



## Coding Specialist Certificate (Online) Program

Healthcare facilities need medical coders for accurately assessing ICD-10-CM/PCS, CPT, and DRG/APC assignments for diagnostic and surgical information. Financial reimbursement is often directly related to these codes. Also, the statistical information generated from the codes is used in support of research, quality patient care, education, and administrative decision making.

The Coding Specialist Program is a five-quarter online program with courses covering healthcare records management, ICD-10-CM/PCS, CPT, E&M coding, prospective payment systems, state and federal coding regulations, and hands-on coding practicum courses. The program is meant to help prepare students for the workforce, as well as for certification from the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) as a Certified Coding Associate (CCA) or Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) and the Certified Professional Coder (CPC) certification from the American Association for Professional Coders (AAPC).

### **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

Coding Specialists are in demand in acute care and ambulatory care facilities, including physician offices and long-term facilities. A variety of government agencies require coding expertise as well. The need for accurate, skilled coders is high throughout the nation. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the field of health information technicians, which includes medical coders, is projected to grow 8% through 2029, which is notably greater than the national average ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)).

Salaries for medical coders vary across organizations, healthcare settings, as well as the level of work experience. However, in 2016 AHIMA reported the national salary averages for individuals with 0-2 years of experience and a CCA credential and individuals with 0-2 years of experience and a CCS credential as \$39,320 and \$50,490, respectively ([www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org)). Salary averages for California are also consistently higher than the national average.

### **PROGRAM MISSION**

In harmony with the mission of Loma Linda University and the School of Allied Health Professions, the Health Informatics, Information Management, and Administration department is dedicated to:

- Educating competent medical coding professionals
- Promoting the medical coding profession
- Extending the current knowledge of medical coding professionals at neighboring health care facilities

### **Program Mission cont.**

- Challenging students and department faculty to maintain high standards of ethical and professional behavior
- Encouraging students and faculty to seek a meaningful relationship with God and a balanced Christian lifestyle

### **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the program, students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Assess health record documentation to verify that it is accurate, timely, and complete and that it supports the diagnosis and other clinical findings.
- Determine the appropriate medical codes for healthcare encounters with accuracy and consistency according to official guidelines.
- Adhere to the format, organization, and mechanical conventions of the ICD-10-CM/PCS, CPT, E & M, and HCPCS coding systems.
- Facilitate health data collection and processing through coding, indexing, and maintaining disease and operation statistics.
- Assess compliance with regulatory requirements and reimbursement methodologies.
- Perform diagnostic-related group and ambulatory patient-classification assignments using decision trees and computerized patient-data groupers.
- Develop appropriate physician queries to resolve discrepancies in clinical documentation and coding.

### **APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE**

#### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

- High school diploma/GED or a college degree
- Completion of the prerequisite courses with a grade of "C" or better.
- Completion and submission of the LLU application at [www.llu.edu/apply](http://www.llu.edu/apply) by August 1st for consideration to begin in the Fall.
- Interview, if deemed necessary.

#### **PREREQUISITES**

- Anatomy and Physiology
- Medical Terminology (can be taken while in the program)



## TUITION SCHEDULE

The tuition for the entire Coding Specialist certificate program is outlined below for full-time students initially enrolled during the upcoming school year. Actual tuition is subject to minor fluctuations from year to year. Tuition is currently calculated at a per-unit rate of \$199 per unit.

Year One	Fall	Winter	Spring
Units per quarter:	8	6	6
Tuition Rate:	\$199	\$199	\$199
Total cost per quarter:	\$1,592	\$1,196	\$1,196
Year Two	Summer	Fall	
Units per quarter:	6	6	
Tuition Rate:	\$199	\$199	
Total cost per quarter:	\$1,196	\$1,196	

**Program Tuition Costs: \$6,368**

*This program is not eligible for financial aid. However, students may make requests for information on establishing payment arrangements.*

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

The Coding Specialist certificate program is outlined below for students initially enrolled during the upcoming academic year.

Fall - Year One	Winter - Year One	Spring - Year Two
HLCS 220 Introduction to Health Information Science and the Healthcare System (4) HLIN 248 Pathopharmacology (4)	HLCS 242 Coding I (4) HLCS 961 Coding Practicum I (2)	HLCS 243 Coding II (4) HLCS 961 Coding Practicum I - continued RELE 257 Christian Ethics in Health Care (2)
<b>Total Units: 8</b>	<b>Total Units: 6</b>	<b>Total Units: 6</b>
Summer- Year Two	Fall - Year Two	
HLCS 245 Coding III (4) HLCS 962 Coding Practicum II (2)	HLCS 250 Reimbursement and Coding Compliance (4) HLCS 962 Coding Practicum II - continued HLCS 260 Seminar and Portfolio for Health-care Professions (2)	
<b>Total Units: 6</b>	<b>Total Units: 6</b>	
<b>Total Program Units: 32</b>		
<b>For more information about the Coding Specialist program, contact:</b>	<b>For more information about our Health Information Management (BS) or Health Informatics (MS) programs, contact:</b>	
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## LLU at a Glance

>> Founded in 1905 >> A Seventh-day Adventist institution integrating health, science, and Christian faith >> Offers over 200 programs in the health sciences >> Houses eight schools: Allied Health Professions, Behavioral Health, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Religion >> About 4,000 students >> Over 1,300 faculty >> 2,000 professional researchers >> \$46 million dollars in private and public grants generated each year >> Many service learning opportunities

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