

Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture

Student Technology Policy 2026 – 2027 Academic Year

Laptop Requirement

Laptops are required for all undergraduate and graduate students in the College of Architecture from the beginning of their first year. Software requirements vary by division (see below). **Please note the recommendations by some divisions of a PC over a Mac.**

Support Infrastructure

Information Technology and the College of Architecture have partnered to provide a support infrastructure for the laptop policy. This includes wireless coverage, repair services and network file storage.

Wireless: The Gibbs College of Architecture (Gould Hall) has wireless coverage throughout. To connect, simply choose the network called “WIFI@OU”. If you need assistance with connecting to wireless, please call 405-325-HELP.

Available Software and Storage Solutions: The University offers Office 365 free for all students. Installer can be found at portal.office.com. Students also have access to 1TB of storage space through OneDrive. This drive can be accessed through the portal website. For more information regarding available resources please call 405-325-HELP or visit ou.edu/ouit

Repair Services: The nearest IT Service Centers is available at OU Bizzell Library basement LL1, provides College of Architecture students support for all their computing needs. The IT Service Center is a Dell and Apple certified warranty repair center, but repairs all brands of computers. This service is free of charge, but students must pay for any parts or additional software required. There are two IT Service Centers on campus, one located in the Engineering Laboratory room 201 and Bizzell Library room 125. All Service Centers are open Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

Network Storage: All students will have access to their Microsoft OneDrive, which provides up to 1TB of storage space.

Financial Aid Help: To help aid in the purchase of a new laptop, students may apply for the [Robert B. Lewis Computer Loan](#).

OU Institutional Loan Form: <https://lfforms.ou.edu/Forms/instloanapp>

Students can also get a discount by purchasing a Dell laptop at www.dell.com/ou.

General Recommendations: Laptops

NOTE: Additional specifications for each division are noted below.

We recommend PC as the primary platform for work in the College: students will need to be able to run Windows 11 on whichever type of computer they choose, in order to use the software required in each division. Students are responsible for finding the best method to install Windows on non-PC computers.

Students should expect to allocate at least 100GB of space to Windows on a Mac. Software versions installed on student laptops need to be the same versions installed in the GCA computer lab unless noted otherwise.

Division of Architecture Guidelines:

Recommended Laptop Configuration:

Operating System:

We recommend PC as the primary platform for work in the college. Architecture students are warned that some software will run unacceptably slowly or not at all on a Mac and as such a Mac is not recommended.

Recommended Configuration:

OS	Windows 11 64-bit
Processor	Intel Core i7 (13th gen+) AMD Ryzen 7 (7000 series)
Memory	64GB RAM recommended
Hard Drive	2TB NVMe SSD
Graphics Card	Graphics Card: 10-12 GB VRAM Graphics Card such as the NVIDIA GeForce RTX 4070 or newer
Miscellaneous:	-802.11G/N wireless or better -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers - 1920×1080 min. 2560×1440 preferred -Three-button mouse -Wi-Fi 6 or newer

This configuration should allow you to run all the required software smoothly, with an allowance for future upgrades, which generally demand more computing and graphics power.

Expected Performance:

- Smooth Revit workflows
- Rhino + Grasshopper workflows
- Lumion rendering
- 3ds Max visualization
- Multitasking environments

Additional Recommendations

Students should consider:

- External 2TB backup drive
- Cloud backup solution
- External monitor for productivity
- Cooling stand for laptops
- Upgradable RAM when possible

Recommended Minimum Configuration:

This configuration may run required software but may experience limitations with complex projects.

OS	Windows 11 64-bit
Processor	Intel® Core™ i7 (13th gen+) AMD Ryzen 7 (7000 series or newer)
Memory	32GB of RAM or better
Hard Drive	1TB SATA SSD
Graphics Card	8GB Graphics Card such as the Nvidia GeForce RTX 3060 or better
Miscellaneous:	-Wi-Fi 6 or newer -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers -1920 x 1080 resolution display -Three-button mouse

Expected Performance:

- Can run Revit and Rhino workflows
- Can run small Lumion projects
- Limited multitasking
- Moderate rendering performance

The minimum laptop configuration will allow you to run all the software required in the first few years, but not always smoothly or dependably. If you are buying a new laptop, you should

follow the specifications in the recommended configuration, above, whenever possible.

Additional Recommendations

Students should consider:

- External 2TB backup drive
- Cloud backup solution
- External monitor for productivity
- Cooling stand for laptops
- Upgradable RAM when possible

Students should own one or two thumb drives, and a means of safely backing up their files.

Dell Technologies has a selection of computers specifically for architecture and engineering, at educational prices, [here](https://www.dell.com/en-us/lp/dell-university-engineering-architecture?ref=cpic_us-en-bsd-d921f0f5-ef9a-41d1-8192-9db2daa3f5cf-shop-by-major-students-1_cta_itemlink_https://www.dell.com/en-us/lp/dell-university-engineering-architecture?ref=cpic_us-en-bsd-d921f0f5-ef9a-41d1-8192-9db2daa3f5cf-shop-by-major-students-1_cta_itemlink_) https://www.dell.com/en-us/lp/dell-university-engineering-architecture?ref=cpic_us-en-bsd-d921f0f5-ef9a-41d1-8192-9db2daa3f5cf-shop-by-major-students-1_cta_itemlink_https://www.dell.com/en-us/lp/dell-university-engineering-architecture?ref=cpic_us-en-bsd-d921f0f5-ef9a-41d1-8192-9db2daa3f5cf-shop-by-major-students-1_cta_itemlink_.

**A note on Hardware Lifespan: Considering the five-year length of the architecture degree, students should take into account the normal technological life span of most computers and should plan on upgrading to a more up-to-date model as usage increases in the upper-level studios. Starting with the recommended laptop configuration, or better, may push this eventuality back by a year or two, or purchasing a machine that can be upgraded (this is uncommon in laptops).*

Architecture Software Requirements:

- Microsoft Office
- AutoCAD
- Autodesk Revit
- 3ds Max Design
- Adobe CS Suite
- Rhinoceros (includes Grasshopper)
- SketchUp Pro
- Lumion (suggested/class specific)

Division of Interior Design

Student Technology Policy:

Students in the Interior Design Division use laptops and iPads throughout the program for coursework, research, project development, and assignment submissions. iPads are required starting in the first Fall semester for digital sketching, rendering, and other studio and graphics work. Laptops are added in the Spring semester of the first year as software demands increase with applications in computer-aided drafting, 3D modeling, rendering, and animation. Both devices remain in use through the end of the undergraduate and first professional graduate programs.

Also required by the start of the second semester: a three-terabyte external hard drive (or equivalent cloud storage) and a wireless mouse with left/right click buttons and a scroll wheel. All devices must meet the system specifications outlined in this document. As coursework advances in upper-level studios, students should expect to upgrade memory or processing speed beyond the baseline recommendations

iPad Requirements:

Best	Better	Good
iPad Pro	iPad Air	iPad A16
11"/13" Screen Size	11"/13" Screen Size	11" Screen Size
256 GB Storage (minimum)	256 GB Storage (minimum)	256 GB Storage (minimum)
8G Ram	8G Ram	N/A
M4 Chip	M3 Chip	A16 Chip
\$999/\$1,299	\$699/\$899	\$449

Apple Pencil Requirements:

Good	Better
Apple Pencil USB-C	Apple Pencil Pro
\$79	\$129

Interior Design iPad App Requirements:

- Procreate
- Adobe Acrobat
- Microsoft Office
- Genius Scanner
- Measure
- Canvas
- Grammarly

Laptop Requirements:

The Division of Interior Design has created a three-tiered system for students to be able to choose their preferred level of computer performance. These tiers are to provide students with expectations of performance for the software that will be used. We highly recommended that you only look at Windows-based computers and **do not recommend Apple/macOS**. Please see the following pages with additional information and recommendations:

Recommended Laptop Configuration:

Operating System:

We recommend PC as the primary platform for work in the college. Interior Design students are warned that some software will run unacceptably slow or not at all on a Mac and as such a **Mac is NOT recommended**.

Recommended Configuration: Tier II

OS	Windows 11 64-bit
Processor	Intel Core i7 (13th gen+) AMD Ryzen 7 (7000 series)
Memory	64GB RAM recommended
Hard Drive	1-2TB NVMe SSD
Graphics Card	Graphics Card: 10-12 GB VRAM Graphics Card such as the NVIDIA GeForce RTX 4070 or newer
Miscellaneous:	-802.11G/N wireless or better -Wi-Fi 6 or newer - Bluetooth -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers -1920×1080 min. 2560×1440 preferred -USB Ports -Three-button mouse

This configuration is recommended for Interior Design majors. Recommended for Revit production workflows • Supports Lumion LiveSync • Supports Enscape rendering workflows • Supports multiple software running simultaneously • Suitable for medium to large academic projects and run all the required software smoothly, with an allowance for future upgrades, which generally demand more computing and graphics power.

Expected Performance:

- Smooth Revit workflows
- Lumion rendering
- 3ds Max visualization
- Multitasking environments

Additional Recommendations

Students should consider:

- External 2TB backup drive
- Cloud backup solution
- External monitor for productivity
- Cooling stand for laptops
- Upgradable RAM when possible

Minimum Configuration: Tier I

This configuration may run required software but may experience limitations with complex projects.

OS	Windows 11 64-bit
Processor	Intel ® Core ™ i5 (13th gen+) AMD Ryzen 5 (6000 series or newer) single thread CPUMark 2200+
Memory	32GB of RAM or better
Hard Drive	1TB NVMe SSD
Graphics Card	8-12GB Graphics Card such as the Nvidia GeForce RTX 3060 or better
Miscellaneous:	-Wi-Fi 6 or newer -Bluetooth -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers -1920 x 1080 resolution display -Three-button mouse -2-4TB external hard disk for backups and system image.

Expected Performance:

- Can run Revit, AutoCAD, Adobe software effectively.
- Supports small Lumion & Enscape projects
- Limited multitasking
- Moderate rendering performance

The minimum laptop configuration will allow you to run all the software required in the first few years, but not always smoothly or dependably. If you are buying a new laptop, you should follow the specifications in the recommended configuration, above, whenever possible.

Additional Recommendations

Students should consider:

- External 2TB backup drive
- Cloud backup solution
- External monitor for productivity
- Cooling stand for laptops
- Upgradable RAM when possible

Advanced Configuration: Tier III

OS	Windows 11 64-bit
Processor	Intel Core i9 (13 th /14 th gen+) AMD Ryzen 9 (7000 series)
Memory	64-128GB RAM recommended
Hard Drive	2TB NVMe SSD optional secondary SSD
Graphics Card	Graphics Card: 12-16 GB VRAM Graphics Card such as the NVIDIA GeForce RTX 4080 RTX 4090 or newer
Miscellaneous:	-802.11G/N wireless or better -Wi-Fi 6 or newer - Bluetooth -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers - 1920×1080 min. 2560×1440, 4k preferred -Multiple USB Ports -Three-button mouse -2-8TB external hard disk backups

Expected Performance:

This configuration is recommended for advanced rendering, complex BIM models and visualization focused students. It is suitable for large academic projects and runs all the required software smoothly.

Capabilities:

- Large Revit models
- Advanced Lumion rendering
- VR visualization workflows
- Heavy multitasking environments
- Faster rendering and export times for Revit production workflows
- Supports Lumion LiveSync
- Supports Enscape rendering workflows
- Supports multiple software running simultaneously

Interior Design Computer Software Requirements: *Software versions installed on student laptops need to be the same versions installed in the GCA computer lab unless noted otherwise.*

Free:

- Microsoft Office
- AutoCAD Architecture
- Autodesk Revit
- AGi32
- ElumTools
- Lumion
- Grammarly

Paid:

- Adobe CS Suite – Includes Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Acrobat Pro)
- SketchUp (free version)
- Enscape

Division of Landscape Architecture

Guidelines:

Students are required to use their laptops, with software below, the first semester of the Landscape Architecture program.

Configuration	Minimum	Recommended
Processor	Intel/AMD processor scoring a single thread CPUMark of 2,200 or higher. (Such as the AMD Ryzen 5 1600X, Intel Core i7-4790S or better)	Intel/AMD Processor scoring a single thread CPUMark of 2,600 or higher. (Such as the AMD Ryzen 5 3600, Intel Core i5-8600 or better)
System Memory	16 GB or more	32 GB or more
Hard Drive	Minimum 1 TB	1 TB or more
Graphics Card	8 GB or more	10 GB or more
Miscellaneous	Up-to-date Windows 11 Screen resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels USB A ports Built-in Speakers Webcam Mouse	Up-to-date Windows 11 Screen resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels USB A ports Built-in Speakers Webcam Mouse
Other	2 TB External Hard Disk	2-4 TB External Hard Disk

Landscape Architecture Software Requirements:

- Microsoft Office
- AutoCAD Architecture
- Rhinoceros 8
- Lumion (Educational)
- SketchUp Pro 2023 (Student License)
- Google Earth Pro
- Adobe CS Suite
- ArcGIS Pro 3.5 (Student License)
- Land F/X
- Esri City Engine

Division of Regional and City Planning

Guidelines:

Students are required to use their laptops for basic word processing and data analysis the first semester of the Regional & City Planning program. Students are required to use their laptops with GIS and related supporting software during their first semester. Some software may be provided free of cost by the instructor when possible. Software listed below is Microsoft Windows compatible only.

Recommended Minimum Laptop Configuration:

Processor	4 th Gen Intel Core i5 2.6GHz or better
Memory	8GB of RAM or better
Hard Drive	128GB HDD minimum
Graphics Card	1GB GPU or better
Miscellaneous:	-802.11G/N wireless or better -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers -1920 x 1080 resolution display -Windows 11 -Webcam

Regional & City Planning Software Requirements:

- Microsoft Office
- Student license ArcGIS 10.2.2 or later (first semester of program)
- SketchUp Pro (first semester of program)
- Google Earth

Haskell and Irene Lemon Construction Science Division Guidelines:

Students in the Construction Science Division use laptops starting in the first semester of their freshman year for an array of daily functions that include email, internet research and paper writing. The use of computers increases in the sophomore first semester with the Computers in Construction course in which students learn CAD, 3D modeling, and spreadsheet software.

Please note that many of the programs used in the construction industry, and thus in the Construction Science program, are not Mac compatible. Students who choose to use Mac computers nearly always have technical difficulties that cause them to fall behind in classes.

Software with intense processing and memory requirements will be utilized as students advance through the program. It is suggested that undergraduate students enter the program with a minimally equipped laptop with the GCA system specifications. Laptops meeting the system specifications above will be required by the second semester of the freshmen year. Graduate students will be required to enter the first semester of their first year with a laptop meeting the system specifications listed. Students may discover a need to increase memory or speed beyond recommended system specifications and should be considered with the initial laptop purchase.

Also, certain courses may require the use of a webcam, please consider laptops with a built-in webcam, otherwise, you may be asked to purchase an additional webcam.

Recommended Minimum Laptop Configuration:

OS	Windows 11
Processor	Intel ® Core ™ i7-3840QM CPU @ 2.80GHz or better
Memory	16GB of RAM or better
Hard Drive	128 GB HDD minimum or better
Graphics Card	1 GB Graphics Card (DirectX Compatible) or better
Miscellaneous:	-802.11G/N wireless or better -USB-A Ports -Built-in Speakers -1920 x 1080 resolution display -Webcam

Construction Science Software Requirements:

- Autodesk Revit
- Autodesk Navisworks Manage
- Bluebeam Revu eXtreme
- Microsoft Office
- Microsoft Project
- Primavera P6
- SketchUp Pro
- Synchro Pro