Hardware / Software Recommendations, Fall 2013 - Spring 2014

The Digital Arts division, housed in the new Wolfe Center for Collaborative Arts, has three excellent computer labs for student use. There are two state-of-the-art Apple MacPro labs, and one Hewlett Packard PC lab, all with computer graphics industry standard software.

A personal computer for student use is very helpful, but is not essential for success in the Digital Arts program. We strongly suggest that students wait until their sophomore year before purchasing a new computer. After a year in the program, Digital Arts majors will have a better sense of their preferences within our diverse major, and therefore their computing needs.

Both PCs and Macs are used in the digital arts industry. However, generally the following guidelines should be followed based on area of focus:

- Imaging, Interactive: Mac or PC
- 3D animation: PC preferred, mac okay
- Real-time 3D: PC
- Video/Film: Mac

Consider the following when purchasing a computer for a Digital Arts student:

1) Students get a better idea of the area within digital arts he or she wants to study during the first year. Most students come in thinking they want to be animators. However, after the first year we have an equal division of students within each area. This decision should guide hardware and software choices.

2) The student learns which system she or he feels most comfortable within the first year.

3) Machines become obsolete in 3 years, so if students wait until sophomore year, the system they have will be adequate until they graduate.

4) Use of student labs builds community. Students learn from and critique each other in the labs. When students use their own computer, they often work at home and miss that important aspect of our major.

5) Even if they own a fast computer, they often cannot afford the vast array of expensive industry software and plugins that we have installed in our labs. Therefore, they wind up in the labs regardless, or try to complete assignments without the proper software, sacrificing quality.

Personal Computer choices based on what is available June 2013:
NOTE: These are top of the line choices and it depends on the student’s specialty. We have great computer labs for the students to work in, so what is listed here will come close to the power of our labs. You can spend less if the student will use the computer as a supplement to work done in the lab.

MAC laptop choice: 15-inch MacBook Pro Configuration (see notes):

- 2.7GHz Quad-core Intel Core i7, NVIDIA GeForce GT 650M with 1GB GDDR5 memory*
- *(Faster processor is essential)*
- 8GB of 1600MHz DDR3 memory (Maximum RAM is a priority)
- 512GB solid state drive (most durable and fastest) OR
- 750GB Serial ATA Drive @7200 rpm hard drive or 512GB solid-state Drive
MAC desktop choice:  Mac Pro Configuration (see notes):
- Two 2.40GHz 6-Core Intel Xeon processors (12 cores) or higher (Faster processor is better)
- 24GB (6x4GB) (Minimum of 16GB RAM is essential)
- 1TB 7200-rpm Serial ATA 3GB/s hard drive (bay 1)
- 1TB 7200-rpm Serial ATA 3GB/s hard drive (bay 2)
- ATI Radeon HD 5870 1GB graphics card
- Apple LED Cinema Display (27” flat panel)
- Secondary Display (optional)

DELL laptop choice:
NOTE: BGSU has a contract with Dell, but you can match specs with any brand.
**You can purchase Refurbished laptops, as they are cheaper and as good as a new one.

Mobile Precision M6700
- 3rd Gen Intel® Core™ i7-3740QM Processor (2.7GHz, 6M cache)
- 16.0GB, DDR3-1600MHz SDRAM, 4 DIMMS
- 17.3” UltraSharp™ FHD (1920x1080) Wide View Anti-Glare, Premium Panel Guarantee
- Integrated HD video webcam and noise reducing array microphones
- NVIDIA® Quadro® K4000M with 4GB GDDR5
Two Hard drives
- 256GB (SATA3) Solid State Mini-card Drive, No RAID
- 750GB 2.5" 7200rpm Hard Drive, 2nd
- 8X DVD+/RW Slot Load [Included in Price]
- Intel® Centrino® Advanced-N 6205 802.11n 2x2 Half Mini-card wireless

PC desktop/ workstation choices:
#1 Dell Precision T5600 (High-end, best choice)
- Two Intel® Processors E5-2670 (Six Core XEON 2.9GHz, 15M, 7.2 GT/s, Turbo)
- Windows 7 Professional,SP1, No Media, 64-bit, English
- 32GB, DDR3 RDIMM Memory, 1600MHz, ECC (4 x 8GB DIMMS)
- Nvidia Quadro K5000, 4GB, 2 DP + DVIi +DViD
- C6 SATA/SSD 2.5 Inch BOOT, plus 1x 3.5 Inch or 1-3x matching SATA 2.5 Inch Hard Drives
  - Boot drive 256GB,2.5"SATA6Gb/sStateDriveforBoot+only
  - 2nd 2TB, 7200 RPM 3.5" SATA 6Gb/S Hard Drive
- 16X DVD+/RW and 6X Blu-Ray Disc (BD-RE) Burner (Data Only), No Media [add $219.80]
- Dual Dell Professional P2312H, Wide screen,23in VIS,HAS,VGA,DVI (Qty 2) [$382.20]
- Dell AX510 Sound Bar for all UltraSharp Flat Panel Displays [Included in Price]

#2 Dell Precision T3600 (cheaper choice)
- Intel® Xeon® Processor E5-2665 (Eight Core 2.4GHz, 20M, 8 GT/s,Turbo+)
- Windows 7 Professional,SP1, No Media, 64-bit, English
- 32GB, DDR3 RDIMM Memory, 1600MHz, ECC (4 x 8GB DIMMS)
- NVIDIA® Quadro® K4000, 3GB, 2 DP & 1 DVI-I ( 2 DP-DVI & DVI-D VGA adapters)
- C6a SATA/SSD 2.5 Inch BOOT, plus 2-3x matching SATA 2.5 Inch Hard Drives (No PERC controller)
  - Boot drive 256GB,2.5"SATA6Gb/sStateDriveforBoot+only
  - 2nd 2TB, 7200 RPM 3.5" SATA 6Gb/S Hard Drive
- 16XDVD+/RW and 8XDVDr,SATA [Included in Price]
- Dual Dell Professional P2412H 24in HAS Wide Monitor, VGA/DVI
- Internal Speaker
- Dell Wireless™ 1397 802.11b/g Mini Card

Minimum software for a student’s personal computer: Adobe Production Premium CS6 Collection (includes Photoshop, Flash, After Effects, Audition, Illustrator) OR Adobe Creative Cloud 12-month subscription (preferred), Autodesk Maya, Microsoft Office. However, this depends on the student’s area of focus.