

YEARLY PLANNING DISCUSSION TEMPLATE

Programs: Medical Assistant & Medical Billing and Coding

Academic Year: 2026

Yearly Planning Discussion

Education and Industry Partnerships

1. Has your program mission or primary function changed in the last year?

The program mission and primary function remain the same.

The Medical Assisting (MA) program prepares students to work in a doctor's office or outpatient clinical setting under the direct supervision of a physician, nurse practitioner, podiatrist, or physician's assistant. The student trains in both front and back-office techniques and clinical skills. Graduates of the medical assisting certificate program are eligible to take the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants examination to obtain the state certification (CCMA-C and/or CCMA-A) and for the national exam American Medical Technologist's Registered Medical Assistant certification (RMA).

The Medical Billing and Coding certification prepares a student to work as a medical biller in a hospital, skilled nursing facility, medical office, outpatient clinic, or billing office setting. Experienced medical billers can also find employment in specialized medical billing agencies or can start their own businesses in medical billing.

2. Were there any noteworthy changes to the program over the past year? (e.g., new courses, degrees, certificates, articulation agreements)

A pathway is currently in development that will enable medical assistants to earn a certificate and an associate of science degree. Both the MA Advisory team and the Health Science faculty support the revisions submitted to the Academic Policy and Procedure committee. Approval is set for September 2026, which will allow students to apply for the degree in 2027.

3. Is your two-year program map in place and were there any challenges maintaining the planned schedule?

Yes, the community has online access to the Medical Assistance (MA) & Medical Billing and Coding (MB) program pathways through the Allan Hancock College Public web site. This website provides details about certification requirements, lists when program courses are available each semester, and highlights other college-level programs that students may find appealing.

4. Were there any staffing changes?

A part-time instructor has joined the Medical Assistant program to teach clinical skills. The program is hiring more part-time faculty, as instructors work full-time or are nearing retirement. Currently, the MA program has a single full-time faculty that also serves as the program's coordinator. Five part-time faculty members are necessary to fulfill both theoretical and clinical training needs. The Medical Billing and Coding courses are also very specialized, requiring three additional instructors.

5. What were your program successes in your area of focus last year?

As you head north on Highway 101, just past the Broadway exit, you will see a billboard promoting the ACH medical assistant program, thanks to AHC Public Affairs and the Dean's office. Students from the current MA class volunteered to be part of the photo shoot and enjoy the recognition of classmates and family for their local celebrity status. Hopefully, the billboard will serve as a great public service announcement for the college and the program.

As the need for more medical assistants increases within our community, clinical sites have asked that recruitment also focus on students who speak Tagalog or Mixteco. (Note: Mixteco is not yet a written language.) Program faculty along with the Dean's office have been meeting with the AHC Community Education department to define a pathway for these students to consider the MA program as a course of study. This year, three students self-reported being trilingual with Tagalog and Mixteco being the third language spoken.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

- a. Please summarize key results from this year's assessment.

MA/MB Program Learning Outcomes

1. Develop communication skills necessary to effectively communicate with other health care members, patients, and physicians.
2. Utilize critical thinking and decision-making skills when providing clinical and administrative services in health settings.
3. Demonstrate respect for human dignity and the rights of all individuals with awareness of cultural differences.

- b. Please summarize your reflections, analysis, and interpretation of the learning outcome assessment and data.

The assessment data from the 2024 Learning Outcomes Assessment demonstrates that students from the 2025 cohort meet the outcomes cited above. The content included in the program curriculum shows currency and will continue for the next year.

- c. Please summarize recommendations and/or accolades that were made within the program/department.

The program faculty encourage MA students to meet with other students within the college community to participate in projects such as the Bulldog Bootcamp. This project is designed to help students develop the technical skills needed to succeed in their program of study and prepare them for the workforce. This year's project will highlight technical abilities, creativity, teamwork, and career readiness skills. Students are being asked to choose one of the following topics. Option 1. Design a solution to a field-specific problem. Option 2. Build a prototype or a product. Option 3. Improve the process or a service. We look forward to hearing about the projects that students choose to complete.

- d. Please review and attach any changes to planning documentation, including PLO rubrics, associations, and cycles planning.

Planning documents for the MA AS degree pathways have been attached to this document.

Distance Education (DE) Modality Course Design Peer Review Update (Please attach documentation extracted from the *Rubric for Assessing Regular and Substantive Interaction in Distance Education Courses*)

- a. Which courses were reviewed for regular and substantive interactions (RSI)?

MB 305 Body Systems and Disease - 5 units

A study of medical terminology, anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, diagnostic testing. SLO-Demonstrate an understanding of foundation allied health knowledge of anatomical and physiological function and how disease and injury affect the Human Body.

MB 352 MA Fundamentals - 4 units

The course explores administrative office tasks, including clerical and accounting procedures and records management. Topics include insurance, banking, professional fees, billing and coding addressed. Computer applications are employed for most functions in the medical field. SLO-Utilize current technology to complete office forms including insurance claims, billing forms, and required reporting.

- B. What were some key findings regarding RSI

Some strengths: The courses utilized the Modules component in Canvas to present course materials per week. Each week the instructors introduced the materials, an overview of the weekly assignments to complete, and the time a student should spend completing the weekly course work. To help students stay up to date with course content, the first class set the modules to become available once each week over a 16-week period. The second required students to finish the first module before Canvas unlocked the next one. Both pathways enabled the students to successfully navigate through the course work.

Some areas of possible improvement: Students have difficulty buying the current course textbooks, often obtaining them late in the semester.

What is the plan for improvement? Starting in Fall 2026, students will have the option to purchase the books during enrollment through inclusive access.

CTE two-year review of labor market data and pre-requisite review

- a. Does the program meet documented labor market demand? How does the program address needs that are not met by similar programs?

The Allan Hancock College program had twenty-one students complete the 10-month program in 2025. This year, twenty MA students are currently in externship sites with local physician and pediatric offices/clinics. Many of these sites offer employment post-graduation. San Joaquin Valley College in Santa Maria also offers a MA program, with completion numbers unavailable.

- b. Does the employment, completion, and success data of students indicate program effectiveness and vitality? Please, explain.

The AHC Institutional Effectiveness site supports the following.
MA and MB Program Students Receiving a Certification from AHC.

Year	Number of Students
2022-2023	1
2023-2024	37

During the year 2023-2024, the students were able to go directly onto the AHC site and apply for the MA & MB certificates. This may help to explain the obvious increase in the number of students receiving a certificate. For 2025, students are once again being directed to meet with an AHC counselor to complete the application process. The outcome should be available next year for review.

CTE Outcomes Survey Dashboard, Hourly Wage Difference for 2021-2023

For AHC College	\$6.57 hourly wage increase
For MA & MB Program	\$5.85 hourly wage increase

CTE Outcomes Survey (Gender, CTE Completers) Year 2023

The trend being seen in the MA data is reflective of those seen in the field of healthcare where more women are employed.

For AHC College	Female-351 Male-253 Binary-2
For MA Program	Female-24 Male-3

- c. Has the program met the Title 5 requirements to review course prerequisites, and advisories within the prescribed cycle of every 2 years for CTE programs and every 5 years for all others?

The prerequisites and advisories for the program have undergone review for 2026. The English 101 prerequisite remains. As AHC has discontinued these courses, the basic mathematics requirement will no longer apply. Additional requirements for the student to complete the Associate of Science Medical Assistant Degree are currently under review. Refer to the Learning Outcomes Assessment section, for details.

- d. Have recommendations from the previous report been addressed?

Additional lab space was a top priority from the last program review. The layout of the current W9 classroom allows 20-25 students. This did not include the additional space needed for students and instructors to complete such skills as phlebotomy, safely and comfortably. In spring 2026, the health science department was given access to room W12 to serve as a new lab space. The area has transformed into a simulation laboratory designed to resemble a doctor's office or independent clinic. New and current equipment has replaced the outdated items left behind by the student health service department that previously utilized the space. The need to replace the carpets with easy-to-clean flooring that simplifies managing any liquid spills remains a high priority. Replacement flooring cost is yet to be determined.

Area of Focus Discussion Template

EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Education and Industry Partnerships – review relationships with four-year institutions including preparation for transfer and changes in major requirements assess employment as well as review employment and the needs of employers and regional partners. Sample activities include the following:

Possible topics:

- Review academic transfers and associate degree for transfer alignments.
- Review articulation agreements.
- Review C-ID (course identification system) modifications.
- Integrate advisory committee recommendations and regional training needs.
- Review career and technical education (CTE) labor market information and trends.
- Explore collaborations, internships and externships, and cooperative work experience opportunities.
- CTE unit completion goals in the Student-Centered Funding Formula and CCCC Vision for Success.

1. What data were analyzed and what were the main conclusions?

Review of the academic associate degree pathway for the medical assistant
The MA program is currently working with the AHC Nursing Counselor and the AP&P Department Chair to develop a pathway for students who complete the 10-month MA program to also obtain an associate degree. The proposal is currently with the AP&P committee for approval and should be available to students in fall 2027. The decision to move forward with this project is supported by the MA advisory committee, faculty of the Health Science department and the AHC Nursing counselor.

Review of Labor Market trends

Labor Market information indicates that Medical Assistants are in demand and wages are competitive, relevant to the level of training. Interestingly, some members of the advisory board reported a current holding freeze for the medical assistant positions due to the federal funding cuts they recently received.

Employment Development Department Data for the State of California

Santa Barbara County is the same as Santa Maria-Santa Barbara MSA.

Medical Assistants (SOC Code: 31-9092)

Occupational Projections of Employment (also called “Outlook” or Demand)

Estimated to Projected	Employment		Employment Change		Total Job Openings
Years	Estimated	Projected	Number	Percent	
2022-2032	1,450	1,890	440	30.3	2,560

Occupation Wages

Year	Period	Hourly Mean	Hourly by Percentile		
			25 th	Median	75 th

2026	1 st Qtr	\$25.81	\$23.06	\$24.40	\$29.25
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Explore collaborations, internships, and externships, and cooperative work experience opportunities.

For a Medical Assistant student to qualify to take the National AMT (American Medical Technologist) exam, they must complete 160 hours of externship at a clinical site, with a Medical Doctor present. The curriculum is approved by AMT every two years and is set unless there are new mandates that would warrant a revision. The number of clinical sites required to have each student complete these hours is relatively large as each site usually takes just one student. Currently there are over thirty site agreements to maintain the student externship experience.

CTE unit completion goals in the Student-Centered Funding Formula and CCCCCO Vision for Success.

The MA and Billing/Coding programs continue to have a 98% completion rate. Enrollment numbers for the MA program remain between 20-21 students. The occupancy for the classroom is twenty-four, which dictates the enrollment number. The focus is to maintain the MA numbers and at the same time increase enrollment numbers for the Billing/Coding classes. Fortunately, the numbers are showing an annual increase. In 2024/2025 ten students completed the program. In 2025/2026, fifteen completed and for 2026/2027 there are twenty-five student applications, which demonstrate an increased interest. Instructors for the program feel that it has been the transition of the Medical Billing/Coding classes to the Distance Education (DE) format that has led to this increase. The DE classes provide students with both a flexible classroom and closely mirror the online environment they will be expected to work in.

2. Based on the data analysis and looking through a lens of equity, what do you perceive as challenges with student success or access in your area of focus?

The family obligations, the commitment to attending college, and the awareness within our community that AHC offers a MA program all affect a student's final decision to take the course. Additionally, there are the costs to consider as many of our students need to also work full-time. Directing students to the resources offered by the college have helped to support students with childcare, food, uniforms, learning assistance, and job opportunities. As part of the externship class, a member from AHC Jobseeker assists students to use the "Career Tool Kit" to develop a job resume for their externship experience and for future employment opportunities. This site is also very useful in that it allows students to return to the site after completing the program to view job opportunities that have been posted by our community partners.

What are your plans for change or innovation? How will you measure the results of your plans to determine if they are successful?

Enrollment Growth

As previously mentioned, a billboard located along Highway 101, just past the Broadway exit, has been posted to promote the AHC MA program. While the view time is only for a couple of months, we are hopeful that the application numbers will continue to increase. To further monitor its effectiveness, the incoming class will be asked in a post program survey how they found out about the program.

Enrollment needs have also focused on a pathway through the Community Education department that encourages our trilingual students that speak Tagalog or Mixteco to consider the medical assistant as an educational goal. This pathway serves our community, which needs health care personnel who can communicate with patients in their native language and provides our students with another career opportunity as a medical interpreter. Monitoring is currently in place that tracks the languages spoken by a student to the externship site they are assigned to for clinical placement.

Program Costs

One additional cost-saving plan worth mentioning is that each student gets a uniform for the duration of the program. These savings can translate into discretionary dollars used to pay for childcare, travel to clinical sites, or food. In the 2026 post-program survey students expressed their appreciation for the uniforms and recommend that this program be continued.

Validation for Program Planning Process: If you have chosen to do the Validation this year, please explain your process and the findings.

- 1. Who have you identified to validate your findings? (Could include Guided Pathway Success Teams, Advisory Committee Members, related faculty, industry partners or higher education partners)**

The MA program conducts an annual advisory committee meeting in March. Our industry partners include site physicians, Directors of Nursing, and site managers along with the MA faculty. Regular agenda topics include currency of the program's curriculum and the clinical opportunities our local sites can offer. To help keep us connected we give each site the opportunity to give feedback about what is going on in their areas of focus. Meetings such as these help us to remain connected with our industry partners and keep our program current to the needs of the community.

- 2. Are there specific recommendations regarding the core topic responses from the validation team?**

The validation teams continue to support the Medical Billing and Coding program and recommend that classes be offered using the Distance Education modality.

Based on the narratives for the prompts above, what are some program planning initiatives and resources needed for the upcoming year? Use the tables below to fill in **NEW** resources and planning initiatives that **do not apply directly to core topics**. ***This section is only used if there are new planning initiatives and resources requested.***

New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only			
Title (including number):	Total-2 4' x 8' Magnetic Glass Whiteboards		
Planning Year:	2026-2027		
Description:			
2-Magnetic Tempered Glass Whiteboard for an interactive simulation wall. Building W, Room W9. \$500 each on Amazon, total \$1000 Request high.			
What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):			
Ed Master Plan	Student Equity Plan	Guided Pathways	AB 705
Technology Plan	Facilities Plan	Strong Workforce	Equal Employment Opp. Title V

New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only	
Title (including number):	Replace carpeting with a laminate flooring in building W, Room 12
Planning Year:	2026-2027
Description:	
Working with AHC facilities. Costs have yet to be determined. Gray laminate flooring is needed in lab to assist with liquid spill cleanup	
What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):	
Ed Master Plan	Student Equity Plan Guided Pathways AB 705
Technology Plan	Facilities Plan Strong Workforce Equal Employment Opp. Title V

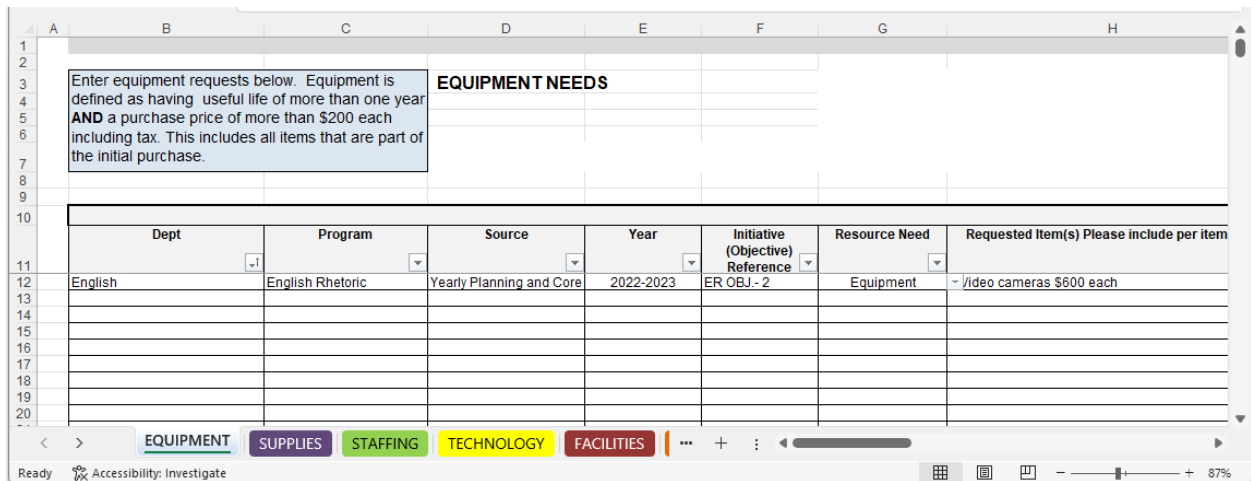
New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only	
Title (including number):	Total-3 laptops \$1487.97 for each unit Total-\$4866.50 for 3 units Classroom laptops to replace units that are outdated or no longer work
Planning Year:	2026-2027
Description:	
The program has twenty-five classroom laptops, 3 of these units need to be replaced	
What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):	
Ed Master Plan	Student Equity Plan Guided Pathways AB 705
Technology Plan	Facilities Plan Strong Workforce Equal Employment Opp. Title V

New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only	
Title (including number):	Total-1 Hearing assist, stethoscopes for students needing sound amplification for skills such as taking a Blood Pressure
Planning Year:	2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete

Description:			
\$400 Request high			
To enhance hearing when taking a Blood Pressure			
What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):			
Ed Master Plan	Student Equity Plan	Guided Pathways	AB 705
Technology Plan	Facilities Plan	Strong Workforce	Equal Employment Opp. Title V


New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only			
Title (including number):	Total-1 Simulation Blood Pressure Arm		
Planning Year:	2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete		
Description:			
1- simulation Blood Pressure Arm with speaker			
\$2000			
What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):			
Ed Master Plan	Student Equity Plan	Guided Pathways	AB 705
Technology Plan	Facilities Plan	Strong Workforce	Equal Employment Opp. Title V

Resource Requests: Please use the Resource Request Excel template located on the Program Review web page to enter resource requests for equipment, supplies, staffing, facilities, and misc. resources needed. Send completed excel document along with completed program view core topic for signature.



MA & MB Equipment needs posted on the HS Department Portal.

Program Review Signature Page:


Mary Pat Nelson (Jun 16, 2026 12:27:14 PDT)
Program Review Lead

Jun 16, 2026
Date

Thomas Lamica

Program Dean

Jun 16, 2026
Date



Vice President, Academic Affairs

Jun 16, 2026
Date











MA-MB Program Review 2025-26_education&industry partnerships

Final Audit Report

2026-06-16

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