Carleton Computer Replacement Policy

Individual Systems

1. The primary computer for each faculty/staff member is on a four year replacement cycle funded by ITS. Replacement may be deferred for up to a year. When a computer fails before its replacement date ITS can replace it with a newer (but used) unit. This restarts the replacement clock according to the age of the replacement unit.

2. The default primary computer for administrative staff members is a PC (Windows) desktop. Laptops can be substituted for positions that require mobility with the approval of the employee’s supervisor.

3. Temporary and part-time employees are assigned used desktop systems; laptops may be requested for high mobility needs, but those are issued depending on assessment of need and availability.

4. Machines used primarily by student workers are generally on a five year replacement cycle and machines in public labs and departmental labs are on a four year replacement cycle.

Other Systems

1. Computers purchased with faculty start-up funds will typically be replaced by ITS once, after a regular period of four years of use. This will cover needs for a period of eight years (typically past tenure decisions), after which these computers, if needed, will have to be replaced by a source other than ITS (e.g. by external grants). Professional Development Account (PDA) funds may be used for this purpose. A request, indicating the availability of such funds, must be made to ITS.

2. Computers purchased with research grants (NSF, NIH, etc.) are the responsibility of the Principal Investigator. These computers will not be automatically replaced by ITS. PDA funds may be used to replace computers purchased with external research grants. A request, indicating the availability of such funds, must be made to ITS.

3. Computers purchased with internal or educational grants. Faculty applying for grants should work with ITS during the grant application process. Approved grants that will develop into teaching labs/spaces may be put on a 4-6+ year replacement cycle (and this commitment will be periodically reviewed). If a system replacement is granted, the replacement may be with used equipment available at ITS.

4. Other systems:
   1. Systems that are critical to teaching (e.g. those linked to specific instruments) that are not on a planned replacement cycle will be replaced with used equipment when the equipment fails.
   2. Systems connected to specialized science instrumentation pose special problems for long-term replacement since the instrumentation often doesn’t support newer computer hardware. In addition, the high cost of the instrumentation hinders upgrading it to be compatible with new computers, further complicating the issue. ITS will work in partnership with the department or appropriate faculty member to identify such instrumentation in order to ensure that ITS maintains an identical spare computer system that will be kept in storage to be used in the event that the primary unit fails.
   3. Custom systems where the operating system cannot be upgraded and anti-virus software cannot be installed pose a security risk and, therefore, must be firewalled or disconnected from the network.
   4. When a computer is due for replacement, a faculty member may need extra capabilities in this machine, and may have the funds, whether intra- or extra-mural (PDA included) to pay for this upgrade. In that case the faculty member must submit a request as part of the regular departmental request process to ITS. Once purchased, the computer will enter the regular replacement cycle. However, ITS will not pay to replace the upgrade component in the future. For more information on the request process, please visit https://apps.carleton.edu/handbook/it/?policy_id=1045746.
   5. All computing hardware purchases made with College funds (including PDA funds) should be made through ITS. Printers, monitors, hard drives, scanners, and accessories are considered computing hardware.
   6. Equipment purchased with PDA’s, grant, and start-up funds are College owned property, tracked in inventory, and insured by the College.