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Copyright Online Miniseries: A Flipped Learning Approach to Disseminating Copyright Knowledge to Subject Liaison Librarians

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Abstract

In the digital age copyright literacy is in high demand. The Association of College and Research Libraries included copyright literacy as a core component of information literacy for higher education in its *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, which explicitly describes an “information has value” component, including copyright knowledge. However, even at an institution fortunate enough to have a copyright librarian, that one person cannot attend every single information-literacy session on campus that is presented in affiliation with the library. Thus the copyright librarian must form bridges to the rest of campus, and one of the best ways to do so is through collaboration with subject liaison librarians. So far this article has not revealed any groundbreaking revelations—librarians collaborate frequently to make the best use of the talents and resources available to them. What is more novel is the suggestion made herein for copyright librarians to adopt the flipped learning model; in particular, to facilitate liaison sessions.

Keywords: Copyright, flipped learning, active learning, information literacy

Copyright Online Miniseries: A Flipped Learning Approach to Disseminating Copyright Knowledge to Subject Liaison Librarians

In the digital age copyright literacy is in high demand. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) included copyright literacy as a core component of information literacy for higher education in its *Framework*, which explicitly describes an “information has value” component, including copyright knowledge (ACRL, 2015). However, even at an institution fortunate enough to have a copyright librarian, that one person cannot attend every single information-literacy session on campus that is presented in affiliation with the library. Thus the copyright librarian must form bridges to the rest of campus, and one of the best ways to do so is through collaboration with subject liaison librarians. So far this article has not revealed any groundbreaking revelations—librarians collaborate frequently to make the best use of the talents and resources available to them. What is more novel is the suggestion made herein for copyright librarians to adopt the flipped learning model; in particular, to facilitate liaison sessions.

For many years the traditional model of training university students in the United States was the lecture-based teaching approach. In this model the professor would take on the role of the “sage on the stage” and the students would sit silently and take diligent notes (New Media Consortium, 2017). However, as educators studied the most effective learning methods this model began to shift (Hamden, McKnight, McKnight, & Arfstrom, 2013). The first shift was from passive learning, where the student sat and took notes, to active learning, where the student engaged with the learning material and other students through group work, activities, and exercises (Hao, 2016). The next shift was to flipped learning models, where active learning was no longer simply a portion of a classroom experience but instead the entire classroom experience (Hao, 2016). The term *flipped learning* derives from the acronym FLIP, which is comprised of the following four pillars: “Flexible environment, Learning culture, Intentional content, and Professional educator” (Hamden et al., 2013). In the flipped learning model the student receives the lecture portion of the professor’s presentation online through a prerecorded video and is then able to use the entire class meeting time to discuss deeper and more challenging questions relating to the course material with colleagues in groups (Hao, 2016). The professor, therefore, becomes a “guide on the side” who can help the students during the class time but is no longer there to lecture to the students (New Media Consortium, 2017). Academic librarians adopted this method of teaching and used it to teach information

literacy to students (Berg, 2018). But this method can also be used to “train the trainer” and, in particular, to train liaison librarians about copyright issues.

Training Program Development

When developing liaison training on copyright, the flipped learning model is ideal for at least three reasons. First, liaison librarians can actually be counted on to watch the videos in advance of class (in comparison with students enrolled in a course, who might skip the video due to time constraints or a lack of interest). Second, time with library colleagues in training is limited; thus, providing helpful content in a video could save time during the training session, allow for multiple viewings (both before and after the session), and even be made available to the general public through a public platform such as YouTube. If necessary for students to understand a particularly hard-to-grasp copyright concept, videos could even be played during a class session or referred to as additional or suggested materials when liaison librarians present to a given class. Third, the best way to learn copyright principles is through practice—by applying them to hypothetical situations and thinking through the outcomes. By using the flipped learning model, librarians could participate in more group work, sharing ideas and solutions together during training time rather than listening to a long lecture.

Training Video Creation

In order to effectuate a flipped learning classroom, some of the lecture content must be moved to an environment where training participants can access it on their own before the training meeting. This can involve readings, handouts, and video lectures. For this module the author created a brief video of a PowerPoint presentation with voiceover content. Best practice dictates that brief videos should be used and, ideally, the instructor should focus on one main topic per video lesson (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). When teaching on any topic in a flipped learning classroom, an instructor may choose to show a video created by another instructor. For the liaison copyright training sessions discussed herein, the author preferred to work with her own material. There are many different ways to create such videos, but the author used the software Camtasia.

Another necessary element of videos is creating a transcription of the content for closed captioning access for users with disabilities. There are generally a few ways to provide closed caption access to the videos. The first way to make the video accessible is to create a written script for the video before recording. Many professors find this helpful

when recording a video because it cuts down on the amount of recording missteps—such as the use of distracting filler words. If a person has a voice that is recognized easily by the computer software, then it may be simpler to have the computer program (such as Camtasia) conduct a voice recognition exercise whereby it provides captions for the video. Some editing is inevitable with this approach because the voice recognition function is not exact.

Once the video is completed a decision about where to host it will need to be made. The author chose to host videos on a public YouTube channel where anyone could access them, but many instructors choose a less public-facing approach, such as uploading the video to a course management system or to TechSmith's Screencast (which will host a small amount of video productions for free).

Preparation for the Training Session

After creating the video it is essential that training participants watch it prior to the training session. The trainer should email a reminder to workshop participants to watch the video in advance of the training. During the first five minutes of training an instructor may elect to answer any questions that participants have about the video. Participants could also be encouraged to email the instructor with any questions before the day of the training session.

The orientation or geography of the training classroom may need some tweaking to provide a good flipped classroom. The heart of any flipped classroom is a focus on hands-on engagement and group work, so from the beginning of the workshop it may be more effective to place participants in groups of three or four at separate stations comprised of individual tables (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Of course, not every library or classroom is equipped with movable furniture, so the classroom setup may be limited. Ideally, however, each group could use a separate workstation with four chairs around a table and a movable whiteboard for group work.

Training Session Structure

To best understand how flipping a copyright training session for a liaison librarian could work, consider the following example. In this example the copyright librarian is instructing liaison librarians about the face-to-face teaching exception to copyright under Section 110(1) of the Copyright Act (2012) in a thirty-minute training session. Under the old lecture model, the lesson plan would look something like the following:

- Introductions (5 minutes)
- PowerPoint lecture (10 minutes)
- Question & Answer period (10 minutes)
- Concluding session (5 minutes)

Note that one-third of the meeting time is pure lecture. No time at all is devoted to group work, discussion, and active learning exercises. However, if the lecture is removed and presented in an online video, such as in a five-minute YouTube video,¹ the new lesson plan would look more like the following:

- Introduction and review (5 minutes)
- Group work (10 minutes)
- Discuss group work (10 minutes)
- Conclude session (5 minutes)

Note that the introduction portion becomes more of a quick review of the online lesson, with the majority of the meeting time (20 minutes) devoted to group work and discussion. Thus, the librarians could work in small groups to go through hypothetical activities that ask them to apply their knowledge of the basic copyright principles to new factual scenarios. For instance, participants could be asked to analyze whether any of the following would be permissible to display during a face-to-face class meeting under the teaching exception to copyright:

- A full-length copy of the film *Kung Fu Panda* that the instructor personally owns.
- A full-length copy of the film *Kung Fu Panda* that the instructor checked out from the university library.
- A full-length copy of the film *Kung Fu Panda* streamed from a Netflix account.
 - The answers to these questions are that the first two are permissible while the last is not due to the terms of service agreement signed by the individual user with Netflix. This group work thus allows students to explore the contours of the face-to-face teaching exception as well as a new concept: the impact of licensing on copyright. Obviously, more and varying group activities could be used, but the temporal flexibility in the classroom afforded by flipping the teaching method is invaluable—especially if training participants appreciate active learning exercises.

¹You can find the YouTube video used in this example on my YouTube page by searching for “Sara Benson” on YouTube and looking for the video titled “Face to Face Teaching Copyright Exception.”

Assessment

This method was evaluated by providing a simulated copyright training session to seven liaison librarians at the University of Illinois Library. The participants were asked to watch the brief video about face-to-face teaching and were then provided with exercises to work through in a group. The participants were asked to provide written feedback in response to the following questions:

1. Was this method of learning useful? Why or why not?
2. How does this method of learning compare to the traditional lecture-style manner of learning? What are the benefits/drawbacks?
3. Could you see yourself using this method to teach students/faculty about copyright concepts?
4. Do you feel that you can accurately explain the face-to-face teaching exception to others now? Why or why not?

In response to the first question, participants universally found that the method was useful because they were able to better prepare for the session by watching the video, which made the session “more interesting and reinforcing” and allowed the participants to use the “practical scenario examples . . . to make it ‘real world.’” In response to the second question, the participants found many more benefits than drawbacks to the method. The benefits included the following:

- Active use of the session time
- Collaborative learning
- Direct engagement of the participants in the learning process during the session
- Providing the learner with more comfort discussing the content during the session
- More time for in-depth discussion during the session
- Attunement to different learning styles by using a video to grab the attention of the participants
- Convenience

The drawbacks included the following:

- Participants may not watch the video (or do the homework) and, as such, make the in-class discussion less useful.
- The video adds a preparatory work burden to the session participants.
- If the participants watch the video too soon they may forget the content before the session.

Generally it seems that the benefits outweigh the burdens, such as a short amount of homework prior to the session, and if participants are unable to watch the video before

the in-person session it could be played at the beginning of the session for review. In response to question three, all of the participants stated that they would use the method themselves and many indicated that having the YouTube video readily available was very helpful because they would like to use the video in their own training sessions. Finally, after the session participants generally felt comfortable explaining the face-to-face teaching exception to others, which demonstrates that they have learned the skill explained in the course materials.

While engaging in the flipped learning model for library training may not be for everyone, it is one more tool in the proverbial information-literacy toolbox that instructors can use. It may take some additional preparation time in terms of making the flipped instruction videos and exercises for use during the actual training period, but in the author's experience, along with the collective feedback from select liaison colleagues, the effort rewards a better learning experience for training participants.

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