



COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT POLICY

Purpose

The College respects the intellectual property rights of copyright owners and is committed to complying with all applicable federal copyright laws. Students and employees are expected to act responsibly and legally when using copyrighted materials in academic, professional, and personal activities.

This policy provides information regarding federal copyright law, institutional expectations, potential penalties for copyright infringement, and the College's disciplinary procedures for violations.

Copyright Basics

Copyright protection exists automatically when an original work is created and fixed in a tangible form. Copyrighted works may include, but are not limited to:

- Books and articles
- Photographs and artwork
- Music and sound recordings
- Movies and videos
- Software and computer programs
- Websites and digital content
- Educational materials and presentations

Unless you have confirmed that a work is in the public domain, covered by an applicable exception, or licensed for your intended use, you should assume that copyright protection applies.

The copyright owner has exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, display, perform, and create derivative works from copyrighted material unless otherwise permitted by law.

Unauthorized Use of Copyrighted Materials

The unauthorized reproduction, distribution, transmission, display, performance, downloading, uploading, sharing, or use of copyrighted materials is prohibited.

Students and employees may not use College-owned devices, networks, systems, or technology resources to:

- Download unauthorized copies of copyrighted materials
 - Share copyrighted materials without permission
 - Upload copyrighted content without authorization
 - Distribute copyrighted works through electronic means
 - Circumvent technological protections designed to prevent unauthorized copying
 - Engage in activities that violate federal copyright law
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Unauthorized Peer-to-Peer File Sharing

Unauthorized peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing of copyrighted materials is prohibited.

Peer-to-peer file sharing involves the use of software or services that allow users to directly share files with others over a network. Examples may include torrent-based applications or other file-sharing platforms.

Students and employees may not use College technology resources, networks, or internet access to:

- Download copyrighted music, movies, software, games, books, or other protected content without authorization
- Upload or distribute copyrighted materials to others through peer-to-peer networks
- Facilitate the unauthorized sharing of copyrighted works

Unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing may subject individuals to both institutional disciplinary action and civil or criminal liability.

Federal Copyright Law Penalties

Unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, may subject individuals to civil and criminal liabilities.

Civil Penalties

Under federal copyright law, a copyright owner may bring a civil action against an infringer. Penalties may include:

- Actual damages suffered by the copyright owner
- Statutory damages ranging from \$750 to \$30,000 per infringed work
- Statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per infringed work for willful infringement
- Court costs and attorney's fees when permitted by law



Criminal Penalties

Willful copyright infringement may result in criminal penalties, including:

- Significant monetary fines
- Imprisonment
- Seizure of infringing materials and equipment

Criminal penalties may include fines of up to \$250,000 and imprisonment for up to five years for certain offenses.

Additional information regarding federal copyright law is available from the U.S. Copyright Office at:

<https://www.copyright.gov>

Copyright Infringement Policy

Any act of copyright infringement prohibited by federal, state, or local law, including the unauthorized reproduction, distribution, public display, performance, downloading, uploading, transmission, sharing, or use of copyrighted materials. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Unauthorized peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing of copyrighted music, movies, software, games, books, or other protected content;
 - Using College computers, networks, systems, or internet access to download, stream, share, distribute, store, or transmit copyrighted materials without authorization;
 - Reproducing, distributing, posting, or publicly displaying copyrighted materials without the permission of the copyright owner or other legal authorization;
 - Copying or distributing software, software code, images, text, audio, video, educational materials, tests, worksheets, or other copyrighted content in violation of applicable copyright laws or license agreements;
 - Circumventing technological protection measures or digital rights management systems designed to prevent unauthorized copying or distribution of copyrighted works.
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Institutional Disciplinary Actions

Violations of this policy constitute misconduct and may result in disciplinary action under applicable College policies and procedures.



Students found responsible for copyright infringement may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions:

- Verbal or written warning
- Loss of technology or network privileges
- Disciplinary probation
- Suspension
- Dismissal from the College
- Restitution where appropriate
- Referral to law enforcement agencies

Employees found responsible for copyright infringement may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The College reserves the right to cooperate with copyright owners, law enforcement agencies, and other authorities investigating alleged copyright violations.

Examples of Activities That May Require Copyright Review

Students and employees should seek guidance before engaging in activities such as:

- Posting journal articles or book chapters to online learning platforms
- Copying worksheets, tests, or educational materials
- Uploading copyrighted materials to websites or cloud storage platforms
- Using music, movies, or videos in presentations
- Showing films or streaming content in classrooms or events
- Reproducing copyrighted images, graphics, or multimedia content
- Sharing digital copies of textbooks or course materials

Questions regarding copyright compliance should be directed to the College Library or designated copyright compliance resource.

Legal Alternatives to Illegal Downloading

Students and employees should obtain media and digital content from lawful sources.

Examples of legal sources may include:

- Licensed streaming services
- Licensed music subscription services



- Public library digital collections
 - Open Educational Resources (OER)
 - Public domain resources
 - College library databases and licensed resources
 - Content purchased directly from authorized vendors
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Student Consumer Information Disclosure

In accordance with the Higher Education Act and applicable federal regulations, this information is provided annually as part of the College's Student Consumer Information disclosures and is made available to current and prospective students through institutional publications and electronic media.