



## EDITOR'S NOTE

# REFLECTIONS

From the No Standing Still Zone

**T**his week I concluded teaching my section of Advanced Legal Research, a course my colleagues and I reworked into a hybrid simulation course in response to recent changes in the American Bar Association (ABA) law school accreditation standards. The advanced research course—which follows our required second-year, for-credit, semester-long research course—gave my colleagues, Ben Keele and Susan deMaine, and me a platform to explore topics relevant to new lawyers and create exercises that reflect “real-world” legal work. In short, this new take on an old course provided an opportunity to stretch ourselves and our students.

My sessions covered decoding financial statements; finding and using market data; locating, generating, and using corporate forms; evaluating the information and filings of publicly traded corporations; and advising small businesses. My last session included critical thinking exercises that challenged students to evaluate their basic assumptions about the law and problem solving. As I reflect upon the seven or so hours spent with my students, I realize that I teach less about *how to find* information and more about *how to interact* with information and *why*.

Five years ago, under our law school's former law library director Judith Anspach, the law librarians proposed a required second-year legal research course. We were given the option of “no course” or teaching the course online. Together we stepped up, took an innovative step forward, and began teaching online. Since then, we have expanded the content to include administrative research, competitive intelligence, practitioner tools, and low-cost research alternatives. Doing so gave us the platform from which to deliver the Advanced Legal Research course as a simulation, geared toward the larger goal of developing courses that best prepare our students to succeed in the changing legal industry.

As law librarians, we are often at the forefront of change, as we are the first to interact with new or changing platforms, new vendors, and new content. We are frequently the first to identify

information needs that develop into information trends that will eventually require a vendor, platform, or instructional response. This role uniquely positions us to advance the education of lawyers at all levels.

The ABA's *MacCrate Report* stepped away from the notion of a gap separating the duties of the legal academy and the practicing bar, advising that both entities had an equal obligation to educate and train lawyers. Stated otherwise, our work, in whatever environment we find ourselves, should work toward ensuring good lawyering; a responsibility that law librarians routinely shoulder willingly and with innovation.

The theme of this issue is education, reflecting on the focus and continued efforts of librarians across library types to develop, prepare, and support lawyers. Focusing on legal education is always a reminder to me that this responsibility connects us all in ways that we may not always be aware. It is also a reminder that one of the greatest sources of my professional education is the AALL Annual Meeting & Conference. I look forward to engaging in many more conversations with you this summer in Chicago.

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