

# RESEARCH GUIDE

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## AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

### George Mason University Libraries

#### THE LIBRARY CATALOG

The online catalog offers several ways to search for books on American government and politics. You can search by title of the publication, by author's name, or by subject. For Subject searches, you must use the standardized subject headings created by the Library of Congress. The multi-volume set of **Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)** can be found in the Reference Department collection. Some examples of Library of Congress Subject Headings for American Government and Politics are as follows:

- General books on this topic:  
*United States – Politics and Government*  
*Federal Government – United States*  
*Legislation--United States*
- Specific topics of interest:  
*Elections – United States*  
*Lobbyists – United States*  
*Political Campaigns – United States*  
*Political Parties – United States*  
*Voting – United States*
- Specific offices or government bodies:  
*United States. Congress*  
*United States. Supreme Court*  
*Presidents – United States*

#### GUIDES TO THE LITERATURE

Bibliographic guides identify the available sources within a discipline. They are excellent tools to use as you begin conducting your research.

**Political Science: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources.** Englewood, CO:

Libraries Unlimited, 1990. Fen Ref JA71 .Y67 1990

**Political Science: Illustrated Search Strategy and Sources.** Ann Arbor, MI: Pierian Press, 1993. Fen Ref JA88 .L69 1993

**Theories of Political Processes: A Bibliographic Guide to the Journal Literature, 1965-1995.** Westport, CT: Greenwood press, 1997. Fen Ref JA71 .B78 1997

## DICTIONARIES

- The American Political Dictionary.** Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, c2002.  
Fen Ref JK9 .P55 2002
- Biographical Dictionary of Congressional Women.** Westport: Greenwood, 1999.  
Fen Ref JK1012 .F57 1999
- Congressional Quarterly's American Congressional Dictionary.** Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 2001. Fen Ref JK9 .K73 2001
- State and Local Government Political Dictionary.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. Fen Ref HF 86 .E58

## ENCYCLOPEDIAS

- Encyclopedia of American Political History: Studies of the Principal Movements and Ideas.** New York: Scribner, 1984. Fen Ref E183 .E5
- Encyclopedia of Governmental Advisory Organizations.** Detroit: Gale Research, 1999.  
Fen Ref JK468 .C7 E52 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (1999)
- Encyclopedia of the American Legislative System.** 3 vols. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, c1994. Fen Ref JF501 .E53 1994.
- Encyclopedia of the American Presidency.** 4 vols. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1994.  
Ref JK511 .E53 1994 (Fenwick, JCL & Pr. Wm. Libraries)
- Encyclopedia of Third Parties in America.** Armonk, NY: Sharpe Reference, c2000.  
Fen Ref JK2261 .E474 2000

## ALMANACS AND YEARBOOKS

- Almanac of American Politics.** Washington: National Journal, biennial.  
Fen Ready Ref JK1012 .A44 Also online at National Journal Policy Central Database.
- Almanac of Federal PAC's.** Washington: Amward Publications, biennial.  
Fen Ref JK1991 .A744
- Almanac of Virginia Politics.** Falls Church, VA: Women's Activist Fund, annual.  
Fen Ready Ref JK3968 .A74
- Book of the States.** Lexington, KY: Council of State Governments, annual.  
Fen Ready Ref JK2403 .B6
- Municipal Yearbook.** Washington, DC : International City Management Association, Annual, 1954-present. Fen Ref JS301 .M8
- Politics in America.** Washington: CQ Press, biennial. Fen Ref JK1010 .C67

## POLITICAL QUOTATION REFERENCE SOURCES

- Macmillan Dictionary of Political Quotations.** New York: Macmillan, 1993.  
Fen Ref PN6084 .P6 E54 1993
- Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Fen Ref PN6084 .P6 O94 1996
- Respectfully Quoted: A Dictionary of Quotations Requested from the Congressional Research Service.** Washington: U.S. Library of Congress, 1987.  
Fen Ref PN6081 .R435 1987

## **DIRECTORIES**

- Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress, 1774-1989.** Washington, DC: U.S. G.P.O., 1989.  
Fen Ref JK1010 .U5 1989.
- Directory of Congressional Voting Scores & Interest Group Ratings.** Washington: CQ Press, 1999. Fen Ref JK1051 .S555 2000
- Directory of Journals in Public Affairs, Public Non-Profit Administration, and Political Science.** Burke, VA: Chatelaine Press, 1999. Fen Ref JA60 .D57 1999
- Federal Regulatory Directory.** Washington: CQ Press, biennial. Fen Ready Ref KF5406 .A15 F4
- Federal Yellow Book.** Washington, DC: Washington Monitor, quarterly.  
Fen Ready Ref JK6 .F45
- Graduate Faculty and Programs in Political Science; A Directory.** Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 2000. Fen Ref JA88 .U6 68
- State Elective Officials and the Legislatures.** Lexington, KY: Council of State Governments, Annual. Fen Ready Ref JK 2403 .S74
- Washington Information Directory.** Washington, DC: CQ Press, Inc., annual.  
Fen Ready Ref F 192.3 .W33

## **HANDBOOKS, GUIDES AND MANUALS**

- Congressional Quarterly's Desk Reference on American Government.** Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1995. Fen Ref JK274 .W449
- Congressional Quarterly's Guide to the U.S. Constitution.** 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1994. Fen Ref KF4528.5 .M567 1994
- Federal Agency Profiles for Students.** Detroit: Gale, 1999. Fen Ref JK421 .F42 1999
- Handbook of Political Behavior.** New York: Plenum Press, 1981. Fen Ref JA74.5 .H347
- Handbook of State Government Administration.** New York: Marcel Dekker Inc., c2000.  
Fen Ref JK2443 .H35 2000
- How to Research the Presidency.** Washington: CQ Press, 1996. Fen Ref JK516 .M378 1996
- Introduction to United States Government Information Sources.** Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1999. Fen Ref J83 .M674 1999
- Measures of Political Attitudes.** San Diego: Academic Press, 1999. Fen Ref JA74.5 .M43 1999
- Speeches of the American Presidents.** New York: HW Wilson, 1999. Fen Ref J81.4 .S64 2001
- U.S. Government Manual.** Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, annual.  
Fen Ready Ref JK404 .U5

## **STATISTICAL SOURCES**

- America Votes: A Handbook of Contemporary Election Statistics.** Washington: CQ Press,  
Fen Ref JK 1967 .A8
- State Fact Finder.** Washington: CQ Press, annual. Fen Ref HN60 .C68
- Statistical Abstract of the United States.** Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office,  
Biennial?? Fen Ready Ref HA202 .S8
- Statistical History of the American Electorate.** Washington: CQ Press, 2001. Fen Ref JK 1967  
.R87 2001 c.2
- Vital Statistics on Congress.** Washington: CQ Press, biennial. Fen Ref JK 1041 .V58

## ELECTRONIC DATABASES

The following online indexes provide access to periodical and journal articles on governmental and political topics; some of these resources cover legal and legislative materials as well. From the GMU Libraries Homepage, choose the heading "Databases-By Subject" and then select "Public Affairs and Law", or go to the Alphabetical List. Access to these licensed databases from remote, off-campus locations is only available to **GMU faculty, students and staff**.

**Congressional LexisNexis** Provides full text of Congressional documents, testimony, legislative histories and federal regulations.

**CQ Researcher** Offers background, analysis and chronologies of contemporary policy issues.

**CQ Weekly Report** Covers bill status in Congress, including bill status, votes and committee and floor action for the House and Senate.

**Current Issues LexisNexis** Includes full-text documents, reports and speeches from research centers, think tanks and government agencies.

**Expanded Academic** Interdisciplinary database with many full text current affairs articles.

**Index to Legal Periodicals and Books** Provides abstracts from legal journals, law reviews, institutes and bar association publications.

**Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research ICPSR** is an archive of research data from academic institution on such topics as elections, census and demographics.

**JSTOR** This interdisciplinary database includes full backruns of core scholarly journals in political science.

**LexisNexis Academic** News and opinion articles from worldwide press sources, opinion polls, as well as law review articles and legal news.

**National Journal Group's Policy Central** Provides news and analysis of of policy issues in federal agencies and in Congress.

**Public Affairs Information Service** Worldwide coverage of articles, books, conference proceedings and documents on public affairs, dating back to 1972.

**State Capital LexisNexis** Includes state bill, laws regulations and constitutions.

**Statistical LexisNexis** Search by subject for statistics of the U.S. and state governments, private groups and international organizations.

**Worldwide Political Science Abstracts** The international literature of political science is abstracted and indexed in this resource covering 1975 to the present.

## PRINT INDEXES TO PERIODICALS AND DOCUMENTS

These print guides can be found in the **Index** shelves of Fenwick Library's Reference Dept.

**American Statistics Index** Covers 1973-present; indexed documents can be found in microform in Fenwick Periodicals Department.

**Current Law Index** Covers 1991-present. **Fen Ref K33 .C87**

**Major Studies and Issue Briefs of the Congressional Research Service.** Coverage 1989-present  
Index:**Fen Ref JK1108 .M25**( CRS documents indexed are in microform in Fenwick Periodicals.)

**Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications.** Covers 1895-present. **In Gov Docs Dept. Ref J83 .A18**

**Sage Public Administration Abstracts.** Covers 1980-present. **FenRef JA1 .S27**

**Social Sciences Index.** Vol. 1 (1974-present) **FenRef AI3 .S62**

## **PRINT JOURNALS ON POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT**

Fenwick Library's Periodicals Dept., First Floor, has many current and back issues of journals on government and political science. Issues earlier than 1983 are located at the Arlington Campus Library. Listed below are selected print journals available in Fenwick Library.

**Congress and the Presidency** Fenwick holdings : Volume 9 (1984 – present)

**Legislative Studies Quarterly** Fenwick holdings: Volume 8 (1983-present)

**Politics and Society** Fenwick holdings: Volume 12 (1983-present)

**Polity** Fenwick holdings: Volume 15 (1983-present)

**Presidential Studies Quarterly** Fenwick holdings: Volume 13 (1983-present)

**Publius: The Journal of Federalism** Fenwick holdings: Volume 13 (1983-present)

**Review of Politics** Fenwick holdings: Volume 45 (1983-present)

**Western Political Quarterly** Fenwick holdings: Volume 36 (1983-)

**Women & Politics** Fenwick holdings: Volume 22 (2001-present)

## **ELECTRONIC JOURNALS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Many political science journals are available in online format. From the GMU Libraries homepage, go to "E-Journal Finder". When you input a periodical title, your search will show you the list of GMU licensed databases which provide the full-text, electronic journal. Below is a selective sampling of some of the E-journals available for government and law topics; dates of coverage vary.

**American Journal of Political Science** JSTOR, 1973-2000

**Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy** LexisNexis, 1997-present.

**Journal of Policy History** Project Muse, 1999-present

**Journal of Politics** JSTOR, 1939-1998

**Political Science Quarterly** Expanded Academic 1993-present; JSTOR 1886-1997

**Political Theory** JSTOR 1973-1999

**Public Opinion Quarterly** Expanded Academic 1995-present; JSTOR 1937-1999

## **TRACKING CURRENT POLITICAL RESEARCH AND EVENTS**

Research in American Government and Politics often involves the tracking of up-to-the minute events. Whether your research involves the status of a current bill, tracking a recent nomination or researching political trends, there are a number of useful resources available.

**CIS/Congressional Information Service Index & Abstracts**

Book coverage: 1970-present **Fen Ref Indexes K49 .C62**

Also available online: GMU Database: **Congressional LexisNexis**

**Congressional Index** Chicago: Commerce ClearingHouse

Coverage: 1983-present **FenRef KF49 .C6**

**CQ Weekly Report** Washington: CQ Press

Coverage:1945-present **Fen Ref JK1 .C6**

**Facts on File** New York: Facts on File, Inc.

Coverage: past 4 years-present. **Fen Ref D410 .F3** Also online database: **Facts on File**

**National Journal's Congress Daily & Technology Daily** GMU online database.

**United States Law Week: Supreme Court/General Law** Washington: BNA

Vol. 44 (1975-present) **FenRef K25 .N58**

## **PUBLIC OPINION**

Opinion surveys play an important role in the American political system. The following are some of the resources that provide current and historical polling data on policy issues.

**The Gallup Poll** . Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., annual

Coverage: 1972-present **Fen Ref HN90 .P8 G3**

**Index to International Public Opinion**. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press

Coverage: 1978-present **Fen Ref HM261 .I552**

**Poll Track** Part of National Journal Policy Central; select from sidebar on right-hand side.

**Roper Center for Public Opinion Research** Part of LexisNexis database; go to "Reference" then "Polls & Surveys".

## **NEWS TRANSCRIPTS**

Broadcast transcripts from media sources can provide additional insight when researching current issues and political figures. The following databases contain full text of news transcripts; time coverage varies.

**Factiva** Includes the text of many network news transcripts.

**LexisNexis Academic** Includes many news and radio transcripts. Use the "Guided Search" option; Step 1, Select category "News Transcripts"; Step 2, limit to a network or program.

**TV News Archive- Vanderbilt University** This collection includes over 30,000 network evening news broadcasts. There is a searchable database, with free access, but registration is required.

[tvnews.vanderbilt.edu](http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu)

## **GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS**

Fenwick Library includes a Government Documents Department on the First Floor. As a large selective Federal Depository, this collection includes numerous documents issued by Federal agencies and Departments, as well as Congressional publications, U.S. Census materials, Papers of the Presidents, Supreme Court Reports, and C.I.A. and U.S.G.S. maps. Also included are Virginia State documents, including legal and regulatory materials and state agency documents. All these publications are **included in the GMU online catalog**, and can be searched by agency, author, title, etc.

## **AUDIOVISUALS**

The Johnson Center Library maintains a large media collection; all items are included in the online catalog. There are many videocassettes, DVDs and audiotapes on Congress, the Courts, government and politics. The Mason online catalog can be searched for these materials by using the "Set Limits" feature, selecting the appropriate category (such as "videorecording").

## **RESEARCH CONSULTATIONS**

Please contact Barbara Hillson, the Public & International Affairs Reference/Liaison Librarian at Fenwick Library, if you wish to schedule an appointment for an individualized research consultation.

**Telephone: 703-993-3715**

**e-mail: [bhillson@gmu.edu](mailto:bhillson@gmu.edu)**

Prepared by Barbara Hillson, June 2003.