

Computing as a University Graduation Requirement

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Computing is everywhere, and it's here to stay. Computing is crucial in many disciplines and influences every discipline. It's unlikely we'll willingly return to a society unmediated by computing. How do our institutions proceed?

This BoF asks, "Should computing be a requirement for all college and university students?"

Some say yes, citing potential for improving equity-of-access, for expanding students' capabilities, for diversifying the people who understand and critique computing, and for increasing the diversity of computing participation. Some say no, citing the lack of equity-of-outcomes, the infeasibility of teaching all students equitably, and students' need for freedom in choosing what they study. Some say, "Let's consider the spectrum of possibilities..."

This session will discuss these possibilities, expressed and constrained by 2024's forces. Is computing's value saturated - or soon to be? Or is computing a meta-skill, whose practice in learning-to-learn amplifies individual efficacy along all paths? Is Computing1 too gate-kept to be as equitable a GenEd as Composition1? Or does requiring computing, in fact, help dismantle those gates? Can students adequately learn about core computing concepts via non-CS courses that use computing? What might required computing entail?

We invite and welcome all with an interest in computing-as-degree-requirement, program-requirement, or GenEd offering. The session's seed materials will highlight evidence against the idea, for the idea, and across its vast, uncertain middle. Our BoF proposers include researchers and educators, both non-CS-requiring and CS-requiring, as well as non-CS-required and CS-required "educatees." Join us!

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