

Technology and software useful for online learning

High speed internet is best; however, online courses from UMM have been completed with dial-up. Most instructors include transcripts of video or audio files. This would probably be very frustrating for a person used to smart phones, ipads, and wifi. Students should always remember that computers and tech support are available at University College centers and some sites. Students may also be able to access high speed internet at many public libraries, adult education centers, and restaurants or cafes.

Students should be familiar with basic internet functions (including downloading free applications) and basic computer use, including (at the very least) basic keyboarding and word processing skills. The UMS system mail is gmail, so knowledge of gmail, gchat, google docs, etc. is useful. Students should check their maine.edu email daily, so they may want to forward this mail to another personal email account.

Printing capability may be needed, so the student's computer should be linked to a printer that is **reliable**. A student's computer would ideally have wi-fi capabilities, a web-cam, microphone, and speakers. While not all classes require these, some may meet synchronously in this fashion or require a student to record him/herself. It also helps to be able to Skype or Face-time an instructor, advisor, or tutor. If the computer has wi-fi it gives the student the ability to access their courses from many different places while working or traveling.

Many students use smart phones and tablets to access courses, mail, texts, etc. It is important that they understand that assignments should **always** be created with a word processing program and saved to a hard drive or external memory. Lots of work has been lost because it was created directly in a discussion board and then did not submit properly. (See separate document to learn about accessing UMS courses with mobile devices).

For an internet browser, Mozilla Firefox is most compatible with Blackboard; Internet Explorer 9 also works with most operating systems. (See separate charts)

All students should have an office suite of software applications available. MicroSoft Office Suite may come with many newly purchased computers, but is not necessary. OpenOffice <http://www.openoffice.org/> is available for free download on the internet, and will read and save files from many different applications.

Virus protection of some sort is recommended for frequent internet use.

The following are addresses where one can download applications from the internet that may be required to access multi-media course materials (**but beware of checkboxes that ask you for permission to also download other items, such as security programs**):

- Adobe Reader <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Java Runtime Environment <http://www.java.com/en/download/index.jsp>
- Macromedia Flash <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
- Macromedia Shockwave <http://get.adobe.com/shockwave/>
- Windows Media Player
<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player>
- Real Player <http://www.real.com/realplayer>
- Apple Quicktime Player <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>

Accessing UMS Courses from Mobile Devices

Here are the devices able to access UMS's Mobile Learn and instructions:

Device	Connection Type Allowed
iPhone & iPod Touch	Wi-Fi
iPad	Wi-Fi
Sprint Android Devices	Wi-Fi and 3G/4G Network
Non Sprint Android Devices	No Access
Sprint BlackBerry Devices	Wi-Fi and 3G/4G Network
Non Sprint BlackBerry Devices	No Access
Sprint Palm Devices	Wi-Fi and 3G/4G Network
Non Sprint Palm Devices	No Access

Blackboard Mobile Learn

The University of Maine system implemented a limited, no cost version of the Blackboard Mobile Learn app last winter which was available to Sprint customers and iOS device users over wifi.

As of September 17, Blackboard changed their distribution model to a personal licensing option and updated their application to make it available to all devices. As a result, it is **NO LONGER FREE** of charge. The cost is \$1.99 for a one-year license OR a one-time fee of \$5.99. (Note: the one-time fee assumes continued use of the same mobile platform. The license is not transferable from iOS to Android and vice-versa.)

To download, please visit:

1. iTunes: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/blackboard-mobile-learn/id376413870?mt=8>

2. Google

Play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.blackboard.android&hl=en>

3. Blackberry: <https://appworld.blackberry.com/webstore/content/11214/>

4. Palm: visit the HP App catalog on your device and search for "blackboard mobile learn" After installation, launch the device and search for "University of Maine System". You will then login to Blackboard as normal and be prompted to choose a licensing option -- one-time or one-year.

For more information of what is accessible to instructors and students through the app, please visit: <http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Mobile/Products/Mobile-Learn.aspx>