

# Interdisciplinary Design major Computer Requirements

All Interdisciplinary Design students who do not own a laptop computer with the specifications listed below will need to purchase one during their first semester of the major. This allows students to work on their own computer in classes. This page provides some recommendations to consider when choosing a computer. In general, purchasing a computer with a faster processor, more memory, and a better graphics card is worth the extra investment as it will extend the useful life of the machine. Consider purchasing a carrying case and AppleCare or an equivalent protection plan for your new computer. Our current advice for laptop purchases includes the following minimum requirements:

**Updated 06/10/2026**

## Operating System

Choose a computer with the latest version of either macOS or Microsoft® Windows®. When deciding whether to purchase a Windows or Mac computer, research the system recommendations for specific software that you intend to use. Some programs will run on only one operating system or the other. Others have specific requirements concerning graphic cards. Many applications for Linux can be run on macOS or via WSL on Windows.

## Processor

**Windows System Processor:** Latest multi-Core Intel i-Series, Xeon®, or AMD® equivalent with 2.5 GHz minimum and 3GHz or higher processor is recommended

**Apple System Processor:** 64-bit Intel CPU or Apple M series CPU

## Graphics Card (GPU)

If you intend to use the laptop for graphics-intensive applications – such as 3D animation, video editing, or photorealistic rendering – you should consider purchasing a laptop with a Class 1, 2, or 3 graphics card (GPU) as shown in this cross-reference list. Class 4 and lower cards found in lower-end Microsoft Surface and MacBook laptops are not suitable for graphics-intensive work. If you intend to work in depth with AI and machine learning, 16GB of VRAM is recommended. Use the above comparison chart to determine how much VRAM is available on each graphics card.

**Memory:** 32 GB or higher is recommended

**Hard Drive:** SSD (Solid State Drive) storage of 512 GB is recommended.

## Software

- A subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud is recommended
- [Autodesk](#) provides free software for students, including Maya and Fusion 360
- [Microsoft Office 365](#) is available to all students for free
- Cloud storage on [Microsoft OneDrive](#) is also available free of charge

**Display:** 1920x1080 (higher resolution recommended but might impact performance).

**Pointing Device:** external mouse with at least 3 buttons.

### **Printer**

Students are strongly advised to purchase a desktop color printer with scanning capabilities. Printing paper size is 8.5 x 11.

On campus, computers with printers are available in WJB 1023 and in Strozier library.

### **Scanning**

Students are encouraged to find a suitable scanning application that can be added to the phone that they carry. On campus, computers with printers are available in WJB 1023 and in Strozier library.

### **Additional needs**

Students may want to purchase an **external hard drive** (USB-C, USB 3.0, or Thunderbolt recommended) to back up laptop. Also, have a couple of **thumb/flash drives** on hand to easily transport information between the computers in the department and your laptop.

**Adapters** to allow you to connect USB devices to your computer's USB-C ports

### **Purchasing**

Computers, software, and accessories can be purchased at a discount through the FSU bookstore on campus or [via their website](#).