Get Ready For Spring Registration!

By Gwyer Schuyler, Club Advisor

Spring registration is just around the corner - the web schedule of classes will be posted in early November, and the first date of Priority Registration is November 14. We all know how crucial it is to register for your courses as soon as your priority registration date comes up. The college will post your priority registration date within Pipeline on October 31. Check it! Find your date! If you're not sure where to look, go to http://pipeline.sbcc.edu, go to Registration and Student Records, then to Check Your Pre-Registration Requirements and Registration Appointment.

Priority registration dates are assigned as follows: 1) DSPS, EOPS, and Veteran students; 2) Continuing students based on accumulated SBCC units; and 3) New or transfer students.

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How Will You Contribute?

By Anthony Pineda

The week of November 6th through the 12th is Health Information and Technology Week sponsored by the American Health Information Association (AHIMA). This year’s theme is “Accurate Health Information for Care YOU Trust.”

As future HIT/HIM professionals, we should do what we can in order to provide service to those who seek access to patient information, protect both medical and social information, protect confidential information, preserve and secure health information, and lastly, promote the quality and advancement of healthcare. This special recognition week is an excellent opportunity for students to do just that.

AHIMA has some great materials available to the public. For example, articles and quizzes for healthcare professionals and the public, press releases, and information on how to order official HI&T week merchandise. Visit http://ahima.org/events/recogweeks.aspx for more information.
Why Not Consider the Health IT Workforce Program?

By Monte Handley

A little over a year ago I had the opportunity of having a “one on one” student/professor coaching conversation with Professor Darla Branda, adjunct faculty member at SBCC (formerly HIT/CIM Department Chair). That particular conversation with Professor Branda will single handedly turn out to be the most important conversation of my academic career. It was from Professor Branda that I first learned about the Health IT Workforce program that was part of the Office of the National Coordinator’s (ONC’s) attempt to develop a flood of new HIT skilled graduates in order to meet the growing workforce shortage of health information technology professionals needed for electronic health record (EHR) implementation.

The HITECH Act was part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) signed by President Barack Obama back in 2009. The HITECH Act requires that certain hospitals and physicians implement full electronic health record systems or risk reduced future payments from both Medicare and Medicaid. Their incentive for doing so also includes receiving “up front” funding from the federal government known as Meaningful Use incentive payments to fund the implementation of their EHR systems. There’s a strict timeline for hospitals and physicians to comply with the EHR implementation guidelines so that they can receive the funding, which for most facilities individually amounts to millions of dollars.

The ARRA workforce program allocated $70,000,000 to 85 community colleges located throughout the United States. Each community college is tasked with offering a six-month non-degree training program. SBCC is one of the schools participating in the workforce development program. The full workforce program focuses on six main roles which include (1) Practice Workflow and information management redesign specialist, (2) Clinician/practitioner consultant, (3) Implementation support specialist, (4) Implementation manager, (5) Technical/software support staff, and (6) Trainer. Community colleges participating in the program can select which roles they will include in their curriculum. SBCC’s program focuses on role number (2) Clinician/practitioner consultant (for more info please visit http://www.sbcc.edu/hit/healthitworkforcetrainingprogram.php. SBCC’s program

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If you haven't taken HIT 101 yet, keep in mind the following: A review of enrolled students in HIT 101 for Fall 2011 found that only people who had completed or were in progress with 13 units through SBCC had a high enough priority to get into that class. This is probably the most popular class offered by SBCC!

Be sure to review the department requirements for your degree or certificate. That information can be found at http://www.sbcc.edu/majors. In addition, if you are pursuing an Associate degree, review the General Education requirements and the available online GE course options on our FAQ page - http://www.sbcc.edu/hit/faq.php.

If you have questions or would like help planning your schedule, email me - schuyler@sbcc.edu.
ICD-10 Is Coming!

By Gwyer Schuyler, Club Advisor

For people pursuing the Medical Coding Specialist Certificate, you are probably aware of the coming transition from ICD-9 to ICD-10. Beginning in October 2013, the Coding credential exams (CCA and CCS) will be based on ICD-10 diagnostic classification system.

Beginning in Fall 2012, SBCC will begin teaching ICD-10 in two classes - ICD-10-CM and ICD-10-PCS. How should you plan for this?

If your plans have been to take HIT 200 in Spring 2012, then you should continue with that plan. For Fall 2012, HIT 200 will be offered for the last time and should be taken by those who plan to complete all remaining Certificate requirements by the end of Spring 2013 and plan to take the CCA exam prior to October 2013.

Who should plan to take ICD-10-CM and ICD-10-PCS instead of HIT 200? If your timeline leads to the completion of all Medical Coding Specialist Certificate requirements in Summer or Fall 2013, then you should plan on taking the new courses instead of HIT 200.


Forming a Group for an Online Class Project

By Gagandeep Bal

As an on line student I have discovered the importance of my fellow class members and peers. Most online classes do not require you to work in a group, yet you will come across a few that will require you to work with your virtual classmates. The very first thing everyone should remember is that virtual classroom is like a real classroom. If you want to achieve a good grade, you should show your participation in every possible way.

A good thing to remember while forming an online group is that good communication is paramount for a successful online project experience. Group members should trade contact information as quickly as possible. The group should decide on the best possible way of communicating (e.g., e-mail, chat, cell phone, or Skype). As a student with limited resources, I tend to prefer using Skype because it is free, works just like a telephone, and it is easy to use. Keep in mind that in order for Skype to work effectively, all group members must be using the same version of the same software.

After deciding on the mode of communication, the group members will need to make some critical decisions regarding the choice of materials for the project. An excellent resource is the Luria Library. All students can access the paid subscription databases from off-campus with their Pipeline username and password.

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is 100% online but some of the other community colleges offer online, on campus, or hybrid programs. I chose to go to a community college close to where I live, with an on campus program that focused on the implementation manager and trainer roles for EHR, while at the same time, remaining in SBCC’s online HIT program. A grueling two semesters but I survived and graduated from the workforce program with certificates in both roles, and maintained by current SBCC HIT program focus too. Immediately after receiving the Implementation Manager and Trainer certificates, I received a summer internship from a very large healthcare organization. I recently finished my summer internship and was asked to stay on as a full time employee in the role of EHR Project Manager, but I would have to defer my pursuit of an HIT degree at SBCC and to me, that was not an option.

Here’s what you need to know. Careers in HIT EHR implementation are highly compensated and in very high demand, so much more than standard HIT, CIM and Medical Coding careers. I recently started applying to job postings for EHR Project Manager, with the expectation that it would take a month or two to land my first interview. Wrong!! I have already received over five responses to my 9 resumes I sent out in the last two weeks. Two have led to interviews. Salaries for the positions I have applied to have ranged from a low of $130,000 to a high of $200,000 annually. Keep in mind though, I do have twenty years previous management experience in Healthcare Finance prior to getting my certificates in EHR, and I am sure that helps a lot. My goal is to finish the SBCC HIT program first, but I have tested the EHR resume waters, and I am blown away by the results. Now combine a certificate with EHR implementation management/training with an associate’s degree in HIT from SBCC, along with a certificate in Medical Coding, and the sky’s the limit! If you have an interest in electronic health records, I strongly advise you to check out SBCC’s website above. It may be the best “one-on-one” student/stUDENT coaching advice you will ever receive.

Thank you so much Professor Branda!

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Another important part is to be able to share the information among all group members. This can be done via e-mail or Google docs. Individuals can access Google docs from their email assigned by the college; thus, allowing groups to share, update, and save documents in a variety of formats.

Set intermediate deadlines in order to complete the project ahead of the final deadline. This will help everyone stay on track and allows for unforeseen technical problems.

Lastly, use social media etiquette and respect towards your teammates. In order for this type of interaction to be successful, it is imperative that you are courteous in every way that you communicate. Group projects are a great way to socialize with your peers and allow you to network with others in the same field.

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