although we hope APAR is a little more fun) and organize your materials first so that data input is merely a technical process. An updated *APAR System Manual* is posted on the CAHIIM Web site for your reference. It takes you section by section, and step by step. Note that during the APAR open period, you can make any changes to Section 1–Profile

program, I understood preparation and presentation for a three hour class; but how exactly did one use these statements called domains, sub-domains and tasks? I turned to the incoming chair, whose encouraging words and those of my assigned mentor have clarified our mission and the many complexities in delivering formal HIM education.

Through my term as a Commissioner, I have gained an appreciation of the enormous amount of work that goes into educating HIM students for the future and the struggle for many educators to maintain a viable and progressive program. I've learned through reading course curricula and syllabi, reviewing program missions and goals, evaluating student support and advisement, and observing the accreditation processes first hand. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, as educators for your hard work and commitment to produce the "end product" that I, as an employer, want to hire.

The CAHIIM Board of Commissioners and Staff extend Season's Greetings to the HIM students, faculty, staff and administrators of the colleges and universities we serve.

with the exception of the name of the sponsoring institution and a change in program director, both of which require formal written notification to CAHIIM staff. All other information, such as changes in administrative officers, addresses, phones, and URL, can be made by the program director during this open period. If any information is in error, please change it now, since the saved profile information populates the CAHIIM Program Directory.

CAHIIM staff reviewed every APAR report to see how you entered data, what "comments" you had, and how you designed your program evaluation plan. No programmatic accreditation actions were identified from the APAR at this time. Last year established a baseline by creating a foundation on which to build data specific to your program, and this year builds on that data. Enhancements will continue to be made based on user feedback. Below is a list of what has occurred and next year's vision for APAR.

- **Phase 1–2005**
 1. Technical design, beta test
 2. Baseline data from all programs entered
 3. Online survey of users–95 percent positive
 4. List of enhancements suggested
- **Phase 2–2006**
 1. Technical redesign
 2. Workflow enhancements
 3. Staff review of APAR data
 4. APAR data input cycle: October 2006–February 27, 2007
 5. List of enhancements suggested
- **Phase 3–2007**
 1. Refine workflow, policies and procedures
 2. Analyze Thresholds and Measurements
 3. Integrate other accreditation processes

HIM Program Metrics

Currently there are 240 CAHIIM Accredited HIM degree-granting programs (47 baccalaureate; 193 associate). In addition there are three CAHIIM approved Masters' Degree programs in HIM/Health Informatics education. For the academic year 2005–2006, there were 12,336 students enrolled in HIM programs throughout the US and Puerto Rico (2,032 in baccalaureate programs and 10,304 in associate degree programs) of which 2,493 graduated (541 baccalaureate and 1,952 associate) during the reporting year.

AOE 2006 CAHIIM Presentations

The following presentations took place at the 2006 Assembly on Education Summer Symposium with Powerpoints stored on the AHIMA AOE Community of Practice under "2006 Assembly on Education" for your reference and use:

- “CAHIIM Basics for New Program Directors”
- “Maximizing Use of the Annual Program Assessment Report”
- “CAHIIM Interpreting Standards for Accredited Programs”
- “CAHIIM Self-Assessment and Program Evaluation Planning”

CHEA Update

CAHIIM submitted a Letter of Intent in August 2006, to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), to begin the process of seeking CHEA Recognition of CAHIIM. CHEA recognition is voluntary, non-governmental, and provides you, the public and sponsors of CAHIIM, with a measure of quality assurance in the reliability of CAHIIM accreditation policies, procedures and decision making practices. We look forward as an accrediting agency to be recognized by CHEA and value our relationship with colleagues in the accreditation industry. To learn about CHEA go to www.chea.org.

Standards Made Easy

In each issue of *CAHIIM View* we will provide some useful tips to help you interpret and use the *CAHIIM Standards* for continual program improvements.

Check your catalog, student handbooks and Web site for accurate, up-to-date information. Make sure if you choose to publish a statement on accreditation, that it is correctly worded. Suggested language can be found on the CAHIIM Web site at www.cahiim.org. For currently accredited programs the statement should be:

The HIM (degree level) program is accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education](http://www.cahiim.org) (CAHIIM).

(For online catalogs insert the URL for CAHIIM: www.cahiim.org)

Remove any superfluous language and keep statements about AHIMA credentialing examinations separate from the accreditation statement. Graduating from an accredited program means that students are eligible to apply to take the AHIMA certification examination for the RHIT or RHIA based on academic level of the program. AHIMA reserves the right to accept and approve each application and transcript.

Benefits of Accreditation

What is the Value of *CAHIIM Accreditation* to Health Information Management programs? Being CAHIIM accredited:

- Supports job marketability and entry-level competency for your

graduates

- Creates goals, target outcome measurements, and an overall work plan for your HIM program's self-improvement to ensure positive student learning outcomes
- Stimulates curriculum relevance for today's electronic healthcare environment
- Lists your program as an accredited program in the online CAHIIM Program Directory, routinely searched by prospective students and the general public
- Consistent HIM academic program performance based on established quality standards and outcomes
- Establishes eligibility for FORE scholarships for students, AHIMA professional entry-level credentials, and faculty development stipends
- The Annual Program Assessment Report (APAR) gives you a consistent repository of outcomes metrics which over time, will provide trending data for your program with comparable benchmark data
- APAR reporting provides a ready resource for program evaluation plans and statistics requested by your sponsoring academic institution and regional accreditors
- Ready access to CAHIIM consultation services at all phases of program development, management and improvement
- Eligibility to subscribe to the e-HIM Virtual Laboratory system

