

PROGRAM APPROVAL APPLICATION
NEW or SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE or LOCALLY APPROVED
(This application may not exceed 3 pages)

Fill In Form

Medical Coding Specialist Proposed Program Title	Fal 17 Projected Program Start Date
Saddleback College College	SOCCCD District

Contact Information

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Goal(s) of Program (Check all that apply):

Career Technical Education (CTE) Transfer Other

Type of Program (Check all that apply):

Certificate of Achievement 12-17 (or 17-27 quarter) units Certificate of Achievement 18+ semester (or 27+ quarter) units
 Associate of Science Degree Associate of Arts Degree

Reason for Approval Request (Check One):

New Program Substantial Change Locally Approved

Program Information

1223.10 Recommended [Taxonomy of Program \(TOP\) Code](#)
 _____ Units for Major-Degree
 _____ Total Units for Degree
 34 Required Units-Certificate

Written Form

1. Insert the description of the program as it will appear in the catalog. (See PCAH pp. 142 and 170)

This certificate program prepares the student for employment as a medical coder in an acute care hospital, clinic or physician’s office, long-term care facility, and other health care settings. Coders review medical records, adhere to current coding guidelines to apply accurate codes for medical diagnoses and procedures to facilitate reimbursement, analyze patient outcomes, and medical research. The Medical Coding Specialist Certificate of Achievement prepares students to take the national certification examination to become a Certified Coding Associate (CCA) offered by American Health Information Association (AHIMA). This program provides training through didactic instruction and labs. Facilities employing coding professionals include hospitals, ambulatory care centers, physician offices, long-term care facilities, and insurance firms.

Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Use and maintain electronic applications and work processes to support clinical classification and coding.
 2. Apply diagnosis/procedure codes according to current nomenclature.
 3. Ensure accuracy of diagnostic/procedural groupings.
 4. Analyze current regulations and established guidelines in clinical classification systems.
 5. Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.
 6. Use and maintain applications and processes to support other clinical classification and nomenclature systems.
 7. Resolve discrepancies between coded data and supporting documentation.
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2. Provide a brief rationale for the program.

The Coding Certificate is a step towards HIT program A.S. degree (HIT TOP code: 1223.10 HIT/Health Information Coding). They share 10 courses totaling 30 units. The Coding Certificate requires an extra course (4 unit) with lab, to reinforce coding skills. The students who earn the Coding Certificate can continue to earn the HIT A.S. with 6 additional courses plus the general education courses necessary to earn the degree. The ability for students to earn the Certified Coding Associate (CCA) offered by AHIMA provides a specialty pathway for a student of the HIT program.

During the June 2015 site visit for the initial accreditation of the HIT A.S. degree by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM), and the input of the Advisory Board, Saddleback was advised to sunset the HIT certificate, and only offer the A.S. degree with other certificates such as the coding certificate. With the changes within the HIT A.S. degree, American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) will require specialty tracks or certificates as pathways to the HIT A.S. degree.

The Health Information Technology (HIT) program is linked to the coding certificate (HIT TOP code: 1223.10 HIT/Health Information Coding).

According to the Burning Glass report of December 2014 titled "Missed Opportunities: The Labor Market in Health Informatics, 2014", the labor market is not keeping up with the demand for workers with these skills. The demand for health informatics workers is expected to grow at twice the rate of employment, but the nation faces a shortage, especially in the area of medical coding—which is a subspecialty under HIT. Many of these positions remain open for a longer time other occupations. The reason--according to this report--is because the graduates are not necessarily prepared for or sometimes even directed to take specialty exams or put on a career pathway to these high-skills, high paying jobs. Stackable certificates and cross-training are highly recommended.

3. Summarize the Labor Market Information (LMI) and employment outlook (including citation for the source of the data) for students exiting the program. (See PCAH pp. 85-88, 136, 147, 148, 165, 168, and 176)

According to the Program Summary for Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder (EMSI), for the year 2014, 6 of 8 regional institutions in Orange County had 232 completers (a change from 0 in 2003) while there were 343 job openings. 2 institutions did not have any completers. 62.5% of completions came from certificate/award programs less than 1 year, while 37.1% were from academic programs with duration of 1-2 years. There was only 1 completer (0.4%) with an associate's degree. Only 1 regional institution was a community college (Cypress College) while the remaining 7 were private institutions.

The 2016 EMSI report for Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician (51.0707) shows that growth for this occupation is 6% higher than average with a 75th percentile earnings of \$23.83. For Orange County region, the report identifies 1,600 annual openings in 2016 and annual openings in 1,855 in 2025—an increase of 16%. In 2014, the total completions for Orange County was only 69 with only 1 degree awarded. (HIT TOP code: 1223.10 HIT/Health Information Coding)

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Based upon the demand from industry, patterns in other colleges with HIT programs, and the increasing demand for coders, Saddleback College should offer the Medical Coding Specialist certificate.

4. List similar programs at other colleges in the Los Angeles and Orange County Region which may be adversely impacted. (There is space for 10 listings, if you need more, please contact laocrc@rscdd.edu)

Coastline, Cypress, ELAC, Glendale, LA Harbor, and Santa Monica community colleges all have similar programs. The department chair of the program reached out to the colleges and there were no objections from the colleges that responded.

5. List all courses required for program completion, including core requirements, restricted electives and prerequisites. (There is space for 20 listings, if you need more, please contact laocrc@rscdd.edu). (See PCAH pp. 143 and 171)

Courses	Course Number	Course Title	Units
HSC 201 (Medical Terminology)	HSC 201	Medical Terminology	3
CIM 1 (Computer Information Systems)	CIM 1	Computer Information Systems)	4
HSC 277 (Hum Body Fundamentals)	HSC 277	Hum Body Fundamentals	3
HIT 200 (Health Information)	HIT 200	Health Information	3

HSC 233 (Legal)	HSC 233	Legal	3
HSC 244 (Disease Process)	HSC 244	Disease Process	3
HIT 220 (ICD Procedure Coding)	HIT 220	ICD Procedure Coding	2
HIT 221 (ICD Diagnostic Coding)	HIT 221	ICD Diagnostic Coding	3
HIT 215 (CPT and Ambulatory Coding)	HIT 215	CPT and Ambulatory Coding	3
HIT 202 (Reimbursement)	HIT 202	Reimbursement	3
<i>HIT 222: Advanced Coding Applications</i>	HIT 222	Advanced Coding Applications	4

6. Include any other information you would like to share.