

HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Associate in Applied Science (AAS)

Program Code: 10-530-4

Total Credits: 62-63

Mid-State's Health Information Management program prepares individuals to enter the emerging field of electronic health record management. Students learn to use computer programs and established methods to securely process, compile, maintain, and report electronic health information data for patient care. In this program, you'll learn to abstract and code clinical data using classifications systems as well as analyze health records according to industry protocols. You'll build knowledge about reimbursement, facility planning, marketing, risk management, and more. Graduates are eligible to take the AHIMA national certification exam for Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT).

To learn more about this program, visit mstc.edu/programs.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR

To schedule an appointment with an academic advisor, call 715-422-5300. Academic advisors will travel to other campuses as necessary to accommodate student needs. For more information about advising, visit mstc.edu/advising.

NEW STUDENT CHECKLIST

Complete the following steps to prepare for your New Student Advising appointment with your academic advisor:

- Submit a Mid-State application at mstc.edu/apply.
- Send official transcripts to:
Mid-State Technical College
Student Services
500 32nd Street North
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at fafsa.gov. Mid-State's Financial Aid team is available to assist with your FAFSA application and to answer your financial aid questions. Contact Financial Aid or schedule an appointment at mstc.edu/financial-aid.
- Set up student MyCampus account at mstc.edu/mycampus-assistance.
- Schedule a New Student Advising appointment at mstc.edu/advising.

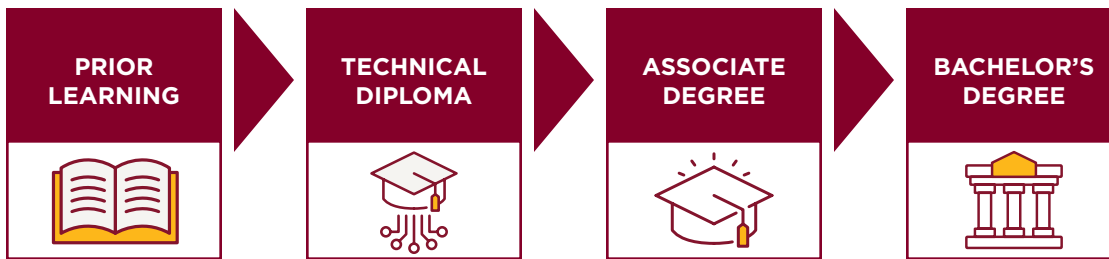
mstc.edu • 888-575-6782 • TTY: 711



Adams Campus • Marshfield Campus • Stevens Point Downtown Campus • Wisconsin Rapids Campus • Virtual Campus • AMETA® Center

Mid-State does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its program, activity, or employment. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Vice President - Human Resources; 500 32nd Street North, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494; 715-422-5325 • AAEO@mstc.edu. 3/2026-AC

CAREER PATHWAY



Career pathways help you build your education step by step. Each stage offers one or more credentials that are recognized by employers and lead to real jobs—and you can keep building toward your career goals as you go.

Begin at any point.

Prior Learning

Credit for Prior Learning

- Certifications and Licenses
- Military Experience
- National/Standardized Exams
- Transfer Credit
- Work and Life Experience

Learn about Credit for Prior Learning at mstc.edu/cpl.

High School Credit

- High School Dual Credit
- Mid-State Fast Track

Learn about High School Credit at mstc.edu/dc.

Technical Diploma

- Medical Coder (31 Credits)
Start Your Career: Financial Services Specialist, Medical Biller, Medical Claims Reviewer, Medical Coder/Specialist, Medical Records Technician

Associate Degree

- Health Information Management (62-63 Credits)
Start Your Career: Health Information Specialist/Technician, Health Information Supervisor, Master Patient Index Specialist, Medical Coding Auditor/Reviewer, Revenue Cycle Coordinator

Bachelor's Degree

For those interested in continuing their education, Mid-State offers transfer guides with various four-year colleges and universities. For more information, visit mstc.edu/transfer.

Other Options

Related Programs: Dental Assistant, Health & Wellness Promotion, Medical Assistant, Medical Coder, Nursing, Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician, Radiography, Respiratory Therapy, Sterile Processing Technician, Surgical Technology

OUTCOMES

Employers will expect you, as a Health Information Management graduate, to be able to:

- Demonstrate professional behaviors and ethics.
- Apply information technology and analytics in data use.
- Apply coding and reimbursement systems.
- Supervise various components of the health information system.
- Apply data governance principles to ensure the quality of health data.

TECHNICAL SKILLS ATTAINMENT

The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) has implemented a requirement that all technical colleges measure outcomes attained by students. This requirement is called Technical Skills Attainment (TSA). The main objective of TSA is to ensure graduates have the technical skills needed by employers. Students are notified of TSA reporting in their final few courses of the program and will complete a mock RHIT exam to fulfill the TSA requirement for this program.

ACCREDITATION

The Health Information Management accreditor of Mid-State Technical College is the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM). The College's accreditation for associate degree in Health Information Management at the Marshfield campus has been reaffirmed through 2031.



Graduates are eligible to take the national certification exam offered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) for the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) credential.

ADDITIONAL ENTRY CRITERIA

To apply to the Health Information Management program, please submit the following documents to Mid-State Admissions:

- Criminal Background Statement of Understanding and Release of Information form.

Mid-State Technical College • Admissions
500 32nd Street North, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

A list of specific physical, emotional, and mental tasks needed to function as a Health Information Management graduate is available at mstc.edu/programs/health-information-management. Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator in the Student Services & Information Center to receive assistance.

PRACTICUM-RELATED REQUIREMENTS

Prior to placement at a practicum site, students need to pay for a criminal background check and provide documentation of required health work.

Students are responsible for ensuring all requirements remain current during program enrollment.

Practicum sites have the right to refuse a student's placement based on inadequate health records, pending charges, or conviction records. Students with a criminal history may not be able to complete practicum courses. Mid-State will make two attempts to place a student in an appropriate practicum experience. If Mid-State is unable to place the student after two attempts, the student will be withdrawn from the practicum course and will not be able to advance in the program.

PROGRAM PROGRESSION AND COMPLETION

In order to progress in and successfully complete the program, students must:

- Repeat courses not completed with a "C" or better prior to progressing in core courses or other courses with co- or prerequisites.
- Receive a grade of "C" or better in all courses required for graduation.

A student may repeat the same course in the HIM (or medical coder) program. If the course is failed a second time, the student is required to meet with the program advisor prior to enrolling in the course again. If a HIM (or medical coder) student fails four separate program courses, the student will be withdrawn from the program. Failures will include failing the same course or failing different courses. A withdrawal grade of "W" counts as one attempt for the course.

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Visit mstc.edu/studenthandbook to view Mid-State's student handbook, which contains information about admissions, enrollment, appeals processes, services for people with disabilities, financial aid, graduation, privacy, Mid-State's Student Code of Conduct, and technology.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

The GPS for Student Success course is required for all Mid-State program students and is recommended to be completed before obtaining 12 credits. Some students are exempt from this requirement. Please see your academic advisor for more information.

ADDITIONAL COURSES AS NEEDED

The following courses may be recommended or required if the student does not achieve minimum placement scores.

College Reading and Writing 1

10831104

3 credits

Provides learners with opportunities to develop and expand reading and writing skills to prepare for college-level academic work. Students will employ critical reading strategies to improve comprehension, analysis, and retention of texts. Students will apply the writing process to produce well-developed, coherent, and unified written work.

Pre-Algebra

10834109

3 credits

Provides an introduction to algebra. Includes operations on real numbers, solving linear equations, percent and proportion, and an introduction to polynomials and statistics. Prepares students for elementary algebra and subsequent algebra-related courses.

MULTIPLE MEASURES

Students can place into courses using high school GPA and completed classes. Placement can be determined in the following ways:

- **Multiple Measures Writing (MMW)**
High school GPA of 2.6 & successful completion of 2.0 credits of high school writing courses with a “C” or better
- **Multiple Measures Reading (MMR)**
High school GPA of 2.6 & successful completion of 2.0 credits of high school literature courses with a “C” or better
- **Multiple Measures Math 1 (MMM_1)**
High school GPA of 2.6 & successful completion of 1.0 credit of high school math (Algebra 1 or equivalent) with a “C” or better
- **Multiple Measures Math 2 (MMM_2)**
High school GPA of 2.6 & successful completion of 2.0 credits of high school math including Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 with a “C” or better
- **Multiple Measures Science 1 (MMS_1)**
High school GPA of 2.6 & successful completion of 1.0 credit of high school lab science course with a “C” or better
- **Multiple Measures Science 2 (MMS_2)**
High school GPA of 2.6 & successful completion of 1.0 credit of high school chemistry with a “C” or better

Past high school and college transcripts are used in making course placement decisions.

SAMPLE FULL-TIME CURRICULUM OPTION

Health Information Management • 62-63 Total Credits

Term 15-16 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10103106	Microsoft Office-Introduction	Yes	3
	10501101	Medical Terminology	Yes	3
	10530123	Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare	No	3
	10530125	Organization of Healthcare	No	2
	10806189 or 10806177	Basic Anatomy or General Anatomy & Physiology	No or Yes	3 or 4
	10890102	GPS for Student Success	Yes	1

Term 15 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10103124	Excel Intermediate	Yes	1
	10530144	CPT Coding for HIM	No	3
	10530112	Legal Aspects of HIM	No	2
	10530117	Human Disease for the Health Professions	No	3
	10530197	ICD Diagnosis Coding	No	3
	10801195 or 10801136	Written Communication or English Composition 1	Yes	3

Term 15 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530132	Health Data Analysis	No	3
	10530160	Performance Improvement for Health Professions	No	3
	10804189	Introductory Statistics	Yes	3
	10801198 or 10801196	Speech or Oral/Interpersonal Communication	Yes	3
	10809198 or 10809188	Introduction to Psychology or Developmental Psychology	Yes	3

Term 15 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530146	Private and Government Reimbursement	No	3
	10530147	HIM Advanced Coding	No	3
	10530113	RHIT Test Prep	No	1
	10530114	Health Information Practicum	No	1
	10530115	Inpatient Procedure Coding	No	3
	10530116	Management of Health Information Services	No	3
	10809172 or 10809196	Introduction to Diversity Studies or Introduction to Sociology	Yes	3

Please Note

- Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) options are available for some courses. You can visit mstc.edu/cpl or contact your academic advisor for details.
- This curriculum sequence is only for student planning. Actual student schedules will vary depending on course availability.
- Program completion time may vary based on student scheduling and course availability. For details, go to mstc.edu/schedule.
- Get the latest updates online at mstc.edu.

SAMPLE PART-TIME CURRICULUM OPTION
Health Information Management • 62-63 Total Credits

Term 10-11 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10501101	Medical Terminology	Yes	3
	10530123	Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare	No	3
	10806189 or 10806177	Basic Anatomy or General Anatomy & Physiology	No or Yes	3 or 4
	10890102	GPS for Student Success	Yes	1
Term 5 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530112	Legal Aspects of HIM	No	2
	10530117	Human Disease for the Health Professions	No	3
Term 8 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10103106	Microsoft Office-Introduction	Yes	3
	10530125	Organization of Healthcare	No	2
	10530197	ICD Diagnosis Coding	No	3
Term 7 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10103124	Excel Intermediate	Yes	1
	10530144	CPT Coding for HIM	No	3
	10801195 or 10801136	Written Communication or English Composition 1	Yes	3
Term 6 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530132	Health Data Analysis	No	3
	10804189	Introductory Statistics	Yes	3
Term 9 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530146	Private and Government Reimbursement	No	3
	10530147	HIM Advanced Coding	No	3
	10530115	Inpatient Procedure Coding	No	3
Term 9 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530160	Performance Improvement for Health Professions	No	3
	10801198 or 10801196	Speech or Oral/Interpersonal Communication	Yes	3
	10809198 or 10809188	Introduction to Psychology or Developmental Psychology	Yes	3
Term 8 Credits	Course Number	Course Name	CPL	Credits
	10530113	RHIT Test Prep	No	1
	10530114	Health Information Practicum	No	1
	10530116	Management of Health Information Services	No	3
	10809172 or 10809196	Introduction to Diversity Studies or Introduction to Sociology	Yes	3

Basic Anatomy

10806189

3 credits

Examines concepts of anatomy and physiology as they relate to health careers. Learners correlate anatomical and physiological terminology to all body systems.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMM_1 or MMS_1 or Accuplacer QAS 246 or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 249 or ACT Math 19 or ACT Reading score of 15

CPT Coding for HIM

10530144

3 credits

Prepares learners to assign current procedural terminology (CPT) codes supported by medical documentation with entry-level proficiency. Students are familiar with and use standard coding references. Emphasizes accuracy, CPT instructional notations, conventions, rules, and official coding guidelines when assigning CPT codes to case studies and actual medical record documentation. Also covers application of modifiers to services and relationship to financial impact.

Prerequisites: Medical Terminology 10501101, Basic Anatomy 10806189, and Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare 10530123; Corequisite: Human Disease for the Health Professions 10530117

Developmental Psychology

10809188

3 credits

Studies human development throughout the lifespan and explores developmental theory and research with an emphasis on the interactive nature of the biological, cognitive, and psychosocial changes that affect the individual from conception to death. Application activities and critical thinking skills enable students to gain an increased knowledge and understanding of themselves and others.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMR and MMW or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 236 and Writing of 237 or ACT of 15 Reading/16 English

English Composition 1

10801136

3 credits

Learners develop and apply skills in all aspects of the writing process. Through a variety of learning activities and written documents, learners employ rhetorical strategies, plan, organize and revise content, apply critical reading strategies, locate and evaluate information, integrate and document sources, and apply standardized English language conventions.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMW or Accuplacer Writing of 262 or Accuplacer Reading 253 or ACT English score of 20 or ACT Reading 21 or completion of College Reading and Writing 1 10831104 with a "C" or better

Excel-Intermediate

10103124

1 credit

Students learn to summarize and analyze large data sets. Some of Excel's data tools and what-if tools are applied.

Prerequisite: Microsoft Office-Introduction 10103106 or Excel-Beginning 10103123

General Anatomy & Physiology

10806177

4 credits

Examines basic concepts of human anatomy and physiology as they relate to health sciences. Using a body systems approach, the course emphasizes the interrelationships between structure and function at the gross and microscopic levels of organization of the entire human body. It is intended to prepare health care professionals who need to apply basic concepts of whole-body anatomy and physiology to informed decision making and professional communication with colleagues and patients.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMS_1 and MMM_1 or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 262 and QAS of 246 or ACT Math score of 19 and Reading score of 19 or College Math 10804107 or Intermediate Algebra with Applications 10804118 with a "C" or better, or General Chemistry 10806134, or General Biology 10806114, or Human Body in Health & Disease 31509302

GPS for Student Success

10890102

1 credit

Integrate necessary skills for student success by developing an academic plan, identifying interpersonal attributes for success, adopting efficient and effective learning strategies, and utilizing Mid-State resources, policies, and processes. This course is recommended to be completed prior to obtaining 12 credits and is a graduation requirement unless you receive an exemption from your program advisor.

Health Data Analysis

10530132

3 credits

Focuses on the collection, computation, analysis, and presentation of healthcare statistical data. Examines data analytics, registries, vital statistics, mandatory reporting, and research.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare 10530123 and Excel Intermediate 10103124

Health Information Practicum

10530114

1 credit

Provides a blend of supervised experiential learning from a health information professional with online classroom activities. Students apply skills and knowledge gained from previous courses in the health information management setting. Classroom activity includes discussion of practicum experience and resume and interview preparedness.

Prerequisites: Health Data Analysis 10530132, Performance Improvement for Health Professions 10530160, Legal Aspects of HIM 10530112; Corequisites: Inpatient Procedure Coding 10530115, Private & Government Reimbursement 10530146, HIM Advanced Coding 10530147.

HIM Advanced Coding

10530147

3 credits

Builds on basic coding knowledge and skills through the coding of clinical case studies and actual medical records. Students access, review, and code electronic medical records from the virtual lab software; perform data quality reviews to validate code assignment and compliance with reporting requirements; develop appropriate physician queries; and assign diagnosis related groups (DRGs) and ambulatory payment classifications (APCs) with entry-level proficiency using computerized encoding and grouping software.

Prerequisites: ICD Diagnosis Coding 10530197 and CPT Coding 10530144; *Corequisites:* Private and Government Reimbursement 10530146 and Inpatient Procedure Coding 10530115

Human Disease for the Health Professions

10530117

3 credits

Focuses on the common diseases of each body system as encountered in all types of healthcare settings by health information professionals. Emphasizes understanding the etiology (causes), signs and symptoms, diagnostic tests, and treatment (including pharmacologic) of each disease.

Prerequisites: Medical Terminology 10501101 and Basic Anatomy 10806189

ICD Diagnosis Coding

10530197

3 credits

Prepares students to assign ICD diagnosis codes supported by medical documentation with entry-level proficiency. Students apply instructional notations, conventions, rules, and official coding guidelines when assigning ICD diagnosis codes to case studies and actual medical record documentation.

Prerequisites: Medical Terminology 10501101, Basic Anatomy 10806189, and Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare 10530123; *Corequisite:* Human Disease for the Health Professions 10530117

Inpatient Procedure Coding

10530115

3 credits

Prepares students to assign ICD procedure codes supported by medical documentation with entry-level proficiency. Students apply instructional notations, conventions, rules, and official coding guidelines when assigning ICD procedure codes to case studies and actual medical record documentation.

Prerequisite: ICD Diagnosis Coding 10530197; *Corequisites:* Private and Government Reimbursement 10530146 and HIM Advanced Coding 10530147

Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare

10530123

3 credits

This introductory course examines the field of Health Information Management including the hardware and software systems used, common industry terminology, the security and ethical responsibilities of professionals in the field, and the current trends in the industry. Students will focus on accuracy and integrity of health data and confidentiality in this course.

Corequisite: 10501101 Medical Terminology

Introduction to Diversity Studies

10809172

3 credits

This course introduces the study of diversity from a local to a global perspective using a holistic, interdisciplinary approach that encourages exploration and prepares students to work in a diverse environment. The course introduces basic diversity concepts, examines the impact of bias and power differentials among groups, explores the use of culturally responsive communication strategies, and compares forces that shape diversity in an international context.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMR and MMW or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 236 and Writing of 237 or ACT of 15 Reading/16 English

Introduction to Psychology

10809198

3 credits

This science of psychology course is a survey of multiple aspects of behavior and mental processes. It provides an overview of topics such as research methods, theoretical perspectives, learning, cognition, memory, motivation, emotions, personality, abnormal psychology, physiological factors, social influences, and development.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMR and MMW or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 236 and Writing of 237 or ACT of 15 Reading/16 English

Introduction to Sociology

10809196

3 credits

Introduces students to the basic concepts of sociology: culture, socialization, social stratification, multi-culturalism, and the five institutions of family, politics, economics, religion, and education. Other topics include demography, deviance, technology, environment, social issues, social change, social organization, and workplace issues.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMR and MMW or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 236 and Writing of 237 or ACT of 15 Reading/16 English

Introductory Statistics

10804189

3 credits

Students taking Introductory Statistics display data with graphs, describe distributions with numbers, perform correlation and regression analyses, and design experiments. They use probability and distributions to make predictions, estimate parameters, and test hypotheses. They draw inferences about relationships including ANOVA. Algebra knowledge and foundational skills in mathematics are important for success in this course.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMM_2 or Accuplacer QAS 241 or ACT Math score of 19 or Pre-Algebra 10834109 or College Math 10804107 with a "C" or better

Legal Aspects of HIM

10530112

2 credits

Focuses on regulations for the content, access, disclosure, privacy, confidentiality, security, retention, and destruction of health information. Includes an overview of the US legal system.

Prerequisite: Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare 10530123

Management of Health Information Services

10530116

3 credits

Examines the principles of management to include planning, organizing, human resource management, directing, and controlling as related to the health information department.

Prerequisites: Organization of Healthcare 10530125, Legal Aspects of HIM 10530112, Health Data Analysis 10530132, and Performance Improvement for Health Professions 10530160

Medical Terminology

10501101

3 credits

Focuses on the component parts of medical terms: prefixes, suffixes, and word roots. Learners practice formation, analysis, and reconstruction of terms. Emphasizes spelling, definition, and pronunciation. Introduces operative, diagnostic, therapeutic, and symptomatic terminology of all body systems as well as systemic and surgical terminology.

Microsoft Office-Introduction

10103106

3 credits

Develops introductory skills in the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and Outlook) while reinforcing the students' knowledge of computer concepts, Windows Explorer, and web usage. This course prepares students for the Associate level MOS Certification exams for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook. Students should possess basic keyboarding, mouse, and Windows 11 skills. Students may develop these skills in the Academic Learning Center while concurrently enrolled in this course.

Oral/Interpersonal Communication

10801196

3 credits

Focuses on developing effective listening techniques and verbal and nonverbal communication skills through oral presentation, group activity, and other projects. The study of self, conflict, and cultural contexts will be explored, as well as their impact on communication.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMR and MMW or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 236 and Writing of 237 or ACT of 15 Reading/16 English or College Reading and Writing with a C or better

Organization of Healthcare

10530125

2 credits

Examines the organization and delivery of healthcare services, external standards, regulations, initiatives, payment and reimbursement systems, and healthcare providers and disciplines.

Performance Improvement for Health Professions

10530160

3 credits

Examines healthcare performance improvement systems. Includes performance assessment, measurement, and improvement as well as patient safety, risk management, utilization management, and medical staff credentialing.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Digital Information in Healthcare 10530123 and Excel Intermediate 10103124

Private and Government Reimbursement

10530146

3 credits

Introduces students to the vocabulary of private healthcare and government reimbursement. Students will identify and compare the varieties of private and government healthcare insurance including the advantages and disadvantages of each for the provider and for the policyholder. HIPAA guidelines are utilized throughout.

Prerequisites: ICD Diagnosis Coding 10530197 and CPT Coding 10530144; Corequisites: Inpatient Procedure Coding 10530115; HIM Advanced Coding 10530147

RHIT Test Prep

10530113

1 credit

Explores strategies for preparing for the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) examination, including study skills, test-preparation skills, and test-taking skills. Includes a basic review of content related to the examination.

Prerequisites: Health Data Analysis 10530132, Performance Improvement for Health Professions 10530160, and Legal Aspects of HIM 10530112; Corequisites: Private and Government Reimbursement 10530146, HIM Advanced Coding 10530147, and Inpatient Procedure Coding 10530115

Speech

10801198

3 credits

Explores the fundamentals of effective oral presentation to small and large groups. Topic selection, audience analysis, methods of organization, research, structuring evidence and support, delivery techniques, and other essential elements of speaking successfully, including the listening process, form the basis of this course. Includes informative, persuasive, and occasion speech presentations.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMR and MMW or Accuplacer Reading Skills of 253 and Writing of 262 or ACT of 21 Reading/19 English or completion of College Reading and Writing 1 10831104 with a "C" or better

Written Communication

10801195

3 credits

Develops writing skills which include prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. A variety of writing assignments are designed to help the learner analyze audience and purpose, research and organize ideas, and format and design documents based on subject matter and content. Also develops critical reading and thinking skills through the analysis of a variety of written documents.

Prerequisite: High School GPA of 2.6 and MMW or Accuplacer Writing of 262 or ACT English score of 20 or completion of College Reading and Writing 1 10831104 with a "C" or better