AY 2019-2020 MD Student Gateway

Student Computing Policies

Laptop Policy and Minimum System Requirements

During their medical school careers, students use laptops for a number of required activities, including online exams. Each student is required to possess a laptop throughout their time in medical school that meets the minimum technical specifications (see below). These specifications are updated annually and published in the VUSM MD Program Gateway. For questions, please contact the Office of Education Design and Informatics.

Hardware:

Minimum
Intel i5 1.6 GHz processor
8 GB of memory
256 GB Hard Drive
13 inches with min. 1024 x 768 screen resolution
802.11n Wi-Fi (or airport extreme)
1GB Video Card memory

Recommended
Intel i7 2.0 GHz processor
8 GB of memory
512 GB Hard Drive, strongly recommend SSD drive
13 inches or larger with 1400x900 screen resolution or higher
802.11n/ac Wi-Fi (or airport extreme)
1.5 GB Video Card memory (or shared memory for Macs)

Not supported: Chromebooks, Netbooks

Operating System:

Minimum
Windows 8, 10
macOS 10.12

Recommended
Windows 10
macOS 10.14 or latest

Not supported: Linux, virtual machines
Browsers:

Google Chrome is the recommended browser for VSTAR.
- Enable JavaScript, Cookies, and CSS (these are usually enabled by default)
- Disable pop-up blockers

Misc:

Latest version of:
- Adobe Acrobat Reader

Recommended, but not required:
- Earplugs for exams
- Earbuds or headphones
- See also, applications recommended by current students (maintained by the VUSM Student Technology Committee)

Frequently asked questions:

Q: Why aren’t netbooks and Chromebooks supported?

A: The NBME (National Board of Medical Examiners) has a secure browser that must be installed on your laptop in order to take their exams, and they only support the versions of Windows and macOS listed above.

Q: I have an 11-inch MacBook Air or other 11-inch laptop display. Why can’t I use this for exams?

A: You can, but some of the images on the exams may be cropped off. You might be able to scroll to see the full image.

Q: Why is Chrome recommended over other web browsers?

A: Chrome performs better and more consistently in our environment. Sometimes other browsers have trouble displaying some of the web-based elements of our applications. Chrome is the preferred, supported browser for VSTAR.

Computer Privileges and Responsibility Policy

Students are expected to comply with the Computer Privileges and Responsibility Policy. Cooperative and respectful use is expected of all users of Vanderbilt computing resources and services. In addition, students should use Antivirus software to safeguard personal computers and Vanderbilt networks. Vanderbilt users should be aware that electronic mail is not necessarily secure or private. Personal data including social security numbers should never be included in an email message.
Vanderbilt University Email Address

Students are required to monitor their vanderbilt.edu address at all times because important information is distributed through that address. Please contact Vanderbilt University Information Technology (VUIT) for information on setting up alternate email addresses.

Certain Federal statutes require that information be delivered to each student. Vanderbilt delivers much of this information via email. Official electronic notifications, including those required by statutes, those required by University policy, and instructions from University and VUSM officials, will be sent to students' Vanderbilt email addresses. Some messages include links to the YES Communications Tool or to VSTAR communications tools, which are secure channels for official communications of a confidential nature. The University and VUSM make every effort to avoid sending students nonessential email ("spam"), and maintain separate lists from which students may unsubscribe for announcements of general interest.

Students are charged with the knowledge of the contents of all official University and VUSM notifications and are required to respond to instructions and other official correspondence requiring a response. Accordingly, students bear the responsibility for checking their Vanderbilt email account frequently and for managing their email account Inbox to prevent important messages from being returned as “undeliverable.”

VU Social Media Policy

The VU Social Media Policy provides guidelines outlining how Vanderbilt supports institutional communication goals through social media platforms. The policy is intended for internet activities that associate or identify a student with Vanderbilt, use Vanderbilt email addresses, or discuss Vanderbilt. In keeping with the Electronic Communications and Information Technology Resources policy (HR-025), Vanderbilt email addresses should not be used in conjunction with unofficial or personal social media accounts and profiles. This policy is not intended to guide online communications when students do not associate or identify themselves with Vanderbilt. The VU Social Media Handbook website has additional information.

Access to Virtual Clinical Workstations

All Vanderbilt medical students may access Virtual Clinical Workstations (vCWS) from outside of the VUMC network using a mobile device or personal computer. This allows students to access eStar/Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR) and other Clinical Workstation programs using their devices without the need for the RSA SecurID key. Guidelines for setting up devices are in VSTAR Help: Connect to the vCWS from home.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Vanderbilt School of Medicine is subject to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which governs access and confidentiality of student information. Details are included in the School of Medicine catalog. Students have access to their academic records in the Office of Enrollment Services at any time. However, if you ask a faculty member to write a recommendation for you, you will need to give your permission for access to your academic information. As a part of the ERAS residency application process, you should complete a FERPA form, giving permission to the Office of Student Records for faculty access to your academic information.

Vanderbilt has designated the following as directory information: the student's name, addresses, telephone number, email address, student ID photos, major field of study, school, classification, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or
institution attended by the student, and other information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Any student who does not wish disclosure of directory information should notify the University Registrar in writing. No element of directory information as defined above is released for students who request nondisclosure except as required by statute. The request to withhold directory information will remain in effect as long as the student continues to be enrolled, or until the student files a written request with the University Registrar to discontinue the withholding. To continue nondisclosure of directory information after a student ceases to be enrolled, a written request for continuance must be filed with the University Registrar during the student's last term of attendance.

Center for Experiential Learning and Assessment (CELA) Video Records Policy

Vanderbilt School of Medicine is committed to quality education and training. Toward this end, students, residents and fellows are routinely observed and evaluated as an integral part of their education and development of their professional competencies, either directly or through video records, as appropriate to the objectives and format of the experience. These are an integral part of the teaching and assessment methods of trainees.

Students are asked to acknowledge the CELA Video Records Policy during orientation to the first year of the MD program by going to this website and following acknowledgement instructions.