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We at the Frist Nursing Informatics Center (FNIC) would like to help better prepare you for your experience at Vanderbilt by sharing an overview of our computing environment:

Managing information is a central role for nursing at all levels. The science of finding, organizing, sharing, and adding to information – especially with the assistance of technology – is an essential area at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN). Consequently, expectations regarding student computer skills are increasing at VUSN. You should have the computer skills to negotiate the World Wide Web; download, move and copy files; and utilize word-processing and spreadsheet software. It is important for you to be able to perform these skills before you begin classes. You will find more information about technology at VUSN by visiting the **Tech Tools** link on the **New Students** Web page at <http://www.nursing.vanderbilt.edu/newstudents>. (There is convenient access to both pages under **Quick Links** on the VUSN homepage).

Personal Hardware & Internet Services: We recommend that you have a home computer, printer, and an Internet service provider, with high-speed Internet access [or broadband such as cable modem (Comcast/Charter/TimeWarner, etc.) or DSL through your phone company (AT&T/Verizon/Baby Bells, etc. If you are in a distance or block specialty, satellite (HughesNet) or cell card (Verizonwireless, Sprint/Nextel, AT&T, Cricket, etc.) connectivity are typically not good enough to be acceptable. You need at least 768KB continuous downstream and at least 512KB continuous upstream speeds. To check your current speeds go here: <http://www.pcpitstop.com/internet/bw.asp> (Select the city closest to you to test.)] Printing of school-related assignments is supported free of charge for the first 375 pages per semester; thereafter prints may be purchased on a Commodore card for four (4) cents a copy. (NOTE: **PhD** students MUST have access to a Windows (XP/Vista) LAPTOP computer they can configure. Unfortunately some of the software in the PhD program will NOT run on a Macintosh at this time. **DNP** students should have a Windows LAPTOP machine as well. If you are a DNP student on a Macintosh, you MUST be able to run the Windows OS on that system, otherwise you must have access to a Windows computer you can configure.)

School Computing Environment: The school's computing environment is a Windows environment. If you plan to purchase a new computer, we recommend that you buy a computer from a well-known manufacturer. In recent years, the brands bought most frequently at Vanderbilt University Medical Center have been HP, Compaq and Dell. VUSN has wireless networking capabilities throughout the school, so you might want to consider purchasing a laptop instead of a desktop computer. It might help you to know that the standard configuration of an FNIC lab computer is a 3.2 GHz Pentium 4 processing unit with 1 GB of RAM and a 150 GB hard drive loaded with Windows XP, a 48X CD-RW/DVD-ROM and USB access for a personal thumb drive. The FNIC will support student use of designated communication, word-processing, presentation, spreadsheet, and database software. Our current software-support list includes Internet Explorer 7.x+, Firefox 3.+ and Microsoft Office 2003/2007 Professional (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Access). (Note: Vista is supported.)

Software: Students can purchase a license for Microsoft Office at a significant discount through Vanderbilt's participation in Microsoft's Student Select Program (<http://its.vanderbilt.edu/softwarestore>). Through this program, students will receive a CD but NOT the printed product manuals or technical support. Students can choose Microsoft Office 2007 Professional (Windows), which includes Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Access, or Microsoft Office 2008 Professional (Macintosh), which includes Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, at an academic price (currently, \$56.23 + S&H for the Windows version; \$59.14 + S&H for the Macintosh version). You may also purchase Office

directly from Microsoft through their “Ultimate Steal” program (<http://www.microsoft.com/student/discounts/theultimatesteal-us/default.aspx>) This program offers a more complete version of Office, but you are responsible for dealing with Microsoft. You can request the CDs for a small fee.

Other Mobile Devices: Some specialty-level students will be required to purchase a PDA (personal digital assistant) or acceptable Smartphone, depending on their specialty. We support Palm, Pocket PC operating systems, Blackberry and iPhone at VUSN. However, PDA/Smartphone requirements may vary by specialty. **PMHNP** students will be required to purchase an audio recorder. We will let you know in August which model/brand we are recommending. **PhD** students will be required to purchase an audio headset (e.g., Logitech Clearchat Pro USB) and webcam (e.g., Logitech Quickcam Pro 9000) (see individual letter from the specialty for more information). **DNP** students will be required to purchase an audio headset. A webcam for **DNP** students is optional (see individual letter from the specialty for more information). Some specialty directors will send their students a letter over the summer with PDA/Smartphone hardware and software requirements. If you do not receive such a letter, we suggest that you check with your specialty director for any specific recommendations before making any purchase. Please frequently check our **Tech Tools** Web page for more information and periodic updates regarding specialty requirements.

Classroom Response Device (Pre-Specialty & ACNP [non-distance] students only): Starting Fall 2009, the School of Nursing will expand its use of the **TurningPoint** classroom response system (**CRS**). Students will be responsible for the purchase of either a **stand-alone clicker** or a **ResponseWare license** to use in conjunction with a student-owned, Web-enabled laptop, smartphone or other mobile device. (**Note:** A few specialty groups will not use this CRS system; students in those exempt groups will be notified that they will not be required to obtain a personal TurningPoint response solution.) Students have the following options: **1)** A clicker may be purchased from the VU Bookstore for about \$60. Students may also purchase a clicker online for \$43.00 (XRC-01) plus \$4.99 for shipping and handling (*see directions below*). (Students may resell a used clicker to the bookstore at a later date for about half of the original purchase price; the bookstore will also exchange faulty clickers.) **2)** Or students may purchase a ResponseWare license online from TurningPoint for \$17.50 per year (RWW-12) or \$35 for four years (RWW-48). (These licenses are also available from the bookstore with a markup.) The license is good for use on one device at a time (for example, you could use a license on your laptop one day and on your PDA the next). Here is how to make your online purchase: Go to <http://store.turningtechnologies.com/> and enter a code (**JS8Y**) to indicate your affiliation with Vanderbilt. Please note that in order to use the ResponseWare license, your mobile device must be Web enabled to work with the school's wireless network or via a separate Internet service for a device such as a smartphone. For more information, please be sure to check the **New Students** Web page frequently for updated information about this TurningPoint response device obligation. (To determine if your mobile device is compatible with the ResponseWare option, go to <http://www.rwpoll.com/test.aspx>.)

Accounts: The University's computer system is called **VUnet**. Once officially matriculated to VUSN, you will be able to create a password for this system at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/epassword>. You will then be able to access restricted Vanderbilt resources, such as the library's online databases and e-resources. A VUMC email account will be created for you automatically; it will be activated by the password-creation process above. Verify that your VUMC Outlook Web Access account works properly by sending an email from and to the account linked from the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing homepage under **Quick Links | Webmail**. Once you have verified your VUMC Webmail account, go to <http://www.nursing.vanderbilt.edu/accounts> and report that you have accomplished this critical step. (You will be entered into a drawing to take place during orientation for a useful hand-held electronic device). If you cannot log into VUMC Outlook Web Access from the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing homepage **Quick Links | Webmail** link, please contact jerry.murley@vanderbilt.edu. (The **Tech Tools** Web page will have more information and updates about email account management.)

Check the **New Students** Web page frequently: <http://www.nursing.vanderbilt.edu/newstudents>

It is important that you see computing as an essential tool in advanced-practice nursing – a tool that you can master and enjoy. We hope you do have time to devote to the preparations that have been recommended – you'll view the investment as well worth it.

The staff of the FNIC look forward to working with you. For additional information, please contact Jerry Murley at jerry.murley@vanderbilt.edu.

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MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT COMPUTING

Expectations for Student Home Computer and Other Resources:

- A multimedia-capable computer with a 2 GHz Intel® Pentium® 4 processor or better
 - 1GB RAM, 100 GB hard drive, CDRW/DVDRW drive (**PhD/DNP, see Personal Hardware.**)
 - A full duplex sound card and speakers
 - 65,000-color video display card set to display at least 1024x768 or higher
 - An Ethernet card (built-in wireless capability also recommended that is Cisco compliant)*
 - Windows XP with Service Pack 3 or later or Macintosh OS X or better**
 - Microsoft Office 2003 or 2007 (*Windows*), 2008 (*Mac*)
- A reliable Internet provider with Web browsing and email services (AOL is not recommended)
- Cable or DSL Internet service
- Shareware/free software:
 - Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.x or better or Netscape 7.x or better or Firefox 3.0 or better
 - RealPlayer Basic Player (<http://www.real.com/>)
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader 9 or better (<http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>)
 - McAfee Anti-Virus (<http://its.vanderbilt.edu/antivirus/downloads.php>)
 - Centra (<http://its.vanderbilt.edu/services/centra/>) (Applies to **PhD/DNP students only.**)
- Other resources: (**PMHNP, PhD & DNP, see other Mobile Devices above.**)
 - PDA/Smartphones: ACNP, ANP, Clinical Management, FNP, NMW, NNP, PMHNP, PNP and WHNP specialty-level students will be required to have a PDA/Smartphone. Please see our **Tech Tools** Web page for general PDA/Smartphone recommendations. Some specialty directors will send their students a letter later in the summer with PDA hardware and software requirements. (**NOTE: This does not apply to pre-specialty students. Optional for doctoral students.**)
 - Personal USB drive (thumb drive) for moving files from computer to computer (see **Tech Tools**)
 - TurningPoint clicker or ResponseWare license (see **Classroom Response Device – Pre-Specialty & ACNP [non-distance] only**)
 - A printer
 - MP3 players are optional (MP3 files are created for most videotaped lectures)
 - Headphones: Logitech Premium USB Headset 350 or compatible (**PhD/DNP students only**)
 - SPSS Graduate Pack 17 – Win (can be purchased at the bookstore for \$199.98 using the following url: <http://www.journeyed.com/department.asp?NAV=0109&SKW=DPmath>) (**PhD only**)

Expectations for Student Computer Abilities and Skills:***

- Familiarity with common computer terminology (files, Web browsers, RAM, etc.)
- Ability to input data via a keyboard and mouse
- Ability to open/close programs, save, print, copy, cut and paste files, make attachments to emails
- Ability to install programs and manage files
- Ability to access the Internet, send and receive email, download, install, and handle files and graphics from the Internet.

* A fast Internet connection through a cable or telephone company (broadband) is strongly recommended, especially for **distance students**. The **Informatics specialty** requires broadband.

** Older **Macintosh computers are not recommended**, but if you have one, it should have at least OS X, 1GB RAM, G4 processor, fast Internet connection, Web Browser: Firefox 3.x+ or IE 5+. (**Macintosh exception:** Users with **newer Intel-based Macintosh computers** OS X 4+ should also acquire and install Parallels and Windows XP for equivalent access to all resources. Remember to install and run separate virus protection and Windows updates on a frequent schedule just as if you owned a non-Apple PC.)

*** For more details, please see the **Tech Tools** Web page introduced on page one of this letter.

Check the **New Students** Web page frequently: <http://www.nursing.vanderbilt.edu/newstudents>