

Basic Computer and Learning Skills

ZACU-101 / 2 credits / Prerequisites: none / Assessment: 0-100

Course Description:

This course combines basic computer and learning skills. It introduces students to basic computer operations, including hardware, operating systems, software, virus protection, file organization and backup procedures. The course also examines basic learning skills such as good study habits, touch typing, basic library research, and introductory writing standards needed for assignments.

Course resources:

- *ZACU Course Companion*
- *ZACU Moodle*
- Nissila, Phyllis, Theresa Love, Robbie Pock, and David Pontious. [How to Learn Like a Pro!](#) Oregon: Open Oregon Educational Resources, 2016. (oer)
- Maryland Community College. [Developing Effective Study Habits](#). 2002. (oer)
- University of Texas at Arlington and Open Textbook Library. "[No Limits](#)." (2018). <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/682>. (oer)
- Jeffrey, Robin and Open Textbook Library. [About Writing: A Guide](#). 2016.
- Guptill, A. M. Y. [Writing in College : From Competence to Excellence](#). [S.l.]: Open SUNY Textbooks, 2018.
- [Bruce's Typing Wizard](#) (OER)
- Merrick, Nellie L., Robert Frederick Bown, and August Dvorak. *My Typewriter and I : A Student Typewriting Manual*. New York: American Book Co., 1937.
- Thomas, D. [Computer Basics and Typing Skills](#)." Choma, Zambia: ZACU Press, 2019.

Course Content:

1. Know How You Learn
2. Develop & Maintain Good Learning Habits
3. Find & Use Good Resources
4. Learn to Use Your Tools: Computer Basics
5. Learn From Others
6. Learn to Touch Type
7. Organize Your Work
8. Prepare and Refine Your Work
9. Improve Your Touch Typing
10. Present Your Work: Word Processing, Spreadsheets, and Presentation Software
11. Master Your Touch Typing

Learning Outcomes. Students will be able to:

- Describe the different learning styles
- Explain Gardner's learning intelligences and illustrate with examples
- Describe and demonstrate good learning skills and study habits
- Name the parts of a computer and explain their functions
- Navigate conventional computer interfaces such as Microsoft Windows and/or Ubuntu
- Know to open, close and install essential computer programs
- Know how to create, save, and print word processing and spreadsheet documents
- Know the essential principles of good touch typing
- Touch type at 25 words per minute or better
- Create academic documents in appropriate forms
- Explain the meaning of plagiarism and how to avoid it
- Discuss the role of Christian belief as it relates to this course content.

Assessment

Students' assessments will be weighted according to scale below.

- Assignments = 30%
- Midterm Test = 20%
- Final Examination = 50%

Additionally, students may not be absent for either the midterm test or the final examination. Should a student fail to sit for either of these assessments, he/she will be required to retake the entire course at its next offering.

Week of...	Activity / Study
26th August	Initial sessions with lecturer
2nd September	Initial sessions with lecturer
9th September	Topics 1, 2
16th Sept	Topics 3
23rd Sept	Topics 4
30th Sept	Topics 5, 6
7th October	Review Topics 1-6 / Complete Assignments
14th Oct	Midterm Tutorial / Midterm Test on 19th October (Topics 1-6)
21st Oct	Typing Practice
28th Oct	BREAK WEEK
4th November	Topics 7, 8
11th Nov	Topics 9, 10
18th Nov	Topic 11
25th Nov	Review Topics 7-11 / Complete Assignments / Typing Practice
2nd December	Review All 11 Topics
9th Dec	Review Week / Final Examination (Cumulative, i.e. Topics 1-11)

Topic 1: Know How You Learn

- Discussion: How do you learn?
- **READ:**
 - Creative Commons. ["What's My Learning Style?"](#)
- The concept of different ways of learning
 - Background
 - Discussion and Observations of Examples
 - Overview of Theories regarding ways of learning
- Gardner's Multiple Intelligences
 - [Multiple Intelligences \(An Explanatory Website\)](#)
 - [Gardner's Multiple Intelligences \[pdf summary\]](#)
- Learning style self-assessment
 - Learning Style Inventory (LSI)
 - [Gardner's Online Test](#) (personalitymax.com)
 - [7 Learning Styles Online Test](#)
- **ASSIGNMENTS:**
 - (During initial 2-week Sessions): In your own handwriting, write a 2-page description of how you think you learn best. Be sure to include some specific examples from everyday life to illustrate your point.
 - Home Study: Take one of the online learning style tests above and describe the results in your Notebook.
 - READ/STUDY: Nissla, [Learn Like a Pro!](#) (pp. 11-32).

Topic 2: Develop & Maintain Good Learning Habits

- Discussion: What are good Learning habits?
- **READ:**
 - ZACU Course Companion
 - Nissila, Phyllis, Theresa Love, Robbie Pock, and David Pontious. [How to Learn Like a Pro!](#) Oregon: Open Oregon Educational Resources, 2016.
 - University of Texas at Arlington and Open Textbook Library. "[No Limits.](#)" (2018). <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/682>. (oer)
 - Maryland Community College. [Developing Effective Study Habits](#). 2002.
- **Focus Points:**
 - Management of Time, Tools and Study Environment
 - Resource management
 - Organizational ideas
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - READ/STUDY: Nissila, [Learn Like a Pro!](#) (pp. 33-60).
 - Create a study schedule for yourself. Write the schedule in your Notebook and follow it diligently.
 - Create a resource management system to organize your study notes. Explain the system in your Notebook.
 - Go to Professor Stephen Chew's website about good learning practices: "[Beliefs that Make You Fail ... or Succeed](#)"

Topic 3: Find & Use Good Resources

- Discussion: Where and how can we find good resources?
- **READ:**
 - ZACU Course Companion: "Reading at a College Level" and "Getting the Most Out of Textbooks"
 - Nissila, P. [Learn Like A Pro!](#): "Reading at a College Level" and "Getting the Most Out of Textbooks"
 - Guptill, A. M. Y. [Writing in College : From Competence to Excellence](#). [S.l.]: Open SUNY Textbooks, 2018. Pages 28-48.

- Navigate your resources
 - College Reading Skills
 - Using Textbooks
 - Online Resources
 - Google
 - Google Scholar
 - Relational Resources
 - Teachers and Lecturers
 - Friends
 - Local Experts (via talking and questioning)
 - Distant Experts (via email or otherwise)
 - Written Resources
 - Libraries
 - Printed documents

- Making the best use of available resources
 - Take advantage of local people, facilities, etc.
 - Take the time to go to where you can get resources (e.g., Provincial Library)

- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - READ/STUDY: Nissila, [Learn Like a Pro!](#) (pp. 61-80)
 - Each student will be assigned a different article to read. Write a 2-page summary of the article. Summarize and assess the content of the article, offering your own observations about the content and the writing style. Submit your report to the lecturer at the mid-term.
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Topic 4: Learn to Use Computers and ICT

- Discussion: How have computers changed our world?
- **READ:**
 - ZACU Course Companion: "Computer Basics"
 - Thomas, D. "[Computer Basics and Typing Skills.](#)" Choma, Zambia: ZACU Press, 2019.
- Self-assessment: What is your level of computer knowledge?
 - Which of the following can you do?
 - operate a computer
 - create, edit and save documents
 - install programs on a computer
 - repair a computer
 - What do you think you SHOULD know and would like to learn?
- Know the parts of a computer
 - CPU, hard drive, memory, CD drive, ports
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 - Monitor: adjustments
 - Keyboard: key locations
 - Mouse: How to use
- Know the computer functions
 - Basic office: word processing, spreadsheets, databases, graphics, presentation
 - Educational: learning programs
 - Computation: statistical and mathematical programs
 - Relational: social media, email
 - Informational: internet, document storage and retrieval
- Know computer operations
 - Booting a computer and shutting down correctly
 - Using the mouse and keyboard to navigate Windows and Ubuntu
 - Using cell phones and tablets for computing purposes
 - Useful software for computers and cell phones
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - READ/STUDY: Thomas, "Computer Basics and Typing Skills." Give special attention to the computer section and the information contained therein. Research the details by searching Wikipedia for related articles.
 - Take the Moodle quiz
 - Memorize the computer "shortcuts" listed in Thomas
- [Parts of a computer system Page](#)
- [Computer Basics Quiz](#)

Topic 5: Learn to Touch Type

- Discussion: How long should it take to type a document?
- **READ/PRACTICE:**
 - ZACU Course Companion: "Touch Typing"
 - Merrick, Nellie L., Robert Frederick Bown, and August Dvorak. My Typewriter and I : A Student Typewriting Manual. New York: American Book Co., 1937. (www.archive.org)
 - [*Bruce's Typing Wizard*](#) (OER)
 - Thomas, D. ZACU Typing Exercise Book. Choma, Zambia: ZACU Press, 2019.
- Typing basics
 - 2 cardinal rules of good typing
 1. Hands in home position (i.e., home keys)
 2. Eyes on the screen
 - Location of keys on the QWERTY keyboard
 - Practice the A row, the Q row, and the Z row. See Merrick and Thomas for exercises.
 - Work for accuracy from the beginning
 - Home Keys are shown below:
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - READ/STUDY: Thomas, pages 12-18.
 - Download Bruce's Typing Wizard and install it on your laptop. You may also visit the ZACU Resource Center and practice on the ZACU desktops.
 - Practice typing 30 minutes everyday. Aim for 15 words per minute (wpm).

Topic 6: Learning From Others

- Discussion: How might we utilize others to enhance our learning?
- READ:
 - ZACU Course Companion: "Listening and Note-Taking"
 - Nissila: "Listening and Note-Taking"
- Learning from lecturers and experts
 - Listening well
 - Taking notes
- Techniques for Learning From/With Others:
 - Networking as a means of learning
 - Group study as a means of learning
 - Peer review as a means of learning
- ASSIGNMENT:
 - READ/STUDY: Nissila, Learn Like a Pro! (pp. 85-104)
 - For the next three Sundays, take notes from your pastor's sermons. Describe the results in your notebook.

Topic 7: Organize Your Work

- Discussion: Are you organized?
 - If so, why?
 - If not, why not?
 - How can you improve your organizational skills?
 - Who do you know that is VERY organized?
- READ:
 - ZACU Course Companion: "Management of Time"
 - Nissila: "Management of Time"
- Organizational Ideas
 - schedule your work time
 - arrange your work material systematically
 - be selective about what you do
- ASSIGNMENT:
 - Interview an organized friend, asking for suggestions about how he/she organizes their materials and schedules. Describe the conversation in writing in your notebook. Note which techniques might be helpful to you to improve your organizational skills.
 - Download a file organizer app to your smartphone. Create different folders on your memory card according to logical categories. Organize the documents stored on your phone's memory card into your different folders.

Topic 8: Improve Your Typing

- Be disciplined: home keys, don't look at keys
- READ/CONSULT/PRACTICE:
 - Smith, Nelson, Marrick and Thomas
- **ASSIGNMENTS:**
 - increase speed without sacrificing accuracy
 - add the numbers to your practicing
 - add the auxiliary keys (shift, enter, tab, backspace)
 - practice every day for 20 minutes

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Topic 9: Prepare and Refine Your Work

Prepare and Refine Your Work

- Train yourself to edit as you write.
- Be diligent about editing.
- Get others to help edit your work.
- Some writing basics:
 - Do not write like you talk.
 - Double check your work. Use correct grammar.
 - Ask someone else to read and correct it.
 - Use correct formatting. Be consistent.
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - **READ/CONSULT:**
 - Guptill, A. M. Y. [Writing in College: From Competence to Excellence](#). (Product Id 23857335). [S.1]: OPEN SUNY TEXTBOOKS, 2018. (oer)
 - Jeffrey, Robin and Open Textbook Library. [About Writing: A Guide](#). 2016. (oer)
 - Continue to consult these two books throughout the first term and beyond. They will help you improve your writing.
 - Write a 3-page description of a local event. Ask a friend to read and correct your description. Discuss with your friend the various corrections and find out why they were made. Write a report in your notebook describing this exercise. What is threatening to have someone read your work? If so, why? What did you find helpful?

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Topic 10: Present Your Work: Word Processing, Spreadsheets, and Presentation Software

- Present Your Work: Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Presentation Software
 - Aim for excellence in what you produce.
- **RESOURCES:**
 - Thomas, D. "[Computer Basics and Typing Skills.](#)" Choma, Zambia: ZACU Press, 2019.
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- Word processing
 - The basics
 - Creating, saving, printing a document
 - Formatting a document
 - Using shortcuts
 - Libre Writer vs. Microsoft Word
- Spreadsheets
 - The basics
 - Creating, saving, printing a document
 - Cells, Rows, Columns, Sheets
 - Simple functions and how to use them
 - Moderately complex functions
 - Libre Calc versus Excel
- Presentation software
 - The Basics
 - Creating, saving, printing
 - Slides, Text, Graphics, Transitions, Actions
 - Imbedding links, videos, audio
 - Libre Impress versus Microsoft Power Point
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - READ/STUDY: Thomas
 - Practice creating word processing, spreadsheets and presentation documents.
 - Create a 2-page mock project report in a word processor (perhaps describing a fictitious business idea). Then create a spreadsheet showing the projected costs and potential income of the idea. Copy and paste the spreadsheet into the mock report.

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Topic 11: Master Your Typing

- Type 20 minutes every day.
- READ/PRACTICE:
 - Smith, Nelson, Marrick, Thomas
- **ASSIGNMENTS:**
 - Work to increase your speed without sacrificing accuracy.
 - Aim for 40 words per minute (25 wpm is passing for this course)
 - Add the remaining keys: numbers, quotation marks, special symbols, control keys, etc.
 - Practice typing full sentences and paragraphs.

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Topic 12: Writing and Learning Standards for Undergraduates

Topic 12: Writing and Learning Standards for ZACU Undergraduates

- Discussion: At what level should Zambian university students write?
- READ or CONSULT:
 - Jeffrey, Robin and Open Textbook Library. [About Writing: A Guide](#). 2016. (oer)
 - Guphill, A. M. Y. [Writing in College: From Competence to Excellence](#). [S.L]: Open SUNY Textbooks, 2018. (oer)
- Writing basics
 - Grammar
 - Writing style
 - Formatting (font size, justification, etc.)
- Honesty and Integrity
 - Quotation, borrowing, citation
 - Plagiarism and the consequences
- Honoring Christian values in academic writing
 - Honesty
 - Abusive writing
 - Truth in academic writing
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 - Review the resources above regarding the topics shown here.
 - Memorize the proof-reading marks in Thomas.