The electronic availability of documents changes beginning on 1 January 2017

Dear Sir or Madam,

dear colleagues,

Due to upcoming changes in the German Urheberrecht UrhG (copyright law), providing students and research partners with documents will be further restricted. Ulm University decided not to accede to the framework contract negotiated between the Verwertungsgesellschaft Wort (VG Wort) and the Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK, Conference of the German Ministers of Education & Cultural Affairs). The University acts on the recommendations of numerous national committees.

As a result of this decision we can no longer provide electronic access to documents in accordance with § 52a UrhG („Öffentliche Zugänglichmachung für Unterricht und Forschung“ “Making teaching and research available to the public”) beginning on 1 January 2017 until further notice. These regulations used to allow teaching staff to digitally provide excerpts from copyright protected sources via platforms such as our teaching and learning platform moodle. Until now, the holders of the copyright have been paid a lump sum but this will no longer be possible as of 1 January 2017.

This means: we can only provide scans of so-called small parts of printed works (especially of printed journal articles or small parts of printed books) via platforms such as moodle until 31 December 2016.

University teachers must delete all electronic documents from moodle and other platforms that were made accessible in accordance with § 52a UrhG no later than 31 December 2016. After this date, new documents must not be uploaded in accordance with § 52a UrhG.

This does not apply to digital or open access documents in the public domain. Linking to works the university or you as a lecturer have acquired the rights for (for example: electronic journals or ebooks) is also still possible. Using the conventional semester reserve shelves (for printed books and master copies) is another option to provide your students with literature.
We deeply regret that this change will complicate the work of our teaching staff and students considerably. Ulm University, jointly with other institutions, will work towards improving the situation to ensure that we can provide and enhance digital teaching as usual.

If you have questions and concerns, please contact our support staff at 52a@uni-ulm.de.

signed:

Prof. Dr. Irene Bouw
Vice President for Teaching and International Affairs