DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

**JARVIS COLLEGE OF COMPUTING
AND DIGITAL MEDIA**

Computer Recommendations for School of Cinematic Arts Programs

Updated on August 2, 2024

School of Cinematic Arts

Film and Television

Hardware: Mac or PC laptop or workstation.

*Laptop Display***:** 1080p (1920x1080) or 1440p (2560x1440) is recommended for laptop machines. Larger screen size is more important than resolution.
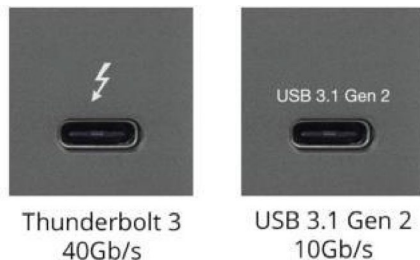
*RAM***:** 16GB minimum, but 32GB is highly recommended, especially for Editing and Visual Effects courses.

Desktop Graphics Card: 4GB onboard memory minimum. If looking to build or buy a desktop system, an NVIDIA GTX 1660Ti is the minimum requirement, and an RTX 2060/2060 SUPER or better card is recommended. AMD Radeon 5700 XT or better will also work, but NVIDIA is preferred for its proprietary encoding solutions (NVENC).

*Laptop Internal Storage***:** An SSD for the base OS and a hard drive or additional SSD for extra storage capacity. 1TB is the recommended minimum, however, more is preferable.

*Desktop Internal Storage***:** 500GB SSD (M.2 nvME OR 2.5") & 1TB Hard Drive are recommended minimum. More storage is better; opting for a larger hard drive vs a larger SSD is the most cost-effective.

*Ports***:** Thunderbolt 3, USB-C, USB 3.0, and Ethernet (for networking) are all recommended. If using a laptop, USB hubs are a recommended accessory to expand connectivity. The reference photo below indicates the labeling used to distinguish Thunderbolt from USB C.

External Hard Drive: 2TB or more with Thunderbolt 3 or USB-C connectivity. After purchasing, the drive should be formatted to exFAT so it can be used with both PC and MAC workstations.

Hardware Discounts

 Students are eligible for [hardware discounts](#) from preferred vendors.

Animation

The animation program recommends that students wait until after their first year to determine if they need their own computer. This will give them time to figure out what their interests are in animation which will in turn dictate what setup best fits their needs.

Priority Specifications
- The most powerful processor possible, for Intel and AMD CPUs, i7/i9 and Ryzen 7/Ryzen 9

should be preferred over 3 or 5 series processors, even if the latter are newer.
- A discrete graphics card from either AMD or NVIDIA is recommended. The more *video memory* (GDDR5+) the better.
- The main drive, containing the OS, should be an SSD, with a secondary, larger HDD drive for storage.
- Much like the rest of the School of Cinematic Arts, a larger display will be useful. If buying a laptop, a physically larger screen takes precedent over a higher resolution screen. 1080p or 1440p is the highest necessary resolution, 4K is more demanding on the machine and detracts from performance.
- If looking to do drawing, consider a machine with pen input support, or buying a separate drawing tablet to use with the machine.

Mac or PC

The animation program is designed for *either* platform to be used. The animation labs on campus are predominantly PC based. The software that students will use in class is available for either platform. Students focused on 3D Animation will likely benefit more from a PC based system as it is native to most 3D software and hardware.

Software Recommendations

Our labs are loaded with all software our students are required to use for class. If students wish to purchase copies for their own computer they should consider the following:
- Adobe Creative Cloud (CC): Available as a month to month purchase. Photoshop, After Effects, Premiere, Animator, are the most commonly used applications. Students interested in motion graphics may also want to get Adobe Illustrator. These are available as part of a suite or for individual purchase. Information about [software downloads and discount offers can be found here](#).
- Autodesk Suite: This is essential software for all 3D animators. It includes a full range of Autodesk products including Maya, Max, Mudbox, and Motionbuilder. It is available as a free download for current students at https://www.autodesk.com/education/free-software/featured.
- TV Paint: Excellent and versatile software for 2D animators.

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