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Go-To Resources for the Non-FCIL Librarian

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Go-To Resources for the Non-FCIL Librarian

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*Hello DipLawMatic Dialogues readers! This is the
first in a set of posts from Michelle and Janet on
FCIL for non-FCIL librarians; the next post will
focus on teaching. Michelle and Janet are both
from Fordham Law Library, where Michelle is
Faculty Services Librarian and Janet just made
the leap from Reference Librarian to FCIL Law
Librarian. Thanks for having us!*

Where can I find Singapore cases on surrogacy? How do I cite check this Russian statute? How do I find
the main sources of international humanitarian law? As librarians, we often receive questions that we
don't know the answers to. What sets us apart is the ability to strategize and efficiently learn the answer.
So for those of us who dabble in FCIL or only rarely get questions or are just interested, here's a
collection – a research guide of research guides and a couple of databases. While this is from the
perspective of two academic librarians, these should get you started and answer the most frequently
asked questions regardless of your work environment!

Research Guides:

GlobaLex – For those of you on the FCIL-SIS listserv, you have probably seen the great (and frequent!)
updates to Globalex. From the publisher,   "The guides and articles published are written by scholars
well known in their respective fields and are recommended as a legal resource by universities, library
schools, and legal training courses." What does this mean for users? It provides the location of various
documents, but it also puts the documents in the context of their legal system. This is helpful for both
those incredibly specific (and seemingly random) journal student requests and questions with broad
strokes. "I need Icelandic adoption laws" – Globalex will get you started. "I want to establish a standard
as customary international law" – Globalex will help you there too! Available for free online,
http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/index.html (http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex
/index.html).

UN Library Research Guides, are unsurprisingly, wonderful resources for areas of law involving the

United Nations. The researcher should keep in mind though, that the guides apply to United Nations resources and are thus not complete regarding international law as a whole. For example, the resource guides on international law may inadvertently give the novice researcher the impression that international law begins and ends with the United Nations. Available for free online, http://research.un.org/en?b=s&group_id=2087 (http://research.un.org/en?b=s&group_id=2087).

Databases

The **World Legal Information Institution, (World LII)**, is home to a number of free and non-profit databases helpful to the FCIL researcher, developed by the Australasian Legal Information Institution, British and Irish Legal Information Institute, Canadian Legal Information Institute, Cornell's Legal Information Institute, Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute, and Wits University School of Law. The searchable databases include case law, legislation, treaties, law reform, law journals, and specialist subject databases from 123 jurisdictions. Though the interface may not be as flashy as those of paid resources, it allows for an impressive level of advanced Boolean searching, including proximity searching. Note that coverage and currency can vary widely by jurisdiction. http://www.worldlii.org/databases.html (http://www.worldlii.org/databases.html)

vLex Global is similar to World LII, but it is a subscription resource. It also contains case law and statutes, occasional regulations, and journal articles from over 100+ jurisdictions. The added value comes from a wider variety of materials such as forms, administrative decisions, regulations, and legislation from countries that can be harder to navigate, especially when you do not speak the language. What really gets me excited about this is the translation tool and the ability to navigate collections in my native language – sure I can use Google translate and try to parse things out, but this eliminates some of the guesswork. Translations, although not perfect, can be made between multiple languages and is not limited to English. https://vlex.com/p/vlex-global/ (https://vlex.com/p/vlex-global/)

For primary and secondary source research, **HeinOnline** is home to many databases helpful to the foreign and international legal researcher. One of the most useful databases is the **World Treaty Library**, which includes over 160,000 treaties from 1648 to the present, as well as related articles and publications. While much of the material on **Hein's World Constitutions Illustrated** is available on free websites, the database is still a useful resource, consolidating constitutional information in one place with quality English translations. For secondary sources, **Hein's Index to Foreign and Legal Periodicals** is the the go-to index for over 500 legal journals. https://home.heinonline.org/ (https://home.heinonline.org/)

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