



## Faculty Lunches with the Dean (No. 33) (Kara Millonzi)

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Categories : [Faculty Lunches](#)

Date : October 11, 2017



Kara Millonzi participated in the last round of Faculty Lunches with the Dean, and she talked about the evolution of an important project called [NC Finance Connect](#). Kara received a grant from the School's Innovation Fund to support development of the site, and she has received first-rate support from folks in our IT Division.

NC Finance Connect is a web presence that focuses on local government finance, and it cuts



across many different categories of public officials. The primary feature is a discussion forum that is organized into 26 finance-related categories, and each category has several subcategories. Users can pick categories of interest and choose to receive email alerts about new discussions and replies within selected categories. NC Finance Connect also serves as a hub for accessing School and other finance-related resources.

The site has been up and running for eight months and over 1500 subscribers are using it to engage in discussions about a wide variety of topics. Kara has solicited feedback and it has been very positive. Now she is thinking about how to leverage the platform to deliver even higher-impact, finance-related resources for the School's clients.

There are roughly 75 finance-related statutes, and in lots of cases it is not possible for public officials to understand the legal requirements simply by reading a statute. Many are outdated and have not kept up with relevant changes in technology, or with modern interpretations based on evolving professional standards. In addition to the text of a particular finance statute, an official must know about case law interpretations, agency regulations, and the impact of other statutory provisions.

Kara described an idea that has gained the most traction, which is something called SOG Annotation for the finance statutes. SOG Annotation would build off the categories in NC Finance Connect, and it might include a sidebar with a list of all relevant statutes. A user would click on the statutory citation to see the text of a statute. They also would see any relevant case law summaries, agency regulations and interpretations, School blog posts about the statute, and any other documents that might be helpful.



Kara is in the process of developing the annotations for five to ten statutes just to get a sense of how much work is involved. One question is whether local officials will use SOG Annotation to better understand the financial law that govern their daily operations. It might be useful to legislators and legislative staff members who are looking to understand and improve individual statutes. Assuming that the project appears worthwhile and manageable, Kara will touch base with our IT professionals about how to integrate this new tool into NC Finance Connect.



Accounting (Funds,  
Accounts Payable,  
Receivables)



Budgeting and  
Appropriations



Cash Management and  
Investments



Community and Economic  
Development

Many thanks to Kara for creating NC Finance Connect and for continuing to think about how it might be expanded to better serve our clients. It has been an enormous amount of work for her and for our IT professionals—a partnership that requires faculty and staff working together. We do not have the capacity to create a customized web-based resource along these lines for every faculty member in every field of work.

NC Finance Connect should also be viewed as a pilot for a more robust web presence in other subject-matter areas. Kara's impressive effort in this area, along with Jeff Welty's work in developing the Criminal Law Knowledge Base for Prosecutors, in many ways are investments for all of us. We need to monitor both of these projects and assess how they might serve as models



for other areas and other client groups.