Computer Information & Recommendations

Files stored in your "S" drive can be accessed from home:

Type `\\soet-students.main.ad.rit.edu\students\(RITusername)` or `\\129.21.17.242\students\(RITusername)` in run command or Windows Explorer (browsers do not work). Make sure to substitute RITusername and RITpassword with your username and password. We do not recommend saving the credentials as it could create problems in the future with a password change.

username: MAIN\RITusername
password: RITpassword

Note: For Mac users, you can create an SMB share, the “\” have to be reversed to “/”.

WARNING NOTE: Copying files to your “S” Drive from your personal computer may cause them to be unavailable on the lab computers because of permission errors. The best method for file transfers is a flash drive.

If you are not logging into the RIT Network (DSL, Cable Modem, Another ISP), You need obtain and run a secure VPN connection. ([http://www.rit.edu/its/services/vpn/](http://www.rit.edu/its/services/vpn/))

Students also need to call the ITS helpdesk (585-475-HELP) to activate their account for VPN.

Free Copies of Microsoft Software (such as Windows 10, Visio, Project, and Visual Studio) can be requested/obtained online at: [https://apps.rit.edu/cast/labs/MSDNAA/](https://apps.rit.edu/cast/labs/MSDNAA/) or [https://msdnaa.rit.edu](https://msdnaa.rit.edu)

Login using your RIT username and password.

Please go to [https://apps.rit.edu/cast/labs/lab_access/](https://apps.rit.edu/cast/labs/lab_access/) to request a form for Lab access.

Instructions to access Microsoft Office 365 are at [https://www.rit.edu/its/services/personal-computers/software/office-365](https://www.rit.edu/its/services/personal-computers/software/office-365)

Other software can be obtained at: [https://homeuse.rit.edu/](https://homeuse.rit.edu/)

RIT email is available using [http://google.rit.edu/](http://google.rit.edu/)

Contact the ITS helpdesk if you have any problems.
Computer Recommendations

The department does not require a student to have a computer. It is however a general recommendation for the convenience and availability of having one's own system. All of the software will be available for use on the department computers found in the labs. Most of the applications are licensed to the department and will not be available for the student to use on their personal computer. This has to do with licensing and the prohibitive costs of purchasing single user applications of these programs. There are computer labs situated throughout the campus that are available for every student to use.

In general, the computers available today will be able to run the types of software that most students use. Unfortunately, no matter what choice of a system you make, it will only be a matter of time before it becomes outdated. My recommendation to other purchasers in the past has been to look at a system that is the top of the line with all the bells and whistles. Then, drop back one or two versions. The thinking is that usually, the fastest CPU, video card and memory are not worth the extra money you will be spending for the amount of performance that you will gain from them.

RIT purchases many systems from Dell. The Optiplex is a good system but not very upgradeable. The Dimension is available with more features. They have very good systems and great service and reasonable prices. I would look for something with the following configurations that meet your needs.

Laptop or Desktop

Laptops are great for portability and will run many of today's computer applications. There is good coverage on campus for wireless networking. Laptops are more of a security concern for theft.

Desktops give you more power for the money. They generally have a faster CPU, and are capable of more internal devices. They are also more upgradeable. It is really a personal choice and what a user is more comfortable with. We use Dell Laptops almost exclusively with good results.

CPU

Faster is generally better. Following my earlier advice, look at the fastest CPU speed and drop back one or two steps. Many students have purchased systems with both INTEL and AMD CPU's.

Core technology and 64 bit technology.

The following is a very basic description. Do your research before you decide that you need this technology and be prepared to spend more money for it.

64 Bit vs. 32 bit.

64 bit computers are fast and are compatible with most software programs these days.
Core Technology
Intel Core processors come in i3, i5 and i7 choices. i3 and i5 are best for everyday uses, whereas the i7 processor is best for high end engineering and graphic applications.

16Gig RAM
You generally can save money and installation costs if you purchase extra memory when you order your system. If you are getting a 64 bit Operating System go ahead and get 16 GB of RAM as the system can take advantage of it and the additional cost isn’t that much these days.

DVD Drive
More software is becoming available on DVD's. This is necessary to accommodate for installation of larger data files in more complex programs. In addition, a CD or DVD burner would be very helpful for data storage; music files etc. and I would recommend one. DVD writers also read and write CD images as well and will hold over 7 CD’s worth of data. The newer type DVD’s (dual layer) will be able to hold 14 CD’s worth of data.

USB Flash or Jump drives
These are the small devices that connect to a USB port on the computer. They can hold from a few megabytes up to gigabytes of data. They will work on almost any computer that has a USB connector. I would recommend one with at least 16 GB of memory.

17” or 19” monitor
A flat panel is great if you have the money. It's a real space saver and the resolution is crisp. I would recommend a minimum of 17” though 19” monitors are nicer and are much cheaper than they used to be.

Ethernet card
The Institute has an OC3 backbone, (very fast), that is provided throughout the campus in the academic and living areas. Road Runner and DSL are available in the area for those away from campus. If you have a laptop, wireless would be a great choice if you plan to carry your laptop around. Wireless technology is available across the campus as well. However, there are limitations to the coverage and it may not be available in all areas.

4GB ram graphics card
This should be sufficient for most applications and games. 4GB would be a minimum or 8GB for games, CAD applications or TV/Video applications. NVIDIA and Quadro are decent choices of manufacturers.

500+ gig hard disk
Get plenty of storage space since hard drives are cheap now.

Printer
There are plenty of black and white printers on campus. However an inexpensive DeskJet might be advisable for those quick print jobs or to print pictures or papers of a personal nature.

Software
We are currently using Microsoft Windows 7 SP1 64 bit (operating system), on our department computers. For word processing, we use Microsoft Office 2013. If you are buying a new system, I would recommend that the Operating System be installed by the folks you are buying it from. That way it's all set up and ready to go. You can purchase MS Office from the RIT Digital Den for about $70. Office 365 (the
cloud version) is available for a lower cost, see https://www.rit.edu/its/services/personal-computers/software/office-365 for instructions on how to obtain that.

The rest of the applications you use will be on the department lab computers. Microsoft software packages that we have student licenses for as part of our MSDN Academic Agreement are Visio, Project, and Visual Studio. You will be able to download these for free in the future if they are needed for your course work. Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

You can find other information at the RIT ITS (Information and Technology Services) web site, http://www.rit.edu/its/

Ken Garland  
Facilities Manager  
ECT Engineering Technology  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
ENT Bldg. Room 3128  
78 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, NY 14623  
V 585-475-7775 F 585-475-2178  
kpgiee@rit.edu

Chris Brown  
System Administrator and Lab Manager  
ECT Engineering Technology  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
ENT Bldg. Room 3128  
78 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, NY 14623  
V 585-475-5080  
cjbsps@rit.edu

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