

Bachelor of Communication Studies (BCS), Journalism Major, Year 2 Laptop, Peripheral, and Software Requirements

The BCS Journalism Major program, Department of Communication at MacEwan University requires that all students entering their second year of study purchase a laptop to complete assignments in and out of the classroom. For students entering their second year of study this will include a MacBook Air, MacBook Pro or comparable Windows 11 system along with an optional case, peripherals, Microsoft Office and Adobe Creative Cloud. Please pay close attention to the following requirements as you will need your system set up and ready to go for the first day of classes. Students with a focus in Broadcast Journalism please refer to the footnotes on page 5.

Why a laptop?

Having mobility in the field of journalism is critical and the Program has selected a laptop requirement that will give you the most flexibility in and out of the classroom. Whether you are working in a classroom, lab, or cafe, you will have all the tools you need when and where you need them.

Why recommend a MacBook Air or MacBook Pro?

Apple uses high quality components in all of its laptops that give students a superior technological experience throughout their studies. It also prepares them for entry into the workplace, as Mac is the standard platform used in the journalism industry. Macs also age better: they are more durable and take much longer to reach obsolescence.

In consultation with our Mobile Technologies Support Specialist, BCS has selected the MacBook Pro as our recommended system, because it is one of the most powerful and adaptable Apple laptops, has a highly efficient battery, is relatively light and easy to commute with, and has a processor capable of running the most demanding applications that are required for Journalism students. Broadcast students please take note of the **Upgrade Options** on page 2. Apple's more recent MacBook Airs and many modern Windows 11 PCs will also meet the minimum requirements for the Program.

I already own a Laptop. Do I need to upgrade or buy a new one?

At a minimum, you will need an Apple Silicon MacBook Pro or MacBook Air (2020 or newer) to have a positive experience during your studies, and to ensure your system is optimized to run the advanced graphically intensive applications you will require. If you have purchased a laptop before your application for the BCS Journalism Major, it will be subject to approval by our department as not all hardware configurations will meet the program's minimum requirements.

Please contact Sasha Stanojevic, our TV Studio Coordinator (information below) to determine if your laptop meets the BCS Journalism Major Program requirements:




Type	Display	Hard Drive	Processor	Graphics	RAM	Operating System
If you own a MacBook Minimum Requirements	13.3" 2056 x 1600	256GB SSD	8-Core Apple M1 CPU	7-Core Apple M1 GPU	8GB	macOS 13.3 (Ventura)
If you own a MacBook Recommended Requirements	14" or 16" Apple Retina	500GB SSD	Intel i5 or AMD A6	Intel, NVIDIA, or AMD	16GB	macOS 14.5 (Sonoma)

** The above Mac requirements describe most MacBook Pros from 2020 onwards. Comparable Windows 11 systems are likely to be approved but will require individual assessment.*

STEP 1) Buying a new MacBook Air or Pro (Recommendations for Windows systems below)

If you are purchasing a new system for your studies in BCS Journalism Major then we highly recommend a MacBook Air or MacBook Pro which can be purchased at an academic discount on [Apple's Online Education Store](#) or at Apple's retail locations. If you plan to customize your laptop, you can only do so through the online store at time of purchase.

Please refer to this table for Apple's MacBook systems that are capable of delivering professional results with their base configurations, however, there are certain upgrades that will prolong the life of your laptop. This doesn't necessarily mean buying the most expensive option but investing more money in your system up front is likely to provide you additional year(s) of use.


Minimum	Recommended	Upgrade Options
		
MacBook Air 13"	M3 MacBook Pro 14"	15"-16" MacBook Pro or Air
256GB SSD	512GB SSD	1TB SSD
8-Core Apple M1 CPU	8-Core Apple M3	8 or 12-Core M3
7-Core GPU	10-Core GPU	10 or 18-Core GPU
8GB memory	8GB memory	16-18 GB memory
\$999	\$1,969	\$2,324 - \$3254

[Apple's Online Education Store](#)

Prices listed are based on Apple Store Canada Education pricing as of May 12, 2024.

STEP 1/Alternative) Windows System





Although we do recommend and utilize the Mac almost exclusively in the BCS, Journalism Major we acknowledge that many students will already have or may prefer to work on a Windows-based platform. Due to the overwhelming number of brands, models, and configuration options it is difficult to make a blanket recommendation, however, the following hardware will accommodate processing intensive activities such as video editing.

Minimum Specs:	Display	Hard Drive	Processor	Graphics	RAM	Operating System
	2560x1440	500GB SSD	Intel Core i7 or AMD Ryzen 7	Dedicated Graphics Card 6gb VRAM	16GB	Windows 11

STEP 2) Peripherals (required, recommended, and optional)

Whether using a Mac or PC there are several peripherals you'll need to consider with the purchase of your new laptop. In particular there are adapters you'll need to purchase for displaying your work on a projector, an external drive for backing up your data locally, and some form of protective case or sleeve to prevent damage to your system.

Please ensure that if you purchase a new 13" MacBook Air you purchase the USB-C adapter below.

		Cost
	Required: 1-4TB SanDisk Extreme Portable SSD <i>External drive for backing up and managing your files. This drive should have a speed over 800mb/s.</i>	\$150-400
	Recommended: Laptop case or sleeve <i>A case that suits your lifestyle and needs depending on your commute and daily use.</i>	\$25 - \$200
	Optional: AppleCare+ Protection Plan <i>Adds to your warranty and accidental damage. Available in yearly or 3-year plans.</i>	\$90 - \$400
	Recommended: USB-C Multi-Port Hub (MacBook Air Users) <i>Current-Gen MacBook Pro models have plenty of ports, but the MacBook Air and older models are limited to USB-C. A hub with ports for USB-A, HDMI, and SD Cards will be required.</i>	\$40-\$80

STEP 3) Software Requirements



1. Microsoft Office 365

As part of the University's Microsoft agreement, Microsoft Office 365 is now free for all students, staff, and faculty. This includes Word, Powerpoint, Excel, and Outlook as well as 1TB of cloud storage and 60 Skype minutes per month. Once your MacEwan email address is setup you can login and register through the MacEwan Portal by clicking on this link:

<https://signup.microsoft.com>



2. Adobe Creative Cloud, Annual Subscription

While we will be utilizing as many free applications as possible, all students in Journalism are required to purchase a subscription to Adobe's Creative Cloud which is the industry software standard and will be used throughout your studies. Subscriptions are currently available through MacEwan's Bookstore at a substantially reduced cost of \$199 / Year through this link:

<http://macewanbookstore.com/p-7440-adobe-creative-cloud.aspx>

IMPORTANT NOTE: *When creating your Adobe CC account, you must use a personal (non-MacEwan) email address, or you may encounter login issues.*

BROADCAST JOURNALISM CONSIDERATIONS

For students progressing in the Broadcast News courses in the Journalism Major, BCS we highly recommend above the "Recommended" configuration to keep up with the demands of a video-editing workflow. You'll want to ensure you have sufficient space and processing power to utilize Adobe's Premiere and Media Encoder applications. Please see the following link with software specific information and requirements direct from Adobe: <https://helpx.adobe.com/premiere-pro/system-requirements.html>

SUMMARY

Please remember that you are responsible for backing up your work and managing your own files. For Design Studies students we do recommend you purchase a new machine that will be "fresh out of the box" and optimized for your school use over the next few years. If you have an older MacBook Pro or Air (or opt to purchase a used or refurbished system) please make arrangements with us well ahead of the start of class so we can verify if your computer is in sufficient working order.

You will need to have your laptop, backup drive, and Creative Cloud subscription purchased and ready to go for the first day of classes.

Need additional pre-purchase information?

Contact Sasha Stanojevic, our TV Studio Coordinator (stanojevics@macewan.ca) with any questions you may have. If you already own a laptop, you must contact Sasha Stanojevic to determine if it meets the minimum program requirements. Please contact Susan Dut (duts@macewan.ca) for any BCS Journalism Major Program enquiry of a non-technical nature.

Step-by-Step-Requirement-Checklist

- Laptop purchased, in hand, and ready to go for the first day of classes.
- Previously owned laptop owners must contact Sasha Stanojevic to determine compatibility.
- Microsoft Office 365 activated and installed prior to the first day of classes.
- Backup drive purchased and in hand for the first day of classes.
- Subscription purchased for Adobe's Creative Cloud service via the MacEwan bookstore:

<http://www.macewanbookstore.com/p-7440-adobe-creative-cloud.aspx>

Note for Windows Users: Please be advised that your instructors will primarily be working on the Mac platform so you may find you have to adapt your workflow and seek support outside of the classroom for any technical issues that may arise. Older systems are not supported and may not work in all cases.

Please allow time to purchase and set up your laptop, particularly if you are ordering online.