

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
COMPUTER LITERACY SURVEY
(July 1990)

Institutions Contacted: Delta Community College, Grand Rapids Junior College, Macomb Community College, Schoolcraft College, Washtenaw Community College

Question 1: In general, how does your institution handle the issue of computer literacy? Prompts: Do you have a requirement? Do you have stand alone courses? Do you teach computer literacy in the context of other courses? Do you offer workshops for students?

Summary: Each of the five colleges handles the issue of computer literacy in a somewhat different way.

1. Delta: There is no computer literacy requirement at Delta; however, they do have an introductory course (3 credits) that is available to any student who wants to develop computer literacy. The course is not key-boarding; it is an introduction to the computer, introduction to three software packages (word-processing, spreadsheet, and database), and introduction to a multi-user system. One computer lab (24 computers) is dedicated to this purpose.

The English department is beginning to teach composition using computers as well. Beginning in Fall, 1990, they will have a lab (18 computers) for this purpose. Faculty who teach composition in the lab settings will have to introduce students to the computer and to whatever word-processing package they use in addition to teaching students composition.

Twelve other labs are dedicated to various programs; these labs use various kinds of equipment and are staffed and operated in a variety of ways. All but one of the twelve labs are used as classrooms but they are open for student use during unscheduled times; further one lab is open from 8 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Formal instruction is not available through the open labs. In short, although there is no computer literacy requirement, there are many opportunities available for students to become computer literate.

2. Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids has no computer literacy requirement, though many are beginning to support such an idea. Currently, the notion is that they will devise a screening test to determine which students are already computer literate and which are not. How they will handle the requirement for those students who aren't already computer literate is being debated. Computer literacy is taught currently through other courses, e.g., many English classes, some reading classes, some math classes, some science classes, some social science classes. Of course, it is possible for a student to avoid being in a computer version of one of these classes.

Students can go to the English Department Learning Lab and get instruction from faculty members and/or from the tutorial software packages available there. Every division in the college has access to computers.

3. Macomb: Macomb has no computer literacy requirement but they do have a computer literacy course (2 credit) that is open to all students. The course uses public domain software, meets for 8 weeks, 4 hours/week. No theory is included, but students do learn to use a word processor, a spreadsheet, and a data base.

MCC teaches a great many of their English composition classes on computers. There are four English computer labs. Classes are scheduled in these labs at all available hours and there is no time available for walk-ins. Students are introduced to the computer and the word-processing package used in the course as a part of the English class. MCC will be experimenting with a couple of sections of remedial math in Fall, 1990. MCC also has a learning center where computers are available for walk-ins. MCC has an open lab at South Campus (100 machines) and one at Center Campus (25-30 machines). These labs are open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily and for more limited periods on weekends. No formal instruction goes on in these labs.

4. Schoolcraft: Computer literacy is a "required goal" at Schoolcraft. To meet the goal, approximately a year ago, Schoolcraft instituted a one-credit course that is required of all students. In 1989-90, however, few students took the course. Schoolcraft has no formal exemption policy or procedures; however, they indicated that most students would request that the requirement be waived on the basis of their having taken other equivalent course work. This course is taught by full-time Computer Information Systems faculty only; however, when the demand becomes greater, part-time faculty may teach the course as well. Schoolcraft College faculty must have a master's degree or equivalent; exceptions have either been grandfathered in or must get the written approval of all faculty in the particular department or discipline.

5. Washtenaw: Washtenaw has just determined that computer literacy will be a required competency in the near future. This competency will be satisfied through a variety of courses. Particular courses will become eligible to satisfy the competency through syllabus review. For example, many of the English 111 classes at WCC are taught on the computer. Presumably if the computer instruction is judged adequate to meet the computer literacy competency, computer sections of this course will be so designated.

Question 2: What are the qualifications of instructors who are involved in the teaching of computer literacy?

1. Delta: The intro. course is taught by Computer Information Systems faculty. They must have a BA or equivalent. The open lab is staffed by CIS faculty with student assistants. The open lab

will come under the jurisdiction of the Office of Instructional Computing in the near future, but this will not change the staffing.

2. Grand Rapids: All faculty who are involved in the teaching of computer literacy through other courses are qualified (MA or equivalent) in their discipline. Whether they are qualified to introduce students to the computer is not an issue.

3. Macomb: The computer literacy course is not housed in an academic discipline; it is housed in Instructional Computer Services. Individuals who teach the course are faculty in various disciplines who have an interest in the course and believe that they can teach it (English, biology faculty members have taught the course in the past). These faculty have a master's degree or equivalent; part-time faculty have a bachelor's plus experience in the computing industry. English faculty who teach composition on computers have the normal credentials (M.A.); whether they are qualified to introduce students to the computer and a word-processing package is not an issue. Since no teaching goes on in the open labs, qualifications of lab monitors is not an issue.

The labs are staffed through Computer Services by two paraprofessionals; students are used as assistants.

4. Schoolcraft: Faculty who teach the computer literacy course have master's degrees or equivalent; if part-time CIS faculty are needed to staff the course, they must have bachelor's degrees and work in the computer industry.

5. Washtenaw: So far qualifications of faculty who teach courses that may qualify as meeting the computer literacy requirements are not an issue. These individuals are qualified in their discipline (master's or equivalent).

Question 3: What departments teach computer applications courses? How are these courses taught? What are the qualifications of the instructors?

1. Delta: Computer applications are taught in 6 or 7 different programs (e.g., CAD, Accounting, CIS). Depending on the department and the curriculum, courses that teach computer applications may be taught in labs or in lecture rooms with lab components. Labs are dedicated to various programs, but are open for student use during unscheduled times. Faculty who teach any of these courses must have a BA or equivalent. No paraprofessionals teach.

2. Grand Rapids: Computer applications are taught in the Computer Applications Division. Instructors must have a master's degree or equivalent.

3. Macomb: Computer Information Systems (CIS) teaches computer applications for degree-bound students. Faculty in this area,

both full and part-time, must have master's and experience. Classes are taught in a variety of configurations: some in regular classrooms; some in labs; some in a combination of classroom and lab--the curriculum dictates the configuration. Office Information Systems classes (word-processing) are taught in labs. They also have an open lab for the use of OIS students. Since OIS faculty are housed adjacent to this lab, they take a strong interest in controlling procedures. In this lab, the lab aide (with the approval of the OIS faculty) offers tutorial help to students on word-processing packages.

4. Schoolcraft: Computer Information Systems faculty teach all applications courses. Two of the veteran full-timers came from industry and do not have master's degrees; while two new full-timers have master's degrees. Part-time faculty have the same qualifications as full-timers (including the veteran vs. newcomer arrangement). Before a new faculty member, either full- or part-time, can be hired without the master's degree, all members of the department or discipline must agree, in writing, with the hiring. CIS courses are scheduled into regular classrooms. Lab work is assigned and students pay a lab fee to use the labs which are available to them extensively seven days each week during regular terms. There are four labs which are coordinated by a full-time person. The labs are staffed by student assistants. No instruction occurs in the labs. OIS faculty teach some work processing courses in the labs. Their qualifications are the same as all Schoolcraft faculty.

5. Washtenaw: Occupational Programs faculty teach computer applications courses. For example, CIS teaches software courses, business-related software. CAD, CAN, GDT, W & F, and Management all have courses or parts of courses that involve computer applications. Instructors must have qualifications necessary for the particular department or discipline (Bachelor's plus two year's experience/Master's preferred). CIS has no lab instructor; they have two technicians who can't teach or grade, but they can be in the classroom.

Question 4: Do you have or have you had contract problems involving concerns about the activities of paraprofessionals?

1. Delta: No problem--no paraprofessionals teach.

2. Grand Rapids: No problem--all who teach are faculty--no paraprofessionals. Some community education people teach but they are hired as adjunct faculty and have been evaluated as qualified.

3. Macomb: No problem with the union. Some concern by some CIS faculty when student lab assistants "help" other students.

4. Schoolcraft: No problem. Paraprofessionals do not teach.


5. Washtenaw: No problem. They have dealt with the issue of lab instructors in their most recent faculty contract. They now have

a designation--Lab Instructor. A Lab Instructor must have a bachelor's degree and serve under a master teacher or other "technological device (telecourse or instructional package). The Lab Instructor can teach and grade.



DATE: February 15, 1999

TO: Larry Bennett
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FROM: Dr. Sharon L. Blackman 
Dean of Technology

**SUBJECT: COMPUTER HARDWARE ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY
COMMITTEE MEETING**

There will be a meeting of the Computer Hardware Engineering Technology Advisory Committee on Thursday, March 18, 1999, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm in room T6. A light supper will be served at 5:30 pm. The meeting agenda will be sent to you approximately two weeks before the meeting.

Please call Ruth Springer (extension 6525) or e-mail her (RASPRING) by March 4 to let her know whether you will be able to attend.

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