

Computing Recommendations for Architecture Students

General Computing Information

The Architecture Department at Stuart Weitzman School of Design requires incoming graduate students to purchase or bring a laptop during your time as a student at Weitzman. It is critical that you bring in a laptop that can handle the demands of your program. As an Architecture student, memory, GPU, and processor performance are key especially when working with larger files and renderings. We have configured a few options at varying price points which will be available via the Campus Express portal on June 1st, 2023. Each of these systems is priced at an educational discount.

We do not configure Macs in our Back-to-School sale and strongly discourage their use in the Architecture program. Some software applications you may use, like Revit, V-Ray for Rhino, and 3ds Max, are only available for Windows and cannot be adequately run on virtualization software like Parallels with Apple's new ARM-based Apple Silicon processors.

Ordering Information

Should you choose to order your laptop through the University's preferred vendors, you can log into [Campus Express](#) beginning June 1st to order. It is important that you secure your laptop and other peripherals with a cable lock. If you plan to purchase a system elsewhere, or want to evaluate a system you already own, you should match the specifications of your preferred system to the ones recommended by Weitzman ITS for the Architecture program:

CPU: Intel i9 or AMD Ryzen 9

RAM: 64GB or more

Storage: 1TB or more SSD

GPU (non-Robotics): NVIDIA RTX A2000/GeForce RTX 4060 or better (8GB or more)

GPU (Robotics): NVIDIA RTX A3500 Ada/GeForce RTX 4080 or better (12 GB or more)

If you have any questions about laptop configurations, please contact ithelp@design.upenn.edu and we will be happy to consult with you. We encourage students to place their technology orders as quickly as possible taking into account any supply chain delays.

Software

As a student in a Design based program, you are required to have Rhino and a subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud. The computer labs at Weitzman are heavily scheduled for teaching and are not to be depended upon to do your work. Often faculty will expect you to bring your laptop to class and owning this software will allow you to fully participate. For the 2023-24 academic year Weitzman students can purchase a subscription to Adobe CC at a significant discount beginning June 1, 2023. Rhino will also be offered at educational pricing from Weitzman. Please see the following [page](#) for more information and any updates.

You can download free copies of Autodesk applications at [Autodesk's student webpage](#). A free download of Microsoft 365 is available to students at [Campus Express](#). Microsoft 365 includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote and more. For a complete list of available software, see our [Software Availability](#) page.

Financing

If you are a US citizen or permanent resident, have filed a FAFSA form, and are eligible for Federal loans, you can ask for a federal loan budget increase from the University's Office of Student Financial Services to assist you in the purchase of your computer. Download their [Application for Educational Budget Adjustment form](#) and return the completed form to them along with a receipt from the computer you've purchased or an estimate of the computer you plan to purchase. For more information, contact the Weitzman School of Design Office of Financial Aid at fin-aid@design.upenn.edu.

More Information

It is important that you visit our [Computer Recommendations page](#) **BEFORE ORDERING** for more detailed information on laptop configurations, software applications, and shipping information.

If you have specific questions about computing requirements at Weitzman, please send us an e-mail at ithelp@design.upenn.edu.

We understand these are important decisions, and we are here to help guide you through the process.

Weitzman IT Team