

LII LEGAL INFORMATION INSTITUTE

WEX TAXONOMY

A M A N D A C H I N

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ABOUT THE TEAM



**Amanda Chin,
MLIS Graduate
Student |
Taxonomy
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- analyzed and restructured LII's Wex Taxonomy.



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- supervised the project by providing guidance, along with her metadata expertise

WHAT IS THE LII?

The Legal Information Institute (LII) is an independently-funded project of Cornell Law School. The LII's mission is to help the public read and understand the laws that govern them for free.

The LII carries out this vision by:

- Publishing law online, for free.
- Creating materials that help people understand law.
- Exploring new technologies that make it easier for people to find the law.

LII also creates and publishes original content meant to demystify the law, including Wex.

WHAT IS WEX?

Open Access legal dictionary and encyclopedia

Features everything from long articles on important concepts to brief definitions of legal terms

LII currently uses a tagging system. You can see which subject areas are “tagged” under each entry. The tagging system was adapted from a homegrown system used by LII staff in the late 1990s for a long-defunct legal academic database.

WHO ARE THE USERS
OF WEX?

NATALIE - THE EVERYDAY USER

NATALIE GOES TO WEX TO LOOK FOR LEGAL TERMS THAT ARE REFERENCED IN A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE



- **INFORMATION NEEDS**

- IS LOOKING TO FIND THEIR INFORMATION FAST AND QUICKLY IN WEX
- FOUND A WEX ENTRY THROUGH A GOOGLE SEARCH

- **FRUSTRATIONS:**

- TERMINOLOGY IS COMPLICATED
- NAVIGATION OF WEX CONFUSING

OWEN - THE LAW STUDENT

OWEN UTILIZES WEX TO FIND TERMINOLOGY FOR SCHOOLWORK



- **INFORMATION NEEDS**

- IS LOOKING TO FIND DIRECT SOURCES FOR THEIR COURSEWORK

- **FRUSTRATIONS:**

- DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE CATEGORIZATION OF THE TERMS
- FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO SEARCH THROUGH WEX FOR TERMS

SAM - THE LAW LIBRARIAN

SAM UTILIZES WEX AS ONE OF THE TEACHING TOOLS FOR THEIR CLASSES



- **INFORMATION NEEDS**

- LOOKING TO UTILIZE A RELIABLE AND TRUSTED SOURCE FOR STUDENTS
- COMPILING OPEN ACCESS SOURCE LIST

- **FRUSTRATIONS:**

- CATEGORIZATION OF TERMS IS CONFUSING
- CATEGORIZATION IS LIMITED
- ORGANIZATION OF CATEGORIES DO NOT MAKE SENSE

THE PROBLEMS

- THE GOAL OF WEX IS TO MAKE RELATED CONTENT EASIER TO FIND BUT THE CATEGORIZATION OF TERMS AND NAVIGATION OF WEX CONFUSING TO ALL USERS
- TAXONOMY IS OUTDATED
 - SOME CATEGORIES ARE UNDERUSED/NOT TAGGED AND SOME NEED EXPANSION
 - E.G. "SPORTS" CATEGORY CONTAINS 0 TAGGED TERMS
- SEARCH FUNCTION IS NOT USABLE

OBJECTIVES

- UPDATE THE CURRENT WEX SUBJECTS TAXONOMY BY:
 - **DELETING, UPDATING, AND ADDING CATEGORIES**
 - DECIDING ON WHAT NEEDS TO GO/STAY AND WHY BASED ON USAGE
 - ADDING DEFINITIONS SO TERMS CAN BE ACCURATELY INDEXED

TAXONOMY

WHAT IS A TAXONOMY AND WHY SHOULD WE HAVE ONE?

- A TAXONOMY IS A HIERARCHICAL WAY OF CATEGORIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF INFORMATION THAT HELPS WITH THE FINDABILITY OF INFORMATION
 - E.G. HOW A GROCERY STORE IS ORGANIZED BY FOOD CATEGORY AISLES
- BY HAVING A WEX TAXONOMY, USERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO BROWSE FOR RELATED TERMS AND CONCEPTS

EXAMPLE OF THE CURRENT TAXONOMY AND ISSUES

- wex
 - ACADEMIC TOPICS
 - legal education and writing
 - THE LEGAL PROCESS
 - criminal law
 - criminal procedure
 - civil procedure
 - legal theory
 - courts and procedure
 - criminal law and procedure
 - legal education and practice
 - wex definitions
- Keywords
 - Latin terms

- NO VISUAL HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE (ACADEMIC TOPICS IS A BROADER CATEGORY BUT IT'S CAPITALIZED HERE)
- SOME CATEGORIES ARE DUPLICATED LIKE LEGAL EDUCATION
- WHAT IS "ACADEMIC TOPICS"?

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

- LIT. REVIEW SHOWED THAT RESEARCH IN REGARDS TO LAW TAXONOMY IS NON-EXISTENT
- WEX IS CURRENTLY CONSTRAINED TO THE DRUPAL SYSTEM. WE TRIED DELETING SOME WEX SUBJECTS UNDER "TYPE" BUT THAT MESSED UP THE FUNCTIONALITY OF THE FRONT-END OF THE WEBSITE

RESEARCH INSIGHTS (CONT.)

A	B	C	D
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Banking Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Bankruptcy and Restructuring Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	CANADA: Municipal Law'	http://webprote	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Commercial and Trade Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Constitutional and Civil Rights Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Corporate Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Criminal Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Education Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Energy Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Environmental and Natural Resource Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Finance and Lending Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Food and Drug Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Gaming Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Health Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Information Security Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Insurance Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Intellectual Property Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Labor and Employment Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class
http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Personal and Family Law'	http://lmss.sali.org/RSYBzf149Mi5KE0Ytm	Class

SALI IS AN OPEN-ACCESS TAXONOMY TAILORED TOWARDS LAWYERS IN STANDARDIZING LEGAL DATA

- SALI HAS A ONE-LEVEL HIERARCHY FOR THEIR SYSTEM
- TERMS ARE MORE FIRM-FOCUSED AND NOT APPLICABLE TO WEX

RESEARCH INSIGHTS (CONT.)

- NOSLEGAL (BASED IN THE UK) HAS AN OPEN-SOURCE LEGAL TAXONOMY
- THEIR TAXONOMY CONTAINS 9 FACETS (NEEDS, WORK, SUBJECTS, PLACES, PERSPECTIVES, SECTORS, LAWS, INFORMATION ASSETS, AND COMBINATIONS)
- I FOCUSED ON LOOKING AT THEIR “LAWS CORE” TAXONOMY AS THERE IS SOME OVERLAP IN STRUCTURE TO WEX

21	law-inf	Information law	law		
22	law-inf-1	Intellectual property	law-inf		
23	law-inf-1.1	Copyright	law-inf		
24	law-inf-1.2	Patent	law-inf		Including utility patent
25	law-inf-1.3	Design	law-inf	Design right, design patent, registered design	
26	law-inf-1.4	Trade secret	law-inf	Confidentiality, confidential information, breach of confidence	
27	law-inf-1.5	Trade mark	law-inf	Trademarks, trade-marks, trade names, brands, branding	
28	law-inf-1.6	Plant breeders' right	law-inf		
29	law-inf-1.7	Database right	law-inf		EU / UK law concept
30	law-inf-2	Data protection and privacy	law-inf	Data privacy	
31	law-inf-3	Defamation and reputation	law-inf		
32	law-inf-4	Freedom of information	law-inf		
33	law-inf-5	Freedom of speech	law-inf		
34	law-inf-6	National security	law-inf	State secrecy, official secrets	

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

- REFERENCED NOSLEGAL AND SALI TAXONOMIES BUT THOSE SOURCES ARE NOT QUITE APPLICABLE TO WEX BECAUSE THEIR LEGAL TAXONOMY IS FOR LAW FIRMS AND NOT THE GENERAL PUBLIC
 - THESE TAXONOMIES ARE MORE FIRM-FOCUSED AND NOT APPLICABLE TO WEX

MY APPROACH

- BECAUSE LAW IS COMPLICATED AND LAW TAXONOMY IS EVEN MORE SO, I WORKED WITH:
 - NICHOLE (SUPERVISOR), TO ADD/DELETE/UPDATE CATEGORIES
 - MET WITH PROFESSOR CARLA WALE AND PROFESSOR TRENT HILL ON HOW TO PARE DOWN OR APPROACH THE PROJECT AS A WHOLE

MY APPROACH

AFTER UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS OF WEX, WE ELIMINATED THE 4 LEVELS OF HIERARCHY INTO 2 LEVELS ONLY AS THE FIRST LEVEL WAS TOO BROAD AND THE FOURTH LEVEL WAS TOO SPECIFIC AND UNDERUSED

SUGGESTED TAXONOMY

- TWO LEVELS HIERARCHY FROM THE ORIGINAL FOUR
 - DEFINITIONS
 - SCOPE NOTES (TO BE ADDED)

WEX Subjects		Definition
Money and Finance	wills	legal document that states a testator's wishes and in
gender, sexuality, and reproductive rights		
gender, sexuality, and reproductive rights	LGBTQ	abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender
government		the body, entity, invested with the power to manage
government	local governmental law	Local governments, those which govern cities, villa
government	education law	Education law is a broad topic that encompasses se
government	immigration law	In the United States, immigration is an area of fede
government	administrative law	Administrative law refers to the branch of law gove
government	taxation	is any charge of money or property that imposed by
Human rights		<u>fundamental rights to which all human beings are e</u>
Indigenous and Native Law		refers generally to the indigenous peoples of the No

SUGGESTED TAXONOMY AND IMPROVEMENTS

- WENT FROM 8 WEX SUBJECT HEADINGS TO 26+ UPDATED CATEGORIES
 - THE INITIAL TOP-LEVEL SUBJECT HEADING LIKE "ACADEMIC TOPICS" WERE TOO BROAD
- ADDED ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES LIKE "GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS", AND "INDIGENOUS AND NATIVE LAW"
- TAXONOMY IS NOT PERFECT BUT IT IS A START IN GETTING STARTED ON INDEXING THE TERMS BETTER

OVERVIEW

- RESEARCHED LAW TAXONOMIES AND ANY RELATED JOURNALS AND PAPERS
 - THERE IS MINIMAL RESEARCH ABOUT LAW TAXONOMY BECAUSE LAW IS VERY COMPLICATED
- UPDATED THE TAXONOMY BASED ON THE INFORMATION I COULD FIND
- FUTURE PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TAXONOMY IS TBD - THIS PROJECT IS A SUGGESTED RESTRUCTURING FOR THE CURRENT ONE
- AN OVERHAUL OF THE SITE WILL BE DONE BY LII
- MORE WORK TO BE DONE!
 - CONTROLLED VOCABULARY NEEDS TO BE MADE (TO ADD TO SCOPE NOTES)

NEXT STEPS FOR WEX:

- WORKING WITH MLIS STUDENTS IN THE FUTURE TO BUILD OUT THE WEX SUBJECT CATEGORIES
- REFINE TAXONOMY FURTHER (ADD/UPDATE/DELETE CATEGORIES)
- CREATING A CONTROLLED VOCABULARY
- INDEXING OF TERMS UTILIZING TAXONOMY

THANK
YOU!