

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT COLLECTION POLICIES

Government Documents Collection Access, Ferris State University Library (FLITE)

The Government Documents Collection is available for all residents of the State of Michigan to use. Because FLITE is a documents depository of U.S. government documents, a designation intended to help the library provide broad access to these publications, anyone is free to borrow from the documents collection.

Library users, who are not Ferris students, faculty or staff, or those without a MichiCard, will have to make special arrangements to check out federal depository documents, but they will be allowed circulation privileges.

Community Analysis and User Groups Defined

FLITE is located in Big Rapids, Michigan, a rural community of about 10,000 people. The total population of Mecosta County is about 40,000. Big Rapid's economic base is varied, with the largest employers being the university, the local hospital, and with companies in the industrial park. A fairly significant portion of the county's population engages in agriculture, or the recreation industry.

Ferris is the only institution of higher education in Mecosta County, although Central Michigan University is only about 45 miles away in Isabella County, and Grand Valley State University is only about 60 miles away in Grand Rapids, and Allendale. The only public library serving the people of Big Rapids is the Big Rapids Community Library. A number of smaller community libraries also exist in Mecosta County. The only museum in Big Rapids or in the county is the Mecosta County Historical Museum.

Ferris State University has been a major part of the life of Mecosta County since 1884 when the Big Rapids Industrial School was founded, which subsequently became FSU. Over 10,000 students currently attend the university in Big Rapids, and these students come from every county in the state of Michigan. A large portion of our students come from Mecosta County, and surrounding counties, but a significant number also comes from Wayne County.

The primary users of FLITE are the students, faculty and staff of FSU. It is also used by people of the Big Rapids and Mecosta County communities. FLITE cooperates with other libraries, in the area, and nationwide in sharing resources through reciprocal borrowing privileges, interlibrary loan, and other activities and programs.

Downtown businesses and city/county government find it convenient to use some of our standard materials (FR, CFR, USC, Census), because of our location.

Circulation of Federal Depository Government Documents

The majority of federal depository documents are marked 'Depository Document' and are in a separate Documents Collection. Items in this separate collection may be checked out. Some government documents are located in the Reference Collection, given Library of Congress call numbers, and are not circulated. Other depository items are periodicals and housed with other periodicals and may not be circulated. Microfiche and microfilm as a rule do not circulate at all, but may be circulated via Interlibrary Loan. There are also CD-ROM and DVD documents that are available for circulation. They are housed on the second floor, and may be interlibrary loaned.

Persons not affiliated with Ferris State University and who do not have a valid ID card may obtain a MichiCard from their participating local public or college/university library and can then check out documents from Ferris. Michigan residents who have neither will have to speak with the Circulation Desk staff person for special consideration.

Collection Development

The Federal Documents Depository Collection is intended primarily to enhance and compliment the general library collection of Ferris State University. Selection for the library's general collections is based on the following policy:

Materials selected for addition to FSU Library's collections are chosen for the following purposes:

1. To support the instructional, research, and administrative needs of FSU students, faculty and staff.
2. To provide a collection of high quality reflecting a diversity of contemporary and historical interests and points of view in a variety of disciplines.
3. To provide access to cultural and recreational materials not specifically related to the university's current academic programs.

Selection criteria for depository items are broadened to include these additional purposes:

1. To supplement the library resources of other local institutions, in areas in which federal information is relevant.
2. To provide authoritative government information to the population of the 4th Congressional District and the FSU service area.

Emphasis is on authoritative materials appropriate for citation in college/university level research.

User Community

Ferris State University is a four-year undergraduate school with about 130 undergraduate degrees in a variety of liberal and technical arts, including two professional degrees, i.e. pharmacy and optometry. Masters degrees are also offered in Criminal Justice,

Information Systems Management, Business Administration, Career and Technical Education, and Curriculum and Instruction.

Selection Responsibility

The documents librarian is responsible for the selection, receipt, and claiming of depository publications. Other librarians and teaching faculty members, as well as community members are welcome to suggest ordering in certain areas, or specific materials, and they are seriously given consideration.

General Characteristics of the Depository Collection

The collection emphasizes social and political science materials, scientific and technological advancements, information on international issues, such as country report, also business and industry documents. Congressional materials make up a considerable amount of the collection, in various formats, i.e. paper, microformat and electronic. Census publications make up a significant part of the collection. We have commercial microfilm of the decennial censuses from 1980-1990 from the American Statistical Index, produced by Congressional Information Service. These holdings supplement our depository materials and will continue to be a part of our collection. Our holdings in the economic censuses are selective, but expanding. The remainder of the documents collection consists of a wide variety of materials from assorted agencies. We do not specialize in any agency and have made no effort to achieve complete holdings in any area. We believe that we need to provide materials on cultural and recreational materials produced by the government, as well as materials of a historical nature, such as those from the Center for Military History.

Lacking facilities to collect everything, we attempt to acquire tools for identifying government information sufficiently that it can be located elsewhere if not here.

An important consideration is to select information products for which the federal government is the ultimate originator and source (e.g. many statistical products derived from data collected directly by federal agencies).

Electronic Products

Electronic items may be tangible (CD-ROMs, floppy disks, videotapes) or intangible (Internet resources involving no tangible physical publication physically received by the depository), or a combination of both. Paper or microfiche may sometimes be distributed under an electronic item. This is expected to happen primarily during the transition to a primarily electronic depository system. Items expected to be entirely intangible are selected, and are added to our electronic book catalog with links to the document web site. Our list of selections reflects both physical publications actually distributed through the depository system, and publications freely available to anyone with an Internet connection. Tangible items (primarily CD-ROMs) are selected for their intellectual

content like books but with consideration of the capacity of our equipment to run the necessary software and the usability of the software by the librarians.

Disposal Policies

The collection has been regularly weeded over the past thirty years. We became a federal depository library in 2002, but have been receiving government publications from various government agencies since the early 1960s. We have also participated in a housing agreement with Northwest Michigan College in Traverse City since the early 1990's. Since 1983 these procedures have been codified in the "Michigan Plan for the Federal Documents Depository Library System." (as revised) to which this library subscribes. Over the years most areas of the Superintendent of Documents classification have received attention at least once. Fast growing areas get more frequent attention as we respond to crises of space in particular areas. When an area has been targeted for weeding, each publication is examined for disposal eligibility (i.e. have we had it for five years) and for potential and probable future use by our regular clientele. Factors considered include evidence of past use or non-use, availability of other, more current, documents on the topic, changes in local curriculum, and "can we get along without it?".

The disposal scheduling system of the "Michigan Plan" has forced attention to be given to all areas of the SuDocs classification.

Replacement

Replacements for "lost and paid" or missing items are made if there is a real or perceived demand, or if the item is part of a series important to the needs of the University or general public. Documents found to be still in print through the Sales Product Catalog will be purchased from GPO or the Detroit Federal Bookstore. A list of needed titles no longer in print is periodically checked against the *Needs & Offers* List and the exchange lists distributed by the Regional Depository Libraries at the Library of Michigan and the Detroit Public Library.

Public Services for Government Information in Electronic Format

Any person, regardless of age or affiliation status relating to the Ferris State University, may access federal government information electronically to the extent that the library has access to the information. There are basically three modes of access.

Public Internet terminals: In order to maintain reasonable security for anonymous access, the public access terminals provide only a browser and Adobe Acrobat Reader for reading PDF files, plus software to access our online public access catalog (III). Software available may change from time to time. Printers are operated by an outside contractor and require payment. Most internet terminals are capable of downloading to a floppy disk or a zip disk. Floppy disks may be purchased from the second floor Information Desk. Zip disks will have to be purchased elsewhere.

CD-ROM/DVD checkout: Most CD-ROMS and DVDs can be checked out like books. Any CD-ROM/DVD may be checked out to any person with access to appropriate equipment. Persons not affiliated with the Ferris State University system can be issued a special permission card for checkout of depository documents only. (See Policy on Circulation of Documents).

Mediated access: The Documents Librarian will work with any patron to locate information available through the internet using a desktop computer. Other reference librarians may be able to provide similar service using their computers or the staff computer at the reference desk. Information can be downloaded and then transferred to floppies or zip disks. The librarian may provide printed output for brief items. More extensive printing may be done using the networked printers available on each floor. A Bulldog card or debit card must be used to pay for the printed copies.