

MOD Syllabus

Course Title/Number: AMA 125 – Introduction to Medical Insurance and Coding

Credits: 2

Total Hours: 22

Lecture Hours: 22

Lab Hours: 0

Meeting Times: During scheduled open classroom hours and occasional scheduled demonstration/mini-lecture.

Prerequisites: No

Course Description: This course will provide students with a knowledge of the history and evolution of medical insurance in this country and the terminology necessary to understand and submit claims. Various types of medical insurance is discussed and compared as well as DRGs and MCO models. The legal and ethical issues are also addressed.

Instructor: Patti Larson, CMA (clinical and lab emphasis)
Michaelann Allen, MA.Ed, CMA (general, clinical, lab, and admin emphasis)
Meredith Crichton, Office Manager (billing and coding expertise, admin emphasis)

Office Location: IB 2403A, Health-Medical Division

Office Hours: As posted in quarterly schedule

Office Phone: (206) 527-5667 (MA Coordination Office)

Office e-mail: mallen@sccd.ctc.edu (preferred for quicker reply)

Alternate Phone: (206) 527-3790 – Health-Medical Division

Classroom Diversity Statement: Respect for diversity is a core value of NSCC. Our college community fosters an optimal learning climate and an environment of mutual respect. We, the college community, recognize individual differences. Therefore, we are responsible for the content and tone of our statements and are empathetic speakers and listeners.

American Disability Act: If you need course adaptations or accommodation because of a disability; if you have emergency information to share with your instructor; or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated; please make an appointment with your instructor as soon as possible.

Student Learning Objectives & Performance Competencies:

Upon successful completion of this course, student should be able to:

1. Understand and describe the medical insurance claim cycle.

2. Define insurance terminology.
3. Develop an understanding of and describe medical insurance coverage to include: traditional, PPO, HMO, Medicaid, Medicare, L&I and Tricare.
4. Explain the significance of DRGs to patient reimbursement.
5. Apply managed care policies and procedures by understanding how and when to contact a patient's insurance company.
6. Apply third party guidelines and advocate on behalf of patients by understanding how and when to fill out an insurance referral.
7. Perform procedural coding.
8. Perform diagnostic coding.
9. Explain claims follow-up and discuss its importance.
10. Discuss legal and ethical issues related to insurance claims and coding.
11. Use a physician's fee schedule.

Methods of Instruction: Students will follow step-by-step instructions provided on a Course Checklist which will be available on the program website.

Students will self-study the material and work through the assignments in the packet. Students may accomplish this at a time and place of their choice, moving forward at their own pace but within the academic quarter time frame. Instructors will be available in the classrooms during posted hours each day to assist students in their studies. Students are encouraged to work at the college as much as possible to fully utilize the resources and instruction available there, but students may study on their own. Instructors are available to teach! Ask us.

For lab work in any courses, students are required to (after reading material) come into the classroom for:

A demonstration of procedures (if any) by an instructor (usually scheduled)
Practice of each procedure a sufficient number of times (under supervision) to gain skill and efficiency, in the classroom. (Some things may also be performed elsewhere but practice with instructor and role-playing with students is vital!)

Perform procedures for a competency evaluation by an instructor*
(*some procedures are performed with other students – see the handout “Procedures at a Glance” available in the classroom for specifics).
Students must practice a sufficient number of times and be prepared to perform the check off. No check offs without practice first!

All students must show evidence of practice by utilizing the procedure log given on the first day of class.

Students who need/want assistance are responsible for notifying the instructor(s) or appropriate department regarding the need, particularly in theory-only courses where contact is minimal. While instructors will be available for assistance and instruction the students must make their needs known. Instructors are available during open hours to teach your needs.

Students should not monopolize instructor/assistant time beyond reasonable. Variations in number of students, and help needed, will vary the time allowed per student each session. Please sign up for only one item at a time when you want individual help.

Students may come in to the classrooms during any of the schedule open times and sign their name on the board. An instructor or assistant will help you as soon as they can by going down the list of those signed up that day. Some days there may be a scheduled lecture or demonstration so that will keep the teacher engaged. In an open schedule there is no way to know ahead of time how many students will come in during a particular session. Please be patient and keep busy studying/working/practicing while waiting for your turn. It is advised you do not plan a schedule so tight that your plan would require you to need help immediately (i.e., do not come into class ½ hour before the session is over and need to check off on five procedures that day!) Students are encouraged to take advantage of the many resources available in the classrooms of the program and at the college and to seek guidance from the instructors.

Textbooks: Student materials based on: Lippincott's Comprehensive Medical Assisting Text w/CD's and study guide, latest ed. Molle, et al. Delmar's Coding Workbook latest ed. by Covell.

Supplementary Reading/Audio-Video Media: As required by instructor.

Required Materials: Course Info on Program Website
<https://frontpage.northseattle.edu/maprogram/>

Calendar/Schedule: Students should use the Quarterly Calendar, along with the Open Hours of classroom time schedule provided, to plan and manage their time for each course. To determine the number of hours of study/work required per week:

- a. From the list of program courses (called the Scope and Sequence), find the Total Number of Hours stated for the course (which would usually be lecture time and add about 50% more hours to that) for homework if this were lecture format. An example is a course that has 11 Total Hours would need about 5.5 hours for homework time = 16.5 hours actual work. It will vary some per individual student but should fall between about 16-20 hours. If it takes a student many more hours than that, the student should see an instructor for guidance on managing time and study skills.
- b. Divide the total hours by the number of weeks in the quarter (in the example above: 20 hours per week (estimate high) divided by 12 weeks = 1.6 hours per week). This gives you a good estimate of the weekly hours you must spend to complete the number of credits you

have registered for. **If you do not understand this or need help estimating the time needed, see an instructor! Time management is critical in order to finish all courses by the end of the quarter.**

Time management, student initiative and responsibility are vital for this format.

Course Policies:

Communication: Students **must contact the instructor once per week** either in person or by email. If by e-mail, student should state briefly their study progress and ask any questions they may have. If there are no questions to answer and no news to tell the student, the instructor may not reply when there is no reply needed. Students should attend all hours that are required (if any).

General: Students are expected to complete all reading, assignments and tasks as required in this course's packet by the **end of the quarter. No grade of "incomplete" will be given**, so students should plan to take only the number of credits you can finish.

You should follow the steps in the order as listed on the Course Checklist. Students should seek assistance in this self-paced module study format; instructors are available to help on an individual basis during Open Hours.

Students must let their needs be known. Students are expected to be able to perform, after extensive practice, **all performance objectives or check off tasks** (if any) to the level of minimum competency for an entry-level medical assistant. Entry-level competencies for Medical Assistants are usually given to all students during advising; if you need a copy, please ask an instructor or look in the "Program/College Handouts" in the classroom.

Students are expected to plan the time needed to complete all work in the course by the end of the quarter. **If a demonstration or mini-lecture is needed** for any hands-on procedures, check the Quarterly Class Schedule to see when the demo(s) you need is/are scheduled. Complete the reading first, then attend a scheduled demo. The student must plan ahead to **be ready for demos early in the quarter to allow time for practice later in the quarter**. If it is literally **impossible** to attend one (severe illness, death in family, etc.) see an instructor for a demo by signing up on the board during Open Hours as usual.

Students should avoid getting a grade of 'no credit' and there are NO 'incomplete' grades given. If you realize you cannot finish a course by the end of the quarter, see an instructor for guidance. **DO NOT WAIT** until the end of the quarter when there is not enough time left to finish. Check

the Quarterly Calendar for the college's various deadlines for dropping courses.

Testing: Tests are a variety of styles, some are multiple choice using a scantron form and some are fill-in. Some courses may have a project or paper instead of a test.

- Ask the instructor to log out the test you need (one at a time).
- Return the test to an instructor for grading.
- You will receive a grade sheet with points and percentage of the exam in your green folder in the classroom.
- No tests can be taken from the room or kept by the student.
- Do not discuss test material or questions with other students. This could be considered a form of cheating and would have repercussions per college and program policies.
- Students cannot have any materials, books or backpacks, etc. with them at the testing tables.
- Students may not leave the classroom during a test for any reason unless an emergency.
- Students may not talk to others during testing or use cell phones. Do not answer calls and take them while testing.
- If a student is witnessed cheating by an instructor or assistant, published disciplinary measures will be followed. (The college's Student Handbook, the College Catalog, and the MA program handbook.) This includes plagiarism or getting/giving help in assignments as well as getting or giving help during testing.

Evaluation Outcomes and Assessment (Grading): Students will be evaluated by the total points earned for completion of the assignments in the Course Checklist. The total number of points *earned*, is divided by the total number of points *possible*, to determine a percentage then this is converted to the college's decimal grade. An example: a course has 400 points possible, the student earns 300 points; $300 \div 400 = 75\%$; $75\% = 1.8$.

The college decimal grade scales are in both the Program Handbook and the College Catalog.

For courses with *performance* objectives (hands-on procedures to practice and perform), students will be evaluated on entry-level competency in performance of hands-on procedures following standard checklists (included in the Course Packet). Students are evaluated and graded using the checklists as they perform a final "check off" for the instructor for designated points; each step has a point assigned. Note that some performance steps have 'critical steps'. These are steps that are so important that if you miss one, you will have to repeat the procedure performance or check off regardless of the number of total points for that procedure.

Any test or check off may be attempted only one additional time. Two unsuccessful attempts will result in a failing grade for that course. Courses can only be taken twice. A second attempt at a course will be allowed; if the student does not pass a course the second time, the student will not be allowed to continue in the program. **If you have an incomplete in any course that you did not finish. The grade of "I" stays on your transcript and you may only repeat that course one time as if you failed the first time.**

Any test or check off attempted a second time will be docked a 15% penalty and a passing grade must be 77%, so there is not much leeway. Students should be sufficiently prepared on the first attempt.

The total course percentage earned based on points from tests and assignments must be at least 77% (2.0) or above to be passing. If an individual assignment or test is not 77% or above, the course's total points may still add up to a total of 77% for the course, which is passing. Students should monitor their points and grades using the grade sheet in the packet.

Percentage of assignments and procedures for this course:

Written work (theory) falls between: 40% and 60%.

Exams are between: 10% and 30%

Projects, reports, etc. fall between: N/A for this course.

Procedures (if applicable to this course) fall between: 25% and 45%.

Course Content Outline:

Evolution of medical insurance coverage

Terminology of medical insurance

Types of medical insurance coverage

Payment systems and DRGs

Insurance coding systems

 CPT and ICD-9

Coding the claim form

Overseeing the claims process

Computerized claims processing

Legal and ethical issues