



HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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Alvin College Mission Statement

Alvin College improves lives by offering affordable, Alvin College-accessible, innovative, high-quality academic, career and technical education to meet the needs of students, workforce and the community.

Alvin College Vision Statement

Alvin College envisions a college that inspires lifelong learning, cultivates innovation, and serves as a vital partner in strengthening the economic and cultural vitality of our region—empowering students and communities to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Alvin College Alvin College Accreditation

Alvin College is a public community college in Brazoria County, Texas. We provide educational opportunities in workforce training, academics, technical fields, adult basic education, and personal development. Alvin College is Alvin College Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate and bAlvin College-laureate degrees. Alvin College also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the Alvin College Accreditation of Alvin College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on [SACSCOC's website](#).

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

1866 Southern Lane

Decatur, Georgia 30033-4907

404-679-4500



CAHIIM Alvin College Accreditation

The Health Information Management Alvin College Accreditor of Alvin College is the Commission on Alvin College Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College's Alvin College Accreditation for Associate degree in Health Information Management has been reaffirmed through 2029-2030.

All inquiries about the program's Alvin College Accreditation status should be directed by mail to CAHIIM, 200 East Randolph Street, Suite 5100, Chicago, IL, 60601; by phone at (312) 235-3255; or by email at info@cahiim.org.



Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM)

200 East Randolph Street, Suite 5100

Chicago, IL, 60601

(312) 235- 3255; info@cahiim.org.

Equal Opportunity Institution (EOI)

Alvin College is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sex, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Program Costs

The **Health Information Management A.A.S. degree** program costs approximately \$5300 for in-district students and \$8400 for those out-of-district. This includes tuition and fees. Additional fees for books, supplies, and expenses associated with professional practice placement will vary.

The **Medical Coding Level II Certificate** program costs approximately \$3600 for in-district students and \$5600 for those out-of-district. This includes tuition and fees. Additional fees for books, supplies, and expenses associated with professional practice placement will vary.

For more information on education costs, payment options, payment plans, deadlines, and more, visit our [Tuition and Fees](#) section of the college website.

Financial assistance is available for those who qualify. For more information, visit our [Financial Aid](#) section on the college website.

HIM Faculty

Dean of Legal and Health Sciences Dr. Marby McKinney		
Program Director Dr. Viseeta Brown	Office- 281-756-5659 vbrown@alvincollege.edu	Office Location S152
Clinical Coordinator Bridget Ruth	Office 281-756-5657 bruth@alvincollege.edu	Office Location S151
Administrative Assistant Laura Parker	Office- 281-756-5610 lparker@alvincollege.edu	Office Location S108

HIM Program Goals

AAS Degree

The Health Information Management (HIM) associate of applied science degree is designed to prepare graduates for entry-level employment in health information by the required AHIMA competencies. The HIM Curriculum prepares Registered Health Information Technicians (RHIT) to organize data in electronic databases, assign codes for reimbursement, abstract and analyze data, and maintain confidentiality, privacy, and security standards to protect patient information.

Coding Certificate

The Coding Certificate pathway prepares individuals to work for healthcare facilities and convert patients' health information into standardized diagnosis and/or procedure code(s) abstracted from the patient's medical record for healthcare insurance claims and databases.

Occupational Skills Award

The purpose of the Occupational Skills Award (OSA) in Health Information Systems is to equip students with essential, job-ready skills for immediate entry into the HIM workforce. This award focuses on the practical application of health data management, electronic health records, and medical terminology. It

serves as a fast-track award that supports career advancement or can be applied toward a certificate or associate degree in Health Information Management.

Students must attain a grade of a “C” or greater in each Health Information Management course designated in the OSA, certificate, or AAS degree curriculum.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the AAS program, graduates should be able to:

1. Perform analysis of health records to evaluate compliance with regulations and standards.
2. Apply clinical vocabulary and terminologies used in the organization's health information system.
3. Apply current laws, Alvin Collegereditation, licensure, and certification standards related to health information initiatives from the national, state, local, and facility levels.
4. Identify and report privacy issues and problems.
5. Apply diagnosis and procedure codes using ICD-10-CM and ICD-10-PCS.
6. Apply procedure codes using CPT and HCPCS.
7. Comprehend basic descriptive, institutional, and healthcare vital statistics.
8. Utilize tools and techniques to monitor, report, and improve processes.
9. Apply policies and procedures to the use of networks, including intranet and internet applications to facilitate the electronic health record.
10. Apply policies and procedures for the use of clinical data received or revenue cycle management.
11. Apply human resource management and team leadership skills to effectively supervise others.

Curriculum – AAS Full-Time

First Year**First Semester (Fall)**

BIOL 2401 Anatomy & Physiology I	4
ENG 1301 Composition I	3
HITT 1301 Health Data Content & Structure	3
HITT 1305 Medical Terminology I	<u>3</u>
	13

Second Semester (Spring)

BIOL 2402 Anatomy & Physiology II	4
HITT 1341 Coding & Classification Systems	3
HITT 1345 Health Care Delivery Systems	3
HITT 2330 Pathophysiology & Pharmacology	<u>3</u>
	13

Third Semester (Summer)

BCIS 1305 Business Computer Applications	3
HITT 1253 Legal & Ethical Aspects of Health Information	2
HITT 2335 Coding & Reimbursement Methodologies	3
MATH 1342 Elementary Statistical Methods	<u>3</u>
	11

Second Year**First Semester (Fall)**

HITT 1211 Health Information Systems	2
HITT 1355 Health Care Statistics	3
HITT 2260 Clinical – Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician	2
HITT 2343 Quality Assessment & Performance Improvement	3
HITT 2346 Advanced Medical Coding	<u>3</u>
	13

Second Semester (Spring)

HITT 2239 Health Information Organization & Supervision	2
*HITT 2249 RHIT Competency Review Language, Philosophy & Culture Or Creative Arts	2
PSYC 2301 or SOCI 1301	3
	<u>3</u>
	10

TOTAL	60
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***Capstone**

Curriculum – Coding Certificate Full-Time
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First Year**First Semester (Fall)**

BIOL	2401 Anatomy & Physiology I	4
HITT	1301 Health Data Content/Structure	3
HITT	1305 Medical Terminology I	<u>3</u>
		10

Second Semester (Spring)

BIOL	2402 Anatomy & Physiology II	4
HITT	1341 Coding & Classifications	3
HITT	1345 Health Care Delivery Systems	3
HITT	2330 Pathophysiology & Pharmacology	<u>3</u>
		13

Third Semester (Summer)

BCIS	1305 Business Computer Applications	3
HITT	1253 Legal & Ethical Aspects of HIM	2
HITT	2335 Coding and Reimbursement Methodologies	<u>3</u>
		8

Second Year**First Semester (Fall)**

HITT	1211 Health Information Systems	2
HITT	2260 Clinical/HIM Medical Records Tech	2
HITT	2346 Advanced Medical Coding	<u>3</u>
		7

Total 38

Curriculum – Occupational Skills Award (OSA) Health Information Systems
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HITT	1211 Health Information Systems	2
HITT	1301 Health Data Content/Structure	3
BCIS	1305 Business Computer Applications	3
HITT	1305 Medical Terminology I	<u>3</u>

Total 11

HIM Departmental Standards

Program Progression

Students will abide by the admission and curriculum requirements of Alvin College and the HIM Department at the time they are admitted or re-admitted to the program.

1. Once a student has enrolled in the HIM Program, all courses must be completed in the proper sequence as shown in the catalog degree plan or must have the approval of the Program Director.
2. No grade below a C will be Acceptable for progression.
3. All students must demonstrate competencies associated with the program curriculum within the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) domains as required by Alvin College accreditation standards outlined by the Commission on Alvin College Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).
4. Students may be dismissed from the program in the event they are asked to leave a professional practice experience (PPE). The student may not be allowed to continue in the program depending on the severity of the issue.
5. Only two (2) attempts in any HIM course will be permitted. If a student does not obtain a C or better in the HIM core courses with two attempts, they can no longer continue in the program and are not eligible to return.
6. Students must complete the program within five (5) years after initial Alvin College acceptance. If a student returns to complete the program after five years, they must start over at the very beginning and repeat the entire program.
7. Students desiring to change from Coding Certificate to the AAS degree or from the AAS degree to the Coding Certificate must notify the Program Director in writing of the request.
8. Students who miss two consecutive semesters will be deemed inactive in the program (unless they notify the Program Director of circumstances preventing them to enroll in courses). Students will be placed in inactive status and must reapply to continue the program.
9. Students desiring to withdraw from the program must notify the Program Director in writing of the request.

Transfer Guidelines

Academic Courses

Students who have completed academic courses in another college or university must submit an official transcript to the admission office and a copy of the transcript to the Health Information Management (HIM) department for each school attended.

Transfer credit is Alvin College accepted Alvin College according to the policy as published in the college catalog. Courses Alvin College accepted for transfer must be similar in content and credit to the ALVIN COLLEGE course(s). This will be determined by examination of the course description and/or syllabus of each course.

No grade below a "C" will be Alvin College accepted for transfer.

Health Information Management Course

HIM courses completed at another college or university will be considered for credit if the course contains similar content, comparable hours (classroom and clinical), and a grade of "C" or better.

Students transferring the Coding and Classification Systems course (HITT 1341) must have completed the current medical coding system for credit. If the current medical coding system was not instructed (ICD-10-

CM and ICD-10-PCS), students have the option to retake the course or take it as an “audit course”. Students enrolled in “audit” courses must complete all required coursework and maintain a 70% or better grade. Audit courses will not be reflected on the student’s Alvin College transcript.

Academic Standards

Readmission

A student who has withdrawn from the HIM program and wishes to be readmitted must:

- Complete an application for the program

- Abide by any changes to the program requirements

- Notify the Program Director at least 8 weeks before the requested date of readmission

- Provide the program with an updated transcript of any college work completed while on hiatus.

Code of Academic Integrity and Honesty

Alvin College students are members of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through a formalized program of instruction and learning. At the heart of this endeavor lie the core values of academic integrity which include honesty, truth, and freedom from lies and fraud. Because personal integrity is important in all aspects of life, students at Alvin College are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity both in and out of the classroom. Incidents of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and students guilty of such conduct are subject to severe disciplinary measures.

Academic dishonesty is defined as deceptive behavior or actions concerning data, records, submitted works, exams, or other materials related to participation in a course or other academic exercise; these actions include, but are not limited to the following: cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, misrepresentation of academic records, falsification of any course-related documents and facilitation of academic dishonesty by others. Cheating includes looking at or copying from another student's exam or assignments; orally communicating or receiving or providing answers during an exam, having another person take an exam, and obtaining or providing an unauthorized copy of an exam or any part of an exam.

Attendance in Online Courses

Alvin College students are required to attend classes. If an absence is unavoidable, the student is responsible for completing all work missed during the absence.

On the census day of each term, students who have never attended a class will be dropped by the Registrar for non-attendance from that course. In the case of online or hybrid courses, attendance will be determined in terms of participation.

Online course attendance will be determined in terms of participation. Alvin College according to the U.S. Department of Education definitions simply logging into the course in Blackboard does not constitute attendance in the online class. Examples of online attendance, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education, include direct interaction between instructor and student; submission of an academic assignment; examination, interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction; participation in an online discussion about academic matters; video assignments, etc. Any of the previously listed activities above can be used for certifying attendance for Distance Education students. Students are responsible for all material presented or assigned for a course and will be held Alvin College accountable for such materials in the determination of course grades. Each course syllabus will provide further details on attendance-taking methods for that course.

Faculty will review student participation for the week and enter attendance Alvin College accordingly.

Late Work

Late work will not be Alvin College accepted unless there are clear and compelling extenuating circumstances. If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from completing course assignments/exams/quizzes, you must contact your instructor immediately, before the assignment/exam/quiz due date unless prevented from doing so by emergency circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances are serious personal and/or family illness/ hospitalization, death in the family, weather-related evacuation/emergencies, work emergencies, and issues related to active military assignment. Personal computer/software/internet connectivity issues are not considered extenuating circumstances. Granting of late work submission due to extenuating circumstances is at the discretion of the instructor and will require documentation for verification of extenuating circumstances. If late work submission is granted, the instructor will establish a due date and requirements without the loss of course points.

Internet Alvin Collegeess

Students enrolled in an online course must have consistent and reliable Alvin Collegeess to a computer with a reliable and consistent broadband internet connection. Alvin College utilizes Blackboard Learn for the delivery of content for its courses. Blackboard requires certain system requirements to be able to participate in and complete your course. For more information, please visit Blackboard Browser Support.

Grading Scale

The grading system used for didactic and clinical courses is as follows:

POINTS	GRADE
100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59-0	F

The grading system for each course is described in the course syllabus.

Exam policy: Students are allowed to make up one missed exam. Make-up exams will be available towards the end of the semester. Make-up dates will be provided in the course syllabus.

Grade Appeal

Students who wish to challenge a course grade must first discuss it with the instructor. If the student then chooses to pursue the challenge, he/she must present his/her appeal in writing to the Program Director. If resolution does not occur at the faculty level, the student may first appeal to the Dean and then the Vice President of Instruction for further consideration. A student has one year from the date a grade is assigned to submit a grade appeal. A student shall not be permitted to submit a grade appeal because of general dissatisfaction with the grade when a penalty has been assigned to the grade, or due to the outcome of a course as a result of a grade. In addition, disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance shall be permitted as the basis for a grade appeal.

Withdrawal Procedure

The HIM Department adheres to the withdrawal policy of the college in the Alvin College Schedule and Catalog. Students should visit with their instructor, academic advisor, and the financial aid department before the withdrawal. Students are not automatically withdrawn for nonattendance. Students must submit in writing their decision to withdraw from the program. Failure to withdraw in writing will result in a failing grade. Withdrawals may affect financial aid, veteran's benefits, athletic eligibility, and even insurance benefits. Withdrawing from classes may affect the tuition rate; tuition is higher for third attempt courses. See the Alvin College catalog of the current schedule for full details and instructions on withdrawing.

Grades for Withdrawals

Courses dropped on or before the census date each semester are not recorded on the student's transcript. Course withdrawals received in the Registrar's Office after the census date and before the withdrawal deadline for each semester are recorded on the student's transcript with a grade of W.

Graduation Requirements

The College may award a degree or certificate when a student has completed the requirements. To receive a diploma for the degree or certificate, a student must apply for graduation in the Admissions Office. Deadlines and Fees for graduation are published in the semester class schedule. Additional information for graduation requirements is listed in the Alvin College catalog.

Records

Permanent records for each student in the HIM program are kept on file for 3 years. Records will include the application, physical exam records, and immunization records. The information in the student file is confidential and will be kept secure at all times.

Grievance Procedure

Any student wishing to present a dispute for possible action should first bring the matter before his/her instructor. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, the grievance should then be presented to the Program Director. If the student should feel that the matter is still unresolved, the student should then file a formal grievance by following the college grievance procedure outlined in the Alvin College catalog.

<u>Student Support Services</u>

Americans with Disabilities Act

Alvin College complies with ADA and 504 Federal guidelines by affording equal Alvin Collegeess to individuals who are seeking an education. Students who need classroom Alvin Collegeommodations must register first with the Student Alvin Collegeeessibility Services Office. Information and assistance are available by meeting with an advisor in admissions, by calling 281-756-3533, or by emailing sas@alvincollege.edu. Instructors are not able to provide Alvin Collegeommodations until the proper process has been followed.

Safety

Alvin College is committed to improving community safety. College faculty, staff, students, and community members may communicate safety concerns to the Campus Police at 281-756-3700. The Campus Police are located in Building H, Room 132.

Library

The Alvin College Library is an excellent source for research and writing help. Quiet rooms are available for studying and doing classwork. For more information, visit the Alvin College Library website or call (281) 756-3559.

Learning Lab

The Alvin College Learning Lab and Tutorial Lab, located on the second floor of building A, provides students with a variety of services including tutoring (math, writing, and other disciplines). For more information call (281) 756-3566 or visit the Alvin College Tutoring/Learning Lab website.

Blackboard Ultra and Technical Support

Alvin College utilizes Blackboard Ultra for the delivery of content for its courses. Blackboard requires certain system requirements to be able to participate in and complete your course. For more information, please visit Blackboard Browser Support. Technical support can be obtained by clicking on "Technical Support" on your Blackboard board or by visiting Alvin College Distance Education Technical Support. You may Alvin access Blackboard chat support 24 hours a day 7 days a week by clicking on the "Blackboard Chat Support" link in this course. Blackboard also provides phone support 24 hours a day 7 days a week by calling 1-877-310-5153.

If you need information or experience problems with your Alvin College ID/password, computers in a campus lab, or Alvin College email, please call the IT Help Desk at (281) 756-3544. They can also be reached by emailing itservices@alvincollege.edu.

Professional Practice Experience (PPE)/ Clinicals

Participating in the Professional Practice Experience (PPE) is a way to strengthen the academic experience for students. The PPE is designed to provide students with HIM work experience that focuses on skill-building and practical application of theory at approved affiliation sites. Affiliation sites are organizations that agree to mentor HIM students, for a **non-paid** extended period to aid the student in blending classroom theory with practical applications.

The AAS program offers one professional practice experience (PPE) for students admitted to the AAS degree program and the Level II Coding Certificate Program. This PPE is 128 hours and is offered during the Fall Semester before completion of the AAS degree or coding certification program. The completion of the hours worked is decided between the student and the facility. Before beginning any PPE, the Clinical Coordinator will meet with all students to discuss in detail requirements and expectations.

Clinicals must be an **unpaid** educational experience; therefore, students cannot receive monetary compensation for duties performed. Clinical experiences can be completed at the student's place of employment, but the work should occur in a department other than the one employing the student. Examples include cancer registry, quality and risk management, admissions, patient financial services, compliance or privacy office, and so forth. This allows convenience for the student while they are exposed to new aspects of the HIM work environment. This is also dependent upon an affiliation agreement between the facility and Alvin College.

Alvin College and the PPE facility require students to undergo a criminal background check and a physical examination. Prior to beginning the PPE, students are required to provide evidence of health insurance coverage and a physical examination which includes a drug screening, and proof of the following immunizations: TB test, DTaP, Hepatitis B, MMR, varicella, and influenza immunization.

All costs associated with the criminal background check, physical examination, and PPE are the student's responsibility, including parking.

HIPAA Requirements and Confidentiality Statement

As a student in the Alvin College HIM program, you will have access to Alvin College confidential information during your clinical experience.

Confidential information is protected by federal and state laws. In particular, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) addresses issues of privacy and security of protected health information of patients. As a student, you are required to comply with the policies and laws governing the confidentiality of patient information. Any violation of the laws in place to protect patient information will subject the student to discipline, which might include but are not limited to dismissal from the clinical site, the program, and legal liability.

Background Information can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website. Purpose: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the healthcare system, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191, included Administrative Simplification provisions that required HHS to adopt national standards for electronic health care transactions and code sets, unique health identifiers, and security. At the same time, Congress recognized that advances in electronic technology could erode the privacy of health information. Consequently, Congress incorporated HIPAA provisions that mandated the adoption of Federal privacy protections for individually identifiable health information.

All students, staff, and faculty are trained, according to HIPAA privacy standards, on how to properly safeguard PHI (Protected Health Information).

What Information is protected?

Protected Health Information. The Privacy Rule protects all "*individually identifiable health information*" held or transmitted by a covered entity or its business associate, in any form or media, whether electronic, paper or oral. The Privacy Rule calls this information "protected health information (PHI)."¹² "Individually identifiable health information" is information, including demographic data, that relates to: the individual's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition, the provision of health care to the individual, or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual, and that identifies the individual or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe it can be used to identify the individual.¹³ Individually identifiable health information includes many common identifiers (e.g., name, address, birth date, Social Security Number). Additional information could be medical record number, room number, name of the facility, physician, caregiver information, date of exam, or dates of service. The NIH National Institute of Health has further defined demographic information in more detail which is provided to students before clinical rotations.

Penalties by Law

Civil Money Penalties: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) may impose a penalty on a covered entity for a failure to comply with a requirement of the Privacy Rule. Penalties will vary significantly depending on factors such as the date of the violation, whether the covered entity knew or should have known of the failure to comply, or whether the covered entity's failure to comply was due to willful neglect. Penalties may not exceed a calendar year cap for multiple violations of the same requirement. Penalty amounts are \$100 to \$50,000 per violation or more or \$1,500,000 calendar year cap.

Criminal Penalties: A person who knowingly obtains or discloses individually identifiable health information in violation of the Privacy Rule may face a criminal penalty of up to \$50,000 and up to one year of imprisonment. The criminal penalties increase to \$100,000 and up to five years' imprisonment if the wrongful conduct involves false pretenses, and to \$250,000 and up to 10 years' imprisonment if the wrongful conduct involves the intent to sell, transfer, or use identifiable health information for commercial advantage, personal gain or malicious harm. The Department of Justice is responsible for criminal prosecutions.

For more information on HIPAA:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html>

Training videos are available at the following site:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/training/index.html>

Policy for Drug Screening

Definitions:

- **Positive Drug Test:** A positive drug test means a medically acceptable drug test, approved by Alvin College, the results of which indicate the use of illegal drugs.
- **Illegal Drugs:** Illegal drugs include those drugs made illegal to possess, consume, or sell by Texas and Federal statutes. An illegal drug also includes those drugs taken by an individual which **exceed the prescribed limits of a lawful prescription or the taking of a prescription drug without a valid prescription.**

Drug screening is conducted on all student applicants. A non-negative drug screen will bar Alvin College acceptance to the program for a minimum of 12 months. The results of the drug screen are generally held at Alvin College for the duration of the student's uninterrupted enrollment in the program unless allegations

are made to support a reasonable cause that the student is not free of illegal drug use; with reasonable cause, the student may be required to submit to further drug screening at his/her own expense. The student is required to complete a release directing the company/agency conducting the drug screen test to send the results directly to the Program Director.

The results reported by the company/agency conducting the drug screen are final unless the student with a non-negative drug screen, within ten days of learning of the non-negative drug screen, requests a review of the results from the company/agency who originally administered the drug screen. Once the company/agency reports its review finding, the results are final and not appealable.

When the College determines that a student has a non-negative drug screen, the student is not allowed to attend the PPE for a minimum of twelve months, which may affect his/her readmission to the program. The student with a non-negative drug screen is required to withdraw from the clinical course and HIM program. Before returning to the program, the student must re-apply and be accepted to the program (including re-testing), have a negative drug screen, and provide satisfactory documentation to the college of successful drug counseling and treatment, all at the expense of the student. When a student with a non-negative drug screen is accepted back into the program, he/she will be subjected to unannounced random drug screening at their expense.

Liability and Health Insurance

All students are required to purchase liability insurance. Arrangements for purchase will be provided by the College and the fee is included in the tuition statement. The liability insurance is a group policy and is renewed each fall. Alvin College will not cover students while working for compensation.

Alvin College does not participate in a group student insurance plan. However, student health insurance is available for purchase through private outside companies. Brochures are available in the Admissions and Registrar's Office and Advising areas or by emailing vpofstudentservices@alvincollege.edu.

Health and Illness

Students are responsible for their health and the expenses of healthcare. Personal health insurance is required before entering the PPE. Students must provide proof of health insurance coverage. Injuries incurred while on campus or in the clinical area are not covered by the College's or affiliation site's insurance.

Students with potentially communicable conditions, i.e., upper respiratory diseases, infected wounds, etc., should notify their instructor before the PPE assignment.

Any student who has contracted a communicable disease or has required hospitalization must present a signed physician's release upon return to the PPE assignment.

Should emergency care be necessary when the student is at a clinical site (PPE), the student will be provided with emergency care at the clinical affiliate to which they are assigned. This care is provided by the agreement between Alvin College and the clinical affiliate. The student will be charged for this care and for any follow-up care that may be required.

Immunizations

To enter and continue in the HIM program, immunizations and tests may be required by PPE affiliates and are recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC):

Hepatitis B

- Submit proof of Hepatitis B immunization **AND** positive titer.
- Make sure to get the correct Hep B titer drawn. It should be a “Hepatitis B surface antibody” test (abbreviated as “anti-HBs” or “HBsAb”). Do not get a “surface antigen” test or any other Hepatitis test.
- Clinical sites set a 5-year time limit on the Hep B titer, and they require that it remain current throughout the entire semester. If the titer expires before the end of the semester, you must turn in proof of a new titer.
- If you recently finished taking the Hep B series, you must wait at least 2 months after the last shot before getting the titer drawn; otherwise, it may be incorrect.
- If your Hep B titer is negative (meaning you are not immune), you must repeat the entire Hep B series. After that, you are done and you will not have to get another titer. It is recommended that you get the new “heplisav” type of Hep B immunization (two shots one month apart and you are done).

Varicella

- Either submit a report of a blood test that states whether you are immune to varicella (called “varicella IgG” titer); or submit proof of two varicella immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart.
- Childhood varicella immunizations are acceptable.
- If varicella titer is negative (meaning you are not immune), submit proof of two varicella immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart- **after the titer**. You will not have to repeat the titer after immunization.

MMR (Measles, Mumps, rubella)

- Either submit a report of blood test that states whether you are immune to measles (rubeola)/mumps/rubella (called “MMR IgG” titer); or submit proof of two MMR immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart.
- Childhood MMR immunizations are acceptable.
- If any component of the MMR titer is negative (meaning you are not immune), submit proof of two MMR immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart- **after the titer**. You will not have to repeat the titer after immunization.

Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis)

- Submit proof of one Tdap immunization administered to you as an adult (on or after your 18th birthday)
- Childhood Tdap immunization is NOT acceptable.
- If your adult Tdap is more than 10 years old, submit proof of a booster in addition to the proof of immunization.
- There is a 10-year time limit on Tdap or booster. It must be current throughout the entire semester; if it expires before the end of the semester, you must turn in proof of booster before the beginning of the semester.

Flu

- Flu season is from Fall through Spring.
- Submit proof of flu shot
- All students should have the flu shot before/during their PPE .
- Flu documentation must show the name of the facility or healthcare provider where it was obtained. This is required by clinical affiliates.

Tuberculosis Screen

- Either submit a report of a TB screen (PPD, QuantiFERON, or T-spot) stating negative results;

- Or if you have a history of positive TB screen, submit a report of chest x-ray showing no evidence of active lung disease.
- **TB screen is valid for one year.** A chest x-ray is good for 5 years.
- **TB screen or CXR must be current throughout the entire semester,** otherwise it must be repeated before the beginning of the semester.
- **NOTE: CXR is ONLY for those with a history of positive TB screen or history of tuberculosis disease. ALL others must do a TB screen.**

Meningitis

- DO NOT turn in to HIM department.
- Submit to the Admissions office (it is an Alvin College requirement)
- Any questions regarding meningitis immunization should be directed to Admissions: 281-756-3531.

Social Networking Sites

The HIM Department at Alvin College recognizes that social networking websites are used as a means of communication. Future employers often review these network sites when considering potential candidates for employment. No privatization measure is perfect. Information can "live on" beyond its removal from the original website and continue to circulate in other venues. In your professional role do not:

- Present the personal health information of other individuals. Removing the individual's name does not constitute proper de-identification of protected health information. Including data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date of the evaluation, or type of treatment or using a highly specific medical photograph may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual.
- Present yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for the Alvin College HIM Department.
- Utilize websites and/or applications in a manner that interferes with your PPE commitments or Alvin College HIM Department.

Individuals should make every effort to present themselves in a mature, responsible, and professional manner. Discourse should always be civil and respectful. The actions listed below are strongly discouraged.

- Display language or photographs that imply disrespect for any individual or group because of age, race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
- Presenting information that may be interpreted as condoning irresponsible use of alcohol, substance abuse, or sexual promiscuity.

Therefore, think carefully before you post any information on a website or application.

Professional Organizations

Students enrolled in the HIM program are eligible for student membership in the following:

- **American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)**

AHIMA is a global non-profit association of health information professionals. AHIMA represents professionals who work with health data. For more information visit www.ahima.org.

- **Texas Health Information Management Association (TxHIMA)**

TxHIMA is a component state association of AHIMA. For more information visit www.txhima.org.

- **Houston Area Health Information Management Association (HAHIMA)**

HAHIMA is a place for Houston area HIM professionals to obtain information.

Membership in these organizations is not required but is highly recommended.

AHIMA member dues include the following benefits:

- Subscription to the Journal of American Health Information Management Association which brings readers in-depth studies of a subject vital to health-related practitioners
- Reduced rates on books and publications
- Opportunities to develop close professional ties with others within the profession

HEALTH INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT

Student Agreement

My signature below certifies that I have received a copy of the HIM Student Handbook. I have read the Handbook and understand the policies set forth by the HIM program and accept them as a condition of my enrollment in the HIM Program.

I will uphold Alvin College student policies and procedures stated in the Alvin College Board Policy Manual and the technical and professional standards of a Health Information Management professional as required by the various HIM organizations that set standards, such as AHIMA, AAPC, and CAHIIM. I will also uphold all requirements for professionalism, patient care, safety, and privacy (HIPAA) outlined in the clinical affiliation agreements for each PPE site.

Board Policy Manual:

<https://pol.tasb.org/home/index/214>

If I find that I cannot abide by the requirements or adhere to the college and board policies, I will notify the HIM Program Director and withdraw from the program. My act of registering for classes in the HIM Program implies that I will abide by the requirements outlined in this handbook, each course syllabus, and that of the college.

Student Signature:

Print Student Name:

Student ID:

Date:

Program Director Signature:

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Confidentiality Statement
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I understand that information about the Clinical Affiliations with Alvin College, including patients, employees, or suppliers is confidential, and that I will not discuss patient information with anyone other than my preceptor and/or the hospital staff directly involved in the patient's care. I understand that the results of HIV testing of patients and employees will be known to certain physicians and direct caregivers and I will keep this information in the strictest of confidence. When in doubt as to whether certain information is or is not confidential, prudence dictates that no disclosure be provided without first clearly establishing that such disclosure has been authorized by the department manager.

The medical record is a confidential, legal document and, as such, all information contained therein or disclosed to me shall be treated as confidential and not discussed or repeated without authorization from the patient or responsible party. I understand that violations of the confidential nature of the medical record, the Release of Information policy of the affiliate, or the security regulations of the Medical Records Department may result in either civil or criminal sanction(s). Civil penalties are fines of up to \$100 for each violation for each requirement per individual. Criminal penalties for "wrongful disclosure" can include not only large fines but also jail time. The criminal penalties increase as the seriousness of the offense increases. These penalties can be as high as \$250,000 and prison sentences of up to 10 years. Knowingly releasing patient information can result in a one-year jail sentence and up to a \$150,000 fine. Releasing patient information with harmful intent, or selling the information, can lead to a 10-year jail sentence and a \$250,000 fine.

My signature below indicates that I have been informed of the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) regulations, and acknowledge the consequences of violation of those regulations.

Student Signature:

Print Student Name:

Date:

Program Director Signature:

HEALTH INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT

Drug Screen & Criminal Background Check Release of Information

My signature below certifies that I have read the requirements on criminal background and drug screening for the HIM Program. This form provides my consent for the results of criminal background checks and drug screens to be released to the Alvin College program director. I certify that I am not using drugs illegally, I will not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at class or PPE placements, and I do not have any criminal history that would disqualify me from participating in the HIM program or PPE rotations. If charged or convicted of any major or minor offenses while enrolled, I must notify the Program Director within 3 days of any such convictions. Failure to notify the Program Director of any major or minor criminal convictions while enrolled in the program may result in immediate dismissal.

Print Student Name:

Student Signature:

Faculty Reference Authorization Form

I hereby authorize the faculty members of the HIM program at Alvin College to provide a professional reference for me, upon request. The faculty have permission to answer any questions that may be asked concerning my performance in the program including grades, attendance, clinical performance, and personal qualities.

Print Student Name:

Student Signature:
