

retention and success rates are directly tied to how well faculty communicate with online students. Faculty are required to participate in discussion activities with their students.

Copyright

Understanding what copyright is, why it exists, and being able to effectively apply “fair use” guidelines for copyrighted materials used in a course are essential tools for any educator.

However, teaching online generally adds some additional challenging questions to the mix. To ensure faculty are provided with a clear and comprehensive overview of the topic, faculty are requested to read the shared Copyright 101 module created by BYU. “[Copyright 101](#)” is designed to:



- Increase faculty knowledge and understanding of copyright and licensing issues; and know what it means to say that someone owns the copyright to a creative work.
- Learn more about why copyright law exists and where it all started (the history of copyright).
- Know how to resolve basic copyright/licensing questions and when and who to ask for more help.
- Realize and respect the ethical/moral aspects involved in using materials protected by copyright.

- Be able to answer a variety of copyright questions and solve specific case studies.

The Teach Act: The Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002 extends an instructor’s legal use of copyrighted materials in online instruction at accredited nonprofit education institutions. Applying the TEACH Act is complex and relies on the instructor’s adherence to a specific set of criteria. Faculty are encouraged to speak directly with members of their own institution to understand if specific use of copyrighted materials in their online classes is within the guidelines of the TEACH Act. Faculty may find the resource, [The TEACH Act: How the Law Affects Online Instruction](#) created and shared by Florida State University helpful.

Creative Commons: Dialogue about the friction between copyright law and digital media has led to the development of Creative Commons. Creative Commons (CC) provides flexible copyright licenses that copyright owners may choose to apply to their work. The CC licenses grant more flexibility than traditional copyright but not as much as “public domain.” A work in the public domain may be used freely. A Creative Commons licensed work still requires the user to adhere to specific guidelines but may be as simple as “crediting the author.” The popularity of CC has resulted in the fostering of a culture of sharing, and there are now thousands of works online that faculty may use without violating copyright. If the instructor is seeking images or audio for a class, it is in the interest of the instructor to check for CC licensed work. The following link can be helpful in this regard: [“What is Creative Commons?”](#)