

# The Law Library of Congress: A Global Resource for Legal Education

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## I. Introduction

### *A. The Law Library of Congress and Its Mission*

Founded by an act of Congress in 1832,<sup>1</sup> the Law Library of Congress serves as the primary source for law books, legislative publications, and other legal information materials within the Library of Congress. The Law Library holds a vast collection of U.S., foreign, and international legal resources. Its staff includes legal specialists with law degrees from countries around the world and reference librarians with degrees in U.S. law and library science. Its expertise, resources, patrons, and mission are global in scope.

The law collection has been the cornerstone of the Library of Congress from its inception. A statute passed by Congress in 1800 addressing the relocation of the government of the United States to Washington, D.C. included an appropriation of five thousand dollars for purchasing books and “fitting up a suitable apartment for containing them” in the Capitol for use by Congress.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Act of July 14, 1832, ch. 221, §1, 4 Stat. 579 (codified as amended at 2 U.S.C. § 132 (2012)). “The significance of the 1832 ‘charter’ establishing a separate Law Library is the recognition of the special place that legal research should hold in a society whose government is based on democratic legal principles.” LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1832–1982: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FIRST HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS 5 (1982).
2. An Act to make further provision for the removal and accommodation of the Government

A catalog from that time showed that, out of a collection of 266 volumes, forty were law-related titles.<sup>3</sup> After the loss of much of the library's holdings, including all of its law books, when the Capitol was burned during the War of 1812,<sup>4</sup> Congress bought Thomas Jefferson's personal library,<sup>5</sup> including 475 law titles,<sup>6</sup> to replenish the congressional collection. By 1832, the year the Law Library was established as a separate department in the Library of Congress, the law collection had grown to 2,011 volumes; by 1898 it had reached 101,868.<sup>7</sup> In the twentieth century, the Law Library expanded both its holdings and its services dramatically, compiling a collection from all nations in a systematic effort that focused first on Europe, next on Latin America, and then on Asia and Africa,<sup>8</sup> and developing the capability to provide foreign law research and reference services for Congress, in addition to U.S. law reference.<sup>9</sup>

While its first obligation is to serve the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court, the Law Library also serves other federal and state courts and agencies, and researchers from across the United States and around the world. The Law Library's first priority is to provide Congress with timely, comprehensive, and innovative research on foreign, comparative, international, and U.S. legal questions.<sup>10</sup> The Law Library also performs legal research for the federal judiciary and federal executive branch agencies on foreign, comparative, international, and U.S. law topics.<sup>11</sup> Its staff also provide legal reference services and guidance on performing legal research to governmental and public patrons who visit its reading room in the Library of Congress or contact the Law Library by telephone or online. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Law

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of the United States, Act of April 24, 1800, ch. 37, § 5, 2 *Stat.* 55 (Apr. 24, 1800).

3. JOLANDE GOLDBERG & NATALIE GAWDIAK, *LIBRARY OF CONGRESS LAW LIBRARY: AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE* 10 (2005). Earlier, in 1790, a committee chaired by Representative Eldridge Gerry of Massachusetts had recommended an initial appropriation of one thousand dollars, and subsequent annual appropriations of five hundred dollars, to acquire a catalog of books including, for example, the laws of the states; the laws of Britain, Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Russia, and Switzerland; parliamentary books; treaties and alliances; and “[s]undry books on the civil and common law, etc etc.” *Gazette of the United-States*, June 26, 1790 at 3, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030483/1790-06-26/ed-1/> (last visited June 27, 2018).
4. GOLDBERG & GAWDIAK, *supra* note 3, at 10.
5. An Act to authorize the purchase of the library of Thomas Jefferson, late President of the United States, ch. 27, 3 *Stat.* 195. (Jan. 30, 1815).
6. GOLDBERG & GAWDIAK, *supra* note 3, at 10.
7. KIMBERLY W. DOBBS & KATHRYN A. HAUN, *THE LAW LIBRARY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS: ITS HISTORY, COLLECTIONS, AND SERVICES* 6 (1978).
8. *Id.* at 7.
9. LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1832–1982, *supra* note 1, at 15-16.
10. *About the Law Library*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://www.loc.gov/law/about/> (congressional version of Law Library website) (last updated Dec. 20, 2017).
11. LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2016 at 4, 12, <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/files/2016/12/FY2016-LAW-ANNUAL-REPORT.pdf>.

Library has assembled a diverse team of experienced foreign and American-trained lawyers and law librarians.

The Law Library is responsible for developing, maintaining, preserving, and managing a vast trove of legal materials assiduously built and organized over more than two centuries. The law collection supports the services that the Law Library and the Congressional Research Service<sup>12</sup> provide to the Congress, and that the Law Library provides to the Supreme Court, other courts and agencies, and the nation. To facilitate comprehensive research, analysis, and reference services, it has built a collection of authoritative legal sources in original languages including more than 2.9 million volumes and 3 million micro-format items.<sup>13</sup> This includes U.S., foreign, and international legal materials covering approximately 260 jurisdictions, along with a number of former nations and colonies.<sup>14</sup>

*B. Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Research  
for Congress and Federal Courts and Agencies*

The Law Library serves as a congressional research arm in the field of foreign, comparative, and international law utilizing its unique collection of legal materials from all countries of the world and its multilingual team of experts on global legal systems, who were trained as attorneys in the U.S. and abroad and are experienced in practicing or teaching law outside of the United States. These experts, referred to as foreign law specialists, are tasked with providing Congress with comprehensive, high-quality, timely, and cutting edge research on foreign, international, and comparative law, and a wide range of reference services.<sup>15</sup> Most of the researchers have geographic or institutional responsibilities. They monitor legal developments in their assigned jurisdictions and are the Law Library's best-informed specialists in those countries' legal systems.

The impetus behind creating this group of foreign law specialists was to improve research services for Congress by explaining to congressional requesters how a law or legal concept would be applied in a foreign country, how it is interpreted by the domestic courts and scholars of that country, and how a specific problem would be resolved according to the laws of that country—in other words, to paint a broader picture of how each foreign jurisdiction's legal system really works and compare its laws with those of the United States. Foreign law specialists also provide occasional translations of foreign laws for Congress.

12. The Congressional Research Service is a legislative branch agency within the Library of Congress that works exclusively for Congress. For more information about the work of the Congressional Research Service, see *About CRS*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/about/> (last updated Apr. 19, 2018).

13. *About the Law Collections*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/about/collections.php> (last updated Apr. 3, 2018).

14. *Id.*

15. *About the Law Library*, *supra* note 10.

The Law Library's foreign law specialists provide members of Congress and their staff with information on how foreign and international legal mechanisms might be used in responding to modern legal challenges, and help members of Congress understand how law is made in foreign jurisdictions and what impact the adoption of similar legislation in other countries has had in the social, political, and economic arenas. A variety of research products produced by the Law Library in response to congressional inquiries are available to the public on the Law Library's website (unless confidential treatment is required by the requester).<sup>16</sup>

The Law Library responds to approximately 1,500 congressional requests every year. About one-third of these responses are full-scale comparative studies for a single country or a collection of countries ("multinational reports"), comparative analyses, and foreign law briefs. Members of Congress are also provided with comparative charts (sometimes encompassing a majority of all existing world jurisdictions) and reference assistance. A variety of online publications on different topics related to specific aspects of international law and the laws of foreign nations and international organizations serve the purpose of better informing Congress and other Law Library patrons of ongoing legal developments worldwide. The foreign law specialists do not play an advisory role in policy making and are not directly involved in resolving pressing political issues. However, they assist Congress by using foreign examples to warn legislators about possible failures of implemented legislation, and to provide examples of best practices in legal regulation.

Responses to congressional requests typically take the form of reports, which include an analytical review of all national legislation in force on a specific topic. These reports often review the legislative history and intent behind a law; provide an analysis of relevant court practices and implementation of the law, including its practical consequences; incorporate related statistics; evaluate proposed amendments; and provide a bibliography. When justified by the topic, responses are presented as comparative charts accompanied by maps, graphs, diagrams, and other visualization tools.<sup>17</sup>

Most of the reports cover the G-7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), together with the European Union as a separate jurisdiction. Inclusion of these countries in the studies is often justified by their dominant position in the global legal system and by the variety of approaches to particular problems that they demonstrate. However, many reports also cover other jurisdictions from which requesters cannot obtain information and where the researcher's specialized knowledge is critical.

16. See *Research & Reports*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/reports/index.php> (last updated Nov. 18, 2016).

17. Because the Law Library's research products are based on primary and secondary legal sources, they do not include data analysis; instead, reliable statistical information published by national governments, international organizations, or other scholars is used.

The Law Library's research products for Congress do not contain justifications or criticism and do not attempt to say which legal system is "better". Rather, researchers identify problems, indicate how they are viewed by different schools of legal thought, and point out solutions proposed in the literature. Striving to be objective, nonpartisan, and unbiased, the Law Library's research brings different opinions to the table and allows the reader to weigh them and make an informed conclusion based on the knowledge received. By not making specific recommendations, the Law Library believes its comparative law reports remain a source of information and retain their research value over time.

In addition to its research for Congress, the Law Library also occasionally provides comparative studies and other research reports to federal judges and federal agencies. This research may be performed for judges when cases before them have a foreign or international law component. In some cases, the judges want to know how the courts of other nations handled similar cases, what justification was used by foreign judges when they wrote their opinions, or simply what the foreign law says if foreign jurisprudence or legislation must be considered. Executive agencies may also request the Law Library's assistance with comparative or other in-depth research projects.

### *C. U.S. Law Reference and Research Services for Congress, Courts, and Agencies*

In addition to the in-depth foreign, comparative, and international law research reports prepared by the Law Library's foreign law specialists, the Law Library also provides extensive reference services on a priority basis to members of Congress, congressional committees, and members of their respective staffs. The Law Library's reference staff, many of whom have law degrees as well as library science degrees, assist congressional patrons with questions on how to perform legislative and legal research, suggesting research strategies and recommending online and print resources. Reference librarians also help congressional users locate and identify legal materials in the Library of Congress catalog. As required by the U.S. Code, the Law Library's reading room is open to members of Congress and congressional staff—and a reference librarian is on duty—whenever either chamber of Congress is in session, regardless of the hour.<sup>18</sup>

The Law Library provides significant services to the federal judiciary, as well as to federal agencies and state courts and agencies. Foremost among those relationships is that with the U.S. Supreme Court and the Court's library. In

18. This is required by the United States Code at 2 U.S.C. § 138 (2012). To fulfill this duty, the Law Library's reading room remains open to members of Congress and their staffs, and is staffed by a reference librarian, until 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. In addition, the reading room remains open for members and staff, and the reference librarian remains on duty, until Congress adjourns that night (or, if Congress remains in session overnight, until relieved by a colleague the next morning).

a provision dating back to the original 1832 federal statute that established the Law Library, the U.S. Code provides that the “justices of the Supreme Court shall have free access to the [L]aw [L]ibrary [of Congress.]”<sup>19</sup> To fulfill this duty, the Law Library provides priority lending, research, and reference services to the Court.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, by federal statute, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has the power to recommend acquisitions for the Law Library,<sup>21</sup> and the Justices may make regulations for use of the Law Library while the Court is sitting.<sup>22</sup> The librarians also provide priority reference and research services to the other U.S. courts and federal agencies, as well as to state courts and state agencies, and serve as a resource for their librarians.

## II. Resources for Researchers

### *A. Collections*

The Law Library of Congress has endeavored to build a “universal collection of legal literature from all times, nations and jurisdictions.”<sup>23</sup> In addition to a comprehensive set of U.S. law materials, the Law Library also holds an extensive collection of legal materials from around the globe that includes the earliest periods of law up through the present.<sup>24</sup> Materials from and about civil law, common law, customary law, and religious law systems are found in its reading room and stacks.<sup>25</sup>

Researchers access the Law Library’s collection primarily through its reading room, located on the second floor of the Library of Congress’s James Madison Memorial Building in Washington, D.C.<sup>26</sup> The reading room holds a reference collection that includes primary sources for federal statutes, administrative materials, and case reporters, as well as selected statutory, administrative, and case reporters for each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia, along with an array of treatises and other reference works on federal, state, and international law. Selected primary-source foreign law materials are maintained

19. 2 U.S.C. § 137 (2012).

20. Luis M. Acosta & Anna M. Cherry, *Reference Services in Courts and Governmental Settings*, 26 *LEGAL REF. SERVICES Q.* 113, 118-19 (2007).

21. 2 U.S.C. § 135 (2012).

22. 2 U.S.C. § 137.

23. Nathan Dorn, *The World’s Legal Heritage in Great Subterranean Halls, or . . . A Collection Big with Babylonian Perspective*, IN *CUSTODIA LEGIS* (May 7, 2013), <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2013/05/the-worlds-legal-heritage-in-great-subterranean-halls-or-a-collection-big-with-babylonian-perspective/>.

24. *Library of Congress Collections Policy Statements: Law*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1-2 (Feb. 2018), <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/law.pdf>.

25. *Id.* at 2.

26. For more information on visiting the Law Library to perform research, see *Visiting the Law Library*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/visit/> (last updated July 20, 2017).

in a reference collection in the Global Legal Resource Room (located near the reading room in the Madison Building); researchers may ask in the reading room to be taken to the Global Legal Resource Room to consult those items. Materials not kept in the reading room or the Global Legal Resource Room may be ordered from the stacks for use in the reading room.<sup>27</sup> Researchers who visit the reading room may also search using a number of subscription databases containing legislative and legal materials and information.

### 1. Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Materials

The United States Congress had historically maintained a collection of foreign law materials in its own library and used them in legislative work. The original Thomas Jefferson collection, which served as a foundation for the Library of Congress, included books on foreign law. Among these were Irish and Scottish statutes, French codes, and other acts of civil law countries.<sup>28</sup>

With the understanding that a democratic state under the rule of law cannot ignore the achievements of world civilizations, including the development of legal culture and national legal systems, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Law Library started to acquire systematically official legal materials from all of the existing foreign jurisdictions.<sup>29</sup>

Today, the Law Library of Congress has the world's largest collection of legal materials, with more than 2.9 million volumes. Sixty percent of them are in languages other than English, covering laws and legal materials for approximately 260 jurisdictions, including those that existed in the past or are not yet recognized as independent states. A significant part of the collection consists of foreign electronic legal resources. The Law Library helps readers access legislative materials published online by foreign governments and use foreign commercial databases, which allows them to locate legal documents not otherwise available to American researchers. The Law Library of Congress's collection includes U.S. and foreign official legal documents, parliamentary and government publications, law books, treatises, commentaries, media reports, statistics, reports of international organizations, law reviews and journals, subscription databases, and the Library's own online collections. For many countries, the collection includes documents issued by subnational authorities. The reliance on authentic documents kept in the Library of Congress's collection is a priority, and allows the Law Library to maintain the accuracy and authoritativeness of its products.

In some instances, the collection of the Law Library of Congress is even better than the collection held by the country in question. For example, when

27. The law stacks include two football fields' worth of compact shelving, with additional materials stored at the Library of Congress's off-site storage facility at Fort Meade, Maryland. Christine Sellers, *Did You Say Bigger Than a Football Field?*, IN CUSTODIA LEGIS (Sept. 29, 2010), <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2010/09/bigger-than-a-football-field/>.

28. LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1832-1982, *supra* note 1, at 3.

29. DOBBS & HAUN, *supra* note 7, at 6.

the Taliban were removed from power in Afghanistan in 2001, almost all legal acts that were in effect before Taliban rule and Soviet occupation, including the country's 1964 constitution, could not be found in Kabul. Because the Law Library of Congress was the only place where some of these documents were available, the Law Library was able to provide crucial assistance to the U.S. State Department in an initiative to reassemble Afghani laws that were previously in force, contributing to the project by copying these acts from its collection and sending them to the Afghani government.<sup>30</sup> Another attempt to restore almost the entire collection of a country's law-related materials occurred after the devastating earthquake in Haiti in 2010, when the parliamentary library along with its entire collection were destroyed. In order to restore access to Haitian legal materials, the Law Library of Congress joined a project aimed at digitizing all Haitian laws and legal publications in the public domain.<sup>31</sup>

## 2. U.S. Law Materials

With an extensive collection of U.S. federal, state, and territorial legal materials, as well as pre-statehood materials from the former colonies, the Law Library offers a wealth of resources for academic researchers, with comprehensive coverage as its goal.<sup>32</sup> The Law Library has endeavored to compile "a record as complete as possible of American Federal and State Law. Thus, the American materials include original editions of Colonial, State, and Territorial Session Laws, Codes, and other compilations of statutes and administrative regulations, and most of all, court reports."<sup>33</sup>

The Law Library's federal legislative holdings encompass all stages of the lawmaking cycle. The Law Library holds most publications<sup>34</sup> by Congress and congressional committees, including congressional debates, committee hearings, committee reports, committee prints, House and Senate documents, acts, and all versions of bills.<sup>35</sup> Its collection of congressional documents is

30. *Supporting the Rule of (Afghan) Law*, THE LOC.GOV WISE GUIDE (2006) (on file with author).
31. *Library of Congress Leads Efforts to Restore Haiti's Laws*, 21 LIBRARY OF CONGRESS GAZETTE 6 (May 7, 2010).
32. See *Library of Congress Collections Policy Statements: Law*, *supra* note 24, at 2-3.
33. GOLDBERG & GAWDIK, *supra* note 3, at 128.
34. Non-published congressional materials, such as internal memoranda and other records and archives of congressional committees, are maintained by the Center for Legislative Archives, a part of the National Archives and Records Administration. See *Legislative Branch*, NATIONAL ARCHIVES, CENTER FOR LEGISLATIVE ARCHIVES, <https://www.archives.gov/legislative>. Researchers should be aware that some congressional records are closed and not accessible to the public for specified periods of time. For more information, see *Rules of Access*, NATIONAL ARCHIVES, THE CENTER FOR LEGISLATIVE ARCHIVES, <https://www.archives.gov/legislative/research/rules-of-access.html> (last updated Nov. 1, 2017).
35. *Library of Congress Collections Policy Statements: Law*, *supra* note 24, at 2.



surpassed only by the holdings of the House of Representatives and Senate themselves.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to case reporters containing opinions issued by federal courts and related digests, the Law Library holds copies of filings in cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and the U.S. Courts of Appeals. The Law Library is one of ten law libraries across the country that serve as depositories of records and briefs submitted in U.S. Supreme Court cases.<sup>37</sup> More recent U.S. Supreme Court records and briefs are available in the reading room before they are bound; bound sets may be requested from the stacks. The Law Library also maintains holdings, albeit not comprehensive, of records and briefs filed in cases before the U.S. Courts of Appeals.<sup>38</sup>

The Law Library maintains the current edition and prior editions of the codified statutes of each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the session laws of the states and the District can also be found in the Law Library's stacks or on microform. The collection also includes the regional and state case reporters and digests. Each state's materials typically also include administrative agency regulations, opinions issued by the state's attorney general and other agencies, and various other documents, such as court rules and jury instructions.

There are, at both the U.S. federal and state levels, a wealth of treatises, hornbooks, digests, encyclopedias, law reviews, and other secondary materials available in the Law Library's reading room and in the stacks that can aid in finding and understanding federal and state law. Pursuant to its collection policy, the Law Library collects such materials selectively, although as comprehensively as possible.<sup>39</sup>

### 3. Rare Materials

The Law Library of Congress's Rare Book Collection is a resource for scholarly inquiry into the history of law and legal systems. For its rare materials, the Law Library's collection goal is to build and maintain a collection that

36. GOLDBERG & GAWDIK, *supra* note 3, at 128. Examples of congressional materials sometimes hard to find in print that are available at the Law Library of Congress include a complete United States Congressional Serial Set that includes maps and illustrations, and sets of legislative calendars of congressional committees.
37. *Where to Find Briefs*, SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, <https://www.supremecourt.gov/meritsbriefs/briefsource.aspx> (last updated Oct. 2017).
38. Dates of coverage and format (microform or print) vary from court to court. For detailed information on these holdings, see *Resources for Locating Records & Briefs of the U.S. Federal Courts*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/federal-courts.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).
39. *Library of Congress Collections Policy Statements: Law*, *supra* note 24, at 3.

enables the researcher to trace any legal question in any jurisdiction to the historical roots of the legal system in which it is found.<sup>40</sup> The rare book collection includes approximately 60,000 volumes of books and bound manuscripts, many printed or issued prior to 1801.

The Law Library's holdings in rare foreign law books represent a comprehensive collection of early legal sources from Europe, the British Isles, Colonial and Latin America, and Asia, including both secular and religious legal systems. The collection includes, among many other examples, manuscripts and incunabula (books published prior to 1501) of pre-Justinian, Justinian, medieval, and later sources as well as interpretations of Roman law; manuscripts and 15th-century editions of canon law; a comprehensive collection of printed works of the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church from the hand-press era; consilia (legal opinions typically issued upon the request of a judge) from France, Germany, Italy, and Spain from the 14th to 18th centuries; printed books of the customary laws of France and neighboring countries from the 15th through 18th centuries; manuscripts, incunabula, and major treatises on international law; treatises on maritime law published in France, England, Italy, and Spain; and Russian legal materials from before the time of the Soviet Union, including approximate 1,300 volumes from the personal collection of the tsars of Russia.<sup>41</sup>

Rare Anglo-American materials offer a wealth of resources for those investigating the origins of U.S. jurisprudence and lawmaking. The William Blackstone collection includes more than 350 titles by Blackstone, encompassing numerous editions of his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, as well as other treatises, tracts, and essays by the famed English jurist.<sup>42</sup> Selected other highlights include the English and American trials collection, with complete official or quasi-official transcripts of trials, confessions, and narrative accounts of criminal, commercial, and political cases in Great Britain and America since the 16th century; a collection of approximately 100 cases on appeal to the Privy Council in England from the colonies of Virginia, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, as well as Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, and St. Christopher; original editions of colonial, state, and territorial session laws and codes; original editions of early session laws of the colonies that became the United States, original editions of session laws of the United States following 1789, as well as of the Confederate States of America; and constitutions and bylaws of Native American Indian tribes. The collection also offers unofficial early American legal publications, including guides concerning the rights and duties of citizens; abridgments of the law

40. Conversation with Nathan Dorn, Rare Book Curator, Law Library of Congress, May 24, 2018.

41. *The Rare Book Collection*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/find/rare-books.php> (last updated Feb. 1, 2018).

42. *Id.*

for officials, lawyers, and laymen; manuals used by justices of the peace; and judicial biographies.<sup>43</sup>

### *B. Online Resources*

#### *i. Law.gov*

Most legal researchers initially come into contact with the Law Library's resources through its homepage, Law.gov. Law.gov provides many points of entry for patrons, both those beginning their research and those attempting to hone or update an existing legal project. The former group of patrons will find a multitude of helpful resources in the Law Library's Guide to Law Online.<sup>44</sup> The Guide to Law Online ("Guide"), a curated compendium of free legal and legislative resources available online, is maintained by Law Library librarians. Although selection for inclusion in the Guide is not an endorsement by the Law Library, the selection process does put an "emphasis wherever possible . . . on sites offering the full texts of laws, regulations, and court decisions, along with commentary from lawyers writing primarily for other lawyers," as well as "[m]aterials related to law and government that were written by or for lay persons . . . [and] government sites that provide even quite general information about themselves and their agencies."<sup>45</sup>

While researchers might initially expect only U.S. resources to be listed—and, indeed, there is a robust U.S. collection with regard to federal law<sup>46</sup> and the laws of U.S. states and territories<sup>47</sup>—the Guide also contains detailed guides regarding foreign, international, and multinational law. In the "Nations of the World" section of the Guide, researchers can find a list of jurisdictional pages for countries, territories, dependencies, special administrative regions, and special sovereignties around the world.<sup>48</sup> Each jurisdiction's Guide page contains links to resources grouped into six subject areas: constitution, executive branch, judicial branch, legislative branch, legal guides, and general sources. While the first four sections will typically link to governmental and educational resources in that jurisdiction's official language(s), the final two sections contain largely English-language guides concerning legal, legislative, political, historical, economic, and other social science-related research regarding the jurisdiction. In this way, a patron who is familiar with

43. *Id.*

44. *Guide to Law Online*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

45. *Id.*

46. *Guide to Law Online: U.S. Federal*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/federal.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

47. *Guide to Law Online: U.S. States and Territories*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/states.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

48. *Guide to Law Online: Nations*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/nations.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

the political framework and the official language(s) of the jurisdiction can immediately begin their review of the primary sources freely available online; however, if patrons are just beginning their research regarding a jurisdiction, or are unfamiliar with the content or language of certain resources available in a jurisdiction, they can utilize the research guides provided to frame their research process.

In addition to the jurisdiction-specific resources found in the “Nations of the World” section of the Guide, researchers can look to the “International” section to find information about international and comparative law resources.<sup>49</sup> One such resource is the “Multinational Reference” research guide, which links to collections of constitutions; official gazettes; websites of professional legal organizations and law schools; legal news articles; and information about executive, judicial, and legislative institutions worldwide.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, researchers can find the “Treaties” legal research guide, which links not only to resources that describe how to do treaty research,<sup>51</sup> but also to primary resources, like the Law Library’s recently-digitized *Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949*, compiled by Charles Bevans,<sup>52</sup> and the United Nations Treaty Collection’s “Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General” page.<sup>53</sup> Researchers can also use the links in the International section to find guides and journals published by law schools around the globe.

Researchers who are interested in comparative law, particularly with regard to the treatment of different issues and subjects in the law, may want to visit the “Current Legal Topics” page under the “Legal Reports” section of Law.gov.<sup>54</sup> As explained above, the Law Library’s foreign law specialists generate legal research reports, upon request by the staff members of congressional committees, members of Congress, and federal agencies, which “provide commentary and recommended resources” regarding the laws of different nations on a specific subject.<sup>55</sup> When the groups for which these reports are originally drafted approve their public release, the reports are published on the “Current Legal Topics” page. Each report page allows for the download of the

49. *Guide to Law Online: International*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/international.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

50. *Guide to Law Online: Multinational Reference*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/multiref.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

51. *Guide to Law Online: Treaties*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/treaties.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

52. TREATIES AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 1776-1949 (Charles I. Bevans ed., 1968), available at <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans.php>.

53. *United Nations Treaty Collection: Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General*, UNITED NATIONS, <https://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx> (last visited May 17, 2018).

54. *Current Legal Topics*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/current-topics.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

55. *Id.*

entire report in PDF form, or patrons can click on a country's link to be taken to that country's section in an HTML version of the report.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, each report is thoroughly edited and cited—researchers can find the citations to the materials used to create the report, including links to resources that can be found online for free, in either footnotes (PDF version) or endnotes (HTML version). Older reports are available through the “Comprehensive Index of Legal Reports” link.

For cutting-edge news about legal and legislative actions around the globe, the Law Library's *Global Legal Monitor* (GLM) page might be of particular interest.<sup>57</sup> This publication consists of brief articles written by foreign law specialists regarding current law-related events occurring in their countries of interest, using “information from official national legal publications and reliable press sources.”<sup>58</sup> GLM articles, which are published almost every business day, contain extensive in-text citations to these reliable sources, as well as a box that provides information about the author, the jurisdiction(s) involved, and a list of topics the article is thought to touch on.<sup>59</sup> If a researcher is interested in finding other articles related to any of these areas (i.e., other articles dealing with a listed jurisdiction, or authored by the same foreign law specialist), they need only click the hyperlinked text to be taken to a specialized search of the GLM database. The publication also has an interactive search screen, linked at the top of every GLM page, that allows for a full-text keyword search of GLM articles, as well as searching by topic, jurisdiction, author, and date.<sup>60</sup>

To keep their research current, and thus stay abreast of the publication of new Current Legal Topics reports and GLM articles, researchers can subscribe to RSS feeds or sign up for e-mail alerts regarding these publications. If researchers are already on the Current Legal Topics homepage, or have opened a report, they can simply click the “Subscribe” link at the top of each Current Legal Topics page to open the subscription window.<sup>61</sup> This window allows researchers to set up email alerts that will send an email any time a Current Legal Topics report is posted and/or every time a GLM article is posted, as well as provide an option to subscribe to the RSS feeds for either publication.<sup>62</sup>

56. See, e.g., Staff of the Global Legal Research Directorate, *Parliamentary Procedures Requiring a Supermajority*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (Apr. 2017), <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/parliamentary-procedures/supermajority.php>.

57. *Global Legal Monitor*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

58. *Id.*

59. See, e.g., Jenny Gesley, *Germany: New Rules for Operation of Drones and Model Aircraft*, GLOBAL LEGAL MONITOR (Apr. 24, 2017), <https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/germany-new-rules-for-operation-of-drones-and-model-aircraft/>.

60. *Search the Global Legal Monitor*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/search/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

61. *Current Legal Topics*, *supra* note 54.

62. *Id.*

If researchers would like to focus their attention on articles regarding a certain topic or jurisdiction, they can visit the GLM “RSS Feeds” page to subscribe to one or more RSS feeds of their choosing.<sup>63</sup> Much like the search screen discussed above, the link to the RSS Feeds page can be found at the top of every GLM page.

Another publication from the Law Library offered in the subscription window mentioned above is *In Custodia Legis*, the Law Library’s blog.<sup>64</sup> The blog posts, authored by staff of the Law Library, deal with a variety of topics, including “current legal trends, developments and enhancements to Congress.gov, issues in collecting for the largest law library in the world, legal history and arcana and a range of international perspectives, including New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Israel, Eritrea, China, and Mexico,” among many others.<sup>65</sup> Of particular interest to non-U.S. researchers is the “Global Law” category of the blog—when the Global Law link on the left-hand side of any *In Custodia Legis* page is clicked, it opens an archive of all the posts that focus on foreign, international, and comparative legal and legislative topics.<sup>66</sup> Another category of interest is the “Research Guide,” which collects all the research guides posted on the blog, whether they focus on U.S., international, foreign, or comparative law.<sup>67</sup> For researchers that have a particular topic in mind, the blog also makes a keyword search available, which can be found on the left-hand side of every *In Custodia Legis* page.

In addition to the many resources listed above, the Law Library also provides an option for online reference assistance through its Ask a Librarian service, which is found through a link at the top of every Law.gov page.<sup>68</sup> Due to the online nature of the interface, the Law Library is able to receive questions from patrons around the world. While the librarians and foreign law specialists at the Law Library cannot provide “[l]egal advice, interpretation, or analysis which could be interpreted as the practice of law,” a “[c]ompilation of bibliographies or legislative histories,” or “[a]nswers for student assignments,” they are able to, and do, assist patrons with regard to their questions about legal and legislative research, no matter the jurisdiction.<sup>69</sup>

63. *Global Legal Monitor: RSS Feeds*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/rss-feeds/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

64. *IN CUSTODIA LEGIS*, <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/> (last visited May 17, 2018); *Current Legal Topics*, *supra* note 54.

65. *About*, *IN CUSTODIA LEGIS*, <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/about/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

66. *Archive for the Global Law Category*, *IN CUSTODIA LEGIS*, <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/category/global-law/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

67. *Archive for the Research Guide Category*, *IN CUSTODIA LEGIS*, <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/category/research-guide-2/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

68. *Ask a Librarian*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/tr/asklib/ask-law.html> (last visited May 17, 2018).

69. *Id.*

## 2. Congress.gov and A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation

Congress.gov is a powerful online tool for federal legislative research that is available globally. The official online legislative system for the U.S. Congress, Congress.gov is presented by the Library of Congress using information provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Office of the Secretary of the Senate, Government Publishing Office, Congressional Budget Office, and Congressional Research Service.<sup>70</sup> Congress.gov enables users to find proposed and enacted federal legislation and related congressional committee reports.<sup>71</sup> The full text of bills is available from 1989 through the present, and bill status information is available from 1973 through the present.<sup>72</sup> Congress.gov also provides information about members of Congress, their remarks in the *Congressional Record*, and bills that have been sponsored or cosponsored by them.

In addition to proposed and enacted legislation, Congress.gov also offers other congressional documents, as well as other resources for the researcher. Congress.gov provides online access to the daily editions of the *Congressional Record*, congressional committee reports, treaty documents, presidential nominations, records of presidential and other executive branch communications, and petitions to Congress by other governmental bodies and entities, as well as other information resources. Users of the website can also consult guides to the lawmaking process prepared by Senate and House parliamentarians.<sup>73</sup> Those engaged in constitutional law research can take advantage of the online version of the *Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation*, more commonly known as the Constitution Annotated.<sup>74</sup> Prepared and updated by the Congressional Research Service, the Constitution Annotated contains legal analysis and interpretation of the articles of and amendments to the Constitution, based primarily on Supreme Court decisions. An online version of the Federalist Papers can also be read on Congress.gov.<sup>75</sup>

70. *About Congress.gov*, CONGRESS.GOV, <https://www.congress.gov/about> (last visited May 18, 2018). Congress.gov is the successor to the THOMAS database, which was retired in July 2016.

71. To learn more about the legislative documents and other materials available on Congress.gov, see *Congress.gov Resources*, CONGRESS.GOV, <https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/Congress.gov+Resources> (last visited May 18, 2018).

72. For more information about the dates of coverage for materials on Congress.gov, see *Coverage Dates for Legislative Information*, CONGRESS.GOV, <https://www.congress.gov/about/coverage-dates> (last visited May 18, 2018).

73. *Learn about the Legislative Process*, CONGRESS.GOV, <https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/Learn+About+the+Legislative+Process> (last visited May 30, 2018).

74. CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION (interim ed. 2017), available at <https://www.congress.gov/constitution-annotated>.

75. *The Federalist Papers (1787-1788)*, CONGRESS.GOV, <https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers> (last visited May 30, 2018).

The Library of Congress's site *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation*<sup>76</sup> is an important source of historical legislative and statutory resources for the researcher. This online collection includes digitized materials from 1774-1875. Legislative documents include congressional bills and resolutions, *United States Statutes at Large*, the *American State Papers*, and the *United States Congressional Serial Set* from that period. Also included are, among other resources, the *Congressional Record* and its predecessors, House and Senate Journals, and *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*.

### III. Services for Researchers

#### A. Legal Reference Services

##### 1. Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Reference Services

As the “*de facto* law library of the United States,”<sup>77</sup> the Law Library of Congress is open to all categories of readers, including members of the bar, academia, and law students, who can utilize the Law Library's collection and expertise of the staff. In discussing the Law Library's services to a broader audience, it may be useful to draw a distinction between comparative and foreign law research. While comparative law research is performed mainly in response to congressional requests, responses to individual requesters are usually focused on the laws of a particular foreign country because researchers contact the Law Library when they need information to resolve country-specific matters or need information about the legal system of a country in which reliable sources are not easily accessible.

Individual requesters may ask, for example, about the proper way to legitimize a child born outside of a marriage in Mexico, whether Chinese ceremonial marriages have legal consequences for establishing one's family status, or if someone who goes on vacation to Canada can take a rifle with him. In their responses to private inquiries, legal specialists identify appropriate governing law and recommend available paper and electronic American and foreign resources that may be helpful in finding legal solutions to a problem, but stop short of providing legal advice. They may also help requesters understand doctrines accepted in the jurisdiction in question and locate judicial interpretations if needed. This information is conveyed to the requester in plain language because public researchers may be unfamiliar with foreign or international law in general, or the legal system of the jurisdiction in question in particular. This type of work requires specialized skills and access to a variety of resources, sometimes much more specific than those available for general research.

76. *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/> (last visited May 30, 2018).

77. *Library of Congress Collections Policy Statements: Law*, *supra* note 24.



## 2. U.S. Law Reference Services

The reference librarians at the Law Library of Congress are available to assist researchers performing federal and state legislative and legal research. During public operating hours, two reference librarians are available for consultation in the reading room, either in person or by telephone. Researchers may also contact the reference librarians using the Library of Congress's online "Ask a Librarian" service.<sup>78</sup> The reference librarians can provide guidance on research strategies and possible resources, and can also assist with identifying relevant materials in the Library of Congress's online catalog.

The librarians field legal reference questions at all levels of complexity from all types of patrons—members of Congress, their staff, federal and state agencies and courts, law professors and students, journalists, and other researchers from across the country and around the world—at one of the most active legal reference desks in the world.<sup>79</sup> They can assist researchers with guidance on research strategies and resources and with locating materials that may be unique to the Law Library's collection (or found in very few other libraries) and facilitate contact with foreign law specialists and other reading rooms in the Library of Congress that may hold materials of interest to the legal researcher, such as the Manuscript Reading Room,<sup>80</sup> which holds the papers of various U.S. Supreme Court Justices and other federal court judges,<sup>81</sup> and members of Congress.<sup>82</sup> Legislative history research is an area on which the reference librarians are regularly consulted, and they are familiar with sources of legislative information and documents available on [Congress.gov](http://Congress.gov) and other government websites, subscription databases, microform collections, and less common materials in the print collection, such as the Law Library's bound collection of congressional bills.

### *B. Legal Research Instruction*

In addition to providing one-on-one reference assistance, the Law Library provides a series of classes to individuals seeking guidance regarding legal and legislative research. These presentations are an important form of outreach for the Law Library, with the staff of its Public Services Division providing around 200 briefings, seminars, tours, webinars, and classes to approximately 5,680

78. See *Ask a Librarian*, *supra* note 68.

79. In fiscal year 2017, for example, the reference librarians answered over 18,000 reference questions in person in the reading room, by telephone, or electronically.

80. *Manuscript Reading Room*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/> (last visited May 22, 2018).

81. *Library of Congress Manuscripts: An Illustrated Guide—Federal Judiciary*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/guide/federal.html> (last visited May 30, 2018).

82. *Library of Congress Manuscripts: An Illustrated Guide—Congress*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/guide/congress.html> (last visited May 30, 2018).

patrons in the last year.<sup>83</sup> As of May 2018, these presentations fall largely into two groups—in-person and online offerings.<sup>84</sup>

### 1. In-Person Classes

The foundation of in-person legal research instruction for the public at the Law Library is in two regularly-scheduled classes—“Orientation to Legal Research” and “Orientation to Law Library Collections.”<sup>85</sup> Recognizing that legal research can be particularly difficult for novice researchers, the Orientation to Legal Research (OLR) class is geared toward patrons who have never performed legal research, or alternatively, are not familiar with U.S.-specific legal research. Thus, the instructors of the OLR class, all of whom are librarians in the Public Services Division of the Law Library, provide researchers with a “basic introduction to legal sources and research techniques,” focusing on “statutes, regulations, and court cases and the relationships among them.”<sup>86</sup> The two-and-a-half-hour OLR classes are offered once a month in the James Madison Memorial Building, the same building that houses the Law Library.<sup>87</sup> To reach out to patrons who cannot visit the Law Library during the work week, there are special, shortened OLR classes offered as part of the larger Library of Congress Saturday Morning Research Orientations rotation.<sup>88</sup>

For researchers who are familiar with legal research, particularly with regard to the U.S. federal and state systems, the Law Library offers a one-hour class that focuses on its specific resources called Orientation to Law Library Collections (OLLC).<sup>89</sup> Researchers who attend the OLLC class learn about the Law Library’s unique print and digital resources, as well as how to access these resources, both in person and online. Additionally, each OLLC class ends with a tour of the Law Library reading room, so that researchers can visualize how the resources are laid out in the physical space.<sup>90</sup> Like the OLR class, OLLC classes are held once a month in the James Madison Memorial

83. LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, REPORT TO THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (Apr. 2018); LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, REPORT TO THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (Nov. 2017).

84. *Educational and Research Opportunities: Webinars and In-Person Orientations*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://www.loc.gov/law/opportunities/seminar-orient.php> (last visited May 17, 2018).

85. *Id.*

86. *Id.*

87. *Id.*

88. *Information for Researchers Using the Library of Congress: Saturday Classes for Researchers*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/main/satorient/> (last visited May 17, 2018).

89. *Educational and Research Opportunities: Webinars and In-Person Orientations*, *supra* note 84.

90. More information about the reading room, which was remodeled in 2015, can be found on the Law Library’s blog, *In Custodia Legis*. See, e.g., Jeanine Cali, *Grand Re-Opening of the Law Library Reading Room*, IN CUSTODIA LEGIS (Sept. 23, 2015), <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2015/09/grand-re-opening-of-the-law-library-reading-room/>.

Building.<sup>91</sup> As both the OLR and the OLLC classes are open to the public, the only restriction on attendance is classroom space—as such, the Law Library asks attendees to view the class schedules and sign up for classes on its website.<sup>92</sup>

## 2. Online Classes

Because not every group or patron is able to come to Washington, D.C. to visit the Law Library in person, the Law Library has begun making selected classes available via webinar. To date, these webinars have focused on materials that are also found online, such as Law.gov,<sup>93</sup> Congress.gov,<sup>94</sup> and *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation*.<sup>95</sup> The most well-established of these online classes is the Congress.gov webinar, which is “designed to give a basic overview” of the official U.S. federal legislative information website, including “searching legislation and the congressional member information attached to the legislation.”<sup>96</sup> The webinar is offered bimonthly, and can be accessed by any patron that has the necessary technical capabilities and has registered for the class (after which they receive the permalink for the webinar “room”).<sup>97</sup> The instructors in this webinar are able to create a more responsive class due to the webinar structure, as they conduct the class largely through a “screen share” option, where patrons can see the features and sample searches being discussed in real time.<sup>98</sup> Webinar attendees are also able to use the webinar software’s “chat” and “feedback” tools to provide immediate reactions to the presentation or ask questions of the instructors.<sup>99</sup> To further promote audience participation, instructors leave time at the end of the webinar to provide additional opportunities for questions.

While not scheduled on a recurring basis like the Congress.gov webinar, other Law Library online class offerings have been provided to interested

91. *Educational and Research Opportunities: Webinars and In-Person Orientations*, *supra* note 84.
92. *Id.* Note that the Law Library is currently using the Eventbrite ticketing website to coordinate class registration. The Law Library’s Eventbrite page can be found at *Law Library of Congress*, EVENTBRITE, <https://lawlibraryofcongress.eventbrite.com>.
93. *See* Part II(B)(1).
94. *See* Part II(B)(2).
95. *Id.*
96. *Educational and Research Opportunities: Webinars and In-Person Orientations*, *supra* note 84.
97. *Id.*; *see, e.g., Eventbrite: Congress.gov Webinar - July 26, 2018*, EVENTBRITE, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/congressgov-webinar-july-26-2018-registration-44893011205>. A note on every Eventbrite registration page details how patrons can prepare their computers in order to participate in the webinar.
98. *Screen share - free. With Webex Meetings*, CISCO WEBEX, <https://www.webex.com/features/screen-share.html> (last visited May 30, 2018). Cisco Webex is the current provider of webinar software to the Law Library.
99. *Best Practices for Communicating with Participants in Event Center*, CISCO, <https://collaborationhelp.cisco.com/article/en-us/nok6zhi> (last visited May 30, 2018).

professional visitors and groups.<sup>100</sup> In fact, two examples of such offerings are provided for free viewing at Law.gov, via the “Legal Research Guides” page.<sup>101</sup> Groups can contact the Law Library to set up a webinar for their members.<sup>102</sup>

#### IV. Public Events and Academic and Professional Visits

As part of its educational outreach, the Law Library of Congress holds several public events<sup>103</sup> per year. Its main annual events include Law Day (May 1), Constitution Day (September 17), and Human Rights Day (December 10). For Law Day, the Law Library often builds its program around the American Bar Association’s selected theme and invites prominent legal scholars, leaders in law, and practitioners to give a public lecture. Constitution Day events have featured authors on constitutional law and history, and professors of law and jurisprudence. For Human Rights Day, the Law Library has convened panelists to discuss, for example, Islamic law reform, bioethics, the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons, and the Miranda warning.

The Law Library also provides classes, briefings, and tours to law students, law professors, attorneys, law librarians, and other “professional visitors from around the world[,] including foreign government officials, government agency personnel, librarians and information technology specialists from other national libraries, [and] library science students.”<sup>104</sup> When a representative from a group contacts the Law Library,<sup>105</sup> staff members work with them to determine whether they have particular research needs that should be addressed during their visit.<sup>106</sup> Law Library staff members then work to create an event schedule, which may include some combination of classes, orientations, panel discussions, reading room or exhibition tours, and topic briefings, to assist in addressing those interests.<sup>107</sup>

100. *Tours and Briefings*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://www.loc.gov/law/visit/tours.php> (last updated Feb. 29, 2016).

101. *Legal Research Guides*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/how-find.php> (last updated Jan. 31, 2018).

102. Webinars may be arranged by contacting the Law Library’s Office of External Relations at [lawoutreach@loc.gov](mailto:lawoutreach@loc.gov).

103. Events are free and open to the public. Individuals do not need to be registered readers to attend an event. Registration for events are handled via Eventbrite at <https://lawlibraryofcongress.eventbrite.com>.

104. *Tours and Briefings*, *supra* note 100.

105. Classes, tours, and briefings may be arranged by contacting the Law Library’s Office of External Relations at [lawoutreach@loc.gov](mailto:lawoutreach@loc.gov).

106. *Tours and Briefings*, *supra* note 100.

107. *Id.*

## V. Internship Opportunities

### *A. Foreign and Comparative Law Interns*

The Law Library provides opportunities for academics focusing on foreign and comparative law to conduct their own research using all Law Library (and Library of Congress) resources. Every year, the Law Library selects several American and foreign legal scholars who, during an extended period of time (usually a semester) pursue their research projects, work with Law Library staff, network with Washington, D.C.-area professionals, present as guest speakers at varied scholarly events organized by the Library, and have the chance to contribute to Law Library publications. This program is especially popular among postgraduate students working on their dissertations and newer faculty members. There are different programs tailored to the professional needs of emerging researchers as well as established scholars.

The Law Library is also a popular place for internships among American and foreign law students, especially those who are pursuing LL.M. degrees. Interns who join the Library's team of foreign law specialists are selected based on their knowledge of particular legal systems and language skills. While working three to four months under the supervision of Law Library researchers, the interns are involved in the Law Library's daily work and help the Law Library's staff to provide research, advice, and assistance to its clients on foreign (primarily the intern's country of first legal education) legal issues. Those who have no foreign legal background work on U.S. and general international law issues. Depending on their training, education, and language skills, interns are often asked to prepare information for the Law Library on basic trends in legislative developments and legal publishing in various countries. It is always a plus when interns have some previous research experience and knowledge of U.S. law, which is helpful for the purpose of interpreting foreign legal concepts for American lawyers.

### *B. U.S. Law Librarianship Interns*

The Law Library also hosts a number of interns who are interested in U.S. legal reference and research, legal collections, or digital projects for the Law Library. These interns typically have earned a law degree and are working on or have recently completed a master's degree in library and information science. In some cases, these internships may be performed for academic credit and may last from one month to one year.

## VI. Conclusion

As the "*de facto* law library of the United States,"<sup>108</sup> the Law Library of Congress is open to scholars and students who wish to visit its reading room, contact its reference librarians by telephone, or submit a question online. This overview of the Law Library's mission, services, and collections will

108. *Library of Congress Collections Policy Statements: Law*, *supra* note 24.

hopefully encourage academic researchers to consider availing themselves of the multitude of national and global legal resources found at the Law Library of Congress and on its website, and the expertise of its staff who use, develop, and maintain its collection.