Resources for Legal Research for GMU Law Students

The Law Library Reference staff is here to provide assistance throughout the year. Please ask questions and let us know how we can help make your tasks easier.

Contact us:

In person:
Monday - Thursday: 9 am – 9 pm
Friday: 9 am – 5 pm
Sunday: 2 pm – 9 pm

By phone: (703) 993-8076

Staff Directory: http://www.law.gmu.edu/library/staff

Links to Helpful Sites:

- **GMU Law Library** http://www.law.gmu.edu/library
- **GMU Libraries** http://library.gmu.edu/
- **Law-Related Research Databases** http://www.law.gmu.edu/library/catalog#law-related
- **Bloomberg Law** http://about.bloomberglaw.com/
- **Westlaw** http://lawschool.westlaw.com/DesktopDefault.aspx
- **LexisNexis** https://signin.lexisnexis.com/lnaccess/app/signin?aci=ls

Abbreviations: What Am I Supposed to Find?

Often authors cite to publications using abbreviations with which you are unfamiliar. *Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations* (KF 246 .B46) is an excellent tool for answering abbreviation questions. A copy is available in the Reference area (Range 112) and at the Circulation Desk. It is also available on **LexisAdvance**.

Another useful resource is the **Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations** http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/, which allows you to search for the meaning of abbreviations in English language publications from the UK, Commonwealth countries, and the United States. It also covers some foreign law publications.

Now That I Know What I Want, Does the Library Have It?

GMU Online Catalog and inPrimo

To find out if the library owns the material you need check the online catalog or locate catalog records using the library's discovery tool, inPrimo. Both may be accessed in the library or from the law library homepage http://www.law.gmu.edu/library.

- You can search for items several ways, including by title, author or keyword (especially good if you're not quite sure of the exact title). If the library owns what you're seeking, the catalog will tell you its location, call number and circulation status (if it's checked out or not). If the location is **LL** then the item is available in the law library. If the location says **GM** the item is located at another George Mason University Library (Fenwick, Prince William, or Arlington).

- If you need assistance using the catalog or inPrimo, please ask for assistance at the Reference Desk or consult one of our user guides:

  - *How to Find Books Using the Library Catalog* http://www.law.gmu.edu/library/guides/online_catalog_tutorial
  - *How to Use the inPrimo Discovery Tool* http://www.law.gmu.edu/assets/files/library/guides/inPrimo_intro.pdf

NOTE: You must have your ID card activated at the Circulation Desk before you are able to check out materials from the library, request items through InterCampus Lending or reserve a study room.

Recall

You may place a recall on an item which is already "charged" (i.e. "checked out") to another patron by completing the following steps [NOTE: This prevents the patron from renewing the item and means you will be contacted when the item is returned]:

- Search for the item in the GMU Library Catalog
- From the bibliographic record click on the "Request" button (at the top of the page)
- Enter the barcode from your GMU ID card and last name and click on "Login"
- Select "Recall" from the drop down box and click "OK"
- Follow the directions, making sure to select "Law Circ Desk" as the pickup point

GMU E-Journal Finder:

The easiest way to find out if the library subscribes to digital version of a particular journal is to use the E-Journal Finder. You can access the E-Journal Finder from the link on the Law Library homepage or from http://library.gmu.edu/phpzone/ej.php.

- To use the E-Journal Finder, enter a journal title or keyword.
- After you type in your entry and hit the search button the results will tell you in which electronic database(s) the journal is located and the years of coverage.
- When possible, the link will take you directly to the journal title.

Law-Related Databases

The library provides access to numerous subscription databases, including electronic resources that are especially useful for legal research. GMUSL students and faculty have password protected access to Bloomberg Law, Westlaw, and LexisNexis. Other GMU databases should be accessed only from the GMU website. Offsite you will be required to enter your GMU username and password.

Links to Law-Related Databases are found on the law library's homepage or directly at http://www.law.gmu.edu/library/catalog. Some of the most popular databases are:

BNA Libraries
BNA databases cover a wide range of legal subjects, including: business law, criminal law, environmental law, labor law, intellectual property, professional ethics, and the U.S. Supreme Court. The Law Library subscribes to all BNA databases, many of which provide daily or weekly email alerts.

CALI (The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction)
A collection of over one hundred interactive, computer-based lessons designed to augment traditional law school instruction. Access is limited to GMU Law School students, faculty and staff. To obtain the password to download CALI lessons, contact the Law Library Reference Office, Room 141.

HeinOnline
A constantly growing collection of legal periodicals that currently includes over 1600 full-text journals. Also includes numerous other collections, including: CFR, English Reports, Federal Register, Foreign & International Law Resources, Intellectual Property Law Collection, Legal Classics (more than 2500 legal treatises), State Session Laws, Treaties and Agreements, U.S. Attorney General Opinions, U.S. Congressional Documents, U.S. Federal Agency Documents and Decisions, U.S. Federal Legislative Histories, United Nations Law Collection, and Virginia Supreme Court Briefs.

Index to Legal Periodicals
An international index that covers 850 legal journals, law reviews, yearbooks, institutes, bar association publications, university publications, and government publications (1908 –

present). Also includes coverage of 1,400 monographs per year. Provides full-text for more than 400 periodicals.

LLMC Digital
Online access to the full text of the Law Library Microform Consortium collection of legal and government documents material. Collection includes historical U.S. primary documents from the executive, judicial and legislative branches. In addition there are selected Canadian and U.K. legal materials.

Proquest Congressional
[Formerly LexisNexis Congressional] Provides full text of Congressional publications in searchable PDF format including Committee Prints (1830-present); Congressional Record (1789-1997, 1985-(daily)); House and Senate Hearings (1824-present); House and Senate Documents and Reports (1817-present); Bills (1789- present), Legislative Histories (1969-present); CRS Reports (1916-present), and the Serial Set (1789-2003).

Proquest Legislative Insight
A Federal legislative history service that will eventually provide approximately 18,000 legislative histories covering laws from 1929 to the present. Includes bills (all versions), reports, documents, CRS reports, committee prints, speeches in the Congressional Record and presidential signing statements.

Many of these databases are governed by license agreements which limit use to the George Mason University Community of students, faculty, staff, and onsite users of George Mason University Libraries facilities. Each user has the responsibility of using these resources only for individual, educational and noncommercial purposes.

The Law Library Doesn't Own What I Need Now What?

There are two options for obtaining books and articles that are not available at the George Mason Law Library. Please check for books and articles from each source in order:

- **InterCampus and InterLibrary Lending Services** for materials available at other George Mason libraries or nonconsortium libraries
- **Consortium Loan Service** for materials owned by the Washington Research Library Consortium

InterCampus and InterLibrary Lending Services (ICL & ILL)

Use this service to obtain books and articles from other George Mason University libraries (Fenwick, Johnson Center, Prince William; books available at the Arlington Campus may be obtained directly) and for obtaining books and articles not available from any George Mason or consortium libraries.

To make a request:

- Go to **https://gmu.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/VGL/logon.html**

- Log in using your GMU login name (bsmith@gmu.edu would enter bsmith as a username) and your GMU email password.
- Create an ILLiad account.
- Select the type of request (article, book, or book chapter) you would like to make from the options on the left and fill out the form.

Once received, article and book chapter requests will be delivered electronically to your ILLiad account. Student and staff book requests will be held at the Law Library Circulation Desk for pick-up. All patrons will be notified by e-mail when books arrive and when articles are ready for download.

Turnaround time for *ICL* requests is usually 2-3 days. Turnaround for *ILL* requests is usually 5-7 days. There are no guarantees, however, so it is recommended that requests be made as far in advance as possible.

If you encounter any problems with the ICL or ILL request process or have questions or comments, please contact the Law Library Library Circulation Desk at 703-993-8120.

Consortium Loan Service (CLS)

Use this method for obtaining books from other academic libraries in the Washington, D.C. area. Please note, books will be delivered to the *Arlington Campus Library* which is located on the second floor of Founders Hall. This service is provided by the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC). Turnaround time is usually 2-3 days.

Please consult the library's guide to borrowing from consortium libraries for details about using this service: http://www.law.gmu.edu/library/ill#Consortium_Loan_Service_CLS__2.