Researching the Law: Finding What You Need When You Need It, 3d Edition.

By Amy E. Sloan. (2020) 152 pages, ISBN: 9781543813364. $95

Subject: Legal research textbook

Useful for: Useful for legal research instructors who teach 1Ls.

Format: Chapters along with a collection of flowcharts.

Reviewer's Comments:

It might seem that legal research has become easier over time. Powerful commercial databases and numerous free resources have made a vast amount of legal information easily accessible to legal researchers. However, as Amy E. Sloan emphasizes in the third edition of Researching the Law: Finding What You Need When You Need It, the wealth of information available to legal researchers can quickly lead to information overload. A pressing challenge for today's legal researcher is not lack of information, but too much information.

A central purpose of the book is to help legal researchers effectively and efficiently filter the enormous amount of legal information available to them. The book also addresses how to think about legal research, a process that Sloan describes as unchanged despite new technologies.

As Sloan explains in the preface, while the book includes some important updates, it retains the same structure and approach to legal research as the prior edition. Part I focuses on the research process, including approaches to pre- and post-filtering. It also provides a concise summary of the American legal system and fundamental approaches to legal research. In Part II, the author describes how to conduct legal research using specific types of resources, in particular secondary sources, cases, updating tools, statutes, court rules, federal legislative history, and federal administrative regulations. Part III includes a collection of flow charts for different types of legal research. An appendix lists selected research resources.

In this edition of the book, Sloan updates the prior edition with current information regarding database coverage and recent technological innovations like document analysis tools and visual mapping resources. In addition, she places greater emphasis on online over print resources, includes more information about how to craft word

searches, and changes the way in which she describes the weight of case law. The Teacher's Manual and instructor slides (available online) also include updates.

The book is a compact volume designed by the author to serve as a stand-alone introductory text or an accompaniment to other instructional materials. It will prove useful to instructors introducing 1Ls to the legal research process and to different types of legal research materials. The book includes access to online student materials through CaseBookConnect.com, including a digital version of the book and review questions.

Reviewed by: Alisa Holahan, Tarlton Law Library and Jamail Center for Legal Research, The University of Texas School of Law, in 2022.