Commercial films, videotapes, and DVDs have copyrights that restrict the manner in which they can be shown. The standard used to determine whether permission is required from the copyright holder is most commonly referred to as “Fair Use”.

The conditions that support Fair Use of video work and most likely do not require a license are: teaching, in the classroom and for a specific course; or personal, such as a “home” viewing, which can include in a residence hall.

Uses that not fall within fair use and require a license are entertainment, any “public” viewing outside of the definition of “home” viewing such as the Student Center, Howard Auditorium, or classroom outside of a course meeting. Any screening where an admission is charged (including a “home” screening) must have a license for public performance. Even with a public license, you can only advertise to the ABAC community unless express permission is received from the issuing organization to advertise to the public.

There are several ways to obtain a public performance license or right:

- Rent the film from a distributor. The Dean of Students Office has catalogs you may consult.
- Purchase a copy of the movie that comes with public performance rights.
- Get written public performance rights from the copyright holder. A letter from the company, filmmaker, producer, or director of the film is acceptable for this purpose. Please ensure that the letter contains all relevant information, is sent six (6) weeks prior to event, that two copies of the letter are sent, and that a self-addressed stamped envelope is included.

Upon receipt of a copy of the public performance permission or license, the Dean of Students Office will approve screening events and publicity.

It is imperative that the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College community comply with these guidelines. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Bernice Hughes at 229.391.5130 or bhughes@abac.edu. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding in this matter.

*The Copyright Act of 1976 defines “public” in this context as “any place where a substantial number of persons outside of a normal circle of a family and its social acquaintances is gathered.”*