

Important Note to Users of the University Commons Network

It is the policy of University Commons to maintain Internet access for its community to local, national, and international sources of information and to provide an atmosphere that encourages access to knowledge and sharing of information. Access to its high-speed network is a privilege and requires that each and every user accept responsibility to protect the network from abuse and disruption. All users have an obligation to use the network in a fair, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. See *Connecting to the Internet* (included in your move-in packet) for a full explanation of your responsibilities as a network user. Some important things to consider when using the University Commons Network (UCNet):

1. The network is designed to provide basic services to residents. This means that the network should be used for such activities as:
 - updates to your operating system and applications software
 - e-mail
 - viewing websites
 - viewing news videos (CNN, MSN, YouTube, etc.)
 - access to software products
 - downloading text files such as books, magazines and newspapers
 - sharing still photographs
 - music downloads (e.g., amazonMP3, Apple iTunes Music Store)
2. The network should not be used for any activity that has the potential to use more than your fair share of capacity. These applications can consume almost all of our bandwidth, leaving other residents with very slow or nonexistent access to the Internet. Examples:
 - Watching movies or TV shows (streaming video) via the internet
 - Movie or TV Show downloads
 - Video conferencing
 - Peer-to-Peer network downloads (e.g. bittorrents)
 - Using the Internet to make phone calls (Voice over IP, VoIP, Vonage, Skype); but see below
3. There are some special cases:
 - Connections to TiVo services via the network for program listings, service updates and other information are ok. However, movie downloads from Amazon or TV episodes streamed from Netflix will stress the network; hence these activities should be avoided.
 - VoIP: The main problem is that while a single VoIP user does not consume an inordinate amount of network capacity, multiple VoIP users can slow the network considerably. It's probably best to use VoIP as a supplement to your local service and limit its use to special cases such as international calls. VoIP video should definitely be avoided.
 - Streaming audio: Many of us enjoy listening to radio over the Internet. Unfortunately this is the same as downloading a file that never ends. In some ways streaming audio is less taxing on the network than VoIP since it is one-way. Nonetheless we have a situation that is similar to VoIP: no problems if only a few residents are listening but the more listeners, the slower the inbound network connections. So the answer is to limit Internet radio use to special situations, such as accessing content that we can't get over the air.

If the bulk of your Internet use falls into categories 2 and 3, you might want to consider paying for a higher level of Internet access through Comcast or AT&T. To provide some perspective on the effect of downloading video and audio content, here are some examples based on the current UCNet inbound Internet connection limit of 3,000,000 bits (~300,000 characters) per second. Times for download are approximate and assume best possible network conditions.

A 6 gigabyte movie	5.5 hours
Contents of a full DVD (4.6 gigabytes)	4.2 hours
Contents of a full CDROM (700 megabytes)	39 minutes
Typical YouTube video (1.4 megabytes)	5 seconds
Book (500,000 bytes)	2 seconds