The Constitutional purpose of copyright and the mission of higher education are the same: to “promote the Progress of Science and the useful Arts.” This mission requires balance between the interests of scholars, faculty, and students. Libraries Are... Champions for Academic Freedom and Balanced Copyright

Commercial actors are increasingly claiming to have the interests of the academic community at heart, and offering licensing products and web-based “education” that purport to assist scholars, faculty, and librarians in addressing copyright issues. The message is: “Copyright means constraints. From unnecessary limits on the use of third-party material in academic publications, which require authors always to obtain permission to use copyrighted text and images in academic publications, which threaten the development of powerful new search tools and the development of research techniques based on text mining. Block preservation in more durable formats of film, sound recordings, and books that could disappear. Perpetuate unsustainable publishing models that place journal articles and other academic resources out of reach for some institutions and the general public. Threaten the development of powerful new search tools and the development of research techniques based on text mining.

Three Academic Freedoms

The Freedom to Research using the widest possible variety of tools and sources, from novels to scholarly journals to data sets, free from unnecessary constraints. The Freedom to Teach and Learn without unreasonable limits on the use of third-party material as the subject of in-class and out-of-class study and discussion. The Freedom to Publish with the ability to quote from and comment upon existing works in appropriate ways.

Freedom to Research is at Stake

UNBALANCED COPYRIGHT COULD THREATEN ACADEMIC FREEDOM

- hobble works with contractual restrictions, digital locks, forcing access, and more.
- make knowledge harder to find, as many works quickly go out of print and become commercially unavailable.
- block preservation in more durable formats of film, sound recordings, and books that could disappear.
- perpetuate unsustainable publishing models that place journal articles and other academic resources out of reach for some institutions and the general public.
- threaten the development of powerful new search tools and the development of research techniques based on text mining.

Research libraries and their partners on campus are champions of that balance.

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Ways To Maintain A Balanced Copyright Ecosystem

1. Make the library a full partner in research, teaching, and publishing. Take advantage of the library and its copyright-savvy staff.
2. Be wary of commercial entities offering to replace the library’s services. Whether it’s copyright “education” or “on demand” document delivery, commercial actors are not acting with the core academic mission as a primary objective.
3. Seek out copyright information from neutral sources.
4. Help improve copyright. Libraries are on the front lines of the copyright debates in Washington, DC, and around the world. Follow these issues and call your representatives in Congress when you see that copyright is becoming unbalanced and academic freedom is at stake.

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