Laptop Recommendations - Academic Year 2023-2024

Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology Faculty of
Media, Art & Design (Updated July 7th, 2023)

This document is for students taking the following programs in the Faculty of Media, Art & Design:

Program	Recommended Laptop
Fine Arts - Advanced (Year 2)	13-inch MacBook Air® with Apple M2 Chip *
PR and Strategic Communications	13-inch MacBook Air® with Apple M2 Chip *
Advertising - Digital Media Management	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Advertising and Promotion	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Broadcasting - Radio and Contemporary Media	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Web Development	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Interactive Media Design	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Journalism - Mass Media	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Journalism and Creative Writing	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Photography	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Graphic Design	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *
Video Production	13-inch MacBook Pro® with Apple M2 Chip *

Why Mac®?
Students breaking into creative and design professions need to be familiar with hardware and software used in industry. Our Program Advisories monitor this closely. Student success is our goal.

Students need to purchase the following items:
1) Apple MacBook Pro® 13-inch (with Apple M2 Chip) or the MacBook Air® (with Apple M2 Chip) for PR, Fine Arts Year 2 and for those with a tight budget.
2) Portable storage device for backup (Photography/Video/Web/Interactive are provided a backup drive in the kit they receive in first year.) We recommend an external bus-powered hard drive or SSD. Students also have access to 2TB of cloud storage via Microsoft OneDrive.
3) Ethernet adapter or USB-C® dock that includes Ethernet (To convert USB-C® to Ethernet.) *
4) Ethernet cable (To connect to the campus network at high speed.) *
5) Three-prong Power Adapter Extension Cable (Some labs may need this.) * Items 3, 4 and 5 for in class.

Do not buy any software:
1) Do not buy a subscription to Adobe® Creative Cloud®. This is provided for eligible programs.
2) Do not buy Microsoft Office® as students can download this for free from DC Mail.
3) Apple sells something called the Education Bundle, but we don't use those software titles.

Apple MacBook Pro®
For those editing a lot of videos we recommend a minimum of 512GB of internal storage.

* Students on a budget should consider purchasing the Apple M1 models.

Where to Buy
You can buy online from Apple Canada. To obtain student pricing online, please visit this URL: *https://www.apple.com/ca_edu_93120/shop*

You also need to purchase:
> **-** Three-prong Power Adapter Extension Cable, Part number: MK122LL/A

> **-** Card reader (or USB-C® dock) for your camera if needed.

Configure to Order
Most students like to buy off-the-shelf. However, there are advantages to customizing your own configure-to-order (CTO) Mac®. You can only do that
online. To obtain student pricing online, please visit this URL: *https://www.apple.com/ca_edu_93120/shop*

You can increase the amount of solid-state storage. You can increase the amount of memory. In terms of priority, we recommend additional storage before additional memory, but the choice is a personal one and how it affects your budget. The new memory design on the Apple M2 is more efficient, so that 8GB seems like 16GB on an Intel Mac. We recommend upgrading storage before memory or both if you can.

NOTE: These upgrades cannot be added after the purchase.

Additional Items
Please buy an Ethernet cable (Category 6) 1-2 meters, to connect to the Campus network. You can buy these inexpensively online through AmazonBasics®, for example. If you are scheduled in room B105A (Photography or Video) please get a 2-meter cable as the ports in B105A are on the floor.

Apple normally runs a student promotion during the summer months, June to early September. We have no influence on Apple's pricing, promotions or product refresh cycles. Time your purchase to ensure you get the latest and greatest, keeping in mind the global chip shortage may affect availability. If you prefer to purchase your notebook computer immediately, keep in mind that a better model may be released at a later date for a similar price. That is simply the nature of the computer industry. Please see Apple's website for details on their refund/exchange policies.

Extended Warranties
Apple notebook computers come with a one-year hardware warranty and 90 days of phone support. Apple's extended warranty is called AppleCare+®. Users can purchase it at any time during the first 60 days after buying a new Mac. AppleCare+ for Mac extends your coverage to three years and adds up to

two incidents of accidental damage coverage, each subject to a service fee, with some limitations. See Apple's website for details. Other vendors may offer their own extended warranties.

Insurance

While AppleCare+ covers up to two incidents of accidental damage, it does not include coverage for theft, fire or flood. Please add your new notebook computer to your household or tenant insurance policy to protect your new purchase. Some credit cards have similar insurance policies, but the claims process can take a lot of time and coverage may have limitations. Check with your card provider before making a decision about how to insure your notebook computer.

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

Can I bring a Windows®-based notebook computer?

Students who bring a Windows-based notebook computer may have difficulty following Mac-based instructions, collaborating in groups, may encounter cross-platform issues, difficulty connecting to servers, difficulty printing. If you purchase a Windows-based laptop that is less than $2000 (approximately), it will likely have an inferior display and may not perform as well as a Mac notebook. *Students with computers that do not meet our hardware requirements must be self-supporting.*

Please do not expect to complete your program with a computer more than three years old or a computer that does not have hardware specifications similar to the Mac notebook computer as recommended in the chart on the first page of this document.

What if I purchased my Mac laptop before these new models came out?

Please do not bring a Macintosh that was manufactured before (approx.) 2018. We recommend:

> **16 GB or 32GB of memory (RAM)**
> **Intel® i5™, Intel® i7™ (9th generation or newer) or Apple M1**
> **Apple Retina® display (13-inch or larger)**
> **Solid state drive (SSD) 256 GB or larger**

Can I get by without a notebook with my desktop at home or in residence?

Students are expected to have a mobile learning device (a notebook computer) in order to complete assignments and collaborative work in class. This is **CRITICAL** to student success.

How do I get the best price?

Make sure you are buying from the online Apple Canada education store (https://www.apple.com/ca_edu_93120/shop) or if in person, bring your student ID or proof of enrolment. Time your purchase to take advantage of promotions. Don't buy generic computer accessories from Apple; shop around for these. Instead of buying new, consider a refurbished or used Apple Macintosh notebook computer. If you are buying used from local "buy and sell" sites such as Kijiji, be sure you know what to look for. Meet any potential sellers indoors, in a well-lit public place, and bring a Mac expert with you, if possible. Or select a reseller that specializes in used computers such as https://www.macdoc.com or others.

Besides the recommended notebook computer, what else will I need?

Students should come to the college with the following: One Category 6 Ethernet cable to connect to the campus network, 1-2 meters in length. You need an Ethernet adapter or USB-C® dock that includes an Ethernet port. Most programs recommend a portable hard drive or solid-state drive for backup. We recommend 1TB minimum. Some programs include a portable hard drive in the student kit. You can choose to buy an external SSD instead of a hard drive to get better performance and reliability at a somewhat higher cost. Please note that Ethernet related items are only needed for in-class learning.

The college has wireless networking. Why do I need Ethernet?

Ethernet is hundreds of times faster than wireless networking and you only have to buy your adapter (or USB-C® dock) and Ethernet cable once.

How much is enough memory?

Choosing how much memory for your computer is a balancing act between cost and performance. For editing video, more memory means better performance. For video editing, Adobe® recommends 8GB or 16GB of RAM, or 32GB of RAM for 4K video, but we don't ask students to shoot in 4K.

Can I get by with an iPad®, iPad Pro® or other tablet?

Although a tablet can be useful for many tasks, a Macintosh® notebook computer is needed to meet all learning outcomes and to work in groups. This may change as new software becomes available.

I understand Apple® is transitioning away from Intel® processors. Should I buy one of these new systems?

Yes, that is our recommendation. Apple® released the first Mac running Apple® Silicon in November 2020: The MacBook Air and the MacBook Pro 13-inch. They have better performance than similar priced Intel-based Mac notebook computers. Software developers including Adobe and Microsoft have been updating their software to ensure compatibility.

Is there someone I can contact for more information?

Please email Conner Pulis at: conner.pulis@durhamcollege.ca for more information or any questions regarding the purchase of your new machine.