

NEW FACULTY

Christopher S. O'Byrne

RESEARCH LIBRARIAN

Chris O'Byrne joins the Kresge Law Library with impeccable academic credentials. While at Reed College, from which he received a B.A. in Classics, he received a Presidential Commendation for Academic Excellence twice, once for the 1995–96 academic year and once for the 1997–98 academic year.

While at the University of Massachusetts, from which he received an M.A. in teaching (Latin and Classical humanities), he was inducted into the Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society and the Eta Sigma Phi Classical Honor Society. He also was awarded two scholarships, one of which was for students with disabilities.

His legal and library science studies have been equally impressive. He received a J.D. in 2005 from the University of Washington School of Law and was honored there by the Center for Computer Assisted Legal Instruction with its Excellence for the Future award.

He has just completed his course work for a masters of library and information science with a Certificate in Law Librarianship from the University of Washington Information School, which has long sponsored one of the premier law library program in the United States.

Prior to arriving at Notre Dame, Chris completed his directed fieldwork placement as a Law Library Fellow at Washington University in St. Louis where he worked on several significant projects, including the reclassification of older international law titles to the current Library of Congress classification standards. Chris has also worked in the reference, technical services, and circulation departments of the Seattle University Law Library and the Marian Gould Gallagher Law Library at the University of Washington.

Chris' path to a career as a law librarian was not necessarily a straightforward one. While an undergraduate student at Reed College studying Classics, Chris served as a tutor for high school students preparing for the National Latin Exam. He also studied Roman culture and Latin at the Inter-Collegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome, Italy. Both experiences drew him to the idea of teaching Latin and Classical humanities on the secondary level.

While studying at the University of Massachusetts for an M.A. in teaching, a program he chose for the two years of teaching experience that it offers as part of the curriculum, Chris gained experience in both high school and undergraduate classrooms, serving as a teaching assistant and instructor. It was here that he decided that a small college environment would work best for him,



rather than the larger classroom environment of a typical high school. He also developed an appreciation for the broad role of an educator: "An educator must do more than teach; an educator's dialogue with students must take place both inside and outside of the classroom."

Chris found teaching Latin to be extremely rewarding. Nevertheless, his graduate-level courses in education law and special education compelled him to seek a degree that would be meaningful on a broader scale than an advanced degree in Classics. He entered law school contemplating a career as an appellate advocate or as a clerk. During law school, however, Chris' growing interest in research methodology led him to advanced courses in legal research and an internship at the Seattle University Law Library. While at Seattle University, Chris realized that law librarianship offered an ideal career path that combined his interests in law, research methodology, teaching, and public service.

As a law librarian, Chris is enthused that his chosen professional niche allows him to be a specialist at times and a generalist at other times. He is pleased to be able to support faculty involved in specific, detailed research as well as assist a *pro se* patron looking for general information about landlord-tenant issues. Chris also appreciates the opportunity to integrate research and writing that law librarianship offers. Chris is a member of three special interest sections of the American Association of Law Librarians: Academic Law Libraries, Foreign Comparative and International Law, and Legal History and Rare Books. His professional interests include copyright, disability law, and Roman law.

Chris is especially appreciative of the Law School's collegial atmosphere; he believes that Notre Dame superbly combines the benefits of a small school environment with the extensive scholarly resources of a major university and looks forward to working with Law School faculty and students.