



BOSTON COLLEGE

Copyright Compliance

Source: Office of Student Conduct

Copyright law protects the rights of anyone who creates or holds the rights to created content, including art, music, written material, movies, and software. The unauthorized copying or distribution of any material created by anyone other than yourself may constitute copyright infringement, which is a violation of federal law and University policy. These prohibited activities include using the Boston College network for sharing music, video, or software without copyright holder permission, whether through peer-to-peer programs (uploading or downloading) or other means.

Boston College's Technology Policy requires all members of the University community to comply with copyright laws and the provisions of licensing agreements that apply to software. In addition, all system users agree in the Boston College Technological and Information Resources Use Agreement to comply with copyright law.

The University imposes significant sanctions for infringing activities, including university probation and loss of network access. In addition, under the Copyright Act, anyone infringing a copyrighted work may be liable for statutory damages up to \$30,000 for each work (i.e. each song or movie) infringed and, if willful infringement is proven, that amount may be increased up to \$150,000. An infringer may also be liable for the attorney's fees of the copyright owner. In certain cases, an infringer may also be subject to criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. For significant offenses, these penalties include up to a five-year federal prison term and a fine of \$250,000. Prohibited activities include using the Boston College network for sharing music, video or software without copyright holder permission.

In recent years, associations including the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America have served thousands of subpoenas on colleges and universities, including Boston College, seeking to obtain the identities of individuals who have allegedly infringed the copyright of their members through peer-to-peer file-sharing. Boston College is required to comply with lawfully issued subpoenas, and students have had to pay significant sums of money to settle copyright claims in order to avoid further liability.

A number of legal alternatives, authorized by copyright owners, exist for acquiring music and other content on-line, including iTunes, Amazon, and even Walmart.com. Boston College encourages you to make use of these services rather than engaging in copyright infringement and risking significant penalties.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact BC's Information Technology Services (www.bc.edu/its) or the Office of Student Conduct (www.bc.edu/conduct).