

University of Wisconsin-Madison Law Library – Description of Foreign Law Collection, July 2011

The foreign law collection at the UW-Madison Law Library is geared primarily towards the research and teaching needs of the law school faculty. It supports original research of faculty members in the law of Russia and the former Soviet Union, Third World Development, Commonwealth Law, European Union Law, and general comparative law.

The major focus of our collection is on Commonwealth countries, with particular emphasis on Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan and South Africa. Our materials from India and Pakistan are buttressed by the P.L. 480 program. We also collect heavily in German and Japanese law, with significant but less complete collections in legal materials from France and Eastern European countries. In addition, the law library has a fairly good historical (but not current) print collection for countries in Latin America, especially Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile and Peru.

Due to recent developments in the curriculum and faculty interest, we are now focusing more attention on our East Asian collections, with particular emphasis on China and South Korea. We are also developing our Islamic law collection.

While emphasis is given to English-language materials, we also collect laws from particular jurisdictions as well as certain treatises and journals in their original languages.

Due to budget and space constraints, preference is given to providing access to primary legal resources through online sources when possible. For example, we have cancelled many official gazettes in foreign jurisdictions because of their availability online. We are also in the process of cancelling some of our UK materials because of alternatives available online.