



ASHLAND UNIVERSITY

Policy Name:	Peer-to-Peer (P2P) File Sharing Policy				
Section #:	IT06	Section Title:	Information Technology	Reviewed:	12/19/12
Approval Authority:	ELT	Adopted:	12/19/12	Next Review:	06/13/22
Responsible Executive:	CITO	Revised:	Every 3 years		
Responsible Office:	Information Technology	Contact:	Dtharp2@ashland.edu		
Public Posting or Internal:	INTERNAL (Portal)	Intended Audience:	INTERNAL		

1. Policy Statement

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (H.R. 4137) requires higher education institutions to make disclosures to students about institutional policies and sanctions related to copyright infringement. This policy also details plans to deter the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material and make students aware of alternatives to illegal file sharing or Peer-to-Peer (P2P) file sharing. Federal law prohibits the reproduction, distribution, public display or public performance of copyrighted materials over the Internet without permission of the copyright holder. Pace University fully complies with the federal [Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998](#) (DMCA) and has the measures in place for tracking alleged incidents of copyright infringement.

2. Reason for Policy

This policy is to address copyright infringement impact related to illegal file sharing, set expectations, and to protect the integrity of Ashland University's technology environment from illegal software applications, network security, and illegal use of such resources.

3. Who Should Read This Policy

All employees and students

4. Resources

Copy of Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA):

[Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998](#)

Legal Sources of Online Content per Educause:

[Educause website](#)

5. Definitions

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) - network of "peers" or computer systems which are connected to each other via the Internet. Files can be shared directly between systems on the network without the need of a central server. In other words, each computer on a *P2P* network becomes a file server as well as a client.

Copy Right Infringement - Downloading or distributing copyrighted material—e.g., documents, music, movies, videos, text, etc.—without permission from the rightful owner violates the United States Copyright Act and several university policies.

6. The Policy

Ashland University (AU) utilizes several technical deterrents to P2P file sharing. Other technologies are considered and implemented as protocols change and evolve. Network activity that utilizes peer-to-peer applications for distributing copyrighted material will be blocked.

Copy Right Infringement

Students, faculty and staff who may be in violation of copyright law not only place themselves at risk, but they may be exposing Ashland University to liability as an institution for contributory or vicarious infringement—e.g., using university network resources to obtain the material and/or to store the material on university computers and/or servers.

Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)

Generally, DMCA notices are sent to Internet Service Providers (ISPs), as they are the Internet Assigned Numbering Authority and of the address space that Ashland University utilizes. An ISP forwards the notification to the AU Tech Support Center account and a variety of authorized IT staff members. A designated network analyst is responsible for the processing of these requests. Upon receipt of the request, the following occurs:

- The complaint is checked to make sure that it is relevant to our institution.
- The complaint is checked to make sure that all information necessary to associate a user with a violation is included in the complaint.
- If additional information is needed, an email is sent to the complainant requesting additional information and explaining the nature of the AU network and why more information is necessary. Because the internal IP addresses of the users are not exposed to the outside world, more information is often needed to successfully correlate an event.
- If the complaint is relevant and complete, a userid will be associated with the IP address in question. Relevant logs and the initial complaint will then be forwarded to the correct institutional authorities for further investigation and potential disciplinary or legal action.

- ISPs and the initial complainant will be notified that the user in violation has been forwarded to the proper authorities for further action.

7. Access to Legal Sources of Copyrighted Material

Access to legal sources of copyrighted material, will be allowed insofar as it does not affect the academic or business use of the campus network.