Faculty Research Assistant Training

Jane Thompson, Faculty Services
William A. Wise Law Library
May 27-28, 2015
Introduction: Where to Get Help

- **Research Assistant Services:**
  - Jane Thompson, faculty services librarian
    jane.thompson@colorado.edu
  - Matt Zafiratos, my library assistant
    matthew.zafiratos@colorado.edu

- **General Reference Services:**
  - Law Library:
    http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/help/ask-librarian
  - Other campus libraries:
    http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/askus/index.htm
RA Training Materials Page

- [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/faculty-and-staff/research-assistant-resources](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/faculty-and-staff/research-assistant-resources)
  - RA Training powerpoint and videos of vendor presentations
  - Sample research plan and log; example of search term brainstorming
  - Major Treatises & Colorado Practice guides
  - Norlin Library proxy letter and virtual tour
RA Protocols: Printing

- **Getting paid** (payroll contacts & employment packets):
  - Meri Cunningham, meri.cunningham@colorado.edu
  - Peggy Delaney, Rm. 326J in Dean’s Office

- **Making photocopies or printing** computer-based documents:
  - Smaller jobs (<100 p.): 3 RA printing cards at Circulation Desk
  - Larger jobs: Copy documents to a flash drive and give to Jane’s assistant (Matt) to print on the Faculty printers; give advance notice to matthew.zafiratos@colorado.edu
RA Protocols: Print Cards at Circ
RA Protocols: Check-outs

- **Checking out books** under Prof’s name:
  - Law Library: RA borrower record for Professor at circ desk

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<td>NOTE</td>
<td>RAs for Summer 2016: Simon Vickery, John Sittler, Kendra Hartmann, Nat Logar</td>
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- **UCB Libraries: Proxy letter from Professor** (form for Norlin Library circ):
RA Protocols: Requesting Books

- **Requesting books from the Law Library** for pick-up at the Circulation Desk:
  [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/students/request-it-law-library-books-waiting-you-circulation-desk](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/students/request-it-law-library-books-waiting-you-circulation-desk)

- **Requesting books through interlibrary loan** from Colorado or out of state libraries:
  [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/students/interlibrary-loan](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/students/interlibrary-loan)

  Prospector [~one week to arrive] and FirstSearch WorldCat [~two weeks to arrive]
Accessing library databases from **home** using Cisco AnyConnect VPN:

See [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/students/vpn-access](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/students/vpn-access) for information.
RA Protocols: Westlaw, LX, BL

- **WestlawNext** password extension—register by 5/31/15 and choose “research assistant”:
  [https://lawschool.westlaw.com/marketing/display/MI/473](https://lawschool.westlaw.com/marketing/display/MI/473)

- **Lexis Advance** and **Bloomberg Law**—no extension needed; passwords may be used for school or for-profit work
How to be a good RA
(See Student Lawyer article posted on RA training page)

- Be reliable
- Communicate
- Be a self-starter
- Ask for help if you get lost
- Don’t try to take on too much
- Spend time in the building
- Be positive
How to be a good RA
(continued from Student Lawyer article)

- Show good judgment
- Be organized
- Be discreet
- Treat your RA work like a real job and have good time management skills
How to be a good RA (Jane’s tips)

- Clarify the **scope and jurisdiction** of the research project
- Clarify **how long to work** on the project and **when** any work product is due
- **Check in** regularly to report findings
- Ask questions about the **substance, style, and formatting** of any research results to be submitted to your professor
Research Process

- Step 1: Formulate and clarify the research problem
- Step 2: Break down the problem into discrete issues to be researched
- Step 3: Identify search terms and connectors, identify preliminary sources for each issue, and engage in research
- Step 4: Start and maintain a research log
Step 5: Capture information and organize it for later retrieval
Step 6: Update your research
Step 7: Know when to stop research
Step 1: Formulate and clarify the research problem, and refine it:

- Ask initial questions of the professor
- Conduct some background research and make a list of additional questions to ask
- Refine your statement of the problem as you take in new information
Step 2: Break down the problem into discrete research issues and list each one.
Step 3: For each research issue:

- Brainstorm search terms and relationships between them (connectors)
  - [http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/how/keywords.htm](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/how/keywords.htm)

- Identify preliminary sources for research, tailoring your choice of sources to the issue

- Conduct searches and engage in research, paying attention to references to related material in footnotes and bibliographies
Step 3: Identify sources to search:

- Locate **key legal treatises** and encyclopedias:
  - Consult “Major Treatises and Encyclopedias in Topical Areas of Law” on RA Training page:
    - [https://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/images/majortreatises.pdf](https://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/images/majortreatises.pdf)
    - For Colorado research: Consult “Colorado Practice Materials Resource Checklist” on RA Training page

- Search “Big 5” Library Catalogs at [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/):
  - Lawp-ac (local)
  - Chinook (campus)
  - Prospector (regional)
  - FirstSearch WorldCat (national)
Step 3: Identify sources to search (cont’d):

- **Search “Big 6” Databases** at [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu):
  - LexisNexis, Westlaw, HeinOnline, JSTOR, SSRN.com (preprint articles and working papers), Google/Google Scholar
  - Tip: Use “Article Search” (Articles tab on Library website) to search multiple databases using the Wise Researcher

- **Identify and search specialty databases (BNA, etc.):**
  - and [http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/research/findarticles/](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/research/findarticles/) (Non-Law)

- **Use journal finders to locate electronic articles:**
  - **Law Library Journal Search** (Articles tab):
    [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/?q=find&qt-find_search=1#qt-find_search](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/?q=find&qt-find_search=1#qt-find_search)
  - **Chinook E-journal Finder**:
    [http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/research/ejournalfinder.htm](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/research/ejournalfinder.htm)
  - **Chinook Classic title search** for print journals: [http://libraries.colorado.edu/](http://libraries.colorado.edu/)
Step 4: Start and maintain a research log of sources to be searched and search terms to use:

- [http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/faculty-and-staff/research-assistant-resources/](http://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/faculty-and-staff/research-assistant-resources/) (see Sample Research Log at bottom)
- Personal research “trails” or histories maintained in WestlawNext, Lexis Advance, Bloomberg Law and other databases; **Save searches** on MyHein, MyLawpac, GoogleScholar
Step 5: Capture information and organize it for later retrieval and citation:

- Spreadsheets, tables, charts
- Lexis Advance & WestlawNext folders, Bloomberg Law workspace
- Citation Management Software - http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/how/citationstyle.htm
  - Zotero.org (free) and Mendeley.com (free)—support for MS Word and Bluebook citation style
Citation Management: Zotero
Step 5: Capture information and organize it for later retrieval:

- Avoid plagiarism: “Submitting the work (whether quoted words, paraphrased words, or ideas) of another, without attribution.” – CU Law School Honor Code
  - UCB Libraries: “Cite any information not originally created by you: quotations, key terms or phrases, ideas, facts not broadly known, images and sounds.”

- Critically evaluate any web sites you want to recommend. See, e.g., [http://lib.colostate.edu/howto/evalweb.html](http://lib.colostate.edu/howto/evalweb.html).
Step 6: Update your research:

- Set up legal alerting and news/journal tracking services to keep updated throughout the research process:
  - Citators & alerts on WL, LX, Bloomberg, HeinOnline
  - Free news (Google News Alerts) and article (Google Scholar Alert) monitoring services
  - Free legislative (govtrack.us, opencongress.org) and regulatory (regulations.gov) tracking services
- Re-run searches at end of research process
Step 7: Know when to stop research. See, e.g.,
http://legalresearch.usfca.edu/content.php?pid=196858&sid=1680019