

LIBRARY GUIDE

U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- About U.S. Government Documents
- Classification of U.S. Government Documents
- Locations of U.S. Government Documents
- Sources for Finding U.S. Government Documents
- Basic Statistical Resources
- Online Resources

ABOUT U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Government documents are materials produced by an agency in the federal government. They take a variety of formats ranging from books and maps, to CD-ROMs and websites. The Government Printing Office (GPO) is in charge of printing and distributing U.S. government publications to libraries participating in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Grand Valley State University has been a selective depository in the FDLP since 1963 and currently receives approximately one third of the publications distributed by the program.

The U.S. Government Documents collection currently consists of over 116,000 paper government publications, more than 60,000 maps, and thousands of volumes on microfiche. In addition, patrons also have access to thousands of government publications available on the internet. The collection is historically strong in Congressional documents, U.S. Geological Survey publications, and Smithsonian Institute publications. The overall focus of the collection is on Michigan and the Great Lakes states of Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, but the library receives publications that contain information on all fifty states and countries around the world.

CLASSIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Superintendent of Documents Classification System

Most U.S. government documents are organized using the Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc) classification system. This system organizes materials by the government agency that created the document, instead of the subject of that document. So if you are looking for items on a particular topic, you may need to look in several different areas to find all of the government publications on that topic. For example, if you needed all of the statistics the government produces on children and poverty, it would be necessary to look for documents from the Census Bureau (C's), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (L's), the National Center for Health Statistics (HE's), and the National Center for Education Statistics (ED's).

Due to the ever-changing nature of the government bureaucracy, finding older documents can sometimes be difficult. As an example, if you were looking for current government publications from the Department of Education you would find them classified under the ED's. If you were looking for Department of Education publications from the 1970s, though, you would have to look under the ED's and the HE's because prior to the late 1970s the Department of Education was part of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (today known as the Health and Human Services Department) whose publications are classified under the HE's.

Tips for Finding the Documents using the SuDoc Classification System

- This is not a decimal system. Treat the numbers before and after decimal points as whole numbers.
 - ED 1.3 will come before ED 1.12, which will come before ED 1.112.
- Years before 2000 had the first number removed (998=1998; 2003=2003).
- If the call number is the same up to a point, the order you follow is Years-Letters-Numbers. Years come before letters. Letters come before all other numbers.
 - HE 20.3208: 986 comes before HE 20.3208: Af 8/2, which comes before HE 20.3208: 270

Library of Congress Classification System

While the vast majority of U.S. government documents are classified using the SuDoc system, many commonly used resources, such as the Statistical Abstract of the United States, the United States Government Manual, and the Foreign Relations of the United States, are classified using the Library of Congress (LC) classification system.

LOCATIONS OF U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

MAIN U.S. Government Documents

The majority of print format government documents are located in the Allendale Library on the east side of the 2nd floor.

MAIN US Government Documents—Reference

These books are classified using both the SuDoc and LC systems. Those books classified using the SuDoc system are located in the Allendale library on the east side of the 2nd floor, while those books classified using the LC system are located on south wall of the 2nd floor near the government documents office.

MAIN U.S. Government Documents—Microtext

File cabinets containing microfiche and readers are located on the 2nd floor in the Allendale Library. If you need to print from microfiche, readers/copiers are available on the north side of the 4th floor.

MAIN Maps

Map files are located on the east side of the 2nd floor of the Allendale Library. Atlases, overflow map files, and a light-table are located in the northeast corner of the 2nd floor.

MAIN Circulation Desk—Compact Disc

Government publications that are available in CD-ROM or DVD formats can be checked out at the MAIN Circulation Desk in the Allendale Library and used either on the Government Documents PCs in the Reference area or they can be loaded and used on personal computers.

STEELCASE & STEELCASE Reference

Certain government publications are located in the Steelcase Library on the Pew Campus. There are government publications in the Steelcase Library classified using both the SuDoc and LC classification schemes. CD-ROMs that are located at the Steelcase library can be checked out and used in the library on the Government Documents PCs or they can be loaded and used on personal computers.

SEIDMAN Govt

Select government publications are located in Seidman House. These items can be viewed any time during Seidman House's regular hours, but cannot be checked out from that building. To check out circulating publications located in Seidman House, place a request in the University Libraries online catalog to have the item sent to any of the libraries with a circulation desk. If you need assistance doing this, please see a reference librarian.

Other Locations

While the majority of U.S. government publications are found in the above locations, government documents can be found in the **MAIN Stacks**, **Reference** and **Periodicals**, and the **HOLLAND** and **FREY** libraries. A search in the online catalog can tell you exactly where a document can be located. Most items located in these locations are classified using the LC scheme.

SOURCES FOR FINDING U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS: ONLINE CATALOGS

University Libraries Online Catalog

Any search for government publications at GVSU should probably begin with the online catalog. Using the online catalog you can search for government publications by title, author, SuDoc number, or using keywords. The online catalog will tell you the location of the publications we own and whether it is currently checked out.

WorldCat

This online catalog of materials owned by libraries throughout the world contains more than 50 million items and is a good source for finding government publications owned by libraries other than Grand Valley State University. *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff.**

ONLINE INDEXES OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

GPO (via FirstSearch)

This online subscription database of the GPO Catalog of U.S. Government Publications provides coverage from 1976 to the present and is updated monthly. Links to documents available online are provided. *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff. Access to this database for Michigan residents is available from the Michigan e-Library at <<https://www.mel.org/databases/subjects.html>>.**

GPO Catalog of U.S. Government Publications

INTERNET: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cgp/index.html>

This publicly accessible database provides coverage from 1994 to the present and is updated daily. Links to documents available online are provided.

LexisNexis Government Periodicals Index

"Covers the publications of scores of federal departments and agencies responsible for fundamental societal concerns: business, agriculture, national security, the environment and natural resources, health and safety, food and nutrition, transportation, and more." This online subscription database provides coverage from 1988 to the present and is updated quarterly. *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff.**

*All subscription databases can be accessed from the University Libraries homepage <<http://www.gvsu.edu/library>>.

PRINT INDEXES OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Online indexes are the best way to find government publications produced after 1976. To find publications created prior to that year, though, you will often need to consult paper indexes.

If you do find a document you are interested in obtaining after using the following sources, you will want to first check in the online catalog to see if GVSU owns it. GVSU did not become a federal depository library until 1963 so the library's holdings of older documents are quite limited. If the document is not found in the online catalog, the next step is to check in the *CIS U.S. Serial Set Index* (see below) because the document you are looking for may have been printed in the *Serial Set*, *American State Papers*, or *New American State Papers*. If the document is not available from any of those sources, you can try borrowing the item from another library by requesting an interlibrary loan.

A Descriptive Catalogue of the Government Publications of the U.S., September 5, 1774-March 4, 1881. Poore, Benjamin

MAIN US Government Documents—Reference Z1223 .A 1885

A chronological list of publications published from 1774-1881. Entries include the title, author and date of each document. SuDoc numbers are not provided so you will need to consult the Checklist of United States public Documents, 1789-1909 to find a SuDoc number, or check the online catalog to see if GVSU owns the item.

Checklist of United States Public Documents, 1789-1909: Congressional to Close of Sixtieth Congress, Departmental to End of Calendar Year 1909. Andriot, John

MAIN US Government Documents—Reference GP 3.2: C 41/2

The general source of pre-20th century SuDoc numbers, this index lists publications of the U. S. Federal Government printed between 1789 and 1909. Entries include issuing agency, SuDocs number, title, and publication date. This index is organized by issuing agency and SuDoc number, and does not contain title or subject indexes, so you need to have a general idea of what agency issued the document.

CIS U.S. Serial Set Index, 1789-1969.

SEIDMAN Y 1.1/2: Index

The *Serial Set Index* provides access, primarily by subject, to the over 14,000 volumes which appeared in the *Serial Set* from 1789 to 1969, as well as the documents in the *American State Papers*. The documents in the *New American State Papers* can be accessed by using this index along with the *New American State Papers Correlation List*.

Guide to U.S. Government Publications.

MAIN US Government Documents—Reference Z1223 .Z7 A572

This work covers serials from 1789 to the present and is a good source for tracking publications over time. Entries include titles, SuDoc number stems, and ISSN for agency series. This is **NOT** the source you want to consult if you are looking for an individual title or report.

Comprehensive Index to the Publications of the United States Government, 1881-1893. Ames, John

MAIN US Government Documents—Reference Z1223 .A 1905

This work covers publications printed between 1881-1893. It is arranged by subject, but does include an author index at the end of the second volume. Entries include title, subject, author, issuing agency, date issued, and number of pages. SuDoc numbers are not provided so you will need to consult the *Checklist of United States public Documents, 1789-1909* to find a SuDoc number, or check the online catalog to see if GVSU owns the item.

Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications

MAIN US Government Documents—Reference GP 3.8:[year]

This print index covers a broad range of U.S. government publications published from 1933 to the present. It is preceded by the *Catalogue of the public documents of the ... Congress and of all departments of the government of the United States for the period from ...* which covers the years 1893-1933.

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC DATABASES & INDEXES

Criminal Justice and Law

LexisNexis Academic

This database allows you to search and access Federal laws and regulations, as well as decisions from Federal Courts (1790-present). Sources include the Federal Register (July 1, 1980-present), Code of Federal Regulations (current year), U.S. Attorney Journal Opinions (1791-present), and the U.S. Code. *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff.**

NCJRS Abstracts Database

INTERNET: <http://abstractsdb.ncjrs.org/>

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service Abstracts Database contains summaries of more than 180,000 criminal justice publications.

*All subscription databases can be accessed from the University Libraries homepage <<http://www.gvsu.edu/library>>.

Earth Sciences

GeoRef

“The GeoRef database covers the geology of North America from 1785 to the present and the geology of the rest of the world from 1933 to the present. The database includes references to all publications of the U.S. Geological Survey.” *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff.**

Search Publications of the U.S. Geological Survey

INTERNET: <http://usgs-georef.cos.com>

A publicly accessible database that contains the USGS publications found in GeoRef. The database is updated 24 times a year.

Bibliography and Index of Geology

MAIN Periodicals—Indexes QE75 .B52

This paper index can be found on the fourth floor of the Allendale Library.

Life Sciences

AGRICOLA

AGRICOLA (Agriculture Online Access) provides “worldwide coverage of agriculture and related fields from 1970 to the present. AGRICOLA is the locator and bibliographic access and control system of the National Agricultural Library (NAL) collections and also includes records from other cooperating institutions.” *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff. A public version of AGRICOLA is available online at <<http://agricola.nal.usda.gov/>>.**

Public Affairs, Political Science and International Relations

PAIS International & PAIS International Archive

PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service) “provides selective subjects and bibliographic access to periodicals, books, hearings, reports, gray literature, government publications, Internet resources, and other publications from 120 countries.” PAIS International provides coverage from 1972 to the present and is updated monthly, while PAIS International Archive contains the records originally in the *PAIS Bulletin*, which covers the years 1915-1976. *Please note that because this is a subscription database, it is available only to GVSU students, faculty and staff.**

Scientific and Technical

Energy Citations Database

INTERNET: <http://www.osti.gov/energycitations>

“Energy Citations contains bibliographic records for energy and energy-related scientific and technical information from the Department of Energy (DOE) and its predecessor agencies.” The database “includes bibliographic records of literature in disciplines of interest to DOE such as chemistry, physics, materials, environmental science, geology, engineering, mathematics, climatology, oceanography, computer science and related disciplines.” Coverage in this database is from 1948 to the present.

GreyLit Network

INTERNET: <http://graylit.osti.gov/>

The GreyLit Network allows you to search across several government databases to find grey literature from the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense, NASA and the EPA.

Department of Energy’s Information Bridge

INTERNET: <http://www.osti.gov/bridge/>

“The Information Bridge provides the open source to full-text and bibliographic records of Department of Energy (DOE) research and development reports in physics, chemistry, materials, biology, environmental sciences, energy technologies, engineering, computer and information science, renewable energy, and other topics.” Coverage includes full-text documents from 1995-present, as well older documents that have been digitized.

NTIS Library

INTERNET: <http://www.ntis.gov/search/>

The National Technical Information Service library allows you to search for information on over 750,000 government-produced products. While many of these products can be accessed freely online, the NTIS sells many others, which may be available at GVSU or another library through interlibrary loan.

STINET

INTERNET: <http://stinet.dtic.mil/>

“The Defense Technical Information Center's Scientific and Technical Information Network (STINET) Service helps the Department of Defense community access pertinent scientific and technical information to meet mission needs effectively.” This database allows you to search for citations and full-text unclassified technical and scientific reports.

*All subscription databases can be accessed from the University Libraries homepage <<http://www.gvsu.edu/library>>.

BASIC STATISTICAL RESOURCES

GENERAL

Statistical Abstract of the United States

Multiple Locations—HA202 [Edition #] (1878-present)

INTERNET: <http://www2.census.gov/prod2/statcomp/index.htm> (1878-present)

The current edition of this book can be found at the Main and Steelcase reference desks and in the Holland and Frey libraries. Older editions going back to 1878 are shelved either in Main reference or the Main stacks and are available either in print or microfiche depending on the year.

State and Metropolitan Area Data Book

MAIN Reference HA202 .A3 (1997/1998 edition)

MAIN Stacks HA202 .A3 (1979,1982,1986, 1991 editions)

County and City Data Book

MAIN Reference and STEELCASE Reference HA202 .A36 (2000 edition)

MAIN Stacks HA202 .A36 (1949,1952,1956,1962,1967,1972,1977,1983,1988, 1994)

Includes data for all U.S. counties, cities with 25,000 or more inhabitants, and places of 2,500 or more inhabitants.

HISTORICAL

Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970

MAIN Reference HA202 .A385

A Century of Population Growth, from the First Census of the United States to the Twelfth, 1790-1900.

MAIN Reference HA195 .A5

ECONOMIC

Handbook of U.S. Labor Statistics

MAIN Reference—Reference Desk and STEELCASE Reference Desk HD5723 .A23 (Current Year)

STEELCASE HD5723 .A23 (Previous editions)

Business Statistics of the United States

STEELCASE Reference Desk HC101 .A13122 (Current Year)

STEELCASE & STEELCASE Reference HC101 .A13122 (Previous editions)

The *Handbook of U.S. Labor Statistics* and *Business Statistics of the United States* consist primarily of government statistics, but are produced by a private publisher. They take the place of *Business Statistics* and the *Handbook of Labor Statistics*, which the government no longer publishes.

EDUCATION

Digest of Education Statistics

MAIN Reference and HOLLAND Reference L111 .A6 (Current Year)

MAIN Stacks L111 .A6 (Previous editions beginning with 1964)

INTERNET: <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS6878>

Condition of Education

MAIN Stacks L112 .A64 (1975-1979, 1982-present)

INTERNET: <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS2522>

HEALTH

Health, United States

MAIN Reference--Reference Desk RA407.3 .U57 (Current Year)

MAIN Stacks RA407.3 .U57 (Previous editions beginning with 1978)

FREY Reference RA407.3 .U572

INTERNET: <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS2649>

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Uniform Crime Reports

STEELCASE HV6787 .A3 (1958-1997)

INTERNET: <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS3082>

Crime in the United States

STEELCASE Reference HV6787 .A3 (Current year)

STEELCASE HV6787 .A3 (Previous editions beginning with 1998)

ONLINE RESOURCES

ONLINE STATISTICAL RESOURCES

GVSU Government Resources and Maps

INTERNET: <http://www.gvsu.edu/library/govdoc>

Statistical resources can be accessed from the menu on the left side of the screen.

FedStats

INTERNET: <http://www.fedstats.gov>

Access statistics from over 100 federal agencies. Browse for statistics by agency, topic, or location, or search for statistics across agencies. Also includes data tools that allow you to create tables, download and export statistics.

University of Michigan Documents Center

INTERNET: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html>

This site contains a wide range of state, federal, and international statistics broken into 24 broad categories. The site also contains a subject index on the left side of the screen.

SEARCH ENGINES

Google Uncle Sam

INTERNET: <http://www.google.com/unclesam>

Searches only websites with .gov and .mil URLs.

FirstGov

INTERNET: <http://www.firstgov.gov>

The U.S. government's official web portal.

OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

GVSU Government Resources and Maps

INTERNET: <http://www.gvsu.edu/library/govdoc>

Access information on the University Libraries' Government Documents and Maps collections, as well as links to federal, state and local government resources, statistical sources, international resources and more.

University of Michigan Documents Center

INTERNET: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/>

"The Documents Center is a central reference and referral point for government information, whether local, state, federal, foreign or international."

Thomas

INTERNET: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Legislative information from the Library of Congress, including the Congressional Record, roll call votes, bill summary and status, bill text, public laws by law number and committee reports.

GPO Access Online Resources

INTERNET: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/databases.html>

An A-Z list of resources hosted by GPO Access.

U.S. Federal Government Agencies Directory

INTERNET: <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgov.html>

From Louisiana State University, this directory allows you to look for government agency websites hierarchically, alphabetically, or through a keyword search.

NEED MORE ASSISTANCE?

Many more government information resources can be found on the University Libraries Government Resources and Maps website <<http://www.gvsu.edu/library/govdoc>>. If you need more assistance, you can contact the Government Documents librarian (616-331-2863) or the reference desks in the **Allendale** (616-331-3500), **Steelcase** (616-331-7331), **Holland** (616-331-3928), or **Frey** (616-331-5932) libraries. If the librarians are busy or the desks are closed, leave a voicemail message or send an email message to refdesk@gvsu.edu. A librarian will contact you during regular library hours.