

OLLU Engage Technical Requirements 2014

These are the technical requirements necessary for you to access your online courses and complete your assignments efficiently and effectively. Please read this information carefully, as you must ensure that your computer is properly configured. If you have any questions or problems, please contact your **Personal Support Center** at the phone number and/or email address at the bottom of this page.

It is important to recognize that computer technology, configurations, and pricing evolve rapidly and will continue to do so. When you think about whether to use a computer you already have or purchase a new one, remember that what is “current” today, will likely be obsolete in three-four years. We say “obsolete” in the sense that the most current versions of the software you need will not run or at least not run very well on an obsolete computer.

As an online student, you will be using your computer a great deal, and completing complex and large assignments on a slow or otherwise inadequate machine will be frustrating and could compromise the quality of your work. This computer and associated software represent an investment in your future. What we recommend here represents early 2014 technology. This page will be updated as needed, but at a minimum, annually.

Hardware

Your computer must be capable of running a modern operating system, at a minimum, **Windows 7** or **Mac OS X version 10.7**.

Your computer should have at least **4 GB of RAM**. More RAM allows for more applications, such as your online course and Microsoft Word, to be open simultaneously and will speed up your computer in general. Adding RAM can be a very cost-effective way to improve computer performance. If possible, consider 8 GB RAM.

You will need a **high-speed/broadband** Internet connection. This is an extremely important part of your computer configuration! If your computer uses a modem to connect to the Internet, you will not be able to stream video, participate in video-based conference calls, and upload videos you create. If you are in a program that requires video uploads, you will need to find a location *in advance* (whether at home or elsewhere) that has the necessary bandwidth. Performing a test upload in advance is highly recommended.

You may also wish to purchase a **microphone**, either standalone or with a set of **headphones (headset)**. These would be for voice chats, video conferencing, or voice-over presentations.

We also recommend that you have a **printer** to facilitate proofing and revising assignments and papers. If you will need to print in color, there are many personal inkjet printers available. Note that while inkjet printers are often inexpensive, replacing the ink cartridges can be quite expensive. If you will not need color, consider a personal laser printer, as that may be less expensive in the long run (i.e., toner cartridges for laser printers are much more efficient than ink cartridges for ink jet printers).

Software

The software you will require falls into three categories: **Applications, Media Players and Plugins, and Utilities.**

Applications

You will need a current browser and the Microsoft Office suite of applications.

Browser Requirements

You will use a web browser to access your courses and interact with other students and faculty. You should be running the most current version of your chosen browser. All of the browsers below have the capability of alerting you when a newer version is available for download. Browsers are all free and the determination of which to use is a matter of personal preference. Download the current version of any of these tested and supported browsers using the links below:

Windows Browsers

- [Chrome](#)
- [Firefox](#)
- [Internet Explorer](#)

Macs OS X Browsers

- [Chrome](#)
- [Firefox](#)
- **Safari** (for OS X versions 10.8 and later, use the built in [Software Update](#) feature to update to the latest version of Safari).

NOTE: Cookies must be enabled on your browser.

A cookie is a small file that is placed on your computer by the system with which you are interacting. Cookies are a very common Internet technology used by many websites, such as Amazon or eBay. Your browser has a setting that allows you to control whether you allow cookies or not. It must be set to allow cookies to be set.

Since cookies are so common, your browser probably already has cookies enabled. If you are unsure whether your browser is set up properly, please contact your **Personal Support Center** at the phone number and/or email address at the bottom of this page.

Microsoft Office

Microsoft Office is a collection (a “suite”) of several different applications that you will need, including Outlook (email), Word (word processing), PowerPoint (presentations), and Excel (spreadsheets). Microsoft Office is the *lingua franca* of modern business and education applications and you are advised to use a recent version (i.e., not more than three years old).

There are various combinations of the programs for different prices, including some that are web-based and offered on a subscription basis. If you are purchasing a new version of Office, make sure you know exactly what you are buying and whether the fee is a one-time expense or a year’s service fee. Some of the Office configurations offer substantial discounts for students, so be sure to ask for the “Academic Version.”

NOTE: Some institutions provide versions of Microsoft Office to their students, so **before you purchase anything, please check with your institution.**

NOTE: Some of the Office configurations include Microsoft Outlook, and some do not. Outlook is an email application and also contains a calendar and a directory of your contacts. If you are intending to use Outlook for email and are purchasing a new version of the Office suite, be sure it contains Outlook.

Media Players and Plugins

Use the following links to download the latest versions of these media players and plugins.

[Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)

Your courses may include .pdf files, which require the free Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Adobe Flash Player

Flash Player is a media player that “plugs into” your browser. Your courses may include images or animations that require the free Adobe Flash Player plugin.

Note: Many mobile devices (especially Apple devices) do not run Flash. If your mobile device cannot display Flash, it might not be suitable for online course access.

QuickTime Player

Your courses may include videos that require QuickTime Video Player.

[QuickTime Player for Windows](#) works with the last several versions of the Windows operating system. Much like Safari, the Mac version of Quicktime Player is bundled with the operating system and updates are available for OS X 10.8 and later through the [Software Update](#) feature in OS X.

Utilities

File-Compression Software

[WinZip](#) allows you to compress a number of files into one file that is much smaller in size than the sum of the original files. If you need to send several large files via email, WinZip can make that an easier and quicker effort. Different email systems have different file size limitations and file compression helps overcome that limitation. The recipient of your email must decompress or “unzip” the compressed file upon receipt.

Anti-Virus Software

No one plans to acquire a computer virus, but the best safeguard is to purchase a reliable and professional **anti-virus utility**, such as [Norton](#) (Windows only) or [Webroot](#) (Windows and Mac). Note that as new virus threats are developed all the time, most virus protection software involves a subscription fee for periodic updates. **This is one piece of software you will want to keep up to date.**

Help!

Remember, if you have problems with any of the technical requirements, please contact your **Personal Support Center** at the phone number and/or email address at the bottom of this page.