

Flipping my Classroom: Revamping the 1L Research Curriculum

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Why reconsider the research curriculum?



What is Information Literacy?

- **The set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze and use information.**
- Ellie Margolis and Kristen Murray, *Say Goodbye to the Books: Information Literacy as the New Legal Research Paradigm*, 38 U. Dayton L. Rev. 117 (2013)

5 Basic Competencies

- Know
- Access
- Evaluate
- Use
- Ethical/Legal

Teaching Research Under an Information Literacy Model

Five Principles

1. Reframe the goal of teaching legal research.
2. Focus on evaluating, not finding.
3. Move away from linear research plans.
4. Reframe what it means to “learn by doing.”
5. Rethink traditional approaches to the first year course.

Old Research Curriculum

- Introduction during Orientation
- Variations on the same problem over the year (LRW I and II)
- Research Report #1: group research project; structured questions; includes books
- Research Report #2: individual project; structured questions
- CALR training through vendors

Bibliographic Research Assignment

1. Generating Search Terms

Using the client interview notes (and without looking at any legal authority), take a few minutes to brainstorm as a group, and generate a list of terms and phrases you think will lead you to the relevant area of law. List the terms below:

2. Background Research

As you learn more about the law (and perhaps become expert in certain fields), generating search terms for a particular set of facts will become easier. Because you likely know little about this area of the law, it makes sense to start your research in a secondary source.

A. ALR

American Law Reports is a resource that collects and summarizes cases that relate to a particular topic or issue. These entries can be especially helpful at the outset of your research because they provide an overview of your topic (although not one that is specific to the particular jurisdiction). Using your evolving list of search terms, go to the third floor of the library and use the ALR Index or ALR Digest to find the entry that is relevant to the facts for the first assignment. Briefly describe your experience trying to find this entry.

- i. What is the proper ALWD citation for this annotation? (Hint: See Rule 24.0)
- ii. Using ALWD form, list one Illinois case cited within the annotation. (Hint: See Rule 12.0)

B. Other secondary sources

Choose a secondary source database on **two** of the fee-based services and try to find a **different** secondary source (law journal article, legal encyclopedia, treatise, practice guide) on this topic. Briefly describe your experience conducting this search, and how it compared to your search in the ALR.

C. Internet Research

Take some of your search terms and what other information you know about the case, and conduct **three** internet searches to try to learn more about this area of the law. List your search terms and the search engines you used below, and briefly describe your experience using the internet to try to find some background information.

Info Lit Research Assignment

2. Google – Try a search on Google. What did you find?

Info Lit Research Assignment

1. **Search Terms**
 - A. List all of the search terms and search strings your group used.
 - B. Which of these terms turned out to be the most useful for your research? Why?
2. **Google** – Try a search on [Google](#). What did you find?
3. **Content-driven Search** (See Sloane, ch. 3) – Try at least two content-driven searches on both [WestlawNext](#) and Lexis Advance. Identify your search terms and describe the process and results.
4. **Source-driven Search** (See Sloane, ch. 3) – Try at least two source-driven searches using any two of [Westlaw.com](#), [WestlawNext](#), [Lexis.com](#) or Lexis Advance. Identify your search terms and describe the process and results.

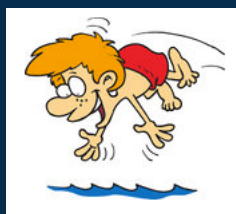
New Research Curriculum

- No more print research, even during Intro
- New assignment with more research components
- Open-ended research report questions incorporating free resources
- “Research Labs” throughout both semesters
 - Including in-class CALR training
- Culminating in-class “exam” on research, citation, hierarchy of authority

Questions to Ask

- Is it law?
- If it's law, is it *my* law?
- If it's my law, is it *useful* law?
- If it's not law, or not *my* law, is it useful in some other way?
- Is it *credible*?
- Is it *permanent*?

Before....



...After