

Law Librarianship LIS 641

Summer 2022

School of Library and Information Services

University of Kentucky

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Virtual Office Hours

By appointment (given the asynchronous nature of the course, but I'll try to be accommodating)

Zoom office link: <https://uky.zoom.us/j/5706310755>

Required Text/Course Page

There is no required text purchase for this course. Instead, assigned readings will come primarily from a free, open-source textbook, *The Sources of American Law: an Introduction to Legal Research*, with various journal articles as supplementary readings. All readings will be distributed via the course Canvas page. The Canvas page will also be used to host course videos, discussion boards, and assignments.

Course Grading

The course will be divided into two major parts. The first five weeks of the course will explore the legal information ecosystem and how its unique organization affects the retrieval of legal information. During this part of the course, students will participate in weekly discussions primarily centered around the retrieval and the description of an information object. Part one will conclude with an untimed assignment for which students will gather resources to answer a hypothetical legal reference question. The second three weeks of the course will explore current issues in legal information practice. During the second part, students will participate in online discussions based on the assigned readings. Part two will conclude with a reflection paper on an issue of interest currently impacting the law library profession as identified in the course readings. The grading breakdown will be as follows:

Discussion Board Participation – 50%

Hypothetical Reference Assignment – 25%

Reflection Paper – 25%

Letter grading will follow the scale of the SLIS:

- 90 - 100% = A
- 80 – 89.9% = B
- 70 – 79.9% = C
- Below 70%= E

Rubrics used to grade the hypothetical reference assignment and the reflection paper will be distributed with the prompts for each assignment.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the legal information ecosystem in the United States.
- Assess how communities and individuals interact with legal information in the United States.
- Develop strategies for connecting communities and individuals with appropriate legal information resources.
- Describe the historical development of information systems unique to the legal field.
- Assess how retrieval of legal information even in the digital age depends on the print-based systems originally designed to organize legal information.
- Evaluate the different types of law libraries, the different roles played by law librarians, and the various challenges currently facing the legal information profession.

Course Schedule:

Week One (6/21¹ – 6/26) – Introduction to the U.S. Legal System

Class Objectives:

- Describe the U.S. Legal System and its resulting information ecosystem
- Assess various governmental bodies' roles as publishers of legal information
- Differentiate between primary legal information and secondary legal information

Assigned Reading:

- *Sources of American Law* chapter 1

Canvas Assignments:

- Watch course videos.
- Participate in class discussion boards: Interest in Law Librarianship; Sources of Law as Information Objects

¹ The University of Kentucky will observe Juneteenth on Monday 6/20, so this week will begin on Tuesday.

Week Two (6/27 – 7/3) – Case “Reporting” and Researching Common Law Precedents

Class Objectives:

- Assess the importance of being able to find judicial opinions to meet users’ legal information needs.
- Describe the historical publication of cases and evaluate the system that evolved for organizing the legal information found therein.
- Evaluate the extent to which the retrieval of judicial opinions continues to depend on the unique organization system developed for print even in computer-assisted legal research.
- Evaluate ways in which computer-assisted legal research allows lawyers to expand research in ways not possible using print sources.
- Assess the utility of judicial records beyond officially published opinions and identify how organization of this material differs from that of published opinions.

Assigned Reading:

- *Sources of American Law* chapter 4
- Michael O. Eshleman, “A History of the Digests,” 110 *Law Library Journal* 235 (2018)

Canvas Assignments:

- Watch course videos.
- Participate in class discussion board: Case Research.

Week Three (7/5² – 7/10) – Statutes, Codes, & Legislative Histories

Class Objectives:

- Describe the legislative process and identify the different types of publications that result from different steps of the process.
- Assess the situationally dependent utility of the various types of statutory publications.
- Evaluate the extent to which electronic publication of legislative materials both correlates to and varies from traditional print publication of the same materials.

Assigned Reading:

- *Sources of American Law* chapter 3
- Mary Whisner, “The United States Code, Prima Facie Evidence, and Positive Law,” 101 *Law Library Journal* 545 (2009)

Canvas Assignments:

- Watch course videos.
- Participate in class discussion board: Statutory Research.

² The University of Kentucky will observe Independence Day on Monday, 7/4, so this week will begin on Tuesday.

Week Four (7/11 – 7/17) – Regulatory Materials & Administrative Publications

Class Objectives:

- Describe the development of the “notice and comment” system of regulatory publication.
- Assess the extent to which the government uses publications as a means of satisfying due process.
- Evaluate the myriad publications produced by administrative departments and agencies and assess the how such “administrative guidance” may be used to satisfy the legal information needs of communities and individuals.
- Assess agency websites as sources of administrative guidance.

Assigned Reading:

- *Sources of American Law* chapter 5

Canvas Assignments:

- Watch course videos.
- Participate in class discussion board: Administrative Research.
- **Hypothetical Reference Assignment posted – Due 7/24.**

Week Five (7/18 – 7/24) – Secondary Sources and the Legal Publishing Industry

Class Objectives:

- Describe various types of legal secondary publications.
- Assess the uses of different types of secondary publication to meet different legal information needs of communities and individuals.

Assigned Reading:

- *Sources of American Law* chapter 8

Canvas Assignments:

- Watch course videos.
- Participate in class discussion board: Secondary Sources and the Practice of Law.
- **Hypothetical Reference Assignment Due 7/24.**

Week Six (7/25 – 7/31) – Types of Law Libraries & Access to Justice

Class Objectives:

- Describe different types of law libraries found in the United States.
- Identify the communities served by different types of law library and evaluate how different types of law libraries meet the legal information needs of communities and individuals.
- Assess the successes of and challenges faced by law libraries in meeting 21st century legal information needs of society.

Assigned Reading:

- American Association of Law Libraries, "Types of Law Libraries," <https://www.aallnet.org/careers/about-the-profession/types-of-law-libraries/>.
- Paul McLaughlin, Jr., "Leveraging Academic Law Libraries to Expand Access to Justice," 109 *Law Library Journal* 445 (2017)
- Mark G. Harmon et al, "Remaking the Public Law Library into a Twenty-First Century Legal Resource Center," 110 *Law Library Journal* 115 (2018)
- Kimberly Mattioli, "Access to Print, Access to Justice," 110 *Law Library Journal* 31 (2018)

Canvas Assignments:

- Participate in class discussion boards: Types of Law Libraries; Access to Justice.

Week Seven (8/1 – 8/7) – Roles of Law Librarians

Class Objectives:

- Identify and describe different types of law library positions.
- Evaluate the skills, knowledges, and qualifications necessary for different types of law library positions.

Assigned Reading:

- American Association of Law Libraries, "AALL Body of Knowledge"
- Elizabeth Caulfield, "Is this a Profession? Establishing Educational Criteria for Law Librarians," 106 *Law Library Journal* 288 (2014)
- James M. Donovan, "Order Matters: Typology of Dual-Degreed Law Librarians," 33 *Legal Reference Services Quarterly* 1 (2014)

Canvas Assignments:

- Participate in class discussion boards: Body of Knowledge; Dual Degrees?.

Week Eight (8/8 – 8/14) – Law Libraries & Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Class objectives:

- Assess how law libraries can promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Identify challenges law libraries face in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Evaluate the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion to law libraries and the fulfillment of their missions.

Assigned reading:

- Shamika Dalton et al, "Navigating Law Librarianship While Black: A Week in the Life of a Black Female Law Librarian," 110 *Law Library Journal* 429 (2018)
- James M. Donovan, "Diversity: How is AALL Doing?," 109 *Law Library Journal* 7 (2017)

Canvas Assignments:

- Participate in class discussion board: Law Libraries & Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- **Reflection paper due 8/14.**