

Recommendations specific to Online and Remote Learning

In addition to the approved requirements set by the Student Computer Ownership Committee and Faculty Senate, below are recommendations increase the quality of the online/remote instructional experience.

The following items are strongly recommended:

1. **Microphones-** These can be internal to the computer or external (connected generally via USB) and increase the audio quality (specificity and clarity) of a student's voice when speaking in class.
2. **Earbuds/earphones/headphones-** These are generally universal and connected to an audio jack of an audio-generating device. These help to both hear sounds during class and reduce noise feedback when speaking/discussing in class.
3. **Headsets (combined microphone and headphone devices)-** These are ideal as a superior solution to the items listed in 1 and 2.
4. **Webcams-** These can be internal to the computer or external (connected generally via USB). 'Seeing' each other during class can humanize the experience, and on occasion, can be helpful for live demonstration.
5. **Scanners/Scanning phone apps-** These items are useful for digitizing and sharing items which are done per hand. Students have reported free apps have approximated the quality of external devices for most uses, but note that a scanner will likely produce higher-quality images.

Additional Information re: Internet Connectivity

Connectivity—specifically internet speed-- appears to be the most limiting factor for student involvement in online/remote courses.

BlueJeans, the streaming software used to conduct instruction, has specific requirements and recommendations for technology (<https://support.bluejeans.com/s/article/BlueJeans-System-Requirements>); note that among these, connectivity is expected to be at least 1Mbps. While 3Mbps is adequate for most functions, 6Mbps or greater is ideal for streaming and other functions, such as the upload/download of large files.

In many locations, home internet will be sufficient in speed. We recommend connecting when possible via a cable to one's internet connection, or a **wifi range expander** to boost the signal quality in one's home, to best utilize the speed offered for home connections.

Additionally, some internet companies have offered temporary, discounted or free packages for families needing internet for remote learning. Here is a subset of known offers:

- Charter Spectrum: <https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/covid-19-internet-offer-students/>
- Comcast: <https://www.internetessentials.com/>
- AT&T: https://about.att.com/story/2020/distance_learning_family_connections.html

The University System of Georgia has also shared that Library public wifi (accessible in and outside of the building) can be a resource when home connectivity is not possible. See here: <https://georgialibraries.org/library-everywhere/>

While it is not an ideal solution, the state Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative has also posted an [internet access page](#) that provides addresses for public WiFi by county.