ARCHITECTURE | Computer Guidelines
Guidance on Computer Acquisitions for Undergraduate Architecture Students

A computer with a webcam and microphone is required for the first week of the semester for online students. Students will use the computer for Zoom, Conceptboard, and Adobe Creative Cloud.

The investment in a good workstation and large screen monitor is recommended as soon as possible and before the second year.

If this is a new purchase, we recommend getting a "desktop computer" over a "laptop," as they can be upgraded as needed and allows the student to get as large a monitor as possible – we recommend at least 24" or larger.

For students who prefer Apple computers, we recommend Macbook Pro attached to a larger monitor, or an iMac Pro. You will need to purchase and install Windows separately. This will require a minimum of 16GB memory.

Minimum Specifications for Undergraduate Online Students

- Windows Operating System
- Processor/CPU: Intel i5 (minimum), Intel i7 or AMD Ryzen 7 series, or greater, preferred.
- RAM: 16GB (minimum)
- Graphics Card/GPU: Nvidia Quadro/RTX 3060 or greater, AMD Firepro/Radeon 6000 or greater. "Integrated Graphics" such as Intel Iris Xe are not dedicated graphics processors and insufficient for supporting 3d design program rendering.
- Hard Drive: 512GB SSD minimum, 1TB+ preferred. USB hard drives for general mass storage are perfectly okay to use. Always back up your data to a second location!

When searching for a computer to purchase, we recommend using the term "Workstation" in your searches. This is a class of computer built to handle high software loads and long running time. However, due to their more powerful hardware, they are more expensive. They are almost always only available made-to-order online through the manufacturer's website.

Here are some examples for making comparisons. While specific models listed are not required, we recommend comparable options.

Recommended Examples:

MSI WS/GS
Dell Precision
Asus Strix
Windows Surface Pro
HP ZBook Razer Blade Pro

James Ryan
Lab Manager, School of Architecture | Interior Architecture and Design | Landscape Architecture
JRyan@academyart.edu