How to build a Creative Commons License

A detailed breakdown of the components for licensing creative works through Creative Commons

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Purpose and Intent:

A Creative Commons license can be useful in a small academic setting to provide

• For granting use to written works posted on a college website for student use and application

• Permissions for instructors creating specific course related materials posted to the web or a learning management system

• Reuse of certain promotional material or other design work as publicity for the institution

• Information literacy education on the use of copyrighted works
Licenses are built upon a 3-layer foundation

- Creative Commons licenses all have 3 basic foundational elements:
  - The base layer is the **Legal Code** which includes language used in a country’s legal system to explain what the licenses purpose and intent, use, exceptions and limitations are.
  - A **Human Readable** layer includes common language explanations of how licenses work and what they can or cannot do for a creator. Here Icons are used for ease of identification.
  - The top layer is a **Machine Readable** layer allowing terms of licenses to be read and promoted in use by websites and through web services.
Licenses include 4 elements

- **Attribution** - or BY is included in all licenses and requires a user of a creative work to give credit to the creator.

- **Non-Commercial** - or NC permits use of a creative work only for non-commercial purposes (use of this creative work cannot be used to make money from)

- **Share-Alike** - or SA means that the creative work can be used but the user must attach the same CC license as the creator has applied to the work.

- **No Derivatives** - ND indicates that adaptations to the creative work may not be shared, in other words, adaptations can be created but not publicly posted.
The 6 license types

CC-BY requires attribution to the creator – it is the most open license to use.

BY-SA means a creator asks for attribution and any reuse must be given the Share-Alike license.

BY-NC means that attribution to a creator is required and use may not be for commercial purposes.

BY-NC-SA requires attribution, for non-commercial use only, and when used must include the Share-Alike license.

BY-ND includes attributing the creator for use and not adapting any part of the work.

BY-NC-ND states that attribution to the creator is given, no commercial use, and no adaptations or derivatives.
How CC licenses affect exceptions and limitations to copyright:

- CC licenses only apply when copyright applies to a creative work.
- When an exception or limitation to copyright applies, such as fair use, fair trading, or other law, CC licenses do not apply.
- When a work is entered into the public domain CC licenses do not apply or are no longer necessary. Works in the public domain do not fall under copyright law.
- CC licenses apply when a creator wants to give a user, viewer, reader, listener permission to freely copy, use, adapt, or redistribute a creative work.

“CC licenses are copyright licenses”

Unit 3.2, Creative Commons Certification Course.
Creative Commons licenses offer a CC0 (CC zero) option for users who want to register their work in the Public Domain.

- Other laws may yet apply to a work that a creator wants to include in the public domain.
- The 3-layer design of the legal code, human readable symbol and description (right), and a machine-readable approach is also used in the public domain.

A creator who wishes to waive all rights, including attribution, to a work which fall under copyright may dedicate the work to the public domain.