

1. About the Federal Depository Library Program

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) was established by Congress to ensure that the American public has access to its Government's information. Since 1813, depository libraries have safeguarded the public's right to know by collecting, organizing, maintaining, preserving, and assisting users with information from the Federal Government. The FDLP provides Government information at no cost to designated depository libraries throughout the country and territories. These depository libraries, in turn, provide local, no-fee access to Government information in an impartial environment with professional assistance.

As institutions committed to equity of access and dedicated to free and unrestricted public use, the nation's nearly 1,250 depository libraries serve as one of the vital links between "We the people" and our Government. Anyone can visit Federal depository libraries and use the Federal depository collections, which are filled with information on careers, business opportunities, consumer information, health and nutrition, legal and regulatory information, demographics, and numerous other subjects.

The Depository Library Council (DLC) to the Public Printer was established in 1972 to provide advice on policy matters relating to the FDLP. The primary focus of the DLC's work is to advise the Public Printer, the Superintendent of Documents, and appropriate members of GPO staff on practical options for the efficient management and operation of the FDLP.

The authority for the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and the legal obligations of designated Federal depository libraries are found in 44 United States Code §§1901-1616.{{6 Federal Depository Library Program}}

2. Mission Statement

The mission of the University Libraries is to support Clemson University in fulfilling its teaching, research and public service goals, including educating individuals for effective life-long learning. The Libraries are to identify, acquire, preserve, organize and disseminate information from a variety of sources and locations with priority being given to supporting the undergraduate and graduate curricula.

The Government Documents department of R.M. Cooper Library at Clemson University is located in the 3rd U.S. Congressional District, and was designated a Federal depository in 1893. The primary mission of the unit is to support the general collecting activities of the main library, which served approximately 14,697 undergraduate students, 2,895 graduate students, 1,320 faculty and 3,011 staff.

In accordance with the requirements defined in the Instructions to Depository Libraries, Guidelines for the Depository Library System, and the Federal Depository Library Manual, this unit also serves the constituents of South Carolina's 3rd U.S. Congressional District.

3. Selection Responsibility Statement

The Government Documents Reference Librarian, in consultation with Public Documents staff, Reference Librarians, and the Head of Reference, makes selection of government documents and supporting materials. It is the responsibility of the Government Documents Reference Librarian to initiate discussions and solicit comments about additions or changes to the collection, and to respond to questions or suggestions by other staff. Staff members may also be

consulted to evaluate and/or select new items offered through GPO surveys as well as to assist in the annual review of items currently selected. They may also identify commercially published materials for the collection. In making selection decisions, the Government Documents Reference Librarian will consider general policy issues, format, availability of space, and needs of the users of the collection.

4. Subject Areas & Collection Arrangement

Based on the mission statement and general subject areas defined earlier, the library has identified which government agencies and types of documents support the information needs of the community. To guide selectors in developing a balanced collection, priorities have been set regarding the collection intensity level of each subject.

The majority of the Federal Documents collection is arranged using the Superintendent of Documents classification, and housed on Level 3 of the R.M. Cooper Library. Several other collections share this space: The South Carolina State Documents collection (which is arranged by South Carolina classification), and a large collection of Technical Reports in microfiche and print formats (which are arranged by technical report number).

There is a small collection of government publications shelved at the Reference Desk. These are generally collections of statistics, such as the Statistical Abstract of the United States, or other reference-type materials. These items are listed in the online catalog by SuDoc number, with a temporary location of READY REFERENCE. In addition, a dummy book is placed in the Documents collection alerting the patron to its temporary location.

Several key Reference titles are cataloged using the Library of Congress classification scheme, and shelved in the Reference collection. Titles include United States Reports, United States Code, The Code of Federal Regulations, and Slip Laws. The latest edition of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is retained in print in the Reference Collection. Historical issues are retained in microfiche. As the print volumes are superseded, earlier print volumes may be discarded, because we have made arrangements with the Law Library at the University of South Carolina to be the agency responsible for retaining this title. GPO, Clemson University, and the University of South Carolina have approved this Selective Housing Agreement.

It is a policy of the Reference Unit that there are no SuDoc-classified Documents in the regular Reference collection. To simplify access for our patrons, all federal documents classified in SuDocs are either shelved in the Ready Reference collection on Level 4, or in the Federal Documents collection on Level 3.

Several serial titles published by the federal government have been identified as key sources for the general collection. Therefore, these publications are cataloged using the Library of Congress classification scheme, and shelved in the main collection. These items are received in the Government Documents Unit, and are then routed to the proper department for processing. These documents are still part of the Depository Program, and so they cannot be discarded without following regular disposal procedures.

5. Formats

Documents distributed in the FDLDP are available in a variety of formats. The primary decision regarding the selection and retention of an item is whether the information falls within the library's subject scope, and the following considerations are made when deciding on the format of a selected item:

1. Frequency of use
2. Space/storage capacity and frequency of publication
3. Cost of providing access
4. Resource sharing capabilities
5. Library's prior holdings

Guidelines for Format Consideration

Print: Paper copy is the preferred format since it is most easily handled by the general public. Because of space requirements and because the government is increasingly using microfiche and electronic products, the Library will be able to choose fewer items in paper in the future. It is the responsibility of the Government Documents Reference Librarian to determine what format is most appropriate when a choice is available. The Library should attempt to accommodate new formats as they become available.

Microforms: Patrons are generally resistant to using microfiche, so it will be chosen only after careful consideration. In cases where a document is only produced or distributed in microfiche, we will, of course, be forced to select that item in microfiche. Certain collections, such as Senate hearings and GAO reports, are preferred in microfiche, based on use and size of the collection. These materials are processed in the same manner as any other publication - with no difference in priority. The collection will be maintained according to FDLP standards for preservation and maintenance. The primary location for viewing and printing microfiche is the Reserve Room on Level 2. We do have several microfiche viewers, but they will not permit printing, and they are not in good repair. As these machines fail, they will not be replaced, but we will rely instead on the equipment in the Reserve Room.

We own several small collections in microfilm. This includes a collection of historical Agricultural Extension Publications (which are only summarily listed in the online catalog) and historical copies of the Federal Register. These items are located in the lone microfilm cabinet.

Single Sheets: Any document that is only a single page will be placed in a plastic sleeve before it is shelved (in the regular circulating collection). These items should not be bar coded, nor security stripped. The Date due slip should be placed so that it does not cover any printed information.

Notepads: Increasingly we are being sent entire pads of a single page of information. In such cases, we will retain one copy of the sheet, and it will be handled as a single sheet (see above.)

Serials: Most serial titles will be bound, so no item records should be created for single issues. Once a volume is bound, item records should be created for that bound volume. Unbound serial issues should be placed in Princeton Folders. Any serial that has holdings listed in the online catalog should be housed in a blue plastic Princeton Box.

Loose-Leaf Services: The federal government continues to provide information in loose-leaf format, although many of these materials are moving to electronic only access. As new materials are sent, superseded pages will be discarded in accordance with the superseded list. Because of staff time and other budgetary considerations, item numbers for materials in this format will be examined very closely before being added to the collection.

Maps: Cooper Library selects the majority of maps available through the depository program. Many of these are already in the online catalog, and the department is currently adding all maps to the online catalog, beginning with the most important series from the United States Geological Survey. See the Maps link on the Libraries' Home page for more details.

Posters: Only posters published on topics that support the curriculum will be selected.

Kits: As with videos in the collection, kits are shelved in the main stacks.

Videos: The collection includes a small number of materials in VHS format. Since there are so few of these videos, they are shelved in the main collection stacks. Only if security or space becomes an issue will these materials be relocated.

Electronic Products: Cooper Library will follow the guidelines to electronic products suggested by the Federal Depository Library program. This includes an Internet Use Policy, Minimum Technical Requirements and Recommended Specifications for Public Access Workstations in Federal Depository Libraries, Public Service Guidelines For Government Information in Electronic Formats, and Guidelines on Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications. All of these policies are listed on the FDLP Desktop.

6. Selection Tools, Non-Depository Items, Retrospective Sources

The following lists are tools are regularly consulted in the selection process. Several of these publications can be used to find reviews of government publications (marked with R).

Depository Items:

List of Classes of U.S. Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries

Union List of Item Selections

Federal Depository Library Manual, Appendix A, "Suggested Core Collection Annotated for Small to Medium Public and Academic Libraries and for all Law Libraries." (Note: I have revised this list to reflect title changes and additions and deletions.)

Federal Depository Library Manual, Appendix B, "Maps Available for Selection."

Federal Depository Library Manual, Appendix C, "Basic Collection."

Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications

Publications Reference File (PRF) (ceased in 1995. Latest edition is in microfiche in the Documents Office)

U.S. Government Online Bookstore

GPO Subject Bibliographies

Non-Depository Items:

Documents to the People (DtTP) R

Journal of Government Information R

Guide to U.S. Government Publications (Andriot)

Government Reports Announcements and Index (NTIS)

DOCEX - Library of Congress's Documents Expediting Project:

Also useful for retrospective collecting, identifying and directly contacting government agencies for documents not in the Federal Depository Library Program

Miscellaneous publishers' catalogs

Retrospective Sources:

As time and resources permit, the Government Documents Reference Librarian will identify areas of the collection that need to be developed. In addition to the Documents Expediting Project, the following sources will be used to identify and acquire out-of-print documents: offers lists from other depository libraries; gift and exchange programs; and older versions of the Monthly Catalog such as Benjamin Perley Poore's Descriptive Catalogue of the Government Publications. In addition, rare and/or valuable documents will be identified, and an effort will be made to acquire those, which we do not own, and to preserve those that we do own. Preservation activities will be coordinated with the Head of Special Collections.

7. Resource Sharing

Selections and deselections are made with some knowledge of the scope of the other depository collection of the 3rd Congressional District and of the holdings of the other depository libraries in the state of South Carolina.

By participation in SCLA GODORT, the Government Documents Reference Librarian learns about other local depository collections and is able to make more informed decisions regarding resource-sharing commitments. Information is shared also through other types of informal professional contact. The Reference Librarian makes referrals for on-site use of these other libraries by using the Union List of Item Selections, OCLC, and telephone contacts. Cooper Library both loans and borrows depository materials through interlibrary loan under the same guidelines as the rest of the collection.

8. Collection Evaluation

Statistical Analysis:

Since bibliographic records and local library holdings for government documents are available online through an OPAC or other database, there exists a wider range of possibilities for gathering needed statistics. Statistics will be analyzed in relation to the collection and community profile. They include evaluating interlibrary loan requests submitted by patrons and those filled by the documents unit, determining how often documents circulate or are used in the library by noting the frequency that particular items are shelved, and noting the number of reference questions answered successfully using the documents collection. In addition, as older documents are returned to the collection after circulation, they will be added to the online catalog.

Patron Satisfaction:

Questions regarding the use of Federal Documents will be integrated into any questionnaires, surveys or interviews directed to the user community in order to assess the impact of the collection.

Zero-Based Collection Review:

A zero-based collection review (evaluating item numbers on an individual basis) will be conducted throughout the year, and new item additions and/or deletions will be implemented at the time of the annual item selection update cycle.

Evaluation of Standard Bibliographies and Lists:

Comparison of the government documents collection to standard lists, such as subject bibliographies or core collections lists will be used to ensure that standard items are included in the collection.

9. Collection Maintenance Statement

The collection will be maintained in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Instructions to Depository Libraries. All documents will be clearly marked with the depository property stamp, shipping list date, and the SuDoc number. Items that are listed in the online catalog will be further identified with an eagle stamp. Holdings information to the piece level for all items received since 1994 is maintained in the online catalog. Holdings information for items from 1976 - 1994 is available through MarciveWeb Docs. Item selection will be reviewed annually, independently and in cooperation with other South Carolina Depository Libraries.

Superseded documents will be withdrawn. These documents may be reviewed for retention after five years, based on currency of information, historical value, use, physical condition, duplication of other sources, and the availability of alternative formats. Those titles no longer needed will be offered to other libraries and/or discarded. Hearings, for example, are regularly reviewed; those of lasting value are retained indefinitely. Disposal procedures are clearly outlined in the document Guidelines for the Disposal of U.S. Government Depository Publications for South Carolina Federal Depository Libraries. Any materials that are not needed by South Carolina libraries but might be of interest to others will be listed on the Needs and Offers List, or other appropriate steps will be taken to identify libraries who might be interested in these documents.

Worn documents will be evaluated for replacement or withdrawal. A deposit account will be maintained with the Government Printing Office to supplement the depository collection and to replace lost or damaged materials. Preservation activities include placing materials identified as acidic in phase boxes to prevent further deterioration and damage to surrounding materials.

Rare documents, or those of potential historical importance, will be evaluated with the assistance of the Head of Special Collections. A decision may be made to relocate some of these items to the Special Collections Department for preservation.

In the past, the procedures for binding documents were complicated and separate from the binding of other materials. To simplify the procedure and to integrate it into the system used in the rest of the library, binding is coordinated with Acquisitions personnel. Binding of periodicals and heavily used monographs is essential in preservation of the collection. As more materials are made public electronically, we foresee a decline in the need to bind materials.

Although there are particular areas where the collection is crowded, with proper stacks maintenance and disposal of documents the collection can fit nicely in the allotted space. Since space is usually not a consideration, every effort will be made to retain documents in paper format - especially in SuDoc number ranges for which we are responsible for permanent retention. There are some exceptions to this rule, notably the historical issues of the CFR, which are in microfiche.

In general, second copies of documents will be retained only if there is a demonstrated need, such as high circulation, subject matter related to our collection strengths, historical value, or value as a current events topic (such as particular senate hearings, newly released controversial report, or tax forms.) These second copies may be in a different format.

10. Access to the Collection

The main function of the Documents department is to provide free and unimpeded access to government information to the general public.

As noted above, Federal Documents have been included in the Online Catalog since about 1994. Older materials are constantly being added to assist patrons in finding information. In addition, Cooper Library subscribes to an index of government publications from 1976 to date which is available on Federal Government Publications page and the Find Articles and

Databases page. Cooper Library also provides indexes to identify government publications and provide access to information: Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications (paper and electronic formats), Congressional Information Services (CIS), American Statistics Index (ASI), Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS) and Publications Reference File (PRF).

Assistance in using these indexes and locating publications is available at the Reference Desk on Level 4, or in the Documents Department on Level 3. Staff is generally in the Documents Department from 7:30 am until 4:30 pm. Reference Desk hours vary during the semester. A schedule of hours is always available on the Libraries Home Page.

Handouts and pathfinders on using government documents and finding information on particular topics are available in the kiosk near the Reference Desk on Level 4. In addition, many links to government information web sites and online publications are maintained on the Quick Reference page, under the subject of Government (U.S.)