Laptop recommendations from our IT staff:

A laptop will probably be the most useful type of computer for students to use. As far as technical specifications, I use the "minimum" specifications for the professional Engineering software that is in use throughout the College. This can make for an expensive laptop, because some of these programs use a lot of resources. I would also recommend that you purchase a Windows based computer and NOT a Mac based machine. There are several pieces of software heavily used in Civil Engineering, for example, that DO NOT have Mac OS versions (prime example being Solidworks). My "minimum" recommended specifications for students is as follows:

- CPU—i7. You want to stay away from any of the really low power Atom based processors, an i5 would probably work, but will be noticeably slower.
- RAM- 8 GB. Remember, this is a "minimum". More is better, but less than this will be too little.
- Hard drive/storage- 1 TB in size and preferably: 7200 rpm mechanical drive OR a Solid State boot drive, with a mechanical drive for work space. I don't recommend getting ONLY an SSD in a computer that will be running engineering software. (This may not matter as an undergraduate TBH, as you will probably not be running long duration computer simulations on this machine.)
- Video Card—a discrete video card with 2GB video RAM (DDR3 or 4 is fine, DDR5 is better but more expensive). This means stay away from anything that says "integrated", as that is video on the motherboard which negatively impacts performance.
- 14" Display

Hit those major points and you will have a machine that will serve you well for your College career!

A further note about software. The University of Akron has a Campus-wide licensing agreement with Microsoft (http://www.uakron.edu/it/office-365/officeproplus.dot) which means that every Student gets Microsoft Office for FREE. This includes all the major programs in the Office Suite: Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook, etc… So you do NOT need to worry about buying the Office products. You can go here to sign in with your UANet ID:
https://portal.microsoftonline.com/

Many of the professional engineering software publishers also have free or reduced cost Student access to their software, this is something you can look into further as you start taking classes and might want that software.