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Search

UCI Directory

Home Help Desk ► Administrative Systems Services & Support ► Instruction & Research ► Network ► Telephone ► About OIT ►

[OIT](#) > [Policies](#) > [Copyright](#) > **Letter to Students**

To: All UCI Students
From: Manuel N. Gomez, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

April 2003

Dear UCI Students:

The Internet is a very powerful tool, providing many new opportunities and capabilities, both in academic and everyday pursuits. Along with the benefits come new challenges, one of which is copyright protection. I am writing today to make sure you are informed of campus policy and to remind you of your obligations as a member of the UCI electronic community.

Making copies of copyright materials over the network is legal only with the consent of the copyright holder or when such copying can be classified as "fair use" [1] according to a somewhat complex set of legal criteria.

Copyrighted material includes music, videos, games, and movies. UCI abides by the provisions of the federal Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), which requires prompt response to claims of copyright infringement by copyright holders or their agents.

If you access copyright materials without permission, you could lose network access, and/or be subject to UCI disciplinary action. Other consequences may include federal prosecution. UCI must take its obligations under the DMCA seriously.

Making copyrighted materials available over the network without a license is a particularly serious offense. Please be aware that most file sharing programs install themselves with world wide sharing on by default - this means you could be sharing materials on the network without your knowledge. It is important that you disable this feature if you use file-sharing programs.

Please review UCI network policy as well as the other references included below.

Manuel N. Gomez
Vice Chancellor
Student Affairs

[1] For an introduction to the issues involved in the legal meaning of "fair use", see <http://www.humanities.uci.edu/humanitech/copyright/copyright.html>

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