

# **Midwest Institute**

## **Copyright Infringement and Computer Use/Sharing Policy**

Midwest Institute's Copyright Infringement and Computer Use/Sharing provides guidelines for the appropriate and inappropriate use of computing resources and file sharing, and provide guidelines to protect against copyright infringement. This policy is applicable to all PMI faculty, staff, students, alumni, and guests of the school.

### **Midwest Institute Computing Resources**

Computing resources include all computers, related equipment, software, data, and local area networks for which the school is responsible as well as networks throughout the world to which the school provides computer access. The computing resources of Midwest Institute are intended to be used for its programs of instruction, research and to conduct the legitimate business of the school. All users must have proper authorization for the use of the computing resources. Users are responsible for complying with all legal and ethical guidelines of Midwest Institute computing resources. Users have a responsibility to respect the privacy, copyrights, and intellectual property rights of others. All use must be in accordance with school policy and applicable state and federal laws. Unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, may result in civil and criminal liabilities to the parties involved.

### **Violations**

Violations include, but are not limited to, the use of computing resources to:

- harass, threaten, or cause harm to individuals, - interfere with the activities of others, and/or
- download or post material that is offensive, illegal, proprietary, and/or in violation of copyright laws.

In instances of copyright infringement or prohibited file sharing, Midwest Institute will take disciplinary action if there is evidence of one or more violations, which may include termination from the program and/or employment. For more information, see the website of the U.S. Copyright Office:  
[www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)

### **Sanctions**

Any responsible party not in compliance with copyright rules and regulations can face probation, termination and/or face sanctions in accordance with state and federal laws. Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). These rights include the right to reproduce or distribute a copyrighted work. In the file-sharing context, downloading or uploading substantial parts of a copyrighted work, without authority or permission, constitutes an infringement. Penalties for copyright infringement include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or "statutory" damages affixed at not less than \$750 and not more than \$30,000 per work infringed. For "willful" infringement, a court may award up to \$150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorneys' fees. For details, see Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505. Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 per offense.