



Health information managers are responsible for the maintenance and security of all patient records. They must stay up to date with evolving information technology and current or proposed laws about health information systems. Health information managers must ensure that databases are complete, accurate, and accessible only to authorized personnel. Medical records and health information technicians typically do the following:

- Review patient records for timeliness, completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness of health data
- Organize and maintain data for clinical databases and registries
- Track patient outcomes for quality assessment
- Use classification software to assign clinical codes for reimbursement and data analysis
- Electronically record data for collection, storage, analysis, retrieval, and reporting
- Protect patients' health information for confidentiality, authorized access for treatment, and data security

Although medical records and health information technicians do not provide direct patient care, they work regularly with physicians and other healthcare professionals. They meet with these workers to clarify diagnoses or to get additional information to make sure that records are complete and accurate. The increasing use of electronic health records (EHRs) will continue to change the job responsibilities of medical records and health information technicians. (*Occupational Outlook Handbook*)

The following pre-health information management program is suggested for students interested in applying to a school of Health Information Management. The University of Nebraska at Kearney is currently affiliated with the following schools of Health Information Management: University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, KS and Dakota State University in Madison, SD. **Gaining acceptance into a health information management program is a very competitive process. Completion of the pre-requisite courses does not automatically guarantee admission.**

Since the acceptance process is competitive, students pursuing a program of study in pre-health information management are encouraged to choose a major as an alternate plan so that they can be working towards a baccalaureate degree concurrently with the pre-health information management program. This requires a major/minor combination or a comprehensive major as well as completion of the UNK general studies requirements and other degree requirements as set forth in the college catalog.

The educational requirements may vary slightly from school to school. Therefore, students should check with the specific school(s) to which he/she intends to apply to ensure that all requirements are fulfilled. The following list is a suggested course of study that will fulfill requirements at most HIM programs.

**Take all of the following:**

ENG 101	Introduction to Academic Writing	3
ENG 102	Academic Writing and Research	3
SPCH 100	Fundamentals of Speech Communication	3
PSY 203	General Psychology	3
SOC 100	Introduction to Sociology	3
BIOL 103	General Biology	4
BIOL 225	Anatomy and Physiology	4
BIOL 226	Anatomy and Physiology	4
BIOL 325	Medical Terminology	1

**Take one of the following:**

CHEM 145	Introductory Chemistry	4
CHEM 160	General Chemistry	4

**Take 3-6 credit hours of fine arts/humanities electives.** Courses in art, music, dance, and theater are suggested. Please consult with your advisor to ensure the courses are appropriate.

**Academic Guidelines**

A minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.50. However, a higher GPA is preferred and will result in the student being a more competitive applicant. Each required course must be passed with a grade of "C" or better. A grade of "C-" will not be accepted. Students searching for electives should consider courses from the following areas: biology, chemistry, mathematics, sociology, psychology, business administration, healthcare management, and healthcare economics. See your advisor for suggestions. Students should be aware of prerequisites on all courses and plan their coursework accordingly.

**Non-Academic Guidelines**

There is no magic formula for acceptance in to professional school. Admission is based on GPA, test scores, shadowing and medical experiences, community involvement and volunteerism, leadership qualities, the interview, the essay, and letters of recommendation. Shadowing and medical experiences are of utmost importance. Students should plan to shadow a minimum of 40 hours in their selected profession. Health Sciences offers opportunities to meet these non-academic guidelines through the Shadowing Program, the Health Science Club, and volunteer experiences. Research experience is not required, but will be looked upon favorably. Students should plan to be involved in these types of activities and experiences throughout their undergraduate career. Other important non-academic factors include good moral character, excellent interpersonal skills, a deep commitment to healthcare, evidence of leadership potential and service to others.

**The Application Process**

Each program facilitates the application process through applications which can be found on the respective school or program's website.

**Letters of Evaluation/Recommendation**

Letters of evaluation will be required of applicants. Letters from a faculty member, health information manager, academic advisor, or employer would be appropriate. Information about the non-academic character of a student would be most useful as academic information is already in the application.

**Interviews**

Most schools screen applicants with some form of personal interview. The format of the interview may vary depending on the schools to which you are applying.

**Criminal Background Checks**

Prerequisite for enrollment into any health science professional program is consent for an external background check. This check includes, but is not limited to, past criminal offenses and registry information. If there is evidence of arrest for a crime(s), conviction for a crime(s), presence on an abuse registry, or other information which reasonably suggests that patient safety might be compromised, the student will be asked to provide additional information.

**Citizenship/International Students**

Professional schools in the health sciences vary as to whether they accept non-U.S. citizens. Some schools that do accept non-citizens require a substantial financial commitment up front. Since not all schools accept non-citizens and since the financial commitment of those that do may be substantial, students should thoroughly research and carefully consider such a decision and discuss it with their pre-health advisors early in their undergraduate years.

**Websites**

University of Kansas Medical Center	<a href="http://him.kumc.edu/">http://him.kumc.edu/</a>
Dakota State University	<a href="http://www.dsu.edu/bis/him/">http://www.dsu.edu/bis/him/</a>
American Health Information Management Association	<a href="http://www.ahima.org/">http://www.ahima.org/</a>
UNK Health Sciences	<a href="http://www.unk.edu/healthsciences">www.unk.edu/healthsciences</a>

### Suggested Sequence of Key Courses

	Fall	Spring
Year 1	CHEM 145 or CHEM 160	BIOL 103
Year 2	BIOL 225	BIOL 226

- A MATH ACT score of 22 or prior completion of College Algebra (MATH 102) is a pre-requisite for CHEM 160.
- Completion of one semester of chemistry is a pre-requisite for BIOL 225.
- It is not recommended to take any of the above science courses during a summer session.