Assisting Faculty with Publishing

How libraries can assist faculty throughout the publication process

By Michelle Cosby

Law school librarians are accustomed to assisting faculty with their publications by requesting interlibrary loans, performing a complex search in a database, or tracking down a book from storage, but there are other services libraries can offer to assist faculty throughout the entire publication process.

Editing the Completed Article Prior to Submission

One service we started offering at North Carolina Central University (NCCU) School of Law Library is citation checking. The service is offered by a trained library research assistant and is reviewed by a reference librarian. The library research assistant reviews the document, checks for citation errors, and verifies sources as necessary. Schools with a large faculty may want to consider hiring a paraprofessional to perform this task. Citation checking is time-consuming, but it is greatly appreciated by the faculty.

Similarly, the librarians at NCCU meet with faculty-hired research assistants and offer one-on-one citation training in addition to workshops offered each semester. Most libraries offer research assistant training, but meeting with the assistant individually to explain the process of verifying sources and checking citations can make the process easier for the assistant and allow the librarian to assist with other tasks.

Submission Process

Librarians can also assist faculty by providing information about the submission process. Providing faculty members with general information on article submission guidelines can be particularly useful, especially for newer faculty members. One resource I point faculty members to is *Information for Submitting Articles to Law Reviews & Journals* by Allen K. Rostron and Nancy Levit, which is available on SSRN at papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1019029. This document details the submission process and requirements for more than 200 law reviews. Additionally, it details any special formatting requirements a law review may have.

Sometimes professors need assistance with selecting journals to submit their publications to. This is an opportunity for librarians to collaborate with professors and help them decide.

Focusing on subject area is a common method, but professors may also want to submit to the Top 100 journals or their alma mater.

Submission Services

Once a professor's article is complete, it is time to send the article to the journals in hopes of being selected for publication. At NCCU, we primarily do this through ExpressO, an online submission delivery service for legal scholars. Faculty members are encouraged to create ExpressO accounts because ExpressO allows them to easily submit their articles to multiple law journals. Faculty members can also receive offers from publications through ExpressO.

I created a guide to assist faculty members with using ExpressO, which requires three documents in addition to the finished article: a cover letter, an abstract, and a resume. In addition to instructions for uploading their works, this guide contains a few tips for the other necessary documents, such as suggestions for abstract lengths and a link to sample cover letters.

Although several other submission services are available, two are worth noting here because they offer benefits in addition to journal submissions. The Chase College of Law offers a free service that allows professors to submit law reviews electronically by allowing them to bcc the law reviews of their choice. After selecting the correct email format, a professor can go through the list and select which journals to submit the article to. Another added benefit is that you can check Chase's site for information about upcoming symposia, which provide additional publication and speaking opportunities.

Additionally, Washington and Lee University School of Law offers a service called Law Journals: Submissions and Rankings. In addition to allowing users to submit articles through LexOpus, users can also get journal ranking information and additional useful information about each journal.

Review of Accepted Article

There are also opportunities for librarians to be involved in the publication process after an article has been accepted. Law reviews will often send an article back to the author for final edits and corrections. Sometimes,

difficult citations need to be corrected. Librarians can assist with helping revise these difficult citations. Similarly, sources used in the article may need to be updated. Many changes in literature or the law can happen after a faculty member submits an article for publication. Finding the most up-to-date

version of a document helps the faculty member create the most authoritative article possible. Helping a faculty member set up an alert can easily ensure that he or she always has the most recent resources to use in the final stages of the article.

Although offering assistance after the article has been accepted for publication is useful, librarians have to know when to tell professors that they need to finish the final edits. Law review editors will send back notes on what needs clarification in an article for final publication. We can find sources and help with citations, but it is up to each professor to make sure that his or her viewpoint is clearly expressed in the article. We as librarians are not in the place to know an author's intent, no matter how closely we have worked with the project.

Research Guides

Creating a research guide to give to a faculty member or his or her assistant can be useful, especially if the faculty member or assistant completes the publication process without librarian assistance. Our *Faculty Guide to Publishing* pulls together a lot of commonly known information and organizes it all in one place. The guide also highlights websites that faculty members may not be aware of. We have references to where all of our citation manuals and dictionaries are located, links to information about the law

review submission process, and references to using ExpressO. There are also several great websites available that explain the publication process and offer tips for submitting. I recommend George W. Hopper Law Library's website, www.uwyo.edu/LAWLIB/facultyservices/faculty.html, and Columbia Law School's website, www.law.columbia.edu/careers/law_teaching/Publishing.

A Good Outcome

No matter how involved a library is with faculty publications, there are many ways to assist faculty with the process. Whether librarians choose to be involved by training student workers to perform these tasks, hiring paraprofessionals, or doing the tasks themselves, helping with the publication process is greatly appreciated by faculty. ∎

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