Legal Writing Resources

Need help with a paper for legal writing, a seminar or journal? The library has many legal writing resources to help students with the first-year legal writing course, law journal notes, seminar papers and many other types of legal writing.

If you need help with grammar, style, or punctuation, try one of the following books available in the Moritz Law Library’s Reserve Room:

- Strunk & White’s *The Elements of Style* PE 140 .S94 2000
- *Plain English for Lawyers* KF 250 .W93 1998
- *The Elements of Legal Style* KF250 .G37 2002

Many legal writing texts designed for first-year legal writing courses are available in the Reserve Room near KF 250.

Computer Security

Never leave your valuables—including your laptop—unattended in the library.

To keep your laptop safer in the library, please use the brackets available on all study carrels and tables to lock down your computer.

Remember that all computing via University networks (including the wireless network) is subject to the University’s policies on Responsible Computing, which is available online at:

<http://cio.osu.edu/policies/responsible_use.htm>
Deciphering Legal Abbreviations

Ever run across a legal citation that you couldn’t figure out? Fortunately, there are several sources that can help with deciphering difficult legal citations:

Cardiff’s Index to Legal Abbreviations http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/. This excellent database of legal citations is searchable by abbreviation or title. Although the database is maintained by a law library in the United Kingdom, it includes most standard U.S. legal abbreviations.

U. of Washington’s Bluebook Abbreviations of Law Review Titles http://lib.law.washington.edu/cilp/abbrev.html. If you use Window’s find function (cntrl F), you can search by abbreviation or alternatively you can just browse the list.

Black’s Law Dictionary Table of Legal Abbreviations (Appendix A). This is a comprehensive listing of abbreviations tucked away at the back of our standard legal dictionary. Copies of Black’s are located in the reference stacks at KF 156 .B53 2004.

Suffering from the Bluebook Blues?

If you’re having trouble figuring out how to cite to legal authorities, you’re not alone.

The first and best source for determining correct citation form is always The Bluebook (available in the Reserve Room at KF245 .U5); but there are several other sources that may help:

- Bieber’s Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations (KF246 .B46 2001)
- Index to Legal Citations and Abbreviations (KD400 .R35 1993)
- World Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations (K 89 .W67 1991)

Also, Jenkin’s Law Library maintains a list of links to numerous useful sources on both legal and non-legal abbreviations: Abbreviations and Acronyms (http://www.jenkinslaw.org/researchlinks/index.php?rl=49).

Finding the Full-Text of Journal Articles Online

The first place you probably look for the full-text of articles is Westlaw or Lexis; but there are many other sources available to you through Moritz Law Library and the University Libraries.

Fortunately, you don’t have to search through all of the databases to find the full-text of an article if you have a citation.

Instead, use the Moritz eJournal Finder, available from the Library’s web site or the University’s E-Journal Title list available from the University Libraries’ web site http://library.osu.edu.

Using these journal finders is easy:
1. Type the name of the journal—not the abbreviation—into the search box.
2. If you don’t get results, search the other list.
3. Once you get results, link to the database that contains the full-text of the journal. (If you need PDFs—try HeinOnline, Academic Search Premier or J-Stor.)
4. You may need to browse the journal by date or volume to find the volume, or search for the title of the article in the database.
5. As always, if you’re having trouble using either journal finder, ask a reference librarian for help.
New Databases:

CQ Voting and Elections Collection is now available from any networked computer in Drinko Hall. This database covers many aspects of voting and elections—such as presidential, congressional and gubernatorial elections, political parties, voters and election demographics. Use this database to view current and historical election data including voter turnout, district profiles, party control, incumbency and re-election rates. It also includes time tables for current and historical elections, and a campaign and election encyclopedia.

New York Times Historical
Access all issues of the New York Times from 1851 to 2001 in image form (PDF) with this new database. It includes all of the advertisements, illustrations, and full-text. Search the full-text or abstracts of the articles. This database is available from any networked computer at Moritz.

CCH Health & Human Resources Internet Network
A third CCH network—CCH Health & Human Resources Internet Network—is now available from anywhere at Moritz. This database contains news and information on medicaid & medicare law, food & drug law, labor law, disability law, and much more. This new database compliments the other two CCH databases focusing on tax law and business law areas available from University Libraries.

Access these three new databases from the Moritz Law Library Student and Faculty Resources page: http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/library/resources/

Laptop Services

Have a laptop and want to use the wireless network at Moritz? Then you’ll want to stop by Lou’s Café during Computer Help hours.

Computer Help Hours in Lou’s Café
♦ Mondays: 9:00 am to noon
♦ Wednesdays: 9:00 am to noon
♦ Fridays: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Staff will be able to configure student’s laptops for the wireless network, install memory upgrades (provided by the student) and perform general troubleshooting. Unfortunately, we can neither repair nor perform in-depth diagnostics on student-owned computers.

Google Scholar: What it can and can’t do.

One of Google’s newest tools may have caught your eye. It promises to find scholarly books and articles with Google’s easy-to-use searching. Google Scholar can help you search many of the subscription databases that are available to you through Ohio State University Libraries and Moritz Law Library.

It can’t, however, provide you access to the full-text of these articles. If you’re using a computer connected to the Moritz network, you may be able to follow the links in Google results to gain access to articles through subscription databases. Otherwise, you’ll need to turn to library resources such as the online catalog (OSCAR), Westlaw or Lexis or an eJournal list.

Google Scholar seems to be strongest in technology and science. Many legal searches turn up pre-published versions of works.
The Newsletter of the Michael E. Moritz Law Library

55 West 12th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210 - 1391
Law Library Reference: (614) 292-9463 or Lawlibref@osu.edu
Law Library Circulation: (614) 292-3987
Law Library Homepage: http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/library/

Top Ten Library Books

1. Census
2. Bible
3. Mother Goose
4. Divine Comedy
5. Odyssey
6. Iliad
7. Huckleberry Finn
8. Hamlet
9. Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland
10. Lord of the Rings

View details and list of top 1000 books at http://www.oclc.org/research/

Voir Dire is published each semester by the staff of the Moritz Law Library, Moritz College of Law, The Ohio State University

Issues also available on the web at http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/library/resources/newsletters.html

Legal Word Search: Supreme Court Edition

Next time you need a break from your studies, try these sites for some law-related fun.

♦ Play legal hangman and get free “legal” advice while you browse for legal humor at www.lawhumor.com.
♦ Check out strange judicial opinions and funniest law school moments at www.lawhaha.com.
♦ See what Canadian lawyers think is funny at www.legalhumour.com.
♦ View a new legal cartoon every day at http://www.juriscomic.com/.
♦ Think you’ve heard every lawyer joke? You can make sure by visiting www.nolo.com/humor/jokes.cfm.
♦ Read humorous judicial opinions at www.requst.net/g2g/humor/cases/index.htm.

Tired of surfing the web and want legal humor in print?

♦ The Lighter Side of Practicing Law is available at K184 LS4 1994 on the 3rd floor of the library.
♦ Several collections of lawyer jokes are available in the reserve room near PN 6200.

Legal Word Search: Supreme Court Edition

M R O A F G S E R J R S C K P T S M A K T P Y F Y
B U E P I K N O V S E N O X Y K N P Z H N J T V D
X U Z S I L N J U I T H E O R Z Y P E O R E Y E R B
W L I P O O I T C I Q E P Q L E A C K U Z Q C O V
H N W C V M N O S O U T E L U S R Q K Y G P O U W
S Q F E C Y X J E Z S N G R U B S N I G T A E J
K E N N E D Y P T N T J U M V Y X C K K G E E R M
F U W Q B O A H C T T P I E H C X I H Z O S N F E
Y P B X K Q C P Z E T Z C J R W I Q S J T Q T
U E B V F Y S L Y L K V K H F L S L E U M T L S Q
U B U S A O C U A Y C V D A V X G Y M V X X A D P
G B E J P E L R M K J C T D D F I Q Z Q M G C M
G E B E C I V G U S S V Q O Y Y B V M D O E Z N Y

Find these words or phrases related to the Supreme Court:

AMICUS APPELLANT ARGUMENT
BREYER BRIEF DOCKET
GINSBURG KENNEDY OCONNOR
OPINION ORDER REHNQUIST
RESPONDENT SCALIA SOUTER
STEvens THOMAS

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
Moritz College of Law