Legal Research as a Fundamental Skill: A Lifeboat for Students and Law Schools


Article Categories: Course Creation & Design; Legal Research Instruction for 1Ls

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Reviewer’s Summary:

Valentine advocates that legal research education and its role in the law school curriculum be reconsidered so that deficiencies in how legal research is taught can be remedied. To eliminate the deficiencies discussed, she asserts that there should be institutional support to include legal research as part of the first-year law school curriculum. She also argues that legal research should be taught as a key lawyering skill and as a key legal skill. Valentine examines the reasons that these changes are needed and then discusses the current ways in which legal research is taught in law schools. She concludes by proposing four principles to guide law schools in how they approach legal research education.