



# MCA STUDENT HANDBOOK

## **MISSION**

**MISSION:** The mission of Medical Communication Ambassadors is to provide innovative and quality interpretation training services to a diverse population with regional, organizational, and individual needs. The mission of our training program is to serve as a stepping stone to careers in medical interpreting.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

MCA requires that each student pass an oral language screening exam provided by a third party and present proof of graduation from high school or a certificate of high school equivalency. The student must pass the oral language screening at a minimum of advanced mid-level on the ACTFL scale in English and Spanish.

MCA will maintain records in each student's file to show compliance with admission requirements and only those whose educational background abilities qualify them to pursue the course for which enrollment is sought. The student must be at least 21 years of age for enrollment.

### **ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

MCA will enroll students up to four days prior to the scheduled start date of the program. Payment in full for the course must be received before the first day of class.

### **ORIENTATION**

MCA will provide students with and orientation to the school policies and procedures. This will include a review of the course materials, policies, safety guidelines, syllabus, and study guide.

### **CANCELATION AND REFUND POLICY**

A student who registers in advance and decides not to attend classes must notify the director of the program before the first day of class. The fee will be refunded in full. If the student has submitted to the fluency exam before withdrawal from the class, the fluency exam fee will not be refunded. A student may withdraw up to the first week of class and will receive a refund of 80%. The 20% is a non-refundable fee which covers the expense of the text books and fluency exam.

### **CANCELATION OF CLASS**

There may be an occasion where the instructor needs to cancel class due illness or extenuating circumstances. In these instances, MCA reserves the right to schedule a make-up class. The instructor will notify all students of any such cancellations.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance to the face to face sessions are essential to student success. MCA recognizes that unforeseen circumstances such as illness or death in the family, can occasionally arise and may result in the student being absent. If the student is unable to attend a face to face session for an unforeseen illness or death in the family, the student must call the instructor to notify her about the emergency as the reason for missing the session before the session begins. If the student misses a class for the above reasons, he/she must schedule a make-up class time. Attendance is measured by the half hour. If a student arrives late or leaves early, this will be noted on the attendance record. The student whose non- made up absences exceed 4 hours will be required to withdraw from the course without a refund.

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

All assignments need to be turned in on time. Students need to respect deadlines for class assignments.

## **REMEDIAL RESOURCES**

If a student needs to improve his or her progress through the program, the lead instructor will be available on an as needed basis to assist the progress of the student. The instructor will help the student with vocabulary, language, and grammar.

## **GRADING**

All MCA medical interpreter courses are graded. The grading system for the program is described in the course outline which is distributed to each student on the first day of class. Each student who receives a passing grade in the class will be awarded a certificate of completion of the course. Students are provided with a letter grade for class participation, homework, group presentation, midterm, final, take home, and oral exams as outlined below.

<b>NUMBER GRADE</b>	<b>EQUIVALENT</b>
A+	97-100
A	90-96
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	65-69
F	Below 65

A score of 70% or higher is required on the final written exam

A score of 80% or higher is required on the final oral exam (student must pass the oral exam to pass the class)

An overall score of 70% or higher is required for graduation

Midterm written: 10 %

Midterm Oral: 15%

Final take home: 10%

Final written: 15%

Final oral: 30%

Class participation: Attendance, homework, quizzes: 15%

**Incomplete:** if the student does not complete and hand in all the homework and take -home exam, he/she will receive and incomplete. The student will have two weeks after the course is done to hand in the completed work. If the work is not handed in by the two weeks, the student will fail.

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Medical interpreting Spanish/English

80-hour training program which is 80 hours of class time

Pre-requisites: The applicant must be at least 18 years of age, with a minimum of a high school diploma or GED. The applicant must also pass a mandatory screening examination in English and Spanish prior to being accepted into the program.

**Primary instructor:** Maria Schwieter

**Course Objectives:** By the end of the course, students should be able to demonstrate competence with the following concepts/objectives:

- Protocols for medical interpreting
- How to self-assess their own skills, knowledge, and limitations
- Application and use of key concepts from each lesson
- Have a complete understanding of interpreter standards and code of ethics
- Work effectively in the triadic encounter
- Ability to do consecutive interpreting
- Ability to effectively do sight interpreting
- Ability to effectively do simultaneous interpreting
- Understanding of medical terminology
- Understanding how memory skills impact interpreting
- Ability to use note taking techniques

# Spanish/English Medical Interpreters Training Course Syllabus

## Week 1:

### Chapter: 1

- ❖ Introduction and pre-test
- ❖ Purpose of the interpreter
- ❖ Types of interpreting
- ❖ Effective communication: different styles & practice
- ❖ Role of the interpreter: conduit, clarifier, cultural broker, and advocate
- ❖ Other roles of the interpreter: managing the flow
- ❖ Code of ethics/ standards of practice.
- ❖ Difficult situations, what to
- ❖ OMH CLAS standards/Joint Commission Standards
- ❖ HIPAA and how it affects you
- ❖ Title VI

## Week 2:

### Chapter: 2

- ❖ Impact of cultural competency on interpreting, Guiding principles for achieving a diverse environment. Explore your culture, cultural influences and how they affect your job
- ❖ Spiritual needs of the client

## Week 3:

### Chapter: 3

- ❖ Listening/note taking techniques
- ❖ Memory development
- ❖ Simultaneous interpreting: methods and practice

## Week 4:

### Chapter 4:

- ❖ Cardiology (cardiac system)
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions
- ❖ Games and role play

## Week 5:

### Chapter: 5

- ❖ Neurology (nervous system)
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 6:**

**Chapter: 6**

- ❖ Oncology
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 7:**

**Chapter: 7**

- ❖ Psychiatry
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions
- ❖

**Week 8:**

**Chapter: 8**

- ❖ Orthopedics (skeletal system)
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions
- ❖ Midterm exam: oral/written

**Week 9:**

**Chapter: 9**

- ❖ Rehabilitation (muscular system)
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 10:**

**Chapter: 10**

- ❖ Surgery (digestive/respiratory systems)
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 11:**

**Chapter 11:**

- ❖ Emergency medicine (integumentary/urinary systems)
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 12:**

**Chapter 12:**

- ❖ Endocrinology
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 13:**

**Chapter 13:**

- ❖ Dentistry
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary, acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 14:**

**Chapter 14:**

- ❖ Gynecology
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 15:**

**Chapter 15:**

- ❖ Pediatrics
- ❖ What to expect in the environment
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms



- ❖ Discharge instructions

**Week 16:**

- ❖ Diagnostics/self-care
- ❖ Terminology, vocabulary and acronyms
- ❖ Final take home exam due
- ❖ Final exams oral/written

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION & STUDENT APPEALS**

### **Academic honesty:**

Any academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty may include but is not limited to:

- Cheating, which includes but is not limited to, cheating on quizzes, tests, papers, or other assignments
- Any type of plagiarism
- Unauthorized digital or hardcopy reproduction of MCA copyrighted materials
- Using or attempting to use any material or device dishonestly

### **Disciplinary action:**

In the event an instructor determines that a student has violated an MCA policy, the instructor will meet with the student and inform him/her of the action or sanction the instructor deems appropriate. The following disciplinary actions may be imposed by MCA:

- Grades: The student's grade in the course or on the examination or assignment affected by the misconduct may be reduced to an extent, including reduction to failure.
- Warning: Notice oral or written that a specific behavior or a series of actions is unacceptable to the point that repetition would most likely result in more serious disciplinary action, such as probation or suspension.
- Expulsion: When a student's behavior is unacceptable to the extent that it reflects unfavorably upon character, judgment, and maturity, the student may be suspended

### **Student appeals:**

A student who wishes to appeal a course grade or disciplinary action should first seek a resolution of the issue informally with the primary instructor of the course in question. If an informal resolution cannot be reached, the student may appeal the decision formally through the level of appeal listed below:

1. The instructor
2. Medical directors

At each stage of appeal, the student must provide a written justification for the appeal and an explanation of the desired resolution. Reviewers may request appropriate additional documentation from any party at any stage of the appeal.

**The appeal process is:**

- Any appeal concerning an assigned grade must be made within three weeks of the time the grade was awarded
- The student must submit a written appeal to the instructor within five business days of receipt of the appeal.
- If not satisfied with the action of the instructor, the student may submit a written appeal to the medical directors of MCA within five business days of receipt of the instructor's decision. The medical directors will submit a written decision to the student with copies to the instructor within five business days of receipt of the appeal.

**Safety Guidelines:**

All students will be instructed on the safety guidelines and confidentiality protocols per HIPAA standards and will sign a form stating that the student understands and will abide by such protocols.

## INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES

### PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR

**Maria Schwieter:** founder and director of Medical Communications Ambassadors (MCA). Maria has been working in the health care field for 33 years. She has been working as a professional medical interpreter for 13 of those years. Maria was raised in La Paz, Bolivia and came to the United States when she was 20 to attend college. She holds bachelor's degrees in psychology and nursing and a master's in mental health counseling. She has successfully completed the Bridging the Gap program for medical interpreters. Maria created and implemented the first Spanish/English validation test for bilingual employees at Memorial Hospital as well as La Porte Hospital in Indiana. She developed a curriculum for An 80 hour medical interpreter's course for Medical Communication Ambassadors that has been widely used in the northern part of Indiana.

Her unique mix of work experience includes: Trauma nurse specialist, diabetes educator, cancer research coordinator. She was also a clinical instructor for the nursing programs at Brown Mackie College and Ivy Tech college. She has worked in the mental health field as a sexual assault therapist, play therapy for children, and a mental health counselor for Spanish speaking clients. She is currently the coordinator and medical interpreter trainer for Interpretation services at IU Health La Porte Hospital.

Maria was the founder and president of the Northern Indiana Medical Interpreters Association (NIMIA). She was also on the executive board of directors of the National Board for Certification of Medical Interpreters (NBCMI). She is also a board member of the National Council of Health Care Interpreter's (NCIHC), a member of the American Translators Association (ATA), the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), the Texas Association of health interpreters and translators (TAHIT), and Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters (MATI). Maria takes an active role in ensuring quality and equal service for limited English individuals throughout the state of Indiana.

## MEDICAL DIRECTORS

**Eileen G. Stiller M.D., F.A.C.O.G.** was educated at the University of Chicago where she received her M.D. and is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology as well as in ultrasound nuchal translucency. Dr. Stiller also worked as the assistant professor of OB/GYNE at the University of Chicago for 2 years. She has been and is the OB/GYNE committee chairperson at La Porte Hospital for over 10 years. DR. Stiller is fluent in Spanish and loves to travel mostly by bike. She has traveled with various mission groups and Doctors without Borders for many years. She has performed surgery for women in several South American countries including Guatemala, Africa and the Philippines.

**Chris Watson D.O.** Dr. Watson is originally from Minneapolis and received his medical degree from the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences in Des Moines, Iowa. Dr. Watson has worked professionally in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Indiana both in private and government sectors. He also served as a Peace Core volunteer in Ecuador where he developed a passion for working with the Latin American community. Dr. Watson lives in Progreso Mexico and continues to practice in the USA.