

Northeast Lakeview College LRC

Resource Guide – U.S. Government Documents

What are Government Documents?

A government document is any publication issued by a federal, state, or local government agency. This Resource Guide focuses on publications produced by the U.S. federal government. Examples of government documents include Congressional hearings, reports, legislation, statistics, and more.

Why should I use Government Documents?

Government documents cover a wide range of subjects and are generally considered to be reliable, authoritative sources. Primary source material and statistics can often be readily found in government documents.

How do I find Government Documents?

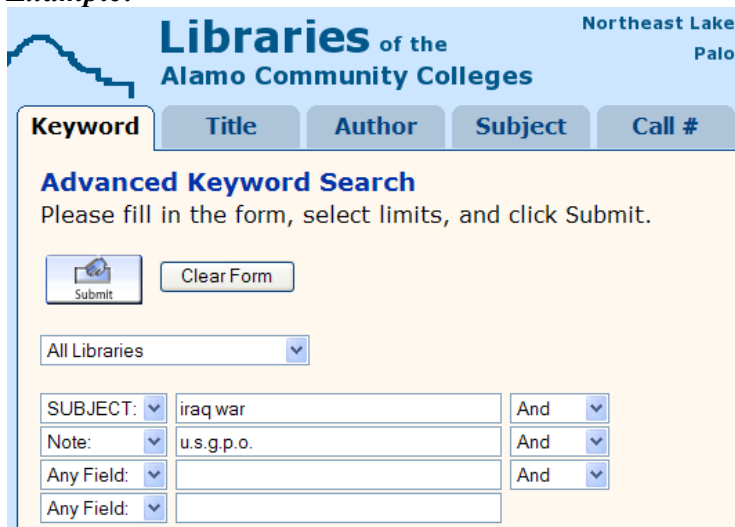
Government documents can be found in many different places and formats, so searching for them is not always straightforward. They can be found in the [ACCD Online Catalog](#), the [NLC Library Electronic Databases](#), and from many free Internet websites.

How do I find Government Documents in the ACCD Online Catalog?

Visit the ACCD Online Catalog at: <http://library.accd.edu/search/X>

It is best to search **All Libraries** when looking for government documents in the catalog. A few can be found from NLC, but the majority have a SAC location listed, even though they are accessible online via the catalog. Most federal documents are produced by the **U.S. Government Printing Office**. Try searching for the keywords of your topic And **u.s.g.p.o.** in the “Note” field.

Example:



The screenshot shows the search interface for the Libraries of the Alamo Community Colleges. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'Keyword', 'Title', 'Author', 'Subject', and 'Call #'. Below this is the 'Advanced Keyword Search' section, which includes a 'Submit' button, a 'Clear Form' button, and a dropdown menu set to 'All Libraries'. The search criteria are entered in a table-like format:

SUBJECT:	iraq war	And	
Note:	u.s.g.p.o.	And	
Any Field:		And	
Any Field:			

Many of the resulting documents will be available in print at an ACCD Library, for example, the document may list a location of **SAC Stacks 3rd floor**. However, you will

also find many of them available online! Just click on the title of the document, then click on the link under “Available online” to open the document. Other documents are only available online and list a location of **SAC Documents Internet**.

San Antonio College Library is a **Federal Depository Library**, which means it receives publications from the U.S.G.P.O. at no cost and allows the public to access these documents. For a list of other depository libraries in Texas, please visit:

<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ref/fedinfo/city.html>

How do I find Government Documents in the Electronic Databases?

Visit the NLC Library Electronic Databases page at:

http://www.accd.edu/nlc/library/t_Electronic%20Databases.htm

Use the databases that are most appropriate for your subject. Some databases are broad and cross field disciplines, whereas others are more focused on a particular subject area. Click on a particular subject, such as [Political Science](#), to take you to the appropriate list of databases. Databases with government documents include [Military and Government Collection](#), [GPO Access](#), and [THOMAS](#). Also, [Background Notes](#) provides facts about the land, people, history, government, etc. of various countries and other areas, updated/revised by the Office of Electronic Information and Publications of the Bureau of Public Affairs.

Military and Government Collection

This database offers current news pertaining to all branches of the military and government. On the Advanced Search screen (default), a limiter is provided for **Publication Type** = Government Document. Enter your search term(s) at the top and select limiters as appropriate.

Searching: **Military & Government Collection** | Choose Databases »

global warming in SU Subject Terms [v] Search Clear ?

and [v] [] in Select a Field (optional) [v]

and [v] [] in Select a Field (optional) [v] Add Row

Basic Search | Advanced Search | Visual Search | Search History/Alerts | Preferences »

Publication Type

- Primary Source Document [v]
- Periodical [v]
- Book [v]
- Government Document [v]

GPO Access

GPO Access is a service of the U.S. Government Printing Office that provides free electronic access to a wealth of important information products produced by the Federal Government, including information from the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches. You can access Resources by Branch, Search the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, access Federal-wide Resources, or check out various GPO Services.

GPO's Services

The U.S. Government Printing Office disseminates official information from all three branches of the Federal Government.



[A-Z Resource List](#)
Comprehensive list of official Federal resources available on GPO Access.



[Locate a Federal Depository Library](#). Locate and use publications at a local library.



[GPO Home Page](#). Agency information, print, design, contracting, and other opportunities.



[U.S. Government Online Bookstore](#). Securely buy official Federal publications online.



[Ben's Guide to U.S. Government](#). Learn about the Federal Government from Ben Franklin.



[Help](#). Search our online

GPO Access Resources by Branch



Legislative Resources

- [View All](#)
- [Conference Reports](#)
- [Congressional Bills](#)
- [Congressional Record](#)
- [Public and Private Laws](#)
- [United States Code](#)



Executive Resources

- [View All](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations](#)
- [Federal Register](#)
- [Presidential Materials](#)



Judicial Resources

- [View All](#)
- [Supreme Court Web Site](#)

Catalog of U.S. Government Publications

Example:
wildlife "environmental impact statement" NOT draft

Keyword(s)

Federal-wide Resources

- [GPO Access Multi-Database Search](#)

Featured Items



[Senate Manual, 110th Congress](#)

Contains the rules, orders, laws, and resolutions affecting the business of the U.S. Senate; Jefferson's Manual, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Constitution of the U.S., etc.



[Constitution of the U.S. 2008 Supplement](#)

Analysis and Interpretation, 2008 Supplement. Annotations of Cases Decided by the Supreme Court of the United States Supplements to the 2002 Edition.

[Featured Items Archive](#)

What's New?

- [12/5— Constitution of the U.S. 2008 Supplement](#)
- [12/1— Unified Agenda, November 2008 Edition](#)

THOMAS

Provided by the Library of Congress, THOMAS allows you to search Congressional Bills, Resolutions, Public Laws, and more. Coverage varies, depending on resource, with many going back to the 101st Congress (1989). Use THOMAS to find legislative histories.

The LIBRARY of CONGRESS THOMAS

The Library of Congress > THOMAS Home



THOMAS

In the spirit of Thomas Jefferson, legislative information from the Library of Congress

Emergency Economic Stabilization Act (H.R. 1424), final text: [HTML](#) | [GPO PDF](#)

Explore new features that we are working on and let us know what you think!

- [THOMAS Home](#)
- [About THOMAS](#)
- [Bills, Resolutions](#)
- [Congressional Record](#)
- [Presidential Nominations](#)
- [Treaties](#)
- [Committee Reports](#)
- [Government Resources](#)
- [For Teachers](#)
- [Help](#)
- [House of Representatives](#)
- [Senate](#)
- [U.S. Code](#)

Legislation in Current Congress

Search Bill Text

Word/Phrase Bill Number

Browse Bills by Sponsor

Select a Representative

Select a Senator

Current Activity

- [Yesterday in Congress](#)
- [Congressional Record Latest Daily Digest](#)
- [On the House Floor Now](#)
- [Schedules, Calendars](#)

Learn

- [The Supreme Court](#)
- [The Legislative Process](#)

What websites can I use to find Government Documents?

Government documents are widely available online. The URL of a U.S. government website normally ends in **.gov**. Check out our list of free, helpful government and legal websites at:

http://www.accd.edu/nlc/library/t_links.html#governmentandlegal

Some links of particular interest include:

General

- Google U.S. Government Search - <http://www.google.com/unclesam>
- Usa.gov (Official information and services from the U.S. Government) - <http://www.usa.gov/About.shtml>
- FedStats (statistics from more than 100 agencies) - <http://www.fedstats.gov/>

Executive Branch

- The White House – <http://www.whitehouse.gov>
- Index of Federal Departments & Agencies - http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/All_Agencies/index.shtml

Legislative Branch

- U.S. Senate - <http://www.senate.gov/>
- U.S. House of Representatives - <http://www.house.gov/>

Judicial Branch

- U.S. Supreme Court - <http://supremecourtus.gov/>
- U.S. Courts (Federal Judiciary) - <http://www.uscourts.gov/>

How do I cite Government Documents?

Government documents can be a little more difficult to cite than other types of materials, usually because they have a “corporate” author. As always, the ultimate authorities regarding citation format are always the appropriate style manual (MLA, APA, etc.) and your classroom instructor.

Columbia University has a helpful page with links about citing government documents:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/usgd/citation.html>

The University of North Texas has a page with General Guidelines for Citing Government Publications:

<http://www.library.unt.edu/govinfo/browse-topics/citation-guides-and-style-manuals/general-guidelines>