Computer Requirements

Northwestern's minimum computer recommendations are intended to ensure that the laptop you purchase will meet the requirements for the coursework in your academic program throughout your university career. Below are recommendations and minimum requirements for Windows and Macintosh laptops. You may wish to contact your Faculty Advisor for any course or major specific recommendations they may have for their students.

Some Northwestern websites and services are primarily designed to work with Windows and Internet Explorer; most will work on Mac OS X and Safari, but we are aware that you may occasionally encounter compatibility issues when using Mac OS X. Other operating systems are not recommended for use at Northwestern outside of Mac OSX and Windows due to incompatibility reasons.

Windows Hardware Recommendations

Most laptops purchased in the last four years should meet these requirements:

- **CPU**: Intel Core i3, i5, i7 or AMD equivalent *(We recommend i5 or higher)*
- **Memory**: 4GB or more *(Recommended: 8GB+)*
- **Network**: standard configuration should be accurate (May need to purchase additional ethernet cable adapter depending on the model)
- **Network Cable:** We recommend students bring their own 14-foot or longer Cat-6 ethernet network cable
- **Hard Disk**: 120GB or larger *(If buying new we recommend solid state hard drives)*
- **Portable Storage:** A USB flash drive is recommended (8GB or larger) or USB external hard drive
- **Warranty:** Each student is strongly encouraged to have an extended warranty to cover the life of their laptop (3-4 years). This will help prevent unplanned costs and downtime for the student, or parents, in the event of a hardware malfunction or failure.

Windows Software Requirements

- **Operating System:** Windows 7 SP1, Windows 8/8.1, Windows 10
- **Antivirus**: Northwestern requires that all students have an Antivirus Program installed on their computer with up to date virus definitions before they are allowed to access on the network.

- **Office Suite:** Microsoft Office 2007, 2010, or 2013 is recommended. All UNW students have free access to Office 365 for their computer and mobile devices upon enrollment and can obtain the latest version of Microsoft Office Suite here.

Mac Hardware Recommendations

Most Mac laptops purchased in the last four years will meet the minimum requirements:
- **CPU**: Intel processor (standard configuration is adequate)
- **Memory**: 8GB or more (Recommended: 8GB)
- **Network**: standard configuration is adequate (May need to purchase additional ethernet cable adapter depending on the model)
- **Network cable:** We recommend students bring their own 14-foot or longer Cat-6 ethernet network cable
- **Hard Disk**: 120GB or larger
- **Portable Storage**: A USB flash drive is recommended (8GB or larger) or USB external hard drive
- **Warranty**: Each student is strongly encouraged to purchase AppleCare for their laptop (3 years). This will help prevent unplanned costs and downtime for the student, or parents, in the event of a hardware malfunction or failure.

Mac Software Requirements
- **Operating System**: Mac OS X 10.10 Mavericks or above
- **Antivirus:** Northwestern requires that all students have an Antivirus Program installed on their computer with up to date virus definitions before they are allowed to access on the network.
- **Office Suite:** Microsoft Office 2010, 2013 or 2016 is recommended. All UNW students have free access to Office 365 for their computer and mobile devices upon enrollment and can obtain the latest version of Microsoft Office Suite here.

Student Computer Discounts

- Dell: Please visit our UNW Dell Store for discounts on computers at http://premier.dell.com/portal/messages.aspx?c=US&l=en&s=eep&cs=RC1376342. Enter member ID below.
- Member ID: **US126417147**

- Apple: If you can visit store.apple.com and click "Education Store" to receive an education discount.

Netbooks and Chromebooks

Netbooks or Chromebooks, may be a desirable alternative to a laptop and are usually acceptable provided the netbook closely matches the recommendations listed above. However, they will <u>not</u> meet your needs as a student or course-work requirements for your area of study. You may wish to contact your Academic Advisor for specific recommendations they may have.

Tablets

A tablet can be a great companion tool for use at Northwestern; most major brand Android, Apple iOS, and Windows Mobile tablets can be registered on the Northwestern wireless network. However, some tablets are not compatible with all campus websites and services and may not meet all your needs as a student. A tablet is <u>not</u> recommended as a standalone substitute in place of a laptop at this time.