Copyright in Online Education: Perspectives and Models

Concerns about copyright are an ongoing issue for instructors and librarians at colleges and universities. The resources below explore the changing landscape of copyright in academic settings, with particular attention to the role that technology plays in the use of intellectual property in higher education. Central to the effective and appropriate use of such materials in scholarship is understanding the difference between intellectual property and copyright, as explained in this article from Core Copyright.

Enabling and Developing Teaching Tools
(2015)

From the Columbia University Copyright Advisory Office, this web page provides guidelines to faculty about the use of various resources in teaching. The office’s main copyright page includes general information about copyright and resources for students.

Copyright for Educators & Librarians
(2014)

This Coursera course—hosted by Duke University, Emory University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—is designed to help instructors and librarians understand U.S. copyright law and how it can be used to facilitate, rather than hinder, teaching and learning.

University of Minnesota Libraries:
Copyright Information and Resources
(2014)

This web page is designed to help users answer two questions: “Can I use this?” and “What do I own?” Within each section are resources that explain copyright law, with links to more information. The page also links to a third set of general resources about copyright.

Course Rights in Cyberspace: Ownership Issues in Online Education (2012)

This paper from Stanford University discusses the copyright implications of the many changes in teaching and learning in higher education. It includes specific information about the ownership of content created for online education, as well as the rights of faculty and institutions.


This report from the Center for Media & Social Impact outlines best practices for educators to apply when interpreting Fair Use in teaching and learning. It approaches the issues from the perspective of educators and is part of a Fair Use website that addresses the issue from a higher level.


From the Association of Research Libraries, this web page introduces a report describing Fair Use for librarians in higher education, and it links to a detailed infographic about a set of best practices for academic and research libraries.


This handbook, published by the Association of College and Research Libraries, examines the impacts of technology on the relationship between intellectual property and academia, including copyright issues and how they apply to scholarship.