Basic Legal Research
Legal Methods Class
Fall 2012


Class 1, Aug. 23  Practitioners’ Perspectives on Legal Research – Guest Speakers
*All legal research classes will be combined and will meet at 8:00-8:55 a.m. in the Moot Court Room

Class 2, Aug. 29  Introduction to Legal Research: Court Reports
Assignment 1 handed out (worth 10 points), due by 5:00 p.m. Aug. 31
Recommended CALI lesson: “Where Does Law Come From?”

Class 3, Sept. 5  Case Finding: Digests, American Law Reports, Full-text Searching
Assignment 2 handed out (worth 10 points), due by 5:00 p.m. Sept. 7
Recommended CALI lesson: “How to Find Case Law Using the Digests” and “American Law Reports”

Class 4, Sept. 12  Case Verification and Updating -- Citators
Assignment 3 handed out (worth 10 points), due by 5:00 p.m. Sept. 14
Recommended CALI lesson: “Updating/Validating Case Law Using Citators”

Class 5, Sept. 19  Statutes & Regulations
Assignment 4 handed out (worth 10 points), due by 5:00 p.m. Sept. 21
Recommended CALI lesson: “Introduction to State and Federal Statutes”

Class 6, Sept. 26  Secondary Sources
Assignment 5 handed out (worth 10 points), due by 5:00 p.m. Sept. 28
Attend Lexis/Westlaw/BLaw class Monday, Sept. 24, Carlson Hall, 10:45am-12:15pm
Recommended CALI lesson: “Introduction to Secondary Resources”

Class 7, Oct. 3  Research Strategy & In-Library Research Exercise
Recommended CALI lesson: “Legal Research Methodology”

Oct. 8-12  **Fall Break**

Class 8, Oct. 17  More on Case Finding and Electronic Searching
Assignment 6 handed out (worth 10 points), due by 5:00 pm Oct. 19
Recommended CALI lesson: “Cost of Legal Research”

Class 9, Oct. 24  Review

Final – Research project handed out via TWEN Oct. 29 at 9:00 am, due Nov. 6 by 5:00 pm (worth 30 points)
*Lexis/Westlaw/BloombergLaw required class and tests must be completed by 5:00 p.m. on Nov. 30.
Purpose of Class
This is a skills course that is the research lab of the Legal Methods class. In the class you will become familiar with legal research materials, both print and electronic, and how to perform legal research effectively. We will cover case finding, statutes, regulations and secondary sources. The class will provide you with experience that will be invaluable to you when you go to work.

Outside Class Communication
I work in the library approx. 9-5 M-F. Please feel free to email, call, or drop by any time you have a question or just need to chat. Do not hesitate to ask me for help. Your understanding of how to do legal research is my top priority. If I need to contact you, I will email you at your law school email account.

Attendance
There will be eight classes and regular attendance is expected. The development of effective legal research depends on the hands-on experience and feedback that you will acquire in class. Also, as listed on the Legal Methods syllabus, this class follows the College of Law attendance policy which requires 80% attendance to pass the course.

Class Location, Aug. 23 class
All classes will meet on Wednesdays in Library 112 with one exception. The first week of school class will be held on Thursday, Aug. 23. On that day all research classes will be meeting together from 8:00-8:55 a.m. in the Moot Courtroom.

Grading and Assignments
1. You will receive a grade for the class. The grade will appear on your transcript but will not be computed in your G.P.A. Your grade will be based on six 10 point exercises, attendance and passing of Lexis/Westlaw classes and tests worth 6 points, class performance worth 4 points and a final research problem worth 30 points. The weekly exercises are due by 5:00 p.m. the Friday after you receive them. The assignments will be handed out electronically (posted on the class TWEN page). You may hand them in via email, or in print at the library's circulation desk (where they will be time-stamped). A half point will be deducted for each day they are late.

2. You should complete your required reading assignments in the text Basic Legal Research by Amy Sloan before coming to class or attempting the exercises.

3. To complete the course you must take a basic Lexis, Westlaw, and BloombergLaw class which will be offered the sixth week of the semester, and pass corresponding Lexis, Westlaw, and BloombergLaw certification tests by 5:00 p.m. Nov. 30. You must also attend and Advanced Lexis, Westlaw and BloombergLaw class offered the second or third week of Spring semester. If you do not take the classes and pass the tests, you will lose six points from your points total. More information will be given in class.

4. Please be considerate of your classmates when completing your research assignments. Please put books back on the shelves after you are finished with them.

5. NOTE: For the six weekly assignments, students may work together to discuss strategy and methodology of solving problems as part of the learning process. Remember though that each individual must go to the sources and do the assigned work, i.e., it is not acceptable to simply copy answers from another student. However, on your final research problem and on the Lexis, Westlaw and BloombergLaw tests, YOU MUST WORK ALONE. Students may discuss any of the tests or final research problem with their professors. You should not, however, discuss any aspect of the final research problem or database tests with anyone else, including other students.

Points
Assignments 1-6 (worth 10 pts each)  60 points
Lexis/Westlaw/BloombergLaw – class/tests  6 points
Class Performance  4 points
Final Research Problem  30 points
Total  100 points