



University of Wisconsin Law Library

Fostering Research &  
Learning at the  
Law School

1893



2018

University of Wisconsin Law Library

*Celebrating* **125** *Years*



2018 marks two important anniversaries for the University of Wisconsin Law School and Law Library. One hundred and fifty years ago, on August 26, 1868, the Law School opened to its first students. Classes were initially held at the Wisconsin State Capitol and nearby office buildings but the school quickly outgrew these accommodations and construction of a law building on campus was approved. Completed in 1893, one hundred and twenty five years ago, this “new” building contained the school’s first, much needed law library.<sup>1</sup> It is in 2018, then, that we celebrate both the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UW Law School and the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UW Law Library.

Although much has changed in the last one hundred and twenty five years, the fundamental mission of the Law Library remains constant – to foster research and learning. From the beginning, the Law Library has advanced this mission by providing access to legal information. As Law Dean Harry Richards recognized in 1904, “under modern methods of instruction, the law library bears the same relation to the work of the law school that the laboratories do to the work in natural science” and as such, a substantial library collection was crucial to the study of law.<sup>2</sup>



UW Law School Library, 1914

Since then, the Law Library has fostered research and learning in many other ways as well, including offering research support and instruction, providing spaces for study and collaboration, and increasing the accessibility and visibility for our outstanding faculty scholarship in the best tradition of the Wisconsin Idea. As we reflect back on these notable anniversaries, we’ve also taken the opportunity to explore how the library currently supports research and learning at the UW Law School. This report describes our progress toward achieving this mission in 2018.

---

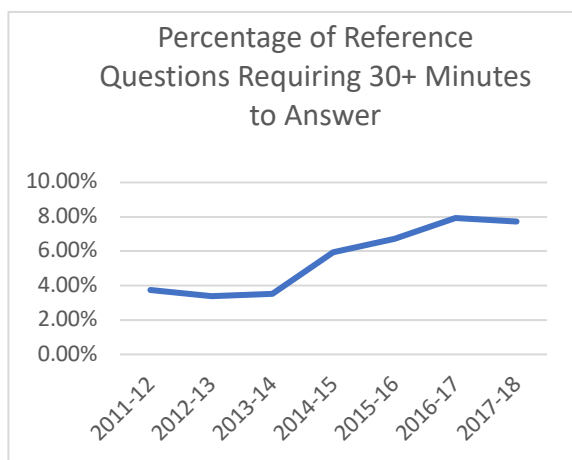
<sup>1</sup> Prior to the construction of the 1893 law building, the school’s legal collection consisted of a “few shelves of books located in a series of temporary rooms” in the Capitol and was “in deplorable condition. Very few of the late works upon the special subjects of the law are found upon its shelves [and] the reports, what there are of them, are not kept complete by the purchase of new volumes as they are issued.” William Johnson, *The University of Wisconsin Law School, 1868-1930* (1972) (unpublished thesis), 140.

<sup>2</sup> Harry Richards, Report of the Regents, 1902-04 from William Johnson, *The University of Wisconsin Law School*.

## Fostering Research

The University of Wisconsin Law Library supports faculty and student research and scholarship in numerous ways, from research to publication and beyond.

- *Point-of-need research support*
    - In 2017-18, Law Library staff answered over 3000 questions from students, faculty, and public patrons. Approximately half were requests for research guidance.<sup>3</sup>
    - While we received the highest volume of research questions from law students,<sup>4</sup> librarians devoted the most time to supporting faculty research – over 153 hours in 2017-18.<sup>5</sup>
- This is unsurprising since faculty requests are typically more complex and take longer to answer. In fact, the complexity level of these questions appears to be rising as demonstrated



Source: PS Stats (Public services question tracker for the UW Madison campus libraries)

by an increase in the number of questions requiring more than thirty minutes to answer.<sup>6</sup>

### Fostering Research through:

- Point-of-need research support
- Research and technology instruction
- Access to broad collection of research materials
- Acquisition of research materials upon faculty request
- Personalized delivery of research materials
- Increased accessibility and visibility of scholarship
- Protection of faculty rights to their scholarship
- Preservation and promotion of scholarly legacy

<sup>3</sup> The total number of questions asked in 2017-18 was 3095. 1475 (47.7%) were reference (aka research) questions. 583 (18.8%) were directional, 218 (7%) were technical, and 789 (25.5%) were categorized as “other.”

<sup>4</sup> See page 7 for a breakdown of reference questions asked by patron type.

<sup>5</sup> Law librarians spent approximately 430 hours answering reference questions in 2017-18. 153 hours were devoted to law faculty research, 138 to law students, 50 to UW Madison campus users, 32 to legal practitioners, and 55 to the general public.

<sup>6</sup> The percentage of reference questions requiring 30+ minutes to answer as compared to the total number of reference questions received has risen steadily from 3% to almost 8% in the last five years.

- *Research and technology instruction*

- In 2017-18, our reference librarians launched a well-received faculty workshops series aimed to improve research and writing efficiency and maximize scholarship distribution.
- Librarians also introduced a well-attended workshop for faculty research assistants to help improve the quality of research support provided by RAs.



- *Access to broad collection of research materials*

- The Law Library provides essential research materials to support faculty and student scholarship. With over 1,360,000 volumes and volume equivalents, the UW Law Library features the largest legal collection in the state of Wisconsin and is among the largest academic law library collections nationally.<sup>7</sup>
- Law faculty and students may also draw upon the over eight million resources available through the UW-Madison campus libraries.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the library provides access to materials beyond our campus collection through our strong interlibrary loan networks.<sup>9</sup>

- *Acquisition of research materials upon faculty request*

- Librarians are very responsive to faculty acquisition requests for research materials. We purchase numerous monographs, journals, and databases upon faculty request including the *Oxford U.S. Constitutional Law Collection* and *Tax Notes* online acquired in 2017-18.

- *Personalized delivery of research materials*

- The Law Library fosters research efficiency by offering same or next-day retrieval and delivery of campus research materials directly to faculty offices. This valuable time-saving service is offered exclusively to law faculty by Law Library staff. No other UW-Madison campus library provides this level of service to their faculty.

---

<sup>7</sup> According to data reported by US News and World Report for fiscal year 2018-19 (question 57).

<sup>8</sup> As of 2018, University of Wisconsin-Madison campus libraries own or license eight million books, periodicals, videos, electronic books, databases, and more. See <https://search.library.wisc.edu/database/UW100080>.

<sup>9</sup> In 2017-18, Law Library staff borrowed 938 items via interlibrary loan for law school students, faculty and staff.

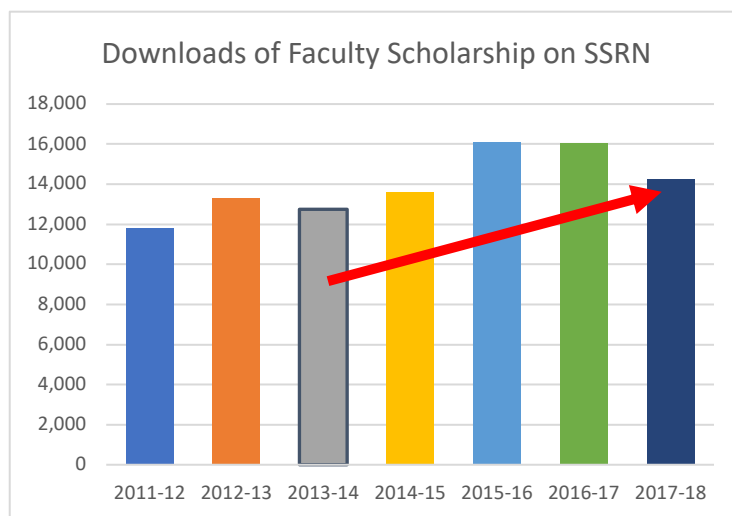


- *Increased accessibility and visibility of faculty scholarship*

- “Our faculty produce excellent, impactful research; getting it out there into the world to be read, cited and used is a consistent goal,” according to Dean Margaret Raymond. In Spring 2018, the library took a major step in helping the Law School realize that goal by launching the UW Law School Digital Repository.<sup>10</sup> We now provide free and open access to our faculty’s scholarship - currently over 3000 articles, chapters, etc. - so that readers worldwide may discover and engage with their work.

- In addition to our digital repository, librarians work with faculty to post their scholarship to the UW Law School Legal Studies Research Paper Series on SSRN.<sup>11</sup>

We encourage discoverability by helping faculty create useful and consistent metadata. Since we began managing this series in 2013, downloads of law faculty scholarship on SSRN have risen.



Source: SSRN, UW Law School Research Paper Series

- *Protection of faculty rights to their scholarship*

- To ensure that author and publisher rights are respected, librarians solicit and track copyright permissions for documents in our digital repository. Librarians also offer guidance to faculty on retaining rights to their scholarship.
- Although fortunately rare, librarians help law school authors protect their rights by researching and analyzing plagiarism claims. Our work in this area has earned the appreciation of UW Madison’s Associate Vice Chancellor of Legal Affairs.

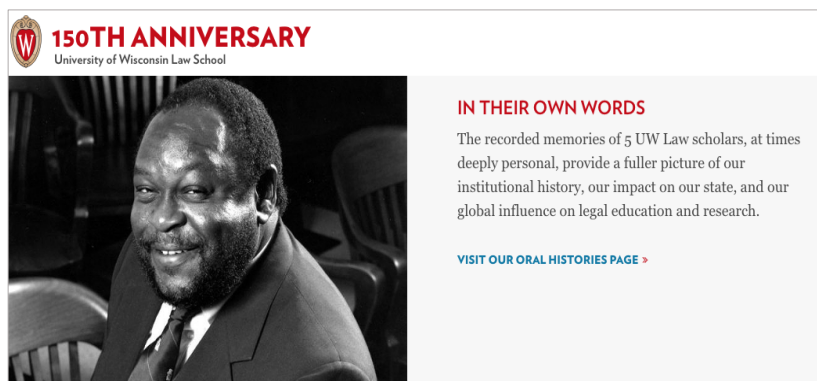
<sup>10</sup> See <http://repository.law.wisc.edu>.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://www.ssrn.com/link/u-wisconsin-legal-studies>.

- *Preservation and promotion of scholarly legacy*
  - The documents that a scholar accumulates during a major research project or over the course of a career represent an important scholarly legacy. Librarians preserve this legacy by working with faculty to organize and preserve these materials.
  - Prior to receiving the Stockholm Prize in Criminology, librarians worked with Herman Goldstein to document and develop permissions for his groundbreaking American Bar Foundation Policing Study materials. We're currently working with several other faculty to make their collections accessible through our digital repository, including Marc Galanter (Bhopal disaster collection), Heinz Klug (South African constitutional materials), and Louise Trubek (Center for Public Representation documents).
  - Oral histories are another excellent way to preserve and promote the Law School's legacy. In preparation for the Law School's anniversary, we collected, digitized, indexed, transcribed, and posted the oral histories of five prominent law faculty and administrators to our digital repository. These interactive recordings feature prominently

on the Law School's 150<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary website.<sup>12</sup> Twenty-five more faculty oral histories are in development.



<sup>12</sup> See <https://150.law.wisc.edu/>.

## Fostering Learning through:

- Our Collections
- Our Services
  - Research Instruction
  - Citation Support
  - Law Journal Support
- Our Spaces
  - Highly-used
  - Responsive
  - Collaborative Learning

## Fostering Learning

The University of Wisconsin Law Library enriches student learning through our services, collections, and spaces.

### • *Our Collections*

- Since our founding in 1893, the Law Library has served as a laboratory for the study and practice of law. We provide law students with essential educational resources representing a broad variety of viewpoints and perspectives, locally, nationally, and internationally. We work closely with faculty to acquire resources needed to support student learning.<sup>13</sup>



### • *Our Services*

- **Research Instruction** – New associates typically spend 40-60% of their time conducting research.<sup>14</sup> To prepare students for this essential practice skill, librarians offer legal research instruction in numerous ways.

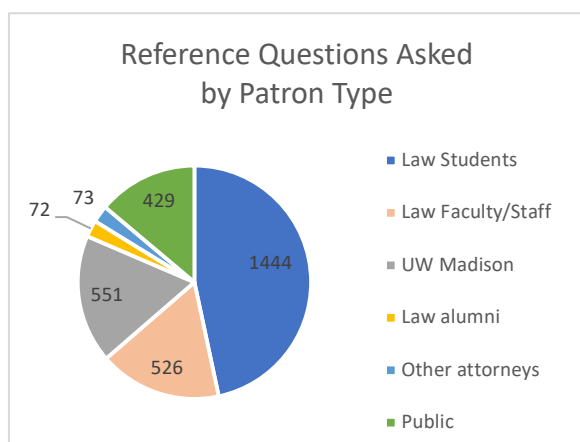


<sup>13</sup> For example, at Yaron Nili's request, we negotiated subscriptions to two business law databases, SharkRepellent and Equilar BoardEdge for his Corporate Governance and Deals Lab course.

<sup>14</sup> LEXISNEXIS, HIRING PARTNERS REVEAL NEW ATTORNEY READINESS FOR REAL WORLD PRACTICE: WHITE PAPER (2015), [https://www.lexisnexis.com/documents/pdf/20150325064926\\_large.pdf](https://www.lexisnexis.com/documents/pdf/20150325064926_large.pdf).



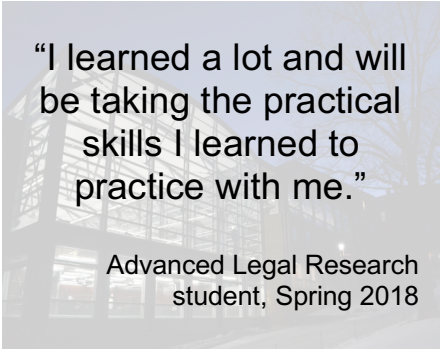
- Law librarians help students find relevant information through point-of-need research assistance at the reference desk. In 2017-18, we answered 1444 (47%) of reference questions from law students. The Law Library also supports student learning across campus answering 551 (18%) of reference questions from other UW Madison students, faculty and staff.
- Upon faculty request, law librarians offer in-class instruction, serve as course research liaisons outside-class, and create course guides recommending useful research materials.



Source: PS Stats (Public services question tracker for the UW Madison campus libraries)

- Librarians offer stand-alone learning sessions to help law students improve their research efficiency. Many of these sessions are offered in partnership with other Law School units including the Academic Enhancement Program, Graduate Programs, Office of Career and Professional Development, and Office of Admissions.
- Librarians also provide experiential research training for our clinic students and faculty. In 2017-18, we offered targeted training for students in the Remington Center, the Economic Justice Institute, and the Law and Entrepreneurship clinics.
- New in 2017-18, our reference librarians offer drop-in lunch-time “lightning sessions” in the atrium. These quick, 3-5 minute learning opportunities introduce students to tools such as the library catalog, HeinOnline, and PowerNotes, a new tool to improve note taking efficiency.

- For students desiring more in-depth research training, the Law Library offers Advanced Legal Research. In this two-credit experiential learning course, students engage in substantial, hands-on legal research.<sup>15</sup> This course is typically offered every other year.



“I learned a lot and will be taking the practical skills I learned to practice with me.”

Advanced Legal Research  
student, Spring 2018

- **Citation Support** – Properly citing legal materials in *Bluebook* format can be a challenge. The Law Library offers citation support to law students in several ways.
  - Librarians offer guidance at point-of-need as well as through instructional sessions held in conjunction with the Academic Enhancement Program and the law journals.
  - The library also supports faculty in ensuring that students appropriately cite their research. Upon request, we can set up preemptive automated checks or conduct manual citation reviews of student papers.
- **Law Journal Support** - Librarians partner with our law journals to foster student learning.
  - Each year, librarians meet with the incoming journal editorial boards to discuss research and instruction needs. We offer training on searching, writing, and citation to help journal students produce high quality content and become more effective researchers and authors.
  - Journal students frequently seek one-on-one librarian assistance to locate materials needed for citation checks or to support their own writing. When materials are not available on campus, we help students obtain them via interlibrary loan.

---

<sup>15</sup> Spring 2018 ALR course evaluations were very positive. Some of the comments included: “This was a wonderful class and I am really glad I took it. I learned a lot and will be taking the practical skills I learned to practice with me.” “This was a super useful course!” “I honestly think that this course should be required for all students. It was so helpful and really interesting. I hadn't heard of half of the sources that we were introduced to through this course.”

- *Our Spaces*

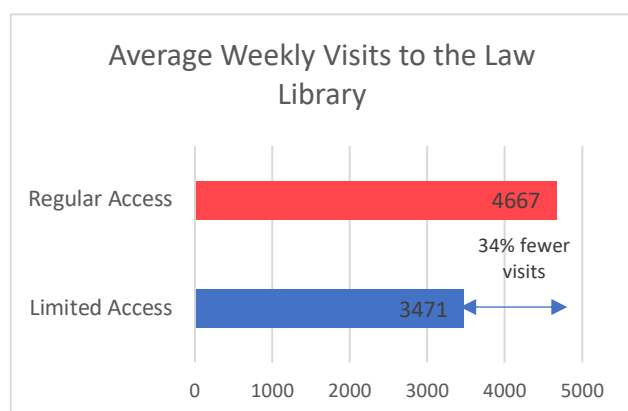
- **Highly-Used by Students**

- The Law Library is a popular space for individual study and group collaboration. With its floor to ceiling windows and warm natural light, the Law Library is frequently cited as the best quiet study location on campus.<sup>16</sup> On average, the library received 4667 visits per week during the 2017-18 fall and spring semesters (not including the limited access periods described below).<sup>17</sup> That's more than 660 visits per day.

- **Responsive to Law Student Needs**

- At the request of the Student Bar Association to provide adequate study space for law students, access to the Law Library is limited during the exam period to law students, faculty and staff, and to those using the library collection.<sup>18</sup> This strategy has been effective in making more study space available for law students. During the 2017-18 limited access periods when non-law students were restricted,

there were 34% fewer visits to the library (the majority of them most likely undergraduates) than during our regular fall and spring semester access periods.



Source: Automated gate counter measuring exits from Law Library

- In addition to these limited access periods, the Law Library also extends its schedule by an additional six hours in each of the three weekends before final exams to provide additional study opportunities for law students.

<sup>16</sup> Most recently, see UW-Madison Information Technology's Best Study Spaces on Campus: 2018-19 Edition at <https://it.wisc.edu/news/best-study-spaces-on-campus-2018-19-edition/>.

<sup>17</sup> This figure is based on the number of times someone exited the library as measured by our gate counter. Note that it also includes staff who work in the library.

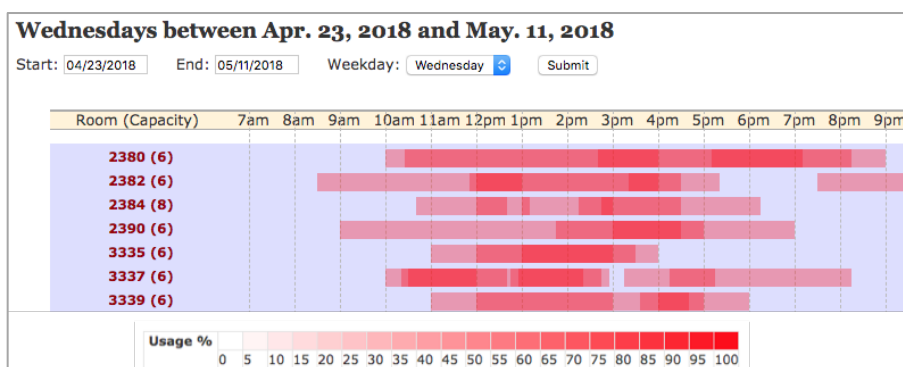
<sup>18</sup> Limited access period begins four full weekends before to the first proctored law exam.



### ○ Collaborative Learning Opportunities

- Law students gather for group learning and collaboration in our study rooms and labs. The library's eight study rooms are heavily used, especially in the weeks before and during final exams (approximately 70-80% use midday).
- Two labs also offer space for collaborative learning. In our Teaching Lab, students engage in hands-on learning of legal research technologies. This lab is used most heavily by the Legal Research and Writing Program and the Advanced Legal Research course. Our other lab offers shared study space for group collaboration.

Study Room Use During Final Exam Period



Source: Heatmap depicting use on Wednesdays during the three weeks prior to the last exam, Spring 2018. UW Law School Calendar Room Usage tracker. [http://law.wisc.edu/calendar/addons/usage\\_studyrooms/](http://law.wisc.edu/calendar/addons/usage_studyrooms/)

**For 125 years**, the Law Library has served as a laboratory for the study and practice of law.

While our collections, services, and spaces have grown and evolved greatly since then as shown in this report, our fundamental mission has remained the same - to foster research and learning at the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Report compiled by Bonnie Shucha

Associate Dean & Director of the Law Library

With the assistance of the Law Library Assessment Committee

Fall 2018