

## **Advisory Committee Followup March 26, 2008**

The following letter was sent to all advisory committee members:

Attached are the proposed changes for the Computer Support Technology, AAS and Diploma programs, and the Information Security and Assurance AAS for Fall 2008. These changes are to reflect the changing needs of our students and will allow more flexibility to elect classroom or online course offerings to fulfill differing educational needs. In addition, the core course will insure the integrity of the program, while allowing the student more options for electives in the areas of programming, security, accounting, administrative support, networking, automated systems, renewable energy and web development.

Some of the highlights include:

- Moving from 68 to 64 credits according to the direction of the MNSCU board, which has recommended AA degrees of no more than 60 credits. Technical degrees would be allowed more than 60 credits.
- General education requirements would be 25% of the total credits for a total of 16 credits (down from 17)
- General Education required classes would include English Composition and 13 general education credit electives in two additional areas of the curriculum. This will meet the requirements set by the MNSCU board and Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- Required technical electives would move from 41 credits currently to 35 credits.
- Technical electives would change from 10 credits to 13 credits and include approved electives in the areas of CST, CSCI, ACCT, RNEW, ROBT and ADSA. This would allow the student greater flexibility to choose courses that fit their educational goals, attendance options and abilities.
- Since there are no direct articulation agreements for this degree, none would be affected.
- Students in other program areas could elect to complete an AAS in Computer Support technology or Information Security and Assurance with one additional year of study. Financial Aid is available for students to complete additional degrees.

Our enrollment in the program last year was 22 new students, which was very encouraging considering the cost of education and the declining population in our area. This year we started with 12 which is respectable, but not fantastic. To help build our program, I am making visits to several area schools and presenting our Social Networking Roadshow which informs student about internet safety, specifically with sites such as MySpace and facebook. The students that are currently enrolled are also working on recruiting students.

Computer careers hold 3 of the top ten careers put out by the department labor and Employment. Below is the Employment Estimates and Regional Wage data from the fourth quarter of 2007 for the Southwest Minnesota Region

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Current Regional Employment	Regional Average Hourly Wage	Minnesota Average Hourly Wage
13-1199	<a href="#">Business Operations Specialists</a>	830	\$22.27	\$25.31
15-1021	<a href="#">Computer Programmers</a>	90	\$29.66	\$34.30
15-1031	<a href="#">Computer Software Engineers, Applications</a>	75	\$36.05	\$39.45
15-1032	<a href="#">Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software</a>	30	\$36.94	\$43.88
15-1041	<a href="#">Computer Support Specialists</a>	100	\$17.20	\$22.79
15-1051	<a href="#">Computer Systems Analysts</a>	50	\$27.70	\$35.62
15-1061	<a href="#">Database Administrators</a>	20	\$36.55	\$34.77
15-1071	<a href="#">Network &amp; Computer Systems Administrators</a>	110	\$25.17	\$32.35
15-1081	<a href="#">Network Systems &amp; Data Communications</a>	45	\$27.94	\$37.19
15-1099	<a href="#">Computer Specialists, All Other</a>	60	\$25.81	\$34.18

Source:

<http://www>

The numbers look great for persons with a computer specialty and we currently have more jobs than graduates. By lowering the number of required credits and expanding the technical electives we are hoping to attract more students with special interests and allow them to get degrees. If you have any ideas for recruiting or sources of funding for scholarships or equipment, that would be much appreciated.

I would like you to respond to me by March 24, 2008 and either approve the changes as proposed or make any recommendations you may have. I will be available by email or phone if you have additional questions.

Feedback was as follows:

Karen McCoy

**Pam,**

***Looks like you are taking Novell out of the required curriculum - which I agree with. I hear very little about Novell - I wouldn't hesitate to take it out of the curriculum all together. Maybe implement the option for low voltage technician? Also, management of routers and switches appears to be an area of need. Otherwise I think it looks good.***

***Thanks – Karen***

**Rita Christianson**

Pam,

This looks good. You are doing a great job! I approve.  
Rita

**Mike Carter**

Pam

I looked at your spreadsheets and it looks OK. My only concern is that the kids won't get a good education in technical areas if we take out too many more credits. I liked that you are going out to the schools and recruiting.

Mike Carter

The following are notes from personal contact and phone calls

**Matt Dack**

Add PC Maintenance and Repair II back in. The changes to the general education requirements are excellent. The security course as a requirement is good.

**John Joosten**

Leave the programs at 64 credits, otherwise it looks good.

**Brad Christensen**

The changes look good and allow for more opportunity to offer classes that are timely for the students.

No response from Connie Olson or Kevin Russen.

The road show has provided us with 3 solid leads for prospective students. We also have been invited to work with Marshall high school on articulation agreements.