

## THE C PROGRAMMING COURSE CONTINUES IN ACCREDITED BUSINESS SCHOOLS

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### ABSTRACT

*C programming language is included in many college and university programs in response to the demand for C programmers. The language is reviewed for course data, hardware and software, course content, textbooks used, and programming assignments and trends are analyzed.*

**Keywords:** C programming language, course content, trends in C programming courses

### INTRODUCTION

Periodic reviews of curricula and course content are important if business schools are to keep abreast of the needs of business and industry. Reviews are particularly important in dynamic disciplines such as computer information systems (CIS) and management information systems (MIS). COBOL has been the mainstay of computer languages included in business school information systems degree programs from their inception (Arnett and Jones 1993; Bauman, Pierson and Forcht 1991; Glass 1997; Larabee 1992; Lee, Trauth, and Farwell, 1995; Rose 1995; Srinivasan, Guan, and Wright 1999). In recent years there has been an increasing demand for graduates of information systems programs to have a basic knowledge of the C programming language (Arnett and Jones 1993; Baer 1995; Longenecker, Feinstein, Fournier, Claborn, and Reaugh 1992; Kemby 1999).

C was developed in the early 1970s by Dennis Ritchie of Bell Labs. C has proven to be an excellent language for developing programs on microcomputers: its speed approaches assembly language, and its portability eases code transfer to a variety of personal computer architectures. For these reasons, C programming language has led to a large increase in UNIX applications. Over the past five years, the demand for MIS and CIS graduates with knowledge of the C language has increased and that trend is expected to continue.

In response to the demand for C programmers, colleges and universities have included the language in their undergraduate offerings. This paper profiles the current introductory C programming courses and makes longitudinal comparisons with C programming courses offered in 1993. The data obtained relate only to courses offered through American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited business schools.

### METHODOLOGY & RESULTS

A questionnaire was sent to the deans of approximately 100 schools in the United States with undergraduate business schools accredited by the AACSB. The current year surveys are currently being analyzed and the results will be reported at the conference. The findings will be presented in five categories: course data, hardware and software, course content, textbooks used, and programming assignments. A comparison of the current year study will be compared with the 1993 findings to determine any significant trends.

*References available from first author upon request.*