Developing a Culturally Competent Legal Research Curriculum


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Keywords: AALL Principles and Standards for Legal Research Competency; ABA Standards; Competencies; Course Design; Curriculum; Diversity; Gender; Hypos; Implicit Bias; Legal Research Instruction; Professional Responsibility; Race; Religion; Sexual Orientation

Reviewer’s Summary:

In this very concise article, Dalton and Nejdl first define “cultural competence” as including “the ability to recognize one’s own potential biases, embrace diversity, and successfully serve others” (p. 19). They then methodically outline evidence from the ABA’s Model Rules of Professionalism, the ABA Standards and Rules of Procedure for the Approval of Law Schools, and AALL’s Core Competencies of Law Librarianship to prove their argument that legal research instructors “have a duty” to promote cultural competency in the classroom (p. 20). Finally, they discuss how to start making small changes to your lectures and assignments to build cultural competency skills, including a link to three race-related hypos the reader can use as a starting point.