

Liberty University School of Law

2015-2016

Ehrhorn Law Library Annual Report

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Executive Summary

The Ehrhorn Law Library (Law Library) is actively involved in a number of projects aimed at enabling the law school to carry out its program of legal education, accomplish its mission, and support scholarship and research. Some of these projects include maximizing library space through weeding of materials, integration or substitution of electronic resources for print materials, renovation of the physical space, and providing legal research training sessions to prepare law students for summer employment opportunities.

In addition to its traditional roles as repository of instructional, research, and entertainment resources, the Law Library continues to make adequate provision for the varied needs of its patrons for quiet research space, adequate study carrels, individual and collaborative study space, as well as space for socialization. The Law Library continues its desire is to achieve an equipoise between these competing needs through innovative programs, incremental incorporation of contemporary ideas about the ideal academic space that promotes learning through colors, noise, lighting and modern library space design strategies. This approach obviates the need for costly and intrusive physical renovation and the attendant noise and inconvenience. Rather, the existing space has been rearranged and repurposed to achieve the set objectives.

Annual Department Improvements: Personnel

A. Staff Evaluation

There are five library support staff positions in the law library. All five positions are currently filled. The library is currently divided into four units and headed by librarians, including Collection Management, Access and Emerging Technologies, Reference and Legal Instructions,

and Online Programs and Electronic Services. The Law Library at present has three librarians, including the director.

B. Improved Organization to Improve Workflow

The division of the library into units allows the library staff to develop expertise in their areas of operation. Members of each unit are also able to hone their expertise by participating in webinars and attending conferences where feasible. Operation along clearly delineated areas of responsibilities and expertise has streamlined library operations and improved efficiency.

C. Facilities

The furniture and flow of the circulation desk area was restructured to better support staff and student needs. The Law Library acquired 18 new study carrels to boost the availability of convenient study space in the library. This addition brings the total number of study carrels to 110 under the control of the library. Two additional study rooms have been added within the library. The library has also taken charge of 7 additional study rooms located in the area adjacent to the library, bringing it to a total of 14 study rooms available for use by law students.

D. Efficiency and Effectiveness of Service

Department of Access Services hired 7 new student workers (4 undergrads, 3 law students) and conducted a training for all Circulation Desk workers using WebEx software.

The Ehrhorn Law Library collection increased by 740 titles and 4,476 volumes between July 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016. On July 1, 2015, the law library collection held 54,798 unique titles and 317,559 total volumes and volume equivalents. As of April 30, 2016, the law library collection holds 55,538 titles, and 322,035 volumes and volume equivalents.

	7/1/2015	4/30/2016	Increase
Titles	54,798	55,538	740
Total volumes and volume equivalents	317,559	322,035	4,476

The Law Library also received a donation of approximately 250 volumes of the personal law collection of the retired Delegate Lacey Putney, Virginia’s longest-serving state legislator. The collection includes Virginia House and Senate Journals, Acts of Assembly, and other legal reference books.

E. Customer Service

The Access Services department integrated its customer service training based on the Liberty University’s “You Matter” program. The addition of a new Circulation Desk Supervisor (Evening) aims to maintain the quality of services available to law students beyond regular library hours.

F. Grants Awarded

Anthony Ikwueme, director of the Ehrhorn Law Library at Liberty University School of Law, recently received a fellowship award from the Carnegie Foundation with the purpose of coming up with a blueprint – in association with the University of Nigeria law faculty – on integration of practical lawyering skills with the University of Nigeria School of Law’s curriculum.

Process Analysis

G. Process Analysis Results

The Library embarked on the process of redesigning the entire library facility to infuse the library with a contemporary look and feel. At the same time, the project aims to reduce noise

level in the library and make the facility more user-friendly. To this end, students from the Interior Design class (FACS 240) made three presentations to the library staff on options available to the library. The presentation was facilitated by Professor Lisa Campbell of the Department of Family & Consumer Sciences. One aspect of the reconstruction was the proposed integration of warm lighting, instructive signage system, and enhanced noise control panels into the library space.

A number of reasons can be adduced for this project. The increased need to conserve energy, the need to meet the different lighting requirements for studying and open shelf space, and, the provision of doors compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, shelves and study carrel space. Upon completion, the Law Library space will adequately respond to the different needs for a library space by our patrons.

Another aspect of the proposed rejuvenation is the designing of a contemporary library space that is retrofitted with state-of-the-art technologies for promoting collaborative and immersive learning experience.

H. Departmental Effectiveness

The library, in consultation with the LU IT department, sought for ways to facilitate collaborative study among students and other stakeholders within the library. As result a number of technologies were ordered (see “Technologies Acquisition” above). We rearranged the Reference collection to maximize the decreasing shelf-space due to the continuing growth in collection.

The Law Library website was further redesigned for navigability while providing additional contents, especially bar exam resources (for example a comprehensive list of state-by-state essay subjects that are tested on the bar was recently added to the website).

The Law Library also embarked on review of job descriptions with a view promoting efficiency and innovation. The exercise focused on the following three areas:

- What am I required to do in my position?
- What problems do I encounter in my position?
- What is one thing I can implement immediately to further excel in my position?

Library Instruction

I. Program Evaluation and Highlights

The librarians continued to reinvent the value to add to the learning experience of the lawstudents by getting in front of the classrooms more and more through advanced legal research sessions they provided to law professors. The year in review recorded more class time for librarians in the classroom than previously. The librarians continued to serve in various law school committees. The librarians also organized summer externships training for students to hone their practical skills in preparation for law practice and summer positions. The value of librarians goes beyond the law school, as some librarians continued to produce video tutorials and research guides to the undergraduate students, particularly those in Helms School of Government.