

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

**CURRICULUM PROGRAM APPLICATION
(New to the System)**

The State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve the curriculum program at the listed college on the condition that equipment funds are available to the college and operating funds generated by the budget formula will permit the offering of the program without any special allocation of funds.

Pitt Community College
Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate) (C45xxx)

Contact:

Jennifer Frazelle
Director, Academic Programs

**PROGRAM APPLICATION
SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT
Pitt Community College
Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate) (C45xxx)**

Program Planning: Pitt Community College is seeking approval for the Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate) (C45xxx) program to begin Fall 2017. The planning area is defined as the college's service area of Pitt County. All colleges were notified of the planning process for this program.

The proposed program was approved by the Board of Trustees at Pitt Community College on March 22, 2016. Minutes from this Board meeting were attached to the program application. The President and the Board of Trustees of Pitt Community College have certified the following:

- The proposed program will enhance the workforce of North Carolina, will provide educational and training opportunities consistent with the mission of the college, and will not duplicate the opportunities currently offered.
- They have assessed the need for the proposed program and the resources required to maintain a viable program and certify that the college can operate the proposed program efficiently and effectively within the resources available to the college.
- The college will complete a program accountability report including student success measures, enrollment trends, completion rates, and employment data three years after implementation of the program.

Program Rationale: Pitt Community College (PCC) indicates the following:

- PCC has been a longstanding producer of Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) credentialed coders in Eastern North Carolina. Graduates of the Health Information Technology (HIT) program are eligible for *entry-level* coding positions in both acute and ambulatory care. Students interested in pursuing *advanced* medical coding education and credentials have been required to seek training online via the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), local workshops, self-guided study and on the job training. East Carolina University (ECU) previously offered a baccalaureate degree in Health Information Management and was another source of credentialed coders for the area. In 2013, ECU transitioned to a master's level program and focused more on informatics and less on the practical application of codes. The termination of the baccalaureate program created a educational gap in NC.
- An aging population will require more medical services, and health information technicians will be needed to organize and manage the older generations' health information data. Moreover, the number of individuals who have access to health insurance is expected to continue to increase because of federal health insurance reform. (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016)
- According to the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the job demand for coders has increased for all levels of education and credentialing. Approximately 12,000-50,000 new jobs are anticipated by 2017 (AHIMA, 2016).

- According to the Department of Labor, the Health Information Technologists and especially the coding professional continues to be ranked among the fastest growing professions in the United States. The profession continues to see a fifteen percent projection increase.
- Passing the Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) exam for both the Certified Coding Specialist-Physician-Based (CCS-P) and/or CCS credential represents high-level achievement and proficiency in inpatient and outpatient coding. An article in *The Journal of AHIMA* notes the benefit of certification includes: a potential growth opportunity as a coder, possible salary increases, and heightened employer confidence in skills and knowledge (Horn, 2015).
- In October 2015, when industry transitioned from ICD-9 to ICD-10 coding, the actual time spent coding records increased significantly for most medical record types. Previously, coders in ICD-9 could skim documentation in the medical record to ensure what the physician documented matched the operative report. Now with ICD-10-Procedure Coding System (PCS), the record must be read in detail in order to capture every aspect of the surgical episode and its intent (Fitzgerald, 2016).
- In 2016, Dunn noted many aspects can factor into coding productivity, but one of the main contributors to the overall decrease in productivity is the relearning factor.
- During orientation, an employer introduces new personnel to their facility and respective policies and procedures. However, when facilities are already taking time to train a student on their computer systems, payor rules and regulations, the additional time needed for actual coding education adds to the burden on the facility. Through completion of the Advanced Medical Coding certificate program, students would receive the more extensive training needed for increased productivity.
- In April 2016, PCC reviewed available coding jobs in North Carolina and found that 71% required either the Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) and/or Certified Coding Specialist-Physician-Based (CCS-P) credential upon hire or within a defined time frame after hire (usually one year). The remaining 29% did not require the CCS and/or CCS-P credentials, but required either the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT), Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA), or experience assigning ICD-10 codes. The proposed program would be a viable alternative for new graduates and new hires in need of additional training to obtain these credentials.
- PCC assessed student interest by surveying graduates of their HIT Program. Thirty-seven out of 87 graduates responded to the survey. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents expressed interest in the program.
- PCC assessed local employer's current and future needs related to the program. Nine out of twenty-three employers/personnel responded. All responded that Pitt County (eastern NC) needs an Advanced Medical Coding Program.
- Letters of support for the program were submitted to PCC by the Managers/Directors of Physician East, PA., Vidant SurgiCenter, and Vidant Health.

Impact of the Proposed Program on Other Programs: This program would be new to the community college system. Eleven colleges are currently approved to offer the Health Information Technology (A45440) program, including Pitt Community College. An impact assessment was sent to the colleges currently approved to offer the Health Information Technology (A45360) program. **No negative impact responses were received.**

Implementation of Collaborative Plan: Not Applicable

Curriculum Design: The proposed program of study is in compliance with the proposed curriculum standard.

Contact:

Ms. Renee Batts
Associate Director

PROPOSED

CURRICULUM STANDARD

Effective Term Fall 2017 [2017*03]
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Curriculum Program Title	Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate)	Program Code	C45xxx
Concentration	(not applicable)	CIP Code	51.0707

Curriculum Description

The Advanced Medical Coding curriculum provides the didactic and clinical experience necessary to become competent credentialed coders.

Coursework includes reimbursement, advanced International Classification of Diseases-10th Revision-Clinical Modification/Procedure Coding System (ICD-10-CM/PCS), Current Procedural Terminology (CPT), and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS).

Graduates may be eligible to take either of the Certified Coding Specialist exams: the Certified Coding Specialist and/or the Certified Coding Specialist-Physician Based (CCS/CCS-P).

Individuals entering this curriculum must be a graduate of a Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM) accredited health information program.

Curriculum Requirements*

[for associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs in accordance with 1D SBCCC 400.97 (3)]

- I. General Education.** Degree programs must contain a minimum of 15 semester hours including at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural sciences/mathematics. Degree programs must contain a minimum of 6 semester hours of communications. Diploma programs must contain a minimum of 6 semester hours of general education; 3 semester hours must be in communications. General education is optional in certificate programs.
- II. Major Hours.** AAS, diploma, and certificate programs must include courses which offer specific job knowledge and skills. Work-based learning may be included in associate in applied science degrees up to a maximum of 8 semester hours of credit; in diploma programs up to a maximum of 4 semester hours of credit; and in certificate programs up to a maximum of 2 semester hours of credit. *(See second page for additional information.)*
- III. Other Required Hours.** A college may include courses to meet graduation or local employer requirements in a certificate, diploma, or associate in applied science program. These curriculum courses shall be selected from the Combined Course Library and must be approved by the System Office prior to implementation. Restricted, unique, or free elective courses may not be included as other required hours.

	AAS	Diploma	Certificate**
Minimum General Education Hours	15	6	0
Minimum Major Hours	49	30	24
Other Required Hours	0-7	0-4	0
Total Semester Hours Credit in Program	64-76	36-48	24

**Within the degree program, the institution shall include opportunities for the achievement of competence in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and basic use of computers.*

Proposed

Major Hours

[ref. 1D SBCCC 400.97 (3)]

- A. Core.** The subject/course core is comprised of subject areas and/or specific courses which are required for each curriculum program. A diploma program offered under an approved AAS program standard or a certificate which is the highest credential level awarded under an approved AAS program standard must include a minimum of 12 semester hours credit derived from the subject/course core of the AAS program.
- B. Concentration (if applicable).** A concentration of study must include a minimum of 12 semester hours of credit from required subjects and/or courses. The majority of the course credit hours are unique to the concentration. The required subjects and/or courses that make up the concentration of study are in addition to the required subject/course core.
- C. Other Major Hours.** Other major hours must be selected from prefixes listed on the curriculum standard. A maximum of 9 semester hours of credit may be selected from any prefix listed, with the exception of prefixes listed in the core or concentration. Work-based learning may be included in associate in applied science degrees up to a maximum of 8 semester hours of credit; in diploma programs up to a maximum of 4 semester hours of credit; and in certificate programs up to a maximum of 2 semester hours of credit.

Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate) (C45xxx)

	AAS	Diploma	Certificate
Minimum Major Hours Required	49 SHC	30 SHC	24 SHC**
A. CORE			24
Required Courses:			
AMC 200 Health Information for Coders	2 SHC		
AMC 201 Legal and Compliance	2 SHC		
AMC 202 Coding for Reimbursement	2 SHC		
AMC 203 Intermediate ICD Diagnose	3 SHC		
AMC 204 Intermediate ICD Procedure	3 SHC		
AMC 205 Intermediate CPT Coding	3 SHC		
AMC 206 Clinical Documentation	3 SHC		
AMC 207 Advanced Coding Lab I	2 SHC		
AMC 208 Advanced Coding II	2 SHC		
AMC 209 Professional Practice Exp.	2 SHC		
B. CONCENTRATION (not applicable)			NA
C. OTHER MAJOR HOURS (not applicable)			NA

Approved by the State Board of Community Colleges on _____.

This program is approved by the State Board of Community Colleges to exceed maximum standard hours for a certificate program. [ref. 1D SBCCC 400.95(d)]

Advanced Medical Coding Courses

AMC 200 Health Information for Coders

Class: 2 Lab: 0 Clinical: 0 Credit: 2

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course provides a detailed look at the role of a coder within the healthcare system. Topics include health record content and documentation for all record types, roles and responsibilities of various providers and disciplines, data source reliability and accuracy, policies and procedures to ensure compliance with regulations and standards, and legal and regulatory requirements. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the role of coding in the healthcare organization and apply various policies and procedures as they relate to documentation and compliance and comply with regulatory standards.

AMC 201 Legal and Compliance

Class: 2 Lab: 0 Clinical: 0 Credit: 2

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course covers legal and regulatory processes, privacy and security rules as applied to the coding environment. Topics include legal terminology, health record laws and regulations, internal and external standards and regulations, data security, storage and retrieval, and access and disclosure. Upon completion, students should be able to apply healthcare legal terminology, maintain a legally defensible health record, comply with state and federal privacy and security laws, and adhere to security policies and procedures

AMC 202 Coding for Reimbursement

Class: 2 Lab: 0 Clinical: 0 Credit: 2

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course covers the revenue cycle and reimbursement for acute and ambulatory care. Topics include payment methodologies and systems, utilization review, case management, billing processes and procedures, and fraud and abuse. Upon completion, students should be able to apply policies and procedures for the use of data required in healthcare reimbursement, evaluate the revenue cycle, and identify potential fraud and abuse.

AMC 203 Intermediate ICD Diagnoses

Class: 2 Lab: 3 Clinical: 0 Credit: 3

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course covers the proper application of ICD diagnosis coding conventions and guidelines and application of codes. Emphasis is placed on reviewing clinical documentation to determine appropriate code selection. Upon completion, students should be able to accurately assign and sequence diagnosis codes according to the current coding and reporting requirements for acute care and outpatient services

AMC 204 Intermediate ICD Procedures

Class: 2 Lab: 3 Clinical: 0 Credit: 3

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course covers ICD procedure coding conventions and guidelines, Procedure Coding System (PCS) Table navigation, and application of codes. Emphasis is placed on the interrelationship between anatomy and physiology and the application of procedure codes by reviewing clinical documentation to determine procedure intent and extent. Upon completion, students should be able to navigate the PCS tables to accurately assign and sequence diagnosis codes according to the current coding and reporting requirements for acute care and outpatient services.

AMC 205 Intermediate CPT Coding

Class: 2 Lab: 3 Clinical: 0 Credit: 3

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course covers the application of Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes as applied to current coding and reporting requirements. Emphasis is placed on the interrelationship between anatomy and physiology and the application of procedure codes by reviewing clinical documentation. Upon completion, students should be able to apply the official CPT and HCPCS Level II coding guidelines, and apply the appropriate reporting measures such as modifiers.

AMC 206 Clinical Documentation

Class: 2 Lab: 3 Clinical: 0 Credit: 3

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course covers the importance of clinical documentation and its role in accurate coding. Topics include communication with providers, documentation in the health record, how to formulate ethical queries to clarify conflicting diagnoses, and implications of accurate coding. Upon completion, students should be able to identify discrepancies between supporting documentation and coded data and develop appropriate physician queries

AMC 207 Advanced Medical Coding I

Class: 0 Lab: 6 Clinical: 0 Credit: 2

Prerequisites: AMC 203, AMC 204, AMC 205, and AMC 206

Corequisites: None

This course covers the practical application of current ICD diagnosis and CPT guidelines by using encoders to code patient charts. Emphasis is on analyzing and applying current regulations and established guidelines in clinical classification systems by using standard data set definitions and resources. Upon completion, students should be able to accurately code a variety of chart types and recommend coding resources.

AMC 208 Advanced Medical Coding II

Class: 0 Lab: 6 Clinical: 0 Credit: 2

Prerequisites: AMC 207

Corequisites: None

This course covers the practical application and evaluation of current ICD diagnosis, procedure, and CPT guidelines by using encoders to code patient charts. Emphasis is on analyzing and applying current regulations and established guidelines in clinical classification systems by using standard data set definitions and resources. Upon completion, students should be able to interpret conventions, formats, instructional notations, and definitions of each classification system to select diagnoses and procedures/services that require coding.

AMC 209 Professional Practice Exp.

Class: 0 Lab: 0 Clinical: 6 Credit: 2

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course provides supervised clinical coding experience in healthcare settings. Emphasis is placed on the practical application of coding concepts through demonstration of critical thinking and integration of didactic and clinical components. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate the comprehensive knowledge required of an advanced level coder.

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
NEW CURRICULUM PREFIX
TIERED FUNDING FORMULA RECOMMENDATIONS

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is asked to assign the following new curriculum prefix to the North Carolina Community College System Tiered Funding Formula:

Tier 1B-AMC – Advanced Medical Coding

Rationale: The AMC curriculum prefix is in the area of health care. *Individuals enrolled in AMC courses must be a graduate of a Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM) accredited health information program.* The HIT curriculum course prefix for Health Information Technology is a Tier 1B classification.

Background: On August 15, 2014, the State Board of Community Colleges adopted the 2014-2015 State Aid Allocations and Budget Policies, which included the implementation of a four-tiered funding model. To implement the Tiered Funding Forming Model, all existing curriculum and continuing education course prefixes were assigned to one of four funding levels as defined below:

Tier 1A: Includes curriculum budget FTE in health care and technical education courses that train North Carolinians for immediate employment in priority occupations that have documented skills gaps and pay higher wages. This tier also includes FTE in a limited number of continuing education courses that train students for the exact same third-party certification as curriculum courses in Tier 1A.

Tier 1B: Includes curriculum budget FTE in other high cost areas of health care, technical education, lab-based science, and college-level math courses. With the implementation of Closing the Skills Gap, Tier 1B also includes FTE in short-term, workforce continuing education courses that help prepare students for jobs in priority occupations and lead to competency-based industry credentials.

Tier 2: Includes

- a) all other curriculum budget FTE,
- b) all Basic Skills budget FTE, and
- c) budget FTE associated with other continuing education courses that are scheduled for 96 hours or more and are mapped to a third-party credential, certification, or industry-designed curriculum.

Tier 3: Includes all other continuing education budget FTE.

Tier 1A is funded at a level equal to 30% higher than Tier 2, while Tier 1B is funded at a level that is 15% higher than Tier 2. Tier 3 is funded at a rate that is 15% less than Tier 2.

Contact Person:

Ms. Renee Batts
Associate Director

REQUEST TO EXCEED MAXIMUM LENGTH OF CERTIFICATE

Pitt Community College
Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate)(C45xxx)

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve a request to allow the following curriculum standard to exceed the maximum length of program hours allowed for a certificate program:

Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate)(C45xxx)

State Board Code requires that curriculum standards reflect the following hour ranges for each program level [Associate in Applied Science (AAS), Diploma and Certificate]:

Curriculum Standard Categories	AAS	Diploma	Certificate
Minimum General Education Hours	15	6	0
Minimum Major Hours	49	30	12
Other Required Hours	0-7	0-4	0-1
Total Semester Hours Credit (SHC)	64-76	36-48	12-18

The following range of hours is proposed for the Advanced Medical Coding (Certificate) program:

Curriculum Standard Categories	Advanced Medical Coding Proposed Certificate (Exceeding Hours)
Minimum General Education Hours	0
Minimum Major Hours	24
Other Required Hours	0
Total Semester Hour Credit (SHC)	24

Background: Per 1D SBCCC 400.95(d): *On special approval by the State Board, a degree program title or a stand-alone diploma or certificate program title may exceed the maximum length of programs as set by the curriculum standards. Such an exception shall apply to all colleges approved to offer the curriculum program title. A request for an exception shall be justified based on one or more of the following criteria:*

- (1) *Additional time in the program is required by law.*
- (2) *Additional time in the program is required by an external regulatory, accrediting, or professional agency recognized by the State Board.*
- (3) *Additional time in the program is justified by documented extenuating circumstances such as the following:*
 - (A) *Documentation that equivalent programs in other states require additional hours of training to teach the competencies of the curriculum;*
 - (B) *Documentation that the program will not be viable without the exception; or*

(C) Documentation that employers have certified the competencies required for the program and the length of time needed to teach those competencies.

Rationale: The Advanced Medical Coding program requires 24 hours of core courses, which would typically require it to fall into the range of a diploma, however, making it a diploma would require that the student complete 12 additional hours (6 general education and 6 major hours) which are not necessary for employment as an advanced coder. Allowing the Advanced Medical Coding to be classified as a certificate, which exceeds hours, will make the program more viable.

In addition, before a student is admitted into the Advanced Medical Coding program, he/she must already be a graduate of a Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIM) accredited health information program which would have required completion of an Associate in Applied Science program. Therefore, the student would already have credit for a minimum of 15 hours of general education. The diploma requires six hours of general education which would be duplicative and unnecessary for the student.

Contact:

Ms. Renee Batts
Associate Director