Rice University signed a campus agreement with Microsoft in 2006, entering into a subscription-based licensing program for MS software applications. For an annual fee, the Subscription Licensing program allows departments the right to run selected products – including upgrades or downgrades of those products—for the designated term.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Does this mean that IT will now start charging for the software we now have on our desktops?
A: No, there will not be a charge for currently installed Microsoft software, which has already been paid for and has a ‘perpetual use’ license. The MS Campus Agreement is entirely voluntary and departments can choose to participate or continue purchasing software as they do currently.

Q: Do we have to participate in the program?
A: No. The MS Campus Agreement is entirely voluntary.

Q: What is the benefit to those offices that already have Word, Excel, PowerPoint or Access?
A: For departments that upgrade applications on a fairly regular basis, the primary benefit is access to the most current version of all the MS Office applications for PC and Mac (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access) and any and all upgrades during the subscription year in a more cost effective manner. Some of the other benefits of the program include easier license tracking and licensing compliance, the option of installing the software on all of a department’s computers and a department is fully licensed throughout the subscription term no matter how many computers or staff they may add.

Q: What defines a department (for the purposes of opting into this campus agreement)?
A: We want to make this campus agreement work for Rice customers and still remain in the guidelines that Microsoft has established. For the purposes of this campus agreement, academic departments are headed by a chair and administrative department are headed by a director, vice president, or vice provost. However, we realize that several Rice University entities do not fit neatly into either of these two categories. If your area seems to fall outside the academic and administrative examples cited, contact Charlita Marrs to determine how the campus agreement can be utilized by your group.

Charlita Marrs, IT Manager for Procurement and Vendor Relations: 713-384-4979, charlita@rice.edu
Q: Who is counted as an FTE (full time equivalent)?
A: In this campus agreement, 1 FTE = 1 currently employed full-time faculty member staff member. Graduate students are not included in the FTE count for each department although they may utilize the desktop bundle on department-owned computers. The calculations for part-time employees are as follows: total part-time faculty/3 = 1 FTE and total part-time staff/2 = 1 FTE. Examples: 6 part-time faculty members/3 = 2 FTE for the Rice-Microsoft campus agreement. 8 part-time staff members/2 = 4 FTE for the campus agreement. Employees who are not required to use a computer for their daily work (grounds, food prep, etc.) are not included in the total FTE count. Contact Charlita Marrs for further details.

Q: Do I have to pay for vacant FTE lines?
A: No. Subscribe only for the current total FTE in your department. If you add FTE count or computers, go ahead and install the software. On the anniversary date, you will have the opportunity to revise your FTE count based on your current employees.

Q: Are graduate students’ personal computers covered?
A: No. Personal computers are not covered under the Rice-Microsoft Campus Agreement unless the computer belongs to an FTE faculty or staff member who has a signed work-at-home agreement on file with their department.

Q: Why is the participation window limited to 30 days?
A: In order to execute the Rice-Microsoft campus agreement in a timely manner and distribute the software, there is a 30-day window of opportunity to opt into the program. A similar 30-day window will be available in September each year. Participants who join in September pay only 1/2 of the annual fee for that year, but are obligated to a full-year’s subscription on the anniversary date (April 30 each year).

Q: When does the subscription charge appear in Banner?
A: In May, a courtesy email will be sent to the person who has signed the subscription agreement for your department; the Rice-Microsoft Campus Agreement charge will go through in the next 5 business days after the date of the email.

Q: How will the software be distributed?
A: Depending on the number of departments who opt into the campus agreement (and total number of subscribers), the desktop bundle will either be available to download or a copy of the media will be available for check out through a central resource for each department.

Q: What if I switch from Mac to PC or vice versa?
A: There is no additional charge. Even if you add another work station or two in your office, these machines are covered. Again, the department subscription is based on their total FTE count, not the number of computers in that department.

Q: If/when Microsoft’s Longhorn operating system is released, is it covered under our campus agreement?
A: Yes.