

College of Education Computing Policy

University of South Alabama Access Requirement

All students enrolled at the University of South Alabama are required to have access to a personal computer. This may be achieved by individual ownership, access to a family machine when residing at home, sharing with a roommate or other suitable arrangements. University public PC laboratories are not sufficient. This access must include a current version of the Microsoft® Office® software suite including Word® and Excel®, access to the University's e-mail system and access to the Internet for research and coursework purposes. Individual programs may have additional requirements specific to their curriculum.

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What is the requirement?

The College of Education requires all students who are pursuing a degree in designated programs to own or have access to a personal portable laptop computer or equivalent device and accessories that conform to the College's current minimum standards:

1. Minimum Hardware Requirements

- Processor:** 2.0 GHz processor
- RAM:** 2 GB
- Hard Drive:** 250 GB
- Optical Drive:** DVD/CD-RW
- Network Connectivity:** Wi-Fi (802.11 b/g/n)
- Webcam**
- Audio Input/Output (Headphones and Microphone)**
- External Storage Device:** 16 GB (e.g., USB flash drive)

2. Operating System Requirements

- Operating System:** Windows or Mac OSX

3. Software Requirements (Software requirements vary from class to class.)

- Productivity software (word processing, email, spreadsheet, presentation, and internet access) must be compatible with Microsoft Office Suite**
- Internet browser (at least two of the following: IE, Firefox, Chrome, Safari)**
- Antivirus software (recommended)**

4. Other

- Technical Support:** Three Year Service/Maintenance plan (recommended)
- Accidental Damage Plan or Insurance:** (recommended)

Who is affected by this policy?

This policy is required of all students pursuing a degree in the following program(s):
Undergraduates admitted to candidacy in K-6 Elementary Teacher Education
Undergraduates admitted to candidacy in Secondary Teacher Education

What is the purpose of this requirement?

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students have adequate access to a broad range of computing resources and have an extensive working knowledge of the use of powerful modern digital technologies. As a result, students should be able:

- to use internet instructional resources;
- to create electronic documents;
- to understand and use data management systems;
- to create and use multimedia materials;
- to create and edit digital video;
- to access printers and other available resources on campus and in partner schools, agencies, and work sites;
- to collect and analyze student and client data; and,
- to allow easy communication and portability of curriculum materials between home, university, and field sites.

Instructors may require students to make use of portable computing, information gathering, and communication tools and resources throughout the semester, including the first day of a course. Lack of access will not excuse the student from class expectations and requirements. The College of Education requirement applies to all affected students as individuals and shared use of devices will not meet the requirements of this policy.

When did this policy go into effect?

The requirement became effective fall semester 2010.

Do students have to buy a particular model?

No, there are several prior and current models of laptops that meet the specified operating characteristics. Students are welcome to purchase a laptop from wherever they like as long as it meets the technology requirements.

Are students required to buy a new laptop?

No, students who already have a laptop or who wish to secure a used laptop computer may do so, as long as the device meets or exceeds the specified criteria as defined in the College of Education Computing Policy. Students are responsible for ensuring that their laptop meets current technology standards.

Can I upgrade my existing laptop to meet the requirements?

It is possible that a laptop can be upgraded in order to meet the College of Education's current technology standards.