

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA  
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE**

**LSC 828: Advanced Legal Research**

**Spring 2010**

**Syllabus**

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Credit Hours: 3.0

Prerequisites: LSC 826 or nine graduate credits in law.

Classroom: Pangborn, Room G003

Class Time: 6:10pm-8:40pm

***NOTE: This Syllabus is Subject to Change***

Instructor: Renate Chancellor, Ph.D.	Office: 246 Marist Hall
Voice: 202-319-6272 Email: <a href="mailto:chancellor@cua.edu">chancellor@cua.edu</a>	Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:00pm-3:00pm and by appointment

**Course Description**

This course builds on the knowledge and skills students acquired in Legal Literature and through conducting legal research for coursework. Students will review basic research tools and techniques and will gain experience researching legislative history and and foreign and international materials as well as the use of finding tools, legal commentary, forms and trial preparation resources. Advanced research strategies and techniques as well as efficient and cost-effective use of online legal research sources, including but not limited to Lexis and Westlaw, are emphasized.

## **Instructional Methods**

The course may incorporate lecture/discussion; guest speakers; presentations and research projects. Class meetings will be supplemented by announcements, discussion, and other materials posted on the class Blackboard site (<http://bb8.cua.edu>).

## **Required Text**

Balkan, S., Mersky, R. & Dunn, D. (2009). *Fundamentals of Legal Research*. 9th Edition. New York: Foundation Press.

## **Recommended**

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (Eighteenth Edition) by Harvard Law Review

## **Other Required Readings**

Please see [course outline](#)

## **Required Technologies**

### **Capabilities Required for Course Delivery and Student Participation:**

Blackboard; standard CUA software; CUA library and information system accounts; ability to use ALADIN digital library resources. Every student should have daily access to a computer and high speed internet access.

**Tools and Technologies Taught:** This course presents the concept of technological innovation as a major factor in librarianship and information professions. You will receive basic training using LexisNexis Academic Universe and WESTLAW (passwords will be provided).

### **Course Goals and Goals for Student Learning:**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the specialized nature of legal bibliography and research. Emphasis will be placed on how to assist users with a broad range of legal questions that arise in various legal environments including, public, law firms, academic and courts.

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

- Demonstrate research skills sufficient for professional practice or other work in a legal environment.
- Critically evaluate research tools and make strategic selections from the wide range of tools available
- Utilize a variety of indexing tools to find the law on a topic
- Apply legal concepts to fact-based problem solving and to develop Advanced legal research strategies
- Utilize the integration of print and electronic resources for effective legal research
- Understand the differences between the various types of online research tools

### **Professional Standards Addressed**

American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Competencies of Law Librarianship, approved by the Executive Board March, 2001.

1.1 Demonstrates a strong commitment to excellent client service

1.2 Recognizes and addresses the diverse nature of the library's clients and communities

1.4 Demonstrates knowledge of the legal system and the legal profession

1.5 Understands the social, political, and economic context in which the legal system exists

1.6 Demonstrates knowledge of library and information science theory, information creation, organization, and delivery

1.9 Demonstrates commitment to working with others to achieve common goals

1.11 Exhibits an understanding of the importance of a multidisciplinary and cross-functional approach to programs and projects within the organization

1.12 Shares knowledge and expertise with clients and colleagues

1.13 Displays excellent communication skills and is able to promote the library and advocate for its needs

1.14 Communicates effectively with publishers and other information providers to advance the interests of the library

1.15 Recognizes the value of professional networking and actively participates in professional associations

1.16 Actively pursues personal and professional growth through continuing education

3.1 Provides skilled and customized reference services on legal and relevant non-legal topics

3.2 Evaluates the quality, authenticity, accuracy, and cost of traditional and electronic sources, and conveys the importance of these to the client

3.3 Assists clients with legal research using both print and electronic resources

3.4 Assists non-lawyers in accessing the law, within the guidelines provided by the American Bar Association's Model Code of Professional Conduct and other applicable codes

3.5 Aggregates content from a variety of sources and synthesizes information to create customized products for clients

3.6 Creates research and bibliographic tools (handouts, aids, pathfinders, bibliographies) on legal and related topics

3.7 Monitors trends in specific areas of the law

## **Course Requirements**

Your final grade will be based on the following course requirements:

- **Attendance and Participation (10 points).** Attendance at all class sessions is required. The class is designed to be highly interactive as such each student is expected to participate in the activities scheduled for each session. Students who attend regularly and contribute the most to the shared pool of knowledge will receive highest grades in this area.
- **Secondary Source Critique (20 points).** Critique a secondary source from a law library. Options and instructions will be provided.
- **Research Exercises (30 points).** Complete 3 research exercises worth 10 points each. A worksheet will be provided.

- **Term Project (40 points).** As a group, you will design a legal information center, write a report and present it to the class on the last day of class. Instructions will be provided.

### **General Expectations for Students:**

- Enroll in Blackboard and check it frequently to receive communications from your instructor (<http://bb8.cua.edu>).
- Students are expected to read, evaluate, and be prepared to discuss the information provided in reading assignments.
- Assignments will be graded according to the grading standards listed on this syllabus. All assignments should be submitted at the beginning of class on the specified due date. Assignments SUBMITTED LATE (either by date or time) WILL RECEIVE LESSER CREDIT than they would otherwise have done.
- Research exercises are to be the work of each individual student.
- Assignments should be proofread and submitted without grammatical and syntactical errors.
- Incompletes will be granted *only* under extreme circumstances.

**Academic honesty:** Academic honesty is expected of all CUA students. Faculty is required to initiate the imposition of sanctions when they find violations of academic honesty, such as plagiarism, improper use of a student's own work, cheating, and fabrication.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty (from <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm>): "The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student's past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate. In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction."

Please review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty, including requirements for appeals, at <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm>.

### **Important University Resources:**

CUA Network:

All students should know their NT (CUA network) account information and be able to log on to the CUA network. Contact the Center for Planning and Information Technology at 202-319-4357 for assistance.

**CUA Libraries:**

All students should be able to use the CUA library resources, including the ALADIN online system. Visit the CUA Library homepage at <http://libraries.cua.edu> for assistance and directions. See also the Mullen Library welcome page at <http://libraries.cua.edu/welcome.html> , or phone (202) 319-5070.

**CUA Center for Academic Success:**

See <http://success.cua.edu>

Pryzbyla Center

Phone: (202) 319-5655

**CUA Counseling Center:**

See <http://counseling.cua.edu/services/>

127 O'Boyle Hall

Phone: (202) 319-5765

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact Disability Support Services (at 202 319-5211, room 207 Pryzbyla Center) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. To read about the services and policies, please visit the website: <http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu>.

**Assessment: (Guidelines – May be Adjusted by Instructor)**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Attendance & Participation	10
Secondary Resource Critique	20
Research Exercises – (3x10 points each)	30
Group Project	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Grading Scale:

95-100	A
94-92	A-
91-89	B+
88-84	B
83-80	B-
79-70	C
Below 70	F

**University grades:**

The University grading system is available at <http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii> for graduate students.

Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on <http://cardinalstation.cua.edu>

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
January 13	<b>NO CLASS:</b> Association for Library and Information Science Education Conference, Boston	
January 20	Introduction to the course, class structure and overview, of Advanced Legal Research	<b>Read:</b> The Heart of Legal Information: Berring, R: <a href="http://www.law.berkeley.edu/library/classes/alr/fall2009/heartoflegalinformation.pdf">http://www.law.berkeley.edu/library/classes/alr/fall2009/heartoflegalinformation.pdf</a>  Subscribe to Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C. (LLSDC) Listserv <a href="http://www.llsdc.org/">http://www.llsdc.org/</a> .

		Be prepared to discuss 3 posts for class on January 27 <sup>th</sup>
January 27	Review of Basic Research Tools and Techniques; The Research Process	<b>Read:</b> Review Chapter 1 in Barkan.  <b>Research Exercise #1 Assigned</b>
February 3	Legal Information Sources	<b>Read:</b> Barkan, skim chapt. 5-8, 16-20.  <b>DUE: Research Exercise #1</b>
February 10	Advanced Westlaw Research	Guest Lecturer – Denise Steward  <b>DUE: Term Project Proposal</b>
February 17	Legislative History – Part 1	<b>Read:</b> The THOMAS website provides overviews of how Congress makes laws in the House: <a href="http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html">http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html</a>  and Senate: <a href="http://thomas.loc.gov/home/enactment/enactlawtoc.html">http://thomas.loc.gov/home/enactment/enactlawtoc.html</a>  LLSDC Legislative Sourcebook: <a href="http://www.llsdc.org/state-leg/">http://www.llsdc.org/state-leg/</a> Guest Speaker: Pamela Barnes – THOMAS  <b>DUE: Secondary Source Critique</b>

February 24	Legislative History – Part 2	<p><b>Read:</b> Barkan, pp. 157-193</p> <p>Finding Congressional Documents from the Past:</p> <p><a href="http://www.llrx.com/columns/reference44">http://www.llrx.com/columns/reference44</a>.</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Kera Manion U.S. Department of Justice</p> <p><b>Research Exercise #2 Assigned</b></p>
March 3	Advanced Lexis Research	<p>Guest Lecturer: TBA</p> <p><b>DUE: Research Exercise #2</b></p>
March 10	NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS	
March 17	Characteristics of Information Seeking Behavior of Lawyers	<p><b>Read:</b> Modeling the Information-Seeking of Professionals: A General Model Derived from Research on Engineers, Health Care Professionals, and Lawyers, Leckie, G.</p> <p><a href="http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/inside/units/bibcontrol/osmc/leckie.pdf">http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/inside/units/bibcontrol/osmc/leckie.pdf</a></p> <p>Information Search Process of Lawyers: A Call for 'just for me' information Services, Kuhlthau, C.</p> <p><a href="http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/~tefko/Courses/612/Articles/KuhlthauTama.pdf">http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/~tefko/Courses/612/Articles/KuhlthauTama.pdf</a></p> <p>Studying Law Students' Information</p>

		<p>Seeking Behaviour to Inform the Design of Digital Law Libraries, Makri, S, Blandford, A &amp; Cox, A.</p> <p><a href="http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/S.Makri/makriDL-CUBA.pdf">http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/S.Makri/makriDL-CUBA.pdf</a></p> <p>Information Sources Used by Lawyers in Problem-Solving: An Empirical Exploration. Wilkinson, M.A. (2001). <i>Library &amp; Information Science Research</i> 23, 257–76.</p>
March 24	International Law: Focus on Treaties and Organizations	<p><b>Read:</b> Barkan, pp. 419-478; 483-500; Appendix C</p> <p><i>Practicing Reference . . . Learning a Little about the World: Foreign and International Research and the Nonspecialist</i>, Whisner, M.</p> <p><a href="http://www.aallnet.org/products/pub_lj_v97n03/2005-33.pdf">http://www.aallnet.org/products/pub_lj_v97n03/2005-33.pdf</a></p> <p>Review: World Legal Systems:</p> <p><a href="http://www.juriglobe.ca/eng/sys-juri/index.php">http://www.juriglobe.ca/eng/sys-juri/index.php</a></p> <p><b>Research Exercise #3 Assigned</b></p>
March 31	Incorporating non-legal materials and integrating technology:	<p><b>Guest Speaker:</b> Debbie Schragar</p> <p><b>DUE: Research Exercise #3</b></p>

April 7		<b>Read:</b> Gerdy, K.B. (2001). "Making the Connection: Learning Style Theory and the Legal Research Curriculum." <i>Legal Reference Services Quarterly</i> 19, no.3/4, 71–93.
April 14	Law Library Management  Guest Speakers: Cameron Gowan, Groom Group LLP, and Scott Bailey, Squire, Sanders and Dempsey, LLP	<b>Read:</b> The Future of Library and Research, Jassin, R. and Jassin, M.  <a href="http://www.lawlib.com/pdfs/NYLJ%20Final%20Article.pdf">http://www.lawlib.com/pdfs/NYLJ%20Final%20Article.pdf</a>
April 21		DUE: Presentations
April 28	NO CLASS CUA READING DAY	
May 5		Group Projects Due on Blackboard by 6:00pm on Blackboard