



Mount Carmel Academy Computer Science

The mission of information technology at Mount Carmel Academy is to assure that all students and educators will have access to technology and will learn technological skills in the spirit of Catholic excellence to enhance their future lives by focusing on student and staff development that will make our students and educators functional and productive citizens.

The Computer Science Department consists of one full-time chief technology officer, two full-time assistant technology coordinators, two part-time technologists, two full-time instructional and/or educational technology specialists, and one part-time educational technology specialist. Course offerings include Computer Applications I-Part I, Computer Applications I-Part II, and Computer Science I, all of which are half-credit courses.

The driving philosophy of the Computer Science Department is to provide a quality technological education to every student so that she may graduate skilled for entrance into either the business sector or an institution of higher learning. Pursuant to this philosophy, the department strives to provide a standards-based instructional technology program that reflects Christian values as well as a readily accessible user-support structure for the entire Mount Carmel Academy community. The Department has structured itself as a Technology Council functioning under the leadership of the chief technology officer and performing in a spirit of teamwork through the sharing of talents and skills. The unique talents of the individual members of the Council unite to create a complimentary whole dedicated to serving the technological needs of students, teachers, and administrators.

The role of the Technology Council is multi-faceted. One aspect is to ensure that students enjoy a smooth transition into college and the business sector. To that end, the technology curriculum is taught on state-of-the-art PC hardware equipped with popular, and regularly upgraded, software applications. Students compute in a local area network (LAN) similar in design and use to those they will encounter in their futures. Instructors provide students with skills-based exercises designed with practical, "real-world" applications in mind, such as crafting resumes and designing budget spreadsheets. The instructors stress attention to detail just as an employer would. To foster and reward the high standards of achievement demanded by businesses and institutions of higher learning, the Council founded a Technology Honor

Society. Further, students (and teachers) have the opportunity to obtain Microsoft Office Specialist Certification training and testing. By the time a young woman has finished her Mount Carmel Academy career, her technological attitude is one of moral stewardship, social responsibility, and personal confidence.

The instructors realize their role is not only to develop trained, confident, and Christian computer users with an eye on the future, but also to acknowledge students' individual differences and learning modalities while doing so. The teachers provide a variety of instructional formats and interact with students much as a coach would with an athlete--responding to the students' strengths and weaknesses and focusing on desired outcomes. The courses are taught cognizant of the fact that the students will be applying their skills across the curriculum. The Technology Council stresses the use of technology as an enhancement to the curriculum and not as an end of its own. Further, the curriculum offerings, class pacing, and instructional techniques historically have been and will continue to be malleable to accommodate the evolution of entry-level skills, student requests, and cross-curriculum needs.

As described above, the first responsibility of the Technology Council is to serve the curriculum needs of the students. The second responsibility is to provide user support to the Mount Carmel Academy community. Each member's technological strength is directed to a well-matched area of responsibility. The Council's talents are enhanced by talent pockets present in the faculty. For example, one faculty member has an expertise with the Associated Press Wire Photo Service while another shines at web page design. By combining their own skills and talents with that of the faculty and outside computer specialists, the Technology Council meets its second role by providing reliable service, offering professional development opportunities, ensuring ready access to both hardware and software, and guaranteeing technical support.

By demonstrating daily their own computing expertise, the members of the Technology Council hope to provide Christian role models for the young women to whom they have a responsibility. The members are ever mindful that the students, faculty, and administrators they serve are their reason for being at Mount Carmel Academy, and the technological talents they each possess are the gifts they bring to that table.