

Law and Political Science
Section Report for 2011
Submitted by Chris Palazzolo, PhD, Outgoing Section Chair
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This year's program (Legal Consequences of Environmental Crises) was a big success. An informal count of attendees was about 50. The purpose of the program, to quote the program committee:

While the environmental cleanup of the BP oil spill will undoubtedly impact the Gulf region for years to come, its legal consequences may last longer. Making sense of legal issues surrounding the gulf oil spill can be a challenge for patrons and librarians alike. Hear about current research regarding the legal implications of the gulf oil spill as well as ways to make this information more accessible to your patrons.

The three speakers, Robert B. Gramling, author of *Blowout in the Gulf*, Jenna Ryan, of Louisiana State Libraries, author of a LibGuide on the Deepwater Horizon Disaster <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/ref/oilspill/> and Jonathan Ramseur of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) provided informative presentations and graciously responded to numerous questions from the engaged audience.

Having organized and put on a number of very successful programs over the past Annual conferences, the program committee, or some past/current members of the committee should work to document some best practices.

Per usual, **the instruction committee** (chaired by Rebecca Ohm) produced a wonderful annotated bibliography for the program, which is available here:
<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/about/sections/lpss/conferences/bibliography2011.pdf>

The **instruction committee** has not held a formal discussion session for the past several midwinters, since the midwinter conference has become primarily virtual for committee meetings. However, of particular interest to several LPSS committees has been the sponsorship of some online discussion groups (topics to be determined, but could be related to instruction ideas, pedagogical tools, etc). There is still some question as to who might be in charge of said setup. Most likely, coordination will be necessary between membership (who originally initiated the idea) and instruction.

The **instruction committee** has also considered the establishment of an assignment repository, but the size of the committee and some issues surrounding the goals of said repository are still under discussion.

The **publications committee** changed its name this past year to the Communication and Publications Committee, which executive agreed better reflects the work that the committee undertakes. The work of the committee has focused upon the following over the past year:

- Reviewing changes to the LPSS online presence (e.g., adapting to the new Facebook group profile)
- Reviewing a proposal for the creation of model guides; this an ongoing discussion as to how to pilot and implement across the section
- Maintaining the web presence and social media coverage

ALA is moving towards Drupal as a new CMS. Current content should be easily migrated, but some training will be involved for our webmaster, Kathi Fountain. There has been some discussion as to whether to split “webmaster” duties into two positions (webmaster and online media coordinator).

Both the **instruction and publications committee** have discussed next steps with the political science information literacy guidelines. Some ideas that have been floated around include the establishment of a shared lib/campus guide that would include examples and applications of assignments, strategies and other engagement with the guidelines.

Mara Degnan-Rojewski currently serves as our ACRL representative to APSA. The **Liaison Coordinating Committee** has implemented some major changes for future liaisons; generally, the changes are designed to make the program more competitive with fixed terms for liaisons. The section will need to sponsor a liaison and make a formal application for funding. Mara is currently under the old guidelines, but future liaisons (beginning 2012, Annual) will need to be under the new rules. Mara will be attending the APSA Teaching and Learning Conference (TLC) in Albuquerque in early 2012.

The **membership committee**, as noted above, has been discussing the online forum idea (to be held several times between conferences) as a means to possibly bring in potential new LPSS members. Another major initiative for membership centered upon the success of joint social/happy hours between GODORT and LPSS, and possibly expanding the social to include other social science-focused sections. The committee will also be putting together a membership survey.

Chad Kahl had assembled a list of all political science liaisons/subject librarians across the U.S. so as to create a pool of potential members. Next steps are currently being discussed. Statistics on the number of LPSS members differs slightly, but it is hovering around 400 (although the most recent budget allocation was based upon a membership total of 503).

The **vendor and publications committee** has been inactive for the most part for 2010-2011. The committee should be revived for 2011-2012. An e-book forum for the social sciences might be a possible idea, as there continue to be numerous questions as to use, availability, access, and the collection economics of e-books.

The **CQ/Marta Lange** award process and luncheon went off without a hitch. Mary Gilles chaired the committee who publicized the award and chose the recipient. This year’s award was given posthumously to Stephen E. Atkins.

The **Review and Planning committee** has focused its discussion upon (1) assisting in the transition of one chair to the next, (2) providing a forum for how ALA/ACRL/LPSS can help in one’s professional career, and (3) reviewing current LPSS guidelines. The committee might serve as a good sponsor of sorts for the program planning best practices review above.

The section has about \$730 remaining in the coffers. Our budget, including grants from vendors for the program, was originally around \$2700. This money will not be held over for next year.