

Closing the Gap: Teaching Practice-Ready Legal Skills

By Christine M. Stouffer. 19 AALL Spectrum 10 (2015).

Article Categories: Advanced & Subject-Specific Legal Research Instruction; Artificial Intelligence & Legal Analytics; Course Creation & Design; Legal Research Instruction for 1Ls; Working with External Stakeholders

Keywords: ABA Standards; Collaboration; Law Firms; Law Schools; Learning; Legal Research Instruction; Research Skills; Technology

Reviewer's Summary:

The author, the director of a law firm library, begins by acknowledging the practical guidance offered to law schools and other stakeholders in the January 2014 Report and Recommendations of the American Bar Association Task Force on the Future of Legal Education. Stouffer provides a broad overview of the issues facing current law school graduates and the professional as a whole, and the 2014 report's admonition that law schools must provide not just a "body of knowledge," but train students to develop competencies in delivering legal service. She offers a number of ways that librarians can facilitate that shift, including a more robust role for law librarians in teaching research courses and embedding in other areas of instruction, focusing on a flipped classroom model of instruction. Stouffer advocates for stronger collaboration between law firm and academic librarians, and provides specific examples of how such partnership can achieve success.

Summarized by: Meredith Capps, Vanderbilt University Law School, in 2020.