Computer Use at Colby

Purchase Recommendations for First-Year and Continuing Students

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Most Important Information

● Colby provides Microsoft Office licenses so you can avoid purchasing it with a new computer. If it comes with your new computer, be sure to install the full professional version that Colby provides.
● Your computer should be running a fairly current version of its operating system. Macintosh computers should have OS X 10.9 or higher. Windows computers should be running Windows 7 or higher.
● You should have a manufacturer’s extended warranty of at least 3 years on your computer. Support is provided for properly functioning hardware and operating systems but not their repair. The Manufacturer’s extended warranty needs to cover these.

What To Expect This Fall

We in Colby’s Information Technology Services department (ITS) look forward to the arrival of the Colby Class of 2020 on Sunday, August 28, 2016. We will be ready to assist with computer network configuration and final software installation on that day. Look for us wearing our blue Colby Computer Connection 2016 shirts. On September 4 & 5, right before the start of classes, we will again have response teams to help new and returning students with last minute computer setup problems. Our objective is to have all student-owned computers in the residence halls fully operational before classes start. Microsoft Office can be installed over the network during the summer and after arrival on campus using the links on the Class of 2020 tab in the portal: my.colby.edu

Computer Information

● Computer ownership is not required but 98% of students bring one, almost always a notebook/laptop. Computer labs are available if you don’t have a computer and when you need access to a different system. Lovejoy 400 is open 24/7 while classes are in session.
● When buying a computer, focus on support: how will the manufacturer fix hardware and operating system problems? Make sure that at least 3-years of support from the manufacturer are included in the purchase.
● Macintosh (10.9 and higher) and Windows (Windows 7 and higher) are equally usable; it should have at least 4GB of ram. Over 70% of students now bring a Macintosh to Colby. Linux is not supported by the College except in specialized labs on campus.
● Make sure the notebook/laptop computer has a video output port for connecting to classroom technology.
● Why not an iPad or other small tablet? While these and other handheld devices are very useful, they are unlikely to be adequate without also having a conventional computer. A basic notebook computer and an iPad is an attractive, though expensive, configuration. There is only very basic support available for handhelds but the wireless network fully supports these devices.
● A printer is optional. The College does not provide computers or printers in the residence halls, so it is very convenient to have a personal printer. Laser printers in the general clusters are available 24 hours a day and there is currently no charge for b/w printing. Color laser printing is available at a charge (currently $.20/side)
• You do not need to buy Microsoft Office – the College licenses every student to use MS Office, which can be downloaded (see the Class of 2020 tab in the MyColby portal – my.colby.edu) or, if necessary, stop by SCS in Lovejoy 120 to have Office installed. If MS Office came with your new computer, it is probably a limited version. Be sure to install the full professional version from the portal.

• **Will I have to delete Office when I graduate?** Maybe. Microsoft is in the process of transforming the way Office is provided to customers, apparently transitioning from locally installed software on a computer to a remotely hosted subscription service. Beginning in 2017, and affecting the Class of 2020, Office may become a subscription service that ends at some point after graduation. If this happens, students will be advised well ahead of time regarding strategies for maintaining access to the Microsoft Office suite and to documents that have been created using it.

• **What do you do if your hard drive crashes?** If your documents are important to you, at least back them up by copying them to your Colby-provided network storage, Colby Apps google drive or to a USB drive. As a more comprehensive backup strategy, we highly recommend that you subscribe to a commercial backup service such as Carbonite (https://www.carbonite.com/), iDrive (https://www.idrive.com/), Crashplan (http://www.code42.com/crashplan/), etc.

• Anti-virus software, regularly updated, is required. Mac and Windows system updates must be installed.

• Residence halls (and all academic and administrative buildings) are fully networked with advanced secure wireless. Wired ports are also available. Game systems, TVs and other devices are permitted.

• Copyright infringement is illegal. Use of peer-to-peer file sharing of music, video, software, images or other items in a manner that infringes copyright can lead to legal action by the copyright owner.

• Know your rights and responsibilities, especially as stated in the “Code of Ethics for Information Technology at Colby College.” Read Colby’s policies and advice related to information technology: www.colby.edu/its/policies-and-procedures

• Protect your privacy, especially your account password. Never share it and beware phishing attacks. http://www.colby.edu/its/identifying-fraudulent-email/

**Where Do Students Get Help With Computer Problems?**

Students have several resources available to them to solve computer problems and to get repairs made.

Student Computer Services (SCS) provides support to students in person (Lovejoy 120), by phone (207-859-4224), and by email (scsshelp@colby.edu) for network connection, application installation and operation, and general usage assistance.

SCS provides on-site support to students having problems with their computers. It is staffed by students employed by ITS, augmented when needed by the ITS professional staff to address network and other general problems that may arise. SCS focuses on the Colby-specific support issues that the manufacturer generally cannot address. These are the priorities for SCS support:

• Network Connectivity - verification of correct operation of the student's computer network (wireless and wired) configuration.

• Application Installation and operation - Microsoft Office installation and support. Assistance with free anti-virus applications.

• SCS employees are prohibited from doing any hardware repair. Any work that entails "opening the computer" or doing more than connecting cables or inserting/removing notebook computer PCMCIA cards must be done by a manufacturer-dispatched repair technician or a local service provider.
Local computer stores - Expedited service, including out-of-warranty work, usually for parts and labor fee, can be obtained from a local computer store:

http://www.colby.edu/its/local-repair-venders/

The Computer Manufacturer (Apple, Dell, etc.) - We recommend that you purchase an extended support contract when you buy a new computer. Since we are unable to provide operating system or hardware support this will allow students to get timely support if there are issues with their computer.

Students Are Important Participants in Colby’s Green Computing Initiative

Students, faculty, and staff at Colby are working in many ways to reduce the adverse impact of our campus community on the environment. The Environmental Advisory Group, on which students have provided important leadership, has consolidated recommendations in many areas of campus life, including information technology, and you will be hearing lots more from them. As you make decisions regarding computer purchases it is worth keeping these computing-related issues in mind. For more information: http://www.colby.edu/its/green-computing/

Need More Information?

If you have questions about Colby’s information technology environment or need general advice on making a purchasing decision prior to August 28, 2016, please send email to computer-advice@colby.edu or call Paula Lemar at 207-859-4206.

Welcome to the Colby Community!