

MEDICAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025



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Preface

The intent of this handbook is to provide you with user-friendly information that will enhance your experience and success as a student in the Flathead Valley Community College Medical Assistant Program. Students are responsible for knowing policies and procedures that are included in the FVCC Medical Assistant handbook. The information provided in this handbook is designed to work in conjunction with the information provided in the course syllabi and in conjunction with the FVCC Academic Catalog. Information about college wide policies can be found in the FVCC Academic Catalog and assists you in your success in the FVCC Medical Assisting Program and/or future courses.

As a Medical Assistant student, the expectation is to function in a professional manner as you learn your role in the medical assistant profession. You are expected to take ownership for your learning and other related events. The faculty in the Medical Assistant Program and FVCC student support groups will attempt to give you the support necessary for being successful in the program.

The FVCC Medical Assistant Program reserves the right to change any provision, requirement, fees, curriculum offerings, or service without prior notice. The faculty will do their best in notifying students of any change in the Medical Assistant Program and have the right to make decisions in individual situations.

WELCOME

Mission Statement

The Medical Assisting Program seeks to provide quality education and training that promotes personal growth of the individual student and to develop skills necessary to succeed in the workplace as an entry level certified medical assistant.

The Medical Assisting Program Faculty supports the mission, philosophy, and goals of Flathead Community College.

Goals

The FVCC Medical Assisting Program is committed to preparing professional and competent entry-level medical assistants in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the medical assisting profession and prepare a students to successfully pass a national certification exam administered by the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) or the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) earning the title of a certified medical assistant (CCMA or NCMA).

Medical Assistant Career Description

Medical assistants are the only allied health professionals specifically trained to work in ambulatory settings, such as physician's offices, clinics, and group practices. These multi-skilled personnel can perform administrative and clinical procedures. Physicians value this unique versatility more and more, as managed care compels them to contain costs and manage human resources efficiently. Not surprisingly, the demand for medical assistants is expanding rapidly.

Medical assistants are diversified in their skills and may answer phones, update records, complete insurance forms, schedule appointments, and arrange for medical services. Clinical duties may include taking and recording vital signs and medical histories, explaining treatment procedures to patients, assisting during examinations, performing phlebotomy or administering medication, and preparing or performing laboratory tests.

Affiliations

The FVCC Medical Assistant Program has partnered with the National Healthcareer Association (NHA). The NHA's certificate programs are accredited through the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

The NCCA was created in 1977 to help insure the health, welfare, and safety of the public through the accreditation of certification programs and organizations that assess professional competence. More information may be found by clicking on the provided link, [NCCA \(credentialingexcellence.org\)](https://www.nccca.org).

Curriculum Design

The curriculum is competency-based, i.e., emphasis is placed on demonstrating knowledge of the subject matters required for competence in the profession. The three instructional strategies used are lecture that provides theoretical foundation, laboratory experiences that provide observation and practice of skills and techniques, and clinical externship that allows students to put into practice these skills and techniques in a professional setting under the supervision of a physician.

Program Outcomes

Upon completion of the program the student will be able to:

- Function professionally in a legal and ethical manner as a medical assistant within their scope of practice permitted by state law
- Effectively communicate with other health-care team members, patients, and physicians
- Perform computer-based tasks such as scheduling appointments, updating patient demographics, correspondence, coding, billing and insurance
- Demonstrate proficiency with basic medical testing procedures
- Display knowledge and use of techniques for asepsis, workplace safety, and risk management
- Record patient medical histories and vital signs, prepare patients for examinations, assist with surgical treatments, collect and prepare laboratory specimens, perform basic laboratory tests, and electrocardiograms
- Give patients injections or medications as directed by physicians and as permitted by state law

- Provide patient education and health coaching
- Students will be qualified and prepared to sit and take the national certification exam administered by the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) or the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) earning the title of a Clinical Certified Medical Assistant (CCMA) or National Certified Medical Assistant (NCMA).

In addition to the program outcomes, students will meet the following Flathead Valley Community College Related Instruction Requirements. Related Instruction courses are embedded within the curriculum and are organized into three categories: Communication, Interaction, and Quantitative Literacy.

Characteristics of a Medical Assistant

The Medical Assistant profession requires the below qualities:

- **Analytical skills** | Medical assistants must be able to understand medical charts and diagnoses.
- **Communication skills** | Medical assistants need to convey important information to patients, such as when scheduling appointments or explaining medical information.
- **Compassion** | Medical assistants interact with patients who are sick or injured and who may be in extreme pain or distress. They must be empathetic toward patients and their families.
- **Detail oriented** | Medical assistants must be precise when taking vital signs or recording patient information. Physicians, patients, and insurance companies rely on accurate records.
- **Interpersonal skills** | Medical assistants work with other healthcare professionals, such as physicians, and need to be able to discuss patient information with them. They also interact with patients and must be courteous.

Medical Assistant Duties and Responsibilities

- Helps patients by providing information, services, and assistance.
- Maintains medical supplies inventory and performs preventive maintenance to keep medical equipment operating.
- Verifies patient information by interviewing patients, recording medical history, and confirming purpose of visit.

- Prepares patients for examination by performing preliminary physical tests; taking blood pressure, weight, and temperature; and reporting patient history summary.
- Saves doctors' time by helping with office procedures.
- Secures patient information and maintains patient confidence by completing and safeguarding medical records; completing diagnostic coding and procedure coding; and keeping patient information confidential.
- Counsels patients by transmitting physician's orders and questions about surgery.
- Schedules surgeries by planning with the surgical center; verifying times with patients; and preparing charts and pre-admission and consent forms.
- Maintains safe, secure, and healthy work environment by establishing and following standards and procedures and complying with legal regulations.
- Keeps supplies ready by inventorying stock, placing orders, and verifying receipt.
- Keeps equipment operating by following operating instructions, troubleshooting breakdowns, maintaining supplies, performing preventive maintenance, and calling for repairs.
- Updates job knowledge by participating in educational opportunities and reading professional publications.
- Serves and protects the practice by adhering to professional standards; facility policies and procedures; and federal, state, and local requirements.
- Enhances practice reputation by accepting ownership for accomplishing new and different requests, and exploring opportunities to add value to job accomplishments.

Technical Standards

Students enrolled in the FVCC Medical Assistant Program must possess the physical, mental and emotional capabilities required to complete the medical assisting program successfully and to pass the certification exam with or without reasonable accommodation.

The Medical Assistant specializes in the application of scientific knowledge and theory in the skillful performance of their profession. Therefore, all applicants should possess:

Physical Standards:

- Lifting Requirements: 50 pounds. Lift and carry equipment and patients up to 50 pounds. Support and assist patients in and out of a wheelchair, and on and off an examination table. Frequency of the lifting requirement is 0-25% of the time.
- Pushing requirement 200 pounds. (Push a patient weighing 200 pounds in a wheelchair).
- Average percent of time during a regular workday spent walking, squatting, sitting, bending reaching is 25%.
- Average percent of time during a regular workday spent standing is 75%.
- Kneel, bend, stoop and/or crouch to perform CPR, assist patients, and to retrieve items from cabinets located below waist level.
- Bend, reach above shoulder height, and or twist to position examination table, adjust equipment, or obtain supplies.
- Fine motor dexterity should be adequate to grasp with both hands, pinch with thumb or forefinger, to manipulate equipment and delicate instruments such as microscopes, sphygmomanometers, and perform tasks such as phlebotomy, electrocardiography, drawing up and administering parenteral medications, handling small containers of potentially biohazardous specimens (one inch by one inch), using sample measuring devices such as capillary tubes, setting up and maintaining a sterile field, putting on personal protective equipment, and operating controls on instruments and equipment, operating multi-line telephone systems, computer keyboards, and ten-key adding machines, and the ability to talk on the telephone and write simultaneously.

Tactile Standards

- Palpate pulses, muscle contractions, bony landmarks and edema.

- Differentiate between temperature and pressure variations.

Visual Standards

- Adequate visual acuity, such as is needed in the preparation and administration of all forms of medication, the performance of diagnostic laboratory procedures, and for observation necessary in patient assessment and care.
- Read accurately numbers, letters, and cursive writing on instruments, equipment, computer screens and paper.
- Discriminate shapes and color in order to identify reagents and other materials such as laboratory media, stained preparations and the physical properties of various body fluids.
- All the above with or without corrective devices.

Auditory Standards

- Adequate auditory perception to receive verbal communication from patients and members of the health care team either in person or over the telephone.
- Hear heart sounds, blood pressure sounds, patient distress sounds to assess health needs of patients.
- Hear instrument timers and alarms.
- Hear over the telephone, paging systems or intercom in order to communicate with patients and other members of the health care team.
- All of the above with or without corrective devices.

Communication Standards

- Adequate communication skills (verbal, nonverbal, and written) to interact effectively with individuals.
- Speak in the English language in clear, concise manner in order to communicate with patients (such as interviewing and taking patient history, obtaining chief complaint, and providing patient education regarding treatment plans, disease prevention, or health

maintenance), families, healthcare providers, other members of the healthcare team and the community.

- Comprehend oral and written language including medical terminology in order to communicate with patients, families, healthcare providers, other members of the healthcare team and the community.
- Write in English clearly, legibly, for documentation in the medical record, completion of forms, and to initiate written communication.

Mental/Cognitive Standards

- Sufficient intellectual and emotional functions to plan and implement assigned duties in a responsible manner.
- Function safely, responsibly and effectively under stressful situations.
- Remain alert to surroundings and potential emergencies.
- Interact effectively and appropriately with patients, families and coworkers.
- Display attitudes and actions consistent with ethical standards of medical assisting.
- Maintain composure while managing and prioritizing multiple tasks.
- Communicate an understanding of the principles of confidentiality, respect, tact, politeness, collaboration, teamwork and discretion.
- Handle difficult interpersonal situations in a calm and tactful manner.
- Remain calm, rational, decisive, and in control at all times, especially during emergency situations.
- Maintain cleanliness and personal grooming consistent with close personal contact.
- Function without causing harm to others if under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter medication.
- Function without causing harm to others. This would include situations that may result from any mental or physical conditions.

Medical Assisting students must complete a [Medical Assisting Technical Standards Acknowledgement Form](#) and submit it to the Program Coordinator upon admission to the program.

The prospective medical assistant student must be able to consistently demonstrate emotional, mental, and physical health in order to:

1. Meet the demands of the position including handling stressful situations related to technical and procedural standards and patient care situations.
2. Exhibit social skills necessary to interact effectively and respectfully with patients, families, supervisors, and coworkers of the same or different cultures.
3. Maintain composure while managing multiple tasks simultaneously.
4. Maintain personal hygiene consistent with close personal contact associated with patient care

Occupational Risks

Medical Assisting is a profession with many rewards, as practitioners can perform both administrative and clinical services, filling several roles in a variety of healthcare environments. The Bureau of Labor Statistics clearly outlines that it is a growth field, with an anticipated 18% growth from 2020 to 2030.

Medical Assistants work directly with providers and patients, with the goal of providing healthcare and ensuring patient safety. It is a position with a great deal of responsibility.

As with any healthcare position, there are certain occupational risks that come into play with being a medical assistant, and those hazards include the following:

- Exposure to infectious diseases
- Sharps injuries
- Bloodborne pathogens and biological hazards
- Chemical and drug exposure
- Ergonomic hazards from lifting, sitting, and repetitive tasks
- Latex allergies
- Stress

At the same time, there are protections set up with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and those protections are particularly important

within a healthcare environment. OSHA has a series of standards that protect the safety of healthcare workers and patients.

Advisory Committee

The Flathead Valley Community College Medical Assistant Advisory Committee meets once a year to provide input and advice concerning the curriculum, externships, evaluation, and employment opportunities in the area. The Advisory Committee is composed of the Program Director, Medical Advisor, working certified medical assistants, faculty members, a representative from FVCC administration, and graduates and/or current students in the Medical Assistant program. A list of the Advisory Committee members is available from the Program Director.

Medical Assistant Program Requirements

Application Process

Apply for admission to the College through the Registration/Admissions office.

Submit a completed Medical Assistant Application by email, mail or in person. Applications are accepted anytime during the school year and will be accepted until the program is full.

- Cohorts begin every Fall and Spring semester, depending on class size. The Medical Assistant Program must have a minimum of four students accepted into the Program in order to start the semester.
- The Medical Assistant Program is a competitive program therefore a limited number of students will be accepted into the program.

Applicants must complete the following requirements in order to be officially accepted into the Medical Assistant program:

- Attend a mandatory meeting with the Program Director prior to admission into the Program. This can be done face to face or virtually.

Minimum Technical Requirements

Your computer must:

- Run the most recent version of Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome (Internet Explorer and Safari do not work well for online/hybrid courses at HCC)
- Be able to view streaming video
- Have a dependable Internet connection (signal loss may result in incomplete work submission). DSL and wireless connections are not always reliable.
- CPU Processor: 2.0 ghz Intel i3 processor or equivalent
- RAM: 4GB or higher
- Hard Drive: highest recommended for the operating system or 1GB of available space.
- Screen Resolution should be at least 1024x768 or higher.
- Webcam and audio capabilities

Technical skills you are required to have include:

- Using the eLearning environment
- Emailing your instructor and attaching files to emails using the Inbox feature in email and Canvas
- Verifying your browser is the most current version and browser privacy settings are correct.

Creating files using MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint and attaching these files to your assignment submissions

- Managing your files. Create a folder for each course you are taking under My Documents on your computer.
- Uploading MS Word, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel, PDFs in completing assignments.
- Using a webcam and uploading videos or audio files, using social media to communicate with your peers or collaborate electronically
- Researching information in the Library or using the Library databases. Make sure to include citations to avoid plagiarism
- Copying and pasting (Control C for copying and Control V for pasting on a PC, Command C for copying and Command V for pasting on a Mac) into a MS Word document or PowerPoint file
- Downloading and installing software and applications

Canvas Supported Browsers:

Canvas runs on Mac, Windows, Linux, and mobile device operating systems iOS and Android. Download the free Canvas App for use on your mobile device. Canvas recommends using the newest version of the following browsers and applications.

- Chrome
- Firefox
- Safari
- Edge

Check Your Browser: Make sure your browser is up to date

Background Checks

All Medical Assistant students must undergo a criminal history background check upon initial acceptance in the program. The background check includes criminal, sexual offender and national healthcare fraud and abuse checks.

The background checks are done by Castle Branch, an external vendor, who sends the information to the college. Clinical sites may require a copy of the student's background check. Students will be asked for written permission prior to the release of their background check to clinical sites.

If a student fails or has a discrepancy on the background check, the student must make an appointment with the Program Director to discuss the options.

Drug Testing | Urine Toxicology

Because patient safety is our utmost concern, drug screens may be required during the course if there is reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Students may be tested if a preceptor, class instructor, and/or clinical instructor makes specific, contemporaneous, articulable observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, or body odor of a student which indicates reasonable suspicion of impairment by either chronic, acute, or withdrawal effects of alcohol or drugs. Screening may also be required if there is reason to believe a student's act or failure to act is a cause of an accident at a clinical site that causes personal injury or property damage.

If a student fails or has a discrepancy on a drug screen, the student must make an appointment with the Program Director to discuss the options.

Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (BLS)

All students are required to be BLS certified through the American Heart Association by the end of the first semester.

Health Requirements

Students that are accepted into the Medical Assistant Program are required to be up to date on all immunizations as outlined below. It is the responsibility of all incoming students to provide appropriate documentation by the third week of the accepted semester. If there are any concerns regarding vaccinations please see the Program Director prior to acceptance into the Program.

1. MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)

**Proof of 1 or 2 required.*

- Two official records receiving vaccinations
- Positive titer results for each measles, mumps and rubella proving immunity

2. Varicella (chickenpox)

**Proof of 1 or 2 or 3 required.*

- Record of two vaccinations
- Positive titer results proving immunity
- Individuals can provide documentation for proof of having the chickenpox from their Healthcare Provider

3. Hepatitis B

**Proof of 1 or 2 required.*

- Titer with reactive or positive results
- Titer can be declined but individuals must sign a declination.

4. Tetanus w/ Pertussis (Tdap)

- Official record of vaccination within 10 years

**Please note: this must be the Adult Tdap vaccination not the DTaP (childhood version of the vaccination) and not Td (tetanus diphtheria).

5. TB (PPD-tuberculosis):

- Must be completed annually.

*Proof of 1 or 2 required

- Record of two negative TB skin tests (two-step) in the last 12 months. If you are providing the two-step documentation the second test must be initiated between 7-21 days after the first negative test was read.

Negative QuantiFERON or T-SPOT TB blood test in the last 12 months.

6. COVID-19

*Proof of 1 or 2 required

- Vaccination Card
 - a. Moderna & Pfizer – 2 Vaccine Doses
 - b. Johnson & Johnson – 1 Vaccine dose

Health Insurance

Students are strongly advised to carry their own personal health insurance.

Liability Insurance

All medical assistant students, when they begin their externship semester, will have professional liability insurance coverage through FVCC.



Medical Assistant Program Courses

Fall Semester	Credits	Offered
AHMS 220 Medical Office Procedures	4	Fall, Spring
AHMA 207 Medical Assisting in Healthcare Specialties	2	Fall, Spring
AHMA 201 Clinical Skills for the Medical Assistant I	4	Fall, Spring
COMX 111C Introduction to Public Speaking <i>Related instruction Requirement</i>	3	See current catalog

Spring Semester	Credits	Offered
HTH 140 Pharmacology for Health Care Providers	2	Fall, Spring
AHMA 203 Clinical Skills for the Medical Assistant II	4	Fall, Spring
AHMA 230 Advanced Medical Office Procedures	4	Fall, Spring
M090 Introductory Algebra <i>Related Instruction Requirement</i> <i>*has a prerequisite</i>	3	See current catalog

Summer Semester	Credits	Offered
AHMA 280 Medical Assistant Exam Prep	1	Summer, Spring
AHMA 298 Medical Assisting Externship	5	Summer, Spring

Medical Assistant Course Descriptions

AHMS 220 Medical Office Procedures | ONLINE (4)

An advanced course intended to train medical assisting students in the administrative procedures currently used in medical offices including, but not limited to, coding, processing of insurance claims, and EMR. Students will also be taught introductory skills of becoming a medical scribe while using current technology.

AHMA 207 Medical Assisting in Healthcare Specialties | ONLINE (2)

This course focuses on basic medical terminology, anatomy, physiology, disease and skill development in the ancillary areas of healthcare including ophthalmology, otolaryngology, dermatology, allergy and infectious disease, gastroenterology, orthopedic, rheumatology, neurology, endocrinology, cardiology, pulmonology, urology, male reproduction, obstetrics, and gynecology.

AHMA 201 Clinical Skills for the Medical Assistant I | HYBRID (4)

This course introduces the clinical aspect of medical assisting. Students will learn the necessary skills to assist health care providers in all aspects of patient care. Includes prepping patients for various exams, vitals, charting, infection control, and medical emergencies.

HTH 140 Pharmacology for Health Care Providers | ONLINE (2)

This course introduces the basic principles of pharmacology and provides an overview of pharmacology language, abbreviations, systems of measurement and conversions, the Controlled Substances Act, prescriptions, forms of medications and administration, the "Five Rights" of safe medication administration, patient care applications, drug classifications/interactions, and safety in drug therapy and patient care. Emphasis is placed on the Medical Assistant's role in pharmacology.

AHMA 203 Clinical Skills for the Medical Assistant II | HYBRID (4)

This course advances the knowledge and skills needed in the medical assistant profession. Students are trained in point of care testing, phlebotomy, administering medications and injections, EKG, and other common tasks that are within the medical assistant scope of practice.

AHMA 230 Advanced Medical Office Procedures | ONLINE (4)

An advanced course intended to train medical assisting students in the administrative procedures currently used in medical offices including, but not limited to, coding, processing of insurance claims, and EMR. Students will also be taught introductory skills of becoming a medical scribe while using current technology.

AHMA 280 Medical Assisting Exam Preparation | ONLINE (1)

This course prepares eligible medical assistant students and/or current practicing medical assistants who are ready to take the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) Clinical Certified Medical Assistant Certificate (CCMA) national exam.

AHMA 298 Medical Assisting Externship (5)

This course provides students with hands-on experience in an ambulatory

care setting. Students are required to have 180 documented clinical hours at assigned clinics in addition to other coursework

Program Policies and Expectations

Attendance

It is expected that students will attend all classes, laboratory hours and practicum hours. Only illness or serious personal matters will be considered adequate reasons for absences. Students will be held responsible for all content missed. Absence from class jeopardizes the student's ability to meet the course objectives and pass the course.

Confidentiality

Students must sign a Confidentiality Agreement affirming to keep all matters concerning the classroom, physician's office, personnel and patients, strictly confidential by not disclosing information outside the office. If there is a breach of confidentiality, the student will face disciplinary action with suspension from all externship sites, remediation if possible, and the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions, including suspension from the program or college expulsion. Additional charges could occur for breach of HIPAA rules at Logan Health and participating clinics per policies and procedures.

Professional Appearance

- During each class students are to be professionally dressed in the required uniform scrub, with FVCC patch sewn on the left sleeve, FVCC name badge and OSHA approved shoes.
- Personal hygiene | Appearance should be clean and neat, free from smoke smells or perfume, long hair tied back, clean fingernails not longer than ¼", two earrings per ear (no gauges), only one small stud style nose facial piercings allowed.
- Tattoos are acceptable unless they are offensive, and then need to be covered during practical exams. Examples are conveying violence, discrimination, profanity or sexually explicit content.

Student Conduct and Professional Behavior

To provide the instructor and students the best possible classroom-learning experience the following rules are enforced:

- Please arrive on time and be prepared for class.
- Students will abstain from conversation that could be considered slanderous to FVCC, the instructor, and/or fellow students. Behavior that disrupts the learning environment will not be tolerated.
- Students will be considerate to other students and adhere to all policies regarding confidentiality with matters discussed in the classroom.
- Classroom participation and professionalism are required to succeed. Examples are considerate behavior towards others, tolerance for differing opinions and lifestyles, professional work ethics (including assignments, attendance, and clinical skills), communication skills and being able to understand and follow through on directions.
- Cell phones need to be on vibrate, off tables, with message checking and texting done during breaks. Leave the room if you have an emergency call.

Behavior that disrupts the learning environment will not be tolerated. Students are also required to adhere to professional requirements listed in the Medical Assistant handbook. If the student is found in violation of the above policies such actions may lead to the student being dismissed from the Medical Assistant Program.

Netiquette Expectations

Netiquette refers to socially acceptable rules to online conduct. The expectation of this course for both instructor and student is to follow the rules of netiquette.

- Address your instructor properly.
- Respect one another.
- Watch your tone.
- Do not use all CAPS.
- Think before you vent.
- Be-security-minded, nothing online is private.
- Search first, then ask.

- Be polite as you are in person.
- Appropriate humor is accepted.
- Use proper grammar and punctuation.
- Stay on topic.

Harassment and offensive behavior or materials are not tolerated, either in person or online.

Progression in the Program

Students must complete the program within two years of entering the program. Not all courses are offered every semester, so it is the student's responsibility to stay on schedule. If the student does not complete the program in two years, the student must reapply and repeat the AHMA and AHMS courses. All AHMA and AHMS courses must be passed with a minimum grade of C (74%) or better.

In addition, students must successfully pass 100% of the psychomotor and affective competences in order to pass the course and/or progress in the program.

Students who are considering withdrawing from a medical assisting course are encouraged to meet with their instructor and/or the Program Coordinator to discuss the available options.

Students in the Medical Assistant Program after withdrawal from or failure to achieve a minimum grade of a C (74%) in a Medical Assistant course may repeat the (same) course one time. If a passing grade is not attained when the course is repeated, the student will be ineligible for readmission.

It is your responsibility to contact the instructor if your average has fallen below 74% for the course.

Students in the Medical Assistant Program must achieve a minimum grade of a C- (70%) in all related instruction courses.

To prepare competent entry-level medical assistants in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains:

- All students are assessed in cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

- All assignments relating to competency must be completed.
- For the assignments relating to skills competencies, students not passing each and every skill and/or final skill demonstration, will fail the class.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percent
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	0-59

Grading Policy for Competencies

In order to pass any Medical Assistant course, the student must satisfactorily pass 100% of the psychomotor and affective competencies within three attempts.

The competency or lab portion of each course are graded on a Pass/Fail basis. The coursework portion of the class is graded utilizing the above scale. To achieve a passing grade in these courses, the following conditions must be met.

- Students must achieve a minimum grade of 85% in the lab skills portion.
- Students final course grades in the coursework (combination of test, homework and assignments) must equal 74% or greater.

Please make competencies a priority and prepare by attending the required labs. If a student is absent from a class in which a scheduled competency is planned, this will be considered the first attempt for that student. A student who has failed any psychomotor or affective competency after three attempts demonstrates a pattern of unsafe clinical behavior is an automatic failure of the course. Course dismissal may result in dismissal from the FVCC Medical Assisting Program.

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor following a failure to review performance and identify any areas of uncertainty.

Program Suspension

A student is subject to suspension if denied clinical practice privileges by a particular clinical facility. While the Program Director will attempt to secure substitute clinical placement for any such student, there is no guarantee that the student will be able to secure another clinical site and/or experience.

A student reporting to class or clinical while under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs will be permanently removed from the program. A student suspended for this reason may appeal such suspension. If the student does not appeal (or, if on appeal, the decision to suspend the student is affirmed) the student will be permitted to seek reinstatement only when the student presents evidence that she/he has participated in counseling/treatment and submits a written confirmation of physical or mental wellness.

Any student needing to withdraw from their externship for personal and not performance related issues will need to meet with the Program Director to be considered for continuing in the program.

Readmission

A student who withdraws or is dismissed from the Medical Assistant Program may request readmission. Readmission requirements must be met (see admission requirements). When the readmission requirements are met, the student will be readmitted according to the date of the application for readmission and the availability of space in the Program. Students must demonstrate continued competency in previous courses upon readmission. Students who leave the program during the first semester in the AHMA and AHMS courses and have not met readmission requirements within one year, must repeat the sequence. If program requirements have changed since the

student took a course, the student may be required to repeat a course. Readmission requirements include a meeting with the Medical Assistant Program Director and a written action plan on how the student can improve their success in the program.

Complaints

Open communication is essential to student well-being and program growth. Students are responsible for immediately reporting any changes in address, FVCC email or phone number. Medical Assistant faculty will use the fvcc.edu email for correspondence and students are responsible to check it often. Faculty anticipate that individual and group concerns may arise during the Medical Assistant program. The faculty supports and encourages informal resolution of all individual concerns.

- Students should address the issue first with the person or persons involved. It is suggested that students express their view of the conflict in clear terms without casting judgment, and then indicate how they would like to see the situation resolved.
- If the issue remains unresolved, the student should contact the faculty member teaching the course and arrange for a meeting to seek problem resolution.
- If the issue remains unresolved, the student should contact the Program Director and arrange for a meeting to seek problem resolution. The Program Director may ask that the issue be put in writing.
- If there is still conflict after meeting with the Program Director, Dean of Student Affairs or Vice President of Academic Affairs should be contacted to set up a meeting with the parties involved.
- Students are expected to follow the chain of command as they would in a professional working environment. It is good practice and minimizes misunderstandings.

Laboratory Policy

The FVCC Medical Assistant laboratory is designed for students to practice and master clinical skills and professional behaviors are necessary to ensure safe patient care skills.

For safety purposes, students must not bring into the laboratory unnecessary books, backpacks, coats or food.

Failure to adhere to the dress code during laboratories will result in a reduced grade.

No eating, drinking, or food storage is permitted in the lab, as per OSHA regulations.

In the event of illness, it is the student's responsibility to make up for a missed lab and notes. Minimum attendance requirements are in place for each class. Failure to meet minimum requirements and to do the make-up work will result in a lower grade and or dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to volunteer being patients for each other. Exceptions to this must be discussed with the program director and or instructor

Externship Requirements and Expectations

Students must wear their college approved scrubs and name tag along with the clinical site badge. Students must adhere to the clinical site dress code at all times. Failure to adhere to the dress code may result in a lowered grade or dismissal from the clinical site. Dismissal from a clinical site may result in dismissal from the program

Externship hours may vary according to the clinical site. Students must achieve 180 practicum hours to be met for program completion and to qualify to sit for the certification exam. The externship is an integral part of the curriculum providing medical assistant students with the practical experience necessary to develop their skills in a clinical setting.

Students must notify the medical facility and faculty before expected arrival time if they will be absent or late. In the case of clinical absence for an extreme emergency or illness (a doctor's note required), the student may be unable to complete all clinical hours required. If withdrawal from the course is necessary, the student may only repeat the practicum course one time. The student will notify the Program Director immediately of any incidents pertaining to patient care or staff relationships. Students should adhere to all the policies and procedures specific to the practice setting

Prerequisites to Externship | Students must have completed the grade requirement of all required courses in the fall semester and spring semester curriculum before being admitted to AHMA 298 Medical Assisting Clinical Externship. In addition, Logan Health or associated medical establishment must approve all students doing clinical hours with the organization. Students must sign a Confidentiality Agreement affirming to keep all matters concerning the physician's office, personnel and patients, strictly confidential by not disclosing information outside the office.

If there is a breach of confidentiality, the student will face disciplinary action with suspension from all externship sites, remediation if possible, and the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions, including suspension from the program or college expulsion. Additional charges could occur for breach of HIPAA rules at Logan Health and participating clinics per policies and procedures.

Students will be supervised at all times while working in externship sites by the clinical supervisors or preceptors. The Program Director will have contact with the Clinical Coordinator regarding the progress of the students during the externship semester.

Students will be evaluated based on information collected by the Clinical Coordinator, from the Clinical Supervisor (either during site visits, email or telephone conversations):

- Professionalism
- Administrative skills
- Clinical skills
- Communication skills

Students, as active participants in the evaluation process, prepare periodic self-evaluations and have the opportunity to compare a faculty evaluation of their performance with their self-evaluation.

Medical assistant students and the Clinical Coordinator decide upon the individual assignments to the externship sites. Students are offered working experience in two to three clinical sites who are chosen based on their ability to give them exposure to both the administrative and clinical aspects of the medical assisting profession.

If the Clinical Coordinator and/or the Clinical Supervisor determine that a student is not meeting the requirements or the objectives of the externship experience, a meeting with the Clinical Coordinator and the student to discuss how the problem can be resolved and a remediation action plan will be made. If necessary, a meeting with the Clinical Supervisor and the above parties will be held. The student will be notified of potential actions up to dismissal from the program. If the student is not following the remediation action plan, they will be notified of active disciplinary action consisting of suspension from externship sites up to a failing grade and/or dismissal from the program.

If a student is asked to leave an externship assignment she/he will face disciplinary action by being placed on probation and, if a sufficient cause is found after an investigation, removed from the externship course, given a fail grade and be dismissed from the Medical Assistant program. If remediation is sufficient, a student may be able to go to another site but if the student is asked to leave a second site, this is grounds for automatic dismissal from the program following due process.

Violating the Student Code of Conduct are justifiable reasons to be removed from an externship site. Some examples are, but not limited to:

- The student performs an illegal act while working in the clinical setting.
- The student breaks clinic, personnel or patient confidentiality.
- The student shows insubordinate behavior to the Clinical Supervisor or other personnel at an externship site.
- The student demonstrates unsafe behavior with patients or personnel at an externship site.
- The student fails to communicate professionally by sharing personal information, asking for medical advice for family and self, talking loudly and inappropriately with Clinical Supervisors and/or staff and providers.
- The student fails to follow facility policies and procedures at an externship site
- The student does not abide by Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Medical Assistant.
- The student in some way undermines the therapeutic relationship between the physician patient or patient-student relationship.
- Excessive absenteeism, constantly asking to leave early, lack of personal hygiene and inappropriate presentation.

The Program Director reserves the right to deny admission to externship sites (and completion of program) to any student who is, upon examination and due process, found to demonstrate unsuitable performance and behavior for the medical assistant profession.

Graduation Requirements

All medical assisting students must successfully complete the required courses for the Medical Assistant Certificate of Applied Science program. Throughout the one-year program, students will meet regularly with the Program Director with regard to class schedules and to make certain they are on track with all program requirements in order to graduate in a timely manner. Provided all program requirements have been met, applications for graduation are submitted. In addition, the Program Director will complete a Grade Audit to be turned in with the graduation application to the Registrar.

Academic Probation Policy

Students will be placed on academic probation any time their GPA falls below 2.0. Any student on probation will be required to meet with the MA Program Director before he/she starts the next semester to discuss the student's academic goals and barriers to achievement of those goals, a review of the academic assistance available at FVCC, and the development of a plan to assist the student to achieve his/her academic goals.

Student Resources

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

FVCC acknowledges that advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have created tools that, when used responsibly, can serve to enhance the learning process. These tools also have the potential to impede the educational process and disrupt student learning potential by inhibiting one of the main goals of higher education: the development of critical thinking and analysis skills.

Therefore, the level to which students use AI to complete coursework is determined by instructors and may vary from course to course. One instructor's permission to utilize AI in any capacity does not constitute permission to use it in other classes. Adhering to each of your instructors'

stated AI policy is part of the commitment to academic integrity all students are expected to uphold.

FVCC Tutoring

The FVCC STEM Tutoring Center is available to all students for support in their math and science courses. Assistance with understanding concepts, completing homework, working on labs/projects, and preparing for exams can be found in LRC 148 and 134. For hours and other information, please visit the STEM Tutoring Center in Eagle Online. Detailed information, such as hours of operation, visit [Student Services](#).

The FVCC Writing Lab (BL 213), located in the Broussard Family Library & Learning Commons, is available to all students for free assistance in writing.

Students can receive help, such as:

- One-on-one tutoring in English skills, e.g., grammar/punctuation
- One-on-one tutoring on research papers and essays, e.g., introductions, organization, conclusions
- Assistance with MLA, APA, Chicago, and other writing formats (handouts available)
- Revising, editing, and proofreading of essays in all disciplines
- Connection to library databases

Contact the Writing Lab at writing@fvcc.edu. Detailed information, such as hours of operation, visit [Student Services](#).

Library and Common Grounds Café

The College Library and Common Grounds Café area offer traditional print and non-print services to all students. The Library features articles, books and media, eBooks, databases and research guides. There are computers and printers for use, scanner/color copier available, open space for study or quiet rooms and internet. Available to reserve are the Virtual Reality Room, Study Rooms, Studio, or Podcast Station.

Accessibility Services

FVCC strives to create an accessible and inclusive campus environment for individuals with disabilities. FVCC will provide reasonable accommodations and

ensure programs, services, and activities are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Accessibility extends to equal and effective electronic and information technology. Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact

Disability Services at 406-756-3880, email DisabilitySupport@fvcc.edu or stop by the Learning Resource Center Building. For more information regarding this process, visit [Disability Support](#)

Recording and Intellectual Property Rights

FVCC seeks to balance legitimate Recording of Learning Activities, the privacy of students and instructors, and the intellectual property rights of instructors. For more information, please visit [Chapter-I-Doc-Section-120](#).

Non-Discrimination Statement

Per the FVCC Accommodations for persons with disabilities can be provided upon request by calling (406)756-3881. Any qualified student with a disability who believes that an auxiliary aid is necessary for participation in any course activity or degree program is strongly urged to indicate a need for services to the Advocate for Students with Disabilities a minimum of six weeks prior to the beginning of the academic semester. This will provide sufficient time to assess student needs and obtain any necessary auxiliary aid. For more information, please call (406) 756-3881 (voice or TTY) or contact Disability Services.

FVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its educational programs or activities. It is unlawful discriminatory practice for an educational institution: (1) to exclude, expel, limit or otherwise discriminate against an individual seeking admission as a student or an individual enrolled as a student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the institution because of race, creed, religion, sex, marital status, color, age, physical disability, or national origin or because of mental disability unless based on reasonable grounds. Mont. Code Ann. 49-2-307.

Inquiries concerning Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 may be referred to: Kelly S. Murphy, Title IX Coordinator, Blake Hall, Rm 138, 777 Grandview Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901, (406)756-3812; or the Montana Human Rights Commission, 1236 Sixth Avenue, P.O. Box 1728, Helena, MT 59624, (406)

444-2884/1-800-542-0807. For more information contact
TitleIXCoordinator@fvcc.edu

Civil Rights, Equity and Title IX

FVCC recognizes the importance of the personal dignity and worth of every member of its community and it is therefore committed to providing an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, national origin, or ancestry. Acts or allegations of discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, stalking, and retaliation will be addressed consistent with this policy and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. For more information, please visit [Title IX & Sexual Misconduct Information](#).