

YEARLY PLANNING DISCUSSION

General Questions

Program Name: **Medical Assisting & Billing/Coding**

Academic Year: **2025**

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

There have been no changes to the program's mission since last year.

The Allan Hancock College Medical Assisting Program mission is committed to providing our students with a strong foundation for competent and professional practice in the healthcare environment. The program offers two certificate options: a Medical Assisting Certificate of Achievement and a Medical Billing and Coding Certificate of Achievement. The medical assisting option 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 is trained in both front and back-office techniques and skills. Graduates of the medical assisting certificate program are eligible to sit for the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants examination to obtain the state certification (CCMA-C and/or CCMA-A) and for the national American Medical Technologist's Registered Medical Assistant certification exam (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 start their own businesses in medical billing.

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

The Health Science programs for Medical Assistant and Certified Nursing Assistant are working to keep enrollment numbers up during the summer months. Between the application periods ending in May to the start of the programs in August up to half of those who accept a seat, declined. The question is why there is such a drop during the summer and what changes can be made to ensure program enrollment success. For the upcoming summer, plans have been made to ask the AHC Public Affairs to make a public announcement that applicants can still apply.

Going forward, the program would like to offer a college level class in the local high schools that fosters students' interest in a career in healthcare, medical assistant, dental assistant, and certified nursing assistant. The class being reviewed by the Health Science Department is HIT 135 Basic Medical Terminology. It is an introductory class with the basic medical terminology, anatomy, and physiology needed to effectively work in a clinical setting. The class doesn't have an age requirement for enrolling, which also makes it a viable option for those under eighteen. (Most of the Health Science programs have an age requirement of eighteen before the student can enroll.)

Recently, the MA program has also been asked to develop a pathway for local high school students and members of the community that would attract trilingual speaking students into the MA program. The recruitment would focus on students that can also speak Tagalog, and/or Mixteco. (Note: Mixteco is not a written language). Meetings with the AHC Community Education Department and clinical community health administrators have just begun the process of identifying the need and a viable pathway.

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

The Medical Assistant (MA) and Medical Billing and Coding (MB) are ten-month programs designed for students to enter the workforce after completion. Information on the Allan Hancock College Public site includes prerequisites, certification requirements, class offerings, and other degree pathways a student may be interested in. The public site is reviewed for currency annually with the program review. As a result of the last review, the medical assistant program and the medical billing and coding program Guided Pathways links have been separated into two different tiles.

3. Were there any staffing changes?

Part-time faculty Hillary Blitch RN has joined the MA program and is currently teaching in the Pharmacology class. She will also be providing instructional support for the Medical Assisting Job Externship course which provides students with the opportunity to work in the clinical field as a medical assistant. Hilary has a long history of teaching in the Health Care Provider CPR classes and may provide further instruction in this area for the MA students.

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

Course completion numbers have remained high. For the 2023-2024 semester, twenty students enrolled and completed the course. Ten of these students went on to take the AMT exam for the registered medical assistant. A 90% pass rate for this exam was achieved. For the 2024-2025 program, there are twenty-one students enrolled. All of them are currently working to complete the one-hundred-and-sixty-hour job success externship that will allow them to sit for the AMT National Registered Medical Assistant exam.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

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

This year, the learning outcomes were reviewed for accuracy and linked to each MA course.

LOA 1. Develop communication skills necessary to effectively communicate with other healthcare team members, patients, and physicians.

MA350-MA Fundamentals

MA352-MA Administrative Procedures

MA355-MA Pharmacology

MA356-MA Job Success Externship

LOA 2. Utilize critical thinking and decision-making skills when providing clinical and administrative services in the healthcare settings.

MA305-Body Systems and Disease

MA351-Clinical Procedures 1

MA353-Clinical Procedures 2

MA355-MA Pharmacology

MA356-MA Job Success Externship

MA360-MA Medical Billing & Insurance

MA361-Coding for Medical Insurance

LAO 3. Demonstrate respect for human dignity and the rights of all individuals with awareness of cultural differences.

MA356-MA Job Success Externship

b. Please summarize your reflections, analysis, and interpretation of the learning outcome assessment and data. Revised 8.28.2023

Data is scheduled for input into SPOL in May 2025.

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

NA

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

NA

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)?

No DE courses were offered during the fall 2024/spring 2025 year to review.

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

a. Does the program meet documented labor market demand?

According to Indeed, an employment website for job applicants, there are currently 38 Medical Assistant jobs available in Santa Maria CA. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics: Employment Outlook reports that employment of medical assistants is projected to grow 15% from 2023-2033, much faster than the average for all occupations. The large baby-boom population continues to enter older age groups, which typically have more healthcare concerns and increase the demand for medical services. As a result, more medical assistants are needed to perform routine administrative and clinical duties in physicians' offices and other primary care settings.

b. How does the program address needs that are not met by similar programs?

The Allan Hancock College program has twenty-one MA students currently in externship sites with local physician and pediatricists 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 not currently available for spring 2025.

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

Yes, the Medical Assistant Program is a viable program as the demand for medical assistants in our community remains high. Program completion rates remain at 90-100%. As a result of the additional clinical lab and classroom space now available, the program can safely increase enrollment numbers to 25-28 students per program offering.

The new lab space is referred to as the Health Science Remediation Lab. New lab tables, chairs and whiteboards are needed for the space and have been included in the Equipment Priority Request.

d. 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?

All MA and MB classes were reviewed in 2025 and found to be current.

e. Have recommendations from the previous report been addressed?

Members of the MA Advisory Committee strongly support and encourage students to take the AMT national medical assistant exam as many of our local clinical sites are now requiring MA staff to have the certification. The data from AMT demonstrates a slow increase in the number of students that take this exam each year. Post-program completion of 3-5 students is now up to 9 students for 2024. The MA program is focused on increasing these numbers. The cost of the exam continues to be a significant barrier for students. For the first time, monies from the Regional Consortium Economic Workforce Development Grant will be used to assist the students with this cost. AMT data will be available to track the number of students that go on to take the exam, and most importantly track the number of students who successfully pass.

**Area of Focus Discussion Template
CURRICULUM AND TEACHING DESIGN**

Curriculum and Teaching Design analyzes currency of modalities, articulation, and industry needs. It includes content review, currency and relevance, accessibility, and equitable practices. Sample activities include the following:

Possible topics:

- Review courses and programs through an equity lens to assess access and success.
- Review prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories, and limitations on enrollment, modality, articulation and transfer, and units and time to completion. Is there disproportionate impact within certain demographic groups?
- Assess teaching practices, equipment, supplies, and materials, and technology (like homework, syllabus, text, videos, classroom technology, etc.)
- Assess and integrate program learning outcomes (PLO).

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

Data was used to determine if the in-person Billing and Coding Program should be converted to a 100% DE program. Enrollment numbers for the in-person Billing and Coding classes remain low. For 2024, there were 8 applicants, resulting in the program being cancelled for the year. The previous 2023 class had slightly higher enrollment numbers, allowing it to be offered with three asynchronous DE class and one in-person class. From the 2023 post program completion survey, students strongly believe that the Billing and Coding program should be offered 100% DE. This teaching modality provides them with the freedom to access the course materials from any location 24/7. The MA/MB Advisory Board further supports the DE offerings, to see if enrollment numbers can be increased.

2. Based on 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 DE modality is well suited for this group of students as many will go on to billing and coding careers where they work directly from home. The medical billing and coding field is still a viable career pathway as it is projected to grow by 9% from 2023 to 2033, with 16,700 new jobs expected to be created (Research.com). As the medical field incorporates the use of AI, these numbers may also change.

3. What are your plans for change or innovation?

Since the last class offering, all program instructors have completed the AHC DE Instructor course allowing the program to be offered 100% DE. As part of the training, instructors were asked to develop a DE course using Canvas. With the possible conversion of the program, each instructor selected a course from Medical Billing/Coding Course program. As a result, all the MB courses have now been developed to enhance DE teaching strategies and support regular and substantive student/instructor interaction.

4. How will you measure the results of your plans to determine if they are successful?

The success of the conversion to a DE program will be based on two data points. The first is to see if the DE offer will increase enrollment to a viable number. The second data point will be completed during the class offerings. Each class will be scheduled to complete the DE evaluation, for regular and substantive student/instructor interaction, recommended by the AHC Academic Senate.

5. What practices are used in your program's DE courses that support or demonstrate regular and substantive interaction?

No DE courses were scheduled for 2024/2045.

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.

Rational for requests: The level of success for the MA indicates that students need to practice with the same medical equipment in the lab simulation setting as they will be required to use once they are working in the community, completing their externships. To maintain a current lab setting and to furnish the new Health Science lab, the following equipment has been requested.

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| New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only |
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| Title (including number): | 4-Blood Pressure kits with Dual earpiece teaching stethoscopes |
| Planning Year: | 2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Description:</p> <p>4-Blood Pressure Kits with Dual earpiece stethoscopes \$150 each, total request \$600. Request medium</p> | |
| <p>What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):</p> <p>Ed Master Plan Student Equity Plan Guided Pathways AB 705 Technology Plan Facilities Plan Strong Workforce Equal Employment Opp. Title V</p> | |

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| New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only | |
| Title (including number): | 3-Magnetic Glass Whiteboard |
| Planning Year: | 2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Description:</p> <p>3-Magnetic Tempered Glass Whiteboard for an interactive simulation wall \$250 each, total \$940, Request high.</p> | |
| <p>What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):</p> <p>Ed Master Plan Student Equity Plan Guided Pathways AB 705 Technology Plan Facilities Plan Strong Workforce Equal Employment Opp. Title V</p> | |

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| New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only | |
| Title (including number): | Lab chairs |
| Planning Year: | 2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Description:</p> <p>6-Easy clean, rolling, adjustable lab chairs \$150 each, total \$1100. Request high</p> | |
| <p>What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):</p> <p>Ed Master Plan Student Equity Plan Guided Pathways AB 705 Technology Plan Facilities Plan Strong Workforce Equal Employment Opp. Title V</p> | |
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| New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only | |
| Title (including number): | 1-Accutrend® Plus meter |
| Planning Year: | 2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Description:</p> <p>1-Accutrend meter, allows the student to check cholesterol and glucose \$439 each, a total of \$539. Request medium</p> | |
| <p>What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below):</p> | |

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|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ed Master Plan | Student Equity Plan | Guided Pathways | AB 705 |
| Technology Plan | Facilities Plan | Strong Workforce | Equal Employment Opp. |
| Title V | | | |

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| New Program Planning Initiative (Objective) – Yearly Planning Only | |
| Title (including number: | 1-Swab test Collection Simulator |
| Planning Year: | 2026-2027 are the academic years this will take to complete |
| Description: 1-Tool for teaching proper oropharyngeal and nasal swab techniques/specimen collection \$180 each, total \$225. Request medium | |
| What college plans are associated with this Objective? (Please select from the list below): | |
| Ed Master Plan | Student Equity Plan |
| Technology Plan | Facilities Plan |
| 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 documents along with completed program view core topic for signature.

Program Review Signature Page:


 Mary Pat Nelson (May 2, 2025 12:55 PDT)

Program Review Lead

05/02/2025

Date



05/04/2025

Program Dean

Date



07/21/2025

Vice President, Academic Affairs

Date











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Final Audit Report

2025-07-21

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| Created: | 2025-05-02 |
| By: | Kara Mushegan (kara.mushegan@hancockcollege.edu) |
| Status: | Signed |
| Transaction ID: | CBJCHBCAABAAH62coSf7aj3jMGbMIGL2dnydF1YRCfZg |

"MA_2024-25_Program Review_curriculum design" History

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