University of California Systemwide Academic Senate
Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunications Policy (ITTP)

Minimum computing and communications equipment and software needs of instructors in the University of California

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The ITTP is developing a list of computing and communications capabilities that are needed by all course instructors in the University of California. Once this is finalized by the Committee, it will be forwarded for approval by the Systemwide Academic Council as an official statement on behalf of the Academic Senate. We hope that this will assist instructors across the UC system to identify and acquire the resources needed to fulfill their teaching obligations.

Before this is finalized, we are seeking broad input from the campuses to make sure this list reflects a broad consensus. Please consider this list on your campus, and forward any suggestions (changes/deletions/additions, with justification) to ITTP Committee Analyst Kenneth Feer (Kenneth.Feer@ucop.edu). We would like feedback by December, or January at the latest, prior to consideration by the ITTP at its next meeting on Feb. 2.

Objective
The use of computing and communications technologies in teaching has expanded dramatically in recent years. Our students in all disciplines have high expectations for the use of technology in teaching and learning, and the University should broaden the use of technology to remain competitive. The following are guidelines for instructors and for the University as to the minimum capabilities needed in course instruction. Many disciplines have special needs beyond those listed below. The purpose of this list is to provide guidance to both instructors and the University as to the capabilities and resources required in course instruction.

Capabilities
- Access to online information of all types (digital library, documents, web sites, audio, video)
- Communication with and collaboration among instructors, with students, and among students
- Authoring of course materials of all types
- Online publication of course information
- Course administration, such as exams and grades, and including protection of student privacy (identities and grades)
Facilities and equipment

- Computer
  - At least three platforms (PC, Mac, or Linux) are acceptable and widely used
  - Can be laptop or desktop, according to individual preference
- Broadband internet connection
- Telephone, providing:
  - Campus and local calls
  - Multi-way conference calling

Computer applications

Information access
- Web browser

Authoring tools
- Word processing
  - File formats: HTML, Word-compatible, and PDF
- Spreadsheet

Publication tools
- Learning management system (such as Blackboard, WebCT, or Sakai)

Collaboration tools
In the case of collaboration tools, there is a special premium on compatibility of tools available to instructors and students:
- Email client
- Desktop video conferencing
  - Point-point and multi-way
- Wiki or discussion forum tools for collaborative discussion threads
- Collaborative authoring tools

Utilities
- Encryption (for preservation of privacy)
- Security protection (firewall, spyware, virus)

Server applications
- Email account, address, and server (IMAP or POP)
- Gradebook shared among instructors, including protection of student privacy
- Web server with publication rights for posting documents and information
- Data storage and backup, particularly to preserve course materials over time
Services and assistance

- Technical and administrative support for computer and for all applications
  - Software installation and upgrade
  - Security monitoring and response
  - Telephone help desk and in-person response