

Brief Analysis Tools in the Legal Research Classroom: Challenges & Best Practices

By Mary Ann Neary & Sherry Xin Chen. Mar./Apr. AALL Spectrum 10 (2021).

Article Categories: Teaching Legal Technology & Legal Analytics

Keywords: ABA Standards; Algorithms; Artificial Intelligence; Competencies; Computer-Assisted Legal Research; Legal Research Instruction; Research Skills; Technology

Reviewer's Summary:

In this article, Neary and Chen discuss how to incorporate brief analysis tools into the legal research curriculum. They also explore how to manage the challenges presented in using these technologies. The authors describe multiple approaches to using brief analysis tools in the context of analyzing student memos. First, they encourage instructors to ask students to compare authorities the students found themselves with those identified in the brief analysis report. Next, they describe how to facilitate a deeper analysis of why students overlooked authorities listed in the report. Finally, the authors explain how to use these technologies to discuss the duty of technology competency, particularly in the absence of algorithmic transparency. The article concludes by encouraging law librarians to play a leadership role in helping students make the best use of AI technology. It also includes a helpful table of the functions and features of commonly used brief analysis tools.

Summarized by: Alisa Holahan, Tarlton Law Library and Jamail Center for Legal Research, in 2021.