




Technology Services & Support for New Faculty

What's the Same at TU? What's Different?

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 =Shortcut  =Advice  =Caution

Introduction

The following are the "essentials" to get started as a new faculty member. Technology will be a vital and ever-present part of your life at Towson University. We're here to help you make the best use of it in your teaching, research, and day-to-day work.

- General Support
- Mobile Devices and Home Networks
- Classrooms and Computer Labs
- Accounts and Passwords
- File Storage, Collaboration, Wireless
- Computer Systems
- Hardware and Software Purchases
- Security and Safety
- Additional Reading, Tips, Links

General Support

1. A Distributed Support Approach

Towson University's Office of Technology Services is the central IT department that provides enterprise-wide services to the campus. This is only one aspect of support available to faculty and staff. Many individual departments and colleges have their own technology providers or coordinators; check with your department head or administrative assistant for information on locally provided services. Procedures vary.

2. OTS Faculty/Staff Help Center

Satisfaction ratings for our Faculty/Staff Help Center are consistently 3.5 and above on a 4.0 scale. Telephone is by far the best way to get help: **410-704-5151**. You can also complete a support request using our self-service web-based system, TechHelp: <http://techhelp.towson.edu>. Due to the loose nature of email and the back-and-forth that's often needed, even for simple issues, we prefer you call us by phone. Tip: always get the name of the person you speak with. **IMPORTANT: In-classroom help calls use a separate process and phone number; see Classrooms and Computer Labs section which begins on Page 2 for details.**

3. Business Hours and After-Hours Assistance

The Faculty/Staff Help Center is staffed by fulltime professionals and student workers Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the fall and spring terms and Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. during January and summer terms. When closed, limited after-hours night and weekend support is available through a partner resource.

4. Types of Support Offered

Typical telephone support is provided, but we also use Remote Control to connect to office computers and, with your consent, take command to fix common issues that would otherwise require a field visit. Walk-in service is also available during business hours. After hours, our support partner provides telephone support for common (but not all) issues.

5. Self-Help Resources

Hundreds of self-help documents, quick sheets, movies, and other resources are available 24/7. See the OTS Web site: <http://www.towson.edu/otstraining>.

6. Technical Support for Computers in Faculty/Staff Offices

On-site technicians are available for office visits by appointment when necessary. We maintain three campus precinct offices, plus have staff at the Towson University Northeastern Maryland site; help is close by and services are provided quickly. All work is coordinated by the Faculty/Staff Help Center using a central dispatch model and formal triage guidelines. Call 410-704-5151 to arrange for support.

7. Self-Service Problem Reporting, Questions, and Service Requests

At other universities, you may have reported technology issues through email. TU uses a web-based system instead called TechHelp, which offers 24/7/365 service to submit and track your requests, questions, and problem reports. The system also provides FAQ and self-help documents. See <http://tutigerstoday.towson.edu/?p=93414> for more information.

8. Student Computing Services (SCS) Open Labs

Student Computing Services offers open lab workspaces to all students. These labs are staffed by a team of friendly students capable of orienting users to lab operations and answering general questions. Open labs are located in three convenient locations: our main center in Cook Library Room 35, SCS West in Towson Run Room 123 and TU Northeast Room 206.

Mobile Devices and Home Networks

1. Support for Personally Owned Devices (Home Computers, Laptops, Printers, etc.)

As a state university, service is generally limited to university-owned computer and networking equipment, printers, and other devices. Otherwise, help should be obtained through a computer service person, company, or your Internet provider or data plan carrier. If you intend to use a personally owned device on campus, check with your department, college, or OTS technology staff before purchasing to ensure it is compatible, can be secured on the network, and will give you the expected performance and functionality.

2. Mobile Device Support in General

With the explosive growth of mobile devices, our goal is to provide a reasonable balance between convenience, security, and support. Our prime focus is ensuring access to university resources. We provide full-spectrum support for university-owned devices. For personally owned devices (iPhone, iPad, Android, Windows, etc.), support is limited to providing configuration information to connect to the campus network and use university resources. See this link for additional information: <http://www.towson.edu/mobilesupprt>.

3. Email-Enabled Phones (Smart Phones) and Tablets

See [configuring smartphones](#) for configuration settings to use TU's Exchange email. To learn how to use your device for email in general, please contact your cellular service carrier or retail point of sale, or check the manufacturer's website or your device manual for information and support. A passcode on the device is required to use Exchange services.

4. Home Networking Equipment

Your home Internet service provider, retailer, or device manufacturer will typically help you set up routers, wireless devices, and computers—as well as troubleshoot problems—by phone or through online help resources. Since they have a wide range of experience with a host of consumer-level networking devices—as well as diagnostic capabilities that may even allow them to check signal paths to your home—they are your solution of choice.

Classrooms and Computer Labs

1. Virtual Tour: Get To Know Your Classrooms Before Classes Start

At TU, we believe that “getting to know your classroom” in advance is one of the best ways gain the confidence and skills needed to use the technology in your teaching as well as handle common problems and issues that invariably pop up. The Virtual Tour link is at the top of our main classroom website at <http://www.towson.edu/ccit>. Each entry includes instructions, trouble-shooting resources, best practices, and a link to report problems. Whenever possible, do a “dry run” before classes start, and visit your rooms for a test drive. Becoming proficient and comfortable with your “tools of the trade” will be time well spent.

2. Our Main Website for Smart Classrooms and Help Resources

See <http://www.towson.edu/ccit>. Includes [Smart Classroom Technology and Support Guide](#) with survival and problem-solving tips, [Smart Classroom Tips and Best Practices](#), short [Instructional videos](#), and more.

3. Classroom Audiovisual Technology Support

First-level telephone support for most classrooms is generally handled by OTS unless otherwise noted. Call **410-704-8324 (4TECH)**. This service is provided Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and until 5:00 p.m. on Friday. At TU, there is no “emergency runner” system in place; our team focuses on problem prevention, but we work quickly to restore or repair reported problems. If it takes more than a phone call to solve the problem, additional support is often coordinated in conjunction with academic departments and colleges, especially for follow-up if a room visit is required.

4. More on Reporting Problems or Calling for Help

We can only fix things we know are broken, so please help and report any problem you encounter using the classroom audiovisual system or computer. The instructor's workstation in the classroom should have an instruction sheet or placard that identifies who to contact for help, but it's usually **410-704-8324 (4TECH)**. You can also use <http://techhelp.towson.edu> to report non-urgent issues and problems. Check with your chairperson, administrative assistant, or department technology provider before the semester starts; your college or department may have specific tips and procedures for your area.

5. Have a Technology “Plan B” and Enlist the Help of Students in Your Class

Our staff and contractors work hard to keep classroom systems working through a proactive, preventative-maintenance approach. However, things occasionally go wrong. Always have a “Plan B” that allows you to continue to teach even if the technology isn't cooperating. There is usually a technologically capable student in your class who may be able to pitch in and try to get things working—or who can call for help and work with a support technician. Taking command of the situation like this can free you up to do what you do best, teach. Tip: dismissing classes for technical glitches is usually not viewed positively by students or colleges.

6. Computer Labs for General Student Use; OTS Student Computing Services

OTS maintains an open-use student computer lab in Cook Library, another site in the west residential campus, and a third at TUNE. All other campus labs are staffed and supported by individual departments or colleges. See your department head or administrative assistant for information on computer labs managed by your college or department. For more on Student Computing Services, see <http://www.towson.edu/technology/studentervices/>

7. Emerging Technologies in the Classroom: Pre-Plan Your Innovation

Our main Classroom and Computer Lab Technologies website <http://www.towson.edu/cclt> has information on things faculty have asked about: videoconferencing (Skype for Business), audience response systems ("clickers"), and other solutions to engage students and facilitate learning. Some solutions are in pilot, others can be accommodated on request. Give yourself plenty of lead time. Check with your department or college technology provider as a first step—and allow at least 4-6 weeks as a rule of thumb. Always do a dry run before your first class use. Murphy's Law applies, along with Darwin's.

8. Instructional Recording (Also Known as "Lecture Capture")

Today's software allow you to easily create videos of not just lectures but all kinds of instructional content—course introductions, student presentations, short how-to videos, and even video markup and critique of student papers. Panopto, which integrates nicely into Blackboard, is the primary campus solution as of Fall 2014. It runs on Windows, Macs, and iOS devices. For further information, see <http://www.towson.edu/panopto> or the company website <http://www.panopto.com>.

9. Classroom and Lab Computer Software

New software installs must be planned and tested so as not to destabilize the computer or introduce problems for other faculty. Contact your department or college technology coordinator if you would like to use a particular software package other than Microsoft Office and "the basics" on a shared computer. Lead time is up to the college/department; some require 4-6 weeks or more. Note that OTS is not able to install or provide Administrator Rights to self-install software unless the department or college has authorized it.

Accounts and Passwords

1. Your NetID (Username)

Your primary username at TU is termed your **NetID**. Along with your password, your NetID lets you log into your office computer, use Blackboard and PeopleSoft, connect to the campus remotely, and more. Although you may hear other terms interchanged for the branded "NetID" they all refer to the same thing.

2. Password Changes, Mobile Device Sync

By audit requirement, passwords must be changed at least every **90** days to help reduce the chances of identity exposure and account compromise. Plan to change your password at least every 90 days—and if you forget it or it expires, use our self-service tools along with your Security Question to reset it. You must also reset **your password on your mobile device(s) whenever you change it**; if not, a "stale" password can lock you out with failed attempts. See <http://www.towson.edu/accounts>

3. Password Tips and Strong Passwords

Never give out your password by email, by phone, or in person. No reputable IT support provider needs it. Consider any attempt to obtain your password an identity theft attempt. Also, avoid using the same password throughout your digital life. If you have other email services, like Hotmail, or you create accounts for online shopping, use different passwords. If compromised, they won't have access to everything as they would with a "master key." Strong password tips: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/Tips-for-creating-a-strong-password>

4. Your Security Question: Forgotten or Expired Passwords

When you activated your NetID, you also set a Security Question; you will need the answer to reset your password if it expires or you forget it. For security question resets, contact the Faculty/Staff Help Center. We cannot reset passwords unless you visit the help center in person due to the potential for exposure by identity impersonation. Manage your NetID and password at <http://www.towson.edu/accounts>

5. Bad Password Attempt Lockout

If you have **six** bad password attempts in a row within ten minutes, your NetID will be locked for ten minutes, after which you can try again.

6. Keep Your Computer Locked When Unattended

When leaving your office computer unattended, even if it's just for a few minutes, lock it using the Windows L key combination or the Mac lock feature. This keeps curious and potentially malicious people out.

File Storage, Collaboration, Wireless Services, Student Printing

1. Network Storage and Sharing Files: Personal and Departmental Shares

Store all your documents and files on your H: drive (for your personal access) and O: drive (for shared access for members of your department). You'll be able to get to them on your office computer—plus computers in classrooms and labs. Off campus, you can access them remotely by Virtual Workspace, and Remote Desktop Gateway. Files are backed up daily, so if you lose or overwrite something, you can restore them following these instructions: [managing your network drives.pdf](#).

2. Avoid Using USB Drives; Caution with Cloud Storage Services

USB thumb drives are easily lost, stolen, or damaged. People seldom bother to back them up—and they may contain vast amounts of information. Parting with one of these handy devices can be catastrophic and lead to exposure of confidential data, identity theft, and worse. Use OneDrive for Business through Towson or your TU O: and H: network drives instead.

3. Transferring Big Files and Documents using the File Delivery Service

Email lets you send files up to 25 megabytes, but even that is too big for many recipients. TU has a web-based option that allows you to send and receive huge files. Visit the File Delivery Services at <http://fds.towson.edu> and log in to explore the options and read the Help information. With this service, you can create temporary accounts for guests at other universities, professional collaborators, editors, etc. and use FDS to send and receive files.

4. Collaboration: Custom Shares, SharePoint, and Blackboard Communities

Collaborating by email is time consuming and can be frustrating if you have to share documents and other materials. OTS can create custom network shares that allow you to share files with university faculty, staff, and even students outside your own department—much like you can with your departmental O: drive. Microsoft SharePoint and Blackboard Communities are other collaboration options. Contact the Faculty/Staff Help Center for more information and to go over your specific needs.

5. Cloud Storage and Sharing Files

The university just launched a secure and feature rich cloud-based way to store and share your university files. You really should use this. You may have used personal cloud storage in the past, which is fine for you stuff, but, when it comes to teaching and research, use OneDrive for Business. You have 1TB of storage to use—this is in addition to your H: and O: drives. We only support OneDrive for Business. If you use anything else, you're totally on your own including any data exposure you may experience.

6. Wireless Networking; Cellular Signal Strength

Wireless covers most areas of the campus. Offices, classrooms, and computer labs may receive a wireless signal, but strength varies. Whenever possible, **plug your computer or laptop into a wired network port**; you'll get at least 10 times faster speed. If you use cellular for data (or voice), realize signal strength from public carriers may not reliably penetrate all buildings due to design and shielding.

7. TU Open Access

When you first attempt to connect your device to our wireless network you're going to see two networks. "TUsecure" and "TUopenaccess." We strongly recommend that you connect your device to "TUsecure" to maximally protect your device and data. When you bring guests to campus, they can connect to "TUopenaccess" without a Towson NetID and password.

8. Cloud Printing Service for Students

A cloud printing service, WEPA, was launched in August 2013. Students are able to send documents from their computer to WEPA's print cloud service. Students can then go to any WEPA print station on campus and print out their work. The fee-based service administered through Printing Services is flexible and convenient. See <http://www.towson.edu/wepa>

Computer Systems

1. Managed Computer Systems and a Standard Software Image

A standard software image is used for university-owned Windows and Mac computers. It has the right settings and pre-installed software including Microsoft Office. This ensures a reliable, secure, robust and supportable computing experience. Updates, patches, and security fixes are applied automatically to computers across the campus. With these managed services, we can provide features like Remote Control Assistance to get you quick help. We urge you to limit changes to your computer to what's absolutely needed to do your work; anything more reduces the chances of our staff providing fast service.

2. Operating Systems Support

Windows 7 64-bit is the current standard for new Windows computers; for Mac, OS X Yosemite (10.10). Windows 8.1 is available for touch screen computers, tablet, and other mobile devices, or for those who need it for a specific use case. The university has decided to *not* make Windows 8.1 our standard image at this time, but we do provide support for it. When Windows 10 and OS X El Capitan (10.11) are available, OTS will collaborate with technology professionals on campus for evaluation and testing. Compatibility with university websites, applications, and services is essential, so this cannot be rushed. Systems using Linux and other operating systems can be used, but you will need to provide your own service and support — and ensure configuration and use follows best security practices.

3. Discounts for Purchases (Personally Owned Systems)

Both Dell and Mac offer discounts for faculty and staff. See the OTS website for links and check prices before considering other retail options. You may get a better deal.

4. Don't Turn Off Your Computer: Restart It

At the end of the day, restart your computer—but don't turn it off. We use "green" power management settings so turning it off is generally not desirable. Choosing the "Restart" option helps flush out residual junk that accumulates in memory over time so it is preferred over simply logging off. OTS sends out a number of updates and security patches overnight to minimize disruption during peak daytime periods. Note: if you do turn it off, we may need to turn it back on overnight for updates, so if you see it on in the morning be aware of this network-based service.

5. Computer Trade-Up Program

The university typically replaces a person's primary computer every 3-5 years, depending on availability of funds; if you have more than one, additional computers are the responsibility of the department to replace. OTS administers the Trade-Up Program; information is communicated through deans, department heads, and technology coordinators.

6. EduCycle Computer Reconditioning Program

All departments on campus can add computers to their inventory or receive repurposed replacement computers from the [EduCycle Computer Reconditioning Program](#) at no cost. These computers are generally three to four years old, have a two year life expectancy, are fully refurbished, and have a new solid state hard drive, keyboard, and mouse included.

Hardware and Software Purchases

1. Ask Early, Choose Wisely

Please don't rush out and buy things before you know it will work in TU's environment and you can get the support you need. Regardless of whether the purchase will be covered through department or grant funds, first discuss your plans in advance with your department head, administrative assistant, and local IT person if your college or department has one. You can also call OTS' Faculty/Staff Help Center. Allow time to be an informed buyer.

2. Hardware and Software for Research and Accommodating Unique Technology Needs

When preparing a research program or writing a grant, the sooner you start talking to your college or department IT coordinator and OTS, the better. We can provide valuable advice in what can—and can't—work in our campus environment. We can also explain technology options and help identify the things that will help make your work a success.

3. Clickers to Control PowerPoint Presentations

The process varies by college and department. Some require faculty to purchase their own, others may provide them on request. Check with your department. They are not offered through OTS. Administrator rights may be required to install or use them—check with your college or department technology provider.

4. Microsoft Office 365 for Windows and Mac

Microsoft Office 365 is a set of cloud-hosted collaboration and office suite applications. This includes Office downloads, OneDrive for Business, Exchange email/calendar, SharePoint, Office Web Apps, Skype for Business instant messaging and conferencing. Features include more storage space, exciting new services and mobile applications for your iOS, Android, and Windows mobile devices. Office 365 suite applications are available through the Office 365 Portal at <http://office.towson.edu>. A sample login is prepopulated to help you remember the login format, just replace it with your own information.

5. Microsoft Office ProPlus at No Cost for Home Computers, Laptops, and Smart Phones

As a part of Microsoft Office 365, faculty, staff, and currently enrolled students can install and use up to five instances of Office ProPlus. Students who are not enrolled in this semester or the next one, retirees, and UB/TU MBA students are not eligible. UB/TU MBA students are actually eligible through UB, and should contact UB for assistance. To download and manage your installations use the Office 365 portal at <http://office.towson.edu>. A sample login is prepopulated to help you remember the login format, just replace it with your own information.

6. Microsoft Office 2013 for Windows

Microsoft Office 2013, the full office suite, is the current standard for TU-owned desktop and laptop computers. It is installed on all TU computers by default and OTS manages the installation, upgrade, and management of that software. TU computers will receive upgrades through OTS deployments or through software distribution using Software Center on Windows computers and Self Service application on Mac computers. **Do not install Office ProPlus on TU-owned desktop and laptop computers.**

7. Microsoft Office 2016 for Mac

OTS is waiting for Microsoft to announce the official release of Office 2016 for Macs. Once released, we will work with individual departments to upgrade all Mac computers on campus. Until then, Office 2011 will remain the standard.

8. Adobe Creative Cloud License for Classroom and Computer Labs

In August 2013, an agreement between Adobe and Maryland Education Enterprise Consortium (MEEC) to license Adobe Creative Cloud software went into effect. This agreement provides Towson University with discounted software. If you would like to request Adobe CC software for your university computer see <http://www.towson.edu/technology/facultystaff/hardwaresoftware/software/adobe/request.html>

9. Other Software Titles

Many commonly used software products are available for you to download using an application already installed on your university computer, and, you don't need to have temporary computer administrator rights to install it. On Windows, open the Microsoft Software Center in the Start Menu and on Mac computers open the Self Service application in the Applications folder. See <http://www.towson.edu/technology/facultystaff/hardwaresoftware/software/index.html> for further information on what OTS can offer. Also, the University Store <http://towsonstore.com> offers various software products (or can order them) at substantial discounts.

Security and Safety

1. Antivirus Software for Personally Owned Computers

If you don't have an up-to-date, preferred product on your personally owned Windows computer (e.g., Symantec, McAfee, etc.) install the free Microsoft Security Essentials product. See <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/security-essentials-download>. It's the home version of what we use on campus—System Center Endpoint Protection. You will have Defender installed by default on your Windows 8 and Windows 10 computers. It is recommended that you install supplementary security software in addition to that, e.g. Malware Bytes, McAfee, etc. For Macs, some leading no-cost options include Avast, Sophos, and Avira. And yes, we recommend Macs be protected; they are not immune. Computers in offices, classrooms, and labs already have malware protection installed—no need to add it.

2. Local Administrator Rights: Temporary and Permanent

Using Windows administrator rights only when needed helps protect you and your computer. Many viruses and malicious software rely on administrator rights to do harm. A self-service tool is available, <http://towson.edu/TCAR/>. It will give you temporary rights for routine tasks, like installing webcams, work-related software, etc. For more information, see the Temporary Computer Administrator Rights video and [self-help document](#). Permanent rights are seldom required or approved.

3. Use University Computers, Software, and Network Resources for University Business

Computers and systems such as email, printing, file storage services, and other network resources are funded by Maryland's citizens and our students. Please limit your use to that which directly supports your work, research, teaching, scholarly activities, and university business. Comingling one's personal digital life and work life can lead to exposure in both.

4. Email, Phishing, Social Networking: Reduce Your Exposure

When communicating with students, staff, administration, or other faculty, use your TU email address. Avoid corresponding by personal email accounts. That's one way to better recognize your friendly senders. Undesired email from strangers remains a top vulnerability. Even if you don't download viruses, there are dozens of incidents each year on campus in which people disclose identity or other sensitive information by responding to "phishing" schemes. Social networking sites, like Facebook and LinkedIn, or emails claiming to be from a professional organization or one of your connections are today's newer traps. Be skeptical and cautious. Personal, professional, and university exposure could result. Forward any suspicious TU emails to phishing@towson.edu so it can be blocked and to avoid further exposure to the university.

5. Single Sign-on Login page

A [Single Sign-on login](#) page is available for you to use. This improved method for accessing the majority of campus web-based applications will significantly decrease the risk associated with outsiders attempting to hack into Towson web applications.

Additional Reading for Office, Email, Virtual Workspace, Remote Access, and Lots More

1. Microsoft Office, Including Outlook/Exchange Faculty/Staff Email

- A. Microsoft Office 2013, including Excel, Outlook, Project, PowerPoint, and Word: <http://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/office2013.html>
- B. Microsoft Office 365, including Office downloads, OneDrive, Exchange email/calendar, SharePoint, Office Web Apps, and Skype for Business instant messaging and conferencing: <http://office.towson.edu>
- C. Which email client is right for me: Outlook, Outlook Web App, or Outlook App on your smart phone? Watch a short movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kak5nFMt2o&feature=youtu.be>

2. Virtual Workspace

- A. Virtual Workspace: Accessing Mail and Files from Anywhere (CIT2): <https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/remote.html>

3. Remote Access Gateway (only for those with an office computer on campus)

- A. Remote Access Gateway Address: <http://remotedesktop.towson.edu>
- B. Remote Access Gateway: Accessing Your Computer Remotely (RDP): <https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/documents/virtual-workspace-and-remote-access/rd5-remote-desktop-gateway-access.pdf>
- C. All Remote Access Titles: <https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/resources/remote.html>

4. Other Important Getting-Started Titles

- A. NetID Activation, Change Password:
[FacStaff_change_reset_password.pdf](#)
- B. Reset Expired or Forgotten Password:
[FacultyStaffResetExpiredorForgottenPassword.pdf](#)
- C. Accessing Your H and O Drives (PDF):
[H O NetworkDrives](#)
- D. Even more including setting up your VoIP office phone, email overview, and tips for new employees: <https://www.towson.edu/technology/facultystaff/orientation.html>

