

Syllabus

PLATO Course Computing for College and Careers, Semester A

Course Overview

This one-semester course is intended as a practical, hands-on guide to help you understand the basic computer skills required during your college education and when pursuing a career. This course has 20 lessons organized into five units, plus five Unit Activities. Each lesson contains one or more Lesson Activities.

This course will cover basic computer hardware and software and productivity applications such as word processing software, spreadsheet software, and presentation software. This course also covers the Internet and emerging technologies.

You will submit the Unit Activity documents to your teacher, and you will grade your work in the Lesson Activities by comparing them with given sample responses. The Unit Activities (submitted to the teacher) and the Lesson Activities (self-checked) are the major components of this course. There are other assessment components, namely the mastery test questions that feature along with the lesson; the pre- and post-test questions that come at the beginning and end of the unit respectively, and an end-of-semester test. All of these tests are a combination of simple multiple-choice questions and technology enhanced (TE) questions.

Course Goals

This course will help you meet the following goals:

- Explore the basics of computer hardware and software.
- Familiarize yourself with the emerging technologies in the field of computers.
- Learn about the different career choices in the field of computers.
- Learn how to use word processing software to create, enhance, and review documents.
- Learn how to use spreadsheet software to present data in the form of tables, graphs, and charts.
- Learn how to use presentation software to create, enhance, and customize slideshows with the help of graphics and illustrations.
- Explore the role and use of the Internet and its various applications.
- Learn how to browse and communicate through the Internet.
- Explore the various security risks and concerns associated with the use of computers.

Prerequisite Skills

PLATO Course Computing for College and Careers, Semester A has the following prerequisites:

- basic math knowledge
- ability to visualize and apply creativity and innovation
- familiarity with the writing process and following guidelines

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Perform basic operations on a computer.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

PLATO Course Computing for College and Careers, Semester A is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- Notebook
- Computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft Excel or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent
- Microsoft Access or equivalent

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you stay on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: Fundamentals of Computers

Summary

In this unit, you will learn about basic hardware configurations and software applications needed to work on a computer. You will also learn about the role of new and emerging computer technologies in a business environment. Additionally, you will familiarize yourself with various career opportunities that require you to have basic computer skills.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
3 days: 2–4	Computer Hardware <i>Describe the basic hardware configuration of computers.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 5–7	Computer Software <i>Discuss different types of software used in computers.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 8–10	Emerging Technologies in the Field of Computers <i>Describe emerging technologies in the field of computers and their uses.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 11–12	Computers and Careers <i>Explore the career opportunities in the field of computers.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 13	Para Jumble	Game
4 days: 14–17	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity
1 day: 18	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: Working with Documents

Summary

In this unit, you will learn how to create documents with the help of word processing software. You will familiarize yourself with various editing and formatting functions of word processing software. You will also learn how to enhance documents with the help of graphics and illustrations. Additionally, you will explore different options of word processing software programs that help you review and proofread documents.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 19–21	Creating Documents Using Word Processing Software <i>Explore options for creating basic documents using word processing software.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 22–24	Editing and Formatting Documents <i>Edit and format a document using word processing software.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 25–27	Illustrating Documents <i>Add images and illustrations to enhance a document.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 28–30	Reviewing Documents <i>Identify and explain options for validating a document.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 31	Space Jumble	Game
4 days: 32–35	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity
1 day: 36	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: Working with Spreadsheets and Databases

Summary

In this unit, you will learn how to create and manage workbooks. You will also learn how to perform basic calculations using a spreadsheet program. You will also learn about the various formatting options available in spreadsheet programs. In addition, you will learn to use tables, graphs, and charts to represent data in spreadsheets visually.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 37–39	Creating and Managing a Workbook <i>Discuss options for creating and managing a workbook.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 40–42	Performing Basic Calculations in a Spreadsheet <i>Explain the options for performing basic calculations in a spreadsheet.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 43–45	Formatting Data in a Spreadsheet <i>Discuss how to format data in a spreadsheet.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 46–48	Representing Visual Data in a Spreadsheet <i>Discuss the options for representing visual data in a spreadsheet.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 49–51	Introduction to Database <i>Explain the fundamental concepts of database.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 52	Thwack-A-Mole	Game
4 days: 53–56	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity
1 day: 57	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: Working with Presentations

Summary

In this unit, you will learn how to use and explore various functions of a presentation program. In addition, you will familiarize yourself with different options that can help you enhance a presentation.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 58–60	Creating a Basic Presentation <i>Discuss the process of creating a basic presentation.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 61–63	Exploring a Presentation Program <i>Explore the working environment in presentation software.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 64–66	Enhancing a Presentation <i>Explain how to enhance a presentation by adding dynamic graphics and animations.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 67	Para Jumble	Game
4 days: 68–71	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 4	Unit Activity
1 day: 72	Posttest—Unit 4	Assessment

Unit 5: Browsing and Communicating Using the Internet

Summary

In this unit, you will familiarize yourself with some of the crucial aspects of the Internet and the World Wide Web. You will also learn how to exchange information with the help of the Internet. In addition, you will familiarize yourself with the ethics and security issues concerning the use of the Internet.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
2 days: 73–74	Introduction to the Internet <i>Explain the fundamental concepts of the Internet.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 75–76	World Wide Web <i>Describe the important concepts related to the World Wide Web.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 77–79	Exchanging Information Using the Internet <i>Explain various methods to exchange information over the Internet.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 80–82	Security Concerns and Ethics of Internet Use <i>Demonstrate proper Internet use and security.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 83	Space Jumble	Game
4 days: 84–87	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 5	Unit Activity
1 day: 88	Posttest—Unit 5	Assessment
1 day: 89	Semester Review	
1 day: 90	End-of-Semester Test	Assessment