

University of New Hampshire School of Law Information Literacy Plan: 2013

“The institution ensures that students use information resources and information technology as an integral part of their education. The institution provides appropriate orientation and training for use of these resources, as well as instruction and support in information literacy and information technology appropriate to the degree level and field of study.”

---NEASC Standard 4.7

Introduction

UNH Law’s mission is to graduate highly capable, confident professionals who will serve clients, employers and the public with integrity and excellence. Although the legal profession has identified legal research as one of ten fundamental lawyering skills (*Legal Education and Professional Development: An Educational Continuum*) and emphasizes the need for future lawyers of be “client ready,” (*Best Practices for Legal Education*) recent studies indicate law school graduates lack fundamental research skills. With the explosion of online information output and resources, legal professionals in the 21st century must learn how to acquire, manage and analyze large quantities of information from multiple formats. The expansion of information is moving so rapidly that the ability to locate relevant information from disparate sources and quickly form a coherent whole has become a critical skill in a knowledge-based society. A comprehensive information literacy plan ensuring students possess the skills needed to be successful creators and consumers of information is important to UNH Law’s mission.

Before the original Plan was approved by the Faculty in May 2009, UNH Law’s Librarians had taken the lead in providing instruction in legal research tools and search strategies inside and outside the classroom. The 2009 plan relied on user-centered, interactive learning opportunities incorporating problem-based strategies and the competencies set forth in the *Association of College and Research Libraries* (hereinafter “ACRL Standards”). The plan solidified institutional commitment and advances the current program. In addition to curricular instruction that is discipline or assignment based, it provides for increased and evolving non-curricular learning opportunities that are relevant and focused. Faculty members are invited to collaborate with librarians on information literacy goals and expected outcomes. The library’s Liaison Program will continue to assist in promoting stronger ties by providing library consultants for Faculty and students.

For the next five years UNH Law will continue to incrementally build on the success and design of the 2009 Plan with a more comprehensive and integrated approach, as reflected throughout this Plan, to information literacy beginning with the first year through the student's academic career. This Plan replaces the ACRL Standards with The American Association of Law Libraries approved Legal Research Competencies and Standards for Law Student Information Literacy (hereinafter “AALL Standards”) described in the following section.

Consistent with the 2014 integration with UNH, the UNH Law Library Faculty has reviewed the June 2012 *Report of the Library Instruction Working Group* by the Dimond Library Faculty – a proposal for a comprehensive instruction or information literacy program. The Dimond Working Group used the *ACRL Standards* to review literature, evaluate instructional programs elsewhere, and to assess bibliographic instruction here at the University of New Hampshire. The Report reviews current instructional activities and calls for short and long term goals to develop an information literacy plan including institution wide outreach. As such, the UNH Law Library Faculty has and will continue to work with the Dimond Library Faculty to ensure this Plan is in harmony with the planning, initiatives and implementation of a full-blown UNH information literacy plan. The Dimond Library is hiring an Information Literacy Librarian in 2013 and we will work diligently with our new colleague counterpart.

AALL Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education

In 2012 The American Association of Law Libraries approved Legal Research Competencies and Standards for Law Student Information Literacy to foster best practices in law school curriculum development and design; to inform law firm planning, training and articulation of core competencies; to encourage bar admission committee evaluation of applicants' research skills; to inspire continuing legal education program development; and for use in law school accreditation standards review.

The standards and competencies are the natural outgrowth of the work of the *AALL Law Student Research Competencies Task Force*, which presented this document's baseline Principles to the AALL Executive Board in 2011. The Principles were based upon the ACRL Standards, but the background of this entire project emerges from the substantial literature on Information Literacy developed by the ACRL and endorsed both by the American Association for Higher Education and the Council of Independent Colleges.

The five AALL Standards are:

- Principle I: A successful legal researcher possesses fundamental research skills.
- Principle II: A successful legal researcher gathers information through effective and efficient research strategies.
- Principle III: A successful legal researcher critically evaluates information.
- Principle IV: A successful legal researcher applies information effectively to resolve a specific issue or need.
- Principle V: A successful legal researcher distinguishes between ethical and unethical uses of information, and understands the legal issues associated with the discovery, use, or application of information.

The AALL Standards are a set of standards and performance indicators that are based on the ACRL standards discussed above, but tailored to fit the skills, tools, and work product that we train law students to acquire, use, and create. They were drafted by AALL in 2009–2010 subsequent to the adoption of the original UNH Law Plan. While the ACRL Standards are a useful start, and critical to undergraduate education, the committee operated with the understanding that the particularized nature of legal research, with respect to content, research strategies, and tools, requires a subject-specific articulation of information literacy standards and competencies. Using the top-level ACRL standards as a framework, AALL began the work of

articulating and honing law school specific standards and competencies in November 2009, in order to create standards that could be used by member libraries of AALL and legal research instructors. While the resemblance to the framework of the top-level ACRL Standards should be apparent, one key distinction between ACRL's Standards and the AALL Standards is that the latter are explicitly tied to the problem-solving work at the heart of legal analysis and research. This pragmatic approach is reinforced in the competencies and performance indicators that explicate each AALL Standard.

Students arrive at UNH Law with varying levels of library skills, requiring an introduction to both academic tools and research strategies at this important stage of their legal education. As they move through the law school curriculum, additional competencies are required to identify, locate, access and evaluate the appropriate resources for their assignments and entry into the legal profession. The *AALL Standards* focus on the needs of students at all levels and list a range of outcomes for assessing student progress toward information literacy. They provide the foundation of UNH Law's information literacy plan.

Comprehensive Information Literacy Plan Outline of Instructional Components

All levels and types of instruction will be user-centered and interactive, integrating principles of problem-based learning and information technology, as appropriate. The *AALL Standards* will serve as the foundation for all instruction.

Level 1: First-Year Law Student Experience First Semester

Objectives:

Introduce basic search strategy; primary and secondary legal authority; mandatory and persuasive authority; accessing, evaluating and updating secondary legal sources; accessing, evaluating and updating case law, statutory law and administrative law; developing a coherent research strategy; and appropriate choice of electronic versus print formats and problem solving through research in the context of a client's legal issue.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to: determine the extent of legal information needed; access the needed legal information effectively and efficiently in a cost effective manner; evaluate legal information and its sources critically; incorporate selected legal information into one's knowledge; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; and understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

Methodology:

Legal Research & Information Literacy Course

Required two-credit course taught by Library Faculty introducing basic legal research sources and tools. Learning events include

worksheets, weekly hands on participation, two research practicums providing one on one attention with professors, midterm and final.
LEXIS & Westlaw Optional Training Classes and Tutorials
Vendor presentations targeted to reinforce first year legal research topics
Optional Training Classes
Librarian presentations targeted to supplement first year legal research topics

Second Semester

Objectives:

Reinforce first semester legal research objectives in context of moot court writing problems; introduce practice-based research tools and strategies to make students client-ready for summer employment and other practice opportunities.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to: determine the extent of legal information needed; access the needed legal information effectively and efficiently; evaluate legal information and its sources critically; incorporate selected legal information into one's knowledge; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; and understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

Methodology:

Research Presentation for Legal Writing Sections

Library Faculty review basic legal research strategies and introduce specialized research tools to jump-start student research.

Summer Research Survival

Required program taught by Library Faculty providing problem-based approach to make students client ready and able to handle the top ten research tasks asked of summer associates. This past year this offering was done in conjunction with J.D. Legal Writing and required as a mandatory class.

Lexis & Westlaw Optional Training Classes and Tutorials

Vendor presentations targeted to reinforce first year legal research topics.

Optional Training Classes

Librarian presentations targeted to supplement first year legal research topics.

Level 2: Second and Third Year Law Student Experience

Objectives:

Provide more in-depth exploration of basic legal research skills; exposure to specialized topical research tools and databases; develop more sophisticated search strategies; and convey transferrable nature of research skills for lifelong learning.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to: determine the extent of legal information needed; access the needed legal information effectively and efficiently; evaluate legal information and its sources critically; incorporate selected legal information into one's knowledge; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; and understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

Methodology:

Advanced Legal Research Classes

Library Faculty performs an annual review of for credit electives to evaluate existing and proposed courses. The current portfolio of approved courses and other instructional initiatives includes:

Advanced Legal Research

Two-credit elective taught by Library Faculty providing instruction and exercises designed to prepare students for cost-effectively completing research tasks they will face in various areas of practice.

Mining Patent Information

Two-credit elective taught by Intellectual Property Librarian providing experiential training in multiplicity of patent and non-patent literature sources.

International Legal Research

Two-credit elective taught by Library Director providing instruction and exercises designed to prepare students for cost-effectively completing various international legal research tasks they will face in various areas of practice.

Patent Landscape Clinic (Basic & Advanced)

Four credit clinical electives taught by Intellectual Property Librarian and Director of ITTI Clinic providing experiential training in preparation of patent landscape analyses for life science clients.

Research Presentations Throughout Law School Curriculum

Teaching Librarians invited to provide customized presentations in specific law school courses to introduce specialized research tools and databases. Teaching

Librarians coordinate with Faculty to meet particular course research requirements and prepare web based course research guides.

Lexis & Westlaw Optional Training Classes and Tutorials

Vendor presentations targeted to reinforce first year legal research topics.

Optional Training Classes

Librarian presentations targeted to supplement second and third year legal research topics.

Level 3: Graduate Student Experience

Objectives:

First Semester: Introduce basic search strategy; primary and secondary legal authority; mandatory and persuasive authority; accessing, evaluating and updating secondary legal sources; accessing, evaluating and updating case law, statutory law and administrative law in the context of intellectual property law. Begin to develop an understanding of the important relationship between research skills and writing skills. Sensitize students to the important research roles of librarians.

Second Semester: Provide more in-depth exploration of basic legal research skills; exposure to specialized topical research tools and databases; develop more sophisticated search strategies; convey transferrable nature of research skills for lifelong learning. Continue to build the connection between research skills and writing as well as advocacy skills.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to: determine the extent of legal information needed; access the needed legal information effectively and efficiently; evaluate legal information and its sources critically; incorporate selected legal information into one's knowledge; skillfully weave acquired information to effectively accomplish more perfected writing abilities; to further understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and to access and use information ethically and legally.

Methodology:

Legal Research & Information Literacy Course

Required one-credit course taught by Teaching Librarians introducing basic legal research sources and tools with some focus on IP research tools and strategies and emphasis on using the open web. Learning events include worksheets, CALI tutorials, in class participation and final exam.

International Legal Research (ICLJ Program)

One credit required asynchronous online course taught by Library Director providing instruction and exercises designed to prepare students for cost-effectively completing various international legal

research tasks they will face in various areas of international criminal law and justice practice. Provide research foundations in applicable domestic law and moving into research strategies to educate students about the documents and process of International Law and how to find them efficiently through experiential exercises culminating in a final project of a research guide.

Lexis and Westlaw First Semester Required Training

Presentations targeted to instruct basic Westlaw content and searching as well as other platforms.

Advanced Legal Research Classes

Teaching Librarians perform an annual review of for credit electives to evaluate existing and proposed courses. The current portfolio of approved courses and other instructional initiatives includes:

Advanced Legal Research

Two credit elective taught by a Teaching Librarian providing instruction and exercises designed to prepare students for cost-effectively completing research tasks they will face in various areas of practice.

Mining Patent Information

Two-credit elective taught by Intellectual Property Librarian providing experiential training in multiplicity of patent and non-patent literature sources.

International Legal Research

Two credit elective taught by Library Director providing instruction and exercises designed to prepare students for cost-effectively completing various international legal research tasks they will face in various areas of practice.

Patent Landscape Clinic (Basic & Advanced)

Four credit clinical electives taught by Intellectual Property Librarian and Director of ITTI Clinic providing experiential training in preparation of patent landscape analyses for life science clients.

Research Presentations Through-out Law School Curriculum

Teaching Librarians invited to provide customized presentations in specific law school courses including the Advanced Writing & Information Literacy Requirement courses to introduce specialized research tools and databases. Teaching Librarians coordinate with Faculty to meet particular course research requirements and prepare web based course research guides.

Lexis & Westlaw Optional Training Classes and Tutorials

Vendor presentations targeted to reinforce previously introduced legal research topics.

Optional Training Classes

Librarian presentations targeted to supplement previously introduced research topics.

Level 4: University of New Hampshire Community Experience

Consistent with the full integration with UNH, the librarians began a continuing dialog regarding how the librarians at the law school as well as the other campuses can best contribute to the information literacy events throughout the state. These discussions to date have resulted in many projected instructional synergies such as:

- *Research Presentations in classes*
- *In Service Training between Library staff*
- *Research presentations at public events*
- *Consultation with librarians regarding information tools and strategies*

Several examples have included the IP Librarian as visiting IP law expert for *Open Source Day* in Durham. The IP Librarian also consulted with the Office of Sponsored Research advising that Office on patent searching online platforms. The UNH Law Librarians have met with the UNH Manchester Librarians to discuss and implement the above strategies during the course of this Plan.

Faculty Collaboration

Given the importance of the UNH Law Faculty in the information literacy process, it is critical the Faculty are information literate themselves or their students will not be. Librarians and Faculty will seek to create and support collaborative partnerships to integrate information literacy concepts into the curriculum with a sustained focus throughout the students' educational experience at UNH Law.

Promoting Faculty Information Literacy

1. Librarian Liaison Program

Under the library's Liaison Program, each Faculty member is assigned a librarian who can help with requests for research or materials to support teaching and scholarship. This one on one assistance can range from performing database searching and tracking down esoteric materials to handling in-depth research projects and working with Faculty research assistants. Librarians also offer customized sessions on use of the Internet and other electronic sources as well as in-class research presentations.

2. Presentations to Introduce Library Services and Resources

Periodically the Teaching Librarian(s) will make a brief presentation to the Faculty to increase awareness of relevant library services and resources.

3. Librarians Collaborating with Related Faculty Committees

Library Liaisons will engage with the Curriculum, Scholarship, Teaching Effectiveness and other applicable Committees to engage Faculty in ways to

promote information literacy classroom opportunities.

Faculty Participation in Information Literacy

1. Increase Faculty Integration of Research Presentations Throughout the Curriculum and Clinics

Faculty members are encouraged to invite the teaching librarians to participate in their courses and clinics to ensure students are exposed to specialized research tools and databases and prepare them for practice. The goal is to progressively increase research presentations and engagements available throughout the curriculum. Training information literate practice ready professionals begins in the first semester. Courses and clinics with research events further build upon this foundation throughout the law school experience. This is an iterative process where the skills spill over into clinics, externships, employment and volunteer work as well as subsequent courses.

2. Increase Faculty Incorporation of Information Literacy Goals and Assessment Throughout the Curriculum

Faculty are encouraged to target specific *AALL Standards* in their courses, identify them in their course syllabi and build-in assignments where they assess student mastery of the specific information literacy goals. The Teaching Librarians will consult with Faculty on the design of built-in research-based assignments and exercises and are willing to provide information on library resources. The goal is to increase the number of built-in research assignments throughout the curriculum.

Information Technology Collaboration

While information literacy is related to information technology skills which enable students to use computers, software applications, databases and other technologies to achieve a wide variety of academic, work-related and personal goals, information literacy is the “intellectual framework for understanding, finding, evaluating, and using information – activities which may be accomplished in part by fluency with information technology, in part by sound investigative methods, but most important, through critical discernment and reasoning.” Information literate students develop necessary technology skills that are increasingly interwoven with and support information literacy. Therefore, it is critical that librarians, Faculty and information technology staff collaborate to ensure students have the appropriate information technology support essential to the success of UNH Law’s Information Literacy Plan.

Assessment

Assessment is an essential component of UNH Law's Information Literacy Plan. In order to demonstrate that students who receive information literacy instruction finish with the knowledge needed to be highly capable, confident legal professionals and lifelong learners, this plan provides mechanisms for measuring outcomes of instructional components at every level.

Level 1 Assessment Mechanisms

Graded Required Research Courses such as Legal Research & Information Literacy

- Faculty or TA evaluated in-class worksheets, research practicums and graded research assignments
- Student self-assessed research narrative as part of final graded research assignment
- Selective use of Socrative, a smart student response system that empowers professors to engage their classrooms through a series of educational exercises and games via smartphones, laptops, and tablets.
- UNH Law course evaluations

Built-in Research Assignments in Graded Non-Research Courses

- Faculty evaluated research assignments
- UNH Law course evaluations

Research Presentations by Teaching Librarians in non-Research Courses

- Librarian designed and administered brief survey for student evaluation of presentation effectiveness
- Faculty evaluation of research for research based writing assignments

Optional Research Training

- Librarian designed and administered brief survey for student evaluation of presentation effectiveness

Level 2 Assessment Mechanisms

Graded Research Courses such as Advanced Legal Research and Mining Patent Data

- Faculty evaluated research assignments

- UNH Law course evaluations

Built-in Research Assignments in Graded Non-Research Courses

- Faculty evaluated research assignments
- UNH Law course evaluations

Research Presentations by Teaching Librarians in non-Research Courses

- Librarian designed and administered brief survey for student evaluation of presentation effectiveness
- Faculty evaluation of research for research based writing assignments
- Library Director will evaluate web-based research guides prepared for presentations

Optional Research Training and Summer Research Survival

- Librarian designed and administered brief survey for student evaluation of presentation effectiveness

Level 3 Assessment Mechanisms

Graded Required Research Course/ Graduate Legal Research & Writing

- Faculty evaluated research assignments
- Student self-assessed research narrative as part of final graded research assignment
- UNH Law course evaluations

Graded Research Courses

- Faculty evaluated research assignments
- UNH Law course evaluations

Built-in Research Assignments in Graded Non-Research Courses

- Faculty evaluated research assignments
- UNH Law course evaluations

Research Presentations by Teaching Librarians in non-Research Courses

- Librarian designed and administered brief survey for student evaluation of presentation effectiveness
- Faculty evaluation of research for research based writing assignments

Optional Research Training and Summer Research Survival

- Librarian designed and administered brief survey for student evaluation of presentation effectiveness

Overall Program Performance

- The teaching librarians will incorporate a section on research skills into the library's student survey conducted every three years and will simultaneously hold student focus groups for feedback on research skills.
- The teaching librarians will track LSSSE results for student feedback on research training
- At the end of each summer, students working in legal jobs will be given a survey relating to the adequacy of their research skills. The same survey will be administered to students completing externships. This survey will be developed by the teaching librarians and administered in conjunction with the Career Services Office and/or the Externship Director.
- Library Faculty will explore possible use of standardized assessment tools and rubrics.
- Starting from the year of its approval by the Faculty, the UNH Law Information Literacy Plan will be reviewed every three years by an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the Dean to determine if the plan is working and make needed revisions to ensure its ongoing success.

Publication

The *University of New Hampshire School of Law Information Literacy Plan* will be published on the law school's website.

Approved by UNH Law Faculty – September 30, 2013