

Building Skills to Teach Outside the Research Box: Law Librarians Teaching Legal Writing to 1Ls

Stephanie Ziegler, Matt Cooper, Sara Sampson, and Ingrid Mattson

Teaching Tips

- Consider students' cognitive load—don't try to teach them everything at once.
- Develop a set of exercises that, over the semester, build students' skills and experience. Students' final assignment can then require them to use *all* their skills in an integrated way.
- Know the legal writing languages of your students—CREXAC, IRAC.
- Make it *clear* to students when you are teaching them a transferable skill.
- Understand metacognition—it's okay to have students do a task and struggle, *then* go over the task and learning process with them.

Tips to Balance Your Time When Teaching

- Plan far ahead of the semester or quarter in which you are teaching—maybe even two semesters or quarters ahead.
- Plan your entire semester, including exercises and keys, in advance.
- Be thoughtful about feedback. Give it strategically to increase its impact and minimize your grading time.
- Focus on techniques that are pedagogically sound *and* more efficient.
- Be flexible with your time—it can be okay to stay a little late one day and come in a little late the next day.
- Set boundaries with students with respect to your time.
- Rely on your librarian colleagues and think of yourselves as a team. You don't have to do it all.

Tips to Build Relationships with Legal Writing Colleagues

- Build and share your knowledge.
- Strategically share library resources.
- Cultivate a culture of respect for each party's expertise.