Current Awareness Tools for Researchers in the Humanities & Social Sciences
Workshop Objectives

- To begin discussion: “How do you stay current” in your field?
- To raise awareness of various e-alerts, tools and services
- To help you identify which tools will work best for your needs
Today’s Agenda

1. Introductions and Overview
2. How do you Stay Current with Research?

3. Table of Contents Alerts
   - Hands-on time

4. Saved Search Alerts
   - Hands-on time

5. Citation Alerts

6. Google Alerts

7. RSS Feeds and RSS Readers
   - Hands-on time
How do you currently stay up-to-date and informed on new publications and research in your field?
What are your information needs?

- Different tools are available depending on your needs. Some things to consider:
  - Are there key journals you are interested in?
  - Is your research interdisciplinary? Do you need to keep up-to-date with journals in multiple fields?
  - Do you want to keep up with new and/or rapidly changing forms of information like blogs or news?

- We’ll look at tools to help you stay up-to-date in each of these scenarios.
Scenario One :

Do you want to:

- Keep up-to-date with a few key journals in your field?
- Be notified about all articles that are published in a key association publication without having to constantly visit the library or the publisher’s website?
- Be notified when a new journal issue is out, and what the contents are?
Solution:
Table of Contents (ToC) Alerts

- Tables of Contents of selected journals are sent to you by email when a new issue is released.
- You don’t need to come to the Library to browse the most recent issue.
- Most academic publishing houses and scholarly societies now offer some sort of Auto Alert for new content.
Journal Table of Contents Alerts

- An alert is often sent before the journal issue is published, so you get advance notification.

- You may need to create an account and sign in to save and edit alerts.
Journal Table of Contents Alerts

Journal publishers in the Humanities and Social Sciences offering Alerts include:

- AnthroSource: [http://www.anthrosourcces.net](http://www.anthrosourcces.net)
- ProjectMuse: [http://muse.jhu.edu/](http://muse.jhu.edu/)
Journal Table of Contents Alerts

To find the publisher of your journal, you can:

- Search the UBC Library journal list for the title, or
- Google the journal title, or
- Use Ulrich’s Periodical Directory to find publisher, journal website and index

http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=100
Let’s set up a **Table of Contents Alert** for the journal *Communication, Culture & Critique* starting from the UBC Library journal list
Go to the Print & Electronic journals link on the library homepage and look up the journal ...
Journal Table of Contents Alerts

- If it’s available online, follow the link to the ejournal page to see if they offer alerts.

- To find the alert service at the publisher’s or journal’s website, look for terms like:
  - alert(s)
  - subscribe
  - notify me
  - email Table of Contents
  - set email alert

**ALERTING SERVICES**
- Email table of contents
- Email Advance Access
- CiteTrack
- XML RSS feed
Journal Table of Contents Alerts
Journal Table of Contents Alerts

- Click the “set e-mail alert” link

- If necessary, login to your account (many publishers require you to register and account with them in order to set up an alert)
Hands-on

Set up a Table of Contents Alert for your favorite journal via the publisher’s website (10 minutes)
Scenario Two:

Do you want to:

- Keep up-to-date on research in a variety of fields?
- Keep on top of new research that is being published in a variety of disciplines without having to search each database?
- See what dissertations have been written recently on your topic?
Solution:
Saved Search Alerts

- A **Saved Search Alert** is based on a search in a database, group of databases, or at the publisher’s website.

- The search is run at specified intervals and you are alerted by email if any new articles on your topic are available.

- You can set a search alert using any index available in the database, e.g., keywords, authors, journal title, etc.
Alerts through Databases

- Many of the databases that UBC Library subscribes to offer an alerting service, including databases from the large vendors like CSA, ProQuest, and EBSCO.

- Note: any of the databases mentioned in this workshop can be accessed through the Indexes and Databases A-Z list on the library homepage (under e-Resources)
Databases using the CSA Illumina interface offer alerts. CSA databases of interest to Humanities and Social Science researchers include:

- LISA: Library and Information Science Abstracts
- Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts
- Philosopher’s Index
- Sociological Abstracts
- Worldwide Political Science Abstracts

... and many more. See the full list at: [http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=519](http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=519)
Alerts via ProQuest

ProQuest databases also offer easy to set up alerts. Databases of particular interest to Humanities and Social Science researchers include:

- Canadian Newsstand
- CBCA Education, and
- ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (PQDT)

➢ **Tip**: set up an alert in PQDT to be notified when new dissertations on your research topic have been submitted!
EBSCO provides a many databases to which UBC Library subscribes. Databases of particular interest to Humanities and Social Science researchers include:

- Academic Search Complete,
- MLA International Bibliography
- Historical Abstracts
- ERIC
- Women’s Studies International
- PsycINFO

... and many more. See the full list at: http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=797
Setting up a Search Alert via EBSCO

- Let’s set up a **Saved Search Alert** using the EBSCO database **Academic Search Complete (ASC)** as our source.

- Link to Academic Search Complete: http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=196
Setting up a Search Alert via EBSCO

To set up a Search Alert, you first need to run a search in the database.

To save a search as an alert:

1. From the Search History/Alerts Menu, click **Save Searches/Alerts**. The Saved Search/Alert Screen appears. If you have not already signed in to My EBSCOHost, you will be prompted to do so.
Setting up a Search Alert via EBSCO

2. To save the search as an Alert that can be automatically run, click the Alert radio button. The Save Alert Screen appears.

3. Enter a Name and Description for the Alert.

4. To run the Alert against a different database, select the Database from the drop-down list.
5. To select how often the search will be run, from the **Frequency** drop-down list, select one:

- Once a day (the default)
- Once a week
- Bi-weekly
- Once a month
6. To limit which articles are searched, from the Articles published within the last drop-down list, select one:

- One month
- Two months
- Six months
- One year
- No limit (the default)
Setting up a Search Alert via EBSCO

7. In the **Run Alert for** field, select one:
   - One month
   - Two months
   - Six months
   - One year (the default)

8. Select the **Results format** to use: Brief or Detailed.
9. To limit **EBSCOhost** access to only the **articles in alert** (rather than the entire site), mark the checkbox to the left.

10. In the **E-mail Options** section, indicate how you would like to be notified. Select:
- E-mail all alerts and notices (the default)
- E-mail only creation notice
- No e-mail (RSS only)
Setting up a Search Alert via EBSCO

11. Enter your E-mail Address.

12. In the Subject field, enter a brief explanation that will appear in the subject line of the Alert e-mail.

13. Title - you can optionally enter a title for the e-mail. The default value for the Title field is: EBSCOhost Alert Notification.

14. E-mail [From] address - Defaults to: EPAAlerts@epnet.com. You can enter a different "From" e-mail address if desired.
Setting up a Search Alert via EBSCO

15. Select the **E-mail format** to use: Plain Text or HTML.

16. To have your search string included with your results, mark the **Include query string in results** checkbox. To include the alert frequency, mark the **frequency** checkbox.

17. When you have finished making changes, click **Save**.
Setting up a Search Alert via ProQuest

- Run your search in a ProQuest database
- On the results screen, click the link “Set Up Alert” link:
Setting up a Search Alert via ProQuest

In the pop-up window, select:

- **Schedule**: how often to send the alert
  - daily, weekly, monthly, every 3 months

- **Stop alert after**:
  - 2 weeks; 1, 2, 4, 6 months; 1 year

- **Email address**
- **Subject**
- **Message**
Hands-on

Set up a Saved Search Alert for your research topic via a subject database

(10 minutes)
Scenario Three:

Do you want to:

- Get notified when an article of interest is referenced or cited by another article?
- Be updated when your own publication is cited by others?
Solution: Citation Alerts

- In several databases it is possible to be alerted when a specific author or a specific publication is cited in another publication.

- A **Citation Alert** notifies you by email when an article of interest is referenced or cited by another article.
Citation Alerts

- Not many databases currently have Citation Alert capability, but more are adding this feature. Stay tuned!

- Currently, you can do a citation search in:
  - Web of Science (includes Arts and Social Science indexes)
  - Elsevier ScienceDirect
  - Informaworld
Setting up a Citation Alert in Web of Science

Step 1: Find the article of interest by running a search or browsing journals or books.

Step 2: While viewing the article, click the Create Citation Alert button.
Scenario Four

Do you want to:

- keep informed on new postings by favourite bloggers?

- Get up-to-the-minute results on news stories and events?

- Be notified of updates to favorite websites?
Solutions: Google Alerts and RSS Feeds

- **Google Alerts** are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of topic.

- Some handy uses of Google Alerts include:
  - monitoring a developing news story
  - keeping current on a competitor or industry
  - getting the latest on an author’s public talks, seminars, or signings
To set up a Google Alert

- Go to the **Google Alerts** page: [http://www.google.ca/alerts](http://www.google.ca/alerts)
- Enter the topic you wish to monitor
- Enter the type of source you wish to monitor:
  - News, blogs, web, video, groups, comprehensive (‘comprehensive’ includes multiple sources from News, Web and Blogs)
- Enter the frequency
  - As-it-happens, once a day, once a week
- Enter your email
To set up a Google Alert

Create a Google Alert

Enter the topic you wish to monitor.

Search terms: 

Type: Comprehensive

How often: once a day

Your email: 

Create Alert

Google will not sell or share your email address.
RSS Feeds and RSS Readers

RSS In Plain English

An excellent 4-minute video introduction to the how and why of RSS

URL: http://www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english
What you’ll need for RSS

1. **An RSS reader**
   - to store and read your feeds
   - also known as feed readers or aggregators.

**Popular RSS readers include:**

- Google Reader: [http://reader.google.com](http://reader.google.com)
- MyYahoo: [http://my.yahoo.com/](http://my.yahoo.com/)
- RefWorks has an RSS Reader, too
What you’ll need for RSS

2. RSS Feeds

Where do you get an RSS feed?

- Many scholarly journals, publications, blogs, news sites, podcasts, and videos offer RSS Feeds to their content.
- Look for these icons indicating RSS Feeds:
RSS Feed: New Books at UBC Library

http://newbooks.library.ubc.ca/newbooks/

New materials in Colonies, emigration, immigration received at Koerner Library (limited to Books)

(received 04 June to 27 September, 2008)

Displaying all 36 items

1. JV51 .C65 2007 / KOERNER LIBRARY

2. JV51 .M647 193 V. 118 / KOERNER LIBRARY

3. JV1811 .R47 2008 / KOERNER LIBRARY
   Series: (Comme un accordéon)
RSS Feed:
Research Blog

http://blog.openaccessanthropology.org
Hands-on

Set up an RSS Feed in the RSS Reader of your choice

(10 minutes)
Questions?
For further help:

- **UBC Library Guide:**
  Current Awareness Tools
  [http://toby.library.ubc.ca/subjects/subjpage2.cfm?id=623](http://toby.library.ubc.ca/subjects/subjpage2.cfm?id=623)

- **Ask Your Subject Librarian:**
  [http://toby.library.ubc.ca/libstaff/subjectlibrarians.cfm](http://toby.library.ubc.ca/libstaff/subjectlibrarians.cfm)