

## **ARCHITECTURE | Computer Guidelines** Guidance on Computer Acquisitions for *Graduate Students*

In online classes, a computer with a webcam and microphone is required starting in the first week of the semester. Tablets and mobile devices are inadequate for online classes and not substitutes for a computer. Students are expected to use advanced 2D and 3D CAD software from the first semester on.

In onsite design studio classes, students need to bring a laptop to class. If the laptop computer screen is smaller than 16", a computer set up with two monitors 24" or larger for the 2nd monitor is recommended.

If purchasing a new computer, we do not recommend a specific system. Graduate students use PCs and Macs. However, most architecture firms use PCs and there are certain CAD software programs (Revit and certain rendering software) that are only optimized for PCs.

### **Minimum Specifications:**

PC: Windows Operating System

- Processor/CPU: Intel i7 processor 9th generation or higher or AMD Ryzen 7 series.
- RAM: 32 GB of RAM or greater.
- Graphics Card/GPU: Nvidia Quadro/RTX 3060 or greater, AMD Firepro/Radeon 6000 or greater. "Integrated Graphics" such as Intel Iris Xe are not dedicated graphics processors and insufficient for supporting 3D design program rendering.
- Hard Drive: 512GB SSD minimum, 1TB or greater preferred. USB hard drives for general mass storage are okay to use

Mac: MacOS Operating System

- Mac Book Pro M3 12 Core or 14 Core
- RAM: 32 GB of RAM or greater.
- Hard Drive: 512GB SSD minimum, 1TB or greater preferred.

**Always back up your data to a second location!**

When searching for a computer to purchase, we recommend using the term "Workstation" in your searches. This is a class of computer built to handle high software loads and long running time. However, due to their more powerful hardware, they are more expensive. They are almost always only available made-to-order online through the manufacturer's website.

Here are some examples for making comparisons. While specific models listed are not required, we recommend comparable options.

Recommended Examples (PCs):

MSI WS/GS / Dell Precision / Asus Strix / Windows Surface Pro / HP ZBook Razer Blade Pro

Have questions? Please reach out to:

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