









How to Find Government Information at UI Libraries

Government Publications Collection
Main Library, Third Floor North
E-mail Government Information Questions: lib-govpub@uiowa.edu
Chat: [Government Information Online](#)
Home Page: <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/govpubs/>
Phone: (319)335-5299

One of the unique resources of the [Main Library](#) is the government information collection. It includes books, pamphlets, periodicals, CD-ROMs, DVDs, and Web-based resources issued by the United States, State of Iowa, other State, and foreign governments. Similar publications are available from the United Nations and other international organizations. Access is also provided to a growing number of web-based resources located through Smart Search and other [databases](#).

Most print publications in the collection may be borrowed, with some exceptions, through the same circulation procedures as other material in the library.

Government information resources may be located in a variety of ways including:

- [Ask a Librarian](#) – or stop at the Information Desk on the first floor to ask a question
- [Smart Search](#), [InfoHawk Catalog](#) and other [databases](#)
- The UI Libraries' Government Information [web site](#) provides links to the some of the most heavily used databases and for some full-text resources, information about the collection, indexes for hard-to-find materials, and [research guides](#) for major research topics and materials.
- [Federal Digital System](#) (FDsys) – a collection of U.S. federal primary government resources in full-text.
- Databases such as:
 - [AccessUN](#)  – an index to United Nations Publications
 - [CQ Electronic Library](#)  – for researching American government, politics, history, public policy, and current affairs.
 - [Lexis-Nexis Congressional](#)  – database of federal legislative publications and related information
 - [Lexis-Nexis Statistical Insight](#)  – database for state, federal, private organization and international statistical resources
 - [SourceOECD](#)  – comparative statistics from the 30 member states
 - [U.S. Congressional Serial Set](#) (Readex)  – database of Congressional Reports and Documents (1789 – 1994)
 - [World Development Indicators](#)  – a collection of economic data supplied by the World Bank
 - [World News Connection](#)  – English language translations of foreign news services
- RAND publications from the original “think tank.” White papers, research studies on a wide-range of public policy topics
- Indexes to a variety of historical published and unpublished federal publications (presidential, federal agency, and legislative) materials

- Specialized reference materials and interpretive resources from private publishers that complement the official government publications collection.

Classification Systems

It is important to know the “call number” to locate an item in the government publications collection. Several classification schemes are used and are described below:

[Superintendent of Documents Classification](#) (SuDocs numbers) – US Federal materials classified by this system are arranged by the issuing agency and identified by a unique arrangement of letters, numbers, dashes, dots, slashes and colons. This material is located on the east side of the collection. Here’s an example: JU10.21/2:2002-2 is the call number for a publication issued by the Justice Department entitled “Statistical Tables for the Federal Judiciary” published in 2002.

Library of Congress – is the most commonly used classification scheme in the Main Library, which uses alpha-numeric characters to define subject categories of materials. Here’s an example: DA630.A17 2002 is the call number for the “Official Yearbook of the United Kingdom” published in 2002. Publications using the Library of Congress classification numbers are housed in the west side of the collection.

SWANK – is a classification system developed by R. Swank in 1944 and used to organize many of the state, foreign and international documents. The basis of this system is the issuing agency, yet it is different than the SuDocs system. Here’s an example. 17-I64CEN 8:2001 represents “Selected Population Trends in Iowa’s Counties” published in 2001 from the Census Services at Iowa State University. Titles with SWANK numbers can be found in the west side of the collection.

Dewey -- is a classification system that was used prior to the Library of Congress system at the University of Iowa. Those titles still using Dewey Classification are older materials in the collection. The system organizes materials by topic. Here’s an example: 317.3 U5 represents the Ninth Census of the United States, 1870.

rev. 07/10 - MM