



Share and Adapt Course Content!

What if you could now adapt, revise, and reuse the content found in this course to further build and grow your own professional learning community? Thanks to the MIT Teaching System Lab's use of a Creative Commons open license, you can!

What is Creative Commons?

Creative Commons (CC) is a non-profit organization that promotes the free sharing of creative work such as music, educational resources, images, and databases through the use of copyright licenses. Unlike traditional "all rights reserved" copyright licenses, the CC licenses allow the originator of any work to clearly define how the material will be shared and remixed. In other words, the originator (the licensor) can define what rights are reserved and what rights are allowed by the user (the licensee). Read more about the different licenses [here](#).

What is an example of how teachers have adapted or remixed content using a CC license?

Joanna, a biology teacher in North Carolina has been taking advantage of CC licenses for many years, primarily through the OER Commons platform, an online library targeted specifically for open educational resources (OER) and other freely available instructional materials. The [OER Commons](#) platform allows anyone the ability to find free resources and then adapt them to their own needs, per the applicable CC license provided by the originator of the content. Here's how she describes how she takes advantage of the CC licensed material on this platform:

For many teachers, our job includes the complex task of choosing meaningful assignments to help students reach a learning goal. Taking advantage of OER [under CC licenses] gives the teacher a wider pool of high quality, standard aligned curricular materials to teachers for free and with the specific intent of encouraging teachers to modify the resources for their own student context and then share them with other teachers in our same grade level and field of study. When teachers collaborate to build and then share such resources, we end up not only helping our own teaching and learning practices, but also contribute to a final product that is much richer than the sum of the individual parts. That helps us all as a profession.

What license is this course using?

This course's content is officially using the Attribution 4.0 International License - aka "CC BY 4.0." This license allows the free sharing and adaptation of the course content, as long as the user gives appropriate credit to the originator (MIT Teaching Systems Lab), provides a link to the license, and indicates if changes were made to the content. This license means that you have the ability to copy and redistribute the course content in any medium or format and the ability to remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, including commercial use. The only thing you cannot do is add additional restrictions to the subsequent work.

Why should you care? What could CC and specifically this license mean to you?

Unlike the content found in many online platforms, especially ones that use a pay to play model, all of the content in this course is available for sharing, remixing, and reuse in any way you wish, as long as you attribute the work and then link to the CC BY 4.0 license with no further restrictions. This means, for example, that if you find something in the course that you think would be of interest to others, you can take the item, revise it as necessary, and then use it in the manner you see fit, as long as you attribute it and include the CC BY 4.0 license. In other words, you can thak the high quality content from this course and modify it for use in your own professional learning community. How cool is that?!

How do I attribute course content?

Here's an example that shows how easy it is to remix and cite work from these courses:

Aria sees an image in her online course that she thinks would help provide a boost to her professional learning network with their work on student collaboration. She inserts the image into a digital training document she is developing for her colleagues and cites the image in the following manner: “Graduate Profile Comic” by MIT Teaching Systems Lab is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Notice that Aria included the image title, the author/originator of the work, the source (in this case, the same as the originator), and the specific license. Where possible, you should provide actual links in the citation that refer back to the original work, author, and the actual license. More examples can be found [here](#).

Still have questions?

Refer to the [Creative Commons website](#) for a more detailed overview of how each license works and take a look at this series of videos and comics that provide other examples of how you can use CC licenses to improve your own work.