

# Student Computer Ownership Committee Annual Report

## Academic Year 2008-2009

**Members:** Christos Alexopoulos (ISyE), Lori Critz (Library), Miles Edson (Housing), Jonathon Giffin (CS), Monty Hayes (ECE), Andy Jones (Student), Jarek Rossignac (IC/Executive Board Liaison), Nicholas Sondej (Student), Lisa Spence (OIT), Alex Taubman (Bookstore), Bruce Walker (Psych)

**Chair:** Jonathon Giffin

**Meetings:** The committee held five regular meetings; we conducted other minor points of business over email as necessary.

1. 2008-Sep-02: Began discussion of tension between student flexibility in choosing hardware & software and faculty needs for specific software requiring specific system configurations. Discussed potential use of virtualization software to lessen this tension; this discussion led to new Mac OS X requirements, explained below. Began discussion of course-specific software needs.
2. 2008-Oct-09: Discussed integration of course-specific software requirements into the Oscar registration system.
3. 2008-Nov-04: Discussed integration of course-specific software requirements into the Barnes & Noble textbook database, and we reviewed the OIT helpdesk's need for continued support of desktop systems.
4. 2008-Nov-25: Reviewed the first draft of the 2009 SCO brochure. Discussed how to gather course-specific software requirements.
5. 2009-Jan-22: Final revisions to 2009 brochure. Discussed integration of course-specific resource needs into Banner.

**Presentations to the Faculty and Administration:** The committee chair made three presentations to groups of faculty and administrators.

1. 2009-Feb-10: Academic Senate. Presented and gained approval of the 2009 SCO requirements and brochure.
2. 2009-Apr-14: Executive Board. Presented for discussion the need to include software as part of required course resources.
3. 2009-Jul-23: Academic Council. Presented for discussion the need to include software as part of required course resources.

**Laptop Hardware Requirements:** The committee set minimum laptop hardware capabilities designed to last students for multiple years. Most requirements were an evolutionary increase from the 2008 requirements and reflected the progression of the laptop computer market. For the first time, the committee explicitly required students to own an external hard drive for data backup.

**Software Requirements:** The committee set minimum software requirements for Microsoft Windows and Mac OS X systems. There were only minor changes from the 2008 requirements because no major software releases had occurred since 2008. The committee introduced three new elements in its 2009 software requirements:

- We recommended the use of My GaTech webmail rather than a local mail application.
- We required data backup software to coincide with the external hard drive requirement.
- We recommended virtualization software running Windows for students purchasing the Mac OS X operating system.

The committee set the hardware and software requirements after consultation with OIT and advertised the requirements to students both as a brochure distributed by the Institute and on our website: <http://www.sco.gatech.edu>.