Legal Research @ SPC

Just for you:

**Paralegal Research Guide:** Links, resources, & tutorials. [http://spcollege.libguides.com/paralegal](http://spcollege.libguides.com/paralegal)

**LexisNexis Academic:** Cases, statutes, codes, regs, & more – available thru Library Online.

**Legal Periodicals & Books (EBSCO):** The best place to go for legal articles – available thru Library Online.

**Westlaw:** Only certain classes get Westlaw access – check with your instructor.

**Print Legal Practitioner’s Collection:** In the Clearwater library.

Research Tips

1. **Understand** the assignment and the requirements. Read, reread, & highlight!

2. **Identify and classify** the legal problem(s).

3. **Create a list of facts** – from the list, brainstorm legal research terms.

4. **Make a plan** – What is your jurisdiction? What is your field of law? What **type of law** are you looking for? **Starting with secondary sources is a smart move!**

5. **Research.** Don’t forget to make sure your primary sources are still good law. **Shepardize or KeyCite!**

6. **Know when to stop.** Don’t research yourself in circles! If your sources are all citing to sources you’ve already found, it is probably time to stop.

Logging In to Library Online
(for Research Guide, LexisNexis, & Legal Periodicals & Books (EBSCO))

Borrower ID = Student #
PIN = Last 4 digits of Social Security #

Or enter thru ANGEL – right side of home screen – “Library Resources & Services”

**Shepardize(Lexis)/ KeyCite(Westlaw)**

- Make sure your primary sources are good law!
- With one click, see all the positive & negative treatment of a case.
- **LexisNexis Academic only Shepardizes cases. Westlaw’s KeyCite can check cases, statutes, codes, & regs.**

Types of Law

**Secondary Sources** – interpretation of the law
- Ex: Florida Jurisprudence 2d; Florida Statutes Annotated
- Good place to start research – leads you to cases

**Statutes, Codes, & Regulations** (Primary) – laws enacted by legislature or executive agencies
- Ex: Florida Statutes; Code of Fed. Regs

**Cases** (Primary) – court decisions
- Tells you how a court interprets the law

Jenica Ibarra, Reference & Instruction Librarian, SPC Clearwater Campus Library, LI114
ibarra.jenica@spcollege.edu