Course Objectives:

This class is a survey of government information dissemination and reference that will compliment many career paths. We will investigate government information policies, publishing, and sources covering these areas: current government affairs, historical, statistical, legislative, regulatory, executive, and judicial. Primary emphasis is given to online U.S. government information, complemented by supplementary non-governmental resources. Scientific U.S. government information systems and sources are briefly introduced.

1. To become familiar with the nature and current status of U.S. federal government information systems and sources;
2. To become familiar with the nature and sources of historical and statistical U.S. federal information;
3. To learn to search effectively in online sources for information produced by U.S. government agencies;
4. To understand the processes by which federal government information is created, distributed, and used;
5. To be able to make informed decisions about the selection, acquisition, description, arrangement and use of federal information sources;
6. To have a beginning familiarity with U.S. scientific government information systems and sources.

Required Textbook


Students are responsible for reading this textbook and either purchasing or accessing it. You may obtain it from the I.U. Official Bookstore. For student convenience, the required readings for the first week will be made available on Oncourse.

Websites and Resources on Citing Government Information: accepted style manuals for the course project are APA, MLA, and the Chicago Manual of Style. Some assignments and the course project require correct citation. See Oncourse for the class citation guide.

Lessons and Course Materials

There are fourteen weekly lessons. Each lesson includes the following information. The instructors suggest you approach the lessons in this order, but it is not required. Reading the directions thoroughly is required!
1. Readings  
2. Lectures  
3. Tutorials and Handouts  
4. Resource Lists  
5. Assignment

**Students are responsible for reading/or viewing the resources on the lists as instructed.** Not all resources need an in-depth reading – and we let you know when you just need to look at a resource or be aware of it! Only a few tutorials and exercises are listed for each lesson. In general, the bulk of your work will be in reviewing the resource lists. Be creative and explore the resources in areas of interest to you that you may want to write about in the Course Project.

**Online lectures, webinars, and readings** are posted in Oncourse. Every week, prepare by watching or reading the lectures, watching the videos and reading the required materials. For some resources, such as websites or online databases, you are required only to look at them and review their purpose and test their functionality.

Students are responsible for independently reviewing all publications and databases included on the **Resource Lists** and for viewing any assigned **database tutorials** to prepare for answering the questions in the Assignments.

**Students are responsible for asking questions.** Use Oncourse messaging to ask the instructor of the related Lesson or both instructors concerning the Course Project if you have questions or don’t understand course content or a resource.

**Course Schedule of Topics and Assignments**

Content for each week, including assignments, will be accessible to students no later than the first day of each week. However, the course project will be available after Week 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong> (Jan 13-18) Morrison</td>
<td>Introduction to U.S. Documents and the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|              | 1. Class introductions  
2. Characteristics of U.S. government information  
3. History of GPO  
4. U.S. government portals and search engines |
|              | **Assignment**  
Posting individual introductions to class blog is required (part of class participation). |
| **Week 2** (Jan 20-24) Morrison  | Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) |
|              | 1. Principles of government information access and current issues  
2. FDLP history, status and future  
3. FDLP Desktop  
4. Depository issues and management |
| **Week 3** (Jan 27-31) Morrison  | U.S. Government Catalogs and Bibliographic Databases |
|              | 1. FDLP: Bibliographic Control  
2. U.S. government catalogs & indexes  
3. Non-governmental indexes and finding aids |
| Week 4  | Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) and the Monthly Catalog (MOCAT) | 1. The Historical Monthly Catalog (MOCAT)  
2. CGP  
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 5 | The Executive Branch: the President | 1. Categories of Presidential Documents  
2. Tools, finding aids, and guides  
3. Whitehouse.gov  
4. Archival Sources  
5. Executive Office of the President | Assignment 2 on Presidential Documents. Due Feb 16. |
| Week 6 | The Executive Branch: Departments and Agencies | 1. Types of Executive Branch Documents  
2. Understanding Federal Executive Branch structure  
3. Tools, finding aids, and guides  
4. Agency websites | Assignment 3 on Executive Branch Documents. Due Feb 23. |
| Week 7 | General Statistics | 1. Statistical Agencies  
2. Statistical reporting  
3. Topical statistics, economic, financial, health, etc.  
4. Historical statistics |  |
| Week 8 | Census Statistics | 1. U.S. Census Bureau  
2. Decennial & special censuses  
3. American FactFinder & other data tools  
| Week 9 | The Legislative Branch: Congressional Documents | 1. Congress and the Legislative Process  
2. Congressional Documents and Publications  
3. Legislative History Research  
4. Federal Digital System (FDsys.gov) |  |
| Week 10 (Mar 24-28) | The Legislative Branch: Congressional Documents, continued | 1. ProQuest Congressional, HeinOnline, and Congress.gov  
2. Senate Treaty Documents  
3. CRS Reports | Assignment 5 on Congressional Documents. Due Mar 30. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 11 (Mar 31-Apr 4) | Administrative Laws, Regulations & Decisions | 1. Rulemaking  
2. The Federal Register  
3. The Code of Federal Regulations  
4. Administrative Decisions  
| Week 12 (Apr 7-11) | The Judicial Branch | 1. U.S. Court System  
2. Reporters & Digests  
3. Court documents  
| Week 13 (Apr 14-18) | FOIA (Morgan), Privacy, Secrecy & Declassified Documents (Morrison) | 1. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)  
2. Government Secrecy  
3. Declassified Documents | Work on course project. |
2. Portals, i.e. science.gov, agriculture, energy, etc.  
3. Databases & catalogs | Work on course project. |
| Week 15 (Apr 28-May 2) | Work on course project | Course project due Sunday, May 4, by 11:59 p.m. |
**Assignment Schedule and Grading:**

The **Assignments** are intended to help you become familiar with the lists of related resources. **On assignments, you must use only resources from the resource lists to get full credit.** These are important resources for government information. Remember, access to historical and subscription resources varies, even on the Bloomington and IUPUI campuses. Carefully check access information in the Resource Lists or in IUCAT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Grade percentage</th>
<th>Due by 11:59 p.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 U.S. Documents, GPO &amp;</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>February 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDLP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 Presidential Documents</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>February 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 Executive Branch</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>February 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4 Statistics</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 5 Congressional Documents</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 6 Administrative Regulations &amp; Decisions</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>April 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 7 Judicial Branch</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>April 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation: Class blog</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>During the semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Course Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>All files due to Oncourse Dropbox, Sunday, May 4, 11:59 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 7 assignments, a class blog, and a final course project paper. Each assignment has a grading rubric. Turn in assignments by online submission to the Assignment tool in Oncourse and to your Drop Box.

**Each assignment will be available in Oncourse AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE IT IS DUE.**

**Late Assignments:** Assignments must be turned in on the due date, no later than 11:59 p.m. You must request permission to turn in an assignment late. Before the due date, special circumstances for late assignments must be discussed with the instructor responsible for that particular assignment and with both instructors for the course project. Extensions for late assignments will be given on an individual basis. Please contact both instructors immediately to discuss extraordinary circumstances.

**Assignments submitted late without permission will be penalized 10 percentage points per day.** Late assignments will not be accepted one week past the due date. **No late Course Projects will be accepted.**

**Class Blog (class participation):**

The class blog is limited to the course site only. At the beginning of class, each student is required to post an introduction. This counts towards class participation. Then weekly, one or two students will be assigned to blog about either the week’s topic or an example of government information in the news. Each student is responsible for submitting one blog post during the semester, according to the schedule in Oncourse. Blog entries should focus on one specific issue from the lecture, readings, tutorials, or a reliable news source. Your blog entry should be a personal analysis, rather than an objective description of readings or events. Entries should be limited to one or two substantial paragraph(s).

**All students are expected to read AND comment upon some blog posts during the semester.** Participation grades will come from both posting and commenting.
Z525 Chat:

Use of the class Chat Room for informal discussions and questions is optional and will not count towards class participation. Share your questions and comments with your classmates. Report an interesting finding. These are forums for student use and sharing, and will not be routinely monitored by the instructors. If you have questions for the instructors, contact them directly using Oncourse messaging.

Indiana University Department of Information and Library Science, Definitions of Letter Grades. IU and ILS policies on academic dishonesty are to be followed. Students found engaging in plagiarism, cheating, and other types of dishonesty will receive an F for the course. When in doubt, cite your sources! For further information, see the I.U. Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct.

Technology Requirements

Students are required to access online government information in a variety of formats from free government information resources and from Indiana University resources that require authentication. You will need to be able to view the Word, PDF, website, and video files indicated in the resource lists. Students are expected to appropriately login for remote access to IU resources.

If you have questions about technology problems, contact UITS. If you have questions about content, contact the instructor responsible for the lesson as indicated in the course lessons and assignments via Oncourse messaging only.