Policies and Procedures

Can anyone at Loyola use the equipment?

Students who have declared as their major Film & Digital Media or Multimedia Journalism and graduates in the Digital Media and Storytelling program have access to equipment every semester – including summer – until they graduate. For all other students, only those enrolled in a production course in the School of Communication will have access to equipment only for the semester they are enrolled in the course. Any student can use the lab computers at any time during open hours.

How do I gain access to equipment?

You will not be able to make reservations and check out equipment until you’ve completed the release form. Please read the form instructions carefully. You can submit the form online via email.

If you submitted a form during the Fall 2019 semester, and you are Film & Digital Media or Multimedia Journalism major or a graduate in Digital Media and Storytelling, YOU DO NOT NEED TO RESUBMIT THE FORM. If you are enrolled in a production course in the School of Communication and you are NOT one of the above majors, you will have to submit another release form.

If you are having trouble signing the form, stop into the lab at any time and we can walk you through it.

What happens when I need to check out equipment for my class?

Your instructor should make you aware of the equipment you will be using for class. We strongly encourage you to make a reservation well in advance for the use of equipment. To make a reservation, go to https://equipmentloan.luc.edu, enter your Loyola ID and password and click on “Owl Lab.” You can find detailed instructions for using the reservation system if you click on the question mark at the top of the page.

You can also come to the lab as a “walk-in,” but equipment is available on a first come, first served basis. This means that the camera you need for your project due on Monday might be checked out. This is why it’s always best to make a reservation in advance.

Do I need to bring anything with me to pick up my reservation or check out equipment?

You must have your Loyola ID in order to check out equipment or pick up a reservation, until we get to know who you are. We try to remember names and faces, but there’s a lot of you!

Note that you don’t need your ID to return equipment – you can even have a trusted classmate return equipment for you if you won’t be able to.

What if I’m late to pick up my reservation?

There is a one-hour window to pick up the reservation. After an hour, the system automatically cancels the reservation and releases the equipment.

You can always edit your reservation - add or delete equipment or change the pick up or return time - through the reservation website. Click on “My Reservations” to find the “Edit Reservation” button. It’s always nice to cancel your reservation as soon as know you won’t need the equipment. Canceling the reservation frees up the equipment in the system and makes it available for other students to be able to reserve.

How long can I keep the equipment I checked out?

To make a reservation:
https://equipmentloan.luc.edu
Equipment is checked out for **two days** at a time. Since the Owl Lab is closed on the weekends, equipment that’s checked out on Thursday or Friday will be due back on Monday.

**What if I want to keep my equipment longer?**

You can renew your equipment by calling the lab at **312-915-8830**. You are allowed two renewals per checkout for a period of two days each. **Never send an email** asking for a renewal - it’s possible the email won't be read in time. Also note that you don't need to bring the equipment in for a renewal, just call.

If you’re running late for your return, not only is it courteous to call us, but you can also ask for a renewal - even if it's just for an extra hour - to avoid late fees. However, this is not a reliable method as the equipment may be reserved for someone else. If that's the case, you won't be allowed to make a renewal and the equipment will be late.

**What happens if my equipment is late?**

**Effective January 13, 2020:** If you return your equipment past the due date and time, you will incur late fines on your account. You should make yourself aware of the fines for any items you check out by referencing the Late Fine List. Each item in the Owl Lab has its own fine and the fine is charged for each day the item is late. These can really pile up so cover your bases to assure you don't get charged. Students are allowed a 30-minute grace period in which to return equipment. (Faculty and staff have a one-hour grace period). You will receive an automatic email with your invoice any time your equipment is late and you can pay your fine using the University's TouchNet payment system online. You will need your total amount due for each invoice.

You have **7 days to pay your fine**. If the fine is not paid by then, you will be restricted from using the lab until the fine is paid. **Accruing three fines in any given semester will result in a temporary ban from using the lab for the remainder of the semester, regardless of whether or not the fines have been paid.**

To avoid late fines, try calling to renew the equipment, even if it's just for an hour. If the equipment is available, we can renew it. You can even ask a trusted classmate to return the equipment for you. It's important to keep in mind that equipment you have might be reserved for another student, so if you are late returning it, you are negatively affecting that student's ability to complete their work. Please be respectful.

**I took my equipment home and I noticed that there is a component missing/scratched lens/damage to the equipment. I didn't lose the component/scratch the lens/damage the item. Is there anything I can do?**

When you check out equipment, the student worker will examine it in front of you. They will make sure that all of the components are there and that there is no visible damage to the item. If you notice that the student worker doesn't check the equipment, **speak up! Ask them to check it for you or check it yourself before you leave with it.** If there's damage or a missing component, alert the student worker and ask them to check out a different item to you. Otherwise, when you return the equipment, we will have to assume that you were the one who lost the component or damaged the equipment and you will be made responsible for any repairs or replacements.

If, after you've brought it home and turned it on, a camera malfunctions or a microphone crackles, call us right away to let us know. We will work with you to troubleshoot or ask you to bring back the item for a replacement.

**I dropped a camera and now it won't turn on. Do I have to pay for it?**

If you damage something, call us as soon as you can during open hours or come in to the lab with the damaged item. It might be a simple in-house fix, which means you won't have to replace it or pay for a repair. Honesty is always the best policy! Remember that the equipment **belongs to everyone** - it is for use by all of your fellow students as well as faculty - so treat it with the same respect you might treat something you borrowed from a friend.

**I lost an item that was checked out to me. What now?**

First of all – call us! It’s important that we know as soon as the item is lost. Unfortunately, you’ll be responsible for the purchase of a replacement item. Cables, lens caps, or a pricey camera – you’ll have to buy a new one. Some of the items can be very expensive so always keep an eagle eye on any gear checked out to you.
What should I do if my equipment is stolen?

If any item checked out to you is stolen, first, file a police report. Notify the lab immediately via email or by calling us. We will need a copy of the police report to keep on file. You may be responsible for replacing the items. It is recommended that you look into obtaining renter’s insurance, which could cover the value of items stolen from your home.

I used these lights/this camera/this program last semester but I’m a little rusty. Can you give me some tips?

Of course! The Owl Lab Technology Assistants are familiar with all of the gear in the lab. Just ask any one of them to give you a primer. You can also email Jillian to set up a meeting with her or a Tech Assistant. It’s always a good idea to check out equipment a before your shoot so you can spend some time familiarizing yourself with it.

I saw on the equipment list that you have gimbal stabilizers/sliders/etc. but I don’t see those items on the reservation website. Why not?

There are some items that you first must be trained to use before you can have access to them. If your instructor shows you how to use it in class, you should be authorized to use it. If there is something you see on the equipment list that you’d like to try out, email Jillian to set up an appointment with her or with a Tech Assistant.