

Senate Reference No. 00-13

TO: Fort Wayne Senate

FROM: Educational Policy Committee

L. DeFonso, Chair

SUBJECT: General Education Subcommittee report on computer literacy – for information only

DATE: February 23, 2001

The Educational Policy Committee (EPC) has accepted the attached report from the General Education Subcommittee (GES) and endorses its recommendations regarding computer literacy. In addition, the EPC has asked that the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs request that the Deans implement the recommended changes and report back to the GES with their concurrence. The EPC submits the report to the Senate for information only.

For the Educational Policy Committee:

Approving:
L. DeFonso

Disapproving

Absent:
R. Sedlmeyer

Non-voting:
K. Browne

S. Hannah

L. Hite

D. Marshall

D. Oberstar

Senate Reference No. 00-13

To: Educational Policy Committee

From: General Education Subcommittee

Date: January 31, 2001

Subj: Report and recommendations on the computer literacy requirement

Background: In April 2000 the Senate amended the revised General Education document to include, in Area I (Foundation Skills), “a computer literacy requirement as defined by the degree-granting unit and approved by the General Education Subcommittee” (SD 99-25). The document further states that the requirement could be met by completion of an approved course or “acquisition of comparable skills in other courses required as a part of the degree program.”

In October, GES asked schools to define their requirements, addressing the use of technology in 5 areas: 1) communication and collaboration; 2) investigating and solving problems; 3) to search, retrieve, and evaluate information; 4) understanding ethical issues related to technology; and (5) the possibilities and limitations of information technology. See attached memo and questionnaire.

A summary of school responses and copies of relevant documents are attached. In general, departments/programs prefer that computer literacy skills be integrated into required courses, so that the requirement can be met without adding hours to the GE requirement. Some departments/programs did not specify all 5 areas as necessary at the foundation skills level.

Recommendations:

1. The GES recommends that (a) the schools’ definitions of the computer literacy requirement be accepted, (b) responsibility for monitoring satisfactory completion of the requirement be assigned to the schools, and (c) any changes made at the school level be reported to GES for concurrence.
2. Because several schools (A&S, HSC, PEA) identified Area I courses as meeting part or all of their computer literacy requirement, there exists a potential for pressure on departments offering those courses (primarily Communication, English/Linguistics, and Math) to provide “remediation” for students who enter the university without prior computer experience. Therefore, the GES also recommends that departments/programs that offer courses identified as meeting the computer literacy requirement at a foundation skill level be encouraged to define (perhaps in consultation with ACITAS) computer skills that students should have *prior* to enrolling in the course—for example, email, word processing, file management (copying, loading, deleting, etc.). Students with no prior computer experience could then be directed to programs such as JumpStart (offered through Transitional Studies) for training in the computer skills needed for success in the course.

The GES appreciates the thoughtfulness of the schools' responses.

Responses Received from Schools.

1. A&S proposes that the computer literacy requirement be defined in terms of the computer literacy skills taught/required in ENG W131, COM 114, and one of several CS or quantitative skills courses. The recommendation came from the A&S Curriculum Committee.
2. BMS provided a matrix listing courses in which various computer literacy skills are taught/required and indicating which courses are required for which degrees.
3. EDUC reports that the five skill areas are taught in EDUC W200 (Microcomputers for Education), required of all undergraduates in the school.
4. ETCS: the course that establishes the floor for computer literacy in the school is ETCS 101 (Introduction to Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science, 1 cr.). A response from EET identifies EET 114 (Introduction to Microcomputers) and EET/CPET 355 (Introduction to Data Communication) as meeting the requirement for that department.
5. General Studies. GS requires "a college-level computer course for graduation." The courses most commonly used to meet the requirement are CS 106 and the BUS K2__ series.
6. HSC: The school identified courses in which computer literacy skills are taught/required. Separate responses received from Nursing and RHIT indicate that all computer literacy skills needed by their students are integrated into various courses required for the respective degrees.
7. OLS: CS 106 (Introduction to Computers) and OLS 280 (Microcomputer Software Applications) are required of all bachelor degree students in OLS and address the five areas.
8. PEA: Questionnaires received from Bill Ludwin and Tom Guthrie listed CS 106 (Introduction to Computers), SPEA K300 (Statistical Techniques; counts in Area I), and various SPEA courses as meeting the computer literacy requirements of their students.
9. The VPA Technology Committee recommended "an entry-level mechanism for testing knowledge at the time of admission," and defined "Central Components of Foundation Level Knowledge" for their school. The Visual Art Department provided a detailed discussion of what computer literacy means for their students. No responses were received from Theatre or Music.

Copies of the complete texts of the schools' responses are available upon request.

Senate Reference No. 00-13

To: Deans and School Curriculum Committees

From: General Education Subcommittee

Date: October 4, 2000

Subj: Computer literacy component of Area I (Foundation Skills)

As you know, the revised General Education document was amended by the Senate to include, in Area I (Foundation Skills),

“completion of a computer literacy requirement as defined by the degree-granting unit and approved by the General Education Subcommittee.”

The degree-granting unit is defined as the school or division.

The process is again addressed under the definition of Area I:

“The Area I requirement is fulfilled by completion of one approved course in each of three areas: Reading and Writing; Listening and Speaking; Quantitative Reasoning, and evidence that computer literacy has been demonstrated through completion of a course approved by the General Education Subcommittee or acquisition of comparable skills in other courses required as a part of the degree program.”

It is now time to establish the school/division definitions of computer literacy, effective fall 2001, in time for student advising and registration next spring. To facilitate the process, the GES has developed a brief questionnaire, attached. We ask that you work with your school curriculum committees to determine how students in your school will meet the computer literacy requirement, using the questionnaire as a point of departure. Please return the completed questionnaire, and a statement of how your students will fulfill the computer literacy requirement, to Jeanette Clausen (KT 174) no later than **November 20, 2000**.

General Education Computer Literacy Questionnaire

Return to Jeanette Clausen by **November 20, 2000.**

Name of individual completing questionnaire:

Information applies to _____ in _____

(program/s)

(school/division)

The Area I computer literacy requirement should provide students with Foundation Skills that will enable them to use information-technology tools effectively throughout their undergraduate degree program (as, for example, ENG W131 develops writing skills that students use throughout their undergraduate experience).

In keeping with policy on the other Area I skills, it should be possible for students to test out of the computer literacy requirement, or to demonstrate the required level of proficiency without necessarily taking a course (perhaps by completing non-credit courses, or by other means).

The GES expects that the school-level definitions of computer literacy will be based on information-technology skills used in the discipline and degree program, and that at least one item will be listed for each of the five goals below. If the skills described are always integrated into courses required for your degrees, please indicate the course numbers. If you are unsure how or whether your students acquire certain skills, please suggest the solution you would like to see.

1. Use of information technology to communicate and collaborate.

foundation skill(s) _____

demonstrated by _____ or covered in _____

(course number[s])

unsure how students acquire skill(s) _____

(optional comment)

2. Use of information technology to investigate and solve problems.

a) foundation skill(s) _____

2) demonstrated by _____ or covered in _____
(course number[s])

3) unsure how students acquire skill(s) _____
(optional comment)

3. Use of information technology to search, retrieve, and evaluate information.

a) foundation skill(s) _____

4) demonstrated by _____ or covered in _____
(course number[s])

5) unsure how students acquire skill(s) _____
(optional comment)

Ethical issues related to information technology.

a) foundation skill(s)/knowledge _____

6) demonstrated by _____ or covered in _____
(course number[s])

7) unsure how students acquire skill(s) _____
(optional comment)

The possibilities and limitations of information technology.

a) foundation skill(s)/understanding

8) demonstrated by _____ or covered in _____
(course number[s])

9) unsure how students acquire skill(s) _____
(optional comment)

6. **Other?** _____