Peer-to-peer (P2P) Policy

Peer-to-peer (P2P) networks are strictly banned on the University’s network. Those who illegally obtain or provide copyrighted material and those who use methods to hide their P2P network activity are in violation of this policy.

The ITS department employs technology to identify those students using P2P networks, including those hiding their activity. The technology employs a graduated 3-tier point system whereby the more points one accumulates the harsher the punishment. Points are assigned with each new file download. The point values and punishment levels are described in the tables below.

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| P2P Point Values |
| P2P Activity | **Points Assigned** |
| Likely Commercial Music | 1 |
| Likely Commercial Film and TV | 1 |
| Likely Commercial Software & Games | 1 |
| Likely Sexual Content | 1 |
| Evasive P2P Client | 1 |
| Aggressive P2P Client | 1 |
| Registered Copyrighted Content | 10 |
| Likely Child Sexual Content | 31 |

Point values are assigned as a connection to known P2P networks occurs. When the system knows that the contents of a file are copyright protected, the system assigns 10 points. When the system cannot identify the exact content of a file transfer but knows that the user is connected to a P2P network, the system assigns 1 point. If the transfer involves either a client that uses evasive techniques to hide the activity or aggressive techniques to improve download performance, the system assigns another point.

Because the University views the exchange of child pornography as particularly heinous, the system assigns 31 points.

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| P2P Punishment Levels |
| Level | **Points Threshold** | **Punishment** |
| 1 | 10 | 1 Hour ResNet Ban |
| 2 | 20 | 2 Week ResNet Ban |
| 3 | 40 | 3 Academic Month ResNet Ban |

For any of these penalties, the labs remain an option for the student to complete necessary coursework.

As a resident student passes the points thresholds listed above, he/she receives the associated penalty. Therefore, after receiving 11 or more points, the student will receive a one-hour ResNet ban. The student will not have access to the Internet on his/her computer for one hour. This one-hour ban serves as a warning.

After accumulating 21 or more points, the student will receive a two-week ban. Before ResNet service is restored, the student must meet with one of the ITS team responsible for ResNet to discuss the University’s P2P policy. At that time, the student must sign a form indicating that he/she understands and will comply with the University’s P2P policy. This 2-week ban will act as the student’s 2nd policy violation as described in the “Policy Violations” section above.

After accumulating 41 or more points, the student will receive a 3-month ResNet ban. If there are less than 3 months before the end of the academic year, the balance of the ban will carry over to the next academic year. This 3-month ban will act as the student’s 3rd policy violation as described in the “Policy Violations” section above.

Suspected child pornography will be reported to the Student Development and Safety and Security offices for their investigation.

Software installed on a student’s computer can perform file transfers without the student’s direction or knowledge. Such file transfers are not a valid excuse for accumulating points. The ITS department therefore recommends that P2P software be completely removed from the computer.

Copyright holders or their representatives also notify the University when infringement occurs. The notification takes the form of a cease-and-desist (C&D) order. The receipt of a C&D order constitutes a policy violation. Additionally, 10 points will be added to the resident student’s total unless the violation in question was already identified by the University’s P2P system.

Individuals involved in P2P activities may suffer additional consequences, such as lawsuits from copyright holders, viruses, spyware, or other malware infestation.

If you have a legitimate need for p2p downloading, there are clients for both torrent networks and standard p2p networks that have been deemed “acceptable.” If you have any questions about what would be acceptable, or what clients are acceptable, please contact Help Desk at x5454.

# Revision Notes

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Original Version # | Date of Revision | Revised By | Changes | New Version # |
|  | 12/16/09 | Michael Case | Original draft taken from IT Policy Guide | 1.0 |
|  | 2/8/2016 | Deb Hustin | College to University | 1.1 |
|  | 4/17/2016 | Michael Case | Update to Current |  |

# Important File Information

KEYWORDS: ITS Stationary;P2P;Policy;Peer-to-peer;Peer to Peer

TEMPLATE: ITS Stationary