**Information on Copyright for Thesis/Dissertation Advisors**

Copyright can be an issue both in cases (1) where your student is using material from another source, and (2) where your student is re-using their own material that has been published elsewhere.

1. Students should be aware of what constitutes “Fair Use” when using material that they did not write or create. Images, tables/figures, and long quotations are at risk of falling outside of the realm of “Fair Use.” For more information on Fair Use, students should visit the [website of the U.S. Copyright Office.](https://www.copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html)
2. Students should be aware of who holds the copyright on work they have published. If a portion of a student’s thesis or dissertation has appeared in journals or conference proceedings, then it is their responsibility to understand whether they hold the rights to reproduce, distribute, or copy that work. Encourage students to review agreed-upon publication terms and inquire about purchasing a license to distribute their work in [ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global](https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.rowan.edu/pqdtglobal/advanced/dissertations/fromDatabasesLayer?accountid=13605) and [Rowan Digital Works](http://rdw.rowan.edu/).

**Registering for Copyright Through ProQuest**

When a student submits their thesis or dissertation to ProQuest ETD for formatting review, [ProQuest](https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.rowan.edu/pqdtglobal/advanced/dissertations/fromDatabasesLayer?accountid=13605) will offer a fee-based option to register for copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office. This is not a requirement; by virtue of having created the work, they already own the copyright. Choosing to formally register copyright will allow them to pursue legal action if their copyright is violated. If they choose not to file using ProQuest, they can file directly through the [U.S. Copyright Office](https://www.copyright.gov/registration/) for a fee.

ProQuest also allows students to place an embargo on their work. An embargo is a set amount of time chosen by the student (usually 6 months, one year, or two years), during which their thesis or dissertation will not be made available to the public. They can choose to embargo both in ProQuest and Rowan Digital Works. Students should consider embargo if they plan to patent intellectual property or publish their thesis or dissertation in whole or in part.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

[Rowan’s Academic Integrity Policy](https://confluence.rowan.edu/display/POLICY/Academic+Integrity+Policy) states that plagiarism (using another’s ideas or words without acknowledging the source) or fabrication (false citation or falsifying data or information) in a thesis or dissertation is automatically elevated to a Level 4 violation, the sanctions for which include suspension and expulsion from the university.

**Two Additional Resources for Students:**

[Copyright and Your Dissertation or Thesis: Ownership, Fair Use, and Your Rights and Responsibilities](https://media2.proquest.com/documents/copyright_dissthesis_ownership.pdf)

This document explains what copyright means for a thesis or dissertation, both in protecting the student’s own work, and in making sure that the student’s work does not violate a copyright held by another party. It focuses on choices that students can make ahead of times to save their work from future copyright issues.

[Rowan University Libraries Copyright](https://libguides.rowan.edu/c.php?g=248016&p=2102274) LibGuide

This LibGuide developed by Rowan University Libraries houses links to information about registering a copyright, the University’s copyright policies, and copyright holder’s rights.