



Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009

The Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) has approved distribution for public comment of the **2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health Informatics (HI) Programs – Master's Degree**. The proposed *Standards* were derived from the CAHIIM Standards model template used for accreditation of academic programs and comply with current codes of good practice in higher education specialized programmatic accreditation.

CAHIIM has conducted a pilot peer review process for approval of master's degree programs in both health informatics and health information management programs since 2006. CAHIIM studied the issues and needs of programmatic accreditation at the graduate level in health informatics and incorporated the work of a blue ribbon Health Informatics Workgroup in 2008 and a CAHIIM Health Informatics Committee in 2009 consisting of four appointed Commissioners to the CAHIIM Board representing health informatics educators and practitioners.

Timetable:

October 1-November 30, 2009	Public comment period
December 1 – 31, 2009	CAHIIM review/incorporate comments
January 1, 2010	Standards in effect

Public Comment Process

Comments from the public and other stakeholders on the proposed *2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health Informatics (HI) Programs - Master's Degree* are welcomed during the public comment period October 1-November 30, 2009. To provide comments please use the link below to the CAHIIM online survey tool.

<http://research.zarca.com/k/SsURPPsQRXsPsPsP>

CAHIIM

The Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) is an accrediting organization which has independent authority in all actions pertaining to accreditation of educational programs in health informatics and health information management. The CAHIIM office is located at 233 N. Michigan Avenue, 21st Floor, Chicago, Illinois, 60601 www.cahiim.org



**Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009**

Mission

The Commission serves the public interest in advancing the value of health informatics and health information management through quality education by:

1. Establishing and enforcing accreditation *Standards* for health informatics (HI) and health information management (HIM) higher education programs;
2. Recognizing programs that meet the *Standards*;
3. Assessing student achievement;
4. Respecting educational innovation and diversity;
5. Recognizing academic institutions' autonomy;
6. Emphasizing the principle of volunteerism and peer review; and
7. Embracing a culture of continuous quality improvement.

CAHIIM strives to carry out its mission by promoting, evaluating, and improving the quality of undergraduate and graduate health informatics and information management education in the United States and internationally. Through our partnership with academe and the practice fields, CAHIIM serves colleges and universities in a voluntary peer review process as a means to continuously improve quality education to meet healthcare workforce needs. As a result, CAHIIM accreditation becomes the benchmark by which students and employers determine the integrity of health information education for the global community.

Additionally, CAHIIM serves the public interest by operating in a consistent manner with all applicable ethical, business and accreditation best practices. Accreditation is a voluntary, self-regulatory process by which nongovernmental associations recognize educational programs found to meet or exceed standards for educational quality. Accreditation also assists in the further improvement of these educational programs as related to resources invested, processes followed, and outcomes achieved. The monitoring of degree instruction is tied closely to national professional association competencies for practice in the profession

CAHIIM and its sponsoring organization(s) cooperate to establish, maintain, and promote appropriate standards of quality for postsecondary educational programs in health informatics and information management to provide competent, skilled professionals for the healthcare industry.



**Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009**

1 **Introduction.**

2 Health informatics has been variously defined. For the purposes of program
3 accreditation, CAHIIM views the discipline through the lens of three major facets or
4 domains:

- 5 • Information systems,
- 6 • Informatics, and
- 7 • Information technology.

8 *Information systems* are concerned with such issues as information systems analysis,
9 design, implementation, and management.

10 *Informatics* is concerned with such issues as the structure, function and transfer of
11 information, socio-technical aspects of health computing, and human-computer
12 interaction.

13 *Information technology* is concerned with such issues as computer networks, database
14 and systems administration, security, and programming.

15
16 These three *facets* are aligned for the purpose of meeting the information needs of the
17 various stakeholders within health care and related systems. Components of each of
18 these facets are highly interactive with each other, requiring knowledge and skills that are
19 shared between them. The result is a critical synergy within the discipline of health
20 informatics. An educational program in health informatics must include content from all
21 three facets. Graduates of a program must have formal exposure and show an
22 understanding of the interconnections between the three facets. Programs and students
23 may choose to emphasize one or more facets consistent with their goals and objectives.
24 The kind of knowledge learned (knowledge dimension) and the process used to learn
25 (cognitive processes) must be consistent with the program's emphasis, goals, and
26 objectives.

27

28 **I.A. Mission.**

29 The health informatics graduate program is designed in concert with the institutional
30 mission and the goals of the college/university division or department in which it is
31 located.

32



**Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009**

33 *Interpretation: Institutional and program mission statements, program goals and*
34 *objectives are documented and made public.*

35

36 **I.B. Sponsorship.**

37 The sponsoring educational institution is accredited by a regional or national accrediting
38 organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, and must be authorized
39 under applicable law or other acceptable authority to award a minimum of a master's
40 degree.

41

42 *Interpretation: The sponsoring educational institution must provide the name of the*
43 *accrediting agency, the most recent date and length of accreditation. The sponsoring*
44 *educational institution must participate in Title IV programs.*

45

46 **I.C. Responsibilities.** Responsibilities of the sponsoring educational institution must
47 assure that governance and lines of authority are clearly defined and that the provisions of
48 these *Standards* are met.

49

50 *Interpretation: The sponsoring educational institution must clarify the lines of*
51 *authority and administrative governance of the health informatics program within the*
52 *framework of the sponsoring institution.*

53

54 **II.A. Program Goals.** The program goals must form the basis for program planning,
55 implementation and evaluation. Program goals with measurable outcomes must be
56 established annually and be compatible with the mission of the sponsoring educational
57 institution.

58

59 *Interpretation: Each program will define its own mission within the broad definition*
60 *of health informatics; a program may further define its mission to include other roles*
61 *and functions, which derive from the purposes of its sponsoring educational*
62 *institution, its communities of interest, faculty expertise and research initiatives.*

63

64 **II.B.** The program's mission and goals must be stated in terms of educational (student
65 and program) outcomes to be achieved, are measurable, and reflect the principles and

**Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009**

66 ethics of the health informatics field, and fit within the mission of the sponsoring
67 educational institution.

68

69 *Interpretation: The program's mission and goals must be outcomes-focused and*
70 *relevant to the mission of the sponsoring educational institution.*

71

72 **II.C.** A program assessment plan exists for systematic evaluation to the extent to which
73 the mission, goals and objectives of the health informatics program must be met.

74

75 *Interpretation: A process exists for systematic evaluation to the extent to which the*
76 *mission, goals and objectives are being met, and describe how this process of*
77 *assessment and continuous improvement complies with the sponsoring educational*
78 *institution's overall evaluation plan.*

79

80 **II.D.** The program must at least annually assess and document its effectiveness in
81 achieving its stated goals and outcomes.

82

83 *Interpretation: Each program must annually assess its program goals and outcomes*
84 *as required by the designated CAHIIM reporting system.*

85

86 **II.E.** The program must use the results of assessment to document program
87 improvements.

88

89 *Interpretation: Data analysis and action plans must be documented. A program must*
90 *document how it meets its target goals and objectives and how it plans to address*
91 *weaknesses observed.*

92

93 **III.A. Curriculum.** The program's curriculum must reflect the program's mission, goals
94 and objectives.

95

96 *Interpretation: The curriculum must focus on the knowledge, skills and values as*
97 *outlined by the program.*

**Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009**

98 **III.B.** The health informatics program must be established as a core concentration or
99 specialized track within a graduate level program of study that culminates with a master's
100 degree or a doctoral degree.

101

102 *Interpretation: The program must describe the degree(s) awarded on completion of the*
103 *program of study. If a certificate is awarded explain how it is an adjunct to the*
104 *graduate degree.*

105

106 **III.C.** A program-specific curriculum must build on health informatics competencies.

107

108 *Interpretation: Programs must append syllabi for all courses in the health informatics*
109 *curriculum. CAHIIM will consider for approval, competencies that have been*
110 *approved by professional and educational associations and governmental agencies.*
111 *CAHIIM will validate alignment of competencies with the program's mission, goals*
112 *and objectives.*

113

114 **III.D.** The program curriculum must stay current with evolving issues and practices in
115 health informatics.

116

117 *Interpretation: The program must demonstrate how the curriculum is routinely*
118 *updated and relevant.*

119

120 **IV.A. Faculty.** The program must clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the
121 faculty necessary to fully support and sustain the program.

122

123 *Interpretation: The number of full-time faculty appointed at the rank of assistant,*
124 *associate, or full professor must be sufficient to ensure that teaching, research and*
125 *service goals of the program are met. Part time and adjunct faculty must be included as*
126 *an important faculty component. The size of the faculty complement in relationship to*
127 *the size of the student body must support and encourage effective and regular*
128 *student/faculty interactions. An appropriate student/faculty ratio depends on a number*
129 *of factors, including the nature of the institution, the range of teaching responsibilities,*

Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
**2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs**
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009

130 *and teaching intensity (such as didactic material, projects, practice experiences,*
131 *research).*

132

133 **IV.B.** The program must provide opportunities for faculty to stay current with evolving
134 issues and practices in health informatics.

135

136 *Interpretation: Examples of acceptable mechanisms may include but are not limited to*
137 *continuing education, memberships and contributions to professional organizations,*
138 *links with industry, and partners.*

139

140 **IV.C.** The program director or equivalent must have, at minimum, a master's degree.
141 The program must define and document the roles and responsibilities of the program
142 leadership necessary to fully support and sustain the program.

143

144 *Interpretation: The qualifications and responsibilities of the individual(s) responsible*
145 *for leadership of the program must be documented.*

146

147 **IV.D.** The qualifications of each faculty member must include competence in assigned
148 teaching areas, effectiveness in teaching, and scholarly productivity consistent with their
149 faculty appointment.

150

151 *Interpretation: The program must maintain documentation of faculty competence,*
152 *teaching effectiveness, and scholarly productivity consistent with each faculty*
153 *appointment (including part time and adjunct faculty).*

154

155 **IV.E.** Each faculty member's performance must be evaluated according to the
156 institution's policies.

157

158 *Interpretation: Evaluation includes accomplishment and innovation in the areas of*
159 *teaching, research and service. Within applicable institutional policies, faculty,*
160 *students, and others must be sufficiently involved in the evaluation process.*

161

Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
**2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs**
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009

162 **V.A. Resources.** The instructional resources and services provided for the program
163 including access to library and information technology applications, as well as other
164 resources used in the curriculum must be adequate, appropriately staffed and accessible
165 by all students regardless of the delivery mode of the program.

166

167 *Interpretation: The program must be able to demonstrate that current instructional*
168 *resources, technology, reference/library resources needed to fulfill the requirements of*
169 *the curriculum, are accessible to and can support all students in the program.*

170

171 **V.B.** The sponsoring educational institution must provide staff to adequately support
172 achievement of the program's goals and outcomes.

173

174 *Interpretation: The program must be able to demonstrate that staff and services*
175 *provided for the health informatics program are sufficient for the level of use required,*
176 *and specialized to the degree needed by the program to achieve its goals and outcomes.*

177

178 **VI.A. Students.** The program must have an effective and accessible academic advising
179 system for students, as well as readily available career and placement advice. Career
180 paths of graduates are monitored, documented and used in the annual program
181 assessment.

182

183 *Interpretation: Each student enrolled in the program must have access to advisors who*
184 *are knowledgeable about the program's curriculum and specific courses.*

185

186 **VII.A. Fair Practices.** All published program information must accurately reflect the
187 program offered:

188

189 **VII.A.1.** The sponsoring educational institution and programmatic accreditation status;

190 **VII.A.2.** Number of credits required for completion of the program;

191 **VII.A.3.** Tuition/fees and other costs required to complete the program;

192 **VII.A.4.** Policies and procedures for withdrawal and for refunds of tuition/fees;

193 **VII.A.5.** Academic calendar;

194 **VII.A.6.** Student grievance procedure;

Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
**2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs**
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009

195 **VII.A.7.** Criteria for successful completion of each segment of the curriculum and
196 graduation including prerequisites, co-requisites, minimum grade point average, and
197 required courses.

198

199 *Interpretation (VII.A.1. – VII.A.7): Policies covering these areas must be published*
200 *and made available to students and the public in the college catalog (and/or online*
201 *website), and such information must be consistent wherever it appears.*

202

203 **VII.B.** All activities associated with the program, including student and faculty
204 recruitment, student admission, and faculty employment practices, must be non-
205 discriminatory and in accordance with federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations.

206

207 *Interpretation: The college catalog and/or website must include an official non-*
208 *discrimination statement and it must be clear that the health informatics program*
209 *adheres to the non-discrimination policy as regards faculty employment and student*
210 *admissions.*

211

212 **VII.C.** Documentation must be maintained for student admission, advisement,
213 counseling, and evaluation. Grades and credits for courses must be recorded on the
214 student transcript and permanently maintained by the sponsoring educational institution
215 in a safe and accessible location.

216

217 *Interpretation: The program must maintain student records that reflect evidence of*
218 *student evaluation on all levels, and progression toward achievement of program*
219 *requirements.*

220

221 **VIII. Administrative Requirements for Maintenance of Accreditation.**

222

223 **VIII.A.** Submission of CAHIIM required reports by the determined deadline date.

224 **VIII.B.** Participation in a designated periodic site visit of the accredited program.

225 **VIII.C.** Notification in writing to CAHIIM of any substantive changes in the institution
226 affecting the program's accreditation including changes in sponsoring institution name,



**Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information
Management Education (CAHIIM)
2009 Standards and Interpretations for Accreditation of Health
Informatics (HI) Programs
Master's Degree
Draft September 2009**

- 227 ownership, or program officials (Chief Executive Officer, Dean and Program Director)
228 within 30 days of the effective date.
229 **VIII.D.** Payment of all CAHIIM administrative fees.

DRAFT