

Course Title: IST 151: PC Tech/Operating Systems

Course Leader: Karen Weil-Yates

Expected Learning Outcomes for Course

- *Students will be able to install, configure and maintain the operating system in both single and dual boot configurations within the Windows family of operating systems.*
- *Students will be able to perform advanced file management operations in order to organize, maintain personal computer systems in a workplace or home environment*
- *Students will utilize system utilities to allocate and organize storage and manage peripheral devices*
- *Students will demonstrate customer service, troubleshooting and preventative maintenance skills*
- *Students will be able to prepare for certification*

Assessment

(How do students demonstrate achievement of these outcomes?)

Students are required to

- complete hands-on activities and answer questions that promote Internet Research of diagnostic solutions, setups, and upgrades; customer service and critical thinking.
- take two hands-on exams: one, where they take a used drive (with existing software/OS), wipe it, partition it and install an OS and subsequent updates; two, where they diagnose and repair a faulty system (one that has booting issues) and take another drive and prepare it for deployment in another country (regional settings, sfc, sigverif, group policy, registry change, and setting password parameters)
- take the Kaplan Self-Test Practical Applications Exam Prep for A+ (currently the leading prep exam for certification)
- Students are also required to watch a webinar, listen to a podcast or attend a tech event and write a report; they must also create a bootable thumb drive or CD

Validation

(What methods are used to validate your assessment?)

All instructors who teach this course must be A+ certified. The textbook is an approved CompTIA A+ text and is published by an industry leader in the information technology field.

This course's assessments were validated at the by advisory committee members as needed. Course content is mapped to A+ 802 (2013) Certification Exam objectives (additional objectives are also included. Students are required to take a nationally approved certification preparation exam for A+. They take the exam at least twice in the semester: The first time is to give the instructor an idea of the student's "starting point"—much like a pre-test. The second exam is the only other "written exam" that is given; it replaces all other multiple choice exams that were

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associated with the course (there were 4). The student may take this exam as many times as they like throughout the semester, with the instructor recoding the highest score. They have access to the answers in the form of taking the exams in a study mode or by borrowing printouts in a notebook to review the answers and rationale behind those answers (there are over 250 questions). The intentions behind this strategy are to:

- Get them used to the type of questions and the speed/pace at which they make take a true certification exam
- Get students into the habit of preparing for an exam—repetitions help with memory retention
- Get students to set goals and achieve those goals (I am going to get a ___% on this exam)
- Give students the initiative and encouragement to take the actual certification—the prep that is used sets a higher bar than the actual certification—this if students pass this prep that can pass the certification.

Results

(What does the data show?)

Self-Test Practical Applications Exam results are as follows:

	Self Test				Course
	Self Test #1	#2	Increase	Pass *	Pass Rate
Student #1	46	0	-46		31
Student #2	56	88	32	Pass	95
Student #3	52	98	46	Pass	97
Student #4	64	76	12		85
Student #5	49	59	10		85
Student #6	50	63	13		89
Student #7	56	77	21		85
Student #8	56	58	2		74
Student #9	46	74	28		80
Average	52.8	65.9	13.1		80.1

(pass rate is based on 80% set by the
Cert Prep company)

Hands-On Exams and Project A:

Students submit a bootable flash drive as approved by the Advisory committee and write a report on their experience; There is an increase in the number of students that complete the project (those who do not, automatically receive an F as stated in the syllabus); only one student did not—he dropped the course.

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	Hands-on Exam 1	Hands-on Exam 2	Project A
Student #1	0	100	0
Student #2	88	100	100
Student #3	98	100	100
Student #4	76	95	100
Student #5	59	97	100
Student #6	63	100	100
Student #7	77	98	95
Student #8	58	91	100
Student #9	74	93	95
Average	66	97	88

Follow-up

(How have you used the data to improve student learning?)

I am pleased with the Cert Prep results. I felt that it gives students control over their end-results—they can take the exam over and over—on their own time.

The hands-on exams are a good indication for me on how much attention the students are putting into their hands-on activities. This semester I permitted students to work in teams on their second exam due to a time constraint.

Budget Justification

(What resources are necessary to improve student learning?) 10-seat site license for A+ Self-Test Certification; Operating System Software, CDs/DVDs