

SAILING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY

Law, Libraries, and Leadership in Transition

NELLCO
symposium
2026



Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) Full Schedule

Monday, April 13

1:00 – 1:50 pm

Opening and Networking

Corie Dugas, Executive Director

Theresa McCue, Member Support Manager

Amanda Karel, Project Manager

Join the staff of NELLCO for an opening kick-off celebration! This will provide an overview of the Symposium week, and then there will be an opportunity to network with other attendees and a chance to win an amazing prize by besting the other competitors in a game of trivia!

2:00 – 2:20 pm

SurePoint Technologies Exhibitor Demonstration

Phil Flora, Vice President of Sales

Katherine Byrnes, Senior Product Owner



Who's Hiring? Law School Hiring Trends and Insights from SurePoint Legal Insights

In this 20-minute session, we'll explore current hiring trends across law firms using data from SurePoint Legal Insights. We'll highlight entry level hiring and retention as well as changes in law firm business models and what that means for law school graduates. We'll also demonstrate how law schools and librarians can leverage SurePoint Legal Insights to track alumni, monitor firm growth, and provide valuable market intelligence to students, faculty, and career services teams.

2:30 – 3:20 pm

Happiness Meets Productivity: Harnessing Gretchen Rubin's Four Tendencies

Heather Simmons, Associate Director for Instruction and Access Services,
Alexander Campbell King Law Library, University of Georgia School of Law
Britiny Hommey, Law Librarian, Beaver County Law Library

Each of us approach the work we need to accomplish in different ways. Knowing your tendency, and the tendencies of those you work with, makes everyone both more productive and happier. Gretchen Rubin, a former Supreme Court clerk to Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, gave up the law to study and write about happiness and human nature. Her Four Tendencies framework divides people into categories based on their relationship with inner and outer expectations.

Obliger: You can count on me, and I'm counting on you to count on me

Questioner: I'll comply—if you convince me why

Upholder: Discipline is my freedom

Rebel: You can't make me, and I can't either

There's a short quiz on her website to figure out which one you are:

<https://gretchenrubin.com/quiz/the-four-tendencies-quiz/>

3:30 – 3:50 pm

Practising Law Institute (PLI) Exhibitor Demonstration

Kim Roma, Senior Library Relations Manager

Kay Mitchell, Director, Library Relations

Getting the Most from PLI PLUS

See what's new in PLI PLUS—and how it can do more for you. Join Senior Library Relations Manager Kim Roma and Library Relations Director Kay Mitchell for a live demonstration highlighting subscription benefits (including a significant discount for NELLCO law schools), an overview of our newest and most popular titles, and the latest platform enhancements. You'll also leave with quick, practical tips to help you get the most value from PLI PLUS right away.



4:00 – 5:00 pm

Acquisitions and Collection Development Interest Group Roundtable

Jennifer Noga, Associate Director for Collection Services, Wake Forest University
Law Library

Iantha Haight, Deputy Director, Howard W. Hunter Law Library, Brigham Young
University

This year the Acquisitions and Collection Development Interest Group roundtable will be an open discussion to talk about issues that impact your daily work such as how AI has changed the way you work, budgets, library spaces, customer service issues with vendors, and any other current topics in the acquisitions and collection development space. We look forward to seeing you!

Tuesday, April 14

1:00 – 1:50 pm

Updating Library Collections with Generative AI: Gaps, Guardrails, and Discoverability

Kristen Clarke Kellems, Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Librarian,
Howard W. Hunter Law Library, Brigham Young University
Garrett Blazzard, Systems and Digital Content Librarian, Howard W. Hunter Law
Library, Brigham Young University

This joint presentation explores how law libraries can use generative AI to map collection holdings, identify subject and jurisdictional gaps, and inform strategic purchasing or culling decisions. It highlights practical approaches to strengthening acquisitions while improving discoverability in catalogs and research guides. Presenters will discuss building guardrails—such as structured prompts, controlled resource lists, and verification workflows—to ensure accuracy and alignment with institutional priorities. The session will also address how AI can support metadata enhancement, surface underused materials, and identify digitization candidates, offering actionable strategies to make collections more visible, balanced, and responsive to user needs.

2:00 – 2:20 pm

Bloomsbury Digital Resources Exhibitor Demonstration

Katie Bennett, Sales & Consortia Manager
Nikki Clayton, Academic Product Trainer



The New & Improved Bloomsbury Collections

We've upgraded our e-book hosting platform for our Law titles, Bloomsbury Collections, with enhanced functionality features, easier search and browse, and various flexible purchasing options and models to acquire our Hart Publishing, Bloomsbury Professional, and C.H. Beck-Hart-Nomos Law titles. Please join us for an informative and interactive presentation on how to use the Bloomsbury Collections platform to the best of your advantage.

2:30 – 3:20 pm

Empowering Neurodivergent and ESL Law Students: Inclusive Practices in the Era of Generative AI

Annalee Hickman Pierson, Head of Reference and Faculty Services, Howard W. Hunter Law Library, Brigham Young University

Kristen Clarke Kellems, Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Librarian, Howard W. Hunter Law Library, Brigham Young University

This presentation will report on the key findings from our original research study through the IRB, where we held focus groups in the fall of 2025 with neurodivergent and English as a Second Language (ESL) law students to determine best practices for teaching these legal research students and what GenAI usage helps them the most.

3:30 – 3:50 pm

LIPA Exhibitor Demonstration

Michelle Trumbo, Executive Director

Preserving Legal Information for the Future: LIPA's Collaborative Approach

Learn how the Legal Information Preservation Alliance (LIPA) is advancing the long-term preservation of legal information through collaboration, innovation, and shared expertise. Join Michelle for an overview of LIPA's current initiatives, including its digital preservation projects and opportunities for institutional participation. The session will highlight efforts to ensure enduring access to legal resources and offer insights into how libraries can strengthen their preservation efforts in an ever-evolving information landscape.



4:00 – 5:00 pm

Interlibrary Loan Interest Group Roundtable

Katharine Haldeman, Circulation Manager, Moakley Law Library, Suffolk University
Law School

John Mondo, Coordinator of Document Delivery and Interlibrary Loan, Charles B.
Sears Law Library, University at Buffalo

Join the ILL interest group for a discussion of both perennial and new interlibrary loan topics.

Wednesday, April 15

1:00 – 1:50 pm

Law Library Strategy: Positioning for Sustainable Relevance

Gregory A. Smith, Director, Ehrhorn Law Library, Liberty University School of Law

Christine I. Dulac, Director and Visiting Professor of Law, Garbrecht Law Library,
University of Maine School of Law

Amy A. Emerson, Assistant Dean for Library and Information Services & Professor
of Law, Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law

Sara Y. Gras, Assistant Dean of the Rodino Law Library and Associate Professor of
Law, Seton Hall University School of Law

Law libraries of all sorts face evolving environments, presenting both challenges and opportunities. In the face of uncertainty, law library leaders must develop strategy to define and implement a viable mission in the foreseeable future. In this session, panelists from four law libraries will reflect on the emerging environment and the directions that they envision for their organizations. In addition to learning from the experiences of other libraries, attendees will be introduced to analytical tools to help them formulate strategy at their own libraries. Time will be allotted for audience questions at one or more points in the session. This session is intended for anyone interested in shaping the future of a law library.

2:00 – 2:20 pm

Oxford University Press Exhibitor Demonstration

David Hayden, Regional Sales Manager
Sarah Baxter, Consortia Account Manager

Using Oxford Law resources: Max Planck Encyclopedias of Public International Law and Oxford Law Pro

In this session, Regional Sales Manager David Hayden will give a glimpse into recent product launches and initiatives from OUP including the new Oxford Scholarship Online Law Archive and the successful first year of the Max Planck Encyclopedias of Public International Law Subscribe to Open model. He will also share a user journey of the recently launched Oxford Law Pro. Oxford Law Pro is an essential legal toolkit, with a curated selection of OUP's authoritative books combined with a powerful AI Research Assistant and new Expert Essential articles to give researchers and legal scholars the answers they need, when they need them.

Add the session to your calendar to find out what else has been going on recently at Oxford University Press!



2:30 – 3:20 pm

I Wanna Be Where the People Are: Relationship Marketing for Libraries

Jim Abernathy, Reference Librarian, Young Law Library, University of Arkansas
School of Law

When people envision an effective marketer, they often think of glossy print materials, clever social media campaigns, or an extroverted "schmoozer" working a room. However, librarians often find such approaches off-putting, too expensive, or outside their skill set. This presentation will discuss relationship marketing, a technique for communicating a library's value that is inexpensive, personally fulfilling, and effective.

3:30 – 3:50 pm

Describe Exhibitor Demonstration

Richard DiBona, Co-Founder & CTO

Kara Peterson, Co-Founder & CEO

Describe.

Getting Started with Describe

Describe is a purpose-built legal research and reasoning platform designed to make primary law more accessible, understandable, and verifiable. This session offers a live introduction tailored for academic, library, and instructional settings.

We will provide an overview of how Describe works and where new users can begin, including natural language search, legal issue exploration, and simplified case summaries.

The demonstration will also highlight selected Describe workflows, including Describe Deep Research and Describe Review. Describe Deep Research helps users work through legal questions with analysis grounded in primary law, with provenance and citations built in. Describe Review helps verify whether cited cases are real and current, whether quoted language matches the source, and whether legal propositions are actually supported by the cited authority.

We will also discuss practical use cases for law libraries, legal research instruction, student learning, and access-to-justice settings. Time will be reserved for questions and discussion.

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Reference Interest Group Roundtable

AnnaKatherine Wherren, Head of Access Services and Assistant Teaching Professor, William A. Wise Law Library, University of Colorado Law School

Michael Whitlow, Head of Instructional Services & Assistant Teaching Professor, William A. Wise Law Library, University of Colorado Law School

Join us for a fast-paced “Show and Tell Reference Hacks” roundtable where attendees share practical tools, workflows, and tips that support reference work across all types of law libraries. Come ready to learn and, optionally, share ideas you can use right away.

Thursday, April 16

1:00 – 1:50 pm

Inclusive by Design: Tools and Techniques for Law Librarians In and Out of the Classroom

B. Austin Waters, Foreign and International Law Librarian, Charles B. Sears Law Library, University at Buffalo

Accessibility and learner accommodations have become increasingly important in both the law school classroom and the library. This presentation looks at different techniques and tools for a more universally designed classroom as well as methods the library can adopt for its patrons utilizing services. However, there is no one size fits all method. For that reason, this presentation will also include time for open discussion in which guided questions are used to foster conversation around best practices at attendees' libraries and in their classrooms and facilitate the sharing of ideas on challenges or possibilities for improvement.

2:00 – 2:50 pm

Third Thursday Virtual Discussion: Public Discourse in Volatile Times

NELLCO Continuing Education Committee

The Continuing Education Committee will host the monthly virtual discussion series of Third Thursdays during the Symposium. Join your colleagues for an open dialogue surrounding public discourse in volatile times.

Have you experienced challenges to library created or sponsored displays? Challenges to materials in your library? Are there questions of academic freedom taking place in your institution? Law libraries are navigating turbulent times within the political landscape. Join your colleagues and peers for an open, honest conversation about public discourse in volatile times within law libraries.

3:00 – 3:20 pm

De Gruyter Brill Exhibitor Demonstration

Lauren Danahy, Acquisitions Editor
Tim Rudman, Sales Manager - Southeast/Mid-Atlantic, United States
Derek Wright, Sales Manager, Southwest/South, United States

Join us for a brief overview of De Gruyter Brill's law publishing program, highlighting key strengths across academic, professional, and historical legal scholarship. This session will introduce core collections, new digital offerings, and tools that support research, teaching, and collection development in law libraries. Designed for busy law librarians, the presentation provides a clear, high-level look at how De Gruyter Brill's resources can enhance access to authoritative legal content.



3:30 – 3:50 pm

Networking and Closing

NELLCO Symposium Planning Committee

Join the Symposium Planning Committee for a recap and roundup of the week's event.

4:00-5:00 pm

Access Services Interest Group Roundtable

Heather Simmons, Associate Director for Instruction and Access Services, Alexander Campbell King Law Library, University of Georgia School of Law

The Access Services interest group will round out the week with a discussion of pressing topics in this area of law libraries.