2015 COMPUTER PURCHASING GUIDE

First year students (both undergraduate and graduate) are required to have a laptop in their first semester. These recommendations are meant to serve as a guide to aid in your purchasing decision.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR HELP

If you have any questions, you can call or visit the NinerTech Computer Store, which is a great on-campus computing resource for UNC Charlotte students located in the Student Union. NinerTech carries everything that is recommended in this guide, and customizes hardware and software bundles for students. They also offer sales and repair services for Apple, HP, and Dell computers. Don’t hesitate to contact the department with additional questions. As well, you can contact Gary Hunter by email at garyhunter@uncc.edu or by phone at 704-687-0154 with any questions you may have.

STEP 1: PICK A SYSTEM (MAC OR PC)

The SoA highly recommends purchasing a 15” Apple MacBook Pro for all first year students. While the MacBook Pro is not a requirement, the department recommends it because the overall quality is much higher than comparable non-Apple laptops, and the MBPs have proven to last longer. The majority of the computing labs in the Storrs building are equipped with Apple iMacs, and all architecture faculty use Apple computers. Many architecture students have chosen to go with the Apple MacBook Pro because you can run either Mac or Windows on the same laptop. While the department may not recommend any other laptops, we do recognize you should decide on a computer that works best for you. If you choose to go with a different computer, you should try to match or exceed the specs for the machines listed below. We have included a sample PC laptop that could meet the student’s needs. The NinerTech Computer Store can help you find a HP or Dell that matches or exceeds the SoA recommended configuration.

RECOMMENDED LAPTOP CONFIGURATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
<th>Example Windows</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screen Size</td>
<td>Diagonal measurement</td>
<td>At least 13”</td>
<td>15”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPU</td>
<td>How fast it runs</td>
<td>2.0GHz</td>
<td>2.5 GHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>How much it can think about at the same time</td>
<td>8GB</td>
<td>16GB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics Card</td>
<td>How it draws pictures, a good computer has a dedicated one</td>
<td>Dedicated video card needed for Autodesk and Adobe applications</td>
<td>NVIDIA GeForce GT 750M with 2GB GDDR5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drive</td>
<td>How much work can be saved to the computer</td>
<td>500GB</td>
<td>512GB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NinerTech Price</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2299.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warranty</td>
<td>To protect your investment</td>
<td>At Least 1 year</td>
<td>NinerCare 4 Years Additional: ($349)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Can run Mac OS and Windows OS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
STEP 2: WARRANTIES & INSURANCE

The SoA highly recommends the purchase of a warranty and insurance for your laptop. There are two Different kinds of warranties to consider. The first is the extended/manufacturer’s warranty. This covers the machine if it fails for some reason due to the design or components. The second kind is accidental damage, which covers the machine regardless of what happens, including spills, drops, and acts of nature.

STEP 3: SOFTWARE

First year undergraduate and graduate students will need the following software:
- Microsoft Office is available free of charge for all students. For more information see the MS Office 365 download page.
- Adobe Creative Cloud ($239.88 for a yearly subscription)
- Windows $129 and Parallels $39.99 (if purchased with computer installed free of charge)

First year graduate students will need the additional software:
- Google/Trimble SketchUp Pro ($49)

In the same way a textbook purchase would be required for a class, additional software purchases may be requested by individual professors or desired by students. The university provides some free software for students registered for classes in the current term such as MS Office, Antivirus software, and a few more. For more information see the ITS Services software downloads page. By waiting to purchase software until it is needed, you will be able to purchase the most up-to-date version and avoid the burden of upgrading software that may not have been used. The following are applications available in the SoA computing labs and may be required by courses: Adobe Acrobat Pro, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Photoshop, Design Builder, Apple iWorks, Nemetschek Vectorworks*, AutoDesk 3DS Max*, AutoDesk AutoCAD*, AutoDesk Revit*, ARC GIS, Google SketchUp Pro, McNeel Rhino, Microsoft Office*, and Strand 7 to name the most commonly used programs (others may be added by faculty).

If you purchase a MacBook Pro at the NinTech Computer Store, they can install your laptop with one of various software packages. The install process could take up to two additional business days.

* These applications are free to download for UNC Charlotte students.

STEP 4: RECOMMENDED PORTABLE EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE

Each Architecture student will be required to purchase a portable external hard drive (portable means no additional power supply, just a USB/Thunderbolt connection to the computer). These drives will be required for all courses that use the computing labs. It has two important functions: 1) to store files that are used in the computer labs, and 2) to be used as a back-up drive for laptops. Recommended minimum size is 750 GB. The following are recommended drives:
- Western Digital My Passport
- G-Technology G-DRIVE mobile Portable Hard Drive
- LaCie Rugged All-Terrain Hard Drive

STEP 5: LAPTOP SECURITY CABLE LOCK

The Storrs building is a relatively secure location on campus. It is a well-lit, open space, which is typically populated 24 hours a day. However, it is very important that you understand the SoA can make no guarantees for the security of your privately owned computing equipment and that you are ultimately responsible for the safety of your computer. To provide increased protection, the department recommends a high quality security cable lock for your laptop. The Kensington Laptop Lock products are great, and can be found for under $50.

STEP 6: OTHER RECOMMENDED ITEMS

The following are not required but are useful items:
- USB Flatbed Scanner
- Bluetooth or USB Mouse
- Durable Laptop Carrying Case
- Surge Protector/UPS
- Laptop Skin/Shell
- Ethernet Cable
- Digital Camera
- Inkjet Printer