

File Sharing Policy

This reference page is intended to inform and educate the Oklahoma Wesleyan University Community about the growing concern of illegal online file sharing. As online music, movies and other media have become more popular, the issue of piracy and the theft of copyrighted material has increased as well.

Companies who own the copyrighted material being pirated are beginning to increase their pursuit of those who are not abiding by the law. By tracking the files being transferred and the users behind the transferring, these companies are increasingly putting pressure on Internet service providers (ISP's) to reveal identities of the computer users who are infringing copyrights. Recently, a small number of students have been sued by copyright holders and required to pay substantial settlements.

Oklahoma Wesleyan University provides an online network for its community to utilize as a tool to further education and communication. With that access also comes the responsibility to show its users how to use the network properly and productively for the entire Community.

The idea of file sharing is like many other technological innovations. It, in itself, is not negative or a positive invention, it is only when a user decides to use it in such a fashion that the tool negates the progress of a community rather than augmenting it.

Plans to “Effectively Combat” the Unauthorized Distribution of Copyrighted Material

We currently employ Content Filtering with Deep Packet Inspection to block P2P traffic from the network, both inbound and outbound. Known file sharing websites are also blocked as a category on the Web Content Filter.

How File Sharing Programs Work

Most file sharing programs like Kazaa, Limewire and Gnutella were created from the technology the original Napster used called "peer-to-peer sharing". To find out more about peer-to-peer sharing (P2P) visit the links below.

- Wikipedia: [File Sharing](#)
- How Stuff Works: [How the Old Napster Worked](#)
- How Stuff Works: [How BitTorrent Works](#)

Federal Copyright Information

What is a copyright? How are copyrights applied to original creative work? How do copyright laws written before the digital age apply to today's new media? To find out more visit the links below.

- [What is copyright?](#)
- [What are some of the basic copyright laws?](#)
- [Applying copyright laws in everyday educational situations](#)

Oklahoma Wesleyan University Network Policy

Like many other higher educational institutions, Oklahoma Wesleyan University has implemented a set of policies to help guide and regulate use of the technology we make available to support teaching, learning and the business of the College.

When is File Sharing Illegal?

Simply stated, file sharing is usually illegal when you are downloading or uploading a file without the consent of the copyright owner of the music or other content in the file. There are some gray areas in this evolving area of the law and you should read more for guidance including the articles linked below.

What Happens if a Student is Investigated?

If a claim is made by a copyright holder against a student, the student will be notified by the University and given an opportunity to address the complaint. If the student is found to be using the Oklahoma Wesleyan University network improperly or fails to comply with Oklahoma Wesleyan University network policy, that student could lose network privileges. Depending on the severity of the infractions, other actions could also be taken. Theft of property, including copyrighted material, is also a violation of the University's Honor Code.

In addition, users can also be sought out by the holders of the copyrighted information for restitution, which in many cases involves heavy fines and time in prison.

- Record Industry Association of America (RIAA): [Frequently Asked Questions about File Sharing Litigation](#)
- Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA): [Piracy and the Law](#)

How Do I Shut Off File Sharing

The following link provides simple and easy to follow instructions on resetting, uninstalling and shutting off your file sharing programs.

- [Resetting or uninstalling your peer-to-peer sharing software](#)

Legal Alternatives

There are many options that allow people to experience free and inexpensive music and other media legally online. Visit the links below for some examples.

- [Apple iTunes](#) (music, TV shows, movies, audio & video podcasts, for free, rent, and buy)
- [Garageband](#) (independent music)
- [MSN Music](#)
- [Napster](#) (subscription service)
- [Rhapsody](#) (free or subscription)
- MPAA: [Legal Alternatives to Piracy](#) (links to TV and motion picture sites)
- RIAA: [Legal MusicSites](#) (links to online music sources)