Library Training Offered for Faculty Research Assistants

by Liz Larson, Reference Librarian

Recently, the Library began offering training sessions for students who work for faculty members as Research Assistants. These sessions are meant to refresh legal research skills that might have become rusty from disuse since the first-year Legal Writing & Research class. In addition, RA’s can learn more advanced research skills that were not covered in that class. The end goal is to make it easier for each RA to conduct research for his or her professor.

These sessions are available to anyone who works as an RA for a law school faculty member. Five sessions have been held so far and more will be offered as needed on an ongoing basis. RA’s can sign themselves up or their professors can do it for them. If you have any questions or would like to sign yourself or someone else up, please contact me by e-mail (ellarson@indiana.edu) or phone (855-1886). I would appreciate at least a few days advance notice. Also, please tell me ahead of time if you would like specific sources, subject areas, or electronic databases covered.

Law Library Fall Break Hours
October 18 - 27, 2002

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<td>October 19, Saturday</td>
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<td>October 20, Sunday</td>
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<td>October 21-25, Mon - Fri.</td>
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<td>October 26, Saturday</td>
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NEW & NOTEWORTHY: WRITE OR WRONG?

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I've never been one to be impressed with a book's appearance on a "Best Seller List." Most of these lists are nothing more than projected sales figures, heavily influenced by the marketing departments of multinational publishing corporations. So it was only in passing, late last spring, that I noticed Stephen Carter's latest book had debuted on the New York Times list. While it isn't unknown for a legal writer to appear on a bestseller list (John Grisham, Scott Turow, and even Alan Dershowitz, have made substantial runs on these lists) it did strike me odd that Carter's name was suddenly there. Carter, who is well known among the academic community, is the William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law at the Yale University School of Law. And while he has published several books in the past, all have been geared toward legal or public policy oriented audiences. When I saw the title of his new book, I assumed it was another dry, scholarly study of the distribution of wealth, and how the legal system is influenced by that distribution - I didn't even notice that it was on the fiction list. And while I knew the library would purchase the book, I also assumed that in a year or two I wouldn't even remember it. Wow, was I wrong!

Not only did Carter's novel, remain on most best seller lists throughout the summer, but it consistently impressed reviewers. While critics praised the book, their reviews must have driven those same marketing departments crazy by disagreeing on its genre. Reviewers have called it a sociological study of contemporary upper-class African Americans; a literate legal thriller; a 600-plus page family saga; a penetrating study of religion in contemporary American life; a condemnation of the federal judicial confirmation process; a black comedy blasting academia; a love story between a father and son; a social commentary on working parents; an analysis of how class and life intertwine . . . What makes the book so good, in my mind, is that it is all of these things. Best seller list or not, I was impressed.

The story revolves around the events surrounding the death of Judge Oliver Garland, whose life was turned upside down by two seemingly unrelated personal tragedies (the death of the Judge's daughter and his scandalous U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearings). The Judge's son, a prominent law professor at a noted East Coast law school, finds himself torn between wanting to learn the truth about his father and trying to save his own life (both emotionally and physically).

In the meantime, if you find *The Emperor* is circulating to someone else (as I suspect it might be), place a "hold" on it at the Circulation Desk and consider reading some of his nonfiction:


Dick Vaughan,  
Acquisitions & Serials Control Librarian

ONLINE INTERLIBRARY LOANS

Library users are now able to request interlibrary loans online from the Law Library's website. The request form can be accessed by clicking on "Request an Interlibrary Loan". Please note that requests should only be made for materials not held on the Bloomington campus. A separate form should be submitted for each request. Please fill in all the sections under "Contact Information" and provide an accurate and complete citation. Incomplete forms may be returned to the sender. We hope students will find this a fast and efficient way to make requests.

Rebecca Bertolini-Meli  
Head of Circulation & Patron Services
LEARNING STYLES: WHY THEY MATTER TO LAW STUDENTS AND LAWYERS

The study of law with its Socratic method, heavy use of casebooks, and the reliance on a three-hour essay exam to assess performance is a relatively unique learning environment. Some students thrive, others struggle. Of those who struggle, some will attribute it to the superior intelligence of their peers. Alternatively, these students may find that they have a learning style to which traditional law school teaching methods do not cater.

Learning styles are the different ways that individuals focus on, process, internalize, and remember information. Cognitive researchers have identified several different groupings of learning styles. One group of learning styles focuses on the learner’s instructional preference. That is, what primary sense does the learner prefer to use during the learning process? This group includes visual, aural, read/write, and kinesthetic learning preferences:

- **Visual** This learning style has a preference for charts, graphs, flow charts, arrows, circles, hierarchies and other devices to represent what could be presented in words.

- **Aural** This learning style has a preference for what is heard. Aural students learn best from lectures, tutorials, tapes, and listening to other students.

- **Read/Write** This learning style has a preference for information displayed in words. Read/Write students learn best by writing out information and taking notes.

- **Kinesthetic** This learning style has a preference for hands-on, real world learning. Kinesthetic students learn best through example, practice and simulations.

The descriptions of these learning styles as well as a questionnaire that can be used to assess your learning style are available at www.vark-learn.com.

Success in Law School

There is a large amount of self-selection that goes into studying law. Law students and faculty have a larger proportion of read/write learners than other professions (the field of nursing, for instance, has a preponderance of kinesthetic learners*). Furthermore, the LSAT’s intensive reading environment rewards testers with good read/write learning skills. Nonetheless, many people end up in law school who are not of the predominate read/write learning style. What follows is advice for all learning styles as to how to get the most out of the law school learning environment.

**Visual Learners** — Try creating conceptual outlines of your classes. Translate legal concepts into flowcharts and visuals. Practice turning your visuals back into words. Write out practice exam answers.

**Aural Learners** — Read cases and notes out loud, participate in study groups in which everyone is given a chance to explain and listen to legal concepts.

**Read/Write Learners** — Rewrite principles and concepts in your own words and translate diagrams and other visuals into words.

**Kinesthetic Learners** — Participate in clinic programs. Pay attention to and seek out examples or “war stories” from a professor’s practice of law.

Success in Practice

Even if you are a read/write learner who is well suited to traditional law school teaching methods, it is important that as an attorney you are sensitive to other learning styles. Inevitably, you will have to do client counseling with non-read/write clients. Also, as a litigator you will have to reach multiple learning styles on a jury. While litigating, attempt to reach as many different learners as possible. Give visual jurors a lot of charts and diagrams. Recreate the scene of a crime with rich visual representations. Utilize litigation support companies that produce trial visuals for attorneys. For instance, The Doe Report (www.doereport.com) produces medical illustrations for medical malpractice trials. Other services produce computer animations for trial use. Also, be aware of the fact that aural jurors will pay close attention to the spoken words of witnesses. Get the witness to repeat or reiterative key facts. Additionally, be aware to the extent that it is permitted, read/write jurors will want to read through written documents and transcripts during deliberations. Finally, kinesthetic learners will be most captured by courtroom dramatizations.

Peter Hook,
Electronic Services Librarian

*VARK Frequently asked questions p. 3
EVALUATING JUMPSTART

During the last few weeks of the 2002 Spring Semester, the Law Library conducted the Jumpstart Legal Research Program, providing concentrated remedial research skills training for law students who were either beginning their professional careers or working as summer associates and clerks. In order to expand the program and better prepare next summer's body of graduates and clerks, the Reference Staff would like to invite all returning Jumpstart students to drop by the Reference Office and tell them about your work-related research experiences. We are especially interested in whether or not you felt adequately prepared for most of your research tasks, how the Jumpstart sessions helped you and, most importantly, what else we could have told you or what we should be telling you about research in the practicing environment. If you don't have time to sit down with us during this hectic period of the semester, we would appreciate it if you could jot down your ideas and leave your notes at the Reference Desk. Your comments will help us in structuring next spring's Jumpstart Program and find new ways of making I.U. law students better researchers, better lawyers, and better prospects in an extremely competitive job market.

Finally, remember that if you discover that you've forgotten some of your newly-acquired research skills by the end of the school year, we'll be more than happy to see you at next spring's Jumpstart sessions.

Keith Buckley
Collection Development Librarian

THE SUGGESTION BOX

Every month in this space Associate Director Linda Fariss responds to a suggestion from the Suggestion Box.

Suggestion: Can someone write an article in your newsletter regarding the courtesy of using cell phones and the extremely loud ringing and annoying tunes that they play? The noise is driving me nuts.

Response: I certainly agree that cell phone use is a problem. Our basic policy is that cell phone use is prohibited in the Library. Please do not talk on the phone while in the Library stacks area. If you must talk on your cell phone, please step out into the lobby or go to a conference room. If your cell phone is turned on, keep the volume low. It is very disturbing to others to have to listen to a phone ringing, let alone playing an annoying song! Thanks for the reminder.

WORKING THE HALLS

Welcome to the Law School:

Trent Trueblood has taken the position of Computer Network Specialist.

Catherine Dyar joins the Alumni Office as the Director of Annual Giving.

Julie Wells, although not new to the Law School, has been promoted from Law Library Binding/Conservation Assistant to Monographic Cataloging Technician.

Happy October Birthday to:

Professor Earl Singleton on the 5th
Professor Bill Oliver on the 6th
Professor Bob Heidt on the 10th
Randy Sparks, Systems Coordinator, on the 11th
Professor Ken Dau-Schmidt on the 12th
Professor Kevin Brown on the 13th
Dave Lankford, Library Media Center Supervisor, on the 15th
Assistant Dean Rachel Kearney on the 22nd
Professor Bill Hicks on the 26th
Professor Bill Popkin on the 28th