History was always a part of the arts, mathematics, and the sciences. Many examples exist at the college or university level where courses such as history of music, history of mathematics, or cosmological history is a natural part of an education in these fields. For the computing discipline, however, history seldom receives such status. From a cultural standpoint, history broadens one’s perspective on the field and lets students and scholars explore the inner thinking of people and the events they produced. From a practical standpoint, history enables individuals and enterprises to learn from the events of the past and to improve on experiences. Both views are necessary to create an informed computing professional. Teachers often ignore history of computing when teaching their computing courses. The typical case is that educators mention some facts or important milestones usually related to hardware and the people responsible for these. The discussion then moves quickly to other topics. This is unfortunate, because we can learn much from history. History is the best teacher to assess the meaningful evolution of the computing profession. The IFIP Joint (TC3-TC9) Task Group has examined this concern and is producing a report entitled: History in the Computing Curriculum. The report addresses the need to include history in the curriculum and serves as a basis for this proposal. It also provides educators, whose formal study of computing history is minimal or nonexistent, ways in which to teach computing history in an educational environment. This Interactive Session presents the work of the IFIP Joint Task Group to a computing and engineering audience. It also seeks to exchange ideas on how educators can teach computing history in a computing curriculum. The presenters will solicit opinion from the FIE ’98 attendees and will have a summary of the report available for them.

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