

Guide for Student Groups

Showing Movies on Campus



Does your student group want to show a movie on campus? Are you showing the movie for entertainment or fundraising purposes? If yes, be aware that you have **copyright obligations** to consider prior to hosting your event.

Entertainment or Fundraising

YES – licence required

A student group showing a movie on campus for fundraising and/or entertainment purposes is responsible for ensuring they have secured the performance rights for that movie in advance of hosting their event.

Securing a Licence

The group will first need to determine who holds the performance rights for the film they wish to show on campus. In Canada, the performance rights for most feature films and many documentaries are held by one of two non-theatrical film rights representatives: Audio Cine Films or Criterion Pictures.

- Step 1: Go to the websites for each collective and locate their online database
- Step 2: Enter the title of the movie you wish to show in the search bar
- Step 3: Follow the instructions on the site on how to request a licence
- Step 4: Pay the licensing fee as directed

If neither of the two collectives holds the rights to the title of the movie you wish to show, you will need to contact the copyright holder directly for permission to show that movie on campus.

Education and Instruction-Related

NO – licence not required

In some cases, classmates or student groups showing a movie may not require a licence if their purpose for doing so qualifies under an exception for educational institutions set out in the *Copyright Act*. Under this exception, persons acting under the University's authority may show a legally acquired movie (e.g. borrowed, purchased, rented) for an educational or training purpose, as long as the event is not for profit and the audience consists primarily of UA students, instructors acting under authority of the institution, or any person who is directly responsible for setting its curriculum.

Example 1: An instructor places a movie on reserve in the library and assigns it to her students to view outside regularly scheduled class time. A group of classmates decides to watch the movie together, so

Search by Title at:

- ❖ **Audio Cine Films** – <http://www.acf-film.com>
- ❖ **Criterion Pictures** – <http://www.criterionpic.com>

or

- ❖ **Other movie titles** – Search online for studio contact information or for movie website. Initiate contact or “request a screening”.

they schedule a room in the library where they gather to watch the film. In this example the criteria set out in the *Copyright Act* have been met:

- the performance is authorized by their instructor;
- the movie is legally acquired;
- the purpose is education/instruction;
- no profit is made;
- only students in the class are in attendance, and
- the event takes place on campus in the library.

Example 2: A student language club wishes to host a movie night for their members. They want to show a movie for the purpose of advancing their understanding of the language they are studying. A faculty member agrees to authorize the performance after confirming the club’s intent and real purpose for hosting the event is tied to a learning objective. The student club must ensure they do not charge admission to their event and must restrict entrance to members and their guests only, keeping in mind the majority of attendees must be UA students, instructors, or persons responsible for setting curriculum. In this example the criteria set out in the *Copyright Act* have been met.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do we need a licence to show movies we borrow from UA Libraries?

Maybe. Some movies in the UA Libraries’ collection were purchased with public performance rights, but many were not. To check whether a film was purchased with public performance rights, look at the outside cover to see if it is the “educational” version or a version with “public performance rights”. If yes, the movie may be shown on campus. If not, or if the movie indicates it is for “home use” only, then you will need to secure a licence. When in doubt, consult a Librarian.

2. How long does it take to get a licence?

If you are working with either Criterion Pictures or Audio Cine Films the timeframe for arranging a licence is usually one week or less. However, the timeframe may vary depending on how busy they are. If you require immediate assistance, telephone them directly to discuss your licensing needs. When contacting the copyright owner directly, allow 6-8 weeks prior to your event, as response times do vary.

3. Is it okay to advertise our event?

It depends. When you purchase a licence you will need to inquire with Audio Cine Films or Criterion Pictures whether there are any restrictions on advertising. If you are intending to show a movie under the educational/instructional purposes exception, then you should limit your advertising to club members or your classmates only.

Other questions?

Contact the Copyright Help Desk by email at copyright@ualberta.ca