College of Sciences and Humanities

Computer Recommendations   ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-25

The purpose of this Computer Recommendations policy is to assist students in making choices about computer acquisition that will optimize their learning experience during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Students in the College of Sciences and Humanities should prepare for a flexible learning experience; social distancing restrictions will limit student ability to utilize campus computer labs at any given moment. Thus because much academic work at Ball State University involves the use of computers and specialized software, students need to have either a **Windows or Macintosh OS computer** for on-campus and online learning. These computers should have a **keyboard, speakers, microphone, and web camera** in order to succeed in the multimodal HyFlex environment of on-campus, online, and hybrid learning modes. Students should also plan ahead to have access to a reliable off-campus internet connection because it may become necessary.

Students may be able to complete the requirements for **some** courses in **some** disciplines using smartphones, tablets, or Chromebooks. However, these will not suffice to meet all instructional expectations of all courses in academic majors and Core Curriculum courses in the College of Sciences and Humanities, especially with regard to certain software packages and online testing including (e.g.) SPSS, Minitab, ArcGIS Pro and Respondus Lockdown Browser. Hence, the College of Sciences and Humanities strongly recommends that students bring either a Windows (PC) or Macintosh OS (Apple) computer to campus. Note: Windows 10 in S-mode is a limited performance machine, and not optimal.

The College does not make specific recommendations as to which PC type students purchase; but Dell products, Apple products, and Adobe are available at the campus Technology Store. BSU's Information Technology Services brochure recommends the following specifications in purchasing new computers:

- **Processor:** Intel i5 (minimum), i7(preferred), or equivalent
- **Memory (RAM):** 8 GB (minimum), 16 GB or more (preferred)
- **Storage:** 256 GB (minimum); 512 GB or more (preferred)
- **Network Card:** 802.11ac
- **Operating System:** Windows 10 64-bit / Mac OS Mojave or newer

An i5 processor, 8GB of RAM, and either Windows 8.1 or Mac OS High Sierra will be workable if you have an older computer.

While most new computers that have the features listed above will suffice, you should consult with your intended major department if you have an older computer or think your major may require the use of highly specialized software.

It is the responsibility of the student to purchase and maintain their computers and software required for their coursework. There are resources available on campus to assist students with computer-related technical issues at Tech Time and Hardware Repair to complete warrantied work on Apple and Dell products. Students will need to back up their work and seek out alternatives if their computer fails, is lost or stolen, or must be shipped for repair.

Students have access to Microsoft Office (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and online file storage through Microsoft OneDrive online storage, which is included with your Ball State Office365 account. You have access to online file storage in this service as long as you remain a Ball State student. A flash drive or an external hard drive are useful for backup and transferring files.