

Dear Medical Assisting Student:

On behalf of the administrators and staff at Mount Wachusett Community College, I am pleased to welcome you to the Medical Assisting program.

As you begin your journey toward this noble profession, educators and staff at MWCC are here to help you every step of the way and provide you the needed guidance and training to become a successful and skilled healthcare professional. Becoming a medical assisting student will require your dedication, determination and hard work to cope with the academic demands of the program that is dedicated to producing efficient and well-rounded healthcare professionals. Soon you will be a part of the healthcare community working side by side with doctors and other healthcare providers in the field with the main goal of saving lives that offers no room for error.

As you work toward completing your program, this handbook has been developed as your guide to help you keep on track. Please take your time and familiarize yourself with its contents. There are resources that are available for you to utilize and help you succeed in your career. As your program director, I am here to provide you guidance along the way but what makes the difference is “YOU”.

Sincerely,

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MEDICAL ASSISTING PROGRAM

The Medical Assisting program endeavors to carry out the Mount Wachusett Community College philosophy of education, which is “the preparation of individuals for lives of fulfillment, leadership, and service in a diverse and global society.” The purpose of the Medical Assisting Program is to provide students with focused medical assisting career courses. The curriculum will prepare the student for the CCMA certification examination and immediate employment in a variety of health care settings. MWCC offers both a certificate program and an associate degree in Medical Assisting.

Medical Assistants are multi-skilled healthcare professionals specifically trained to work primarily in ambulatory settings performing the following skills:

- Venipuncture
- CLIA diagnostic testing
- Injections
- Taking history & recording vital signs
- EKG's
- Assisting with exams and minor surgeries
- Utilize electronic medical records
- Scheduling
- Telephone tasks
- Practice finances
- Medical coding and correct use of medical terminologies
- Completing Insurance Forms

The duties vary depending on office location, size, and specialty.

As a graduate, you will be able to select from hundreds of job opportunities all over the country, knowing that the education you received from Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) has prepared you for the challenges that you will meet. Jobs will be found in physicians' offices, clinics, hospital specialty departments, insurance or billing companies, usually working regular hours with no shift work, weekends, or holidays.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics cites that medical assisting is expected to grow much faster than average through 2022, due to the many changes in the health care industry. The average pay range for an entry level medical assistant is \$15-\$18/hr.

Our students gain knowledge of medical terminology, professionalism, pharmacology, computer applications, clinical applications as well as administrative applications. Students complete a directed practice experience (externship) that allows the student to apply classroom education to the “real world”.

The Medical Assisting Certificate curriculum is designed to be a two-semester program requiring completion of the courses outlined. The focus of this curriculum shall be on the student's suc-

successful attainment of the various competencies outlined in the national certification examinations for medical assisting.

Graduates of the the Medical Assisting Program at MWCC are eligible to sit for any of the national certification examinations given by various credentialing organizations accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) such as the National Healthcareer Association (NHA), American Medical Technologists (AMT) and the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT).

*****Students must pass all MAS courses with a C+ or better to remain in good standing in the MAS program. Students must pass all MAS courses in the first semester with a C+ or better before they can move into the second semester.**

Only two attempts at an MAS course is allowed. If a student fails to complete an MAS course on the second try, they will not be allowed to continue in the program. The program must be completed within 4 semesters of the onset of MAS classes.***

PROGRAM GOALS

- To prepare entry-level competent medical assistants in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains.
- Successfully pass the certification exam for medical assistants
- Respect the rights of patients, colleagues, and other healthcare professionals and safeguard confidences within the constraints of legal, ethical and moral conduct.
- Practice within the profession's ethical and legal framework.
- Maintain professional competence and utilize opportunities for continuing education and career advancement.
- Revise and create a competitive and sustainable program curriculum
- Maintain the credentialing exam passing rate above the threshold value set by accreditors
- Increase student involvement in program activities that promote self-confidence and the sense of belonging

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

In addition to General Education Outcomes, students who complete the Medical Assisting certificate or degree will:

- Demonstrate, and continuously utilize the principles of medical asepsis and standard precautions, as well as other safety precautions
- Recognize emergency situations and respond appropriately to emergency care techniques in various life-threatening situations
- Utilize knowledge of various medical office procedures, practices, and technologies to complete simulated tasks
- Obtain and effectively chart all pertinent patient data
- Apply knowledge and skills of various clinical procedures such as *taking vital signs*, laboratory testing, and other diagnostic and medical procedures
- Understand and interpret usage of medical terminology
- Comprehend basic pharmacology including dosage calculations, drug interactions, and administration of medications

- Provide education to patients, families, and other care givers on various healthcare including preventative and treatment regimes
- Integrate knowledge and skills acquired to function as a competent entry-level medical assistant
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the human body including structure, function and basic pathologies
- Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate and effective application of legal and ethical standards of practice

MA CERTIFICATION

Graduates of MWCC's medical assisting program can become certified by taking and passing the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) exam through the National Healthcareer Association (NHA). The fee for the certification exam is included in the MA Seminar course cost. Application will be made in the last semester and the exam will be taken following graduation.

Graduates of the MWCC Medical Assisting program are also eligible to sit for the Registered Medical Assistant (RMA) exam through American Medical Technologists and the National Certified Medical Assistant (NCMA) exam through National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT).

CORI/SORI CHECK (Criminal Offender/Sexual Offender)

Students must pass a CORI/SORI check before entering any externship. These will be conducted before a student is allowed to partake in an externship.

IMMUNIZATIONS

State immunization requirements and those of the externship sites must be met before a student can begin the MA Program. These records are maintained by the Student Health Services Department.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

Liability insurance is purchased by the college to cover students at externship sites. There is a fee of \$15.00 associated with the externship course.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Technical standards must be met with or without accommodations (See Technical Standards below.) This Technical Standards page should be printed, signed, and submitted on the first day of classes.

Technical Standards for MAS

Students entering this program must be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- Comprehend textbook material at the 11th grade level.
- Communicate and assimilate information either in spoken, printed, signed, or computer voice format.
- Gather, analyze, and draw conclusions from data.
- Be able to type 30 words per minute for three minutes with three or fewer errors using the "touch" method of typing.
- Distinguish shapes and colors under a microscope.
- Read typewritten text and patient data from a computer screen with or without corrective devices.
- Discriminate color in order to identify reagents and other materials such as laboratory media, stained preparations, and the physical properties of various body fluids.
- Possess the manual dexterity required in such tasks as performing phlebotomy; operating blood analyzers and laboratory information systems; handling small containers of potentially biohazardous specimens (one inch by one inch); using sample measuring devices such as pipettes; giving injections and being able to adequately focus and manipulate a microscope and, using the small muscle dexterity necessary to do such tasks as gloving, gowning, and operating controls on machinery.
- Traverse the hospital and laboratory corridors, passageways, and doorways (minimum width, three feet).
- Communicate with patients and staff in the English language.
- Maintain cleanliness and personal grooming consistent with close personal contact.
- Possess hearing with or without corrective devices to be able to transcribe medical dictation from recorded media.
- Comprehend and respond to the spoken word of all age-specific groups.
- Function without causing harm to self or others if under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter medications.
- Function without causing harm to others. This would include situations that may result from chronic mental or physical conditions.
- React quickly, both mentally and physically.
- Work as a member of a team.
- Remain calm, rational, decisive, and in control at all times, especially during emergency situations.
- Identify behaviors that would endanger a person's safety and intervene quickly, with an appropriate solution, in a crisis situation.
- Exhibit social skills appropriate to professional interactions.
- Respond to distress sounds, visual distress cues, emergency alarms, and vital sign assessment equipment.

Student Signature

Date

BLACKBOARD/EMAIL

Students are required to activate and to use their MWCC iConnect account. Each student is required to check the Blackboard site for each course in which s/he is enrolled and MWCC email on a **daily basis**. Any announcements, assignments, or course changes will be posted to Blackboard. Only the student's college email address will be used for all correspondence.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students must meet attendance requirements of the class/lab sessions of each medical assisting course. Each course syllabus outlines the policy on attendance and notification of instructor regarding lateness/absences .

Students must return promptly from break/lunch in order to receive full credit for the day. Tardiness will be documented and deducted as time missed.

Personal appointments should be made on non-class days/times. These policies will be strictly enforced.

It must be emphasized that excessive absences will be considered grounds for dismissal from the program

COMPETENCIES

A well-trained medical assistant will possess a variety of administrative and clinical skills. These skills are tested and the student proves their competency in each skill. The medical assisting program at MWCC requires that **each student must pass ALL competencies with a score of 100%**. Each competency can be attempted a maximum of three (3) times. If a student fails on the third attempt for any given competency, she/he may be dropped from the program.

CLINICAL CLASSES

Clinical classes (Clinical Procedures and Clinical Lab Procedures) are the courses where a student will gain the skills and knowledge to function in a clinical capacity. Each skill will be tested through competency testing.

The student is expected to attend **all** labs. In the event that a student misses any lab hour/s, it will be at the discretion of the instructor that they may be able to make up the time.

If makeup lab time is granted it may be at the student's expense.

COURSEWORK

Coursework such as homework, quiz, exams and other learning activities assigned online and in-class have to be completed before or on the due date set. Late homework will have equivalent deductions as noted in each course syllabus. In cases of missed exams or quizzes, it is the responsibility of the student to request possible make-up but it is the instructor's prerogative to approve this.

EXTERNSHIP REQUIREMENT

An externship is an opportunity for a student to put the theory and skills that they learned in the classroom into practice in an actual medical setting. MWCC will contract with externship sites that are willing to host a student. It is the student's responsibility to contact and interview for a site where they will complete their externship. It will be at the discretion of the externship site to decide which student will best fit their needs. By the end of the 2nd week of the second semester (end of January), a student needs to have secured their externship site and completed and submitted the necessary paper work to the practicum coordinator.

The externship will be completed during the second cycle of the second semester. **A minimum of 23 hours/week at the externship site is a requirement.** The externship will be composed of 40 hours in the administrative area and 120 hours in the clinical area of the externship site.

Further requirements of the externship will be outlined in the course syllabus.

Notification of absence from the clinical site is a necessity. A student who is going to be absent from a scheduled clinical site must call **both** the instructor and the supervisor at the clinical externship where s/he is due to report to duty, prior to the start of the clinical shift.

Externships must be started within 9 months after completing the clinical courses. If it has been more than 9 months but less than 12 months since completion of their clinical courses, a student must complete a competency challenge before they will be allowed to register for an externship. The challenge will consist of taking vitals, doing an ECG, and demonstrating competency in phlebotomy and injections.

If a student has not started their externships by 12 months following the completion of the clinical classes, a student must repeat the clinical classes.

Dress Code

The MWCC Medical Assisting program believes that professionalism begins with appearance and attire. The dress code is formulated to ensure high standards of dress and appearance that represent the MWCC's MA program to area healthcare settings. The values of asepsis, client safety, and client sensitivity are also incorporated into the policy. The faculty/agency reserve the right to ask a student to leave the clinical area if appearance is not in keeping with the dress code. **Students are expected to adhere to any requirements specific to a particular clinical site, following institutional policy as needed.**

1. The official uniform for the Medical Assisting Program:

- Galaxy blue scrub pants
- Galaxy blue scrub top with MWCC patch affixed to the upper left sleeve
- Galaxy blue or white scrub jacket with MWCC patch affixed to the upper left sleeve
- Clean white shoes/sneakers and white socks
- MWCC Student Nametag/ID badge

2. Nametag: Students must wear an MWCC issued nametag/ID badge as identification in clinical settings. This is to be worn on a pin or clip holder, not a lanyard.

3. Clinical Settings:

- The uniform must be worn on days in which the student is in the clinical area unless faculty specifies otherwise.
- Uniforms are to be worn in **only** clinical areas or in designated community events, such as health fairs.
- A white shirt/turtleneck may be worn under the uniform. In addition to the requirements listed above, student must comply with any dress code policies for MAs set by the clinical agency in which students are participating in a clinical experience.
- Gum chewing is not permitted.

4. Administrative Settings:

- For administrative areas, students may be required to wear professional attire.
- Pants or slacks to the ankle/shoe.
- Dresses and/or skirts must be covering the abdomen and to the knee.
- MWCC issued nametag/ID badge must be worn as identification in healthcare settings.

The following are not permitted:

- Jeans
- Shorts
- Halters
- Lounge pants
- Sleeveless shirts or camisoles worn alone

5. Accessories:

- Jewelry is restricted to one wedding ring and no more than one pair of small earrings in each ear lobe.
- Necklaces should not be visible.
- One watch with second hand is required.
- Body jewelry and/or piercings must be removed for all classes and externships.
- No tattoos should be visible.
- No perfume or scented aftershave is to be worn.

6. Hair and Nails

- Hair is to be worn off the face, and should be neat as well as comfortable. Long hair should be secured above the neckline.
- Nails should be neatly trimmed. No nail polish will be permitted.
- Artificial nails are not permitted in the clinical setting.
- Male students should be clean shaven or have neatly trimmed beards or moustache.

Classroom Behavior, Etiquette, and Civility

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community—students, faculty, and staff members. The college community believes that a student’s education will be enhanced by adherence to the following guidelines:

1. Treat all college property with respect.
2. Students are expected to be on time for class. If the student must arrive late on a rare occasion, s/he should enter unobtrusively and sit in the first available seat nearest to the door.
3. Attend to all personal needs before the class begins.
4. Students are expected to purchase their textbooks **prior** to the first day of classes. Pre-start assignments will be given so the student must come to class on the first day prepared and ready to participate. Students who are unable to buy books at the beginning of the term should discuss the situation with the instructor at least 3 weeks prior to the start of classes.
5. Students are expected to come to class with notebooks and writing implements to take notes.
6. Students should strive to be alert throughout the class and listen carefully to the instructor, media presentations, and other students. Behaviors such as sleeping, texting, using IPOD/IPADs, and side conversations will not be tolerated. Disruptive behaviors may result in dismissal from the classroom.
7. While in class, students are expected to cooperate with the instructor and focus on learning. Students who disrupt the classroom and distract other students interfere with the instructor’s job. For example, a conversation with friends during class is considered a disruption.
8. Eating inside the laboratory is not allowed.
9. Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow students with respect. Prejudiced language and behavior are not tolerated in the classroom. It is inappropriate to raise one’s voice, use vulgar language, or attempt to intimidate another. Submitting without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course (or the same course upon readmission to the program) constitutes cheating and will result in a zero for the assignment.
10. Students are expected to stay in class and remain seated until the class is dismissed. The instructor has the right to finish his or her thoughts at the end of the class without students closing their books and walking out. Leaving before class ends gives the unmistakable impression that the individual does not respect the class, the other students, and the instructor.
11. Students should come to class prepared to discuss all assigned readings. Reading and discussion develop skills that are essential for further college work in professional careers.
12. Students are expected to do all assigned homework and other coursework that need to be completed before or on the due date (online or in-class delivery) and submit them in on time in the format requested by the instructor. Failure to complete missing assignments/homework may result in course failure.
13. Students should work hard, ask, and respond to questions in a serious manner. They should take responsibility for their attendance, participation, and learning in the course.
14. Academic dishonesty policies and the penalty for such violations are outlined in the MWCC student handbook. Cheating means receiving unauthorized help on an assignment, quiz, or

examination. It is wrong to use unauthorized sources, notes, books, and other materials during a quiz or exam or for an assignment.

15. Plagiarism is the process of submitting another individual's work as your own and will not be tolerated. Sources must be documented. Today specialized software and the internet can help faculty to find the sources of such material easily. Plagiarism is stealing; it is academically and morally wrong. Students found guilty of such a practice will receive a zero grade for the assignment, and may be subject to withdrawal from the course and the MA program.
16. Cell phones are a distraction. The use of these devices is not permitted in the classroom, lab, or clinical unit.
17. Students are expected to attend class. It is the instructor's right to lower grades or give failing grades to students who do not attend regularly.
18. Students are responsible for reading the information in the student handbook and familiarizing themselves with all policies and procedures.
19. Netiquette: These same rules to online learning communities.

Inability to comply may result in failure of the course.

PROGRAM COURSES

SEMESTER I (Fall)	CREDITS
MAS 105 Introduction to Medical Assisting	2
MAS 130 Medical Terminology and the Body Systems	4
MAS 207 Medical Assisting Clinical Procedures	4
MAS 208 Principles of Pharmacology	2
ENG 101 College Writing I	3
SEMESTER II (Spring)	
MAS 230 Finance & Practice Management	4
MAS 206 Medical Assisting Lab Procedures	4
MAS 240 Medical Assisting Seminar	2
MAS 250 Externship	4

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

All MAS courses must be successfully completed with a grade of C+ or better.

MAS 105. Introduction to Medical Assisting. 2 Credits.

This course provides a foundation of the administrative skills required to function as an entry-level medical assistant in an ambulatory care facility. Focus is placed on psychological, social, and developmental concepts applicable to caring for individuals and families in a variety of healthcare settings. Students will be introduced to administrative functions, telephone techniques, appointment scheduling, patient reception and processing, and legal concepts affecting patient care, drug regulations, and employment. Students will develop interpersonal communication and organizational skills to work professionally in a medical office. Emphasis is placed on high standards of ethics in relation to the patient and profession.

Prerequisites: ENG 098, FYE 101, RDG 098. Fall.

MAS 130. Medical Terminology and the Body Systems. 4 Credits.

This course is designed to provide students with a clear understanding of two important concepts in healthcare, medical terminology and the relationship between structure and function. It offers fundamental concepts as to the origin of medical terms, word building as well as the various word parts and their uses when constructing and analyzing medical terms. A workbook-text format is used to help understand the principles of word building and an online learning management system platform containing audio and visual aids is utilized to enhance learning including proper pronunciation of words. The integration of concepts about the various organ systems and their functions including comparison of structure and function of the human body across the life span, identifying the various organs composing each organ system, relevant pathology, signs and symptoms including treatment, facilitate retention of concepts learned in medical terminology. The online Practice Anatomy Lab (PAL 3.0) containing virtual human cadaver dissections, histology and illustrations provides additional audio and visual aids to facilitate learning. It utilizes an adaptive-based learning platform that caters to the needs of each individual learner and online student activities for this course are assigned to further clarify concepts and enhance learning.

Prerequisites: ENG 098, FYE 101, RDG 098 or placement. Fall.

MAS 207. Medical Assisting Clinical Procedures. 4 Credits.

Medical assisting clinical procedure is a four-credit course consisting of three hours lecture and two hours lab per week. Students will learn the theoretical aspects of clinical concepts that are applicable in a healthcare setting as well as learning the proper execution of medical procedures when assisting practitioners, patients and in the administration of clinical procedures. Concepts covered in this course include various diagnostic and therapeutic modalities, preparation and administration of medications, taking vital signs, recognizing emergencies, proper use of medical equipment and devices, stocking supplies, proper sharps disposal, history taking, assisting in physical exams and treatments, proper identification of patients and patient instruction for medical procedures, dietary modification and follow up. Homework are completed online and the use

of videos consisting of clinical procedures and scenarios provide additional learning materials that enhance understanding of concepts covered in class. Prerequisites: ENG 098, FYE 101, RDG 098 or placement. Corequisites: MAS 105, 130. Fall.

MAS 208. Principles Of Pharmacology. 2 Credits.

This course examines current and commonly used practices, procedures, medications, and drug preparations. Emphasis is placed in three areas: medication calculations; drug book usage; the effects of drugs on the body systems. Instruction on the system of measurements and conversions used to calculate medication dosages will be provided. The use of a drug book will be taught with emphasis on drug classifications, routes of administration, drug preparation, and patient education. Discussion on the effects of drugs on the body systems will include interactions and vitamins and supplements. Additional topics will include safety protocols, compliance with drug regulations, and quality control of prescription requests. Students will apply critical thinking regarding patient assessment and develop skills for effective patient communication, care, and education.

Prerequisite or co-requisite: MAS 105, MAS 130, ENG 101. Fall.

MAS 206. Medical Assisting Lab Procedures. 4 Credits.

Students are introduced to clinical laboratory aspects of medical assisting and learn to perform the following: use quality control principles during patient specimen collection and instrument and reagent preparation; prepare and maintain quality control records; perform routine urinalysis; perform and record results for basic hematologic, chemistry, serologic, and microbiologic tests; collect and label biological specimens including blood, urine, stool, sputum, throat, and vaginal; process, prepare, store, deliver and dispose of specimens along with collection equipment; and use universal precautions and laboratory safety protocols. Three hours lecture and two hours lab per week.

Prerequisites: MAS 105, MAS 130, MAS 207, MAS 208 successfully completed with a grade of C+ or better. Prerequisite or co-requisite: MAS 230. Spring.

MAS 230. Finance & Practice Management. 4 Credits.

This course provides a foundation of the financial and additional administrative skills required in an ambulatory care facility. Students will gain knowledge and experience with both paper and electronic medical records. This course is designed to provide students with a clear understanding of scheduling and bookkeeping. The regulations of various medical insurances, including Medicare, Medicaid, and Workman's Compensation will be presented. Students will learn and complete procedural and diagnostic coding and medical billing. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to function effectively within the administrative area of a medical facility.

Prerequisite: MAS 105 successfully completed with a grade of C+ or better. Spring.

MAS 240. Medical Assisting Seminar. 2 Credits.

This course is designed to help students integrate knowledge from across the medical assisting curriculum in preparation for the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant exam. Students will integrate and apply both administrative and clinical knowledge, theory and understanding from their previous course work in the medical assisting program. Combination of lecture, class activity and standardized tests shall be used to enhance learning and engagement as well as to improve recall on concepts learned. Timed test using third party learning management system platform or uploaded questions in Blackboard shall be used during standardized tests to simulate the actual exam to orient students about the actual test process. The course will cover the following areas: administrative, clinical and general knowledge. Areas that will be tested include: office and financial management, diagnostic and treatment services, pharmacology, and laboratory services, medical terminology, anatomy, physiology and healthcare law and ethics. Study and test taking techniques will be reviewed and practice sessions for the exam will be available. CCMA application process, eligibility and expectations during the exam shall be covered. Registration is restricted to students who are preparing to take the CCMA exam and maintaining good academic standing. Prerequisites: MAS 130, MAS 206, MAS 207, MAS 208, and MAS 230 successfully completed with a grade of C+ or better. This course is taken in Spring.

MAS 250. Externship. 4 Credits.

This externship will provide supervised placement in a non-classroom setting at a health-care facility, medical office or other appropriate site. This experience will enable the student to synthesize and apply concepts and skills learned in the Medical Assisting program. This externship consists of a minimum of 160 hours of unpaid, supervised experience at an approved clinical site of Mount Wachusett Community College. The experience is to be divided as 40 administrative hours and 120 clinical hours. This will allow the student to be involved in the total environment of a health care facility. In addition, there will be an online component to this experience. Enrollment requires permission of the MA program director, CORI/SORI check, up-to-date health requirements, and provider/professional level CPR. An appointment with the program director is required both before and after the externship. Prerequisites: MAS 105, MAS 130, MAS 206, MAS 207, MAS 208, MAS 230 successfully completed with a grade of C+ or better. Co-requisite: MAS 240. Spring.