

U.C. College of Engineering
Student Owned Computing Policy
April 2007

Since the 1998-1999 academic year (class of 2003), the University of Cincinnati, College of Engineering, has required entering freshmen to own a personal computer (PC) before the end of their freshmen year. Although students can choose between desktop or portable PC configurations, the College strongly recommends that students purchase a portable PC with wireless network access.

Overview of Policy Rationale

The rationale for the student owned computer requirement involves many factors, some of which are:

- The College concentrates its limited computing resources on providing workstations and engineering software required to support coursework. The University has implemented a university-wide Information Technology and Instructional Equipment Fee which provides limited funds for these computing lab resources. These funds are not sufficient for providing personal computing. **Students must provide their own personal computing** (word processing, email, etc.) on their own computer. This is the primary purpose for the Student Owned Computing Policy.
- Many students already plan to own their own computers and want guidance on what hardware/software to buy.
- By having their own computer students can fully benefit from the computer programs and documentation frequently delivered as part of an engineering textbook.
- **A portable wireless computer is strongly recommended** because a portable computer with wireless network access allows students to use their personal computer while they are on campus between and during classes. A student can avoid having to find an open computer system in a computer lab or needing to go to the location of their desktop computer if they have their own portable computer with them.
- Requiring student ownership of hardware/software means that these costs are included in financial aid considerations.

Minimum Requirements

Minimum computer requirements are established for each group of engineering students by graduating class. Minimum requirements are published during the spring quarter before students enter the College of Engineering and are not changed after they are defined for a specific group of students. Due to the length of the academic program (5 years) and the required co-operative work assignments, there are many reasons for considering a purchase that exceeds the minimum college requirement.

These requirements are the minimum requirements for students in the College of Engineering. Individual programs and departments may have additional requirements for their students, including requiring that their students use only portable computers.

Detailed information describing the minimum hardware and software required for each graduating class of students is listed at

<http://www.eng.uc.edu/resources/college/collegecomputing/soc/minreq/>

Timing of Computer Purchase and Minimum Requirement

Students can choose to purchase a system at the beginning of their first year and begin to learn to use computing early on. Or the student can wait until the later in their first year when there could be lower prices for the minimum and recommended systems. Students must have their own computer by the end of their first year.

Computer Vendor Considerations

The College has made special arrangements with selected computer vendors to provide customized minimum required computers which meet or exceed the minimum hardware requirements. Students are not required to buy their computer from these companies but should consider these offerings to help determine pricing of a properly equipped and supported system. The most up-to-date information on the offerings is maintained at

<http://www.eng.uc.edu/resources/college/collegecomputing/soc/recven/>