

Computer Support Specialist



What is computer support?

Computer support is a diverse field where technicians support technology users and their equipment. Support can be delivered in various formats: in-person, on the phone, or at a workbench. Technicians can perform jobs such as assisting a customer on the best way to use their office software, replacing faulty computer components, installing software, or advising a client on the best system to purchase for their specific needs.

What is the Computer Support Specialist Program?

HCC offers an A.A.S. for Computer Support Specialist. Students take courses in current popular office software so that they can help clients accomplish productivity tasks. Both Windows and Linux operating systems are taught, allowing students to learn to troubleshoot problems with various utilities, establish good file and disk management on systems in the workplace, design a system maintenance plan, and demonstrate for others how to perform system tasks. Students demonstrate their knowledge of hardware and system repair, and software installations and troubleshooting as they prepare for their A+ certification. They will acquire basic networking skills such as: cable making, setting up SOHOs, and drawing basic LAN and WAN topologies as they prepare for their Network+ certification. Students will study the theory and operation of a Help Desk; investigate how IT departments are organized and make decisions regarding software and equipment purchases; plan and execute training; develop disaster recovery plans; and sharpen their customer support skills.

What skills do computer support specialist need to have?

Student technicians need to develop strong oral and written communication skills for communicating with clients; they often conduct or assist in training. Active listening skills are important when interacting with clients regarding their system malfunctions or software problems. Technicians need to develop a good sense of procedure and visualization as they talk users through problem solving steps. Good observation and critical



thinking skills help to build troubleshooting skills. Technicians learn research skills in order to find solutions to hardware problems, make recommendations for purchases, updates, and installations. Proper documentation skills are necessary for recording logs, preparing instructions, and writing reports.

Essential Work Habits:

- Ability to work step-by-step, double-checking and testing results, and documenting them
- Active listening skills to assess the client's needs
- Good speaking skills to convey information to clients, coworkers, and supervisors
- Ability to research answers to questions
- Ability to keep up-to-date in the field of technology
- Good customer relations
- Willingness to work outside "normal" working hours
- Ability to ask open-ended questions to ascertain the root problem

(source: www.thebalance.com)

PROGRAM OPTIONS

- A.A.S. Degree, Computer Support Specialist

CAREER OUTLOOK

MEDIAN SALARY

\$55K

for computer support specialists

EMPLOYMENT



882,300 jobs in the U.S.
8% growth in the next ten years

More support services will be needed as organizations upgrade their computer equipment and software. All areas of the economy need support technicians including medical, manufacturing, education, government agencies, financial, small businesses, and homeowners.

(source: www.bls.gov/ooh)

What are the program options?

Students can earn an A.A.S. degree in Information Systems Technology with a Computer Support Specialist Concentration in two years.

Types of jobs with a Computer Support Specialist Degree:

- Computer Support Specialist
- Desktop Support
- IT Support Specialist
- PC Field Support Specialist
- Help Desk (Tier 1)
- Computer Hardware Support
- Technical Support Specialist

A.A.S. Degree

Computer Support Specialist Concentration, Information Systems Technology

The Computer Support Specialist Concentration provides students with the necessary skills for careers as computer support technicians, Help Desk Technicians and Repair technicians. Courses concentrate in areas of building, maintaining and troubleshooting computers; installing, configuring, and troubleshooting operating systems and software; server installations and customers skills. The curriculum includes preparation for A+, Network+, and Security+ certifications. This A.A.S. program is a career degree, preparing students for the workforce after graduation. However, students can opt to transfer to a four-year program rather than start a career, but should confer with advisors and transferring institutions for specific requirements.

General Education Requirements 18-20

Arts and Humanities

Select from approved General Education course list .. 3

Behavioral/Social Sciences

Select from approved General Education course list .. 3

Biological/Physical Science

Select from approved General Education course list 3-4

Diversity

Select from approved General Education course list .. 3

English

Select from approved General Education course list .. 3

Mathematics

Select from approved General Education course list 3-4

Program Requirements 34 credits

CSC 102	Introduction to Information Technology.....	3
CSC 109	UNIX/Linux Operating System	3
CYB 246	Introduction to Cloud Computing.....	3
IST 105	Fundamentals of Word Processing	3
IST 106	Spreadsheet Software.....	3
OR		
IST 173	Database Fundamentals.....	3
IST 108	Microsoft Operating System.....	3
IST 150	PC Tech: Repair and Troubleshooting....	3
IST 151	PC Tech: Operating Systems	3
IST 154	Networking Basics.....	3
IST 204	Help Desk Technology and Services.....	3
IST 261	Server Management I.....	3
STU 106	Professionalism in the Workplace.....	1

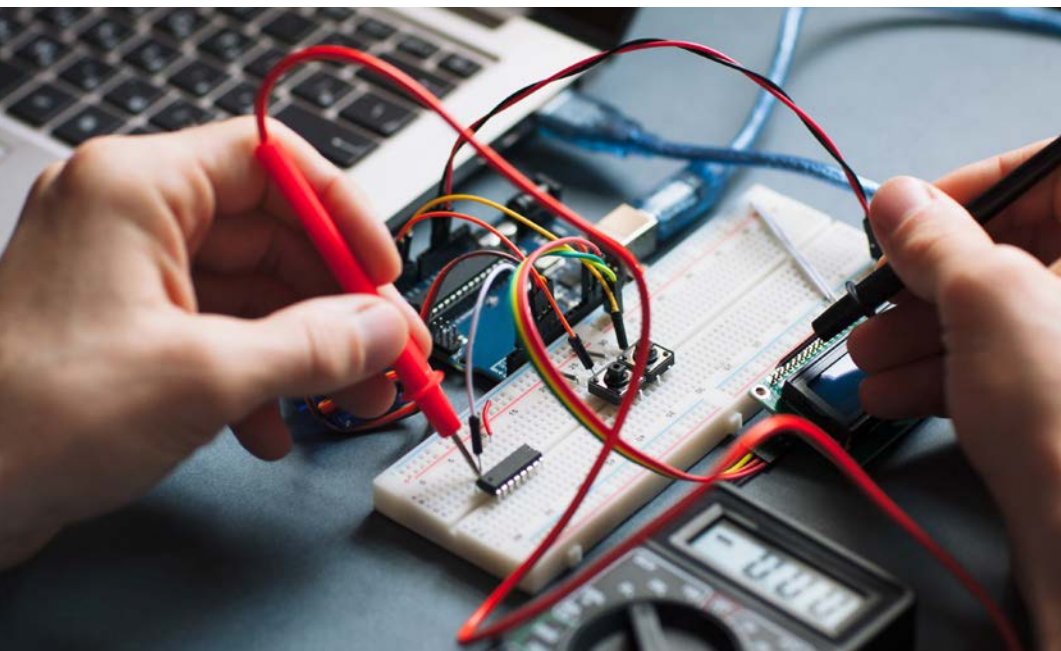
Restricted Electives 6-8 credits

Select from the following list:

IST 106	Spreadsheet Software.....	3
<i>*if did not take as a program requirement</i>		
IST 160	Introduction to Security Fundamentals..	3
IST 166	Computer Forensics I – Principles and Practices	3
IST 173	Database Fundamentals.....	3
<i>*if did not take as a program requirement</i>		
IST 269	Internship I.....	1-3
WEB 101	Web Design I	3

Degree Requirement..... 60

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