

Iowa State University Library
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY
United States Government Publications

I. General Purpose

The primary mission for the Federal government publications collection is to support the general curricular activities of the faculty, staff and students. The Library seeks to provide the University with a leading resource for teaching, research, outreach and service. As a federal depository library, this collection also strives to serve the government information needs of the constituents of the state of Iowa, and especially those of Iowa's Third Congressional District, in accordance with the requirements defined in Title 44 of the *United States Code*, the *Instructions to Depository Libraries*, and the *Guidelines for the Depository Library System*. "The purpose of depository libraries is to make U.S. government publications easily accessible to the general public and to insure their continued availability in the future. The purpose shall be achieved by a system of cooperation wherein depository libraries will receive free federal public documents in return for making them accessible to the general public in their areas." (*Federal Depository Library Manual*, p. 165).

Outside the University community, the most likely users of the Library are the residents of Story County. These individuals are highly educated and very mobile. Many of them are young adults. One-third of the county's residents are college students. Story County has 6.3% foreign born compared to 1.6% in the state.

There is a heavy emphasis on contributions the University can make to the economic and community development including the benefits of research upon the development of new industries in Iowa. Significant employers in Story County are the Iowa Department of Transportation, 3-M, Barilla America, Inc., Sauer-Sundstrand, the National Animal Disease Center, and Mary Greeley Medical Center. In the rural portions of the county and in counties to the west, east, and north there is a lot of agricultural related employment. The unemployment level in the county has been historically low compared to the state and the nation. The city of Ames draws people from several counties in north central Iowa for shopping, employment, and medical care. Ames is located at the intersection of Interstate 35 and US 30.

Iowa State University is a Land Grant University with a commitment to serve not only the university community but also the residents of Iowa. It serves the entire state with its outreach programs in extension and the Agricultural Experiment Station.

II. History

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) was established in the late 19th century to provide the citizens access to federal publications in a library in their

geographical area. As the system evolved, depositories in every congressional district were added. In 1907, when the libraries of Land Grant institutions were added to the depository system, Iowa State University Library became a federal depository library.

Initially, all designated depository libraries received every publication, but in 1922 that was changed to allow depositories to select the items they received. The Serials Dept. in the ISU Library was responsible for the selection and receipt of depository materials. The Serials Dept. tended to select titles which could be handled as serials and which supported ISU's focus on agriculture, engineering, and the physical and biological sciences. The selection rate during this time was less than 50%.

In the beginning, libraries had to retain, forever, all items received from the depository program unless the item was superseded. The Depository Library Act of 1962 created regional libraries to receive and permanently retain all publications distributed through the program, and it allowed selective depository libraries to dispose of items after a five-year retention period.

With the Parks administration at ISU, the University was charged to become a broad based university. More depository titles, which would support the social sciences and humanities, were added and the emphasis was no longer on serial publications. This change in emphasis along with the additional work created by the FDLP change in the retention policy led to the creation of a Government Publications Department in 1969.

The Government Documents Department consisted of one international documents librarian, one state documents librarian, two federal documents librarians and support staff to handle routine documents processing. Each of the documents librarians spent one half of their time doing selection and evaluation with the remainder of their time being spent on documents reference, administration and interfacing with Technical Services. In 1984 the Government Documents Department was disbanded; the librarians were incorporated into the Reference Department; documents reference transactions were handled at the general Reference Desk; and a Documents Processing Unit was created as a unit in the Reference Department. In 1990, a single Government Information Specialist was appointed and the Documents Processing Unit moved to Public Services. In 1996, documents processing responsibilities were transferred to Technical Services.

Over the years Federal receipts have ranged from 100% in the early days to less than 50% after 1922 when the serials department was selecting federal documents. The selection rate leveled off in the 1980's to around 75%. It was later refined downward to about 69%. With the move to a mostly electronic format for documents and the limiting to one publication per Item number, the selection rate has increased to around 75%.

III. Iowa State University Program

All government publications are accessible for public use in the library during the hours the library building is open. Since 1994, all selected titles, regardless of format, are represented in the Library's online catalog. To aid in identifying government publications, the Library owns or subscribes to a number of major indexes including: GPO Access, Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications, Marcive, Lexis Nexis Academic, Lexis Nexis Congressional, Lexis Nexis Statistical, and PAIS.

Assistance in using these indexes and locating federal publications is available at the Help and Information Desk, through the Ask a Librarian Service, and via instant messaging. The Help and Information Desk is the primary service point for government documents and the staff is periodically familiarized with government publications through staff training sessions.

General library circulation policies apply to government documents. Most publications circulate to those with a valid ISUCard or an ISU Library Visitor Card which may be purchased for a nominal fee at the Circulation Desk. Increasingly, most federal publications are available electronically from the users' desktop.

The Library loans and borrows depository materials through interlibrary loan. The Library has various consortial agreements with libraries in Iowa, the region, and nationally which provide for interlibrary loan access to our collection. We is a strong net lender of items.

IV. Subject Boundaries

The Library selects item numbers which meet the curricular, research, and service needs of the University. The public's current and potential needs for political, social, economic, legal, tax, travel, statistical, health, family and personal development, social security, immigration, citizenship, government grant and general information are also considered. Foreign trade and economic development information is secured for business and economic development interests in Iowa.

The primary responsibility for selection of the material to receive on depository belongs to the Government Documents Team. They consult with the subject bibliographers regarding the government publications which would enhance their parts of the Library's collection decisions remain with the Government Documents Team. Selections and deselections are made with some knowledge of the scope of the other depository libraries in Iowa. Selection occurs at several different points including: the annual item update, the receipt of surveys of new item numbers available, the receipt of gift titles from non-depository sources, the review of recently circulated titles returned by Access Services for reshelving, the use of tools which highlight government publications, continuous weeding activity, and the selecting activities of subject bibliographers.

The Library collects some government publications which are not available through the depository program. It participates in the Documents Expediting Project of the Library of Congress and maintains deposit accounts with GPO and NTIS for purchase of government materials which may not otherwise be available. The staff will also contact government agencies directly to obtain materials not available from the GPO. Any bibliographer identifying a title, which does not appear to be in the Library, is free to initiate an order for that title. It is not the responsibility of the Government Documents Team to do retrospective selection in government publications.

The ISU Library has a strong collection of congressional material including the *Serial Set* from 1789, the hearings from 1935 and the *Congressional Record* and all of its predecessors. Other strengths include the publications of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the former Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Energy, and economic publications from the U.S. Department of Commerce, including the Bureau of the Census, resulting from long-term research interests of the University.

The government publications collection is maintained in accordance with the guidelines set out in the *Instructions to Depository Libraries*. It is weeded on a five year cycle going systematically through the collection title by title. Any title, which meets the Library's collection development guidelines, is transferred to one of the Library's collections. If the **title is** over five years old and does not meet the collection development guidelines, it is discarded according to GPO depository procedures. If the title is less than five years old and does not meet the collection development guidelines, it remains in the collection until the next weeding cycle. Worn depository publications are evaluated for replacement or withdrawal and the library's Preservation Office is notified about any book needing their attention.

The microfiche and media collections of federal documents are also weeded of titles older than five years, which do not meet out collection development guidelines. The GPO depository procedures are followed in the discarding of unwanted microfiche. The microfiche and electronic products, which meet collection development guidelines, are retained in the government publication collection of Microforms or Media or are accessed via the Internet.

V. General Collection Guidelines

A. Linguistic.

Documents are usually published in English. Items published in other languages will be considered on an individual basis.

B. Geographical Areas.

For series arranged geographically, the Library selects item numbers for the geographic areas which have been determined to be the most used by Library patrons. This means that, depending on the topic, the Library may select all 50 states, only Iowa and the surrounding states, or a combination of states.

C. Types of Materials Collected.

Types of GPO item numbers which are selected:

1. Annual and other reports of agency activities and programs.
2. Statistical reports, especially compilations.
3. All Congressional publications.
4. General publications of agencies whose programs are of interest to ISU.
5. Handbooks, manual and guides of agencies whose programs are of high interest to ISU.
6. Periodicals indexed in indexed held in the ISU Library Reference collection.
7. Catalogs of agency publications which contain titles not include in the *Monthly Catalog*.
8. Agency directories which are more detailed than compilations such as the *Federal Yellow Book*.
9. Serials which support the ISU curriculum described in the *General Catalog*.
10. Publications of general interest to the Library's patrons as determined by the experience of the staff. These do not need to be in support of ISU teaching or research, since a depository is required to meet the needs of the citizens of the area.
11. Substantive bibliographies covering broad subjects.
12. Reports on national political, economic, social and technological issues.
13. Maps in support of the maps collection development policy.
14. Electronic products including web resources.

Types of GPO item numbers which are **NOT** selected.

1. Duplication of information found in more substantive publications.
2. Glossy publications which are primarily public relations tools for the agency.
3. Periodicals which are not indexed. An exception is made for some newsletters with a short retention period when the reported activities are of keen current interest to users.
4. Individual speeches.
5. News/press releases
6. Posters
7. Subject bibliographies which cover a short time span or are covered in other sources.
8. Reprints of articles
9. Extracts from the *United States Code* and the *Code of Federal Regulations*.
10. Catalogs which essentially duplicate the *Monthly Catalog*.
11. Forms (except for tax forms).
12. General publication of agencies of little general interest to our patrons.
13. Publications requiring a lot of updating, such as loose-leaf services, which are not of strong interest to our users.
14. Annual reports of federal agency state and regional offices outside the Midwest.
15. Catalogs of training courses being offered by agencies.

interest.

17. Grant and fellowship notices, which tend to be expired by the time they are received from GPO.

18. Reports on congressional activity in the agency's subject area.

The ISU Library supplements the documents collection with commercial indexes, bibliographies, online services, directories, periodicals, and monographs which aid in locating government material. These items are purchased with other funds.

D. Format of Materials Collected

It is the general policy of the Library to be as much format blind as possible since content is the most important factor. With the decision by the government to move to an all electronic depository program, most of the documents are received now via the Internet. Depending on need and availability, the Library will select federal information in other available formats including paper, microfiche, and maps. When determining a format to be selected, the decision is based on purpose, content and ease of use. When a choice of formats is available, it is the Government Documents Team's responsibility to determine which format is most appropriate without increasing the documents "footprint" in the tangible collection.

V. Specific Collection Guidelines

The Library tries to obtain all documents listed in the annual "Notable Documents" list. Other sources of evaluative information for government documents are *Government Information Quarterly*, *Documents to the People*, *Microform Review*, *Serials Review*, and GOVDOC-L.

It is the policy of the Library to integrate tangible government publications into the Library's collections to as great extent as possible. This allows books and journals on the same subject to be housed together regardless of publisher. A few government publications not deemed appropriate for cataloging are housed in an open stacks collection arranged by Superintendent of Documents (Sudoc) Number. When tangible depository items are cataloged for the general collection they receive the same treatment as other library purchases. They are subject to the Library's binding, preservation and replacement policies.

Due to a lack of space in the main library, some federal documents, which have previously been integrated into the General Collection, are located in a remote storage building. These are primarily runs of older serials.

VI. Detailed Subject Areas

The Library collects heavily publications of the Agriculture Department, Commerce Department, Environmental Protection Agency, Interior Department, Justice Department, NASA, National Science Foundation and Congress to support the research needs of the

University. It also strives for a strong reference collection of documents from the Defense Department, Health and Human Services Department, Homeland Security Department, Labor Department, and Executive Office of the President, Treasury Department, and the Transportation Department.

VII. Other Resources Available

University of Iowa—regional depository
FDLP Desktop <http://www.fdlp.gov>
Federal Depository Library Manual

VIII. Cross-references to Collection Policies

ISU Library Collection Development Policy ISU
Reference Collection Development Policy

IX. Creation date: June 1998, Phil Vandevoorde

X. Revision History

September 2000, Joyce A. Lindstrom
August 2008, Jan Fryer

XI. Bibliographer name: Ed Goedecken