

**DATE:** January 26, 2006

**SUBJECT:** University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Master of Science in Health Informatics and Information Management

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Approval

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** For over 50 years, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center has offered a baccalaureate degree in Health Information Management; however, with the technological requirements in health care professions, and the recommendations of the profession’s credentialing body, advanced training is needed to not only coordinate and control information but to manage information. The goal of the MHIM is to provide the competencies for health care professionals to manage the information in an increasingly complex electronic health environment. Information is a key resource in the delivery and financing of healthcare and must be managed effectively. The health information management (HIM) profession evolved as a direct result of the healthcare industry’s need to manage such information more effectively. The profession encompasses the collection, storage, retrieval, analysis, and dissemination of health information for a variety of purposes in disparate healthcare settings. The healthcare system has become a complex health information environment requiring all healthcare professionals to have greater skills in managing patient information through the continuum of care. Skills for data management and data integrity are imperative to improving quality and reducing medical errors and costs.

**PROPOSED START-UP DATE:** Upon approval

Commission staff has reviewed program proposals according to the academic standards adopted by the Commission on November 14, 2002. Each standard is referenced below.

**1.1.20A MISSION:** The proposed program is consistent with the role and score of the university mission “to provide a stimulating academic environment for its students in an urban setting.” The university, “through its research, teaching and outreach roles responds to individual needs, such as the support of health care and preventive health services.”

**1.1.20B CURRICULUM:** The proposed curriculum requires completion of 33 semester hours. As a new major, all new courses are required. Offering health informatics and health information education at the masters’ degree level is the next step in the progression of the profession. The curriculum focuses on emerging frameworks for creating integrated health care information, data management and decision support systems. It is specifically designed to prepare professionals to thrive in a technology-supported and information-driven health care environment.

<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
Major Core Requirements	30
Thesis/Non-Thesis	3

**1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS:** Admission requirements are as follows:

- Baccalaureate degree at a minimum
- Demonstrated knowledge of anatomy and physiology, language of medicine, health information/health record content, statistics, principles of management
- Satisfactory score on GRE including writing assessment and minimum grade point average of 3.0
- Foreign applicants whose native language is not English must submit results of TOEFL, with minimal score of 550
- Official transcripts, letters of recommendation, and personal interview with the admissions committee
- Ability to meet published technical standards of the College of Allied Health Sciences and the Department of Health Information Management

**Projected Program Productivity**

Student Projections	Full-time Enrollment	Part-time	Graduates
Year 1	0	0	0
Year 2	0	4	0
Year 3	0	8	0
Year 4	0	12	4
Year 5	0	12	4

**1.1.20D FACULTY:** There are currently eight faculty members in the Department of Health Information Management that will be involved in teaching classes on a part time basis. Only one additional faculty member is required in the first year, with a second to be added in the fifth year. Faculty salaries will be covered through internal reallocations, student tuition and fees.

**1.1.20E LIBRARY RESOURCES:** Current library resources are adequate to support the proposed program. Library services are available to students located on and off campus through electronically web-based access.

**1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION:** The proposed program will be housed in the Department of Health Information Management, coordinated by a program director that reports to the chair of the department.

**1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES:** None indicated.

**1.1.20H FACILITIES/INSTRUCTIONAL EQUIPMENT:** The proposed on-line program does not require additional facilities or instructional equipment.

**1.1.20I STUDENT/EMPLOYER DEMANDS:** UTHSC conducted a graduate survey in September 1998 to determine the level of interest in a master's program in health information management. Of the respondents, 44 percent were interested in pursuing a graduate degree, in most cases for more challenging job opportunities. When asked how they would prefer to complete the degree, 40 percent preferred distance education via the Internet.

According to a recent workforce study in health information management, eighty-eight percent of students in health care administration and technology expressed intent to pursue further education in HIM. HIM is available in only a small number of institutions; therefore, HIM professionals may be forced to choose advanced education in another discipline. The need for graduate education in light of interest and employer demand is an important consideration for the profession.

The type of employment opportunities include:

- Executive Health information
- Medical language and classification specialist
- Data quality improvement
- Information security Information resource planner
- Data Base Manager/Data analyst/research
- Information systems user liaison
- Health Information Management Educator
- Chief Information Officer

**1.1.20J NO UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION:** There are no other graduate programs Health Informatics and Information Management in Tennessee. In July 2005 a Master of Science in Bioinformatics was approved. This program is similar in that it is the deals with the science of organizing and analyzing biological data for medical and biological research.

**1.1.20K COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS:** None indicated.

**1.1.20L DESEGREGATION:** The program will not impede the state's effort to achieve racial diversity. The baccalaureate degree program in Health Information Management has been successful in achieving an ethnically diverse student body. Due to the electronic delivery expectations are for the same or greater levels of participation among minorities.

**1.1.20M ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION:** Student achievement of programmatic goals will be evaluated by an analysis of outcomes based on specific program objectives. Other program evaluation methods include student performance on comprehensive examinations, graduate certification examination scores, student and faculty resource assessment surveys at the end of the program, student evaluations of courses and faculty, graduate satisfaction surveys, and employer surveys to assess the graduates' job performance in relation to the program's defined objectives and outcomes.

Program evaluations are the responsibility of the program director. Evaluations will be conducted annually. The results of evaluation data will be shared with faculty for analysis and future planning.

**1.1.20N ARTICULATION:** N/A

**1.1.20O EXTERNAL JUDGMENT** (Graduate Programs): Shirley Maki, Assistant Professor, Department of Healthcare Informatics and Information Management, College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN, provided the on-site expert external review. Professor Maki noted that the curriculum is consistent with the accreditation requirements to position the program to gain accreditation. She also was pleased with the on-line delivery designed to reach working adults. Professor Maki enthusiastically recommended approval of the proposed program.

**1.1.20P COST/BENEFIT/SOURCE:** The well documented shortages and needs in the health care professional has been well documented. The proposed program will appeal to a wide range of people in health care, especially to working professionals because of the on-line opportunity. The proposed program will address the growing technological needs in the health care professions, preparing graduates for responsibilities in a wide range of job opportunities in health care data resources and information systems. The baccalaureate degree will be phased out and funds reallocated for the implementation of the proposed masters' degree.

**Financial Projections**

Compensation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Administrative Compensation	Salary					
	Benefits					
	Total					
Faculty Compensation	Salary	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$181,000
	Benefits	\$21,250	\$21,250	\$21,250	\$21,250	\$45,250
	Total	\$106,250	\$106,250	\$106,250	\$106,250	\$226,250
Clerical/ Support Staff Compensation	Salary					
	Benefits					
	Total					
Library						
Equipment						
Travel						
Other (Specify, e.g. Grad Assts., etc.) Operating Expenses (Supplies, on-line course development)	\$5,000 on line course development	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$111,500	\$111,250	\$111,250	\$111,250	\$226,250	

**1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING:** An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following approval. The review will be based on goals established in the approved program proposal. At the end of this period, campus, governing board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. These goals include, but are not limited to enrollment and graduation numbers, program costs, progress toward accreditation, library acquisitions, student performance and other goals set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. As a result of this evaluation, if the program is found to be deficient, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. Copies of such recommendation will be forwarded to the Education Committees of the General Assembly. The Commission may also choose to extend this period if additional time is needed and requested by the governing board.