

Research Exercise #1
(due February 22, 2006)

Part A (Background and Commentary Sources): Your client owns a small business in Chicago with several full- and part-time employees. She wants to put together an employee handbook containing company policies and rules, a description of the health insurance and other benefits available to employees, and other information about the company. But first, she wants to know whether distributing such a handbook will make it more difficult for her to fire employees.

1. List some factual and legal concepts (including synonyms, antonyms, and broader and narrower terms) that might help you research the above scenario.

2. Consult a law dictionary to look up one of the legal concepts that you listed above. Write out (or briefly summarize) the definition that you found.

3. Formulate a statement of the main issue raised by this scenario. (Include both the relevant legal and factual concepts; try to write it in the same style that you would use for a “question presented” in an objective memorandum.)

4. Using one of the major national legal encyclopedias (*American Jurisprudence 2d* or *Corpus Juris Secundum*), locate information relevant to the scenario. Briefly describe below the process you used and what kind of information you found. (For example, indicate the concepts that you looked up, whether you used the index or started with the main part of the encyclopedia, the title of the article/topic that you found most useful, whether there was relevant information in the pocket part, what kind of law appears to govern—e.g., state vs. federal, statutory vs. common law, etc.)

5. a) Using one of the major legal periodicals indices (*Index to Legal Periodicals* or *Current Law Index*), find an article published in an academic law review that appears to be relevant to the scenario, or at least peripherally related to it. (Make sure that the article appears in an academic law review or journal that is published by a law school, such as *The John Marshall Law Review* or *The John Marshall Journal of Computer & Information Law*, rather than a practitioner-oriented periodical like the *CBA Record* or the *Illinois Bar Journal*. Look at a volume of the publication itself if you are not sure about this—most academic law reviews share a similar format.) Write the citation to the article below; include the citation information that appears in the index, and don't worry about citation format.

Part B (Digests and Reporters): You are researching the following issue of state tort law: Can the host of a party be held liable for serving alcohol to a guest who subsequently injures another driver in an automobile accident?

1. Choose a state other than Illinois to use for this part of the assignment.

Indicate the state here: _____

2. List some factual and legal concepts (including synonyms, antonyms, and broader and narrower terms) that might help you research the above issue.

3. Locate a digest that contains classified case annotations (headnotes) of decisions of that state's courts. Disregard any references to federal court decisions or cases from other states. Give the title of the digest below (e.g., *Illinois Digest 2d*).

4. Using the digest, try to locate state court decisions that are relevant to the above issue. Consult the descriptive-word index at the end of the digest to find potentially relevant digest topics and key numbers.

a) Digest topic: _____

Key number(s): _____

b) Digest topic: _____

Key number(s): _____

c) Digest topic: _____

Key number(s): _____

Note: The "digest topic" is the main heading (e.g., Contracts), not the subject that corresponds to an individual key number (e.g., Restraint of Trade or Competition).

5. Look up the promising topics and key numbers in the main part of the digest. Once you have found some case annotations that seem to be on point, circle the key numbers (in #4 above) that turned out to be relevant, and list two of the case citations below. (Don't worry about citation form here; just copy the citations as they appear in the digest.) If you can't find any cases that are directly on point, just list two of the closest ones that you were able to find.

Case #1: _____

Case #2: _____

6. Look up one of the cases you listed above in a reporter—preferably a West regional reporter. Then, write a complete citation to the case below, in ALWD form. Include a pinpoint reference to a relevant page of the case.
