

Hardware and Software Purchase Requests

The goal of this policy and the associated request process is to ensure that all hardware and software purchased by Emmanuel is well-suited to the needs identified by the requester, compatible with the College's environment and can be purchased in a cost-effective manner.

Specifically, the process is intended to ensure:

- the best allocation of available funds to purchase software and hardware that supports the College's core mission and strategic goals;
- all hardware and software will operate effectively at the College;
- competitive pricing, through consolidation of purchasing power and identification of best vendors;
- appropriate review of licensing agreements for all software;
- a clear understanding between IT and the requester regarding technical support, maintenance, licensing, network connectivity, etc., of all hardware and software.

Process

1. A request is initiated by completing the hardware/software request form available on the portal. Requests require the approval of the chair of the requester's department.
2. Information Technology will work with the requesting department to determine whether:
 - ❖ the hardware\software will be compatible with the technology infrastructure of the College;
 - ❖ technical support is expected for the hardware\software being acquired, and whether IT or a third party can provide that support;
 - ❖ there is already a license agreement in-place to cover the software;
 - ❖ there are data security considerations related to how the software will be used;
 - ❖ Another hardware\software vendor may provide better pricing or functionality.
3. IT will initiate review of hardware\software requests beginning no later than May 15, and will review requests submitted after that date on a rolling basis. An annotated list of all academic departmental requests for software or hardware priced will be submitted to Academic Affairs for review before purchase.
4. Among factors considered when reviewing software and hardware requests are:
 - ❖ How the purchase supports the core mission or strategic goals of the College;
 - ❖ How the purchase supports the objectives of one or more course(s);
 - ❖ The percentage of class assignments that will utilize the software;
 - ❖ How the software will be used to support research at the College;
 - ❖ Price in relation to the number of students who will benefit from the purchase;
 - ❖ Price in relation to the number of faculty who will benefit from purchase;
 - ❖ Whether there is substantially similar software already available at the College;
 - ❖ Whether there is substantially similar software that may be superior and/or more cost-effective;
 - ❖ Whether the software or hardware may be used by multiple disciplines;
 - ❖ The level of technical support likely to be needed for installation, maintenance and/or training of users;

- ❖ The level of technical support provided by third parties;
 - ❖ Whether the request is submitted by the appropriate deadline:
 1. For installation in time for Fall or Summer courses: May 15
 2. For installation in time for Spring courses: preferably May 15, to ensure funding is available; otherwise, no later than October 1;
 - ❖ Whether departmental or grant funds are available to support the purchase.
5. Requesters will be notified when a decision is made by Academic Affairs about the purchase request.

Examples of the how the process may work in practice (some software names have been changed to protect the innocent) :

- ❖ A faculty member requests the citation management software “Noting.” IT notifies the faculty member that the College has a site license to a substantially similar product, “Refworks,” and asks for details about why the site licensed product will not meet her needs. The faculty member states that it is simply her personal preference. IT will recommend denying the request, subject to Academic Affairs sign off. The professor is always welcome to purchase the software herself, with the understanding that IT will not provide support for the software.
- ❖ A faculty member requests a site license for ST statistics software. Although he is aware that the College has a site license for SPSS, a substantially similar product, he explains that there are several key functions that ST can provide and SPSS cannot. He also states that in his view, ST is a superior product that should replace SPSS. IT surveys current SPSS users about whether they would like to change to ST, provides comparative information, and, if needed, a trial. Most SPSS users are content with their current software, and do not wish to switch. IT will recommend against purchasing a site license, but in favor of purchasing a single user license for ST for this professor. The SPSS site license will remain in place.
- ❖ A faculty member requests ATI a qualitative analysis software package for herself and 25 students. IT does a comparative analysis of similar products, and finds that another company offers reliable and significantly less expensive software (\$2000.00 less) with all of the functionality needed by the user. IT asks the faculty member if she will try the other software to see if it will meet her needs. The faculty member tries both ATI and the alternative software, and prefers ATI, because it is much easier to use, is the industry standard, and she believes, may well be adopted by other classes or disciplines at Emmanuel. IT would support the purchase of ATI, but would seek input from Academic Affairs given the significantly large expense (\$2500.).