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*Research Guides*

**INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
U.S. LEGAL SYSTEM**

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**I. The Legal System**

Benítez, Alberto Manuel. *An Introduction to the United States Legal System: Cases and Comments* (KF385.A4 B42 2006).

Burnham, William. *Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) (KF385.B87 2006).

Farnsworth, F. Allan. *An Introduction to the Legal System of the United States* (3d ed.) (KF387.F37 1996).

Feinman, Jay M. *Law 101: Everything You Need to Know About the American Legal System* (2d ed.) (KF387 .F45 2006).

Fine, Toni M. *American Legal Systems: A Resource and Reference Guide* (KF240 .F56 1997).

Fletcher, George P. *American Law in a Global Context: The Basics* (KF380 .F59 2005).

*Fundamentals of American Law* (Alan B. Morrison, ed.) (KF389. F85 1996).

Hay, Peter. *Law of the United States: An Overview* (KF385 .H393 2002).

Hegland, Kenney F. *Introduction to the Study and Practice of Law in a Nutshell* (4th ed.) (Reserve).

*Introduction to the Law of the United States* (Clark & Ansay, eds.) (2d ed.) (KF385 .I58 2002).

Johns, Margaret Z. & Rex R. Perschbacher. *The United States Legal System: An Introduction* (2d ed.) (KF385 .J64 2007).

Melone, Albert P. & Allan Karnes. *The American Legal System: Foundations, Processes, and*

*Norms* (2d ed.) (KF386 .M45 2008).

Moliterno, James E. & Fredric I. Lederer. *An Introduction to Law, Law Study, and the Lawyer's Role* (2d ed.) (K237 .M65 2004).

Von Mehren, Arthur Taylor & Peter L. Murray. *Law in the United States* (2d ed.) (KF385 .V66 2007). This presentation of the American legal system is designed for lawyers of civil law backgrounds.

## **II. The Courts**

Carp, Robert A., Ronald Stidham & Kenneth L. Manning. *Judicial Process in America* (7th ed. ) (KF8700 .C37 2007).

Englander, Marilyn & Curtis Karnow. *How the Courts Work: A Plain English Explanation of the American Legal System* (KF387 .E54 2008)

*The Federal Court System in the United States: An Introduction for Judges and Judicial Administrators in Other Countries* (Office of Judges Programs, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts) (2d ed. 2001) (Documents JU 10.2: F31/2 & <http://www.uscourts.gov/library/internationalbook-fedcts2.pdf>).

Meador, Daniel John. *American Courts* (2d ed.) (KF8720 .M43 2000).

Miller, William S., *A Primer on American Courts* (KF8720 .M55 2005).

Neubauer, David W. *Judicial Process: Law, Courts, and Politics in the United States* (3d ed.) (KF8719 .N48 2004).

Segal, Jeffrey Allan, Harold J. Spaeth, & Sara C. Benesh. *The Supreme Court in the American Legal System* (KF8742 .S433 2005).

*Understanding Federal and State Courts* ([http://www.uscourts.gov/outreach/resources/fedstate\\_lessonplan.htm#twosystems](http://www.uscourts.gov/outreach/resources/fedstate_lessonplan.htm#twosystems)) examines the “differences, similarities, and interactions between the federal and state court systems.”

## **III. Legal Encyclopedias & Dictionaries**

The entries in *West's Encyclopedia of American Law* (2d ed.) (Ref. KF154 .G77 2005) define terms and highlight significant concepts, events, cases, and people. *American Jurisprudence 2d* (1962-) (Practice & Procedure KF154 .A42) and *Corpus Juris Secundum* (1936-) (Practice & Procedure KF154 .C56) synthesize federal and state law to provide a comprehensive summary of American law.

*Black's Law Dictionary* (8th ed.) (Reserve and Ref. KF156 .B53 2004) is considered the most authoritative American legal dictionary. *A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage* (2d ed. (Ref. KF156 .G367 1995) and *Mellinkoff's Dictionary of American Legal Usage* (Ref. KF156 .M45 1992) are dictionaries of legal language as used in the U.S. today. *Legal Terminology* (Ref.

KF240.B767 2006) provides basic explanations of legal terms.

#### **IV. Legal Language/Legal Writing**

Garner, Bryan A. *The Elements of Legal Style* (2d ed., 2002) (Reserve) and *Legal Writing in Plain English: A Text with Exercises* (KF250 .G375 2001).

Rossini, Christine. *English as a Legal Language* (2d ed.) (Ref. K50 .R67 1998).

Teply, Larry L. *Legal Writing Citation in a Nutshell* (Reserve).

#### **V. Especially for International Students**

Alcaraz Varó, Enrique & Brian Hughes. *Legal Translation Explained* (K213 .A4182 2002).

Brostoff, Teresa Kissane & Ann Sinsheimer. *Legal English: An Introduction to the Legal Language and Culture of the United States* (2d ed.) (KF272 .B76 2003).

Gader-Shafran, Rachel. *The International Student's Survival Guide to Law School in the United States: Everything You Need to Succeed* (Reserve).

Hoffman, Craig & Andrea Tyler, *United States Legal Discourse: Legal English for Foreign LL.Ms* (Reserve)

Neacsu, Dana. *Introduction to U.S. Law and Legal Research* (Reserve).

Nedzel, Nadia. *Legal Reasoning, Research, and Writing for International Graduate Students* (2d ed.) (KF240 .N43 2008).

Ramsfield, Jill J. *Culture to Culture: A Guide to U.S. Legal Writing* (KF250 .R358 2005).

Widmer, Corinne. *A Civil Lawyer's Introduction to Anglo-American Law: Torts* (KD1949 .W53 2008).

Wojcik, Mark E. *Introduction to Legal English: An Introduction to Legal Terminology, Reasoning, and Writing in Plain English* (2d ed.) (KF250 .W65 2001).

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11/2009