

June 5, 2020

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

As we continue to plan for the return of residential classes this fall, the health and safety of our campus and Central New York community remains our highest priority. As referenced in Chancellor Syverud's May 20 announcement regarding the [University's accelerated academic calendar for the Fall 2020 semester](#), faculty members will need to be prepared to offer most in-person classes simultaneously in an online or other virtual format to accommodate the individual health circumstances of students and faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are extraordinary times, and I am aware that faculty members have raised questions about ownership and use of course content. I want to assure you that faculty rights under the University's policy on the [Ownership and Management of Intellectual Property](#) ("IP Policy") have not changed, and the University does not intend to assert any ownership over the residential course content you adapt for remote delivery during the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters due to COVID-19-related exigencies.

I encourage you to refer to the Frequently Asked Questions below for further information. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact Peter Vanable at pvanable@syr.edu.

My office will initiate a broader conversation regarding other online course content and intellectual property rights through the University Senate and other faculty channels.

Thank you for your continued hard work and flexibility as we navigate through this unprecedented and challenging time.

Sincerely,

John Liu
Interim Vice Chancellor and Provost

Frequently Asked Questions

Ownership of Residential Course Content Delivered In-Person and/or Remotely During the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. Where can I find the University's IP Policy?

The IP policy can be found in Section 3.23 of the [Faculty Manual](#).

2. What does the University's IP Policy say with respect to ownership of course content?

Generally speaking, the IP Policy provides that faculty members own their course content, except in certain narrow circumstances outlined in the policy that will not be applied to the residential course content you adapt for remote delivery during the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters due to COVID-19-related exigencies ("COVID-19 Adapted Course Content"). As the owner of this content, you are free to reuse, repurpose or share it at your discretion, including for purposes not related to the University.

3. Can the University use my COVID-19 Adapted Course Content without my consent?

No. The University will not reuse your COVID-19 Adapted Course Content without your consent.

4. What if I am unable to finish teaching a course during the pandemic?

In order to ensure the continuity of learning for our students, faculty members will be asked to share their course content with any faculty member who is asked to fill in (for the sole purpose of completing the course). At the end of the semester, all videos and other materials must be returned to the faculty member who owns them.

5. What steps can I take to protect my COVID-19 Adapted Course Content from being used by others without my permission?

- Use Blackboard or another platform that is only accessible to students enrolled in your course or is password protected.

- Advise students that you own your course content and they may not reuse or share it without your permission or except as otherwise allowed under U.S. copyright law. You can do this in your first class meeting, on your course website or in your syllabus.
- Include the following language in the header or footer of your course materials: “© [Faculty Name] [Year]. This content is protected and may not be shared, uploaded or distributed without prior approval.” Note: websites like CourseHero may filter out content that includes this language.
- If your course content has been uploaded to CourseHero or a similar website, follow the website’s instructions to send a takedown request. Instructions are usually located in the website’s copyright policy at the bottom of the webpage. (e.g. CourseHero: coursehero.com/copyright/).
- If your course content has been uploaded to CourseHero or a similar website, or shared with other individuals without your permission, it may constitute a violation of the University’s [Academic Integrity Policy](#) or [Code of Student Conduct](#). Please contact the Center for Learning and Student Success and/or the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for further guidance.