Measuring Scholarly Impact
Are Citation Metrics the Right Fit for Law Schools?
Impact on Law Schools & Law Libraries

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Representation Problem

- Law Journals Only
  - Dismisses value of interdisciplinary scholarship and citations in non-legal publications
  - Scholarship that transcends a single discipline brings together diverse perspectives & broadens opportunities for new insights & innovations
  - Scholarship written by diverse groups receives more citations and has higher impact factors than scholarship where authors are not diverse

Undercounting

• Individual effect

• School-wide effect?
  
  “Although some law professors publish in ‘pure’ out-of-field journals, the small numbers who do so tend to be scattered among many different law schools such that for the vast majority of schools, not counting these citations will have little effect on school-wide citation counts.”

Mean Citations to UW Law Faculty Scholarship

- Hein (law journals)
- Web of Science (interdisciplinary journals)
- Google Scholar (interdisciplinary, all types)

Google Scholar H-Index Calculator for Chrome, [https://www.mat.unical.it/ianni/wiki/ScholarHIndexCalculator](https://www.mat.unical.it/ianni/wiki/ScholarHIndexCalculator)
## Effect on School-wide Ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UW Law Faculty</th>
<th>Cited 12 mos. (mean)</th>
<th>Cited Total (mean)</th>
<th>Cited 12 mos. (median)</th>
<th>Cited Total (median)</th>
<th>Total Score (2 x means + 1 x medians)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hein (law journals)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>527</td>
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<td>Web of Science (non-law journals)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
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Scholarly Impact Ranking Principles

I. A metric should identify and control for existing biases based on individual author’s race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, ethnicity, class, or nationality.

II. A metric should not reproduce biases based on institution or discipline/subject matter prestige.

III. A metric should have a methodology that is chosen carefully, can be reverse engineered, and is openly documented.

IV. A metric should not be based as a matter of convenience on the coverage of a single dataset. A metric’s dataset, and all related documentation, should be transparent.

V. A metric should not exclude scholarship based on format.

VI. A metric should not place undue value on downloads received on a single platform.

VII. A metric should prevent manipulation of results by self-citation at the author or institutional level.

Draft by AALL Academic Law Libraries Special Interest Section

Feedback? Contact Amanda Watson, University of Houston Law Center
Leadership Role of the Law Library

• Generating Awareness
• Improving Metrics Accuracy
• Promoting Scholarly Visibility
Generating Awareness

• Information about
  – citation metrics
  – proposed rankings & potential impact

• Importance of
  – each authors profile
  – promoting scholarly visibility
    • Working group on scholarly visibility
Improving Metrics Accuracy

• Verify author profile list from Hein

• Check HeinOnline author profiles for mistakes, missing publications (and citations?)
  – Review CVs
  – Meetings with faculty

• Create & Connect ORCID ids

• Inform Hein of any corrections
Promoting Scholarly Visibility

• Improve accessibility & findability
  – Post scholarship to repository, SSRN
  – Create & curate Google Scholar profile
  – Workshop on increasing findability
    • Hat tip to Caroline Osborne, Carol Watson, TJ Striepe’s AALL 2019 presentation -
      https://digitalcommons.law.uga.edu/speeches/172/
Promoting Scholarly Visibility

• Create buzz
  – Promotion by library
    • Social media, blog
    • Podcast on new faculty scholarship
  – Workshop on #AcademicTwitter: Promoting Your Work

https://wilawinaction.law.wisc.edu/
Questions?

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