



Basic Document Retrieval September 1, 2004

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Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this handout is to give a broad overview to online sources for those who would like to get their own documents online. The purpose is NOT to replace the Phone Page – Faculty and their assistants should feel free to use the Phone Page as much as they like! If you are not already familiar with the Law Library Homepage (www.law.umich.edu/library), I would recommend that you spend some time looking at the webpage and becoming more familiar with it. Most of the resources that I will highlight in this handout, are accessed via the Law Library webpage.

Libraries at the University of Michigan

There are three library systems at the University of Michigan: the Law Library, Kresge Business Administration Library and the University Libraries. The University Libraries system is made up of a number of libraries, including the Hatcher Graduate Library, the Shapiro Undergraduate and Science Libraries, Taubman Medical Library, etc. Each of the three library systems has a separate catalog: the Law Library uses Lexcalibur, the Kresge Business Administration Library uses the Kresge Library Catalog, and the University Libraries use Mirlyn. In order to completely check to see if materials are on campus, you need to check all of those libraries. You can find links to all of these catalogs on the Law Library Homepage (www.law.umich.edu/library).

There is no need to find the call number and location of a book before submitting a Phone Page request. However, many online resources (especially electronic journal subscriptions) are available via the library catalogs, so it will be useful to know where the catalogs are, and how they work.

Law Library

There are a number of resources that are accessible to you via the Law Library webpage. We have a list of electronic subscriptions to journals, electronic reserves and exams, and a list of electronic resources.

Electronic Subscriptions to Journals

You can find the list of the Law Library's electronic Subscriptions to Journals on our website (www.law.umich.edu/library/eres/ejournals/ejournalsindex.htm). The list is organized alphabetically, so you can browse the titles and find the one that you need. You can also run a search if you prefer to find the journal that you need by searching. You can then follow the links to find the articles that you need and print them out.

You can also find out if the Law Library has an electronic subscription to a journal by searching for the journal in Lexcalibur, our online catalog. For example, if you go to Lexcalibur (<http://lexcalibur.lib.law.umich.edu/>) and search the Library catalog for the title "Howard Journal of Criminal Justice," you will see a hyperlink included in the catalog entry. This indicates that we have an electronic subscription to the journal, which you can access via the hyperlink.

Electronic Resources List (www.law.umich.edu/library/eres/ereslist/ereslistindex.htm)

The Library has a very large collection of electronic resources (also referred to as the Electronic Reference Collection). The collection is arranged both alphabetically and by subject. All of the resources listed are accessible to you via the computer in your law school office. You can also access most of the materials at an off-campus computer. If you are using an off-campus computer, just type in your username and password when prompted to login. Rather than try to discuss all of the materials that we have electronic access to, I am going to highlight a few resources that are very helpful in identifying and obtaining full text pdf versions of articles.

1. **HeinOnline:** This database includes hundreds of law journals which can be searched and retrieved in pdf format. This database is a very good addition to using Westlaw and Lexis because Westlaw and Lexis usually only have journal issues from 1980 – present (there are a few exceptions to this rule. For example, Harvard Law Review is on Westlaw from 1949, Vol. 63 to the present). In contrast to Lexis and Westlaw, HeinOnline will have most of the back issues of the journals that are in its databases. The most recent copies of the journals are not included in its databases, however. For example, HeinOnline has the Michigan Law Review from 1902-2003. To access the law journals database in HeinOnline follow the law library electronic resources link (listed above), then click on "H", then click on "HeinOnline", then click on "Law Journal Library."
2. **Jstor:** This database includes hundreds of social science, humanities, economics, business, and science journals. They have begun to add a law journal database to Jstor and they plan on adding more journals in the future. Jstor is very similar to HeinOnline in that it includes the earliest issues of the journals included in its databases, although it does not have the most recent issues. For example, the Quarterly Journal of Economics is included in Jstor from 1886 – 1998. To search Jstor, follow the law library electronic resources link (listed above), then click on "J", then click on "Jstor", then click on "Search." If you are not sure if the journal that you need is included in Jstor, you can click on the "advanced search" button, then scroll down to see the different types of journals. If you click on the "+" sign next to a journal type, you can see each of the journals included in that category.

University Libraries Electronic Resources

Electronic Journals and Newspapers – University Libraries Homepage

There are two main ways to discover if the University Libraries has an electronic journal or newspapers. First, on the University Libraries Homepage (<http://www.lib.umich.edu/index.html>) there is a link to “electronic journals and newspapers” (<http://www.lib.umich.edu/ejournals/>). The list is alphabetical, so if you know the name of the publication that you need, you can browse the list to find the publication. The list is also searchable, so if you are not sure of the title of the publication that you need, you can search the list in order to find it.

Electronic Journals and Newspapers – Mirlyn

Second, you can use Mirlyn to search for the title of the publication that you need. If the University Libraries has an electronic subscription to the journal or newspaper, you will find a link to the publication in the Mirlyn Entry.

Kresge Business Administration Library

Most of the electronic resources that are available at the Kresge Business Administration Library can only be used from terminals located at the Kresge Library. The electronic journals that Kresge has that are open to the wider University community, can be accessed via Mirlyn or the University Libraries Electronic Journals and Newspapers list (see above).

Retrieving Cases – pdf

Westlaw

Westlaw is currently in the process of loading the page images from the Regional Reporters (including A., A.2d, NE., NE.2d, NW, NW.2d, P., P.2d, Pd.3, SE., SE.2d, So., So.2d, SW., SW.2d and SW.3d), and from the Federal Reporters (including F., F.2d, F.3d, F.Supp., F.Supp.2d, S.Ct., and U.S.) into their databases. Eventually, they will have all of the page images loaded into Westlaw. To access the reporter image of a case, use the “find” function, and type in the citation of the case which you are trying to find. When the case comes up, if there is a reporter image, you will see a link at the top of the case which you can click on in order to access the image. A notice will appear stating that it might cost extra to view and print the reporter image. You can click on “ok” and ignore the message, since it does not cost us extra to access the image (it is part of our contract with West). You can then print out the case to your attached printer. **Please note that you can only access the reporter images of cases via www.westlaw.com, you cannot access them via the WestMate software.**

Supreme Court Website

The Supreme Court website -- <http://www.supremecourtus.gov> – includes copies of opinions for the most recent sessions of the Court. To access the cases, go to the website and select “opinions.” Next, choose the session in which the decision was announced, then choose the opinion which you would like to see.

HeinOnline

In addition to having journal articles as described above, HeinOnline also has the United States Reporter in its database. To access the cases, go to HeinOnline as described previously. However, instead of choosing “Law Journal Library” choose “U.S. Supreme Court Library.” You can then access the U.S. Reports and print out the case that you need.

Court Websites

Many state and federal courts post recent opinions on their websites. Sometimes they will be in pdf format, sometimes they will be in html format. If you have having a difficult time finding a case, it can be helpful at times to visit the court website to see if an opinion has been posted. Links to the Federal Court websites can be found at <http://www.uscourts.gov/links.html>. It is usually fairly easy to find state court websites using www.google.com.

Retrieving Cases – html

Westlaw and Lexis-Nexis

Both Westlaw and Lexis-Nexis have all published cases from all federal and state courts, and a great number of unpublished cases as well. To find a case, on Westlaw, you can use the “find” function and simply type in the citation of the case that you need. To find a case on Lexis, you can use the “get a document” function and simply type in the citation of the case that you need. If you cannot find a case in Westlaw or Lexis, that usually means that the case was unpublished and that neither service decided to add it to their databases. In this situation, the best place to look for a copy of the case would be on the court website as describe above.

United Nations Documents

The United Nations has a great many of its documents online. The UN website itself (www.un.org) is not very good for searching documents, but the websites of its various bodies, commissions, committees, working groups, etc., often have documents online.

UN High Commission on Human Rights

This website can be found at www.ohchr.org. To search the databases, choose “Document Search” from the options listed on the right side of the screen. You can then run a search in their various databases for the document which you need.

UNBISNET – United Nations Bibliographic Information System

This is the library catalog for the Dag Hammarskjold Library and can be accessed at www.unbisnet.un.org. Many UN documents are included in the catalog in pdf form. You can run searches for UN documents by document number if you choose the “New Browse List Search” option, and you can run searches using keywords if you use the “New Keyword Search” option. If there is a fulltext version of the document available, there will be a link in the record that you can use to access the document.

Google

Often, if you run a google.com search with the document number for the document that you need, you can locate either a pdf or an html copy of the document. You do need to be careful, however, in order to make sure that the document that you find is the “official” version of the document.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact me and I would be happy to help you! Also, please remember that the Phone Page Service can always deliver to the Faculty and their assistants any documents that they need.