

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Department of Health Informatics and
Information Management**



**College of Applied &
Natural Sciences**

**Louisiana Tech University
Ruston, Louisiana 71272**

Fall 2013

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Mission of the Graduate Program

The mission of the Department of Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) is to provide a strong foundation of health informatics and information management to our students, community and industry by striving for excellence in research, teaching and service.

The mission of the MHI program is to prepare confident, innovative, and contributing professionals who can identify and use a variety of information systems resources and technologies to accomplish the informatics and information management objectives of diverse healthcare practice environments.

The goals of the MHI program are:

1. To keep the course content current to industry expectations and practice demands.
2. To produce MHI graduates who are employable in the field.
3. To be responsive to the community of interest.

The program provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary in analysis, design, implementation and evaluation of information systems that apply directly to Health Informatics and healthcare delivery. As practitioners, graduates will serve society and the profession through collaborative practice, innovative teaching, and the generation and application of new knowledge and theory by focusing on a body of research.

Students will follow an online, non-thesis plan of study consisting of 39 semester credit hours. The program will be offered in a unique format that will allow students to maintain their current employment status while enhancing their knowledge and skills. Through online/distance study, students will take course each year during the fall, winter, spring and summer quarters. Students will use various forms of communication (e.g., e-mail, electronic bulletin boards, digital drop box) to complete coursework and to communicate with each other and the faculty during the online program.

Each core area is introduced with a survey course that provides the global perspective of principles and concepts associated with the core area. The survey course provides the breadth of knowledge for a broad understanding of issues. The courses that follow in each core area allow for more in-depth exploration. These courses enable the students to develop expertise in a given content area. It will be in these courses that students complete in-depth projects, conduct research and prepare formal written documentation to demonstrate competence of mastery of content.

Admission Requirements - GRE Not Required

Admission is competitive; consequently applicants who meet the minimum requirements specified herein are not assured admission. The department qualitatively and quantitatively evaluates applicants and makes selections based on performance, personal qualifications, and evidence of potential for success. Applicants will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee after the following items have been received: application form, application fee, essay, reference letters, and all applicable transcripts.

Applicants for admission to the Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) Graduate Program in the College of Applied and Natural Sciences must possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and must meet the minimum admission requirements of the Graduate School, as published in the current *Catalog* of Louisiana Tech University, as well as meet the admission requirements of the Department of Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM). Student admission documents will be received by the Graduate School, and then sent to the Department of Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) to determine competencies and deficiencies. Each graduate student must assume personal responsibility for knowing the Graduate School regulations and requirements described in the current *Catalog*.

In order to meet the minimum qualification for the Master's in Health Informatics, applicants must:

- Possess a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution
 - Unconditional admission to the master's program in the department requires completion of a bachelor's degree in Health Information Management or related area, and at least a 3.0 (4.0 grade scale) overall (or last 60 hours) grade point average. Conditional admission will be granted to applicants not meeting requirements for unconditional admission but who have a GPA of at least 2.50 overall or for the last 60 hours. Conditional status may be changed to unconditional status when a student earns a minimum of 9 hours of graduate credit at Louisiana Tech, provided he or she has a "B" average on all work pursued for graduate credit, including no grade lower than "C" and not more than one course with a grade of "C". If a student completes 9 hours of graduate credit and is not eligible for unconditional status, the student will be dropped from graduate status.
- Have at least two years of work experience in industries that can directly translate to health informatics, such as health care, IT, health information management, consulting, or law. For the students who do not have a healthcare background, they will need to submit an essay. The essay should answer the following questions in about 500 words.
 - What experiences led you to pursue a Master's degree in Health Informatics?
 - What leadership skills have you demonstrated in your field?
 - What are your career goals and how will a Master's in Health Informatics support these goals?
 - Why did you choose Louisiana Tech for your studies?

- Describe the role of health informatics in assuring the quality of care and safety of healthcare services.
- The students who choose not to submit an essay will need to submit a GRE score.
- Have official transcripts sent in a signed, sealed envelope from each post-secondary institution attended.
- Submit a résumé highlighting the applicant's education and experience
- Submit a personal statement addressing the outcomes and benefits the applicant hopes to receive by completing the program.
- Submit three letters of recommendation
- Interview to determine eligibility, interest, and purpose of study

If applicants are international, they must submit:

1. ECE or WES Course-by-Course Evaluation: at applicant's expense, original sent from company, completed within two years of application.
2. Certified or notarized copy of official transcript
3. Certified or notarized copy of English translation of transcript

If you receive an Acceptance Letter to Louisiana Tech University:

- 1) Schedule an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator of the Department to prepare a Plan of Study and to obtain a registration form for your first quarter of enrollment.
- 2) If you wish to be considered for a graduate assistantship, submit an Application for Assistantship form as well, which can be found at the following link: http://www.latech.edu/documents/grad_school_assistantship_application.pdf.
- 3) Your acceptance letter will provide you with instructions to obtain a Campus Wide ID (CWID) number that you will use to register. Use your new **CWID** number to get assigned a **BOSS** (online student registration system) PIN, receive a student ID card, and open a **Tech e-mail** account. Specific registration and fee payment instructions may be found on the Registrar's website by clicking on the Racing Form, which is the schedule of classes and general information updated each quarter.
- 4) Once you know which course or courses you will be taking and have registered for, check the web pages of the professors who are teaching them, and check **Moodle**. Many post reading lists and requirements in advance of the course, and often students want to begin preparing early. If the professors' course outlines are not available online, feel free to contact them directly to discuss their requirements.
- 5) Do not hesitate to direct questions or concerns not addressed by these instructions to the Graduate Coordinator at any stage of this process, who will be your advisor as you work toward the degree and the person who will clear you for registration each quarter.

Plan of Study

A Plan of Study, a list of courses to be completed to earn the Master of Science degree, is developed by the student in consultation with his/her advisor. **The Plan of Study should be completed by the time the student completes the first quarter of graduate work.** To ensure that course work will apply to the Master's program, a student must be admitted to the degree program and have an approved Plan of Study, listing the specific courses. The Plan of Study must be filed with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Applied and Natural Sciences. Deviation from the Plan of Study must be approved by the Faculty Advisor, the Department of Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM), and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in advance of enrolling in the course. A copy of the Plan of Study form (GS Form 6) can be downloaded at: www.latech.edu/graduateschool/forms.shtml.

Course Load

Because of the importance of course sequencing and content, students will be required to take a minimum of 6 graduate semester credit hours per quarter.

Grade Requirement

To receive a graduate degree, a student must have an earned GPA of at least 3.0 on all work pursued for graduate credit while registered at Louisiana Tech. A graduate student will be placed on probation if either the cumulative grade point average and/or the average for the quarter on work pursued for graduate credit are below 3.0. A student will automatically be dropped from graduate status if either the cumulative average and/or the average for the quarter are below 3.0 on work pursued for graduate credit at Louisiana Tech University for three consecutive quarters in attendance. Students dropped from graduate status will be classified as post-baccalaureate. Such students may take courses for "undergraduate credit" (no 500-level).

Work taken from a post-baccalaureate student will not be considered graduate work and will not count towards the Master of Science degree. Students dropped from graduate status may choose to appeal the decision. The appeals procedure is detailed in the *Louisiana Tech University Catalog*, available online on the Registrar's webpage: (<http://www.latech.edu/registrar>)

General Requirements for All Advanced Degrees Courses

All 500-level courses are open to graduate students. Courses numbered in the 600- and 700-level generally require doctoral classification and are specifically associated with doctoral programs. There are courses numbered in the 400-level that are usually for seniors but may carry graduate credit. Graduate students taking 400-level courses for graduate credit are required to undertake additional work in order to bring the course requirements up to graduate level.

The semester hour is the unit of credit at Louisiana Tech. Most courses carry a credit of 3 semester hours. Credit for each course is indicated by a three-digit numerical description, for example, 0-3-3: the first number indicates laboratory contact hours per week; the second lecture periods per week; and the third, credit in semester hours.

Courses taken by graduate students that do not appear on an approved plan of study will not apply toward meeting the requirements of any graduate degree. In order to pursue and/or receive a graduate degree, students must first be admitted to that specific degree program.

Registration

Students will only be allowed access to classes after completion of registration, which includes payment of tuition and fees. Registration days and procedures are published in the *University Catalog* and online at: <http://boss.latech.edu/>. Students who are currently enrolled are expected to register for the next quarter during the “early registration” period. New students and readmitted students register during the general registration period (before the first class day). Late registration is allowed during the first three regular class days. Students who have registered may also add or drop classes during these three days.

Note: Students are responsible for taking the courses required in their curriculum as they are offered and are responsible for completing any prerequisites that are required.

Campus-Wide Identification (CWID) Number

Louisiana Tech University uses a Campus-Wide Identification (CWID) number as the primary means of identifying students. Although the student’s social security number is still a required element of University student academic information, it is not used as the primary means to positively identify students in the Student Information System. Access to the student’s social security number is restricted to a very limited number of financial aid, comptroller, registrar, and student affairs administrators. All student products, to include their Student ID Card (Tech Express Card) use the CWID. This 8-digit number is provided to the student at official notification of admission and remains with them permanently. The CWID is a non-sequential, machine generated number that does not mimic numbering sequences from the student’s social security number. While the CWID is designed to provide additional protection for students against identity theft, the CWID itself should be afforded the same type of protection as the social security number.

Bulldog Online Student System (BOSS) Account

BOSS provides each student with a unique account that allows the student to access their academic records and demographics in the Student Information System via the Web. Each student is provided with a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) known as a BOSS PIN that, when used in conjunction with their CWID, provides private access to items such as transcripts, grades, web registration, web tuition/fee payment, and numerous demographic and student service menu items. Some of the demographic categories allow for changes to be made online, such as updates to emergency contact information for the Emergency Notification System (ENS).

New undergraduate students receive their TECH e-mail USERID and Password along with their BOSS PIN while attending Orientation. If the student does not attend Orientation, is a new graduate student or an online student only, they should follow the instructions found on the

TECH web site for obtaining these items electronically. For their own privacy and protection, students should not give out their TECH USERID, password, Campus Wide Identification (CWID) - student identification number, or BOSS PIN to anyone. The University will only e-mail reminders of the BOSS PIN to the student's TECH e-mail account. The University will not e-mail these elements to commercial ISP accounts without first receiving a signed written release authorizing the University to e-mail or FAX the PIN to an account/number of the student's specification. If a student "pops" their e-mail from their TECH account to a commercial ISP account, the student assumes personal responsibility for the protection of their private information. The University strongly suggests that students change their BOSS PIN (BOSS menu option "Change PIN") to an alpha/numeric sequence only they know (and will readily remember).

Tech E-mail Account Activation

Louisiana Tech University provides each enrolled student with a Tech e-mail account. Tech faculty and administrators use this e-mail account as one of the primary means for communicating with the student body, other faculty, and other staff. Faculty members and administrators use this account to transmit private information to a student through the University's information security mechanisms: information that will not be transmitted through commercial ISP accounts for security reasons. Students are encouraged to activate and use their Tech e-mail account as soon as possible after registration and tuition/fee payment and to check their e-mail account daily. USER ID and password information is available at HelpDesk.LaTech.edu or at the University Computing Center (Basement, Wyly Tower of Learning).

Academic Ethics

Academic honesty is expected of all students. The College of Applied and Natural Sciences requires that students in all coursework and all concomitant academic endeavors know of and adhere to the considerations of scholarly ethics, including, but not limited to: the issues of accurate reporting of research*, plagiarism, publication credit, duplicate publication, or sharing data (cheating, academic misconduct). Breach of academic honesty will result in dismissal from the College of Applied and Natural Sciences. College of Applied and Natural Sciences graduate students are to comply with the University Honor Code.

Class Attendance

Students and Faculty will use Louisiana Tech University Policy 2206 – Class Attendance. This policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Student Responsibilities

Upon registration, students accept the responsibility to regularly and punctually attend all classes in which they are enrolled. Failure to do so may jeopardize a student's scholastic standing and may lead to suspension from the College or University.

The student is responsible for making arrangements satisfactory to the instructor regarding absences including prior notification of planned absences, providing documentation if needed, and making up examinations and work as required. For other emergency absences, the student shall submit excuses for class absences to the appropriate instructor within three class days following the student's return to his/her respective class. For classes that meet once a week, the excuse shall be presented no later than one calendar week following the student's return. The Registrar's Office does not issue excuses.

Graduate Assistants

Graduate students who have been appointed to a Graduate Assistantship (including both teaching and research appointments) have certain obligations that must be satisfied and certain guidelines that must be followed. Students appointed to a Graduate Assistantship will have out-of-state tuition fees waived, if applicable.

Students receiving a Graduate Assistantship must be enrolled in a minimum of 6 graduate credit hours per quarter while receiving the Assistantship. Should a student's course load fall below the six-hour minimum, the Assistantship and out-of-state tuition waiver will be cancelled, and the student may be required to repay the funds received. These guidelines pertain to all graduate assistants regardless of whether their source of support is from grant funds, School/departmental funds, college or University funds, or some other source of funds.

In certain situations, students receiving an assistantship may be able to register for 3 hours of graduate credit during summer quarter if specified criteria are met; check with your advisor or the Graduate School if you have questions about summer registration requirements.

Financial Aid

Louisiana Tech University provides equal educational opportunities for all students, and this policy of equal opportunity is fully implemented in all programs of financial aid available to assist students in obtaining an education at Louisiana Tech. An extensive financial aid program encompassing scholarships, grants, employment, and loans is available to assist students. Need, skills, and academic performance are carefully weighed to develop a "financial aid package" for qualifying students. Application for the various Federal Aid Programs and the Louisiana Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) requires completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This application allows the applicant to be considered for a Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study positions, Perkins and Stafford loans. This same application allows the dependent student's parent to be processed for a Parent's Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), if requested. The State of Louisiana will use

the FAFSA application to trigger a determination of eligibility for TOPS and the Louisiana GO Grant based on FAFSA data.

Course Delivery

Online courses utilize Moodle course management software. Students must have a Louisiana Tech University e-mail account to access Moodle. University e-mail accounts will be issued upon admission and user IDs and passwords will be sent to the student via Moodle at <http://moodle.latech.edu>. Students may access an online tutorial once they have logged into Moodle.

MHI Curriculum Course Sequence

Fall Quarter

HIM 500 – Healthcare Compliance 3

HIM 501 – Healthcare Information Network Systems 3

Total Hours: 6

Winter Quarter

HIM 522 – Computerized Decision Support 3

HIM 504 – Clinical Information Systems 3

Total Hours: 6

Spring Quarter

HIM 503 – Medical Vocabularies & Classification Systems 3

HIM 505 – Health Informatics Advanced Statistical Methods 3

Total Hours: 6

Summer Quarter

HIM 521 – EHR Infrastructure 3

Total Hours: 3

SECOND YEAR

Fall Quarter

HIM 513 – Systems Development 3

PSYC 541 – Research Methods in Behavioral Sciences 3

Total Hours: 6

Winter Quarter

PSYC 523 – Leadership and Decision Making

HIM 502 – Database Architecture

Total Hours: 6

Spring Quarter

HIM 523 – Healthcare Information Analysis

HIM 511 – Project Management

Total Hours: 6

Total Semester Hours: 39

Add: Elective HIM 557: Special Topics

Course Descriptions

HIM 500: Healthcare Compliance. 0-3-3. Study and application of the essentials of healthcare compliance.

HIM 501: Healthcare Information Network Systems. 0-3-3. Study of prominent technology architectures for healthcare information systems and networks. Addresses issues related to technology standards, hardware, integration, security of information systems and networks.

HIM 502: Database Architecture. 0-3-3. Study of information engineering principles associated with data and application architectures. Includes aspects of data modeling and database development.

HIM 503: Medical Vocabularies and Classification Systems. 0-3-3. Study of issues related to standardized clinical terminology, linguistics, medical vocabularies and natural language processing.

HIM 504: Clinical Information Systems. 0-3-3. Survey of clinical computing applications and their integration to support healthcare delivery. Evaluation of such systems in regard to clinical decision making, outcomes, and data architectures.

HIM 505: Health Informatics Advanced Statistical Methods. 0-3-3 A study from a healthcare perspective of the advanced statistical methods used to evaluate problems and aid in decision making.

HIM 511: Project Management. 0-3-3. In depth study of successful information system management including information systems planning, management controls, development , project management, operations and quality improvement, and human resource management.

HIM 512: Issues in Technological Change. 0-3-3. Evaluation of Issues associated with the introduction technology in the healthcare delivery environment. Theoretical principles and concepts associated with leadership and change management. (This course will no longer be offered beginning Fall 2013)

HIM 513: Evaluation of Information Systems. 0-3-3. Methodologies, techniques and barriers encountered deployment of information systems. Emphasis placed training and evaluation, documentation, interface design, legacy systems, data conversion and interoperability.

HIM 521: EHR Infrastructure. 0-3-3. Study of information systems theory, theory of electronic patient records including infrastructure and applications, and NHII initiatives. Emphasis placed on strategic planning for health information systems.

HIM 522: Computerized Decision Support. 0-3-3. Study of concepts related to decision making and decision contexts. Exploration of technology support for decision making with study of purposes, architecture development and implementation.

HIM 523: Healthcare Information Analysis. 0-3-3. A course designed to employ students with a foundation in basic data mining, data analysis and pattern recognition concepts with their application in the healthcare environment.

PSYC 523: Leadership and Decision-Making. 0-3-3. Examination of the various skills, behaviors, and attitudes required for effective leadership. Includes practices, decision-making, communication and ethical issues related to leadership.

PSYC 541: Research and Statistical Methods. 0-3-3. A study of the research and statistical commonly used in the Behavioral Sciences with an emphasis on quantitative methodology and APA writing style.

PSYC 542: Statistical Methods in Behavioral Sciences. 0-3-3. Preq., PSYC 541 or HEC 504. A study of the statistical methods used to study problems in Behavioral Sciences. (This course will no longer be offered beginning Fall 2013)

HIM 557: Special Topics: Health Informatics. (*Elective*). 0-3-3. The topic or topics will be selected by the Instructor from various sub-areas of Health Informatics. May be repeated as topics change.

Appointment of Advisory Committee Form

<http://www.latech.edu/documents/gform5.pdf>

Plan of Study Form

<http://www.latech.edu/documents/gform6.pdf>

Revision in Plan of Study Form

<http://www.latech.edu/documents/gform7.pdf>

Additional Information

Department of Health Informatics and Information Management

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Wyly Tower, Room 1114
P.O. Box 3171
Louisiana Tech University
Ruston, Louisiana 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-2854
Fax: (318) 257-4896
Website: <http://him.latech.edu/>

College of Applied and Natural Sciences

James D. Liberatos, Ph.D., Dean
Janet F. Pope, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Graduate & Undergraduate Studies

913 Prescott Memorial Library

P.O. Box 10197
Louisiana Tech University

Ruston, Louisiana 71272
Telephone: (318) 257-4287
Fax: (318) 257-5060
Website: <http://www.ans.latech.edu>

Louisiana Tech University Graduate School

Dr. Sheryl S. Shoemaker, Ph.D., AUD, Interim Dean

Wyly Tower, Room 1642

P.O. Box 7923
Louisiana Tech University
Ruston, Louisiana 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-2924
Fax: (318) 257-4487
Website: www.latech.edu/graduate_school/

Note: The Graduate School website is a source of information regarding policies, deadlines, and downloadable graduate school forms

Louisiana Tech Resources

Admissions

Hale Hall
P.O. Box 7923
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-2924
Fax: (318) 257-4487
E-mail: gschool@latech.edu
Website: www.latech.edu/admissions/

Registrar

Keeny Hall 207
P.O. Box 3155
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-2176
Fax: (318) 257-4041
E-mail: registrar@latech.edu
Website: www.latech.edu/registrar/

Prescott Memorial Library

Dr. Rita Franks, Interim Dean of Library
Services, Director of Collection Services
Dr. Walter Wicker, Dean Emeritus
P.O. Box 10408
Ruston, LA 71272

Information Desk: (318) 257-2231
Fax: (318) 257-2579
Telephone: (318) 257-2577
Website: www.latech.edu/library/

Louisiana Tech Bookstore

P.O. Box 10378
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-3066
Fax: (318) 257-3356
Website: www.techshop.latech.edu

Louisiana Tech Computing Center

Wyly Tower (Basement)
P.O. Box 3184
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-2893
Fax: (318) 257-3645
Website: www.cc.latech.edu

Louisiana Tech Comptroller's Office

Keeny Hall, Room 128
P.O. Box 7924
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-4325
Fax: (318) 257-2234
E-mail: tuition@latech.edu
Website: www.ltadm.latech.edu/comptrol/

Financial Aid

Keeny Hall, Room 240
P.O. Box 7925
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-2641
Fax: (318) 257-2628
E-mail: techaid@latech.edu
Website: www.latech.edu/financial_aid/

Career Center

Keeny 337
P.O. Box 3153
Ruston, LA 71272

Telephone: (318) 257-4336
Fax: (318) 257-4750
E-mail: careercenter@latech.edu
Website: www.latech.edu/career_center/