

NORTHEAST TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MEDICAL INSURANCE

MDCA 1343

Spring 2025

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: April Brannon , AAS, CMA (AAMA)
Office: UHS 103
Telephone: (903) 563-1694 (Text messages are great!)
Email: abrannon@ntcc.edu
Credit Hours: 3 hours
Course Start Date: January 21st
Course End Date: May 16th
Last Day to Withdraw: April 10th

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course emphasizes medical office coding for payment and reimbursement by the patient or third-party payers for ambulatory care settings. Additional educational topics include managed healthcare, processing insurance claim forms, introduction to ICD-10 and CPT coding, reimbursement methodologies, and commercial insurance carrier requirements.

Required Texts:

- ***Understanding Health Insurance: A Guide to Billing and Reimbursement (2020 ed). Michelle Green, Cengage Learning, 2021.***
- ***Online access for MindTap: Access card purchased with Textbook***

Course Learning Objectives:

1. List the types of insurance plans and models of managed care and third party plans (VIII.C.1a)
2. Describe the differences between liability, professional (malpractice), and personal injury insurance (X.C.8.a/b/c)
3. Describe information required to file third party claims and the steps for filing third party claims (VIII.C.1b,c)
4. Discuss meaningful use and explain meaningful use as it applies to EMR/EHRs (VI.C.12)
5. Describe how to use the most current HCPCS level II coding systems (IX.C.3)
6. Discuss and differentiate between fraud and abuse regarding coding and reimbursement (VIII.C.5)
7. Describe how to use the most current procedural coding system (IX.C.1)
8. Describe how to use the most current diagnostic coding classification system (IX.C.2)
9. Define and discuss the effects of upcoding and downcoding (IX.C.4.a,b)

10. Define medical necessity as it applies to procedural and diagnostic coding (IX.C.5)
11. Complete the objectives related to each chapter of the textbook

Course Policies:

To ensure you have all key information available to you off-line, it is highly recommended that you print the student syllabus and course calendar for your reference.

Attendance:

This is an online course – there is no on-campus attendance for this course. Attendance is not recorded for this class. It is recommended that you log-on to your classroom at least twice daily to ensure you are aware of announcements, assignments, discussions, and testing. The course week begins on Monday at 12:01am and ends on Sunday at 12:00 midnight. Days of the week correspond as follows:

Monday – Day 1
Tuesday – Day 2
Wednesday – Day 3
Thursday – Day 4
Friday – Day 5
Saturday – Day 6
Sunday – Day 7

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure and/or Alternate Course Delivery Requirements

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Northeast Texas Community College to move to altered operations. During this time, Northeast Texas Community College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online through the BlackBoard Learning Management System, online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor NTCC's website (<http://www.ntcc.edu/>) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, BlackBoard for each class for course-specific communication, and NTCC email for important general information.

Additionally, there may be instances where a course may not be able to be continued in the same delivery format as it originates (face-to-face, fully online, live remote, or hybrid). Should this be the case, every effort will be made to continue instruction in an alternative delivery format. Students will be informed of any changes of this nature through email messaging and/or the BlackBoard course site.

Instructional Methods and Tools:

The instructional methods and tools are tied to the course and chapter learning objectives by allowing the student to research, discover, and perform the differing

educational exercises within the MindTap Learning Platform and class discussion forums. This course uses the following tools to aid students in successfully achieving the learning objectives in this course:

1. The MindTap Learning Platform will be used for the majority of assignments in this course. The platform contains different learning tools that include videos, homework assignments, learning labs, tests and quizzes, and simulated claim scenarios.
2. Weekly discussion questions.
3. Additional articles, lectures, and video demonstrations supplied by the instructor.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria:

Exams will be given each week and will cover information contained in your text, class discussions, MindTap learning tools, and any additional materials given by the instructor. If there is an alteration in the class calendar, the change will be announced in the “announcements” section of BlackBoard. There are **NO** make-up exams and I do **NOT** accept late assignments! All assignment due dates are listed in the course calendar and under the description of the actual assignment. If you have a conflict with the date, it is your responsibility to contact me in advance of the due date to make arrangements for alternate submission. Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. **It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignments are submitted on or before the due date!** I do understand that there are unforeseen circumstances (such as a death in the immediate family and hospitalization) that may not allow you to post assignments by the due date. Please contact me as soon as possible to arrange for an extension if this occurs. **Technology issues are not valid reasons for missing deadlines.** Please ensure that your computers are updated with the correct software. A list is available on the “Home Page” of our classroom of criteria and functionality needed for the MindTap learning platform. Course weeks close on Day 7 at 11:59pm.

The instructor will **not** drop students from the course rolls for any reason. If the student decides not to complete the course, it is the responsibility of the student to officially drop the course through the Registrar’s office. Failure to do so will result in an “F” being awarded in the course.

Grade Policy

DQ’s	25%
All MindTap Assignments	45%
Final Comprehensive Exam	30%

Grading Scale:

The grading scale of all graded activities combined will be the following

90% - 100%	=	A
89% - 80%	=	B

79% - 75% = C
 Below 75% = F

**** A minimum of a “C” is required to pass this course.**

Drop Policy: The last day to drop with a grade of “W” is **Thursday, April 10, 2025.**

Grades will be posted online under **“My Grades”** in Blackboard. Grades will be posted no later than day 7 of the following week in which the assignment was due. For example, if your assignment was due in Week 3, you would not receive grades on that assignment until Day 7 of Week 4. MindTap grades will automatically post to your grade book after you have submitted the assignment. I do review tests and worksheet assignments for computer errors and may award credit for answers that I feel are correct.

I will log in to the course at least 4 times during the week to monitor the weekly **Discussion** area. Feedback will be provided in the **Discussion** area and/or in the **Announcements** area. Requests for more specific feedback may be made in the **Discussion** area or in the **Ask the Instructor** area. I will respond to at least one main post each week but will not usually respond to all posts. If you feel you are not receiving enough personal feedback, you are strongly encouraged to contact me and ask for more specific feedback via email.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is considered an act of cheating. Each student has a responsibility to follow the college policies regarding academic dishonesty which are found on page 86 in the Northeast Texas Community College General Catalog. Please see my letter regarding Academic Integrity found on BlackBoard under **“START HERE”**

Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty, the issue will be dealt with per NTCC’s policies and may receive a grade of “0” for that assignment. A second violation will result in failure of the course.

Online Communication:

Since this is online course and we do not interact face-to-face, good communication within the online environment is essential. Please read “The Core Rules of Netiquette” posted under **“START HERE.”**

If you have any questions regarding course content or questions related specifically to the class, please post them in the **“Ask the Instructor Forum”** posted under **“START HERE”** or **“DISCUSSIONS.”** Please take advantage of this forum as all students may benefit from your knowledge. If you have a personal question or situation, please email me directly. I make it a policy to answer all emails within 24 hours of receipt of the email. If I do not respond to you in 24 hours, please text me. As with electronic transfer of information (Internet connection issues), I may not have received your email. I also make it a point to log-on to our classroom frequently each week. If for any reason I will

be unavailable during the semester, I will post the information under the **“Announcements”** tab.

It is important to always check your **Blackboard Course E-mail, the Discussion area, Announcements**, and the **Ask the Instructor** area each time you check into the classroom. One of your classmates may have offered feedback or insight that will be helpful to you or I may have provided information in general to assist you in your work.

Private e-mailing between student and instructor via the **Blackboard Course e-mail** should only be used for personal, confidential situations. Any communication regarding a personal matter should be sent directly to the instructor via e-mail. No communications of a private or personal matter should be posted in the public spaces of the classroom.

Please feel free to use the Class Biography forum to initiate and participate in conversations not directly related to the course. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know other students.

Course Navigation:

Please ensure that you navigate through the entire course so you are aware of the location of course materials, email, grade book, BlackBoard help, etc. It is your responsibility to ensure your knowledge of the BlackBoard system. If you have any questions, please post in the **“Ask the Instructor Forum,”** or you can contact NTCC’s Tech Support. There are several “tabs” to the left of the course screen that provide additional information for the course.

Internet Connection Issues:

Since this course is delivered in an online format, please ensure that you have the proper computer and Internet set-up. There are no excuses for not submitting assignments due to technology issues – in other words, “my dog ate my computer” is not a valid excuse. If you have issues regarding connectivity, please contact NTCC’s Tech Support for help. If you have issues with navigating through the BlackBoard system, please refer to the **“HELP”** tab to the left on the course screen.

Course Materials and Assignments:

Along with your text books for this course, additional course materials located within the MindTap program are available as educational resources. You are also expected to use the Internet for additional research to enhance your discussions and assignments. There are several types of assignments that will be required to be completed during this course.

Discussion Questions (DQs): You will have one DQ due each week. Your initial response to the DQ is due by Day 2 (minimum word count of 50 words). You are required to respond to your instructor and at least two of your peers as this is an open forum and we often learn from each other’s posts. I expect your posts to be researched, insightful, and add value to the discussion. Please note that I do grade on grammar, spelling, citation and referencing, and punctuation as correct use of written communication is important. I also require that you cite and reference your information. I

have posted basic information for use of APA formatting under the “Start Course Here” tab. Your responses must be paraphrased in your own words. DO NOT COPY/PASTE from the Internet as this is plagiarism. Please see the section regarding “Academic Dishonesty.”

MindTap Assignments: All of the following assignments are performed through the MindTap Learning Platform and are due by Day 7 of each week. Please check the weekly schedule for the list of MindTap assignments due for the specific week.

Case Studies: Due by Day 7 of each week. These consist of reading a scenario and writing a critical thinking summary

Chapter Reviews: Due by Day 7 of each week and consist of coding diseases and procedures for submission to insurance companies.

Chapter Quizzes: Due by Day 7 of each week.

******There are no make-ups for any activities or assignments and I do not accept late work unless prior arrangements have been made.**

Final Comprehensive Exam: This exam will be administered the last week of class and will not be available before the last week of class. Additional information regarding the final will be posted in week of class. **There is absolutely NO MAKE UP for the final exam.**

APA (American Psychological Association) Format: APA is a specific format that is a guideline for every aspect of writing, from determining authorship to constructing a [table](#) to avoiding [plagiarism](#) and constructing accurate reference citations. This format must be adhered to for all writing assignments to avoid plagiarizing your written material including discussion questions and peer responses. If you are unfamiliar with APA formatting, I have provided an Internet link on the “**START HERE**” page for reference.

ADA Statement

It is the policy of Northeast Texas Community College to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange an appointment with a College counselor to obtain a Request for Accommodations form. For more information, please refer to the Northeast Texas Community College Catalog or Student Handbook or you can contact the Coordinator of Special Populations at 903-434-8202, or visit the website:

<http://www.ntcc.edu/index.php?module=Pagesetter&func=viewpub&tid=111&pid=1>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive

funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student's name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

Tobacco Use

If you come to NTCC's campus, the use of tobacco products including smokeless tobacco, smoking tobacco, electronic cigarettes, and any legal smoking preparation is prohibited in all College buildings, enclosed facilities, inner campus, and College owned vehicles.

Tobacco use is prohibited in:

1. All enclosed buildings and facilities, including but not limited to classrooms, offices, food service areas, lavatories and residence halls
2. All exterior areas in the inner campus and parking lots.
3. All college owned vehicles.

Tobacco use is permitted in:

1. Personal vehicles
2. Designated smoking huts on the west side of campus.

Chapter Objectives

Chapter 1

1. Define key terms
2. Discuss introductory health insurance concepts
3. Describe the job responsibilities of a health insurance specialist
4. Explain the role of workplace professionalism in career success

Chapter 2

1. Define key terms
2. State the difference between medical care and healthcare as well as the difference between insurance and health insurance
3. Discuss meaningful use
4. Discuss the significant events in healthcare reimbursement
5. List and describe medical documentation concepts
6. Discuss advantages of implementing EHRs

Chapter 3

1. Define key terms
2. Discuss the history of managed care in the U.S.

3. Explain the role of the managed care organization
4. Describe the effects of managed care on a physician's practice

Chapter 4

1. Define key terms
2. Describe the processing of an insurance claim
3. Discuss the life cycle of an insurance claim, including EDI
4. Explain the role of credit and collections in processing claims

Chapter 5

1. Define key terms
2. Provide examples of statute, regulation, and case law and explain the use of the Federal Register
3. Describe federal legislation and regulations affecting healthcare
4. List and explain HIPAA's provisions

Chapter 6

1. Define key terms
2. Explain and use ICD-9 coding system and general equivalence mappings.
3. Describe the purpose and use of ICD10 coding system
4. Interpret and explain diagnostic coding and reporting guidelines for outpatient services
5. Assign ICD-10 codes to outpatient and provider-based office diagnoses

Chapter 7

1. Define key terms
2. Explain the format used in CPT
3. Locate and explain main terms and subterms in the CPT index
4. Select appropriate modifiers to add to CPT codes
5. Assign CPT codes to procedures and services

Chapter 8

1. Define key terms
2. Describe the HCPCS levels
3. Assign HCPCS level II codes and modifiers
4. List situations in which both HCPCS levels I and II codes are assigned

Chapter 9

1. Define key terms
2. Explain the historical development of CMS reimbursement
3. List and define each CMS payment system
4. Apply special rules for the Medicare physician fee schedule payment system
5. Complete a UB-04 claim form

Chapter 10

1. Define key terms
2. Select and code diagnoses and procedures from case studies and sample reports

3. Research local coverage determinations

Chapter 11

1. Define key terms
2. List and define general insurance billing guidelines
3. Enter patient and policy holder names, and other demographic information according to claims completion guidelines
4. Describe how funds are recovered from responsible payers
5. Explain the use of the NPI
6. Explain the difference between assignment of benefits and accepting assignment

Chapter 12

1. Define key terms
2. Explain the characteristics of commercial insurance plans
3. Explain the differences between primary and secondary commercial claims
4. Complete commercial primary and secondary fee-for-service claims

Chapter 13

1. Define key terms
2. Explain the history of BCBS
3. Apply BCBS billing notes when completing CMS-1500 claims
4. Complete BCBS primary and secondary claims

Chapter 14

1. Define key terms
2. Explain Medicare eligibility guidelines
3. Describe the Medicare enrollment process
4. Explain the difference between Medicare part A, B, C, and D coverage
5. Explain the Medicare advance beneficiary notice of noncoverage and when it is required
6. Explain the Medicare mandatory claims submission process
7. Apply Medicare billing notes when completing CMS-1500 claims.

Chapter 15

1. Define key terms
2. Explain Medicaid eligibility guidelines
3. Describe the Medicaid enrollment process
4. Describe how payments for Medicaid services are processed.
5. Apply Medicaid billing notes when completing CMS-1500 claims
6. Complete Medicaid primary, secondary, mother/baby, and SCHIP claims

Chapter 16

1. Define key terms
2. Explain the historical background of TRICARE and how it is administered
3. Define CHAMPVA
4. List and explain TRICARE options, programs, and demonstration projects, and supplemental plans
5. Apply TRICARE billing notes when completing CMS-1500claims

Chapter 17

1. Define key terms
2. Describe federal and state workers' compensation coverage
3. List eligibility requirements for coverage and classify workers' compensation cases
4. Submit first report of injury and progress reports
5. Describe workers' compensation appeals and adjudication processes
6. Apply worker's compensation billing notes when completing CMS-1500 claims