

Meeting the Challenges of Instructing International Law Graduate Students in Legal Research

By Nina E. Scholtz & Femi Cadmus. 24 Trends L. Libr. Mgmt. & Tech 13 (2014).

Article Categories: Course Creation & Design; Legal Research Instruction for 1Ls; Teaching LLM & Non-JD Students

Keywords: Assessments; Boot Camp; Citations; Course Design; Legal Research Instruction; LLM Students; Pedagogy; Research Log

Reviewer's Summary: The authors identify some of the challenges of teaching legal research to foreign LLM students. These include the limited amount of time for research instruction, difficulty with American legal citations, and a lack of understanding of the common law system. The authors suggest five solutions, all of which they have implemented in their legal research and writing classes for LLM students. The first suggestion is a "boot camp" in which students learn to apply common law concepts to a hypothetical case. The second is to introduce basic legal research principles using lectures, quizzes, and research exercises. The third is to teach citation recognition using the Bluebook. The fourth is to have the students keep a research log, which is turned in just as they are about to begin writing their persuasive motions. The final suggestion is to hold one-on-one research conferences with the teaching librarian.

Summarized by: Robert N. Clark, University of Houston Law Center, in 2019.