

Western's Computer Requirement

Western Carolina University strives to ensure that students have access to the highest quality education, taking maximum advantage of the changes in information and communications technologies. Since 1998, all newly admitted degree-seeking undergraduate students have been required to have an appropriate, networkable computer. This requirement has also applied to readmitted students since Fall 2001. The computer requirement includes a software and hardware component. A student laptop requirement for all students, except distance learning students and some part-time students is in effect for the Fall 2009 semester. For further information, see the WCU IT web site at www.wcu.edu/it.

students who are purchasing a computer

The University requires students to bring a laptop computer.

The hardware configurations that are the industry standard in the summer of 2009 are the recommended configurations for '09-'10 school year. The recommended *preferred* hardware configurations for a newly purchased computer are as follows:

Windows System	Macintosh System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 2.4 GHz Processor Core 2 Duo (or 2.2 GHz Core 2 Duo Processor for notebooks) o 2 GB RAM o 250 GB hard drive for desktop/ 80 GB hard drive for laptop o LCD flat panel display or color monitor o Combo Drive (DVD-ROM/CD-RW) o Built in Ethernet (on-campus) or suitable Internet connectivity (off-campus students) o USB, PCI, or Firewire expansion capability o Operating System: Least expensive operating system as students can upgrade to Windows Vista with our campus agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 2.4 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo or higher processor o 2 GB RAM o 250 GB hard drive for desktop/laptops o LCD flat panel display or Color monitor o Combo Drive (DVD-ROM/CD-RW) o Apple Integrated Ethernet Adapter (on-campus students) or suitable Internet connectivity (off-campus students) o USB, PCI, or Firewire expansion capability o Operating System: OS X Leopard

REQUIRED SOFTWARE - Microsoft Office Software

ATTENTION PARENTS & STUDENTS: WCU has signed an agreement/contract with Microsoft Corporation to provide students the Microsoft Office software as a download free of charge. Windows Vista is available for purchase from our Walk Up Help Desk. The cost is \$10 and must be in the form of CatCash on a CatCard.



For Windows: Microsoft Office 2007 Professional Edition (Access, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Publisher, Word)

For Macintosh: Microsoft Office 2008 for Mac

Antivirus: Students are required to install and maintain current antivirus software in order to connect to WCU's computer network. WCU has licensed Symantec's Endpoint Antivirus for student use at no additional cost to the student.

For more information on student computing, visit <http://www.wcu.edu/10627.asp> or call the ITS Help Desk at 828-227-7487 or toll free 866-928-7487. The WCU bookstore also stocks a number of products to help students meet the current computer requirement. Please check the WCU Bookstore for academic pricing on other software and hardware accessories. The phone number for the Bookstore is (828) 227-7346. Their web address is <http://books.wcu.edu>.

purchase of computers

Western Carolina University has designated Dell and Apple as the primary vendors for the purchase of computers. Students may purchase computers and required software from any vendor. However, machines purchased from our selected vendors through the university-endorsed vendor websites will be preconfigured for easy connection to the university's network and will include all required hardware at an educational discount.

Computers purchased through the Dell and Apple vendors will not have the Microsoft Office suites installed. However, the software is available as a download from <http://www.wcu.edu/10608.asp>

Please visit the Information Technology Services Web site at <http://www.wcu.edu/10625.asp> for more details on the purchase of computers from our selected vendors through the university-endorsed websites.

students who already own a computer

Students who already own a computer may not need to purchase one. Most computers running Windows XP/Vista or Macintosh computers running system OS X or higher should connect to the university's network with an appropriate network interface card or modem. A minimum of 2 GB memory is essential, as is an appropriate sized hard drive. All computers should have either a DVD Combo drive (preferred) or a CD-R/CD-RW drive. Systems must be capable of connecting to Western's network and utilize a WCU-supported OS and a supported version of Microsoft Office. Systems having less than this minimum specification will not perform satisfactorily or meet WCU's computer requirement. Due to limitations, Windows XP/Vista Home Edition is NOT supported.

network and Internet connectivity

Students living on campus access the Internet via WCU's high-speed network. Students living off-campus are required to obtain appropriate connectivity through an external Internet Service Provider (ISP) to access the various university computing resources. In our area Broadband access is available via the local cable company, and DSL is often available from our local telephone company. Dialup access is available through ISP's such as AOL and Verizon. Off-campus students may need to purchase additional equipment beyond what is required for students living on campus in order to connect to the Internet and WCU's Web-based resources, e.g., cable modem, 56K modem.