

LPSS NEWS

Law and Political Science Section, Association of College and Research Libraries
Volume 15, Number 2, Spring 2000

ALA ANNUAL 2000 CHICAGO

TENTATIVE MEETING SCHEDULE

**PLEASE CHECK THE ALA
WEB SITE FOR FINAL
SCHEDULE**

[HTTP://WWW.ALA.ORG/EVENTS](http://www.ala.org/events)

FRIDAY, JULY 7

5:00-7:00 PM

LPSS SOCIAL/HAPPY HOUR
PLEASE COME AND MEET US!

SATURDAY, JULY 8

12:30-2:00 PM

MARTA LANGE/CQ AWARD
LUNCHEON

2:00-5:30PM

LPSS ALL COMMITTEE
MEETING & GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SUNDAY, JULY 9

9:30 AM – 12:30PM

LPSS PROGRAM

"LEGAL WEB SITES AREN'T
JUST FOR LAWYERS"

**DATE & TIME TO BE
ANNOUNCED**

MARTA LANGE/CQ AWARD
COMMITTEE

Closed meeting for committee
members only.

LPSS NOMINATING
COMMITTEE [2000 ELECTION]

Closed meeting for committee
members only

LEGAL WEB SITES AREN'T JUST FOR LAWYERS: FINDING & USING LAW- RELATED WEB SITES

SUNDAY, JUNE 27TH, 9:30AM – 12:30PM

Sponsored by ACRL Law and Political Science Section and
ARL Office of Scholarly Communication

To those unfamiliar with legal and law-related resources, finding and using legal web sites can be a daunting experience. This panel presentation relies on a show-and-tell approach to teach the intricacies of locating and evaluating law-related web sites. Handouts highlighting key sites and pointers for evaluating sites will be provided. Tips and guidelines on avoiding the unauthorized practice of law will be discussed, as well as suggestions for promoting law-related sites to your patrons. Plan to spend this time with your LPSS and other colleagues to learn more about legal websites.

SPEAKERS: **Sue Parker**, Associate Dean, University Library,
California State University-Northridge
Chris Simoni, Northwestern Law School
Merle Slyhoff, University of Pennsylvania Law School

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year has been another busy year for LPSS members and I've enjoyed it. The Section has continued the recently established schedule of coordinating most committee meetings with the general membership meeting, which most agree has helped the efficiency and effectiveness of "doing LPSS business". Resulting from these planning sessions, LPSS has increased the quality of its discussion groups; its reviews of web and other electronic resources; its conference programs; as well as enhancing the working relationships with vendors and publishers. This year we have another outstanding set of nominations for Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect and Member-at-Large. In addition, we get to vote on adoption of proposed bylaws changes. By the time you read this, the ballots should have been counted, so I hope everyone took this opportunity to select our next officers and confirm our bylaws. I encourage you to become active in the Section to confirm continuance of the high quality activities. Please get in touch with Jan Lewis, the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, at lewisja@mail.ecu.edu if you're interested in joining one of the committees.

I look forward to seeing you all this summer at our general membership meeting, luncheon, and program.

Grace York Recipient of the Marta Lange/CQ Award

Congratulations to the 2000 Marta Lange/CQ Award winner Grace York, Coordinator, Documents Center, University of Michigan Library!

Grace exemplifies the qualities we seek in awarding the Marta Lange/CQ Award. Her numerous contributions to the profession, in the form of articles, web sites, committee work, and speaking engagements have shown her to be a vital source in furthering the cause of government information, both domestically and worldwide.

Please join us Saturday, July 8th at the Congressional Quarterly (CQ) sponsored luncheon honoring Grace during the ALA Annual Meeting in Chicago.

--Merle Slyhoff, Chair, Marta Lange/CQ Award Committee

DRAFT MINUTES LPSS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

ALA Midwinter Conference, San Antonio
January 15, 2000

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Marifran Bustion, LPSS Chair, welcomed everyone to the membership meeting. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

2. MINUTES from the Annual Conference were approved.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

REVIEW AND PLANNING (Stephen Stillwell):
Stephen reported that he had received comments on the ACRL strategic plan and forwarded them to Maureen Sullivan, ACRL President. Some of the suggestions were incorporated into the present draft. The committee noted some concerns with the present draft: ACRL sections are not mentioned; statements are passive, with no active verbs; of the six directives, members are mentioned last, even though they are the backbone of the organization. Stephen will

post the plan on the listserv for comments and forward any comments to ACRL. The committee will not revise the LPSS strategic plan until the ACRL plan has been published. The by-laws changes were approved by ACRL. The constitution and bylaws will be posted on the listserv and on the ballot. The committee

recommended considering virtual membership on section committees, perhaps virtual committee members could write reviews. The committee will continue to investigate ways to reach out to the membership and increase participation without requiring members to attend conferences.

PUBLICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP (Catherine Hansen):

The committee wants to add a column to the newsletter about what members are doing now. They will solicit information on the listserv for "phantom" members as a way to reach out to them. There are still lots of

membership brochures, which will be sent to library schools. The committee wants to revise the brochure, and will present revisions at Annual. The aim is to make the brochure into a mailer, which will require some organizational and cosmetic changes. The most significant change will be the removal of officers' names, though they will still be on the web site. There was a question about where LPSS ribbons come from and how to order them. This is the 25th year for LPSS. Marifran Bustion will contact Melissa Cast at ACRL about getting more ribbons. Catherine Hansen will contact Melissa Cast about getting a list of LPSS members, especially an e-mail list. She will ask for an alphabetical list, and will add new members to the listserv.

2000 PROGRAM COMMITTEE (Marifran Bustion):

The theme for this year's program is "Legal Web Sites Aren't Just for Lawyers: Finding and Using Law-Related Web Sites". The speakers are Sue Parker, Associate Dean, University Library, California State University -Northridge (formerly at Harvard Law School) and Chris Simoni from Northwestern University Law School.

2001 PROGRAM COMMITTEE (Tom Mann):

The tentative theme for the 2001 program is "Cyberspace: a New Opportunity for Faculty and Students". The program will be about ways librarians can work with faculty to bring the library into the classroom and make it easier to use electronic media resources and other library materials. Jan Lewis reported that program planning for 2001 was going to change. All sections/committees must turn in program forms to the ALA Conference Coordinating Team at 2000 Annual. The team will sort the forms into program tracks so that similar programs are close together and are at no-conflict times. The program tracks will not be defined until after the forms have been turned in; therefore there is no need to fit the program into a specific track. Deadlines remain the same, but we may not get the time slot we request. ALA does not decide which programs will be approved. Divisions remain responsible for all program approval.

MARTA LANGE/CQ AWARD (Marifran Bustion):

There is a breakfast meeting Monday morning with CQ to make sure CQ knows what their role is, since there has been a lot of turnover of representatives at CQ that work with LPSS.

LIBRARY INSTRUCTION (Christine Angolia):

A pathfinder for the 1999 program was provided in paper and on the web. The committee stands ready to create a pathfinder for the 2000 program. They want to expand the information on the speakers and add a few more print resources. The Library Instruction Discussion Group meets Sunday afternoon. The theme of the discussion is "Is the Instruction Workshop Dead?". All were encouraged to attend as the meetings are usually vigorous and lively with a high rate of participation.

VENDOR/PUBLISHING (Atifah Rawan):

The committee has created a list of legal and Political Science resources that are available electronically, which will be put on the LPSS web site with links to LPSS reviews. The aim is to use the list as an inventory. A review of CIS *Congressional Universe* is planned. The committee met with the Gale Group to discuss their declassified documents database. The Gale representatives asked for comments and answered LPSS questions. CIS representatives gave information on the *U.S. Periodicals Index*, which will be reviewed on the web. The committee is also working on a review of the *CIS Index to Unpublished Hearings*. There was discussion on how to make the web site more user-friendly. A question was raised about whether the CIAO representative should meet with only the Vendor/Publisher Committee or if the committee should schedule a general meeting with LPSS. Possibilities recommended were: schedule a second discussion group at Midwinter, or have CIAO set up a vendor meeting. The issue of perception was raised. If LPSS sponsors a meeting with a commercial vendor, will it be seen as an endorsement by LPSS? The issue will be discussed further. The issue of linking web sites will be discussed at the committee meeting at Annual. The committee also wants to know what sort of information LPSS wants on its web site.

GODORT (Gwen Halford):

GODORT has been involved in discussions of NTIS closing. It is of critical concern and ALA Council has proposed a resolution on the issue. The resolution and information about NTIS closing are available on the GODORT web site. The National Action Alert Network (NAAN) is an outlet for informing members of the actions GODORT is taking and a network for contacting representatives and senators. Gwen also reported on the bills GODORT is supporting. Information on these and NAAN is also available on the GODORT web site. At Annual, the GODORT program is going to be a panel discussion describing university collaborative efforts between universities and state and local governments to build urban information systems.

NOMINATING (Paula Popma):

The committee has completed its work and have nominees for Vice-Chair and Member-At-Large. Jan Lewis asked that if anyone wished

to be on a committee to let her know. She will also put out a call for volunteers on the listserv.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Marifran Bustion reported that ACRL has received \$10,000 for programs since 1995, even though they requested \$15,000 last year. Therefore, ACRL is looking for ways to cut back. ACRL will set the budget limits for sections. There are no guidelines for honoraria. Payments are based upon field and qualifications. It was suggested that sections/divisions share speakers to divide the expense. ACRL has agreed to loan sections money for their socials with understanding that ACRL will be repaid within one month of the event. Ideas on how to attract more people to the LPSS social will be discussed at the Annual meeting in Chicago.

--Submitted by: Gabrielle Carr, Secretary

TAKE A LOOK AT THE LPSS WEB SITE
<http://facstaff.uww.edu/hansenc/lpss.htm>

Or, go to the ACRL Web site: <http://www.ala.org/acrl.html>
and click on LPSS under Sections.

REVIEW

LEXIS -NEXIS *Congressional Universe*

Marketed by Congressional Information Service, Inc.(CIS), a wholly-owned subsidiary of LEXIS - NEXIS . [CIS, 4520 East-West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20814-3389. E-mail: cisinfo@lexis-nexis.com.]

Need a one-stop shopping resource for political news and legal research? *CIS Congressional Universe* may be just what you need, especially if you are a seasoned researcher or a college student who knows a little about the legislative process. Along with *Academic Universe* and *Statistical Universe*, CIS *Congressional Universe* is another excellent CIS product, covering legislative issues and Congressional publications. Like its cousins, *Congressional Universe* does a nice job of being comprehensive, navigable, and providing good complementary learning aids.

Congressional Universe is divided into 11 major topics: "CIS Index", "Publications," "Testimony," "Bills," "Laws," "Regulations," "Members," "Committees," "Inside Washington," "Hot Topics," and "List of Links." These topics are always visible throughout *Congressional Universe* on the left-hand side

of the screen, as are the four categories "Home," "How Do I?," "Overview," and "Help." Each major topic is further subdivided by source material or by other logical subdivision.

What sets *Congressional Universe* apart from other products is primarily its content. While comprehensive in the breadth of its coverage, it is also strong in the depth. "CIS Index" provides abstracts of Congressional publications going back to 1970. The "Statutes at Large" sub-section of the "Laws" topic area

is another notable plus, as *Congressional Universe* provides indexing going back to 1789. Moreover, "Inside Washington" provides the full text of the *National Journal* (1977-current) and its sister publication, *CongressDaily* (1991-current). The "List of Links" area is also valuable for *not* overwhelming the researcher with quantity of links, as is so often the case on the Web. Instead it strives for quality by offering only those WWW links most germane to the Congressional research process. Among these are "Congressional Sites," "Political Parties," "News" sites like C-SPAN, and "University Sites" like the Legal Information Institute. Site design is simple yet effective. *Congressional Universe* provides the same elegant user interface found on Lexis-Nexis's companion academic products, a wonderful continuity feature. Search boxes are customized within each *Congressional Universe* major topic area, resulting in an intuitive search environment throughout the entire product. The simple Boolean operators "AND," "OR," and "NOT" are usually available throughout *Congressional Universe*, as is the asterisk "*" as a wildcard symbol. Advanced search characters are also supported, so advanced searchers may continue to use terms like W/S and PRE/N. A list of these operators is also provided in the *CU* help file. When viewing search results, the searcher has four options. As the default, "Document List" provides the first five lines of citation information. Key Word In Context ("KWIC") provides only the sentences or paragraphs containing the key words in question. "Expanded List" provides a citation mid-way between "Document List" and KWIC view. "Full" text view is the final viewing option. The opportunity to re-do or refine your search is present at all times, via the "Edit Search" and "FOCUS" links, respectively. Output display options include re-formatting as HTML for cleaner printing ("Print/Save Options"), and simple "E-mail" with the ability to add a lengthy personal note to your email.

Some users may prefer the "Overview" feature to gain a big picture view and quickly navigating through the site. Basically a site map, the Overview subtopics still require that the user have some prior knowledge about the legislative process and government

documents. For instance, the "Publications" major heading lists the subheadings "Text of Prints" and "Congressional Record," among others. Is the average undergraduate going to know the difference between a print and the *Congressional Record*? This type of searcher may be better served by something akin to an interactive wizard or flowchart providing directions via binary YES/NO questions. Otherwise, it is left to the novice searcher to discover what a print is by going to the "Text of Prints" page, scrolling down, and clicking on the "Find more information about committee prints" link. This background information may be better placed somewhere in the foreground. *Congressional Universe* does provide very helpful reference pages such as information on the legislative process, a legislative glossary, citation guides, and a "How Do I?" FAQ section. But one gets the feeling these valuable tools may be buried too deeply in the site to be noticed by those who need them most.

For those who learn by example it would be helpful if CIS's editors took a cue from Congressional Quarterly by peppering their major topic and subtopic areas with popular current-interest examples. This could provide a valuable learning alternative. To some degree this pedagogical strategy is incorporated under the major heading "Hot Topics." It would be interesting to see how the legal research experience could be made more "cool" for undergraduates, counterbalancing the inherently stodgy nature of government publications.

Overall, CIS *Congressional Universe* is a quality tool for researching current and past legislative issues and finding your way around Congressional publications. Its current organizational structure best lends itself to seasoned researchers who are already knowledgeable about the legislative process and the differences between various government publications. For less knowledgeable researchers, such as the average undergraduate, additional finding aids like interactive wizards or natural language searching would prove invaluable as a "hand rail" for those trekking through the sometimes deep and circuitous canyons of Federal government information.

Submitted by: Atifa Rawan and Eric Comport

The following chart of legal online databases (pp. 6-7) is part of a longer list of both legal and Political Science web sites, compiled by the Vendor/Publisher Committee, that will appear on the LPSS web site

Online Library Databases in Law

Compiled by LPSS/Vendors and Publishers Committee, ALA Midwinter 2000, Atifa Rawan, Chair

NAME OF LEGAL SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	ACCESS METHOD	DATES OF COVERAGE	PRODUCER
* = not full text				
Avalon Project	A project of Yale Law School to provide full text of various pre-18th Century - 20th Century documents related to law, history, and diplomacy	web	pre 18th Century –	Yale Law School http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/avalon.htm
CCH OmniTax Online School Library/CCH Internet Tax Research NetWork	Current and archival information about tax law	web		CCH Inc. http://tax.cch.com
Checkpoint	Current and archival tax research materials	web		RIA Group http://checkpoint.riag.com
Code of Federal Regulations	The general and permanent rules published in the Federal register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal government	web	1996-	US GSA http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/cfr-table-search.html
CODICES	Case law of constitutional courts in Europe and the U.S.	web		Council of Europe Publishing http://www.coe.fr/codices
Current Index to Legal Periodicals (CILP)	Timely topical access to approximately 475 law school reviews and other selected legal journals under 100 subject headings	web	current 8 weeks	University of Washington Law Library http://lib.law.washington.edu/cilp/cilp.html
Electronic Commerce and Law Report	A weekly electronic newsletter about the legal aspects of electronic commerce	web		Bureau of National Affairs http://www.bna.com/e-law
Federal Register Online	Documents of Federal administrative agencies	web	1995-	US GPO http://www.access.gpo.gov/su%5Fdocs/aces/aces140.html
Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals*	Index to 450 legal periodicals published worldwide	web	1985-	RLG http://eureka.rlg.org
Index to Legal Periodicals & Books*	Index to 650 US legal journals, yearbooks, and other legal publications	web	1981-	Wilson http://www.hwwilson.com/databases/legal.shtml
IndexMaster*	Contains the tables of contents and indexes from over 4000 legal treatises from approximately 60 publishers.	web		IndexMaster, Inc. http://www.indexmaster.com

InterAm	A database for Latin American law, containing treaties, statutes, and regulations	web		National Law Center for Inter-American Free Trade http://www.natlaw.com
International Business and Environmental Regulation	A comprehensive guide to Environmental Regulation and its impact upon business and investment within Canada, Europe, and the United States	web		Yorkhill Law Publishing http://www.yorkhill.com/itm00021.htm
International Civil Procedure	A detailed analysis of civil procedures in 16 jurisdictions, mainly in Europe	web		Yorkhill Law Publishing http://www.yorkhill.com/itm00014.htm
Legal Resource Index*	Citations to articles from law journals and selected law-related articles from business and general interest periodicals	web		American Association of Law Libraries http://141.161.38.45:82
Legal Scholarship Network	A series of electronic journals of abstracts (working papers and articles) in various areas of law.	web	1997-	Social Science Electronic Publishing http://www.ssrn.com/lisn/index.html
LegalTrac*	Articles in over 800 legal sources from the English-speaking world	web	1980-	Gale http://infotrac.galegroup.com
Lexis.com	Web-accessible version of LEXIS	web		Lexis-Nexis http://www.lexis.com/research
LOIS	An online legal research alternative to Lexis	web		Loislaw.com http://www.pita.com
NELLCO	New England Law Library Consortium	web		NELLCO http://www.Nellco.org
New Westlaw.com	An enhanced interface and new features to Westlaw.com	web		West Group http://www.newwestlaw.com
Pike & Fischer Internet Law and Regulation	"Comprehensive and reliable research on Internet law"	web		Pike & Fischer http://internetlaw.pf.com
Statutes at Large	Statutes at Large via Congressional Universe	web	1789-1997	CIS http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp
Supreme Court Today	Time-sensitive information on all matters coming before the Supreme Court	web		Bureau of National Affairs http://www.bna.com/prodcatalog/desc/LWLN.html
TIARA™ U.S. Treaties Index*	An index to information on over 10,000 treaties	web		Oceana Publications http://www.oceanalaw.com
TIARA™ U.S. Treaties Researcher	Over 10,000 U.S. Treaties indexed, with full text searching.	web		Ocean Publications http://www.oceanalaw.com
United States Law Week	A comprehensive overview of precedent-setting actions in all areas of U.S. law, from all jurisdictions nationwide	web		BNA, Inc. http://www.bna.com/prodcatalog/desc/USLW.html
United States Law Week's Supreme Court Today	Updates on the very latest action taken in any case before the U.S. Supreme Court	web		BNA, Inc. http://www.bna.com/prodcatalog/desc/LWLN.html

US Code	General and permanent laws of the United States, organized by subject	web	1994-	GPO Access http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/cong013.html
Westlaw.com	"The premier legal and business research tool on the Internet"	web		West Group http://www.westlaw.com
World Law Index, Part 1: Index to Hispanic Legislation*	"The definitive international online index to hispanic legislation"	web	1976-1997	RLG http://autoweb.rlg.org/toc.html

BE ACTIVE IN LPSS!!

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Consider joining an LPSS committee and/or become a mentor. Reap the rewards of meeting and working with your colleagues around the country. LPSS needs volunteers. Contacts are:

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