

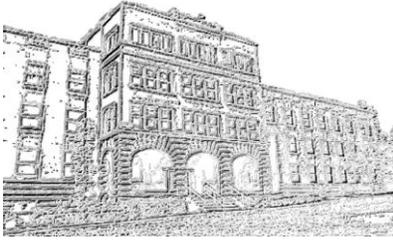
Columbia Gorge Community College



Medical Assisting Student Handbook 2012 - 2013

Written: August 2007

Revised: May 2008, November 2008, March 2009, June 2009, June 2011, June 2012



2012-2013 - WELCOME

The Medical Assisting Faculty at Columbia Gorge Community College congratulates you on your choice of healthcare as your career!

This Medical Assisting Student Handbook has been created to provide you with information, policies and procedures directly related to your studies in this program. You are responsible for knowing and understanding the policies and procedures found in this Student Handbook. If you have any questions about the information contained in this handbook, please be sure to ask for clarification. If you find additional information, not presented here, that would be helpful with your success as a student, please let us know.

We are happy that you are here and we look forward to working with you to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to become a caring and competent medical assistant.

Medical Assisting Faculty
Columbia Gorge Community College
Medical Assistant Program

Columbia Gorge Community College
Medical Assisting Program

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I. THE PROGRAM

A. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Medical Assisting program is located within the Health Occupations Department at Columbia Gorge Community College. Other health programs within this department include Nursing, Nursing Assistant, and Emergency Medical Technician.

The medical assisting profession requires a high degree of knowledge, skill, judgment and integrity. The American Association of Medical Assistants "Code of Ethics" provides the standards for this role. Your responsibilities as a student contained in this handbook follow from these standards.

B. SPONSORSHIP

Columbia Gorge Community College is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges through Portland Community College. The Medical Assisting Program is in the process of achieving accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). This process was completed in September, 2010.

C. PROGRAM GOAL

The goal of the Columbia Gorge Community College Medical Assisting Program is to educate students who are well prepared technically with demonstrated work ethics and professional values. These include:

- students who achieve entry level competencies
- students who promote a positive attitude
- students who contribute as team players
- students who are responsible professionals

Medical assisting education is based on a curriculum that integrates concepts from the physical, biological, social and behavioral sciences and humanities. We believe the most important guiding principle in healthcare education is balancing client'/patient's rights to safe and effective care with students' rights to education. We embrace a teaching/learning environment that respects diversity, and an attitude of lifelong learning.

D. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To offer a Medical assisting program that is regularly assessed and updated in order to maintain technical standards and to meet the needs of students and the community.
- To teach using traditional and innovative instructional methods, materials and equipment.
- To provide students with accessible library collections and learning resources.
- To provide students with opportunities to broaden their awareness and understanding of our diverse society.

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E. FACULTY AND STAFF

President: Dr. Frank K. Toda

Chief Academic Officer (Interim) Brian Greene

Dean of Student Services Lori Ufford

Director of Nursing and Health Occupations Doris Jepson, RN, MSN

Faculty/Coordinator Diana Lee-Greene, RMA (AMT), MT (ASCP), MBA

Adjunct Faculty:
Dan Ropek
Annette Byers
Terry Emmonds
Laurie Miller
Joyce Burkhart
Jules Burton
Kristie Ketchum

Health Occupations Administrative Assistant: Angela Johnston

II. ACADEMIC POLICY

A. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Students must maintain a minimum level of performance (no lower than a "C" grade) in **each** of the required technical courses (BI, MP, MA, MTH, MLT, or HE prefix) in order to continue to progress through the MA program and be eligible for the Certificate in Medical Assisting.

Students who fail to meet the minimum level of performance in one or more courses will be informed in writing of their probation in the program. If the course is offered the next term, a student might be allowed to retake the failed class the next term in addition to the required courses in the progression. If the student or the instructor determines that that option is not available, the student will be dismissed from the program. All determinations will be agreed to in writing. Once dismissed any student desiring re-admission to the program will be required to repeat the course(s) and earn a passing grade. Re-admission to the program is always on a space-available basis.

B. CONFERENCES AND ADVISING

Course instructors are available for conferences concerning assignments, tests, course content, etc. during the instructors posted office hours. Formal conferences may be scheduled during each term to assess student progress.

Professionally trained academic advisors are also available to assist students. Help is available for matters such as learning difficulties and study skills, development and exploration, as well as for family, personal and social problems. Academic advisors are a good source of information about the college and its programs, community resources, etc. The academic advisor offices are located in Student Services.

C. GRADING AND EVALUATION POLICIES

The grading scale used for each class in the MA program will be contained in each course syllabus. Students will be expected to maintain the minimum level of performance as outlined under Academic Performance regardless of the instructor's choice of grading scale.

The basis for the letter grade is the composite score of projects, papers, quizzes, lab modules/clinical objectives and/or tests for each course. Student will be required to participate actively in courses which have a "Participation Grade". In making such a grade determination, instructors will take into consideration student performance in the course in terms of attendance, attitude, participation, and other evidence of student achievement. Course instructors have the prerogative of increasing or lowering a grade by one letter based on these factors.

Students are expected to maintain a "C" grade (or Pass) for each course in their respective program. The student will not be allowed to take a "Pass" grade in a course in which a letter is grade

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is offered. Course instructors have the prerogative of requiring students to repeat any learning experience for which they receive less than a "C" letter grade. In making such a determination, instructors will take into consideration the importance of the learning experience to a related job entry level skill, knowledge or attitude.

Other symbols routinely used for grading and the conditions under which these may be applied are indicated below. Specific definitions are listed in the college catalog and in the schedule each term.

"I" - Incomplete. When the quality of work is satisfactory, but some minor, yet essential, requirement of the course has not been completed, and for reasons acceptable to the instructor, a report of "I" may be made and additional time granted for completion of the work. All incomplete coursework must be completed by graduation in order to be eligible to sit for the AAMA national certification examination.

"P" - Pass. Acceptable performance. A grade of "P" represents satisfactory achievement which would have been graded "C" or better on the regular grading scale, but is given instead of the letter grade. In the Medical assisting program, a student cannot request a grade of "P" if a letter grade is supposed to be given.

"NP" - No Pass. Unacceptable performance when the class is only offered on a pass/no pass basis.

"W" - Withdrawal. This mark is to be used only by student records when the student has followed established school policies for properly withdrawing from class within the specified time limits.

Graduation. - A student is required to maintain a "C" average in combined required, technical, and general education courses in the program in order to receive the applicable certificate and/or Associate of Applied Science Degree (see College Catalog). Each candidate must complete the applicable MA curriculum. All students planning on graduating from PCC must petition for graduation, preferably two terms prior to the students' final term.

D. TEST AND FINAL EXAMS POLICY

This test policy is applicable only to those courses with an MA prefix and may be altered for different instructors.

Attendance at all examination, scheduled tests and quizzes is mandatory. If a student cannot attend an examination, test or quiz due to an unexpected occurrence, the student may be excused, if the student notifies the **course instructor** (NOT the Program Coordinator) **before** the examination, test or quiz and provides documentation confirming the occurrence, such as a certificate from a doctor confirming an illness, if the instructor requires such documentation. The student will be expected to take the examination, test or quiz at a mutually agreeable time with the instructor no later than 1 week after the originally scheduled date and may receive a 10% reduction in his/her score for the exam, test or quiz. Individual instructors may alter this policy if they so desire and the change will be listed in the course syllabus. A prior arranged excused absence may not result in the 10% reduction. If the student does not have an excused absence, the student will

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not be able to take the missed exam, test or quiz and will receive a failing grade on that exam, test or quiz.

NOTE: To protect the testing environment for all students, when an exam, test or quiz begins, the instructor will close the door and no student will be admitted after the door is closed. Students are not allowed to bring personal items into the classroom during testing, to include electronic devices, books and school material, etc., unless specifically needed to take the exam.

In order to receive a passing grade for the course students must obtain a 70% or higher on the final examination of the course. There will be no retake of a final exam with an unsatisfactory test score.

No early final exams will be permitted unless there is an emergency or unusual situation and the instructor can accommodate the student. Such decisions are at the discretion of the course instructor.

If a student is absent for a final exam, the student may receive an incomplete or failing grade for that course at the discretion of the course instructor.

Retake of failed tests, (excluding final exam) is at the discretion of the course instructor. Grade on a retake can be no higher than 70%.

E. COMPUTERIZED TEST FORM INSTRUCTION

Using a #2 pencil only, students must correctly fill in the name section (last name first).

All test copies must have the student name printed on them and returned with the answer sheet to the instructor. Students will be allowed to review corrected test in class. Test grade will not be recorded until test is returned to instructor. Students are not permitted to keep tests.

F. TEST REVIEW AND TEST RETURN

Each test is analyzed for validity of questions after it is given. Since this process can be time consuming the appropriate time to return the tests and scantrons for review will be determined by the instructors, and may vary throughout the term. An effort will be made to return these as soon as possible. A test will not be returned for review until all students have taken it.

Individual Test Review

1. No test will be kept by students.
2. If you wish to review the test with a specific instructor, you must schedule an appointment.
3. If you wish to do a general review of the test, you must schedule an appointment with Medical assisting faculty. Office hours for faculty are posted outside their respective offices. The syllabus also contains office phone numbers and email addresses for faculty.

ASSIGNMENTS AND HANDOUTS

Students are expected to turn in course assignments at the beginning of class. No assignments will be accepted via FAX or e-mail without prior approval from the instructor. Late assignments will only be accepted for prior excused absences or emergencies. Student is responsible to get the assignment turned at the next scheduled class time or other arrangements agreed upon by both the student and the instructor. Assignments will not be accepted after this date.

The student is responsible for materials handed out during class. Arrangements should be made for a classmate to obtain handouts when absent. Handouts will be sent to students prior to the scheduled lecture. Students wishing to have a handout must print the handout and bring it to class. The instructor will not have handouts available in class unless a significant change to the handout has been made.

G. CLASS ATTENDANCE

Potential employers use attendance and promptness as two indicators of dependability and employability. Attending classes regularly and promptly is an important aspect of the training. The highly integrated structure of the curriculum requires regular and prompt attendance for successful achievement in the program.

Absenteeism can adversely affect the student who is on a financial aid grant. The college is required to maintain class attendance records in order to verify a student's attendance on a specific day or dates. Students who do not attend classes are not entitled to receive funds.

Adherence to the following attendance policies is therefore important:

Absence from class: The student is responsible for completing all course work regardless of absenteeism. The student is responsible for materials handed out in class and assignments made during class. Arrangements should be made for classmates to obtain handouts (see "Handouts"). **Missed class notes may only be obtained from another student or on-line when available.**

Absences from Labs: All lab exercises/modules must be completed for a passing grade. Missing two or more labs (regardless of excuse) may result in a "No Pass". Three late arrivals or early departures will constitute one absence (see "Tardiness").

Accumulated absence: Absences (excused or not) and tardiness from one-third or more of the scheduled classes may result in a lowered final grade, or failure at the discretion of the course instructor.

Tardiness: Tardiness is defined as arriving in class after the instructor has started or leaving class before it has officially ended. There is no "excused" tardiness; 3 late arrivals or early departures will constitute one absence.

Absence from Directed Practice site: All time lost from Directed Practice work activities must be made up. Time rescheduled will be only at the convenience of the site. Students are required to

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notify the Program Director as well as the Directed Practice site supervisor prior to any absence, late arrival or early departure. Make up days will be arranged by the Program Director in conjunction with the Practice Site supervisor. Students are not permitted to make their own arrangements for practice site assignments.

H. PROMOTING STUDENT SUCCESS

The Medical Assistant Faculty are committed to promoting student success. To this end, the faculty provides feedback through the use of performance-based outcomes (PBOs) frequently throughout the term and faculty advises students where they are in relation to those outcomes. If problems that may affect student success in a clinical medical assistant course are detected, faculty informs students and assists them in developing a plan that identifies goals and actions for improved performance. Students are responsible for implementing the plan, including following up on referrals for help and arranging additional conferences with their instructor as needed to follow up on problems. Faculty informs students about and document problems according to the following:

Problem-Solving Record (PSR) this procedure is intended to call attention, as early possible, to a situation that, if uncorrected, could lead to academic failure. A PSR documents the problem identified by an instructor, a plan to remedy the problem, and the student-instructor conference to discuss the problem and plan. If performance in Skills Lab is the issue the student's clinical instructor may join the conference. Students receive a copy of the PSR.

Non-Clinical PSR - Instructor meets with students whose classroom-related performance indicates a need for problems-solving. Examples of such performance include two theory tests that have been failed, a pattern of submitting assigned work late, class disruptions or inappropriate classroom activity and repeatedly missing or arriving late for tests.

Clinical Performance PSR - Instructor meets with students whose clinical performance indicates a need for problem solving. Some examples of such performance are missed skills check offs, repeated "No Pass" on skills check offs, repeated need for remastery, missed clinical time, inadequate preparation for clinical assignment and unsafe clinical practice.

Probation Record (PR) is a notice to a student that immediate changes are needed in some behavior(s) to prevent either failure or dismissal from the Program. Subsequent occurrences of problem behavior during a probationary period will result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the program. The instructor identifying the problem behavior informs the student and schedules a three-way conference (or possibly four-way conference if the performance is at the Clinical Extern Site). In attendance at this conference will be the instructor(s), the Director of Nursing and Health Occupations or delegate and the student. The PR documents the problem and plans to remedy the problem, specifies the conditions for retention and progression in the Medical Assisting Program, and documents the three (or four) way conference. Students receive a copy of the PR.

- ❖ **Academic Honesty** - Students who fail to practice academic honesty as expected (see CGCC's Academic Honesty Policy) will be placed on probation, if not dismissed from the program. Students placed on probation for academic dishonesty will remain on probation for

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the remainder of their enrollment in the Medical Assisting Program, whether enrollment is consecutive or interrupted by time out of the Program. A second occurrence of academic dishonesty will result in dismissal from the Program.

- ❖ **Clinical Performance** - Students who do not demonstrate safe practice may be placed on probation, if not dismissed from the Program. It is expected that students will practice safety at all times during their clinical experiences, which includes Clinical Lab assignments and check offs. Students who demonstrate unsafe clinical behaviors while on probation may be barred from the clinical practicum. This would result in a "No Pass" and the student would not progress in the program.

Unsafe clinical behavior is demonstrated when the student:

1. Violates or threatens the physical or psychological safety of the patient.
2. Violates previously learned principles which threatens the safety of the patient.
3. Assumes inappropriate independent/dependent action or decisions.

Whether the problems in student performance result in a PSR, PR or dismissal from the Program it is a Medical assisting faculty decision with input from the Director of Nursing and Health Occupations as needed. In making this decision, faculty consider the implications of student performance for patient safety, professional and personal integrity, and student success. While faculty makes every effort to alert students as early as possible to problem situations, there is no implied process that requires a PSR must precede a PR or that either of these must precede dismissal.

1. **Written Work;** Unless otherwise directed by the course instructor, all written work must be typed, and it will be judged on its content, spelling, grammar, and timeliness. The college has computer resources to help students with the typing requirement.

The student is expected to practice appropriate ethical conduct for Academic Integrity based on the guidelines in the CGCC Student Handbook. The student is expected to practice appropriate ethical conduct by independently (unless otherwise instructed; e.g., some assignments are group projects) completing assignments and lab work. Students must not allow others to copy or use their work or supply answers or data to other students. Failure to credit the source of another person's ideas is considered plagiarism. Common instances of plagiarism include copying sentences or answers from another student's papers or test and turning in papers or documents produced by someone else. Attribution of all cited and quoted materials is required. Standard formats must be used correctly and consistently. Likewise, a bibliography is required for all written work. Resources beyond the assigned texts should be sought out and correctly referenced.

2. **Student Concerns/Academic Difficulties.** If a student has an academic problem or concern, it should be discussed with the individual instructor first in a private one-to-one setting. If the situation cannot be resolved this way, the concern should be brought to the Program Coordinator, if still unresolved, the concern should be brought to the Director of Nursing and Health Occupations; if still unresolved, the concern should be brought to the Dean of Student Services. If the situation still remains unresolved after discussion with the above parties, the

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student should follow the protocol set forth in the *CGCC Board of Education Student Grievance Policy* in the Student Handbook.

3. Use of Cell Phone and Computers. Cell phones will be turned off for theory lecture, testing and during all clinical experiences. The student must use a watch to tell time and not the cell phone. Computers will be allowed only to assist in documenting the lecture material. Under no circumstances will internet use or any other non lecture related computer use be tolerated. Violation of any of these policies can result in a PSR.

I. GENERAL EDUCATION

Columbia Gorge Community College requires general education course and competencies to meet degree requirements. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain the catalog of the admission to *CGCC* and to monitor their progress. Advisors are available to assist in planning.

J. GRADUATION PROCEDURES

MA students planning on graduating **must** petition for the Medical Assisting Certificate. Students should begin the petition process no later than the end of fall term. MA's must have a current CPR card by completion of the winter term in order to participate in the clinical rotations and to take the national certification examination following graduation.

K. NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of Columbia Gorge Community College and its Board of Education that there will be no discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, color, sex, marital status, national origin, religion, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, and any other status protected by applicable local, state, or federal law in any educational programs, activities, or employment.

Persons having questions about equal opportunity and nondiscrimination should contact:

Exec. Director of Human Resources and Strategic Planning - Employment
Chief Academic Officer - Educational Programs
Dean of Student Services - Student Programs, Activities, and Services

L. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

It is recognized that a process for the resolution of student complaints is necessary. A complaint may be initiated by a student who believes he/she has been subjected to unjust action or denied student rights. Grievance procedures should start with the instructor and immediate administrator. Copies of Columbia Gorge Community College Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook including the Student code of Conduct and grievance procedures are available in the Student Services Office. This information can also be accessed on the college website at www.cgcc.cc.or.us, or in the student handbook.

II. STUDENT POLICIES

A. STUDENT RIGHTS

Columbia Gorge Community College students in all programs and divisions have certain rights and responsibilities. College policies provide that all persons, regardless of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, marital status, or disability, have access to higher education. Students are guaranteed a safe learning environment, freedom from harassment, freedom of expression, confidentiality, and the right to have grievances heard. They also assume the responsibility of conducting themselves in a manner compatible with the college's function as an educational institution. The *College Catalog* and the *CGCC Board of Education Policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities* thoroughly define the college's philosophy and policies regarding student rights and responsibilities (These can be found in the Student Handbook 2010-2011).

B. CAMPUS RESOURCES

Faculty and Student Services Advisors

During the academic year, the program coordinator will be available for each student to assist the student, and address any concerns the student may have. The student is also encouraged to discuss issues with the instructor of each course. The office hours of the coordinator are posted outside her office door.

Before registering each term, each student must meet with his or her **student services advisor** to ensure that the student is registered for the appropriate classes. The student is responsible for arranging this meeting with his or her student services advisor and also for registering in a timely manner for all required classes each term.

Course Syllabus

Each course in the Medical Assisting Program has a course syllabus. The syllabus describes the course and all requirements that must be met to obtain a passing grade.

Course requirements, outcomes, learning activities, and examinations are designed to assist students to meet minimal skill levels required for the program. Students are required to complete all learning activities and reach all learning objectives by the deadlines stated in the syllabus.

Students are encouraged to keep copies of the syllabus and associated documentation for each course taken as a record of their accomplishment within the Medical Assisting Program.

Practice Sites

The facilities where students acquire practice skills (referred to as "externships") are carefully selected by the Medical Assistant Coordinator and the Director of Healthcare Occupations. Students are assigned to a specific facility based on a variety of factors, including practice level, availability of experiences, faculty supervision, and to the extent possible, students' personal desires. Not all students can have experiences in all facilities, but all students are assured placement for experiences needed for successful completion of the Medical Assisting Program.

Professional Organizations

Professional persons have a responsibility to be active in organizations that enhance their professions through membership and participation. Students will be expected to join the American Association of Medical Assistants by the beginning of fall term. Continued enrollment in this organization will be optional once the student graduates from the program.

C. PROGRESSION IN THE PROGRAM (term by term)

Students are eligible to continue from term to term in the program provided that they meet academic and performance standards as specified in this handbook.

D. READMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Students who have left the program and wish to rejoin must repeat any classes that were not completed successfully (letter grade of "C" or better) providing there is space available. The only exception is that a failure in any of the externship course MA270, the student will not be allowed to retake and therefore the student cannot apply for readmission to the program. The decision to re-admit will be based on space availability by the Program Director in conjunction with input from the Director of Nursing and Health Occupations, Chief Academic Officer or Dean of Student Services if appropriate following the guidelines set out in the Medical Assisting Program Re-Entry Admission Packet.

Candidates for re-entry should contact the program office as soon as possible prior to the time they desire to re-enter, but no later than August 1 of the year prior to start of Fall Term. Specific requirement for reapplication, retesting, etc. will be available that time.

E. TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Student progress is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Program director. The MA program reserves the right, upon the specific recommendation of the faculty and after the student has received written notification of the reasons and procedures, to terminate a student's enrollment in the program. Such action will be initiated when the faculty deems it inadvisable for that student to complete the program.

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The conditions contributing to these determinations by the faculty may include (but are not limited to):

- a. Unsatisfactory academic performance levels.
- b. Unsatisfactory clinical affiliation (directed practice) performance.
- c. Unethical or unprofessional conduct.
- d. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

F. CLASS CANCELLATION

Class canceled due to inclement weather will be announced over local radio stations and is campus specific. Class and lab missed will be rescheduled as time permits. If class is not canceled, and a student is unable to attend, the student is responsible for the material missed and the absence is considered non-excused.

G. LABORATORY

The laboratory area is available to students only during their scheduled lab time or class time or by prior arrangement with the instructor.

Lab use is on a structured basis. Equipment will be available during lab and/or class times as required by class work.

Beverages (except water) and food are NOT permitted in the laboratory. Smoking is restricted to areas outside the buildings. The laboratory is a work area only. Please be considerate of other students by working as quietly as possible. Children under 12 are not allowed in the classrooms or labs. No radios/cassette players or iPods may be used on the premises.

Students must assume responsibility for their personal property. Purses, briefcases and other valuables should never be left unattended in the laboratory, in any college classroom or other college facility. The staff cannot be responsible for the personal property of the students.

Each student is responsible for maintaining a neat work area in the laboratory. All equipment and books must be returned to their proper place at the conclusion of class or lab session and all work areas must be sanitized after lab assignments. Students are also responsible for reporting equipment breakdowns to the instructor.

H. ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

Illegal drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated. Use of such drugs constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Some directed practice sites may require a drug screen prior to accepting a student; therefore, all students will be required to submit to a drug screen prior to extern site assignments.

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1. Refer to Columbia Gorge Community College's Code of Conduct to determine the specific policy regarding the use of alcohol and drugs. The policy and consequences are published regularly by the college in term schedules, also. Because of the special circumstances surrounding the training of future medical assistants, the Medical Assisting Program has a supplemental substance use policy that operates in conjunction with the college's policy.
 - a. In all aspects of providing patient care, Medical assisting Students must perform safely and effectively. They are, therefore, responsible for avoiding potential adverse effects on their behavioral, physical, emotional, and mental states that could result from the use of drugs, whenever and wherever taken, including alcohol and any "over the counter" or prescription medications.
 - b. Based on the contractual agreements of the Medical Assistant Program with clinical sites, it is the duty of an instructor to dismiss students from the clinical setting if there are any questions of the student's ability to function safely and responsibly in patient care. These contractual agreements recognize the right of the clinical sites to exclude students who exhibit unsafe or irresponsible behavior. Such exclusion could mean that a student would not be able to achieve course outcomes and could, therefore, not be able to continue in the Medical Assisting Program.
2. Performance, behavior, appearance or breath odor may suggest the use of alcohol or other drugs. Some examples of signs that may indicate substance use are:
 - a. a change in a person's behavior
 - b. bloodshot eyes, dilated or constricted pupils
 - c. emaciated or unusual weight loss
 - d. tremor, especially early morning
 - e. slurred speech
 - f. inappropriate or bizarre emotional responses
 - g. altered/impaired gait
 - h. breath odors
 - i. repeated tardiness or absence
 - j. diminished work performance, including mental functioning
 - k. accidents or near-misses involving patients or equipment

When indications of substance use are detected while a student is engaged in activities on campus, the student will be required to explain the findings. At the discretion of the Medical assisting Faculty, such explanations may need to include the report of testing of body fluids for chemical substances. In consultation with the Director of Nursing and Health Occupations, the Medical assisting Faculty will decide what disciplinary action is appropriate.

If substance use by a student is detected in a clinical setting, the student will be suspended from the clinical component of the Program and be required to undergo immediate testing for the presence of alcohol or other chemical substances. The student status will be reviewed by the Medical assisting Coordinator and the Director of Nursing and Health Occupations. Factors that

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will be considered in this review include whether the student exhibited unsafe performance or irresponsible behavior in patient care and whether the test results are positive.

I. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

All CGCC students enrolled in a health care program, including Medical assisting, with requirements for practical experience or field training may have to pass Criminal History Checks as a condition of their acceptance into a medical or other facility for training.

Students who do not pass the Criminal Background check may not be eligible to complete training at affiliated practicum sites, to sit for certification exams, or be hired for some professional positions. If you believe that your past history may interfere with your ability to complete the program of study or to obtain certification in your chosen field, you should contact the appropriate state board or the program director.

J. DRESS CODE

❖ **Professional Appearance: Community-Based Settings** students should follow the dress code for professional appearance outlined below:

- All clothing and shoes must be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- Avoid extreme styles on dress and personal grooming.
- Shirts/tops must be an appropriate size without fitting too tightly and must have sleeves. The neckline should be high enough so that cleavage is not visible.
- Clothing shall not be provocative (i.e., skin-tight clothing or clothing that exposes the midriff, thighs, or back).
- The outer layer of clothing shall not consist of undershirts, tank tops, muscle shirts, T-shirts, sweatshirts, short skirts, tights, or sweat pants. Camouflage or military fatigue type clothing shall not be worn.
- Clothes with large logos, slogans, or sayings shall not be worn.
- Shorts, including longer style walking shorts, are not acceptable.
- Pants must fit appropriately without being tight; leggings/stretch pants, leather pants, sweat pants, and jeans ("jean-cut" or "jean-style" pants in any color) may not be worn.
- Shoes must be safe and appropriate to the work being done; not thong sandals, spike-heeled, or platform shoes; no open-toes shoes; shoes must have heel strap; heels may be no higher than two inches.
- Hats may not be worn indoors except for health, safety, or religious reasons.
- In addition to the above policies, lab coats or scrubs with CGCC logo and student's photo ID shall be worn, as directed IN THE COURSE SYLLABI FOR THOSE CLINICAL COURSES.

❖ **Grooming Policy in the CGCC Medical Assisting Program All Settings**

- Hair should be controlled (braided or tied back).
- Fingernails should be clean, short, and only clear polish is allowed. Acrylic or other types of artificial nails are not permitted in clinicals or skills lab

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- Facial hair must be neatly trimmed and clean with no growth extending down the neck.
- No excessive jewelry; no piercing may be visible, including tongue rings. Earrings are limited to two piercing per ear lobe - no dangling earrings.
- All visible tattoos must be covered.
- Body odor, whether from heavy fragrances, smoke, or perspiration, is offensive, and fragrances may cause allergic responses. To avoid odor on student's uniforms, students are required to refrain from smoking or wearing fragrances while in uniform.
- Students should consider that tobacco, coffee, some other beverages, and certain foods may leave strong odors on breath that is offensive to clients/patients.
- No gum chewing is allowed.
- If a student arrives at a clinical practice session in violation of these grooming rules, the student will be asked to correct the violation immediately or leave the session for the day. If the student is required to leave, the student must arrange for an alternative time to make up the missed clinical session. Repeated violations will affect the student's grade for the course.

K. TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Medical Assistants must possess the physical and cognitive capacity, emotional stability, and communication skills essential for the delivery of safe, effective patient care. Students admitted to the Medical Assisting Program, with or without accommodation, must be able to meet the following academic and technical standards.

- (1) Visual acuity sufficient to assess clients and their environments and to implement the care plans that are developed from such assessments.
- (2) Hearing ability sufficient to assess clients and their environments and to implement the care plans that are developed from such assessments.
- (3) Olfactory ability sufficient to assess clients and to implement the care plans that are developed from such assessments.
- (4) Tactile ability sufficient to assess clients and to implement the care plans that are developed from such assessments.
- (5) Fine motor skills sufficient to perform psychomotor skills integral to client care.
- (6) Strength and mobility sufficient to perform client care activities and emergency procedures.
- (7) Physical endurance sufficient to complete assigned periods (e.g. eight or twelve hour shifts, days, evenings, or nights, weekends, holidays) of clinical practice with acceptable speed.
- (8) Ability to speak, comprehend, read, and write in English at a level that enables accurate, clear, and effective communication with individuals, families, and groups respecting social, cultural, and spiritual activities.

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- (9) Emotional stability to function effectively under stress, to adapt to changing situations, and to follow through on assigned client care responsibilities.
- (10) Cognitive ability to collect, analyze, and integrate information and knowledge to make clinical judgments and management decisions that promote client outcomes.

L. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS - CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics of this Association shall set forth principles of ethical and moral conduct as they relate to the medical profession and the particular practice of medical assisting.

Members of this Association dedicated to the conscientious pursuit of their profession, and thus desiring to merit the high regard of the entire medical profession and the respect of the general public which they serve, do pledge themselves to strive always to:

- Render service to humanity with full respect for the dignity of person.
- Respect confidential information gained through employment unless legally or required by responsible performance of duty or divulge such information.
- Uphold the honor and high principles of the profession and accept its disciplines.
- Seek to continually improve our knowledge and skills of medical assisting for the benefit of patients and professional colleagues.
- Participate in additional service activities which aim to improve the health and well-being of the community.

In accepting admission into the MA program the student commits himself/herself to the generally understood ethics of the health professions and specifically to the ethics of their chosen profession. Ethics will be addressed throughout the course of study.

An extremely important aspect of professional ethics is the maintenance of the confidential status of patient medical records and physician/facility business. This applies to information obtained in the classroom, in the laboratory, or during directed practice. Confidential information must not be disclosed to unauthorized individuals, including family and friends.

The Program Director will investigate all instances of alleged misconduct or unethical behavior. IF necessary, the matter will be referred to the Chief Academic Officer for hearing and determination. Unethical or unprofessional conduct is cause for dismissal from the program.

Unless the instructor directs otherwise, students are expected to complete assignments on an independent basis. Asking another student or graduate to share projects, paper, modules or tests is considered unethical behavior. It is equally unethical to share materials with a student who intends to cheat. Unethical conduct is cause for dismissal from the program. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for specific violations and sanctions and procedures.

INDICATORS OF UNSAFE CLINICAL PERFORMANCE

Because medical assisting students function under the license of physicians, and instructors are responsible for their students in the clinical area, it is therefore necessary for the students and the faculty to conscientiously identify any behavior that is unsafe. **Unsafe clinical performance** will result in a progression review and, depending on the severity of behavior, result in the initiation of a re-mastery agreement, problem solving record, probation or immediate failure from the program. The following is a list of unsafe clinical behaviors with examples that represent only a partial listing for each behavior.

1. Violates or threatens the **physical safety** of the client/patient. E.g., neglects use of chairs, arm rests; inadequate supervision of clients at risk.
2. Violates or threatens the **psychological safety** of the client/patient. E.g., uses clichés repeatedly. Speaks inappropriately in front of client and significant other. Unable to communicate therapeutically.
3. Violates or threatens the **microbiological safety** of the client/patient. E.g., unrecognized violation of aseptic technique; comes sick to clinical experience; failure to follow hand-washing techniques; exhibits unhygienic appearance.
4. Violates or threatens the **chemical safety** of the client/patient. E.g., violates the "7 Rights in Administering Medications"; administers medications without consideration of potential harmful effects; fails to follow patient identification procedures.
5. Violates or threatens the **thermal safety** of the client. E.g., "burns" client with heating or cooling therapies.
6. Inadequately and/or inaccurately utilizes the medical assisting process. E.g., Fails to observe and/or report critical assessment regarding patients. Fails to follow written and/or verbal instructions/orders.
7. Violates previously learned principles/objectives in carrying out patient care skills/or therapeutic measures. E.g., MA students unable to give IM medications; unable to calculate medication dosage; fails to observe safety precautions during oxygen therapy; skills not checked off in skills lab.
8. Demonstrates inappropriate independent/dependent behaviors while in the clinical setting. E.g., fails to seek help when situation is in an emergency; unable to make or makes inappropriate decisions without consulting physician; unable to provide safe patient care without constant direction.

LEGAL LIMITATIONS FOR CMA CERTIFICATION

Individuals who have been found guilty of a felony, or pleaded guilty to a felony, are not eligible to take the Certified Medical Assistance Examination (CMA). However, the certifying board may grant a waiver based on mitigating circumstances. See the American Association of Medical Assistance (AAMA) CMA Examination Application for specifics.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Students of the Medical Assisting Program are eligible for membership to the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA). Some of the benefits of membership include receipt of the official journals of the organization, attendance at professional meetings and involvement in the association before job entry.

Students are eligible to join during the first term. Application costs are the sole responsibility of the student. Application forms will be provided at Orientation.

Student membership is required by the MA Program staff as part of professional training and development during the program. Membership after completion of the MA program is optional. Professional associations provide avenues for continuing education and networking. Association involvement may be beneficial to career advancement.

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

Students who successfully complete the MA Program are eligible to take the national certifying examination given by the AAMA. An application must be filed and fees payable during spring term. The program staff will provide the necessary information prior to the time applications must be submitted. Students are encouraged to allow sufficient time for materials to reach the national exam office.

M. EMPLOYMENT (during academic year)

The number of hours of employment while attending the MA Program is dependent upon the student's ability. Part-time employment of more than 15 hours a week is discouraged. Part-time employment will not count toward required hours in MA directed practice, even if students are employed by clinical affiliation sites. Employment may not interfere with scheduled classes, labs or clinical experience. Student externships will not be paid even in the event that the student does a rotation in a location where they are also employed.

M. JOB PLACEMENT

Our program is known throughout the medical community and we will receive local and regional job listing through the year. While we do not actually place graduates, job openings will be posted on

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bulletin boards and students may be notified via e-mail of such opportunities. We cannot guarantee or promise a job to anyone.

N. LIBRARY

Columbia Gorge Community College Library has many materials for health occupations including reference books, periodicals and tapes. The materials in the Library are subject to the department's circulation policies and procedures.

Study areas including small conference rooms for study groups and computers are available for student use.

P. HEALTH RELATED REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is a requirement of the MA Program that all students have a "**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FOR MEDICAL ASSISTING STUDENTS**" form completed prior to the conclusion of fall term. Students that have not provided all required medical documentation will not be allowed to register for Winter classes and may not be eligible for scheduled Directed Practice rotations spring term.

One of the interests that we have is ensuring safety against exposure to acquired illness. There are additional considerations which each students as an individual needs to address - that being Hepatitis Be vaccination.

Columbia Gorge Community College **strongly recommends** that each student in the MA Program show evidence of completion of the Hepatitis B vaccine series prior to clinical directed practice. This series is a form of insurance against the acquisition of Hepatitis B in handling blood and blood products. Additionally, it may become the policy of clinical affiliated sites to require individuals to have these immunizations prior to gaining practical experience at their site. Consult your physician and/or health clinic for further information.

All students are required to have a current TB screening; documentation of results must be provided.

Oregon statue requires that all students of allied health programs born on or after January 1, 1957, furnish written proof of first and second doses of the measles immunization.

An additional consideration is that of **tetanus immunization**. Even though it is not a program or college requirement at this time, we strongly suggest that students have had a tetanus immunization within the past 7 years (which would cover one through the program). If no immunization has been received, we strongly suggest that consideration be given to having the immunization. We suggest this precaution due to the potential for skin punctures in the clinical sites.

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STUDENT HEALTH

Student participation in the program requires maintenance of a level of physical and mental health that will permit successful completion of all elements of the program.

If there is evidence that a student's mental or physical condition is a contributing factor to substandard achievement in the program, the student shall be counseled to seek help from a private physician, or Student Counseling Services. In the course of these procedures it may be deemed necessary for the student to submit statements from a physician pertaining to his/her mental and/or physical abilities to continue in the program. Cases in which a student refuses to seek such assistance of the MA staff feels that the student should not continue in the program will be referred to the Division Dean for final determination.

In the event of pregnancy, a student may be asked to comply with the following conditions:

- a. After pregnancy is verified, the program may request the attending physician to attest in writing to the student's physical capacity to continue in the sequence of classes.
- b. The student may be required to withdraw from any directed practice site by the quarter term during which she reaches the eighth month of pregnancy. This decision would involve the site supervisor, the student and the MA staff and, if necessary, the student's physician. After delivery, she may request readmission (see readmission to the program) in the proper course sequence with her physician's approval.

RECORDS AND FORMS

a. Immunization Records

The college immunization record is required for all students in the Medical Assisting Program. This record documents measles (*rubeola*), hepatitis B, and tuberculosis immunity status. The Oregon State Health Division and Columbia Gorge Community College both require students in the Medical Assisting Program to have documentation of measles immunity by virtue of age, documented history of the disease, or measles vaccine; exemptions are possible based on certain conditions (see the form). The student must also have had or be in the process of receiving the hepatitis B immunization series. Many clinical facilities are also requiring documentation about immunity to other diseases, most specifically chicken pox (*varicella*) and German measles (*rubella*). It is in the best interest of each student to know his or her status regarding immunity and to take appropriate measures to ensure protection for these communicable diseases. Finally, the student must document evidence of a tuberculin skin test, Purified Protein Derivative ("PPD") or exemption from that test. The PPD test must be done annually and must comply with current OSHA regulation.

The immunization record must be presented to the MA Program Coordinator prior to the beginning of the Winter term in the MA Program.

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A physical examination is required, with evidence of physical and mental health adequate to perform all the functions necessary for the Medical Assisting Program. For this purpose, students are required to submit a self-report and a report of an examination conducted by a qualified licensed healthcare professional, on the first day of class Fall Term. The Medical Assisting Program is physically demanding and course work missed because of illness may be difficult or impossible to make up.

b. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certificate

Certification for basic life support for healthcare providers (BLS for healthcare providers) is required for clinical experiences at all facilities. Certification must be current. If the student completes this training no earlier than May 30th of the year prior to entry into the program, then certification would last for the entire time in which the student is enrolled in the program.

c. Accident Forms

If a student is involved in an accident while on campus or at a clinical practice site, the student must immediately notify his/her instructor and the following form must be completed. The form is available from the Health Occupations coordinator.

The *Columbia Gorge Community College Incident/Accident Report Form* is to be completed for all injuries.

d. Needle Stick Policy

All needle sticks, splashes of body fluids, and any exposure to susceptible body fluids must be reported to a faculty member immediately for determination of possible blood-borne disease exposure.

Upon exposure the student with notify the clinical instructor - the clinical instructor will assist the student with the policy within the clinical facility for immediate and follow-up care related to the exposure.

e. Latex Allergy

Students may encounter latex products in skills lab and clinical.

- Students ***must*** sign a Latex Allergy Form prior to the first day of skills lab, and notify the Skills Lab Coordinator and their Clinical Instructor before skills lab or clinical experiences each term.
- **THE SKILLS LAB COORDINATOR WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PROVIDE NON-LATEX ITEMS TO ALL STUDENTS. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO MONITOR LATEX CONTENT BY READING LABELS.**

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- **SOME CLINICAL SETTINGS HAVE LATEX PROCEDURE GLOVES. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO OBTAIN NON-LATEX GLOVES FOR HIS/HER USE IN CLINICAL.**

General guidelines have been developed by the American Nurse Association:

- ❖ Be aware of the problem of latex allergy.
- ❖ Choose a level of glove protection according to need; vinyl gloves may be appropriate. In general, choose low protein gloves that are powder free.
- ❖ Wash hands after glove use.
- ❖ Report symptoms of contact dermatitis as soon as possible and have the causative agent determined accurately.
- ❖ Do not use oil based emollients (petroleum derivatives, mineral oil) with latex glove use! Use of petroleum based lotions significantly increases the absorption of latex proteins and can greatly increase sensitization.
- ❖ Know your rights if you become sensitized, including the right to have an alternative product made available to you or used around you.