

**Collection Policies  
for the  
GPO Selective Federal Depository Collection  
of the  
Mississippi State University Libraries  
  
February 2002**

---

**Table of Contents**

1.	Introduction.....	2
2.	Mission Statement.....	3
3.	Selection Responsibility .....	4
4.	Subject Areas and Collection Arrangement.....	4
5.	Formats .....	4
	Guidelines for Format Consideration .....	4
	Guidelines for Public Service of Electronic Formats.....	7
6.	Selection Tools, Non-Depository Items, Retrospective Sources .....	8
7.	Resource Sharing.....	9
8.	Collection Evaluation .....	10
9.	Weeding and Collection Maintenance .....	11
10.	Access.....	13

# Collection Policies for the GPO Selective Federal Depository Collection of the Mississippi State University Libraries

February 2002

## 1. Introduction

**The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)** originated in the early 1800's when a joint resolution of Congress directed that additional copies of the House and Senate Journals and other documents be printed and distributed to institutions outside the Federal establishment.

*Chapter 19 of Title 44 of the United States Code* is the authority for the establishment and operation of the Federal Depository Library Program. The legal responsibilities of Federal depository libraries fall into two broad categories:

- ?? Providing for free public access to Government information
- ?? Providing for the proper maintenance of the depository materials entrusted to the individual depository's care  
(*Instructions to Depository Libraries*)

As a Land-Grant institution, **Mississippi State University (MSU)** is dedicated to the three broad purposes of learning, research, and service: learning, on-campus and off-campus, to enhance the intellectual, cultural, social, and professional development of its students; research, both to extend the present limits of knowledge and to bring deeper insight, understanding, and usefulness to existing knowledge; and service, to apply knowledge and the fruits of research to the lives of people.

The University began as The Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi, one of the national Land-Grant Colleges. It was created by the Mississippi Legislature on February 28, 1878, to fulfill the mission of offering training in agriculture, horticulture and the mechanical arts without excluding other scientific and classical studies, including military tactics. The Legislature renamed the College as Mississippi State College in 1932 and in 1958, again renamed the College, as Mississippi State University.

The Mississippi State University Library was designated a federal depository library in 1907 to serve the Third Congressional District. The Government Documents Area is committed to providing free and open public access to government information provided through the federal and state depository programs. The Federal Depository Library Program was established to assist Congress in fulfilling its responsibility to inform the public on the policies and programs of the federal government. The *Instructions to Depository Libraries* states that "the Government information needs of the general

public must influence the collection development of depository libraries." The federal documents collection in the Mississippi State University Mitchell Memorial Library serves not only its students, staff, faculty and the Third Congressional District, but also the much larger public service area of the counties that are served by Mississippi State University in cooperation with the other federal depository libraries in the region.

## **2. Mission Statement**

Mississippi State University Libraries' vision is to continue to serve as the premier campus information resource by providing its communities of users an ongoing, creative, technologically advanced library program that supports, enhances and inspires education, scholarship and service of the highest caliber in an environment of free and open inquiry and with a commitment to excellence. The mission of Mississippi State University Libraries is to support the University mission by providing four essential services for its user communities: collecting, managing, ensuring access to, and facilitating analysis of information necessary for superior learning, research, and service.

The Vision and Mission Statements of the Libraries serves as the Vision and Mission Statements of the Government Documents and Microforms Departments.

## **3. Selection Responsibility**

Selection of government documents and supporting materials is made by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms along with recommendations from the Government Documents Reference Librarian. The Coordinator evaluates and selects new items offered through GPO surveys as well as to annually review and re-evaluate items currently selected. All library faculty and staff may identify and request for purchase commercially published sources to support the collection.

Faculty of the institution may be consulted for retention or evaluation of specialized publications (e.g. receipt of all Tiger/Line compact CD-ROMs, Transportation CD-ROMs). Questions received throughout the previous year are reviewed in consideration of the zero-based annual review of the *List of Item Selections* (e.g. number and type of questions concerning highway engineering or soil documents). The written Government Documents Collection Policies are reviewed annually by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms at the same time.

As a general rule, the Libraries will not keep or acquire duplicates of documents for its collection. However, consideration will be given to acquiring duplicate copies of heavily used materials and documents that contain information about Mississippi or the Southeast. Government publications from federal agencies that are not distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program may be acquired to enhance the U.S. Government Documents Collection.

## **4. Subject Areas and Collection Arrangement**

The federal documents collection is arranged by the Superintendent of Documents classification system and housed in the Government Documents and Microforms Area of the Library. Topographic maps are arranged in alphabetical order by state and then by map name.

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. 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 and Microforms Area, and are then routed to Technical Services for processing. These documents are still part of the Depository Program, and cannot be discarded without following regular disposal procedures. All federal documents received as videotapes and kits are also routed to Technical Services for processing and are then housed in the Library's Instructional Media Center with all other library media.

## **5. Formats**

Documents distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program 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 also 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 Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms to determine what format is most appropriate when a choice is available. The Library will 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 and when recommended by the FDLP. In cases where a document is only produced or distributed in microfiche, it will be selected in that format. Certain collections, such as Congressional 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 availability within the Library and the Government Documents and Microforms Area of numerous microform reader/printers enhances the selection of this more space-saving format.

**Single Sheets:** Any document which is only a single page will be placed in a plastic sleeve before it is shelved. If possible, these items are processed in the same manner as any other publication.

**Notepads:** Entire pads of a single page of information are sometimes received. In such cases, only one copy of the sheet is processed although the entire pad will be shelved in the collection.

**Serials:** Most serial titles are not bound, therefore within the one online catalog serial bibliographic record, item records are created for each issue. Each issue is processed as an individual piece and shelved together in princeton files or magazine boxes.

**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*. Careful attention will be given to the selection or non-selection of publications offered in loose-leaf format due to the availability (or non-availability) of main volumes, missing transmittals, staff time and other budgetary considerations.

**Maps:** The largest collection of topographic maps is comprised of the US Department of Interior, Geological Survey's 7.5' series. Other maps are collected based on their ability to meet the Library's scope and collection parameters.

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

**Kits:** All federal documents received as kits will be routed to Technical Services for processing and housed in the Library's Instructional Media Center with all other library media.

**Videos:** All federal documents received as videotapes will be routed to Technical Services for processing and housed in the Library's Instructional Media Center with all other library media.

**Electronic Products:** *Tangible electronic products* (CD-ROMs, DVDs, floppy discs) are selected with attention given to subject content, ease of use, capability of staff to provide service, required equipment as well as interest/demand of the constituents of the Third Congressional District. Consideration is also given to selection of a tangible electronic products by nearby federal depository libraries.

*Intangible electronic products* (Internet documents / databases) are made available via public Internet access in the Government Documents and Microforms Area and other Library departments. Since the majority of federal documents' bibliographic records are in the Library's online public access catalog, links to government publications on the Internet (World Wide Web) are identified where present in the bibliographic record and reflect the selections of those publications offered by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO).

The MSU Libraries will follow the guidelines for 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.

The following types of documents are generally not selected:

- ?? Dated calendars
- ?? Forms
- ?? Agency issued rules, regulations, instructions, laws
- ?? Navigational charts
- ?? Telephone directories

This is because currency, space, liability, and accuracy are of primary importance. The availability of many forms, rules, regulations, and laws on the Internet have facilitated the Government Documents and Microforms Area in providing these materials without regard to space and currency issues. Care is taken to obtain the information only from reputable government sites.

The Government Documents and Microforms Area has been able to purchase several retrospective collections of government documents in microform. These collections include materials from the Congressional Information Service. With the availability of these microform collections, scholars and the general public have access to a vast array of information.

## Guidelines for Public Service of Electronic Formats

1. The MSU Libraries' Government Documents and Microforms (GD/MF) Area provides no-fee access for University clientele and the general public to in-house computer workstations supporting depository electronic formats (e.g. CD-ROMs, diskettes, the Internet). This service is equal to or exceeds the services provided for other collections of the library.
2. The GD/MF Area provides access to government electronic information disseminated through the Federal Depository Library Program to the general public and maintains hardware that meets the latest "Recommended Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries" as published annually in *Administrative Notes*.
3. The GD/MF Area makes tangible electronic products and services (CD-ROMs, floppy diskettes) which are selected available to the general public in a timely manner. Where a product is not currently loaded and/or supported on a workstation, access is provided "by appointment" within twenty-four hours, assuming appropriate application software is available.
4. Circulation of all non-reference tangible electronic products is made available in accordance with the library's circulation policies of other non-governmental tangible electronic products or other depository resources.
5. The GD/MF Area provides Internet access to government information at no cost to the general public, including telnet and ftp capabilities to encourage downloading and/or transmission of electronic data. Downloading of electronic data to portable disk formats is encouraged due to the Libraries' use of appropriate virus protection routines and if patrons adhere to software licenses. (Government information is provided without charge, but some products containing government information may be protected by copyright law.)
6. The GD/MF Area maintains a homepage and provides links to prominent and useful sites for the general public in accordance with the Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program.
7. Fax and e-mail delivery of government information to distant users in accordance with GPO requirements and guidelines is also available. Limits to, or costs associated with, printing, downloading, or faxing are consistent with other public service provisions within the Libraries.
8. The MSU Libraries provides appropriate reference service and help guides/documentation of tangible electronic products and the Internet for the general public through the Libraries web site and through written handouts, brochures, and product documentation available within the library. Reference

service is available in person, via telephone and e-mail. Extended reference consultations may also be scheduled.

9. The MSU Libraries and the GD/MF Area offer training for the general public in using tangible electronic products and Internet resources through pre-arranged specific instructional sessions and group library instruction courses.

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

The Government Documents and Microforms Area currently selects approximately 95% of the materials distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program. This percentage will have minor fluctuations due to new item numbers and the changing informational needs of the community. Retrospective collection development relies on commercially available materials and discard lists from depository libraries. Purchase of commercially available retrospective or current supplementary collections (e.g. *Congressional Universe*) are encouraged but dependent upon available funding. Requests for purchase and justifications are first approved by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms and then presented to the MSU Libraries' Administrative Council. Selections from discard lists are for replacing non-received or missing publications or retrospective development of areas where an available item number had not been selected.

Item number selections are primarily based on the following considerations:

1. Support for the inquiries/informational needs of the general public
2. Support for the university's academic programs
3. Accessibility within Mississippi among other depository libraries
4. Fulfillment of responsibility to keep citizens informed
5. Support of the library for staff, space, and equipment

Consulted in the selection process are the following publications:

### **Depository:**

- List of Classes of U.S. Government Publications*
- Item Lister (at the GPO Web site)*
- Federal Depository Library Manual Appendix A: Suggested Core Collection Annotated for Medium Public and Academic Libraries and for All Law Libraries*
- Federal Depository Library Manual Appendix C: Basic Collection*
- Federal Depository Library Manual Appendix B: Maps Available for Selection*
- Monthly Catalog of United States Publications*
- Sales Product Catalog (at the GPO web site)*
- GPO Subject Bibliographies*
- Information in U.S. Government publications*

- Department of Commerce Monthly Product Announcements*
- Consumer Information Catalog*
- Shipping lists*

**Non-Depository:**

- GOVDOC-L
- MAPS-L
- MissGovDoc-L
- DTTP: Documents to the People*
- CIS catalogs
- professional journals (e.g. *Government Information Quarterly*, particularly annual issue on "Outstanding Government Documents")
- Guide to U.S. Government Publications* (Andriot)
- University/commercial publishers catalogs
- Local/national newspapers/television programs
- Patrons
- Interlibrary Loan requests

The MSU Libraries subscribe to the microfiche collection that accompanies the *American Statistics Index* for 1970 to the present. This microfiche collection contains both depository as well as non-depository documents.

The Libraries also subscribes to the microfiche collection that accompanies the *CIS Index to Publications of the United States Congress* for 1970 to the present. This microfiche collection also contains both depository as well as non-depository documents.

Because of heavy demand, duplicate copies (paper or electronic) are obtained for the following titles:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook*
- Census of Population/Housing: Mississippi (both paper and CD-ROM)*
- U.S. Industry and Trade Outlook*
- Statistical Abstract of the United States*
- County and City Data Book*

## **7. Resource Sharing**

Selections and deselections are made with some knowledge of the scope of other depository collections within the state of Mississippi. If requested, the MSU Libraries exchanges item selection lists with the Mississippi University for Women, the regional depository and any other Mississippi depository.

Since 1997, the Government Documents and Microforms Area has tape loaded, available retrospective records and maintains a current subscription with Marcive to

have bibliographic records of federal depository government publications automatically loaded into the library's online public access catalog. Some retrospective records of congressional hearings identifying the Library's commercially purchased microfiche collections have also been loaded.

By participation in MLA, SELA and ALA chapters of GODORT, the government document librarians learn about other local depository collections and are able to make more informed decisions regarding resource sharing commitments. Information is also shared through other types of informal professional contact. The MSU Libraries both loans and borrows depository materials through interlibrary loan. As the bibliographic utility used by the MSU Libraries, OCLC contains holding symbols for all depository materials cataloged into the Library of Congress classified collections.

## **8. Collection Evaluation**

An integral part of collection development is evaluating the collection to determine if goals and priorities set by the MSU Libraries are, in fact, meeting user needs. There are several methods (listed below) used by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms to evaluate the documents collection. These collection development decisions are based on pre-determined methods of evaluation, as opposed to sporadic or reactionary decision making. The Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms uses no one method in a vacuum, but implements several methods and compares the data to obtain a truer picture of collection's strengths and weaknesses.

### **Methods of Evaluation**

**Statistical Analysis:** Since bibliographic records for government documents received since 1997 are available through the online catalog, there exists a wider range of possibilities for gathering needed statistics. Statistics will be analyzed in relation to the collection and community profile. This will 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 reshelved, 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 a one-by-one basis) will be implemented at the time of the annual item

selection update cycle. New item additions and/or deletions will be implemented at this time.

**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. Weeding and Collection Maintenance**

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 SuDoc number. Holdings information to the piece level for all items received since 1997 is maintained in the online catalog. Holdings information for items received prior to 1997 is available through a manual shelflist although the department is striving to retrospectively catalog these materials so that all government documents are represented in the online catalog.

**Weeding:** Federal depository materials may be withdrawn after five years, with the approval of the regional depository and after being offered to other libraries in the region. Since the MSU Libraries is currently striving for Association of Research Libraries membership, removal of documents from the collection is carefully considered. A conservative rate of withdrawal allows a useful collection along with a historical preservation of information. Criteria used to determine if documents no longer fit the collection scope include:

1. Physical condition
2. Currency of information
3. Age
4. Use
5. Duplication
6. Replacement by another format
7. Superseded editions listed in the *Superseded List* and its updates in the *Administrative Notes*.

Badly damaged or brittle documents are candidates for weeding or replacement if these publications cannot be preserved after examination by the Library's Preservation Committee. Worn documents are evaluated by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms for replacement or withdrawal. Rare documents, or those of potential historical importance, will be evaluated with the assistance of the Special Collections Department. A decision may be made to relocate some of these items to the Special Collections Department for preservation. Examination of the collection for weeding and maintenance is an ongoing process.

**Disposition Policy for Superseded Depository Maps:** Superseded depository documents/maps may be discarded without permission of the U.S. Federal Depository

Library Program or the Regional Librarian upon receipt of a new edition or revision. It shall be the policy of the Government Documents and Microforms Area, Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University, to distribute superseded depository maps in the following priority order:

1. To other departments or branches of the Library.
2. To the Geosciences Department of the University.
3. To faculty/staff of the University.
4. To students of the University.
5. To any other interested individual.
6. Any remaining, unclaimed superseded maps will be disposed of according to the appropriate guidelines of the U.S. Federal Depository Library Program.

The Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms has the final word as to map disposition and may change or alter from the above policy with approval from the Dean of Libraries.

**Maintenance:** The Government Documents and Microforms Area continues to place selected materials in Hollinger boxes (i.e. non-acidic) to impede deterioration and damage. Princeton files are regularly purchased to protect documents. The collection is continuously monitored for expansion or shifting to allow for growth and prevent overcrowding on shelves.

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.

Map cases are purchased to accommodate proper housing of sheet maps. Maps arriving in manila envelopes are placed in princeton files on shelves for better maintenance. Oversized materials are separated from the regular documents collection for special shelving that will protect them as well as provide more cost-efficient shelving for the collection. Blocks or dummies are placed in their places identifying their location.

**Binding:** Various bindery options are available and binding is done at the discretion of the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms or the Government Documents Reference Librarian. Types of materials that should be considered for binding include:

- ?? Items that are worn or have loose pages.
- ?? Items sent as loose pages.
- ?? Sets where previous volumes have been bound.

Selected monographs are identified for commercial binding on a case by case basis. Other materials are identified for in-house binding via pamphlet binding, lamination binding and/or FastBack binding. Binders are regularly purchased for selected documents to protect them on the shelves. Repairs are handled either in the Government Documents and Microforms Area or in the in-house Binding Department which is responsible for library repairs.

## **10. Access**

**Location:** The Government Documents and Microforms Area is conveniently located on the second floor of the Mitchell Memorial Library directly opposite of the Reference Department. All formats of the Superintendent of Documents Classified Collection are housed together. The Microforms Collections is also housed in this area and it contains the commercially purchased collections that supplement and enhance the federal collection. The depository documents are available for in-house use to all patrons.

**Circulation Policy:** Government publications from the Documents Area circulate through the Library's Access Services Department. Circulation loan policies conform to those for circulating books. Most monographic documents, CD-ROMs, and all topographic maps are allowed to circulate. The materials which very rarely circulate are the Congressional Record, Serial Set, census, and microfiche; and in these cases, permission must be given by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms. Borrowers include faculty, staff, and students from the university and patrons from the general public.

Government document publications of a reference nature will be stamped with the following and their online catalog records will state their non-circulating status.

GOV. DOCS. REFERENCE  
THIS DOES NOT CIRCULATE

**Inter-Library Loan Policy:** Online catalog records received from Marcive for government documents are blocked from appearing in OCLC which limits the number of InterLibrary Loan requests we receive for these materials. This was an intentional decision made in 1997 when the MSU Library originally profiled with Marcive and, at this point, is not to be changed.

The MSU Libraries will strive to lend any of its government document material to any library/institution which will, in turn, lend to us. All government materials [e.g. documents, microfiche, topographic maps, CD-ROMs, DVDs] will be lent unless they are deemed special, rare or non-replaceable. All InterLibrary Loan requests received by the MSU Library will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the final decision to loan being made by the Coordinator of Government Documents and Microforms.

**Disabled Patrons:** The Government Documents and Microforms personnel will help to find and retrieve government materials for disabled patrons. Patrons will be sent to the Access Services Department to have copies made from materials retrieved.

**Access Mission Statement:** The Government Documents Department is committed to the principal of the federal depository program. Should the department be unable to readily obtain/provide a document not received in the program, the department will provide the patron bibliographic information and referral to an appropriate source. This may include referring the patron to an affiliated library for Interlibrary Loan Service.

The library also provides facilities for reading, printing or downloading from CD-ROMs, DVDs and floppy diskettes received through the depository program. If the necessary software or equipment is not available onsite, these materials may be checked out.

The Mississippi State University Libraries' commitment to access to federal documents is demonstrated by:

1. Posting of the federal depository library logo at the library's two main entrances and on the door leading to the documents collections.
2. Inclusion of a government documents homepage on the library's web site.
3. Inclusion of government documents in the library bibliographic instruction program (general and specialized).
4. Open stack access to the depository collection.
5. Presence of popular government CD-ROMS on the library's LAN.
6. Presence of the GPO/OCLC/Marcive records in the library's online public access catalog.
7. The availability of documents and current indexing reference materials, via the depository program:
  - a. Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications
  - b. GPO Access
  - c. STAT-USA
  - d. Bacon-Davis Database
8. The availability of documents and current indexing resources purchased by the MSU Libraries:
  - a. GPO on SilverPlatter
  - b. Congressional Information Service Index (to hearings and legislative history) and complete microfiche collection

- c. American Statistics Index and complete microfiche collection
  - d. Statistical Universe (web access)
  - e. OCLC First Search (web access) (e.g. WorldCat)
  - f. Lexis-Nexis Universe (web access)
  - g. ERIC and E\*Subscribe
  - h. MedLine
  - i. Agricola
  - j. *Government Information Quarterly*
  - k. *JoC Week* (formerly: *Journal of Commerce*)
9. The arrangement of documents by SuDoc classification number in a separate easily identifiable collection (excluding items arranged by LC call number in the Reference and Circulating Collections).
  10. The provision of reference assistance for federal documents by all Government Documents and Microforms personnel in addition to the General Reference staff.
  11. Interlibrary loan service with documents listed.
  12. Availability of telefacsimile transmission (via ARIEL where receiving library has same).
  13. Participation in Govdoc-L, Mississippi Government Documents Librarians Listserv, DocTech-L, Microforms-L, FEDLIB, LAW-LIB, MAPS-L DigLibns, Marcive\_GPO and Statuniv-L for resource and information sharing of government documents.
  14. Participation in library displays.
  15. Inclusion of government documents in subject bibliographies and help guides.
  16. Providing voice mail via the Government Documents and Microforms Area telephone.