An Important Copyright Message for the Bucknell Community

Do you know that most music and movie sharing is illegal? Are you aware of the risks you are taking when you do this?

The US Copyright Law (Title 17 of the US Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material regardless of the format of that material. The consequences of illegally sharing copyrighted material over the Internet are serious.

With the availability of high-speed Internet connections, Peer-to-Peer (P2P) programs have been developed to allow people to share information in digital formats. In particular, P2P programs like KaZaA, Blubster, Gnutella, Morpheus, AudioGalaxy and others are commonly used to share music and movies without regard to copyright restrictions. Making copies of any copyrighted material without the right to do so is against both state and federal law and University policy. Most commercially produced music and movies are copyrighted and cannot be freely shared. This is the law. We believe that many people who make illegal copies know it is wrong, but they don’t know how serious the penalties can be.

The record and movie industries are enforcing copyright laws by using technology to detect those who run servers or simply download something they have no right to have. The likelihood of being caught is increasing, and prosecutions will become more frequent. Recently, the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) has taken further action to subpoena the names of people who are sharing large amounts of music. These subpoenas can lead to lawsuits, substantial financial penalties and perhaps jail time. In the spring of 2003, for example, four students at other colleges settled copyright claims against them out-of-court for approximately $15,000 each. The DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) specifies procedures that Bucknell must follow when notified an individual using our network is violating copyright laws.

Regardless, most music and movie-sharing violates the law that we are bound to uphold. In addition, members of our community must follow university-defined policies for appropriate use of technology resources. If you distribute copyrighted music and videos, you are putting yourself at risk of losing computing privileges, being charged by Bucknell’s community judicial board, and facing prosecution under civil and criminal laws. Bucknell and ISR will not be in a position to protect you or your identity from this prosecution.

For your own protection, you need to seriously consider your own actions.

For more information:
www.musicunited.org — of particular interest is the TAKE IT OFF link

www.riaa.org — Recording Industry Association of America

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