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U of S Online Research Module: Federal Legislation

by Greg Wurzer & David Francis

Module 1 - Federal Bills

In Module 1, we will learn about the federal legislative process, beginning with bills. We will cover LegisInfo and required background information on the Parliamentary procedures for passing legislation.



Module 2 - Official Sources of Online Federal Legislation

The goal of this module to gain familiarity with official sources of federal legislation. Note that you will routinely use these sources to access statutes and regulations throughout your studies and professional career.



Module 3 - HeinOnline Sources of Federal Legislation

In Module 3, you will learn how to further use HeinOnline - an online collection of legal resources - to advance your studies here at the University of Saskatchewan. This collection contains digital copies of all annual and revised statutes in Canada.



Module 4 - Interactive Research Resources

In Module 4, you will access videos regarding legislative history, noting up legislation and legislative intent. Legislative history can be important in legal research particularly when one must find out the origins of a piece of legislation.

The videos that follow will provide greater understanding of these important concepts. Please note that you will see screen shots from Westlaw and the Federal Justice Laws website that look different from each of these sources now but the same principles apply. If you wish to see a small collection of crime comics, please see Greg in the Law Library.



Module Objectives

Module Objectives

The goal of this module to gain familiarity with Canadian federal statutes.

After completing this module, you will be able to:

1. Define a government bill.
2. Identify the stage at which a bill becomes an act (or statute).
3. Understand different types of bills (such as private Members' bills or Senate public bills).
4. Understand how bills are numbered.
5. Describe how a bill becomes a law.
6. Understand First, Second, and Third readings of a bill.
7. Understand the significance of and processes related to Royal Assent.
8. Recognize the significance of the Coming Into Force Date.
9. Describe the differences between bills numbered S-1 and C-1.
10. Describe the long titles and short titles of bills.

Assigned Readings

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To provide a context for this module's learning objectives, please complete the following readings as indicated below:

1. The Comprehensive Guide to Legal Research, Writing and Analysis

Read chapters 3 and 4. These chapters will provide an excellent background and description of federal bills and how they become laws.

2. LegisINFO - Info!

LEGISinfo is an essential research tool for finding information on legislation before Parliament. This tool provides electronic access to a wide range of information about each bill, such as:

- details on the passage of the bill through the Senate and House of Commons;
- the text of the bill as introduced at First Reading and its most recent version if it is amended during the legislative process;
- votes;
- major speeches at second reading;
- coming into force data;
- legislative summaries from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament; and
- government press releases and backgrounders (for government bills).

LEGISinfo is a collaborative effort of the Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament.

You can launch this web resource [here](#).

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Continue: Check Your Understanding: Chapter 3

Cancel

Continue

INSTRUCTIONS

Force Completion If interrupted, this test can be resumed.

Multiple Attempts This test allows multiple attempts.

Click **Continue** to continue: Check Your Understanding: Chapter 3. Click **Cancel** to go back.
You will be previewing this assessment and your results will not be recorded.

Click Begin to start. Click Cancel to quit.

Cancel

Continue



QUESTION 1

10 points

Save Answer

How many readings must a bill have before becoming law and where to they occur?

- 1. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 3 in the Senate
- 2. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 2 in the Senate
- 3. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 1 in the Senate
- 4. 3 readings in the House of Commons only

QUESTION 2

10 points

Save Answer

Name 2 types of House of Commons Bills

- Public interest bills & money bills
- Government bills & private members' bills
- Public bills & private members' bills
- Treasury bills & commoners bills

QUESTION 3

10 points

Save Answer

Name 2 places where a new Act of Parliament is first published

- The Globe & Mail & The National Post
- Federal government bulletins
- CBC News website



Review Test Submission: Check Your Understanding: Chapter 3

User	Gregory William Wurzer
Course	LAW-243-01 (82176.201609)
Test	Check Your Understanding: Chapter 3
Started	4/11/17 12:45 PM
Submitted	4/11/17 12:47 PM
Status	Completed
Attempt Score	20 out of 60 points
Time Elapsed	2 minutes
Results Displayed	All Answers, Submitted Answers, Correct Answers, Incorrectly Answered Questions

Question 1

10 out of 10 points



How many readings must a bill have before becoming law and where to they occur?

Selected Answer:

1. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 3 in the Senate

Answers:

1. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 3 in the Senate

2. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 2 in the Senate

3. 3 readings in the House of Commons & 1 in the Senate

4. 3 readings in the House of Commons only



Question 3

0 out of 10 points



Name 2 places where a new Act of Parliament is first published

Selected Answer:

The Globe & Mail & The National Post

Answers:

The Globe & Mail & The National Post

Federal government bulletins

CBC News website

Canada Gazette Part III & Statutes of Canada

Question 4

10 out of 10 points



What is the name of a Federal website that publishes Federal legislation

Selected Answer:

2. Justice Laws website

Answers:

1. LegisINFO

2. Justice Laws website

3. Canada Gazette online

4. Government of Canada website

Example 1: Using LegisINFO

Example: Using LegisINFO

When accessing LegisINFO online, the first screen should appear as follows:



PARLIAMENT OF CANADA

LEGISinfo

Introduction | FAQ | Text Mode

Download XML Source

New Layout for Bills

Beginning January 25, 2016, bills introduced before both Houses of Parliament will have an updated layout. The changes will not affect the wording or meaning of existing and proposed legislation. Bills that have already been introduced in the current session will remain in their original format until they are reprinted as part of the legislative process. Learn more about what has changed [here](#).

LEGISinfo is an essential research tool for finding information on legislation before Parliament. This tool provides electronic access to a wide range of information about individual bills... (more)

The information found on this Web site is updated after each sitting.

To refine the list of bills below, choose options from the menu on the right.

All Bills for the Current Session (42nd Parliament, 1st Session)

Results 1 - 20 of 153

Filter By: Parliament - Session: 42-1

Sort By: | Latest Activity Date | Bill Number

Show Details Hide Details

42nd Parliament, 1st Session
C-1 An Act respecting the administration of oaths of office
Show Details Progress ██████████

42nd Parliament, 1st Session
C-2 An Act to amend the Income Tax Act
Show Details Progress ██████████

42nd Parliament, 1st Session
C-3 An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the
Revised number administration for the financial year ending March 31

Refine Your Search

Parliament - Session
42-1 (2015-12-03 -)

- 41-2 (2013-10-16 - 2015-08-02)
- 41-1 (2011-06-02 - 2013-09-13)
- 40-3 (2010-03-03 - 2012-03-26)
- 40-2 (2009-01-26 - 2009-12-30)

more...

Originating Chamber

- Senate (30)
- House of Commons (123)

Type

- Senate Government Bill (1)
- Senate Private Bill (2)
- Senate Public Bill (25)
- House Government Bill (23)
- Private Member's Bill (100)

Political Affiliation

- Bloc Québécois (2)
- Conservative (24)

Note the types of information on this page. You will see that different Parliamentary sessions are in the right-hand column. Current session bills are listed in the centre of the page.

A recent change to the Criminal Code regards street racing (street racing in urban environments has unduly endangered human lives to the point where traffic regulations are thought to be inadequate). The point of this example is that this piece of legislation had been introduced in several sessions of Parliament before becoming law.

Note the search box in the lefthand column. Type in "street racing", hit return, and note the different sessions when a bill was introduced.

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Exercise 2: Using LegisINFO

Exercise 2: Using LegisINFO

Once a Bill has been selected, links are provided, such as Major Speeches at Second Reading, Similar Bills & Coming into Force information (lower right-hand portion of the page):

The screenshot displays the LEGISinfo website interface. On the left, there is a navigation menu with sections like 'Bills on Today's Agenda', 'Bills Before Committee', and 'LEGISinfo Search'. The main content area shows search results for 'street racing', listing bills C-19, C-230, C-65, and C-338. Each result includes the bill number, title, and a progress bar. On the right, there is a 'Refine Your Search' sidebar with filters for Parliament Session, Originating Chamber, Type, Political Affiliation, Sponsor, and Status.

LEGISinfo
Introduction | FAQ | Text Mode

Results XML Download XML Source

Results 1 - 5 of 5 (approximate)

Filter By:
 Long Title: street racing
 Short Title: street racing

Sort By: | Latest Activity Date | Bill Number | Parliament and Session ▼

Show Details Hide Details

29th Parliament, 1st Session
C-19 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (street racing) and to make a consequential amendment to the Corrections and Conditional Release Act
 Statute of Canada: 2006, c. 14
 Show Details Progress: ██████████

30th Parliament, 1st Session
C-230 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (street racing)
 Show Details Progress: ██████████

30th Parliament, 1st Session
C-65 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (street racing) and to make a consequential amendment to another Act
 Show Details Progress: ██████████

37th Parliament, 3rd Session
C-338 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (street racing)
 Show Details Progress: ██████████

37th Parliament, 2nd Session
C-338 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (street racing)
 Show Details Progress: ██████████

Refine Your Search

Parliament - Session
 • 39-1 (1)
 • 38-1 (2)
 • 37-3 (1)
 • 37-2 (1)

Originating Chamber
 • House of Commons (5)

Type
 • House Government Bill (2)
 • Private Member's Bill (3)

Political Affiliation
 • Canadian Alliance (1)
 • Conservative (2)
 • Independent (1)
 • Liberal (1)

Sponsor
 • Cadman, Chuck (3)
 • Cotler, Irwin (1)
 • Toews, Vic (1)

Status
 • House - Consideration in Committee (3)
 • Royal Assent Received (1)

Based upon this new view of LegisINFO, please answer the following "check your understanding" question.

Justice Laws Website

Justice Laws Website

The Justice Laws website is a great source for federal statutes, regulations and other tools that are free and available on the internet. Documents and information on the site are official. Becoming familiar with this site will be useful to you while in law school and throughout your career as well.

The following image shows the Justice Laws website: a good source for federal statutes & regulations (split view). Please note the search box in the middle of the page and the contents in the lefthand column, including Constitutional Documents, Consolidated Acts & Regulations, and Annual Statutes.

Open the Consolidated Acts and Consolidated Regulations webpage These contain all amending or added acts & regulations up to the date noted at the bottom of the page:



Annual Statutes and Consolidated Acts

The Annual Statutes, which up until 2014 were published in print volumes and which are located in the law library, publish Public General Acts as they were enacted by Parliament in each calendar year. Each yearly "volume" is comprised of new Acts and those Acts that amend existing Acts. Presently the Justice Laws website does not include Annual Statutes enacted before 2001.



The Justice Laws Website provides an official consolidation, or updated version, of the federal Acts and regulations. Each consolidated Act incorporates any changes or amendments up to the date indicated at the bottom of the web page.

"Amending" Acts or regulations make changes to existing laws. The amending Act will add new sections or make changes to existing sections of Act. A consolidated Act or regulation is one that has been updated and incorporates the amendments into the original text.

As of June 1, 2009, all consolidated Acts and regulations on the Justice Laws Website are "official" and can be used for evidentiary purposes.

Student Feedback

- Students liked the assigned chapters & questions
- Good to be able to go back to review material
- Really liked “hands-on” exercises
- Students wanted more questions!



Future plans

- Legal Citation Module

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Got Questions? Need Help?

Gregory Wurzer

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University of Saskatchewan

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15 Campus Drive

Saskatoon, SK S7N 5A6

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Email: greg.wurzer@usask.ca

Website: <http://library.usask.ca/law/>



[Image source](#)

Thanks for your attendance!

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