Minimum Technical Requirements and Skills

When taking an online course, students necessarily commit to taking the necessary steps to ensure they are able to participate in the course as that course requires. For instance, students in online classes must also frequently be able to:

- Use the Internet;
- Open and run applications, especially productivity software like word processors and spreadsheet programs;
- Open and navigate to particular websites;
- Write and respond to email messages;
- Add attachments to email messages; and
- Download and install software, including any applicable Java or Adobe Flash updates.

Students in online programs offered through the University's Department of Humanities may find minimum requirements listed on the Department's website. Students in the Bachelor of Criminal Justice program should consult the memorandum of understanding (MOU) they will have signed upon entry into the program. Human Resource Management students should refer to their program orientation and training material. In other cases, students will typically find sufficient the following minimum technical requirements:

- A personal computer. Smart phones, tablets (including iPads), and other mobile computing devices may not be able to perform all tasks necessary to participate fully in an online course.
    - Operating system: Windows Vista, Mac OS X 10.6,[1] or Linux (Debian 7, Fedora 17, OpenSuSE 12.2, Ubuntu 12.04)
    - Hardware:
        - Processor: 1.5 GHz dual-core Intel Pentium 4 (Windows), Intel (Mac), Intel Pentium 3 or Athlon 64 (Linux)
        - Free RAM: 128 MB
        - Free disk space: 100 MB
        - Monitor: Color with a resolution of 800x600
        - Graphics card: 128 MB
        - Broadband network adapter
        - 100% Sound Blaster compatible sound card and speakers
- Broadband Internet access (e.g., DSL, cable; i.e., not "dial up"). It is generally not recommended to use WiFi or mobile (e.g., 3G, 4G) connections when taking examinations, participating in video conferences, or engaging in other activities that require especially stable connections.
- A web browser (e.g., Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox current stable release). Apple Safari and Internet Explorer users may experience difficulties with some learning management system or other web components.

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[1] To avoid difficulty in using Blackboard, Mac OS users may especially need to test their systems' compatibility.

- A working University email account. Correspondence from instructors and University offices will **not** be directed to personal email accounts.
- A productivity software suite (e.g., Apache OpenOffice, Google Drive, LibreOffice, Microsoft Office 365). The suite will typically need to be able to read, create, and interact with Microsoft Office file formats. For most courses, assignments should be submitted in Microsoft Office formats.
- A PDF reader (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Reader 6.0)
- A current Flash version as provided by Adobe or provided with one's browser of choice (e.g., Google Chrome)
- For courses offered in Blackboard, a current version of Java

Information about accessibility features in each of these platforms can be obtained via the vendor's websites (e.g., Apache, Blackboard, Google, LibreOffice, Microsoft, Mozilla). Students should bear in mind that the specifications listed above are typical **minimums**, and higher specifications may be helpful or provide a more pleasant computing experience. In rare cases for particular courses, students may also be responsible for meeting higher minimum requirements.

In some cases, faculty may require students to show the work they have done to arrive at a certain response (e.g., especially in mathematics and science courses). To do so, students may need to type their work into a word processor file, inserting appropriate symbols to indicate relevant functions or steps. If an instructor chooses to allow students to submit handwritten materials in order to show their work, students who take advantage of this permission continue to bear responsibility for adequately and clearly transmitting their work to their instructor.

Within the context of whatever other directions an instructor may provide for this transmission, students needing to submit digital copies of handwritten material may find helpful the following suggestions and tools:

- Students in convenient physical proximity to a Faulkner campus may contact that campus's Student Success Office for a copier access code. Students may then use a University copier to scan their work and email it to themselves. The copier codes assigned for this purpose do not permit photocopying or printing.
- Scan the work on a personal scanner, at a local library, or at a local office supply store or print shop.
- Photograph the work with a digital camera or mobile device. When using this method, students should take special care to ensure their handwritten material is clear in the digital images.
- Use a mobile app designed to capture handwriting (e.g., Explain Everything, Evernote / Penultimate), and capture the handwriting directly in a digital format.