

UNAUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTION OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

The unauthorized copying, sharing (including peer-to-peer file sharing), or distribution of copyrighted material is strictly prohibited. It is a violation of federal law, the Copyright Act, and the student conduct policies in the University Catalog, Student Handbook, and program-specific handbooks. Students who infringe a copyright are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action ranging in severity from a warning up to and including termination of employment.

In addition, penalties for copyright infringement include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or “statutory” damages affixed at not less than \$750 and not more than \$30,000 per work infringed. For “willful” infringement, a court may award up to \$150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorneys’ fees. For details, see Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505.

Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 per offense.

Legal Alternatives for Acquiring Copyrighted Material: The internet contains a wealth of information. Many sites on the internet offer the opportunity to legally purchase (and in some cases download for free) music, movies, and games. An organization called EDUCAUSE has compiled a list of sources of legal alternatives for downloading media content, which can be found at: <https://www.educause.edu/focus-areas-and-initiatives/policy-and-security/educause-policy/legal-sources-online>. The University does not guarantee the accuracy of this list or the availability of the sources listed.