Copyright Quiz
For Graduate Students

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Welcome to the Copyright Quiz!

The Copyright Quiz is designed to test your copyright knowledge and to help you gain a better understanding of Canadian copyright law.

The information will be particularly beneficial if you are a UM graduate student working on your thesis.
Question 1

True or false?

If a work (for example, a photo, diagram, chart, or whole journal article) does not have the © copyright symbol, it’s not protected by copyright and I can add it to my thesis.
False.

In Canada, a work does not require the © copyright symbol to be protected. As soon as a work is in a fixed format (written or printed on paper, saved on a computer, posted to the web, painted on canvas, etc.), it’s copyrighted. However, because the © copyright symbol is required in some countries, it’s advisable to use it for your own works.
Question 2

True or false?

I can avoid obtaining copyright permission by modifying or adapting an existing work and using the modified version in my thesis.
False.

Only the copyright owner has the right to change a work. Adapting or modifying usually requires copyright clearance. Keep in mind that copyright protects the *expression* of an idea, not the idea itself. Therefore, creating your own *original* work based on an idea is acceptable – that’s why more than one work on any given topic exists – but changing a work likely requires permission.
Question 3

True or false?

A copyrighted work such as a chart, graph, diagram, figure, drawing, photograph or map can be copied to my thesis without permission if the image makes up less than 10% of all the images in the article or book or website that it came from.
Answer 3

True.

Works such as charts, graphs, diagrams, figures, drawings, maps or photographs are considered complete, stand-alone works. Fair Dealing allows you to use a fair amount of a copyrighted work without getting permission. A fair amount is often defined as 10% or less of a whole work.

For example, if you would like to take 2 figures from an article which contains only 9 figures, that would likely NOT be fair, as there are not that many figures in the whole article compared to how many you would like to copy to your thesis.

As another example, if you wanted to copy 4 photos from a website that had hundreds of photos, you’d likely be allowed to copy them (4 would be a fair amount).

When using an image, check the ORIGINAL SOURCE of the image to see how many other images are in the website, article, book, etc. This will help you determine whether your use falls within the 10% range and is fair or not.
Question 4

True or false?

If I express an idea or fact using my own words in my thesis, I’m not breaking copyright law.
Answer 4

True.

You have the right to paraphrase or express ideas and facts in your own words. Ideas and facts are not copyrighted – it’s the expression in tangible formats of those ideas and facts that are protected by law. However, you’re required to cite the source of the facts and ideas you express in your own words.
Question 5

True or false?

I can copy to my thesis a small portion of text from a copyrighted work without permission as long as I cite the source.
Answer 5

True.

You can copy a fair amount of text from a copyrighted work as long as you use quotation marks and include a citation.

Note that copyright clearance is required for copying to your thesis an amount that is *more than fair*. Fair is usually defined as 10% or less of a work. Copying the integral or crucial portion of a work (for example, the entire conclusion of a journal article) might be considered unfair. If in doubt, obtain permission.
Question 6

True or false?

A work from the public domain (where there is no copyright in the work) can be used in my thesis freely and without permission, even if I want to use more than 10% of it.
Answer 6

True.

Permission is not required to copy, adapt or distribute works from the public domain. Keep in mind that works publicly available in a library or on the web are not by definition in the public domain. The vast majority of material isn’t in the public domain.

Most works are protected by copyright in Canada for the life of the creator plus 50 years, at which point the work enters the public domain. Although this rule may seem straightforward, confusion arises when the work is re-published. For example, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* in its original form is in the public domain, but copyright to the 2003 edition of *Hamlet* published by Penguin Books with critical essays and footnotes is held by that publisher.
Question 7

True or false?

All Canadian government-issued publications are in the public domain.
False.

Government publications are not automatically in the public domain. However, most federal government documents (Crown works) and some provincial legislation and judicial decisions do not require permission to use in your thesis.

Some provincial and municipal government works are clearly marked as being freely available for copying. Check the source carefully to determine if permission is required for more than a fair amount. Note that even if permission is required, government offices rarely request copyright permission fees.
Question 8

True or false?

If a chart, photograph or article is on a website, I can copy it freely to my thesis because everything on the web is free for the taking.
Answer 8

False.

The vast majority of material on the web is not free nor in the public domain and therefore might require permission before copying. First determine whether your use of a work is fair or not.

An alternative to copying or obtaining permission for a work on the web is to provide the URL with the citation in your thesis.
Question 9

True or false?

I can add my own previously-published work to my thesis because, as the author of the previously-published work, I own the copyright to it and can do what I want with it.
Answer 9

False - probably.

Unless you negotiated with the publisher to retain copyright to your work, it’s likely that copyright was transferred to the publisher as part of your publication agreement. Check the publisher contract carefully.

If copyright was transferred to the publisher, you must obtain permission to copy more than a fair portion of the work to your thesis. You will also need to cite your own work.
True or false?

Canadian and U.S. copyright laws are the same.
Answer 10

False.

Copyright law in the United States is different than copyright law in Canada. For example, most works pass into the public domain 50 years after the author’s death in Canada while the term is 70 years in the U.S. The subtle differences between the “Fair Use” concept in the U.S. and the “Fair Dealing” concept in Canada is another example.

It is important to keep in mind that U.S. works used in Canada for your thesis are subject to the Canadian copyright rules.
Question 11

True or false?

Copyright rules for the web are the same as copyright rules for printed materials.
True.

Material on the web is generally treated the same way as printed material. There are in fact additional exemptions to the *Copyright Act* that make some online material even easier to use.

When uncertain about copying or obtaining permission for works on the web, a good alternative is to include in your thesis the URL with a citation instead.
Question 12

True or false?

Letters, emails and messages posted to newsgroups or blogs are copyright-protected.
True.

Most letters, emails and messages posted to newsgroups or blogs are considered literary works and are protected by copyright. The employer might own the copyright if the content was produced as part of someone’s job.
Question 13

True or false?

Purchasing a book gives me the right to copy it, purchasing software gives me the right to share it, and purchasing a video gives me the right to show it where I want.
False.

Purchasing a copyrighted work (owning the physical object) does not give you the right to copy it, share it or show it wherever you want. Only the copyright owner has those rights.
Question 14

True or false?

I’m allowed to make a back-up copy of computer software that I purchased.
True.

The owner of a legitimate copy of computer software has the right to make one back-up copy which must be destroyed as soon as s/he is no longer the owner of the software. Someone who borrows the software does not have this same right.
Question 15

True or false?

I have to apply to the Canadian government to have my thesis or my other works officially copyrighted.
False.

Copyright protection is automatic upon creation. Your thesis or any of your other works do not have to be registered to be protected. Theses are not usually registered.

However, a registered work may be easier to present in Court if your copyright was violated. Note that there is a fee to apply for registration of copyright.

You do not need to register a work to use the © copyright symbol, and it is good practice to use the © copyright symbol as a reminder to readers that the work is copyrighted.
Question 16

True or false?

I can add to my thesis more than 10% of the content from a work that has a Creative Commons licence without obtaining permission first.
True.

Any work that has a Creative Commons licence associated with it can be shared and distributed in whole or in part. Some works can even be adapted or used for commercial purposes if the licence allows it; check the licence details first. See the Creative Commons website for more information.
Question 17

True or false?

Obtaining permission to use a copyrighted work for my thesis is expensive and time-consuming.
False.

While there are exceptions, many publishers or rights holders grant permission to use copyrighted works in a thesis for free or for a low price. As well, many respond quickly to copyright requests sent via email or through their web-based forms.
Question 18

True or false?

When permission is required, I need the copyright owner’s signature in ink before I can use the work in my thesis.
False.

Permission granted via email is acceptable; a signature in ink is not required. Store permissions in your files indefinitely. Note that oral permission is not adequate.
Question 19

True or false?

As a teaching assistant, I can distribute to my students any amount of published articles, book chapters, etc. without permission as long as it’s for an educational purpose.
False.

The *Copyright Act* has allowances for educational purposes, including many that extend beyond Fair Dealing, but there are limits.

While the *Copyright Act*’s Fair Dealing provision applies to educational use, the use still has to pass the fairness test. See the University’s Copyright Guidelines from the Copyright Office website or contact the Copyright Office at um_copyright@umanitoba.ca to determine how much can be legally distributed (either digitally or on paper) for educational purposes.
Question 20

True or false?

As a teaching assistant, I can incorporate charts, maps, photographs, diagrams, figures, drawings, etc. into my PowerPoint slides and display them in a classroom without permission.
Answer 20

True.

The *Copyright Act* allows an instructor to project or display copyrighted works on a screen for in-class teaching without copyright permission. Instructors are also allowed to distribute, either digitally or on paper, a fair amount of copyrighted material for educational purposes.
Need clarification or more information?

Contact the University of Manitoba Copyright Office at
um_copyright@umanitoba.ca
204-474-9607
201 Allen Building
http://umanitoba.ca/copyright/

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