

SPECIAL INTEREST SECTIONS

SIS Council

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Academic Law Libraries

The Academic Law Libraries Special Interest Section (ALL-SIS) was established in 1979 to promote interests and address issues of common concern to those employed in academic law libraries. The SIS serves as the umbrella organization for all interests—administration, collection development, consortia, directors, fees for service, interlibrary loan, public services, technical services, and middle management. This organizational model recognizes that there is a place for all academic librarians in the SIS and provides opportunities for those with special expertise to contribute to the overall betterment of the larger group.

At the AALL Annual Meeting, the ALL-SIS hosts a reception for its members, sponsors a directors' workshop, a middle managers' workshop, and conducts a business meeting. The SIS is a consistent leader in the number of education programs and workshops it sponsors at the Annual Meeting. The ALL-SIS Newsletter, published three times per year, informs members of activities and resources of special interest to them. Because of the SIS's broad coverage and sub-topic focus, those not working in academic law libraries can benefit from membership and are encouraged to join.

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Computing Services

Computing Services SIS (CS-SIS), previously known as the Automation and Scientific Development SIS (ASD-SIS), was created in 1975 out of a combined interest and generally-perceived need for a central clearinghouse and forum for librarians to meet and discuss technological developments that were then having an impact on the profession. CS-SIS has continued to track and provide a forum for discussions about high technology and its application to law librarianship. Each year at the Annual Meeting, the section sponsors a number of programs and/or workshops of interest to law librarians. In addition, the section's newsletter, *Connecting*, provides information about new developments in library information and technology. All section members or other interested parties have open invitations to contribute writing of any style and nearly any length to *Connecting*.

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Foreign, Comparative, and International Law

The Foreign, Comparative and International Law SIS began in 1985. However, it has been in existence as an AALL committee since 1947, albeit under varying names. The FCIL-SIS's primary objective is to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information on foreign, comparative, and international law. The SIS also represents members' interests and concerns within AALL.

To meet its primary objective, the SIS sponsors a rapidly-expanding schedule of educational opportunities through programs, institutes, and workshops each year. The members share their expertise among themselves and with other librarians. They write, speak, consult, and otherwise provide assistance to others through active discussions and information sharing on INT-LAW.

The SIS has provided the expertise in the development of AALL's plan for the training of the next generation of foreign and international law librarians. It will continue to supply the expertise and manpower as AALL implements the plan.

Members of the FCIL-SIS can easily find specific activities to be involved in through the SIS's standing and special committees,

the working or issues groups, as well as its publications, including the triennial FCIL Newsletter.

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Government Documents

The Government Documents Special Interest Section (GD-SIS) was established in 1974 to disseminate information on government documents to AALL members, to further the continuing education of law librarians in documents librarianship, to coordinate the activities of law librarians in representing their interests to public and private groups, and to work in cooperation with documents groups in other associations and organizations.

To accomplish these goals, the GD-SIS and its members publish a newsletter called Jurisdocs (issued three times a year), prepare bibliographies of state documents that are of interest to law libraries (available for sale from the SIS), and sponsor at least one major program at each AALL Annual Meeting. Members of the GD-SIS are interested in documents from municipal, state, U.S., and foreign governments and international organizations and in the acquisition, cataloging, promotion, and use of government information.

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Legal History and Rare Books

The Legal History and Rare Books SIS was established in 1989 at the AALL Annual Meeting in Reno, Nevada. Its purpose is to promote the study and appreciation of legal history and rare books among members of the profession. To that end, the SIS hopes to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information concerning all aspects of these two different yet interconnected subjects. The organization publishes a newsletter twice a year and sponsors speakers and programs on both legal history and rare books at the Annual Meeting. In the hopes of attracting as wide an audience as possible, the SIS encourages vendors and book dealers to join the group.

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Legal Information Services to the Public

The Legal Information Services to the Public (LISP) Special Interest Section provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information on improving access to legal information and promoting legal information services to the public. LISP also represents its members' interests and concerns within AALL.

LISP develops and sponsors programming, at the AALL annual meeting and elsewhere, on improving public access to legal information.

LISP promotes efforts to assist self-represented litigants in accessing legal information. The SIS publishes the reference brochure, "How to Research a Legal Problem: A Guide for Non-Lawyers."

LISP encourages its members and local AALL chapters to present programs and workshops on legal research for the non-law librarian, to consult with public libraries on collection development, and to publish information about the availability of legal materials. The SIS publishes the Public Library Toolkit and state-specific toolkits designed to help public librarians understand the process of legal research and assist patrons in accessing legal information.

LISP promotes and encourages its members to partner with, and provide research assistance to, pro bono service providers, either through local AALL chapters or individually.

LISP awards the Kathy Garner Grant to provide AALL members with financial assistance to attend the AALL Annual Meeting.

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Micrographics and Audiovisual

AALL has been interested in technical developments that affect librarianship for many years. Originally, committees were assigned to monitor and report to the Executive Board and membership about developments and applications of audio and visual technology to law study and practice. As these developments have encompassed a wider variety of topics, more members have become involved. In 1979, the Micrographics and Audiovisual Special Interest Section was approved and the Audiovisual Committee's work shifted to the SIS. The stated objectives of the SIS are:

1. To disseminate information in micrographic, audiovisual, and other imaging formats.
2. To further the continuing education of librarians in the areas of micrographics, audiovisuals, and other electronic media.
3. To promote the effective and creative use of micrographic and audiovisual technologies.
4. To cooperate with similar special interest groups of other organizations, such as the American Library Association's Audiovisual Committee.

The SIS currently has three working subcommittees: Audio/Video, Microform, and New Technologies. The subcommittees work on issues specific to their respective missions while meeting the objectives of the SIS. The SIS has a liaison with the ALA Audiovisual Committee and publishes a newsletter with articles concerning the development and application of media in law libraries.

Online Bibliographic Services

Originating in 1977 as the OCLC-SIS, the Online Bibliographic Services Special Interest Section (OBS-SIS) broadened its scope to include all bibliographic utilities and local online systems. The OBS-SIS membership is diverse, embracing staff from both public and technical services who serve in law libraries of every type and size. The section addresses the professional concerns and interests of its members, extending across all organizational boundaries. The section's interests include all aspects of national and local bibliographic online systems, including public access to bibliographic data, technical services functions, interlibrary loan services, and the integration within local systems of data from remote sources.

The OBS-SIS provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information on the use and capabilities of various online bibliographic services (including OCLC) and on local automated library systems. In addition, the section explores ways that emerging technologies can be integrated with traditional bibliographic systems and how these changes affect libraries and librarians.

Committee work, Annual Meeting programs and roundtables, and special projects serve as the primary vehicles for carrying out the goals of the SIS. The OCLC Committee communicates members' concerns to the governing body of the bibliographic utility. The Local Systems Committee provides a forum for the exchange of information on the implementation and use of local automated library systems. The Education Committee coordinates educational programming submitted to AALL by the section. The Web Advisory Committee maintains and enhances the OBS-SIS website to meet the evolving needs of the section. The OBS/TS Joint Research Grant Committee participates with the TS-SIS in awarding grants to support research in the technical and online bibliographic functional aspects of service to the clients of law libraries. Membership in OBS-SIS committees is open to all interested SIS members; appointments are made based on interest expressed on the annual member survey.

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Private Law Libraries

The Private Law Libraries Special Interest Section (PLL-SIS) is now AALL's largest, with a membership of more than 1,600 firm, corporate, and independent law librarians. It comprises more than a third of the membership of AALL. Presently, the PLL-SIS sponsors seven groups under its auspices: the Corporate Law Librarians, Independent Law Librarians, Records Management Law Librarians, Technical Services Law Librarians, Intellectual Property Librarians, Librarians Serving One-Person Law Libraries (OPLL), and Multi-location Librarians.

Activities of the PLL-SIS include: sponsoring a number of programs and workshops at the AALL Annual Meeting; working closely with AALL to promote law librarianship using materials such as the AALL Tool Kit; sponsoring educational programming for and exhibiting at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Legal Administrators; underwriting the costs associated with the AALL representative to the American Bar Association Law Practice Management Section; creating a new members packet to welcome newcomers to the section; and funding scholarships and grants to assist members in need.

In addition to these projects, the section created a strategic plan in the fall of 1996 that will guide its activities until the year 2000. This plan identified six initiatives targeted to addressing the needs of the private law librarian, both within AALL and within the larger legal and librarian communities. Standing committees include: Bylaws, Consumer Advocacy, Education, Grants, Mentoring, Newsletter Advisory, Nominations, Public Relations, Standards and Guidelines, and Technology, with additional task forces and ad hoc committees as needed.

The section has issued its own newsletter from 1978 to 1982, from 1985 to 1987, and from 1989 to the present. The current publication, *PLL Perspectives*, is quarterly, and is available to all section members as part of their membership.

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Research Instruction and Patron Services

Research Instruction and Patron Services Special Interest Section (RIPS-SIS), formerly known as the Reader Services Special Interest Section, was approved by the AALL Executive Board in 1979. The purpose of the SIS is to organize programs and provide a forum for the discussion of topics such as reference, CALR instruction, bibliographic instruction, interlibrary loan, circulation systems, and other topics relating to services provided to the patron. The Research Instruction Caucus (RIC) merged with the SIS in 1995.

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Social Responsibilities

Social Responsibilities SIS (SR-SIS) addresses issues of social change and social responsibility that are of concern to AALL members, both personally and professionally, by sponsoring education programs at the Annual Meetings and through the introduction of resolutions. Two active standing committees, Law Library Services to Institution Residents and the Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues, contribute to the work of the SIS. SR's publications include: *Directory: Law Libraries Providing Services to Prisoners, Recommended Collections for Prisons and Other Institutions, Law Libraries and Sexual Orientation and the Law: A Selective Bibliography on Homosexuality and the Law, 1969 - 1993*, and *Sexual Orientation and the Law: A Research Bibliography Selectively Annotating Legal Literature Through 2005*. Periodic updates to this latest publication are done online at www.lgbtbib.org. The SIS also publishes an electronic newsletter twice a year.

The forerunner of SR-SIS, the Contemporary Social Problems SIS, was approved by the AALL Executive Board in 1977. Its roots, however, can be traced back to the formation of the Conference of Concerned Law Librarians, which developed into the Committee on Contemporary Social Problems (formed in 1973). In 1981, CSP-SIS merged with the Law Library Service to Institution Residents SIS, retaining the Contemporary Social Problems title. CSP became the Social Responsibilities SIS in 1993.

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State, Court, and County Law Libraries

The State, Court, and County Libraries Special Interest Section (SCCLL-SIS) was one of the first groups within AALL to be officially recognized as a special interest section. Founded on July 3, 1973, in Seattle, Washington, by two dozen law librarians from 17 states and Canada, it became an SIS on June 25, 1977. The purpose of SCCLL-SIS is to promote the value of member libraries and librarians to governing boards, internal and external customers, and funding bodies, and at the same time provide an ongoing mechanism for providing continuing educational benefits and advocacy for its diverse membership within the larger Association.

The SIS currently has more than 550 members representing federal, state, county, court, and special law libraries. Annual business meetings are held at the AALL Conference, along with numerous SIS-sponsored program offerings.

Programs and activities within the SIS include 12 standing committees and one joint committee reflecting a variety of interests, including standards, web-based information services, marketing, education, trustee development, and relations with the judiciary. A series of four resource guides promoting member libraries and services are underway; three are already published. In addition, the SIS publishes electronic newsletters, value-added website, and an active online discussion list. Members participate at all leadership levels of the Association.

Membership in this SIS is open to any AALL member.

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Technical Services

The Technical Services Special Interest Section (TS-SIS) promotes the communication of ideas, interests, and research in acquisitions, cataloging and classification, preservation, binding, and serials control in all types and sizes of law libraries.

The work of the section is performed by five standing committees. These committees (Acquisitions, Cataloging and Classification, Exchange of Duplicates, Preservation, and Serials) conduct surveys, study problems or areas of concern, and plan convention programs and workshops.

Five discussion groups also meet at the Annual Meeting to address current problems and issues. These groups are the Acquisitions, Binding, Heads of Technical Services, and Technical Services in Law Firm Libraries roundtables, and the Heads of Cataloging Departments in Large Law Libraries discussion group.

TS-SIS publishes a newsletter jointly with OBS-SIS: *Technical Services Law Librarian*. It contains regular columns and non-substantive articles, current awareness items, and reports of convention meetings and committee activities. The Exchange of Duplicates Committee produces, and offers for subscription, lists of duplicate serial issues. The lists permit the coordination of duplicate exchange activity between participating Association libraries.

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