

# Questions About Computing at Oberlin

## **What percentage of campus courses use electronic information to enhance the course (for example, syllabi, reading lists, discussion groups, video)?**

We estimate that most courses at Oberlin use some sort of electronic resources. In many courses, digital copies of syllabi, class handouts, sound clips, and video are available to students course sites. These sites also allow professors to supplement class activities with discussion forums, online self assessments, blogs and wikis (<http://oncampus.oberlin.edu>). We have approximately 26 "smart classrooms" and an electronic classroom with 18 wireless laptops.

## **Are technology resources available to prepare graduates for successful technology use in their careers?**

By the time Oberlin students graduate, they have been exposed to many information technology resources, both in and out of the classroom. The College maintains an up-to-date and wide diversity of IT opportunities for students. Examples: online course syllabi, online registration, computer labs and special multimedia equipment. All students are assigned email and network accounts, and can request web accounts. There are many opportunities to learn and use specialized software that they will encounter in the real world (e.g. advanced multimedia, statistical and spatial analysis software).

## **What library resources are available online (catalog, databases, special collections)?**

A full featured, web-based online catalog, OBIS, includes links to over 100 databases and over 7,000 full text, electronic, journals. See: <http://www.oberlin.edu/library/>. Professors can also make materials available to students in their classes through the online portion of their course as course reserves (ERes or Blackboard).

## **Does the campus have a specific computer/IT competency requirement for all undergraduates?**

No. However, we do believe that the requirements of the courses that students take will provide them with more than the necessary skills to compete in the new age of electronic resources and communication. We also have an office dedicated to working with faculty so that they can easily and

effectively integrate technology into their teaching and assignments.

## **What percentage of faculty have a networked computer available to them?**

All faculty have a networked computer in their office.

## **What information about admission and financial aid is available online, and can necessary forms be submitted electronically?**

Application forms and general information are both available. See: <http://www.oberlin.edu/admissions> for information about the Oberlin College admissions office. See: <http://www.oberlin.edu/finaid> for information about financial aid at Oberlin.

## **Is the college catalog, including important campus policies, available on the Web?**

Yes. See: <http://www.oberlin.edu/catalog/>

## **Can a student access her personal student information/data online?**

Students can use our on-line student information system, PRESTO (<http://presto.oberlin.edu/>) to view their addresses, class schedule, grades, academic transcript, overall status of financial aid, and their account balance online.

## **Can a student find out his grades online or by phone at the end of a semester?**

Yes. Students can view both mid-term and final grades via PRESTO at any time after grades have been posted. PRESTO is PIN-protected and encrypted for security. Some faculty also provide a student's ongoing grade through Blackboard.

## **How is dropping and adding courses processed?**

Students register for courses through our online registration system, PRESTO. During their assigned registration time window, students can add and drop classes, search for available seats in desired courses, change the credit hours of variable-hour courses, and print their semester schedules directly from the web via PRESTO. In addition, professors can electronically consent students into courses requiring an instructor's consent via PRESTO.

**Can students pay bills, receive loans, or make campus bookstore purchases using online procedures?**

No, but these services are planned for the future.

**What campus and community services are covered by “smart cards” or “debit cards”?**

Dining and residential hall access is through the student's ID card, as is the charge for printing in computer labs, copying in the libraries, and purchases at the Computer Store as well as many vendors in the town of Oberlin.

**What student information does the campus provide routinely to parents?**

No specific student information is available, although much general information is available via our web site, Oberlin Online.

**What percentage of students on this campus have full-time use of personal computers?**

Over 95% of Oberlin College students own a personal computer. Since we make some public computer labs available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (when classes are in session), virtually ALL students at Oberlin have computing and network resources available to them on a full-time basis.

**What is the ratio of public access computers to undergraduate enrollment?**

We have over 300 public and departmental access computers available on campus, and approximately 2800 students, thus a ratio of one computer for every 9-10 students.

**Does the campus allow students to create personal Web pages?**

Yes, all students are provided a web account on request. See: <http://www.oberlin.edu/students/sites.html> for a listing of student web pages.

**Is contact information for students, faculty, and staff readily accessible electronically?**

Student information is limited and generally only available to on-campus community members. Faculty/Staff information

can be found in the faculty/staff directory, called Fusers. (<http://www.oberlin.edu/fusers>)

**Is there a campus code of behavior for use of computing resources?**

Yes. See: <http://www.oberlin.edu/cit/policies/>

**What social activities and services are available over the Web?**

The College's official web site, Oberlin Online, has an OnCampus section that allows the exchange of social news, events and classified ads, and access to materials and announcements from various organizations and offices. See: <http://oncampus.oberlin.edu>

**Are there Web sites for student organizations and clubs, and are these linked to the campus home page?**

Yes. Every chartered student organization is given a site within our oncampus environment. Officers are added automatically during the summer.

**What, if any, technology fee is charged by the campus and what does it cover?**

Oberlin has no technology fee for students.

**Are students required to purchase their own computers?**

Students are encouraged to own a personal computer, but there is no requirement. The Oberlin College Computer Store sells Macintosh and Gateway computers, as well as peripherals and accessories at educational pricing. We recommend the purchase of laptops with wireless cards to take best advantage of networking opportunities. <http://www.oberlin.edu/cstore/>

**How does the campus make computing and network access financially available to all students?**

For those students who bring a standard networkable computer to campus, and live in one of the College's residence halls, internet connectivity is provided free-of-charge. For students who don't own a computer, or who live off campus, over 300 Macintosh and Windows computers are available at several locations on campus (public and

departmental labs), all of which are connected to the internet.

**Does the campus assess extra fees for network connections in the dorms or for off-campus access?**

There are no fees for connecting to the College's residential network or for students in off-campus college-provided housing. Students in non-college housing must obtain their own Internet access.

**If I bring my own computer equipment to school, what kind of support can I expect from the campus?**

All residence halls are completely wired for high-speed connectivity to the campus network. We have Residential Computer Coordinators (RCCs, students living in the residence halls) available to assist residential students with their computing issues. Additionally, the CIT employs student computing consultants who work at the central computing facilities in Mudd. The Student Computing Services Center is open in Mudd during daytime, evening and weekend hours for assistance with computer questions. Students may also send email to [cit@oberlin.edu](mailto:cit@oberlin.edu) for help any time.

For students who own laptop computers with the appropriate wireless network interface card, Oberlin College also has a wireless networking infrastructure. Many places on campus provide wireless access, including many residence hall areas. See <http://www.oberlin.edu/cit/wireless> for a map of wireless access. We expect to add more wireless access in the future, and recommend students bring laptops to take advantage of it.

**What hardware and software standards, if any, does the campus require, recommend, and/or support?**

We have standardized on Macintosh OS X and Windows XP Pro for faculty and staff. We provide site licenses for virus protection software. The Microsoft Office Suite is a standard at Oberlin. We also have some support for many other products, including Dreamweaver, Photoshop, FileMaker Pro, etc., which are available on many lab computers. See <http://www.oberlin.edu/cit/policies/supportpolicy.html>.

**What kinds of services (help desk, training, troubleshooting) are provided by the campus, and during what hours of operation?**

The CIT Help Desk is available from 9 AM to noon, and 1 to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. In addition, the Student Computing Services Center in Mudd is open some day, evening and weekend hours. Residential Computer Coordinators are available by appointment to assist on-campus students in their residence halls with their internet connectivity needs. Email sent to [cit@oberlin.edu](mailto:cit@oberlin.edu) is answered as quickly as possible, 24 hours a day.

**Does the campus have a plan for keeping the hardware current, and if so, what is the replacement cycle?**

Yes. We replace the public and departmental computer labs every 3 to 4 years. Faculty and staff also receive new computers on an approximate 4 year cycle. In some cases, we add memory and/or other components after 1 or 2 years.

**How does the campus support printing for students, and is there a charge for this?**

A limited amount of free laser printing is available in the computing labs per semester. Additional printing has a per page fee. Color laser printing service is also available for a nominal charge in the main computer lab in Mudd.

Oberlin College is a member of EDUCAUSE. Their complete consumer guide about Information Technology resources for parents and prospective students (on which this document is based) is available at <http://www.educause.edu/consumerguide/>

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