Keck School of Medicine of USC
Office of Educational Technologies

Laptop, Printer, and Software Requirements

All entering medical students at the Keck School of Medicine of USC are required to own a laptop computer that you will use both in class and during proctored examinations. Students are also required to have, at home, a duplex (two-sided) printer and high-speed Internet connectivity to share documents with faculty, staff, and other students and to access online instructional content.

Minimum Specifications (Summer 2024)

Incoming students can use their existing laptop computers provided that those laptops meet the minimum specifications listed below. We strongly suggest that your laptop *exceed* each of these minimum specifications. While a laptop that simply meets these minimum specifications will be adequate to begin medical school, it may not serve your needs throughout your four years at USC and may cause issues streaming live lectures or during National Board of Medical Examiners' examinations.

Incoming students can select a laptop computer manufacturer of their choice provided the laptop meets (or exceeds) the minimum specifications.

	PC	Mac
Operating System †	Windows 11 or newer *Virtual machines and applications are not permitted.*	Mac OS X 13 (Ventura) or newer *Virtual machines and applications are not permitted.*
Processor	2.4 GHz or higher; Intel Core i5 or better	M1 chip or better
Memory (RAM)	16 GB or greater	16 GB or greater
Storage	256 GB or greater	256 GB or greater
Screen Size ††	13" or larger	13" or larger
Web Browsers	Chrome, Edge, or Firefox	Chrome, Firefox, or Safari
Extended Laptop Repair & Support Warranty †††	4 year	3 year
Printer ††††	HP Officejet Pro 8034e or comparable duplex black & white (or color) printer	HP Officejet Pro 8034e or comparable duplex black & white (or color) printer
Productivity Software	Microsoft Office 365 (Word, PowerPoint, and Excel); Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (free)	Microsoft Office 365 (Word, PowerPoint, and Excel); Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (free)

† *UNIX, Linux, Chrome OS, Android, and other operating systems other than Windows or Mac OS are not supported at this time.*

†† *While a 13" screen size is adequate for most instructional applications, you may need to scroll horizontally for some applications – including virtual microscopy and exam questions with images. If your laptop's screen is smaller than 13", you are permitted to use it while being advised that this screen size will be highly inadequate for several instructional applications, particularly with interactive images and computer-based testing.*

††† *Because students are responsible for the maintenance of their own laptop computers, you are required to purchase extended support services (preferably through the manufacturer at the time of purchase). The Keck School of Medicine of USC is not able to provide hardware or software support for student-owned computers, nor are we able to provide 'loaner' laptops to students in instances when personal laptops are not working.*

†††† *Preclinical course materials (e.g., slide presentations that accompany lectures and small groups) will be distributed electronically. Students have the option to use their laptop computers and other computing devices to view, edit/annotate, and manage these materials electronically (STRONGLY SUGGESTED) and/or to print these materials at home or in the Norris Medical Library for a fee (black and white: 10 cents per page, 18 cents double-sided; color: 50 cents per page, 90 cents double-sided). Limited, shared printing resources may also available in the computer lab.*

Comments/Additional Recommendations

- As a USC student, you may download up to five copies of the latest version of Microsoft Office 365 for use on your personal computing equipment, including desktop or laptop computers, and up to five copies on your iPhone, iPad, and Android and Windows mobile devices. See http://itservices.usc.edu/officestudents/
- SentinelOne Endpoint Detection and Response software (a.k.a. "antivirus" and "antispyware") is available for download at no cost at https://usc.cyberforcesecurity.com/
- While having a smartphone (e.g., an Apple iPhone, an Android smartphone, a Google Pixel) is *not* a requirement, having one will enable you to make use of a wide array of clinical apps and will also make communications easier during your year three clerkship rotations and your year four selectives and electives.
- While desktop computers are typically covered under renters insurance, laptops (and tablets and smartphones) may not be. Check with your insurance agent to see if additional coverage is necessary for loss or theft.
- Because loss of data can be very disruptive, we strongly recommend using an online backup service that regularly makes a backup of your entire hard drive (e.g., Carbonite, BackBlaze). This should be in addition to any cloud file storage/synchronization services you choose to use (e.g., Dropbox, OneDrive, iCloud, Box.net).

Financial Aid

The Higher Education Act, as amended in 1998, recognizes computers as an educational expense. Thus, students may request to increase their student loan amount by up to $2,000 for inclusion of a computer and printer in their cost of attendance. **This is NOT a stipend or a grant.** This is a one-time increase in the amount of student loans you are eligible for during medical school. All adjustments will be for fall/spring.

For More Information

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Office of Educational Technologies at (323) 442-1119 or ksomtech@usc.edu.

Welcome to USC!