

## From Player to Programmer: Choosing BSCS and BSIT for the Right Reasons

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*Her dissertation, "AI-Driven Learning Management System Integration to Selected Local Colleges in CALABARZON: A Readiness Assessment Framework," has been published internationally, reflecting her passion for innovative educational technologies and her commitment to advancing education through research.*

*Since 2008, she has served as an educator at the City College of Calamba, where she has been part of shaping students' lives for more than a decade. Professionally, she has worn many hats—serving as a Capstone Research Facilitator, the former IT Cluster Head, and now as the Director of the Management Information Systems (MIS) Office.*

*She was born to the late Mr. Abner A. Alava Sr. and Mrs. Minerva B. Alava, who are now peacefully resting and awaiting Christ's return. She is the third of four siblings: her older sisters, Jennifer and Jhoana Alava, are both nurses working in the United Kingdom, while her younger brother, Abner Alava Jr., is based in Canada.*

*Beyond her academic and professional accomplishments, her most cherished roles are outside the office—being a devoted mother to her exceptional children, Von and Chesca, and a loving wife to her husband, Gary. Her journey is a testament to the fact that while titles and achievements bring honor, the accurate measure of life lies in faith, family, and service to God and others.*

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Every enrollment season, I meet students excited to take up the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS) or the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT). When I ask what inspired their choice, one answer frequently stands out:  
*"Because I'm good at online games."*

As a college professor in the Computer Department and as an MIS Director, I understand where this confidence comes from. Gaming builds familiarity with technology. It develops strategy, fast decision-making, and teamwork. But over the years, I have also witnessed a crucial realization among many students:

Being good at games is not the same as being ready for computing.

## What Students Discover in Their First Year

In the classroom, students quickly encounter subjects such as:

- Programming Fundamentals
- Discrete Mathematics
- Data Structures and Algorithms
- Database Management
- Networking and Cybersecurity

At this point, many are surprised. Coding is not about speed—it is about logic. Debugging is not about reflex—it is about patience. System development is not about winning—it is about solving real-world problems.

I have seen talented gamers struggle with their first programming project. I have also seen quiet, determined students—who were not gamers at all—excel because they were willing to think deeply and work consistently.

As the Bible reminds us:

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.”— Colossians 3:23  
Success in BSCS and BSIT is built on dedication, not digital hobby.

## Lessons from the MIS Office

Beyond teaching, my role as MIS Director allows me to see the professional side of Information Technology. Our office manages systems that support operations, data, security, and institutional processes.

In real-world IT:

- There is no reset button when a server crashes.
- There is no second life when data is lost.
- There is no shortcut when cybersecurity is compromised.

Technology professionals carry responsibility. They safeguard information. They maintain infrastructure. They ensure continuity.

This is why choosing a computing course must be intentional.

“For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost?”— Luke 14:28

Before enrolling in BSCS or BSIT, students must count the cost: time, effort, mental endurance, and discipline.

## When Gaming Becomes a Calling

Does this mean gaming has no place in computing? Not at all.

Gaming can spark curiosity:

- How are games built?
- How does artificial intelligence behave?
- How do servers support thousands of players?

When a student moves from simply playing to wanting to create, something powerful happens. Passion transforms into purpose.

I have proudly watched former “gamers” become software developers, system analysts, and IT professionals—not because they played well, but because they chose to grow beyond the screen.

“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”— Proverbs 16:3

### **A Message to Future IT Students**

If you are planning to enroll in BSCS or BSIT, ask yourself:

- Do I enjoy solving complex problems?
- Am I willing to spend hours debugging code?
- Can I handle mathematical and analytical subjects?
- Am I ready to turn interest into expertise?

Gaming is entertainment.

Computing is a discipline.

Information Technology is a service.

Choose your course not just because you are confident with a controller or keyboard—but because you are ready to build, innovate, and serve.

### **Final Reflection**

As a professor and MIS Director, my greatest fulfillment is not seeing students win tournaments—it is seeing them:

- Successfully defend their capstone projects
- Deploy systems that help offices operate efficiently
- Secure meaningful employment in the tech industry
- Use their skills ethically and responsibly

From player to programmer, from gamer to developer—the journey is possible. But it requires more than skill. It requires commitment, character, and calling.