1L Database Guide

The following guide provides a brief introduction to the most popular electronic resources provided by the law library. As you go through law school, prepare to practice by getting comfortable with a wide variety of tools. You never know what will or won’t be available in the future or what you will need to know.

Resources like Lexis Advance and WestlawNext require a personal password. Most resources use the same login through the law school. Resources like Hein Online will work automatically when you are on campus. Off campus, go to the law library’s Electronic Resources page at http://lawlib.stmarytx.edu/databases. You will then be able to connect through the law school’s proxy server using the information on your student ID card. If you have trouble using any of the resources listed here, please contact a Librarian.

If you would like more information about using the research tools, assistance locating a resource, or information about additional resources, please stop by the circulation desk on the first floor of the law library and ask for assistance. Any of the law librarians would be glad to help!

Comprehensive Legal Research Databases

Lexis Advance (www.lexisadvance.com)
Lexis Advance contains thousands of legal and non-legal databases. It is primarily used for researching case law or statutory materials. The cases and statutes provided by LexisNexis are annotated by professional staff and have cross-references. In addition LexisNexis offers a cite-checking service known as Shepherd’s, which helps researchers determine whether case law is still “good law.” In addition to primary legal materials, this database contains a number of other secondary materials such as restatements, treatises, law reviews and journals, and newspapers.

WestlawNext and TWEN (lawschool.westlaw.com)
WestlawNext is almost certainly the most comprehensive service boasting an index of over 23,000 databases. It is primarily useful for researching case law and statutory material, but it also contains a number of other resources that may be of interest to a researcher.

FastCase (https://apps.fastcase.com/Research/Pages/Start.aspx)
A legal research database whose libraries include primary law from all 50 states, as well as federal coverage going back to 1 U.S. 1, 1 F.2d 1, 1 F.Supp. 1, and 1 B.R. 1. The Fastcase collection includes cases, statutes, regulations, court rules, and constitutions.
Law Reviews and Journals

HeinOnline
HeinOnline has law reviews and journals, all available as PDFs. Most journals are available from the very earliest issues, so this is a good place for historical research or retrieving older material (Westlaw and Lexis only go back to the 1980s for journals). The law library’s subscription to Hein Online also contains many other collections, including a large collection of government documents, moot court materials, and international law resources.

Index to Legal Periodicals (full-text)
ILP indexes and provides full-text access to over one thousand legal journals. Its coverage is more expansive than HeinOnline’s.

E-Journal Locator
This is a list of all journals the law library has online access to, as well as those available from the university’s Blume Library. If you start with a citation, you can use this to go straight to the article. To get to this list, visit the law library’s homepage (http://lawlib.stmarytx.edu) and simply type the title of the journal into the “Search Electronic Journals” box.

Classroom Resources

CALI (Computer Assisted Legal Instruction)
(www.cali.org)
CALI contains instruction modules, recorded lectures, and quizzes on a variety of legal topics, including property, torts, estates, the legislative process, etc. This is a good place to find quizzes for finals or extra lessons on a topic you cover in class. Your CALI registration code is printed on the instruction sheet you received in your 1L orientation folder.

LexisNexis Digital Library
(http://skell.libraryreserve.com)
St. Mary’s University Law Library provides access to course-specific study aids, treatises, and other law school materials.

West Academic Study Aids
(lawlib.stmarytx.edu/databases.html)
St. Mary’s University Law Library offers you online access to hundreds of study aids, treatises, and audio lectures to help you succeed in law school.