

Curriculum Review for Computer Course Based on Need Assessment

Netsanet Mekonnen*

Introduction

Education takes place formally or informally in villages or religious schools. In some places primary education is offered formally or informally. In its broadest sense, however the curriculum is considered to be everything that transpires in the course of planning, teaching and learning in an educational institute. Here the intention is not to discuss what a curriculum is or not to revise the current curriculum of the college, instead it is simply to focus on a particular computer course. But what I would like to suggest is that we shouldn't continue teaching the same courses which can not bring about a significant change, rather we try to reevaluate or revise the curriculum taking into account the need of *students, academic staff and the community at large in accordance with the present situation which incorporates the latest technology*. Incorporating new knowledge and advances in technology in college programs is the responsibility of college instructors. This means there will be some new arrivals which should be included in the existing program which may bring about a significant change.

Computer technology or Information Technology (IT) is an area which everybody wants to know and should know. But in our college the computer course is given or offered as a requirement only for a particular faculty or for a specific field of study, and so far we are using the course in this way.

But this practice should be changed and we have to teach the new information to every student who joins the college regardless of their field of study. In this fast changing world we need more and more

Ethiopian Civil Service College.

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information and one of the ways to get information is mainly through the Internet. Education is not only one way of communication where by a student or a learner is waiting to learn only from the teacher. In order for the student to benefit from the new technology, through which almost any kind of information is available, the student should learn how to use the internet and in general how to make use of the computers. So far students are taking only one course, which is introduction to computer for one term, and this course is not sufficient for them to have knowledge as to how to use computers by themselves. In fact the students have a great desire to know the computer more and more. However, the college curriculum allows them to take only one introductory course for one term.

Since computer or information technology is changing day by day we have to consider of updating the curriculum we are using at present. This means there will be some new arrivals which should be included to the existing program and some might be taken out. Incorporating new knowledge and advances in technology to college programs is the responsibility of college instructors, which call for the need for training in higher education.

In many colleges or universities, instructors want to make use of computers for different purposes, like preparing notes for their classes, preparing their research findings and things related to their area of study. In the college where I teach (Civil Service College) there is a computer room for teachers to come and do their work, but most of the time they don't make use of it. One of the reasons is that some of the instructors have limited knowledge about how to use computers. So the computer center has come into a conclusion that the instructors of the center should reach the academic and non-academic staff to give a training in some of the computer courses, and we have already started teaching some of the basic courses.

The objectives of the training for academic or non academic staff should not be limited to the teaching of the basic concept; it should go beyond that and include the latest technologies. In order to reach the

college community with the new information technology instructors of the computer center need to acquaint themselves with the latest technology like network administration, hardware maintenance whereby they can give a lot of services to different departments and offices and in general with any new arrivals of the latest technology.

The drastic change in knowledge and information technology will force the curriculum of an institute to be revised and updated. In its broadest sense, however, the curriculum is considered to be everything that transpires in the course of planning, teaching and learning in an educational institution.

All the inputs of an institution are intended to support the implementation of the curriculum and some of the outcome of the implementation process includes developed talents. Change in society will require relative changes in the curriculum of higher education, because learning in higher education should enable us to overcome challenges.

By its very nature information technology is a subject area whereby many people want to know and learn more; that is why it has been commercialized, and it is not new to see different computer centers giving different courses everywhere around us.

But it is mainly the responsibilities of higher institutions to give proper education which takes into account the needs of the society and the existing situation. It is because of this, the computer center prepared the following questionnaire and decided to send it to different organizations. This will also help to get a general overview of the community around which contributes much to the designing or revising of the curriculum.

*A Questionnaire Designed to Asses the Sifuation Regarding
Information Technology In Federal and Regional Government
Organizations*

The objective of this questionnaire is to get an overview of the uses of Information Technology in various regional and government organizations, and based on this to prepare a short term computer course to develop skilled manpower in that area, so that the organization will benefit from the new Information technology.

Name of the organization _____
 Address (Region/City) _____
 The person who provides the information _____
 Job Specification _____
 Date _____

- ❖ It will be better if the information is provided by a person who knows about Information Technology.
- ❖ Please put "X" mark for the right answers in the space provided.
- ❖ If there is not enough space for writing the information you can use extra paper.

- Hardware Information

- How many computers are found in your organization ?

_____ 1 - 10
 _____ 10 - 20
 _____ 20 - 30
 _____ Above 30

- What type of computers are they? (processor)

_____ 386	how many	_____
_____ 486	" "	_____
_____ pentium II/III..	how many	_____
_____ If it is A different type	" "	_____
_____ please mention it		

1. Software (Operating system) Information

1.1 What kind of operating system does the computer use?

MS-DOS MS-Windows 3.x
 Ms-Excel Windows NT
 UNIX if it is a different one
 please mention

2. Software (Application Software) Information

2.1 Usually what kind of application program does the organization use?

Ms-Word Word perfect
 Ms-Excel Lotus 123
 Ms-Access DBASE

If it is a different one

2.2 For what kind of work do you use the Application program

 for writing letters for data AnalysisIf you are using it for other things

3. Software (programming Language)

3.1 Does your organization have computer professionals who develop easy application programs for the organization?

 Yes No

3.2 If yes, what software do they use?

 Visual Studio (C++, Basic FoxPro) Pascal Fortran CIf there are others

3.3 Explain briefly if there is any specific software which your organization needs to be used by your organization only?

4. Network Information

4.1 Are your computers networked

 Yes No

4.2 If yes, are you using the network?

 Yes We don't use it

4.3 If No, why?

- _____ We don't know how to use it
 _____ It is not important to use
 _____ Its importance is not known

If there is another reason, please indicate. _____

4.4 If yes, what purpose do you use the net work for?

- _____ Internet service
 _____ file/program/printer sharing

If there is other reason _____

5. Internet Information

5.1 Is your organization a user of Internet technology?

- _____ Yes
 _____ No

5.2 If yes, for what kind of services do you use?

- _____ E-mail
 _____ getting information
 _____ for Advertisement

If it is for other purposes, please specify _____

6. Worker's knowledge of Computer _____

6.1 Among the workers, how many of them use Computers? _____

6.2 How many of them have taken Computer courses? _____

6.3 What type of courses have they taken? _____

Courses

No. of workers who have taken the course

6.4 Employee level of knowledge in using computers _____

- _____ Beginners
 _____ Intermediate
 _____ Advanced

6.5 Should we use computers? (your suggestion) _____

6.6 How many of your employees need the courses on computer?
 _____ (% or in numbers.)

6.7 If necessary beside the basic courses (Introduction, Windows, Word, Excel,)

If there are other courses they need to take please mention.

<u>Courses</u>	<u>No. of workers who have taken the course</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

6.8 If your organization wants to train the workers, how is its capacity to cover the expense? _____

6.9 What do you suggest the way the courses are offered
 _____ by sending the trainee to the center
 _____ by inviting teachers to your organization

6.10. In which months of the year would you like to take the course offered _____

7. Consultancy

7.1 Does your organization have consultancy services in cases of any computer failures and other related problems?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

7.2 If yes, the name of the organization _____

8. What does your organization expect from a college like E.C.S.C. regarding Computers & Information technology?

9. If you have any idea which you would like to suggest, please specify

