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Law Library Briefs

Roger Williams University School of Law Library



No. 37, August/September, 2007

Resources for Studying Law and Law School Writing

The Law Library staff welcomes new and returning students. We wish each one of you a successful academic year. To assist you with studying the law and your various writing projects, the Law Library offers a wealth of print and electronic resources. This article will highlight some of them.

.....
● *Treat every moment in class as* ●
● *sacred; your job is to learn* ●
● *how to analyze legal problems* ●
● *like your professor(s), and the* ●
● *best way to do that is to be pre-* ●
● *pared for class and totally en-* ●
● *gaged in the classroom discus-* ●
● *sion.* Dean and Professor of ●
● Law David A. Logan ●
.....

Studying Law

Studying legal subject areas can be challenging as you strive to learn unfamiliar terms and complex concepts. Do not despair! The best study aids on legal subject areas on the market and in the Law Library's collection are those authored by legal scholars and practitioners. Some study aids are referred to as either hornbooks, nutshells, or treatises. Each of these study aids covers the terms and concepts of a particular subject area in varying degrees of detail from basic to comprehensive in their coverage of the subject. These study aids reference cases, statutes, and secondary sources such as law review articles, *American Law Reports* annotations, and other resources. Leading publishers of study aids are Thomson/

West, LexisNexis, and Aspen Publishers. Foundation Press, an independent affiliate of Thomson/West, also publishes study aids. The treatises published by the various legal publishers provide the most comprehensive coverage of a legal subject area and may consist of one volume or several volumes. Selected treatises are available on LexisNexis and Westlaw. Hornbooks and nutshells are published by Thomson/West. LexisNexis publishes the "Understanding..." series and Aspen Publishers publishes the *Examples and Explanations* series of study aids. These study aids are generally not available electronically. Current editions of the hornbooks, nutshells, and "Examples and Explanations" and "Understanding..." series are available on Reserve. Older editions of these books, if available, are shelved in the stacks. Copy 1 and Copy 2 of a study aid on Reserve circulate for two hours and are restricted to use within the Law Library. Copy 3 and higher of a study aid on Reserve can be checked out of the Law Library for forty-eight hours. The older editions shelved in the stacks can be checked out from the Law Library for twenty-one days.

Study aids can be found by author, by advanced keyword, by subject, or by title using the Law Library's WebCatalog. The Law Library publishes a "Study Aids:..." series which is an annotated listing of study aids in the Law Library's collection for first-year courses (civil procedure, con-

tracts, criminal law, property, and torts). Other subject areas in the series are constitutional law, evidence, federal taxation, and professional responsibility. They are on top of the bookcase located at the entrance to the Law Library.

.....
● *Law school training is not just* ●
● *concerned with acquiring* ●
● *knowledge about a body of* ●
● *law; it is, even more impor-* ●
● *tantly, concerned with the de-* ●
● *velopment of skills and char-* ●
● *acteristics that are essential to* ●
● *the professional lawyer. Study* ●
● *aids, as a supplement to re-* ●
● *quired readings and class dis-* ●
● *cussions—rather than as a* ●
● *primary source—can be help-* ●
● *ful in building knowledge of* ●
● *an area of law. Essential law-* ●
● *yeering skills and attributes* ●
● *such as precision, profession-* ●
● *alism, creativity, careful listen-* ●
● *ing, effective public speaking,* ●
● *and practical judgment are* ●
● *more readily developed dur-* ●
● *ing class discussions and con-* ●
● *versations outside class with* ●
● *your professors and peers.* ●
● Professor Colleen P. Murphy ●
.....

CALI Lessons and Podcasts

The CALI (Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction) website at www2.cali.org contains interactive lessons on numerous legal subject areas. When signing up for access at

