FOREIGN, COMPARATIVE, AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION

"The object of the Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Section shall be to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information of foreign, comparative, and international law; and to represent its members' interests and concerns within the AALL."
—Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Special Interest Section Bylaws.

In furtherance of this object, we present this guide to Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Special Interst Section (FCIL-SIS) participation and the tasks of FCIL librarianship

Collection Development

FCIL librarians select and manage legal information on such diverse topics and in so many different languages that collectively we have a tremendous amount of knowledge about foreign and international laws and legal publications.

When deciding how to limit or expand your foreign and international holdings, you may want examples of other librarians' collection plans or you may want to consult with a librarian who already collects materials for a jurisdiction that you need to develop.

FCIL-SIS has a collection policy repository at www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/foreignlawselector.html. To submit your FCIL collection policy, e-mail the webmaster.

At http://foreignlaw.wordpress.com, FCIL-SIS hosts a collaborative blog identifying foreign primary law in members' collections.

Teaching Research Skills

Whether guest lecturing within firms, in law school seminars, or at local bar events—or even teaching semester-long classes—FCIL librarians often create presentations and activities to demonstrate legal research sources and strategies.

To get a sense of how much material to cover in a lesson, to be sure you know the full range of skills and content to teach, and to brainstorm about ways to teach a lesson, you might benefit from seeing another FCIL librarian's presentation or lesson plan.

FCIL-SIS compiles syllabi, lesson plans, and other teaching materials at www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/syllabi.html. For mentoring or brainstorming, contact a member of our interest group on teaching FCIL research: www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/committees.html

We present programs on prominent FCIL topics, sources, and strategies at the AALL Annual Meeting and Conference. From these you can see content ideas and presentation methods upon which to model your class lessons. A list of our recent past programs is located at http://aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/pastprogramsnewsite.html. Find handouts and other program materials at www.softconference.com/AALL/am.asp.

Conducting Research

From reference desk questions to major investigations, an FCIL librarian's quest for foreign and international documents sometimes involves direct pleas for help.

Post inquiries to the FCIL discussion forum www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/discussion.html and librarians from all over the United States and elsewhere will tell you if they know how to answer your question or if they have a source you need.

Write about your own research strategies, favorite sources, or professional ideas on our blog at http://foreignlawcollections.blogspot.com.

Our website has a terrific guide titled "Jumpstart Your Research: Use People Resources." Available at www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/jumpstart.html

Other ways to interact with foreign law research specialists are to:

Contact past recipients of the FCIL-SIS Schaeffer grant (www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/grants.html)

Contact the author of a Globalex foreign law research guide (www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/index.html)

Professional Development

Your career can take many paths depending on the work you undertake as an FCIL librarian.

Reading our quarterly newsletter, including back issues, will inform you about other FCIL librarians' outreach and involvement with foreign libraries and various international organizations. The newsletter is available at www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/newsletter.html.

In addition, the FCIL-SIS Internships and International Exchanges committee has information about travel opportunities at www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/internships.html.

Participating in one of the FCIL-SIS committees or interest groups will develop your skills in leadership, communication, and project organization, which will help you position yourself to move into a library management job. We have interest groups for: African law; Asian law; Commonwealth of Independent States and Eastern European law; electronic issues; foreign selectors; and teaching research. For more information, visit www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/committees.html.

Presenting a program at our national conference or publishing an article in either our newsletter or a broader AALL publication will enhance your networking abilities, your name recognition, and your resume. The FCIL-SIS provides guidance and brainstorming support to members interested in submitting articles or conference program proposals. Visit www.aallnet.org/sis/fcilsis/officers.html for more information.

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