



**MDCA 1443-101CL**  
**Medical Insurance for Medical Assistants**  
**Fall 2025**  
**Tuesday –Wednesday 9:00am - 12:00pm**

**Instructor Information:** Darlene Alexander, A.A.S., CMA, RMA [dalexander@com.edu](mailto:dalexander@com.edu),  
Office: 409-933-8231

**Student hours and location:** Tues- 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm; STEMS Room 233

**Required Textbook:** Medical Insurance; A Revenue Cycle Process Approach: Valerius 9e  
Edition and Workbook. ICD-10 CM for Physician's Office, CPT & HCPCS Coding

**Required Textbook:** Medical Insurance; A Revenue Cycle Process Approach Workbook:  
Valerius 8<sup>th</sup> Edition.

**Brightspace D2L**

- We will be using Brightspace D2L for this course, so you will need access to a computer and the Internet. There is also a **mobile-friendly** app and can be used on your phone or tablet through the or a mobile browser!

**Course Description:** Emphasizes accurate ICD-10 and CPT coding of office procedures for payment/reimbursement by patient or third party and prevention of insurance fraud. Additional topics may include managed care or medical economics.

**Course Prerequisite/ Co-requisite:** Students must be enrolled in MDCA 1309, MDCA 1302, MDCA 1321 and HITT 1305 as co-requisites for this class.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Log into Brightspace/D2L at least once a week to check for Announcements and e-mail, review the content, and complete any graded course activities.
2. Complete and submit all graded activities within the time limit prescribed by the instructor. Graded activities and their due dates are indicated in the Course Syllabus toward the end of this document but are subject to revision if circumstances (such as hurricanes) dictate.
3. **Maintain an average of 75% or better.** Students are responsible for submitting weekly graded activities within the date/time parameters indicated in the Course Syllabus.

4. The mid-term and final exam will be administered as indicated on the Course Syllabus.
5. Students must have all required skill procedures in order and completed for each semester.

This course requires classroom attendance (on campus). You will also be required to wear a uniform consisting of grape-colored scrubs and appropriate shoes.

**Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:** As a student you are required to complete all lessons, assignments, and tests as part of each course within the program. Your semester grade will be comprised of: Case studies, assignments, chapter quizzes, mid-term exam, and final exam. Grading rubric for assignments is found on the course menu. Quizzes and exams are self-grading by Brightspace/D2L.

**Grading Formula:** As a student you are required to complete all lessons, assignments, and tests as part of each course within the program. Your semester grade will be comprised of:

**Grading Scale:**

|                       |      |  |                      |
|-----------------------|------|--|----------------------|
| Assignments/Homework  | 15%  |  | A = 90.0% to 100%    |
| Lab/Participation     | 15%  |  | B = 80.0% to 89.99%  |
| Quizzes               | 10%  |  | C = 75.0% to 79.99 % |
| Discussion/Case Study | 10%  |  | D = 70.0% to 74.99 % |
| Mid-Term Exam         | 20%  |  | F = 0% to 70%        |
| Final Exam            | 30%  |  |                      |
| Total                 | 100% |  |                      |

***A student must receive a “C” (75%) or better.” If a student receives a grade of a “D”, or “F” for the same MDCA course on two occasions, the student will not be eligible to continue in the Medical Assistant Program.***

*The Medical Assisting program uses a competency-based evaluation process that provides the students with three attempts to pass. If the student completes a competency on their first attempt, the student will earn a grade of 100%. If the student completes on their second attempt, the student will earn a grade of 90%. If the student completes on their third attempt, the student will earn a grade of 80%. Should the competency not be passed with an 80% or higher, the student will be required to repeat the course. Competency evaluations are averaged at the end of term for the student’s final grade. A student must receive a “C” (75%) or better.” If a student receives a grade of a “D”, or “F” for the same MDCA course on two occasions, the student will not be eligible to continue in the Medical Assistant Program*

**Late Work:** Late work may not be accepted unless individuals' arrangements have been made with me prior to the due date and time. The missing work must be completed within three days past its original due date. I will e-mail you if I make any adjustments to the calendar. If you are not in class at the start of the test, you will not be able to take the test. All class work is due on the date it is given – no exceptions! Homework assignments not posted in Brightspace/D2L will be given a grade of zero.

**Make-Up Policy:** If a student misses a graded activity due to an **emergency absence, or illness (of the student)**, it is the student's responsibility to promptly arrange for make-up work. Students that cannot complete assignments on time must contact the instructor. Parameters for make-up work will be made at the discretion of the instructor and may not be an option, depending on the circumstances. Furthermore, students that cannot take an exam within the allotted time must contact the instructor in order for the test to be considered for an additional attempt. The percentage of each activity will weigh in the final grade, regardless of whether the student participates in the activity or test. Keep in mind, you must contact the instructor and make arrangements for submission. Do not expect the instructor to remind you. If you fail to contact your instructor your work assignments may not be turned in and will receive zero for what was due.

**Please Note – Quizzes cannot be made up. If you miss a quiz, you will receive a zero grade, and it might affect your average. I will e-mail you if I make any adjustments to the calendar**

**Mid-term and Exam make-ups will not be allowed unless there is an emergency (of the student), and I must be notified before the time of the exam.**

**Attendance Policy:** Your attendance and active class participation are an integral component of your educational experience and that of your classmates. Because of this, it is critical that you attend all classes and labs. All lecture classes, labs, require mandatory attendance As the program handbook outlines. Class/Lab attendance is checked daily. A student is allowed to miss no more than 10% of the total course hours of class/lab time combined. As the program manual outlines, these must be excused absences, and the program director must approve unexcused absences, COM recognizes no excused absences other than those prescribed by law: religious holy days and military service. The student must make up any hours beyond the 10% class period and will be given a written warning for excessive absences. A student who misses 15% or more class periods is considered unable to complete the program objectives and can be removed from the class by an instructor-initiated withdrawal. Any missed lab days must be made up outside of their regularly scheduled class time. Additional absences will result in a review of the student's enrollment status, and they may be dropped from the course. Class activities missed during the absence may not be made up. To qualify for the RMA exam, you must attend 720 class/lab hours and 200 Clinical hours. Don't expect the instructor to remind you.

**Communicating with your instructor:** ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via Brightspace or 409-933-8231.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

| SLO            | Maps to Core Objective   | Assess by Activity |
|----------------|--|--------------------|
| <b>SLO #1:</b> | <b>Communication Skills:</b> Students will effectively develop, interpret, and express ideas through written, oral and visual communication (written, oral, and visual). | Assignments        |
| <b>SLO #2:</b> | <b>Critical Thinking Skills:</b> Students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, inquiry & the ability to analyze, evaluate & synthesize information.           | Discussions        |
| <b>SLO #3:</b> | <b>Teamwork:</b> Students will consider different points of view and work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.                                   | Discussion project |

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams is an extremely serious offense and will result in a **grade of zero** on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate discipline action.

**Student Concerns:** If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Kay Carrier, Allied Health Careers Chairperson at 409-933-8414 / [kcarriere3@com.edu](mailto:kcarriere3@com.edu).

**Notice to Students Regarding Licensing:** Effective September 1, 2017, HB 1508 amends the Texas Occupations Code Section 53 that requires education providers to notify potential or enrolled students that a criminal history may make them ineligible for an occupational license upon program completion. The following website provides links to information about the licensing process and requirements:

**Course Outline:****Medical Insurance**

| Open/Close Dates  | Lecture                               | Graded Activities   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Week One<br>Aug 18 <sup>th</sup> – Aug 24 <sup>th</sup> | <b>Chapter 4</b><br>Diagnostic Coding | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect<br>assignments |
| Week Two<br>Aug 25 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup>     | <b>Chapter 5</b><br>Procedural Coding | Homework, Assignment<br>Quiz, Discussions, Connect<br>assignments |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Week Three<br>Sept 1 <sup>st</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup>         | <b>Chapter 1</b><br>From Patient to Payment: Understanding Medical Insurance                                       | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Four<br>Sept 8 <sup>th</sup> – Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>    | <b>Chapter 2</b><br>Electronic Health Records, HIPPA, & HITECH: Sharing and Protecting Patients Health Information | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Five<br>Sept 15 <sup>th</sup> – Sept 21 <sup>st</sup>   | <b>Chapter 3</b><br>Patient Encounters and Billing Information   | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Six<br>Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup> – Sept 28 <sup>th</sup>    | <b>Chapter 6</b><br>Payment Methods and Checkout Procedures  | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Seven<br>Sept 29 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>    | <b>Chapter 7</b><br>Health Care Claims Preparation and Transaction   | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Eight<br>Oct 6 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>     | <b>Chapter 8</b><br>Private Payers/BlueCross BlueShield  | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Nine<br>Oct 13 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>     | <b>Mid-Term</b>  | <b>Starts at 9:00 AM</b>                                       |
| Week Ten<br>Oct 20 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 26 <sup>th</sup>      | <b>Chapter 9</b><br>Medicare   | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Eleven<br>Oct 27 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 2 <sup>nd</sup>    | <b>Chapter 10</b><br>Medicaid  | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Twelve<br>Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup> – Oct 9 <sup>th</sup>     | <b>Chapter 11</b><br>Tricare and CHAMPVA   | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Thirteen<br>Oct 10 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 16 <sup>th</sup> | <b>Chapter 12</b><br>Worker's Compensation and Automobile/Disability Insurance                                     | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Fourteen<br>Oct 17 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 23 <sup>rd</sup> | <b>Chapter 13</b><br>Claims Processing, Payments, and Collections  | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Fifteen<br>Oct 24 <sup>th</sup> – Oct 30 <sup>th</sup>  | Classroom work and Lab<br><b>Review</b>  | Homework, Discussions<br>Assignment, Quiz, Connect assignments |
| Week Sixteen<br>Dec 1 <sup>st</sup> – Dec 6 <sup>th</sup>    | <b>Final</b>   | <b>Start at 9:00 AM</b>  |

**\*This Schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor\***

**\*\*Textbook assignments will be assigned in class\***

## **Entry Level Competencies for the Medical Assistant taken from the 2022 Standards and Guidelines for the Medical Assisting Educational Programs:**

This course includes the following competencies: (Cognitive, Psychomotor, Affective)

### **Knowledge Based:**

- VIII.C.1. Identify: a. types of third-party plans; b. steps for filing a third-party claim
- VIII.C.2. Identify managed care requirements for patient referral.
- VIII.C.3. Describe processes for: a. verification of eligibility for services; b. pre-certification; c. preauthorization
- VIII.C.4 Define a patient-centered medical home (PCMH).
- Describe how to use the most current diagnostic coding classification system.
- VIII.C.1. Identify: a. types of third-party plans; b. information required to file a third-party claim; c. the steps for filing a third-party claim
- VIII.C.1. Identify: a. types of third-party plans; b. information required to file a third-party claim; c. the steps for filing a third-party claim
- IX.C.1. Describe how to use the most current procedural coding system
- IX.C.2. Describe how to use the most current diagnostic coding classification system
- IX.C.3. Describe how to use the most current HCPCS level II coding system
- IX.C.4. Discuss the effects of: a. upcoding; b. downcoding
- IX.C.5. Define medical necessity as it applies to procedural and diagnostic coding

### **Skill Based:**

- VIII.P.1. Interpret information on an insurance card
- VIII.P.2. Verify eligibility for services
- VIII.P.3. Obtain precertification or preauthorization with documentation
- VIII.P.4. Complete an insurance form
- VIII.P.5. Assist a patient in understanding an Explanation of Benefits (EOB)
- IX.P.1. Perform procedure
- IX.P.2 Perform diagnostic coding.
- IX.P.3 Utilize medical necessity guidelines.

### **Behavior Based:**

- A.1. Incorporate critical thinking skills
- A.2. reassure patients
- A.3. Demonstrate empathy for patient's concerns
- A.4. Demonstrate active listening
- A.5. Respect diversity
- A.6. Recognize personal boundaries
- A.7. Demonstrate tactfulness
- A.8. Demonstrate self-awareness

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## Institutional Policies and Guidelines

**Grade Appeal Process:** Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook <https://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.html>. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

**Academic Success & Support Services:** The College of the Mainland is committed to providing students with the necessary support and tools for success in their college career. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

**ADA Statement:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator Phone: 409-933-8919 Email: [AccessibilityServices@com.edu](mailto:AccessibilityServices@com.edu). Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

**Textbook Purchasing Statement:** A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week session is Oct 1<sup>st</sup>. The last date to withdraw for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week session is Nov 25<sup>th</sup>. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is Nov 14<sup>th</sup>.

**FN Grading:** The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor.

**Early Alert Program:** The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention is very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program, you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

**Resources to Help with Stress:** If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at [deanofstudents@com.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@com.edu) or [communityresources@com.edu](mailto:communityresources@com.edu).

**Nondiscrimination Statement:** The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of the College District policy.

**Tardiness Policy:** A student who is not in class at the given start time of the class will be considered tardy. A student who is more than 5 minutes late may be refused entry into the class for that period at the discretion of the instructor. Entering class late or leaving early disrupts the class and is disrespectful to faculty and peers. Class activities missed during the absence may not be made up. Excessive tardiness will result in remediation. A student who cannot successfully complete a remediation plan due to excessive tardiness, can be removed from the class by an instructor-initiated withdrawal. Extenuating Circumstances can be discussed with Program faculty.

***This includes all breaks during any on-campus class times.*** Failure to interact with course content via Brightspace/D2L as indicated on the Course Schedule and module overview pages in Brightspace/D2L can likewise negatively impact a student's final course grade. Unless arranged by the instructor BEFORE the due date, a late submission will be given a score of zero. Once the class is closed it WILL NOT be reopened.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students are expected to conduct themselves as mature adults observing all college rules and classroom etiquette. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated in the classroom at any time. As a student active in the learning community of this course, it is your responsibility to be respectful of the learning atmosphere in your classroom. Failure to comply could mean dismissal from the program.



**Class Activities:** Course topics are introduced and discussed during classroom sessions. Additional group exercises and workbook activities are conducted throughout the class meetings. Generally, ongoing feedback for assessments and assignments will be conducted before and after the assigned due dates.

**Cell Phone Use:** Cell phones or any **Camera and or Recording devices** use is **strictly prohibited** during any lab/class session. Please keep in “silent” mode during lectures and be respectful of instructors and other students. Should you need to answer the call, please do so outside of the classroom. Due to cheating in the past, we cannot allow any wireless devices to be on during the tests. In an emergency, you may be reached by contacting Campus Police at 409-933-8403. Failure to comply will result in dismissal of class for that day. You will receive one verbal warning, one written warning, and on the third warning you will be asked to leave the class for that class period. If you are asked to leave the class for the day more than two times you will have to turn in your cell phone to the instructor before each class period for the remainder of the semester.

**To show respect for your fellow students and instructor, you will turn off your phone and other electronic devices and will not use these devices in the classroom unless you receive permission from the instructor.** Use of recording devices, including camera phones and tape recorders, is prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and other locations where instruction, tutoring, or testing occurs. Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as reasonable accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for information regarding reasonable accommodation.

**Professionalism:** Success in one’s career is almost as dependent on professional behavior as on one’s academic knowledge and abilities. Therefore, students are expected to exhibit professional behavior in the classroom as well as all activities with this course. Professional behavior includes:

- **Attends class is punctual-** The student attends every class period, arrives on time for class activities or informs the instructor in a timely manner of unavoidable situations that cause the student to be late or miss class.
- **Dependable-** the student meets assignment deadlines and follows through to completion of responsibilities.
- **Effective interpersonal and team skills-** The student relates well to people, shows respect to others, deals tactfully and effectively with others, influences as opposed to directs, provides constructive critics without altering others, negotiates or mediates when appropriate, exhibits openness to new ideas, and demonstrates a positive attitude.
- **Effective communication skills-** The student listens, speaks using correct grammar and without excess fillers. Example: Umm, you know, and like.
- **Ethical Conduct-** The student maintains honesty, integrity, and confidentiality of patient provider, fellow student, and college information.

**Plagiarism:**

The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. Plagiarism is a very serious offense. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing someone else's words without giving proper citation, copying directly from a website, and pasting it into your paper, using someone else's words without quotation marks. Any assignment containing any plagiarized material will receive a **grade of zero** and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate discipline action. In this course you may not use AI for any assignment in any way, shape, or form. Use of AI will be treated as plagiarism.

**Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Any assignment containing material generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) will receive a **grade of zero** and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate disciplinary action.

**Success Tips for Students:**

- Read all assignments and understand requirements for completing assignment prior to coming to class.
- **Three Prior to Me:** The MA faculty encourages students to problem-solve, work as a team as well as utilize available resources. In order to develop these skills, we will employ the “**Three Prior to Me**” process. This means that before you contact the instructor with a course-related question, you must have attempted to find the information in three other places. For instance, if you are unsure about the meaning of a term used in the course, you would attempt to locate this information in three places prior to asking the instructor. Hence, you might do a Google search for the term, ask a classmate, and refer to your textbook. Instructors will question you regarding what research methods you utilized to locate information on your own. This process is not meant to be a barrier to you, but instead to provide the following benefits:
  - Preparation for the workforce.
  - Increased research skills.
  - Instructors will have more time to provide feedback and interact with students.