

**ASSOCIATIONS DISTRIBUTE COPYRIGHT POLICY GUIDE TO CAMPUSES**

Organizations representing higher education, research libraries, and publishers today encouraged colleges and universities across the nation to review their policies for complying with copyright law to ensure they are in line with recent legal and technological developments.

To help institutions carry out such reviews, the Association of American Universities (AAU), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Association of American University Presses (AAUP), and the Association of American Publishers (AAP) have written and distributed "Campus Copyright Rights & Responsibilities: A Basic Guide to Policy Considerations." The [document](#), which will also be made available on association Web sites, is intended to present a clear summary of copyright issues in the higher education setting that reflects university and college concerns as well as those of the publishing industry, with which they routinely interact. It has been endorsed by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Authors Guild.

The sponsoring groups stressed that the document issued today does not propose specific policies, but rather encourages colleges and universities to review existing policies. It provides information to facilitate that review, with the understanding that each campus is likely to have its own policies for complying with the law.

The sponsors noted that colleges and universities are significant producers of copyrighted materials – faculty members, staff, and students create a wide variety of copyrighted works, and many institutions operate university presses. Institutions of higher education are also significant users of such materials – in research, in the classroom, in libraries, and in creating new works. Although the underlying principles of copyright law have not changed substantially, the sponsoring groups developed the guide to help colleges and universities understand and adjust to substantial changes in the legal landscape resulting from a number of recent statutory amendments and court decisions.

“Developments in digital technologies have produced new ways to create and use copyrighted works, enhancing their availability and utility, while simultaneously increasing the potential risks of infringement to copyright owners,” they added. The new document notes the importance of adopting policies and actions that “limit the risk of institutional liability for copyright infringement by faculty, students, and other network users.”

Although stakeholders in copyright law interpret various provisions and principles differently, higher education associations, librarians, and publishers cooperated on the development of the guide in a good-faith effort to frame a common understanding of the law. They did not reach a consensus on every element of the law, but the document reflects broad areas of agreement and also notes areas of disagreement.

The authors noted that copyright law is intended to balance the incentives it provides to authors “to create new works that advance the public welfare through the proliferation of knowledge and ideas” with the need to ensure “the free flow of information and ideas.”

Limitations on copyright that protect certain uses of copyrighted works “are particularly important in the academic environment and several are specifically designed for nonprofit educational institutions,” they added.

AAU is an association of 62 leading public and private research universities, 60 in the U.S. and two in Canada, all distinguished by their strong programs of undergraduate and graduate education and research.

ARL is a nonprofit organization of 123 research libraries in North America. ARL influences the changing environment of scholarly communication and the public policies that affect research libraries and the communities they serve.

AAUP is an international association of 128 nonprofit scholarly publishers dedicated to the support of creative and effective scholarly communications.

AAP is the national trade organization of the U.S. book publishing industry. Its approximately 300 members include most of the major commercial book publishers in the United States, as well as smaller and non-profit publishers, university presses and scholarly societies. The protection of intellectual property rights in all media, the defense of intellectual freedom, and the promotion of reading and literacy are among AAP’s primary concerns.

The two organizations endorsing the document broadly represent higher education and authors.

ACE is the nation's unifying voice for higher education, representing approximately 1,800 accredited, degree-granting colleges and universities and higher education-related associations, organizations, and corporations.

The Authors Guild works on behalf of its members to lobby for free speech, copyrights and other issues of concern to authors and brings authors the latest news in the publishing industry.

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