

Westminster Policy on Sharing and Distributing Copyrighted Electronic Media

It is a violation of federal law and Westminster policy to share and/or distribute copyrighted materials without the permission of the copyright holder. Violators may be subject to civil and criminal prosecution under the provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) and may also be subject to personal sanctions specified in college policy.

Popular file sharing programs such as KaZaA, Morpheus or iMesh commonly share files out from your computer after you have downloaded them. Many users do not realize that this software may turn your personal computer into a server, or upload site, even if that was not your intent. Files on a network connected PC may then be illegally shared with every other person connected to the World Wide Web. It is imperative that you disable the file sharing capability of these systems. If you do not know how to disable this function, please contact the Support Phone at 832-2023 or the Computer Lab staff. You may also wish to refer to the University of Chicago's excellent web page on [Disabling Peer to Peer File Sharing](#).

Industry representatives aggressively monitor the Internet to discover incidents of illegal file sharing of music, games or video. When violations are discovered, they contact the network owner and/or the Internet Service Provider and demand that the offending device be disconnected from the network. To protect the user and the college from culpability under the DMCA or college policy, the college will disable network access for any machine for which a DMCA complaint has been received.

To restore network service, the user must contact the Dean of Students and arrange to sign a document stating that the user has disabled the file sharing function of the software and has agreed to discontinue all illegal file sharing activity. Action taken by the college to remedy a violation does not preclude the copyright holder from seeking civil and/or criminal prosecution. The law specifies civil liability of not less than \$200 or more than \$2,500 per act, and criminal penalties up to \$500,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 5 years for the first offense.