Off the Shelf ... A review of selected law library resources

Catching up on Legal News with JURIST (and Other Resources)!

Welcome back, students! Curious about what significant legal events have occurred over Christmas break? Well, if you haven’t been following them yourself (which we hope is the case since break is a great opportunity to focus on other things for a while), then you should visit JURIST to catch up. JURIST is a Web-based news and real-time legal research service provided by the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in Pennsylvania.

Under the direction of Bernard Hibbitts, a team of law student reporters, editors and web developers provide objective, timely, and concise reports on breaking legal news. Unlike many other contemporary legal news services, “JURIST eschews sensational legal news about crimes, trials and celebrities, and instead concentrates on legal issues with significant jurisprudential, social and political implications . . . attempt[ing] to provide a more even balance of US and international legal news than is common in traditional legal or mass media.”

The scope of JURIST’s coverage may be limited, but the depth of its research and reporting is not. JURIST always links directly to the underlying primary source materials (e.g., legislation, docket information and court filings, judicial and administrative decisions, hearings, and more) for all of the articles in its Paper Chase news stream. Consequently, your understanding of an issue is not limited to the article author’s summary of the relevant sources. Additionally, JURIST also publishes exclusive commentaries by American and foreign law professors and legal practitioners who are directly involved in the most pressing legal issues of the day. This combination of impartial reporting, direct access to primary sources, and expert analysis and explanations makes JURIST a great starting point for your legal research (especially when it comes to locating foreign and international materials).

Be sure to bookmark JURIST today and you’ll agree: “What could take an hour searching the Web takes a minute on JURIST.”

If exploring JURIST piques your curiosity about other legal news feeds and blogs, be sure to click the News Feeds link at the bottom of the gold Library News column on the Kresge Law Library homepage. In addition to JURIST, The BLT: The Blog of Legal Times, Law.Com, NPR Legal Affairs, and SCOTUSBLOG, will also help you keep abreast of current legal news.

-Chris O’Byrne

1. Frequently-asked questions about JURIST.

Tracking News Stories with Alerts

If you are interested in monitoring a news story as it develops, don’t forget that there’s more to it than Google Alerts. You can also set up an Alert Search on LexisNexis or use Westlaw’s WestClip service. Both services give you far more control over the scope of your search (e.g., more easily search individual publications or combined news databases) and allow you to form a more precise query (i.e., specify the relationship between your search terms) than Google Alerts. However, for tracking coverage in the blogosphere, Google Alerts is the way to go. If you have questions about using any of these services, stop by Suite 1100 of Eck Hall and see one of your friendly Research Librarians!