

The University of Oklahoma
Policies and Sanctions Regarding Copyright Infringement

1. The unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, may subject the students to civil and criminal liabilities;
2. Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). These rights include the right to reproduce or distribute a copyrighted work. In the file-sharing context, downloading or uploading substantial parts of a copyrighted work without authority constitutes an infringement. Generally, 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. For more information, please see the website of the U.S. Copyright Office at <https://www.copyright.gov/>;
3. Unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing may result in disciplinary actions under the University’s Student Rights and Responsibilities Code for students who engage in illegal downloading or unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials using the institution’s information technology system. Under the Code, Students are responsible for complying with all local, state, and federal laws and are prohibited from misusing computing facilities, which includes misusing data files belonging to others and violating University Information Technology policies. Students who engage in prohibited conduct are subject to disciplinary sanctions including but not limited to verbal or written warning, probation, educational sanctions, financial sanctions, suspension, or expulsion. Details are available [here](#).

Additional information may be accessed here:

- [The Digital Millennium Copyright Act](#)
- [17 U.S.C. § 106](#)
- [17 U.S.C. §§ 501-513](#)