

To: All UCI Students

From: Manuel N. Gomez, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

October 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.

Though trading of copyrighted music, movies, games and software over the Internet has become commonplace using file-sharing programs such as KaZaa or Morpheus, it is often not legal to do so.

Making copies of copyrighted materials over the network is generally illegal unless you have the consent of the copyright holder. There are some limited exceptions; however, these exceptions generally do not apply when a person "shares" copyrighted materials with others for entertainment purposes. Copyrighted material includes music, videos, games, movies, text, and software.

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 copyrighted materials without permission, you could lose network access, and/or be subject to UCI disciplinary action. Other consequences may include civil liability and even criminal prosecution.

Some believe that "recreational file-sharing" is unlikely to be noticed. This is not the case. Copyright holders are significantly intensifying enforcement using automated scanning software to identify infringements, no matter how small.

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.

To protect your own personal information and the integrity of your computer as well as to obey copyright laws, you should not install file sharing software unless you configure it properly. It must be configured to share only those materials you have the right to share, such as documents, photos, and music that you create. "Sharing" files on your system without proper attention to what is being "shared" -- and with whom -- can easily allow personal information on your system, or even your entire system, to be used in ways which can have dire consequences for you.

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

Manuel N. Gomez
Vice Chancellor
Student Affairs

[1] UCI Computer and Network Use Policy

<http://www.policies.uci.edu/adm/pols/714-18.html>

[2] Students' Understanding Copyright Policy at UCI

<http://eee.uci.edu/help/student/copyright/>

[3] Disabling Outward File sharing (UCI Residential Housing Network):

http://resnet.uci.edu/p2p_page1.html

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<http://www.oit.uci.edu/policy/studentletter-oct03.html>