Navigating the information universe: some useful links.

Legal aspects:

See “A students’ guide to Copyright and Fair Use” at:


This is put out by the university’s Office of Technology Management and dates back to 2008 so clearly isn’t completely up to date: but it’s a good starting point.

The US Government’s Copyright Office – www.copyright.gov – also has links to useful sites, including the text of the current laws governing copyright, and a “Frequently Asked Questions” area.

Plagiarism resources:

The University Library has a useful page, at:

http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/research/academicintegrity.html

Getting copyright permissions:

This is something that can be particularly difficult for music students who wish to use extracts from actual pieces of music (by other people) in their dissertations. Companies like ProQuest Digital Dissertations now expect the writer of the thesis/dissertation to provide permission letters for all copyright (or potential copyright) materials. This can cause particular problems in the following areas:

(1) Getting permissions to use extracts from pop genres such as rock/hip-hop/rap. The worldwide market for pop score publication is mainly controlled by only four or five companies (such as Warner Chappell, Sony Music, and Universal Music Group) and it’s difficult to get them to pay attention to your request for copyright permission, even if you spend lots of time on their website. Unfortunately, you *do* have to make the effort, so make sure you leave lots of time for this – don’t wait until the last minute before submission of your dissertation/thesis before thinking about getting permissions!

(2) Getting permissions to use extracts from film music scores. The big film studios really aren’t that interested in small issues such as letting you use an extract from a film score in your thesis. But again, you have to make an appropriate amount of effort to get permissions.

(3) Problems with publishers having been taken over, gone out of business, etc. This means that it’s not always easy even to know who currently owns the rights to a particular piece of music. This issue particularly affects pieces of classical music. Several sites can help you with addresses and other contact
details of music publishers. But do *not* assume that all of them have a website, or will respond to e-mail the same day as you contact them – again, make time to get copyright permissions, and don’t leave it until the last minute.

Some sites of publisher information (some pop, mainly classical):


Music Publishers’ Association Directory of Music Publishers, and Directory of Publisher Imprints, at http://www.mpa.org/content/directories (mainly US)

International Confederation of Music Publishers, at www.icmp-ciem.org

Wikipedia can also be a useful source for learning about the history of now-defunct music publishers, which may help in tracking their copyrights.

The library can sometimes help you track down copyright holders, so please contact us if you think we can help. Don’t forget ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers – www.Ascap.com) and BMI (Broadcast Music Inc – www.bmi.com) can also sometimes help in tracking down contact details for living composers and artists.

Submitting your dissertation:

University of Illinois Thesis Office (part of the Graduate College) website at:

http://www.grad.illinois.edu/thesis-dissertation

See also their “Thesis frequently asked questions (FAQs) site at:

http://www.grad.illinois.edu/thesis-faqs

www.ideals.illinois.edu. All doctoral theses and dissertations submitted through the U of I Graduate College since Fall 2010 are deposited in IDEALS. DMA “projects”, which do not go through the Graduate College, are not automatically deposited in IDEALS, but you can, if you wish, deposit into IDEALS yourself. IDEALS is the University of Illinois’s “institutional repository”.

“Submitting your dissertation or thesis to ProQuest” site at: