Engineering Laptop Information

Many times the Engineering department is asked by an incoming engineering student, in preparation for their first semester, what recommendation we have for the purchase of a laptop, which will best suit their needs as an engineering student?

This is a difficult question to answer because in reality the need for a potentially high end laptop can be an unnecessary expenditure for the reasons listed below:

1. Typically a first or second year student will not need specific engineering software, which would require a high end laptop. Should the need arise for use of this software it is installed and available in the engineering labs.
2. If a student decides to change majors, the high end laptop they purchased prior to entering Messiah College will have been a potentially unnecessary expenditure.
3. Realistically, an engineering student will not need a high end laptop until their junior year when they have decided on a particular concentration. At that point they can get a more powerful laptop to run SolidWorks (this software only runs on Windows) for a Mechanical concentration or National Instruments Circuit Design Suite for an Electrical / Computer concentration. Even then it would be their choice to buy that laptop as all the software they will need is available on the machines in our engineering labs. This engineering software and others we use are typically designed to operate properly on Windows.

The Messiah College Information Technology Services - Basic Campus Computer Recommendations:

The following list represents configurations that provide the best performance with our learning management system and synchronous software. These are the configurations the College is ready and able to support.

- i3 processor (i5 or i7 is better)
- 2 GB of memory/ram minimum (4 GB, or more, is better)
- Windows 7 or 8, Mac OS X 10.7 or higher
- If you plan on putting a lot of pictures, movies and/or music on your PC, you may want a larger hard drive (such as 500GB)
- Extended warranty (if financially feasible)
- USB headset\mic (if course requires it) e.g. Logitech USB
- Video Camera (if course requires it) Reliable brands include Sony, Kodak and Canon.

Department-specific recommendations/requirements will be detailed in the course syllabus. Many laptops already have built-in cameras.

This recommendation (above) is provided at:
http://www.messiah.edu/info/20154/information_technology_services/197/technology_recommendations/3

This link also provides additional valuable information, which should be reviewed, on the following:

1. Software
2. Frequently asked Questions
3. Cell Phones

May 24, 2015