

Task Mastery in Legal Research Instruction

By Matthew C. Cordon. 103 Law Libr. J. 395 (2011).

Article Categories: Advanced and Subject-Specific Legal Research Instruction; Course Creation & Design

Keywords: Assessments; Competencies; Course Design; Habits; Legal Research Instruction; MacCrate Report; Motivation; Pedagogy; Task Mastery

Reviewer's Summary:

After a brief summary of major legal research pedagogical developments following the MacCrate report, Cordon argues that the MacCrate report and other similar assessments of core research competencies focus too much on substantive knowledge about legal research and should instead focus on seven habits of highly effective researchers, as posited by the treatise *Litigating Tort Cases*. The habits are as follows: Practice Makes Perfect; Being Curious, Confident, Creative and Competitive; Using Effective Strategies and Seeing the Big Picture; Covering the Details; Passion for Knowledge, Writing, Advocacy, and Technology; Cost-Consciousness; and Savvy Use of Sources. Finally, Cordon posits legal research classes should implement task-mastery motivational systems, where more emphasis is placed on the effort and improvement of the individual rather than reaching competitive performance goals set for the group at large.

Summarized by: Savanna Nolan, Georgetown University, in 2019.