

# LAW IN ACTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

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## Student Blog Focuses on Business Law Issues

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Laptop computers, wireless networks, blogging, instant messaging, and the availability of a wide array of on-line research tools are changing how students learn in law school.

For a cadre of UW Law School students, the business of business is, well, blogging. About eighteen students under the guidance of Professor Gordon Smith have set up a Web log called *Law & Entrepreneurship News* to track developments in business law. The Web-based journal, employing a mix of commentary and news stories, provides a resource for business lawyers and allows students to closely follow new legal wrinkles in a range of areas of interest to them.

"As I understand more legal issues, I'm able to post a story and tell people why it matters," says Zachary Wyatt, a second-year law student and editor of copyright and trademark issues for the blog. "It's a great addition to classroom learning."

Smith agrees that the blog — which launched in September at <http://entrepreneur.typepad.com/news/> — provides a valuable chance to share breaking legal news and help students form opinions about the new developments. "Law school can be a rather passive experience for a lot of people — it's really the professor at the center and students reacting," says Smith, who specializes in corporate and securities law. "Blogging enhances their knowledge because they have more context in more recent cases." In addition to helping individual students learn about legal topics, the blog provides a way for these law students to practice their research and writing skills.

*Law & Entrepreneurship News* averages about 150 hits a day.

Student editors keep abreast of subject areas such as international trade, Wisconsin issues, venture capital, taxation, franchising, and small business. The site also includes links to other business blogs.

Smith says blogging imposes a special brand of discipline. He started his personal Web site, called *Venturpreneur*, at [www.venturpreneur.com/weblogs/](http://www.venturpreneur.com/weblogs/) with an eye toward doing the work of *Law & Entrepreneurship News*.

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## Ambassador, Senator Discuss Constitutions in Lively Forum



South African Ambassador Barbara Masekela and Senator Russ Feingold

South African Ambassador to the United States Barbara Masekela joined Senator Russell Feingold at the Law School in March, for a public conversation on the role of constitutions in developing democracy. Law School Professor Heinz Klug, an expert in South African law, moderated the discussion.

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## Faculty Showcases Law School at AALS Meeting

The University of Wisconsin Law School was well represented this January at the annual Association of American Law Schools (AALS) meeting in San Francisco, where member schools focused on the theme of “Engaged Scholarship.” Four Wisconsin faculty members were part of the scholarly program.

The AALS is a non-profit association of 166 law schools that serves as the learned society for law teachers and principal representative of legal education to the federal government, and to other national higher education organizations and societies.



**Professor Jane S. Schacter** presented at a session addressing democratic governance on the issue of Judicial Review. Her

research explores problems of legal interpretation, as well as debates about sexuality and law, with an emphasis in both areas on questions of democratic theory. At the UW, she teaches Constitutional Law,

Legislation, Sexual Orientation and the Law, and Civil Procedure. ■



**Professor Gregory Shaffer** participated in a panel discussion that explored the idea of jurisdiction and the cross-

border assertion of norms in an era of globalization. The panel discussed the theoretical basis for jurisdictional rules from both legal and anthropological perspectives. Shaffer is Director of UW’s European Union Center and Co-Director of the University’s Center on World Affairs and the Global Economy. He teaches courses in international trade law, international law, European Union law, international business transactions, and public corporations. ■



**Professor Heinz J. Klug** spoke on his experiences

in South Africa in the workshop “Building a Democratic System.” Klug’s anti-apartheid activities in his native South Africa as a member of the African National Congress and as a journalist resulted in exile for eleven years. He continued to work in exile in Zimbabwe and Botswana for the ANC, then pursued a legal education in the U.S. Since the fall of apartheid, he has served as an adviser to the new South African government on creating their constitution and on water rights and land tenure issues. ■



**Professor Gretchen Viney** moderated a panel that explored contextual influences in interviewing and counseling criminal

defense clients. The panel and attendees discussed achieving more sophisticated methods of interviewing and counseling that would more effectively address specific client needs. Gretchen Viney is a clinical associate professor at the UW and associate director of the Lawyering Skills Program. ■

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But he found the job too big for one blogger. As his own blog took a turn toward discussing everything from gourmet cheese to politics to the Bowl Championship Series, Smith recruited students to

work on the instructional blog.

Recent posts to the blog included news of the tax code’s effect on small businesses, the bankruptcy bill’s likelihood of passage, a proposed Internet sales tax, and the strong job market in uni-

versity towns. “It’s the wave of the future,” says Wyatt. “It’s a great way to get information out, and you don’t have to rely solely on traditional media outlets.”

— *Dennis Chaptman,*  
*UW Communications*