A Guide to Government Resources for Criminal Justice Sciences Majors

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A. Introduction

Government publications are a significant resource for criminal justice sciences majors. Milner Library is one of nearly 1,200 federal depositories of government information throughout the United States. As a federal depository library, Milner Library provides free access to government information to Illinois State University and the surrounding community. We strive to collect, organize, preserve and provide free and unimpeded public access to United States Government publications and information in support of Illinois State University’s mission and curricular needs. We also strive to serve the informational needs of the general.

Criminal Justice Sciences program at Illinois State University mandates research-level holdings from the Department of Justice. Milner Library selects nearly all justice related items available through the depository program. We retain titles that provide current information or that are seminal research works in the field.

Among the most used resources in the depository collection are reports from the Justice Department’s National Institute of Justice, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. According to library use data, nearly 12% of all documents usage stems from the Department of Justice.

Milner Library receives important statistical works such as the comprehensive Uniform Crime Report, Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics and National Crime Victimization Surveys (NCVS). We also receive census products; these products are particularly valuable for criminal justice and law enforcement professionals seeking demographics for community, state and national studies.
B. Getting Started

Important Things to Know About Government Resources:

Call Numbers

1. Government resources are arranged in the stacks using the Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) classification system, rather than the Library of Congress (LC) classification numbers used in much of the rest of the library.

2. SuDocs refers to a classification system created by the U.S. government. SuDoc numbers are issued based upon the government agency that produced the resource. This means that resources are grouped by their publishing agencies, not their subject area.
   - Government agencies can grow, divide, or change responsibilities over time. This means that the same type of resource could be shelved in different places based upon the agency that published the resource. [For instance, the Department of Health and Human Services originated in 1980. Before 1980, it was the Department of Health, Education and Welfare from 1953.]

Below are examples of SuDoc ranges for some of the agencies in the Department of Justice:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (General Publications)  J 1.14/2
- Prisons Bureau  J 16.1 – J 16.33
- Drug Enforcement Administration  J 24.1/2 – J 24.29
- United States Parole Commission  J 27.1 – J 27.9
- National Institute of Justice  J 28.1 – J 28.41
- Justice Statistics Bureau  J 29.1 – J 29.40
- Community oriented Policing Services  J 36.2 – J 36.15/4

C. Finding Government Resources in the Catalog

Here are some useful subject headings that you might want to use in searching the Milner Library catalog for government documents that might relate to criminal justice studies.

- Arrest – Police methods  Policewomen
- Community policing  Police brutality
- Police patrol  Police – Job stress
- Police community relations  Police questionings
- Police training  Police shootings
D. Limiting the Catalog Search to Government Information

Limit your search in the catalog to Government Information only:

Choose “More Limits” before beginning your search.

You will get a screen that looks like the one below:

In the Location menu, make sure to select “Federal Government Resources” and then, “Set Limits.” Now when you search, you will be searching only government resources.
E. Finding Government Resources on the Shelf with SuDocs

To find material on the shelf, use each element of the SuDocs number one at a time.

J 28 . 2: G 15/ 2003
(1) (2) (3) (4)

1. Government resources are shelved in alphanumeric order; first alphabetically by the first letters of the SuDocs number. The first letter(s) often signify the originating department of agency (i.e. A=Agriculture, C=Commerce, E=Energy, J=Justice, NAS=National Aeronautics and Space Administration).

2. The period is not used as a decimal point, but rather to indicate the beginning of the next element of the SuDocs classification scheme. Therefore, J 28.2:G 15/2003 is located on the shelf before J 28.12:B 13 , because 2 is less than 12..


4. For those resources published prior to 2000, when a year was used at the end of a SuDocs number (signifying an edition published in that year), the first digit was dropped, so 1992 became 992. Dates are not filed in with other numbers. Therefore, J 28.2:G 15/2003 comes before J 28.2:G 15/3.

The examples below represent a shelf of U.S. Government Resources correctly arranged.


(The above explanation of shelving order of government resources was adapted courtesy of Kent State University Libraries and Media Services.)

F. Government Journal Publications

Some government publications are available in journal format. Milner Library receives several government-published journals of specific interest to criminal justice studies students. Current issues of these journals are shelved on Floor 2, the main floor of the library.

While you will be able to find the titles of these journals in the Milner’s catalog, the individual articles within the journals will not have catalog records. You can search for articles via indexes or databases.

Search Strategies:
- You may choose to browse through these journals to look for interesting topics
- If you already know your topic, it’s best to use an index or database to determine if these journals have published anything relevant to your topic. (You can search the indexes listed with the journals by clicking on the “Find Articles on Your Topic” link on the Milner Library home page, and then searching “Databases by Title.”)
G. Government Journal Listings

**FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin**
DOC. J 1.14/8: volume #/issue #
Published by the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation
Indexed in: Criminal Justice Abstracts

**Federal Probation: A Journal of Correctional Philosophy and Practice**
DOC. JU 10.8: volume #/issue #
Published by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts
Indexed in: Criminal Justice Abstracts

**National Institute of Justice Journal**
DOC. J 28.14/2-2: volume#/#issue#
Published by the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice
Indexed in: PAIS International

H. Finding Government Statistics

**Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics**
DOC. J 1.42/3; J 26.10; J 29.9; J 29.9/6:year
1974–present
Latest edition at the Floor 2 Reference Desk
(Older editions located on floor 4.)

National statistical information on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Tables and figures provide statistics and text on topics such as prison populations, characteristics, and sentences of inmates.

**Uniform Crime Reports**
DOC. J 1.14/7:year
1959–present
Latest edition at the Floor 2 Reference Desk
(Older editions located on floor 4.)

Reports present the nationwide view of the eight offenses which constitute the Crime Index based on statistics contributed by state and local law enforcement agencies. Includes frequency of crimes as well as information on crime rates, types of weapons used, gender, age, and race of victims.
I. Performing Broader Searches

GPO Monthly Catalog
1976–current
An electronic index of over 500,000 government publications and is updated monthly. When available, links to full text are provided.

- You can reach this index from the Milner Library Home Page by clicking on the “Find Articles on your Topic” link on the Milner Library home page, and then searching “Databases by Title.”

- **IMPORTANT NOTE**: Not all government resources owned by Milner Library are cataloged – if you find a resource listed in the GPO Catalog that you’d like to see, it’s worth checking the shelves at Milner first, before trying to find out if another institution has the resource you’re looking for. If you are unsure or need help, you can always seek assistance at the Reference Desk or contact the Government Documents Librarian, Angela Bonnell, through e-mail at abonne@ilstu.edu or via Yahoo or AIM Instant Messaging under the screen name: mlbabonne.

J. Finding Historical Government Resources

To find resources that were covered before the publication of the electronic version of the GPO Monthly Catalog 1976, it is necessary to use print indexes. Below is a listing of several useful indexes, by the years they cover:

1900–1971
**Cumulative Subject Index to the Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications**
Z1223 .A183 (Floor 2 Reference Stacks)
Fifteen volumes provide subject access to the Monthly Catalog.

1893–1940
**Document Catalog**
Z1223.A1905 (Floor 2 Reference Stacks)
Entries are under both personal and governmental authors, subject, and title.

1881–1893
**Comprehensive Index to the Publications of the United States Government, 1881-1893, by John G. Ames**
Z1223.A1905 (Floor 2 Reference Stacks)
Comprehensive index of government publications from 1889-1893 that continues Poore’s Descriptive Catalogue. Arranged alphabetically by subject area with a name index in volume 2.
K. Map of Social Science Floor (fourth floor)