

Computer Purchase Recommendations

Fall 2011

Dear Incoming Chicago-Kent Student:

Congratulations and welcome to Chicago-Kent College of Law and the Center for Law and Computers (CLC)! The staff of the CLC is delighted to be able to assist you in using computer technology to support your study of law at Chicago-Kent. We cannot emphasize enough the need for you to become familiar with your computer now instead of waiting until mid-August. Once school starts, your focus will have to shift to reading cases, preparing for class and impending legal writing assignments. Therefore, it is very important that you learn as much as you possibly can about your computer before classes start.

Chicago-Kent College of Law has undertaken as its ongoing mission an effort to integrate technology with a law school education. This mission is twofold: 1) using technology in the three to four years of law school itself to help learn legal concepts and complete school projects; and 2) familiarizing students with the technology that they will be faced with in the practice of law in the 21st century. For these reasons, Chicago-Kent requires all law students to own a computer to complete their law school education.

Your life as a law school student is much easier when you have ready access to information using your own computer. You will be expected to check your email account daily since this is the main method of communication throughout the law school community. Many professors make class materials available to their students over the Internet and expect that students will refer to them online. You will also complete much of your legal research via computer using the LexisNexis and Westlaw research services from both school and at home.

There is a lot of information to share with you in this letter, but rest assured, paying attention to these details now will pay off later this fall and every semester thereafter. This letter contains a set of recommend computer specifications for a Mac and a PC. This outlines the specifications that are necessary if you already own a computer and would like to continue to use it for law school. These are guidelines of what you should purchase if you do not already own a computer.

Laptop vs. Desktop

In purchasing a new computer, the first decision is whether to purchase a laptop (laptop/portable) or a desktop computer. Whether to purchase a laptop or desktop computer is entirely up to you. Each type has its own benefits. Laptop computers are usually configured with an Ethernet network card to connect to the network while in the school. The school has over 1,800 network ports where you can log into the network and access email, the Internet, legal research services, and on-line legal databases. Chicago-Kent currently has wireless access points located in all areas of the school. Laptops also can be used in the most of the classrooms to take notes during class. Many students find typing notes to be faster than handwriting and ultimately easier to organize at the end of the semester. Network connectivity is available in all classrooms via hardwired or wireless.

On the other hand, desktop computers frequently cost less than laptop computers. For the same money as a laptop, you can usually get a more robust desktop and possibly some extras.

A Word about Specifications

If you do not currently own a computer, we strongly urge you to purchase a computer that meets our **recommended** specifications. We designed these keeping in mind that you will be using this computer for the next three to four years and believe that these components will be sufficient.

Please be aware that Chicago-Kent does not Support Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 2000, or Linux operating systems.

Recommended Computer Specifications:

If you have a computer that nearly meets the minimum requirements and is extremely costly to upgrade, please call the Center for Law and Computers at (312) 906-5300 or email us at helpdesk@kentlaw.edu, so that we can assist you in determining the best solution for both your short and long-term needs.

Apple

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| General | 15-inch: 2.53GHz |
| Processor | Intel Core i5 |
| Memory | 4GB Memory |
| Hard drive size | 320GB hard drive |
| Battery | Built-in battery (8-9 hour) |

Windows

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| General | 15.6 inch |
| Processor | Intel Core i5 |
| Memory | 4GB Memory |
| Hard drive size | 250GB hard drive |
| Battery | Built-in battery (8-9 hour) |

Microsoft Office 2010 and Mac Office 2011

As a new student at Chicago-Kent College of Law you are given a copy of Microsoft Office 2010 Professional at no charge. If you are buying a new computer, please do not purchase a Microsoft Office product. Students who are Mac users may choose either Office 2010 Professional for Windows or Office 2011 for Mac.

If you have any questions regarding these computer specifications or anything about computers at Chicago-Kent College of Law, please do not hesitate to contact the Center for Law and Computers by calling (312) 906-5300 or emailing helpdesk@kentlaw.edu.

Center for Law and Computers (CLC)

Chicago-Kent College of Law
Illinois Institute of Technology