SHORELINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

PROGRAM: Health Care Information Programs
DATE: November 24, 2009
PLACE: Room 2327
TIME: 2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS

COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE
*Lisa Crosby

*members present

WELCOME
All were welcomed to the meeting by Sheila Green-Shook, Chair, at 2:00 p.m.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Donna Wilde provided an overview of the status and activities since the last HCI Advisory Committee meeting June 2009. This is the second year that the HCI programs have been totally online. Currently there are 18 second year students, 3 of which are part-time. There are approximately 110 first year students which include both Medical Coding and Reimbursement Specialist (MCRS) and Health Information Technology (HIT) majors. Some may not be able to continue winter quarter due to grades or financial concerns. Seven MCRS students will graduate at the end of this Fall quarter and 25 MCRS students will continue. Next year, there will be approximately 45-50 second year HIT students from many states around the country and it is anticipated that 30 of the current first year part-time HIT students will continue on a part-time basis to finish the first year of their program. The college receives approximately 500 requests for information about one or both of the HCI programs and turns most of them away because the program is full.

Faculty include Donna Wilde and Gloria Anderson who have full time status. Part-time faculty include:

- Ellen Braun, RDH, who teaches Human Diseases and Pharmacology.
- Kelly Johnson, RM, SM (MCASCP) a microbiologist – Medical Terminology
- Anita Ostrander, HT (ASCP), Q (IHC), a histotechnologist, teach the Medical Terminology
- Toni McKay, RHIT, Clinical Integrity and Compliance Analyst at Providence Health Systems in Everett, co-teaches the Computers in Health Care with Donna and Hospital/Clinic Records course and main instructor HIT Capstone course
- Ellen Cadwell, RHIA – co teach with Toni the Hospital and Clinic Records course
- Dawn Lui, RHIT from MedAssets – will co-teach Basic ICD-9-CM with Gloria and may co-teach other coding courses spring quarter
- Another instructor for Alternate care records (since this meeting, Jeannette Neibert, RHIA has been hired).
- Another person to teach Human Diseases will be hired.

The minutes of the June 2009 Advisory Committee were reviewed and Donna indicated that most of the suggestions related to EHR implementation provided by the members have already been incorporated into several existing classes and the remaining items will be included in either the Management or HIT Capstone courses this Spring. Donna thanked the members for their excellent suggestions.
Shoreline has been approached by Keystone College, a fully accredited college in Pennsylvania for a possible partnership. They have been approached by HIM managers in their region of their state to begin a medical coding training program, but there are no eligible faculty. They are writing a grant to obtain funding to begin such a program and wish to partner with Shoreline in this endeavor. They will provide the courses and faculty for the foundation courses such as English Composition, Anatomy/Physiology, Medical Terminology, Pharmacology, Human Diseases, etc., and they would like Shoreline to teach their cadre of students Hospital and Clinic Records, all four coding courses and medical reimbursement. They will contact us when funding has been secured.

Shoreline has been in ongoing discussions with Clark College in Vancouver, which has a one year Health Information Specialist certificate program under the direction of John Clausen, RHIA. Shoreline has more expertise on inpatient HIM instruction and Clark has more expertise on outpatient/physician office instruction. Both programs are looking at revisions to their curricula so that Clark HIS certificate students can transfer to Shoreline for the second year of the HIT program – a 1 + 1 concept. It is hoped that this will be completed by June 2010. We will need to build a bridge class to have their transfer students obtain experience with the Virtual Lab that Shoreline’s first year students have completed. The committee concurred with this approach.

Shoreline is working on challenge exams for students who are entering one of the HCI programs with experience or prior classes elsewhere that may or may not be comparable to existing Shoreline courses. Currently, a Human Biology (Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology) challenge exam is available for those students who come to the Shoreline campus and take it through the Science Division. A challenge HCI 134 Medical Terminology exam is available either on campus through the HCI program or via distance through the use of a proctor. Challenge exams are available for some of the coding courses. Students who already have a CCS are waived out of most coding and reimbursement courses (although they still need the medical foundation classes), and those with a CPC credential are waived out of several classes. The HCI faculty plan on working toward development of additional challenge exams for other courses including the hospital/clinic records course, medical reimbursement, computers in health care, etc. Since a number of health informatics programs are being initiated in state community colleges in response to ARRA, there needs to be a mechanism to evaluate graduates of those programs who wish to transfer to Shoreline for an associate degree.

Major time was spent during the summer on ARRA and the Department of Labor Grant (discussed elsewhere). Gillian Lewis, Dean of Health Occupations and Physical Education at Shoreline, and Donna thanked all members of the committee for writing their letters of support. They were critical to the grant application and the college could not have done this without the support. Shoreline is very grateful for this support.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Results of the AHIMA RHIT exams for the October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009 year were reviewed. 13 Shoreline students took the exam during this time and there was a 100% pass rate. Shoreline graduates were at or above the national mean in all categories, and overall was 6% above the national average.

Discussion then took place regarding the need to get more graduates to take the national exam. This is a problem statewide and nationwide. Carol Quinsey indicated that WSHIMA has money available to pay for these exams on a lottery basis and many additional exam fees could be paid but graduates often do not apply. Discussion then ensued regarding the new AHIMA policy initiated last year which allowed those students in their final term of study to take the national exam (although they would not see the results until they graduated). There was a 96% pass rate for those who took the exam at that time compared with 80+% pass rate for those who waited. Members of the committee agreed to work with HCI faculty in putting together something for the students’ spring term class regarding the importance of taking the exam, especially during spring quarter if possible.
Review of the Graduating HIT Students Curriculum Evaluation Results was done – this survey looks at specific classes and topics from a student perspective. This is different from the graduate surveys done the following year after they have been employed for a period of time. Overall the results showed that most indicated that they were satisfied with the level of education. Some indicated that they wanted additional training in coding, although, as was pointed out, there is only so much time in an HIT curriculum available for this. Susan Lingle and others indicated that students and graduates will always feel uneasy about their coding knowledge and that with experience over time, confidence will increase. The committee members agreed that additional coding courses would not be warranted at this time.

**CLINICAL PRACTICE**

At the present time students have two clinical practice courses, a short 4-day practice experience in the summer between the first and second year of the program and the second 15-day practicum winter quarter of the second year. Shoreline is extremely grateful for the assistance by HIM facility managers and staff in this activity. Due to the difficulty nationwide, and locally, of finding sufficient practice sites, CAHIIM has been reviewing the situation. According to a discussion Donna had with Claire Dixon-Lee, CEO of CAHIIM and Vice President of AHIMA, the CAHIIM Board of Commissioners have decided to reduce the amount of time required in the field if the educational program utilizes the AHIMA Virtual lab. Guidelines from them will be forthcoming, but she indicated that it will probably state that there must be at least one meaningful experience in the field which could either be project based or practice based, the amount of time to be determined by the program’s Advisory Committee.

Donna indicated it was extremely difficult to locate sites during the summer, especially this year, because the facility employees were on vacation or the site was implementing its EHR. Shoreline recognizes how difficult it is to have sites take students on clinical practice and would support a decrease in field time.

After the official guidelines are received from CAHIIM, Shoreline will develop a written policy regarding the amount of clinical practice and suggested activities and will send it to members of the Advisory Committee via email for review and email vote. All members of the committee agreed to this method of voting.

**AHIMA VIRTUAL LAB**

The list of Virtual Lab software and functions was reviewed with the committee. It is quite extensive. They had trouble fall quarter at AHIMA because the organization was implementing a new IT system, which included the Virtual Lab but most is resolved at this time, with the Cerner/Athens EHR new system to be in place by the end of December. This lab is of excellent assistance in providing students with hands-on experience with real-life activities and EHRs. Millions of dollars has been spent by AHIMA on this project for use by all levels of AHIMA approved/CAHIIM accredited programs. Payment is based on subscription rates on number of students. At this time, the federal Perkins funds are used at Shoreline for this purpose.

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR GRANT**

Discussion then took place regarding the Department of Labor (DOL) Grant and general ARRA activities this summer. In the early part of the summer, Gretchen Murphy, Sheila Green-Shook and Donna Wilde attended numerous meetings re ARRA grant funds available, including those for Health Information Exchanges, Regional Extension Centers, telemedicine, and education of health care professionals and laid off IT personnel who needed training in health informatics. There has been a lot of confusion within the state and nationwide (according to AHIMA) regarding all of this. Bellevue Community College took the lead in working with existing Washington state community colleges to develop a grant application for a very brief curriculum plan for instituting 6 month Health Informatics programs for laid off IT staff. After review of this curriculum plan, and after determining that the ARRA grants would not pay for additional faculty, Shoreline decided not to move forward with that activity.
Gretchen Murphy discussed the situation in which North Seattle Community College had concerns that the classes in their Medical Assisting and Information Technology in Health Care programs could not easily transfer to the University of Washington’s HIHIM program. The UW has strict requirements, institution-wide, regarding not accepting many professional technical courses as transfer classes. Because of this, North Seattle and several other colleges are discussing the possibility of setting up an online four-year HIM program at Eastern Washington University in which these professional technical courses could transfer directly. They intend to have a CAHIIM accredited HIM baccalaureate program and it is not clear at this time if CAHIIM will approve those courses in a higher level program.

Discussion also took place regarding the ARRA consortium of community colleges under Bellevue College’s leadership regarding the purchase state wide of GE Centricity software for use in their Health Informatics programs since they would not be eligible to participate in the AHMA Virtual Lab. Shoreline will check to determine if they can utilize that software as well. [Since the HCI Advisory Committee met, it was determined that from the GE Centricity web site that it is outpatient/clinic software for physician practices and is not an inpatient EHR software package].

Mid-summer AHIMA contacted the accredited HIM programs regarding its plans to develop a curriculum for a short-term (6 month) EHR training program which could be an existing part of a CAHIIM accredited HIT program. It would most likely emphasize EHR implementation in a physician’s clinic. AHIMA also alerted all program directors regarding a new DOL grant that would pay for faculty in addition to other resources. After full investigation Shoreline submitted a $1.2 million grant application (funds to be spread over 3 years) on October 5, 2009 which included the following:

- **Content**
  - 6-month EHR certificate part of HIT Curriculum – developed by AHIMA
  - 1+1 Program with Clark College with the intent to replicate it, if successful, in other areas of the state not served by an accredited HIT program
  - Development of challenge exams for experience
  - Career pathway from student assessment and prerequisite courses, foundation science/health care courses, 1+1 program, 5-quarter MCRS program, 2-year HIT program, baccalaureate degree HIM programs and higher.
  - Provision of ICD-10 continuing education for health care professionals

- **Purpose:**
  - gain two additional HCI full-time faculty positions
  - additional monetary resources for consultants and continuing education for HCI faculty
  - additional part-time staff for eLearning Department
  - subscription for Virtual Lab
  - extra sections for ESL courses

- **Support Letters – Gillian Lewis and Donna again thanked the committee members for their support:**
  - Members of the HCI Advisory Committee
  - HIM Program Directors from University of Washington, Tacoma Community College, Spokane Community College, Clark College
  - Qualis Healthcare (they are seeking to be the Regional Extension Center and offered to have Shoreline HIT students for clinical practice experiences and possible employment after graduation)
  - Linda Klaus, CEO of AHIMA
  - King and Snohomish County Workforce Development Councils

Grant materials indicated that applicants should hear by the end of November whether or not the funds were awarded. If Shoreline does not receive them, Advisory Committee members agreed to be willing to write future support letters for other grant applications. Donna and Gillian emphasized that in determining the amount of in-kind funding, the value of HIM directors/clinical practice supervisors and for educational Program Directors should be considered a very high value. It is not just based on volunteer time, but the expertise of the persons assisting in this endeavor. Committee members requested a summary or copy of the complete application request. Donna will follow through. She pointed out that the last drafts of the
application were not reviewed by her, so some of the information is not quite correct. She will point that out in the cover email message when this is sent.

**HIT CAPSTONE COURSE**

Toni McKay discussed the HCI 235 HIT Capstone Course. This is the class in which students are given a case study, and then work in groups to develop plans and documents (job descriptions, budgets, etc.) for a new HIM Department in a physician’s clinic. She taught it for the first time as a total online course last year and shared the results with the committee. It was difficult to do this on a distance basis with students located in all time zones, and difficult to have each team complete all sections of the project. The project also included some activities related to paper records, and only partial activities related to the EHR (e.g. coding, etc.). Plans are underway to revise the course to have it be more EHR focused, in which student teams complete different sections of the course, rather than each team completing all of it. About half way through the quarter, the plans are to have students be assigned to different teams to work on other parts of the project. The committee discussed these ideas and talked about the importance of having the parts of the project be due in appropriate chronological order, so that the group working on the budget, for example, would not do their work until another team working on numbers of employees, etc. Discussion also took place on different approaches to the HCI 224 Management course, not only in relation to the Capstone course, but also to add additional information related to EHR implementation provided by the Advisory Committee at its June 2009 meeting.

**ICD-10-CM/PCS**

At the present time, Gloria Anderson has been incorporating some ICD-10 instruction in current courses, and will be adding additional instruction over both 2010 and 2011 in order to meet the requirements of AHIMA/CAHIIM. Since Gloria was unable to be present at the meeting, further discussion was deferred until the Spring 2010 Advisory Committee meeting.

**RETIREMENT AND NEW FACULTY RECRUITMENT**

Donna Wilde announced her plans to retire from Shoreline as a full time faculty member and HCI Program Director effective August 31, 2010. She may continue teaching on a part time basis in the future. College administrators will develop plans for replacement and national advertising may need to be done. Gillian Lewis encouraged all members of the committee to apply for either full-time or part time positions or share the information with others who might be interested.

**OTHER**

Members will be contacted later regarding the date for the Spring Quarter Advisory Committee meeting. They indicated that they liked the time frame of 2:00 – 3:30 because they are able to avoid commute traffic times.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.