

copyright, file-sharing and responsible use of electronic resources

As a member of the Columbia University community, it's important that you understand your responsibilities regarding the University's policies and federal law on your use of electronic resources, such as computers (the University's and your personal computers), networks (including the Internet), email, and online information resources.

Columbia's electronic resources and services are for the primary purpose of supporting the University's mission of education, research, and service. Uses that interfere with or threaten the operation and activities of any part of the University are prohibited, as are uses that violate the rights of others.

Peer-to-peer file-sharing programs such as Kazaa and BitTorrent make it easy to download and share unauthorized copies of music, movies, and other copyrighted works; **this is against the law and exposes you to legal liability.**

Violations of copyright law also violate University policy and may subject you to disciplinary action.

To help you use Columbia's electronic resources and services responsibly, and to help you understand the basics of copyright law, we have summarized some information about copyright law below; you can find detailed information on the University's website: www.columbia.edu/cu/policy/copyright.html.

Copyright protection covers any original work that exists in some physical form from the moment the work is created, whether the work contains a copyright notice or not. This means that just about any work you come across—software, books, music, film, video, articles, cartoons, pictures, and email—is most likely protected by copyright. **If you copy, distribute or share any copyrighted material on the Internet, you are infringing on the copyright of the material**, unless you have the express permission of the copyright owner or qualify for an exception under the law. You can find a description of exceptions at www.columbia.edu/cu/policy/copyright.html.

The University does not monitor the network for content; it monitors only the volume of use on the network. However, representatives of copyright owners routinely search the Internet for copyright violations, and this monitoring has led to numerous lawsuits against students, including many Columbia students. Payments to settle these lawsuits can be substantial.

Peer-to-peer programs such as Kazaa, BitTorrent and LimeWire automatically turn on sharing when installed, therefore you may be violating copyright law even without knowing it. In addition to filing lawsuits against individuals, under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, copyright owners can file notices of copyright violations with the University, requiring the University to take immediate action to eliminate violations. If you are implicated in such activity, the University will notify you and may terminate your network access until you have corrected the problem.

File sharing generates a high volume of network traffic. Should the University find that your computer is generating excessive network traffic, your Internet access will automatically be limited. For information on bandwidth limits, the University's Computer and Network Use Policy, and a link to information on the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, visit www.columbia.edu/cu/policy.

As a Columbia University student, it's important that your rights for the intellectual property you create is protected; understanding and respecting the intellectual property rights of others is the first step in fostering a culture that respects the rights of all.