

Feinberg School of Medicine

Computer Requirements for Incoming Students 2025

A reliable, secure laptop is a critical part of your educational toolkit. The minimum recommended specifications are shown below; however, we encourage you to reach for the preferred level or higher. Investing now gives you a better chance of having a machine that will carry you through the duration of your program without significant upgrades.

Windows

Component	Minimum	Preferred
Hardware		
Processor	13 th Gen Intel i5	14 th Gen Intel i7
RAM	16 GB	24 GB or higher
Hard drive	512 GB SSD	1TB or higher SSD
Webcam	Built in	Built in
Microphone	Built in	Built in
Software		
OS	Windows 11 Pro	Windows 11 Pro
Duo Desktop	Required	Required
BitLocker Encryption	Required	Required
Anti-malware	Windows Security (built into OS)	Windows Security (built into OS)

Mac

Component	Minimum	Preferred
Hardware		
Processor	Apple M1	Apple M3 or M4
RAM	16 GB	24 GB or higher
Hard drive	512 GB SSD	1TB or higher SSD
Webcam	Built in	Built in
Microphone	Built in	Built in
Software		
OS	Sonoma	Sequoia
Duo Desktop	Required	Required
FileVault Encryption	Required	Required
Anti-malware	Sophos Home Premium or other Duo-approved anti-malware*	Sophos Home Premium or other Duo-approved anti-malware*

**Most Duo-approved anti-malware are only available with an enterprise license. For personal Mac devices, you will need to purchase Sophos Home Premium.*

Duo Desktop Requirements

Feinberg uses Duo Desktop (formerly known as Duo Device Health/DDH) to verify that desktop and laptop computers have supported, up-to-date operating systems, encryption, and anti-malware software before allowing access to multi-factor authentication-enabled university resources, including email and Canvas. If your computer meets the minimum requirements listed above, your computer should be compliant with Duo Desktop requirements.

To install the Duo Desktop application:

- Windows: <https://dl.duosecurity.com/DuoDesktop-latest.msi>
- Mac: <https://dl.duosecurity.com/DuoDesktop-latest.pkg>

FAQ

Can I use an iPad or tablet?

Many FSM students use tablets as supplemental learning/studying tools, including note taking, additional screen real estate, or other purposes. If you find iPads or other tablets to be useful, please bring it along, however, a tablet is *not* a substitute for a laptop that meets the minimum requirements above and cannot run critical software needed to successfully complete your program of study.

How big should my monitor or second screen be (for my laptop)?

We recommend at least 13" for your laptop screen, however, screen size is ultimately up to personal preference.

Can I use a Chromebook?

No, Chromebooks and ChromeOS are not compatible with required software.

Do you recommend a Windows PC laptop brand?

Any well-known brand with access to support and parts should suffice. For faculty and staff, Feinberg IT generally purchases from Dell, Lenovo, and Microsoft. These brands typically have discounts for students as well. However, we recommend that you avoid ACER laptops as they have frequently had challenges with our exam software.

Do you recommend getting the extended warranty offered (for the laptop)?

Yes, in general, we encourage people to purchase a 3- or 4-year warranty, depending on what is available.

Do you recommend any other accessories?

An extra computer charger and/or a portable charger may come in handy. Some classrooms at FSM may not have enough outlets for all students.

If I need additional guidance or have questions about technology, who should I contact?

Please contact Feinberg IT using the form on our website, <https://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/it>, or by emailing fsmhelp@northwestern.edu. Feinberg IT staff will also be available during orientation for some programs. Please check with your program coordinator for more information.