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**The Indigo Book**

**Second Edition**

An Open and Compatible Implementation of  
A Uniform System of Citation

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## Manifest

### Status

This document, published on August 30, 2021, is the 2.0 release of the original beta release published May 2, 2016. Errors and omissions may be sent to jromig@emory.edu.

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### Formats

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### Introduction

Welcome to *The Indigo Book 2.0*—a free, Creative Commons-dedicated implementation of the uniform system of citation commonly used in United States legal documents.

*The Indigo Book* (2d ed. 2021) isn’t the same as *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (21st ed. 2020), but it does implement the same system of citation that *The Bluebook* does. The scope of *The Indigo Book*’s coverage is roughly equivalent to *The Bluebook*’s “Bluepages”—that is, *The Indigo Book* covers legal citation for U.S. legal materials, as well as books, periodicals, and Internet and other electronic resources. For the materials that it covers, anyone using *The Indigo Book* will produce briefs, memoranda, law review articles, and other legal documents with citations that are compatible with the Uniform System of Citation. Although law students, scholars, and legal professionals sometimes talk about legal citation as if it is truly uniform, the fact is that legal citation has never actually been a uniform national system. Accordingly, *The Indigo Book* also provides insight into some of the discretionary preferences and jurisdiction-specific variations found in legal citation throughout the United States.

Unlike *The Bluebook* and competitor citation manual *The ALWD Guide to Legal Citation*, *The Indigo Book* is free, in two senses. *The Indigo Book* is given to you free of charge. *The Indigo Book* is also free of the restrictions of copyright. You are free to copy and distribute this work, and to improve on it. As with the 2016 version, we are releasing this version of *The Indigo Book* under a Creative Commons “CC0” public domain dedication that allows you to use it, copy it, distribute it, and modify it. *The Indigo Book* welcomes the Juris-M project for automating legal citations, built in connection with the citation formats provided in the First Edition of *The Indigo Book* and in progress with updates reflecting this Second Edition.

The first edition of *The Indigo Book* was compiled by a team of students at the New York University School of Law, working under the direction of Professor Christopher Jon Sprigman and published in 2016. The second edition of *The Indigo Book* was compiled by Professor Jennifer Murphy Romig with assistance from students at the Emory University School of Law, and published in 2021. In the five years since the first edition of *The Indigo Book*, U.S. citation practices have continued to expand and fragment. The proliferation of citation formats has taken place via both official channels, such as the North Carolina Supreme Court’s adoption of medium-neutral citation format; and unofficial practices, such as the growing use of (cleaned up) as a parenthetical to replace (internal citations and quotation marks omitted), as promoted by Washington, D.C. lawyer Jack Metzler.

This Second Edition of *The Indigo Book*, like the first one, continues to take its inspiration from the 10th edition of *The Bluebook*, published in 1959:

The primary purpose of a citation is to facilitate finding and identifying the authority cited. The rules set forth in this booklet should not be considered invariable. Whenever clarity will be served, the citation form should be altered without hesitation; whenever a citation would not amplify the identification of the authority referred to, no citation should be given.

In that spirit, we hope you will take *The Indigo Book*, use it, enjoy it, and continue to improve it.

Professor Jennifer Murphy Romig  
Emory University School of Law