

Computer Purchase Recommendations for Incoming Visual Studies Students, Fall 2008

Dear Visual Studies Student:

Congratulations on your enrollment in the Department of Visual Studies at the University at Buffalo, a recognized leader in the integration of technology with teaching and learning. VS students use digital technology for research, in the exploration and communication of ideas, and in the creation of art and design. Courses using digital technology cover all areas, including multi-disciplinary Foundations courses, Emerging Practices, Communication Design, Photography, Printmaking, Painting and Sculpture.

UB requires students to have access to a computer beyond what is provided in public labs. (For more info, visit ubit.buffalo.edu/newstudent). Visual Studies maintains labs for its students to use outside of class. However, it is highly recommended that students purchase their own computer that is able to handle applications used in class. Owning a capable computer will enable you to work at home or elsewhere — especially convenient when the lab is closed, or during busy periods. Visual Studies generally recommends portable, rather than desktop computers. Portables allow students to work on their own computer during class, to type notes and conduct research. Wireless Internet is available throughout the UB campus.

Visual Studies has standardized on the Apple Macintosh, the platform of choice for creative exploration and expression. Windows PCs and Macs are comparable in power and price. However, PCs are generally more difficult and costly to maintain and secure against viruses and spyware. The Mac OS is generally considered to be more secure, and its intuitive interface, integrated software solutions, and high quality hardware promote both efficiency and fun. Apple includes advanced hardware and software that would cost hundreds of dollars more as options on a similarly priced PC. All new Macs include high speed network connectivity, CD/DVD drives, HD audio and video capabilities, and the award-winning iLife suite of media applications.

Macs can easily be used in courses outside of Visual Studies as well, integrating seamlessly with UNIX and Windows environments. Popular applications are available for both Mac and PC, and Macs can read and write to PC disks. All new Macs can also run Microsoft Windows, bringing applications previously only available on the PC to Apple hardware.

We recommend the following Apple configurations to our students:

Basic — *recommended for Communication Design and general studio majors*

Desktop: iMac 20" 2.66GHz Intel Core 2 Duo, SuperDrive DL, 2GB RAM, 320GB Hard Drive, AppleCare. \$1,518.

Portable: MacBook 2.4GHz Intel Core 2 Duo, SuperDrive DL, 2GB RAM, 160GB Hard Drive, AppleCare. \$1,382.

High-end — *recommended for Emerging Practices majors*

Desktop: Mac Pro with two 2.8GHz Quad-Core Intel Xeon, SuperDrive DL, 2GB RAM, 320GB Hard Drive, NVIDIA GeForce 8800 GT video card, 20" LCD Display, AppleCare. \$3,482.

Portable: MacBook Pro 15", 2.5GHz Intel Core 2 Duo, SuperDrive DL, 2GB RAM, 250GB Hard Drive, AppleCare. \$2,538.

We recommend that students purchase removable storage for backups and transporting files between home and the labs. Consider a Western Digital 500GB My Book Essential Edition 2.0, about \$140, or a Kingston 4GB USB2 Flash Drive, about \$40.

For current discounted pricing, promotions, and online purchasing, visit www.apple.com/education. On campus, UB Micro, www.ubmicro.buffalo.edu, has great deals on software for students, including Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium, \$320.

Prices on this page are current as of 7/21/08 and may change.

You can find out more about Visual Studies at <http://visualstudies.buffalo.edu>. If you have any questions about this or any other technical concerns, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

Best wishes for the upcoming year,

Domenic J. Licata, Instructional Support Technician, djlicata@buffalo.edu, 716-645-6878 x1348