

2015 National Legal Research Teach-In Kit

Research Instruction & Patron Services Special Interest Section
American Association of Law Libraries

Personal Law Library Project

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The assignment is distributed in multiple sections, with due dates throughout the semester. It is geared to help students: 1) review legal research sources; 2) identify research sources of interest in a particular topic area; and 3) take into account cost considerations when selecting legal materials for subscription or purchase in practice. The assignment makes use of the latest edition of the Svengalis Legal Information Buyer's Guide and Reference Manual, which is kept on reserve at the circulation desk. It was run for the first time last year and was well received by the students.

Personal Law Library Project

Advanced Legal Research

Yolanda Jones – Florida A&M University College of Law

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INTRODUCTION

For this project you will be asked to assume that you have just started a law practice with two of your friends from law school (small, 3 person firm). You are starting from scratch and have to establish a law library for your practice. You drew the short straw, and have been designated as the “law librarian” for the firm.

Using a **budget** of \$1000 per month, or \$12,000 per year, choose a combination of print electronic resources from the tables listed below. Prices will be based on the latest edition of the Svengalis Legal Information Buyer’s Guide and Reference Manual (for the sake of the assignment we will use prices given as examples for solo practitioners as a three person license). Assume Florida as your jurisdiction. Your “practice area” may be one that you have in mind for after graduation or a subject that you want to further explore.

This assignment will be done in three parts during the course of the semester, and will be due on the following dates:

Part One – Due January 30th

Part Two – Due February 20th

Part Three – Due April 10th

For each part, fill in the tables below. Space has been provided for you to write a brief justification to your two partners about which sources you picked from each section, why you think that they are the best fit for the budget, and how much reliance you feel you can have on free web sources. Also note if there will be reliance on a local law library that is open to the public, what resources do they offer that are available to the public (you can use FAMU as a model).

In PART THREE- When finished total everything for each category and fill in the amounts on the summary memo template provided. Answer the questions on the summary template.

Sources to be used for the project include:

1. Legal Information Buyer's Guide and Reference Manual [latest available] – This resource is on reserve at the Circulation Desk and must be used to complete this project. Note that pricing listed in the book is usually a year or two behind so the listed prices are actually on the low side. Several chapters will be utilized for the assignment including:
 - a. Chapter 4 – Personal Law Library
 - b. Chapter 27 – Legal Treatises by Subject Area
 - c. Chapter 28 – State Legal Publications
2. Vendor catalogs (provided in class). Note that vendors are moving more towards online and you can use publisher websites such as West Publishing at <http://legalsolutions.thomsonreuters.com/law-products/law-books/books> or Lexis Publishing at <http://www.lexisnexis.com/store/>. Feel free to use the online sources if you wish.
3. Materials and information from prior class lectures.

Part One - Due January 30th

- **Table 1:** Print Treatise Sources in subject area (see list, below, from Svengalis Chapter 27)
- **Table 2:** Print General Secondary Sources (from Svengalis Chapters 17, 18, 19) Also consult **vendor catalogs** (provided in class or online).
- **Table 3:** Print Secondary Sources from your jurisdiction (assume Florida). See the Florida entry in Svengalis Chapter 28. Also consult **vendor catalogs** (provided in class or online).

Part Two - Due February 20th

- **Table 4:** Print Primary Sources from your Jurisdiction
- **Table 5:** Print General Reference Sources
- **Table 6:** Major Legal Journals/Legal Newspapers/Legal Newsletters. Should you go with online only? See Svengalis Chapters 19 (Legal Periodicals), 20 (Legal Newspapers), and 21 (Legal Newsletters).

Part Three - Due April 10th

- **Table 7:** Legal Electronic Information Vendor (pick ONE) (Lexis/Westlaw/Bloomberg) (see Svengalis Chapter 25 – Computer-Assisted Legal Research).
- **Table 8:** Legal Electronic Information Vendor Add-Ons? (Lexis/Westlaw). Bloomberg has none.
- **Table 9:** Mobile Sources/platforms – Will you go mobile? Buy a tablet? (IOS or Android? IOS has more legal apps but Android is catching up) If yes, expect to get an app for your legal information platform chosen above in Table 1.
- **Summary Template**

PART ONE

As part of the project, in **Table 1** you will be asked to pick print titles from your area of interest. Pick ONE area of interest to you from the Categories of Legal Publications listed in the Legal Information Buyer’s Guide (see below for recommended subjects):

- Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Automobile Law and Practice
- Bankruptcy Law
- Computer Law
- Construction Law
- Criminal Law
- Disabilities Law
- Elder Law
- Environmental Law
- Family Law
- Health and Hospital Law
- Immigration Law
- Insurance Law
- Labor and Employment Law
- Products Liability
- Real Property
- Social Security Law
- Taxation
- Tort Law
- Trusts and Estates
- Workers’ Compensation Law

Table 1: Print Treatise Sources in subject area _____ (see list, above, from Svengalis Chapter 27)
 – Include **at least** 3 print treatises. Why did you make these selections?

Please provide title	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS – Why did you make these selections? (insert more pages if needed):

Table 2: Print General Secondary Sources (from Svengalis Chapters 17, 18, 19) – which ones would you pick? Why?

Also consult vendor catalogs (provided in class). Note that print catalogs are being phased out and you can use publisher websites such as West Publishing at <http://legalsolutions.thomsonreuters.com/law-products/law-books/books> or Lexis Publishing at <http://www.lexisnexis.com/store/>. Feel free to use the online sources if you wish.

Title	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment
Legal Encyclopedia - National (American Jurisprudence)	\$147/month West add on		West - In print \$805.00/month.
Legal Encyclopedia – State (Florida Jurisprudence/Flajur)	\$147/month West add on		
Legal forms? Which one(s)?	NA		Assume free from court website, part of Lexis/Westlaw/Bloomberg, or included in some of your treatise choices
American Law Reports	\$174/month West add on		Add on in Lexis and Westlaw?
Florida Legal Research by Barbara J. Busharis	\$25		Same publisher (Carolina Academic Press) has guides for several other states.

REMEMBER THAT IF YOU PURCHASE A PRINT TREATISE, SEVERAL HAVE SUPPLEMENTS OR UPDATES FOR WHICH YOU MUST PAY AN ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FEE IN ADDITION TO THE INITIAL COST OF THE PRINT BOOK.

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

Table 3: Print Secondary Sources from your jurisdiction (assume Florida) – which ones would you pick? Why? Consult vendor catalogs in print or online. See Florida entry in Svengalis Chapter 28.

Title	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment
Florida Legal Research by Barbara J. Busharis	\$25		Same publisher (Carolina Academic Press) has guides for several other states.

REMEMBER THAT IF YOU PURCHASE A PRINT TREATISE, SEVERAL HAVE SUPPLEMENTS OR UPDATES FOR WHICH YOU MUST PAY AN ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FEE IN ADDITION TO THE INITIAL COST OF THE PRINT BOOK.

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

PART TWO

Table 4: Print Primary Sources from Jurisdiction (from Svengalis Chapter 28)

Which ones would you pick? Why? Also consult the West Publishing Catalog “Know the Law State By State.” Assume will get state court cases and regulations from a legal information vendor (you will explore the database vendors in Part Three). However, some lawyers subscribe to Florida Law Weekly (<http://www.floridalawweekly.com/flwonline/>) and the regulations publication Florida Administrative Weekly (<https://www.flrules.org>).

Title	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment
Annotated code (Statutes) for your jurisdiction - Florida	\$388/month		West’s Florida Statutes Annotated Monthly Assured Print Pricing
Court Rules	\$209/year		West’s Florida rules of Court: State and Federal
West’s Florida Cases Set	\$214/month		Reprints Florida opinions from the Southern Reporter. Monthly Assured Print Pricing
Florida Law Weekly (cases)	\$420/yr print \$390 web \$510 both		
Florida Administrative Weekly (regulations)	\$318/yr in state		Rules available free on web at https://www.flrules.org

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

Table 5: Print General Reference Sources (from Svengalis Chapters 17, 18, 19)

Assume that you can get a lawyer directory such as Martindale-Hubbell or the West Legal Directory either online or free on the web (<http://www.martindale.com>; <http://directory.findlaw.com>).

	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment
Legal Dictionary (assume Black's Law Dictionary)	\$130		
Court Directory (BNA's Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges & Clerks)	\$225/yr		
Svengalis Legal Information Buyer's Guide	\$160		
Lawyer Directory	N/A		

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

Table 6: Major Legal Journals/Legal Newspapers/Legal Newsletters

Assume that you will receive other journals and newsletters tied to state and national bar memberships, such as the Florida Bar Journal and the ABA Journal. Also assume that major law reviews and legal newsletters will be included with the legal database vendor you will choose in Part Three. The full cost is given. Should you go with online only? See Svengalis Chapters 19 (Legal Periodicals), 20 (Legal Newspapers), and (Legal Newsletters).

Title	Full Cost (print/web)	Select? (Yes/No)	Website
America Lawyer	\$455/yr		http://www.americanlawyer.com
National Law Journal	\$199		http://www.nationallawjournal.com

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

PART THREE

Table 7: Legal Electronic Information Vendor (pick ONE) (see Svengalis Chapter 25 – Computer-Assisted Legal Research). Would you pick one and get a three person license?

	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment
Lexis (Small firm plan)	\$100/month \$240/month		Lexis Fixed Rate Plan (partial content) Primary Law - \$1200yr Enhanced w/fed -\$2400yr
Westlaw (Small firm plan)	\$303/month \$365/month		Pro Plan (partial content) Primary Law - \$3,636/yr Primary Law Plus - \$4,380
Bloomberg Law (Flat Rate)	\$450/month		Includes all content
Casemaker (Flat Rate)	\$60/month		What is included?
Fastcase (assume Included with Bar Membership)	N/A	YES	

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

Table 8: Legal Electronic Information Vendor Add-Ons (would you select one or rely on a local law library?). See Svengalis Chapter four p 28.

(Remember, Bloomberg Law does not have add-ons.)

Circle one – Lexis Westlaw

Add-On	Cost	Select? (Yes/No)	Comment

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

Table 9: Mobile Sources/platforms – Will you go mobile? Buy a tablet? (IOS or Android? IOS has more legal apps but Android is catching up) If yes, expect to get an app for your legal information platform chosen above.

Pick AT LEAST three additional apps from the Library Guide

<http://libguides.law.ucla.edu/mobilelegalapps>.

		Select? (Yes/No)	
WestlawNext APP (IOS/Android)	N/A		
Lexis Get Cases (IOS)	N/A		
Casemaker (IOS/Android)	N/A		
Black's Law Dictionary App (IOS)	\$50		
Bloomberg Law (IOS/Android)	N/A		

JUSTIFICATION TO PARTNERS (insert more pages if needed):

To: Partners

From: _____

Date: _____

Re: Law Library Collection for Our Firm Summary Template/Conclusion

Attached is a set of tables I used to make recommendations for our firm starter library/information system collection. Given our **budget** of \$1000 per month, or \$12,000 per year, we will be able to afford the following databases and print titles in the following categories. See the attached tables listing for more details.

1. **Table 1:** Print Treatise Sources in subject area _____ - Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
2. **Table 2:** Print General Secondary Sources – Total of \$ _____ per month/ yr
3. **Table 3:** Print Secondary Sources from your jurisdiction (assume Florida) - Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
4. **Table 4:** Print Primary Sources from your Jurisdiction - Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
5. **Table 5:** Print General Reference Sources – Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
6. **Table 6:** Major Legal Journals/Legal Newspapers/Legal Newsletters - Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
7. **Table 7:** Legal Electronic Information Vendor (pick ONE) (Lexis/Westlaw/Bloomberg) - Total of _____ per month/yr
8. **Table 8:** Legal Electronic Information Vendor Add-Ons? (Lexis/Westlaw). Bloomberg has none.- Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
9. **Table 9:** Mobile Sources/platforms – Will you go mobile? .- Total of \$ _____ per month/yr
10. **Summary Template/Conclusion**

ADD UP ALL EXPENDITURES. HOW MUCH WILL YOU SPEND PER MONTH/YEAR? **Total:** \$ _____ per month/yr

Finally, the examples in Svengalis assume a sole practitioner. For three people is \$1000 per month too low a figure? How much do you think each lawyer should contribute per month? Can one person afford \$1000 per month? Note one time purchases that need no further maintenance fee or supplementation and discuss reliance on free web/open source and local library sources, such as those at Famu Law Library.