

From: message@ubc.ca [mailto:message@ubc.ca]
Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2010 11:08 AM
To: ubc-v@broadcast.ubc.ca
Subject: UBC Broadcast E-mail: Access Copyright

The following message is sent on behalf of Wes Pue, Vice Provost (Academic Resources), and is intended for faculty, staff and students at the UBC Vancouver campus. Members of the UBC community will have heard about proposed increases in fees charged by Access Copyright. Following is a back-grounder and statement of UBC's current position.

Background

Access Copyright (AC), an organization that collects copyright fees for publishers from postsecondary institutions, has proposed dramatic fee increases.

These fees are payable by universities for copying material from scholarly journals, textbooks, and other materials. Until recently, it was economically feasible for universities to pay a fee to AC and thereby avoid the cost of seeking individual copyright clearance directly from each publisher.

UBC currently pays AC fees amounting to \$650,000 a year of which \$150,000 is subsidized from UBC's general operating funds and \$500,000 a year is built into the cost of course packs which are purchased by students. AC has applied to the Copyright Board of Canada for approval of a new tariff that would increase these costs to \$2 million.

The tariff proposed by AC for January 1, 2011, will create unacceptable cost burdens to student and institutional budgets alike.

UBC's Position

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), on behalf of UBC and its other member universities, is opposing the size of the increase. However, a final determination by the Copyright Board of Canada is likely to take two years or more. Although the full impact cannot be known until this process is complete, the effect on students, faculty, and the university budget will be considerable.

At present:

1. It is clear that the upcoming changes in AC arrangements will have very serious financial impact on the university.
2. The University is actively considering a range of options to mitigate the financial burden while ensuring a transition to new practices that is as painless as possible for students and faculty.
3. While the University is doing this, faculty and students are not being asked to take any special measures and they may proceed as if previous Access Copyright arrangements remain in place. The University is managing the implications of doing so for the time being.
4. UBC will support AUCC in opposing the severity of the fee increase, even as it explores other options.

We will provide you with an update when further information becomes available. For questions or comments on these important matters, please contact ingrid.parent@ubc.ca