

Simmons College Technology Replacement Cycle

Why We Replace Equipment

Many technology devices on campus need to be on a regular replacement cycle to as most technology equipment has a relatively short useful lifetime. Mechanical parts wear out and maintenance costs increase as equipment ages, making it more cost effective to upgrade instead of repairing. Additional reasons for replacing equipment include:

- Innovation makes older equipment obsolete, as newer (and better) software is designed for the speed and performance capabilities of newer hardware
- It is necessary to meet the hardware and software requirements of our campus-wide systems, such as Datatel (Benefactor, Colleague, and SOAR) and WebCT
- Security measures are constantly improving, and in order to take advantage of the latest protection, we need to run newer software
- Scalability of support requires as much consistency as possible in hardware and software, minimizing the variety of different things to support.

Lifecycles have been chosen to balance the cost in money and effort associated with replacement against the benefits of new equipment.

Eligible Equipment

The Technology department (TASC) maintains the infrastructure of equipment for email, web, voice mail, networks (data, voice, video), and classrooms (projectors, DVD players, etc.) on a equipment-dependent schedule .

Individual and departmental desktop/laptop computers and printers also need to be regularly replaced. In general, computers that qualify for the regular replacement program are: the primary computer for staff or faculty members; general access computers (classroom, technology lab computers on the academic and residence campuses, express web stations, and information commons computers); and departmental lab computers.

Computers purchased with external funds and those integral to scientific equipment are not typically eligible for the replacement cycle. (See the Policy on Purchasing of Technology with External Funds.)

Departments are encouraged to use departmental/workgroup printers and copier/printers where appropriate rather than individual printers, to decrease the College's investment in these devices, the cost of supplies, and the number of machines requiring maintenance. Departmental/workgroup printers are therefore also eligible for replacement.

Timing

Desktop and laptop computers will be removed from service approximately 3 years after purchase. Disposition of old computers will be subject to College and Technology policy. Those policies prohibit their further use on campus or

distribution to employees by sale or gift. Currently those computers are donated to local schools or non-profit organizations. Shared network printers will be replaced when appropriate based on wear, utilization, new technologies, etc. The lifetimes of printers vary but typically exceed four years.

Costs

Replacement cycle funds will pay up to the cost of a “standard” (lab or office) computer towards the replacement of eligible computers. If a computer is more expensive than the standard (e.g., laptop, special monitor, additional memory or hard-disk, etc.) is required at the time for cyclic replacement, the school/department will be required to pay the costs above the standard. Replacements ahead of schedule are the responsibility of the department. When a department has a net gain of an employee, the cost of the initial equipment for the new staff member is the responsibility of the department. Subsequent upgrades will be part of the normal program.

Process

Each year Technology identifies the computers our records show are due for replacement. Technology confirms the list of machines to be replaced with the liaison in each department. For each computer, the liaison, user, and Technology determine: any deviations from the current standard for that replacement (Macintosh or Windows, office or lab); any nonstandard software needs; and any data transfer needed between old and new machines. This work typically happens October-May as summer is reserved for Technology to prepare the general access computers for the new academic year.