

# Computer Purchase Policy

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process by which the university acquires and disposes of computers for faculty, staff, administrators, and labs. The goal of the policy is to ensure that each employee has a suitable computer to perform his/her assigned responsibilities while also providing judicious stewardship of university resources.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all full and part-time university employees and to the purchase of all laptop and desktop computers and tablet/mobile computing devices, regardless of the university funding source. In the context of this policy, a “computer” is defined as a complete working computer system and does not include e-book readers, printers, peripherals, external memory, external disk drives, monitors, or software.

## **Guidelines for Computer Purchases**

All computer purchases must be made through the university’s Technical Services Department, adhering to UAPB’s in-house requisition/purchase order protocol as outlined by the UAPB Purchasing Department. Benefits of a central purchasing process include:

- Ensuring that faculty, staff, and administrators have access to up-to-date computer systems
- Requiring that computing equipment purchases are reviewed by IT staff
- Consolidating purchasing into large orders to lower costs associated with acquisition and deployment
- Maximizing value by working with preferred vendors
- Reducing the total cost of ownership by purchasing standardized configurations
- Centralizing record-keeping to facilitate effective planning, maintenance, upgrades, and disposal

All computer purchases must be made with the university’s preferred supplier(s) and conform to a set of university-specified standard models, with the following exceptions:

- Faculty whose teaching and research responsibilities require an alternative to the standard configuration (Must be approved by an academic dean.)

- Administrators and staff whose specific technical, environmental, or functional job responsibilities require an alternative to the standard configuration (Must be approved by the divisional vice chancellor.)
- All computers purchased with university funds remain the property of the university until disposed of through the State of Arkansas's surplus property program.

### **Preferred Vendors & Service Providers**

The State of Arkansas has negotiated special purchasing contracts with select vendors and service providers. Utilizing preferred vendors helps ensure that the university receives the maximum value for its purchasing dollar. These relationships also include special access to warranty and other services that assist IT staff in fixing problems and lower the total cost of ownership of the equipment.

### **Standard Models**

The IT Operations Group maintains a standard desktop and a standard laptop configuration that will meet the general computing needs of most staff members. This standard configuration will be used in the absence of special requirements (which require dean/VP approval), with the goal of minimizing the number of models and configurations deployed in the division.

### **Purchasing Schedule**

The IT Department schedules bulk purchases of computers once a year in July in order to reduce acquisition, recordkeeping, deployment and disposal costs. IT staff will consult with departments before each purchase to discontinue or replace equipment with expired warranties, as well as arrange for the acquisition of additional equipment for new staff or programs. Our goal is to replace most computers during the summer months.

A scheduled order may be deferred and combined with a later order to reach a minimum dollar threshold required by our preferred vendors. Temporary equipment may be made available to departments if it is needed before the next order cycle.

### **Computers Purchased with Grant Funds**

Computers acquired using grant funds will be purchased outright using the same configurations, guidelines and vendors as other university computers, unless there is cause for an exception as outlined in the "Guidelines for Computer Purchases" section above. For ongoing grants, departments should plan on replacing equipment on a regular basis, usually in five years or upon warranty expiration, as well as budgeting for parts and repairs.

## **Computers Received as Gifts**

Departments receiving computing equipment as gifts from individuals or corporate sponsorships must work with Director of Technical Services before agreeing to accept equipment donations. Equipment gifts must be reviewed to ensure that the gift can be fully utilized in the UAPB environment and that ongoing operating or maintenance costs will not outweigh any benefit that the machine might provide.

### **Refresh Cycle:**

Full-time faculty desktop computers should be replaced on a five-year cycle while laptop computers should be replaced on a three-year cycle. This is done to ensure that systems used for daily business are up-to-date and under warranty. Administrative deans and department heads are responsible for maintaining a refresh list, budgeting for the refresh (IT can provide costs for standard models), and communicating needs with IT. Academic deans are responsible for maintaining a refresh list for faculty and communicating their computer refresh needs with IT by May 1st for the following fiscal year. Funding for the computer refresh cycle is still part of the department's budget.

### **Hand-me-down Systems**

Sometimes computer systems that are due for a refresh still have a significant amount of usable life left in them. Departments needing a "hand-me-down" system for a work study student or other need may make a request through the Director of Technical Services and hand-me-down assignments will be made in conjunction with the summer refresh program. Technical Services reserves the right to determine if any university-owned machine has usable life.

### **Delivery of Equipment**

Once a computer has been purchased and setup, the computer will become the property of the department. Technical Services staff will complete a moving request form and obtain all authorized signatures.