Comm Skills Virtual Learning

# Legal Communications I & II Research & Investigation

April 30, 2020

Lesson: April 30, 2020

**Objective/Learning Target: Students will research and investigate gaps in laws and policy.**

# Bell Ringer/Let's Get Started

Today we are going to focus on retrieving information from online sources. List the keywords from your topic area. Next, create a list of synonyms.

Here is an example of how to use keywords to improve your search process.

# Lesson/Activity

**Research Tips**
- **<u>Newsletters:</u>** Sign up for the Brookings Briefing, Politico or RealClear's topic reports, updates from major publications like the New York Times, The Washington Post, The Economist, The Atlantic, etc. and other newsletters and news aggregates. These are great ways to keep up to date on what is going on in this year's topic area.
- **<u>Google Alerts:</u>** Create google alerts for key terms, bringing research to your inbox daily or weekly.
- **<u>Wikipedia:</u>** Wikipedia can be useful IF you go to the links at the bottom of the page to find articles--use their citations as your own.
- **<u>Google Scholar:</u>** If you are looking for more in-depth research, especially for solvency mechanisms, case ideas and source lists., Use googlescholar.com to find scholarly resources from journals, official publications, etc.

# Lesson/Activity

Think Tanks are the single best place to look for research. These scholars research current affairs for a living, and often debate among each other about different policy options. These are highly qualifier, practice oriented thinkers. Institutions to investigate:

- **American Enterprise Institute (AEI)**
- **Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC)**
- **Brookings Institution**
- **Cato Institute**
- **Center for American Progress (CAP)**
- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities**
- **Congressional Research Service (CRS)**
- **Economic Policy Institute (EPI)**
- **Heritage Foundation**
- **Hoover Institution**
- **New America Foundation**
- **Pew Research Center**
- **RAND Corporation**
- **Third Way**

# Lesson/Activity

These sources are either highly regarded newspapers and other journalistic enterprises, or leading issue publications that write to inform. All conform to basics of journalistic integrity and offer reasoned, fact based opinion pieces.

Most offer newsletters or alerts, and are worth following on Twitter

**The Hill** - Political journalism

**Los Angeles Times** - Largest west coast newspaper, covers national issues

**National Review** - Conservative leaning journalism and opinion

**New York Times** - National newspaper, strong political and investigative reporting

**Politico** - slightly left leaning political reporting.

**Real Clear Politics** - Gathers news, opinion, and polling from around the web, and has lots of issue specific pages

**Roll Call** - Original source of political journalism

# Practice

**Goal: Locate 3 or more articles for your topic.**

**Adapt and complete the following questions:**

### Documentation of Information from Publications

### or Internet Sources

Briefly describe the problem being researched:

Identify the library, office, agency, organization, website, or other where you obtained this publication:

# Practice

Title of the Publication: _____

Author(s): _____

Date of Publication: _____

According to this publication, what community(ies) is/are affected by this problem?

# Practice

According to this publication, how serious is this problem in the community?

How widespread is the problem in other communities and states?

Is there a public policy that deals with the problem? (circle one)     **YES  /  NO**

    a. What form does the policy take (law, regulation, judicial order, etc.

    b. Briefly describe the public policy. Does it involve action by the government, society, the private sphere, or a mix of all?

    c. Is the public policy dealing with the problem adequate, or is it being poorly enforced or implemented? Explain:

If there is NO policy, explain why you think there is no policy:

# Practice

What level(s) and branch(es) of government is/are responsible for dealing with the problem?

What disagreements about this public policy, or the current way of dealing with it, exist in the community?

Who are the major individuals, groups, or organizations expressing opinions regarding the problem?

# Additional Resources

[National Criminal Justice Reference Programs](National Criminal Justice Reference Programs)

[Research Databases](Research Databases)

[Writing About Think Tanks](Writing About Think Tanks)