

Office of University Information Technologies (UNIT)

Illegal file sharing and downloading

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An important reminder to the Villanova community ...

Villanova's file sharing policies have not changed, neither have the laws. UNIT, the Dean of Students Office, Human Resources, and General Counsel have updated the process and communications addressing file sharing violations. This process is meant to:

- educate students and employees about illegal file sharing/downloading,
- deter users from file sharing/downloading files illegally,
- decrease inappropriate misuse of valuable University computer and network resources, and
- avoid liability to the University employees who illegally download and/or share music,

movies, software, or other copyrighted material will be subject to disciplinary actions as well as legal action often pursued by industry associations such as the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Industry Association (MPAA).

University imposed sanctions may include revocation of network privileges, disciplinary probation, fines, or even, for repeated or more egregious violations, suspension or termination from the University. A court may require a violator to pay statutory legal liability of up to \$150,000 per infringe work.

We have made refinements in our approach to implementing and enforcing the policy. The changes to update and formalize our procedures were made for some very good reasons.

Colleges and universities recognize the importance of respecting copyrights and have joined forces with the RIAA in an effort to combat illegal file sharing in the Joint Committee of the Higher Education and Entertainment Communities. Villanova wants to better educate the University community about illegal downloading/file sharing and the dramatic consequences that infringers pay. The recent *Grokster* Supreme Court decision made clear that liability would not be limited to individual end user infringers only, but would also extend to anyone promoting infringement. Villanova University will not allow its network to be used for this illegal activity that drains University network capacity and resources from legitimate users.

We know that many students have gotten the message (see the recent article in the *Villanovan*)

that illegal file sharing is wrong and that trying to save a few dollars by stealing music or videos is not worth the risk to their academic career, bank account or future job prospects. Nevertheless, our own VU network monitoring indicates file sharing is still detrimentally affecting the University's network activity and Villanova still periodically receives inquiries from the RIAA and MPAA about individual student's accounts that those industry watchdogs have identified as infringing. The RIAA and MPAA use sophisticated tools to monitor activities over the Internet and identify infringers. Individuals who download (and/or share) music, movies, software, etc. without the permission of the copyright holder violate the law and University policy. **DON'T RISK IT!**



UNIT Workshops October 17-28



To see the entire UNIT Workshops offerings, read workshop descriptions, download course materials, and REGISTER ONLINE, visit unit.villanova.edu/workshops/

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