

PSCI 115F – THE SUPREME COURT

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The location and call number of each publication is given in parentheses at the end of its bibliographic entry. All publications in this guide may be found on the 4th level (the main floor) of the Central Library unless otherwise noted. **The URL for the Vanderbilt Library home page is <http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/>.**

Background Information

These sources give background and history, the current problem, and proposed solutions. They are also good places to look when you are trying to decide on a speech topic. They usually cover both the “pro” and the “con” of an issue.
Vanderbilt Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Need a database to find an article?”

CQ Weekly [Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report], 1946-. ([E-Journal and Database](#), 1983-; Latest five years: GOVT REF Alcove JK1.C15--West Wall)

Best source for current developments on political issues and campaigns and on activities of all three branches of government. Choose Archive "Search Articles" and use the * (asterisk) to substitute for word endings. For the paper version, the yellow pages provide a cumulative index.

The annual *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* (GOVT REF Alcove JK1.C66--West Wall) and quadrennial *Congress and the Nation* (GOVT REF Alcove JK1001.C6--West Wall) summarize and arrange *CQ Weekly* information by topic.

Guide to the U.S. Supreme Court. 4th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004. 2 vols. (REF. KF8742 .W567 2004)

West's Encyclopedia of American Law. 1997. 12 vols. (REF KF 154.W47 1998)

Books and Government Information

At the Vanderbilt Library home page → “Find Books and Other Items” (upper left) → “Acorn”

Start in Acorn, the library catalog. Acorn is the catalog for all 9 libraries in the Heard Library system, as well as a few other departmental libraries on campus (like the Women’s Center and the Family Resource Center). Use the \$ (dollar sign) to substitute for word endings.

Periodical and Newspaper Articles

General journal, magazine, or newspaper articles: Start in a periodical database like ProQuest or InfoTrac which both provide popular and scholarly articles on many topics.

Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Top Databases” (near top)

Proquest. (Online)

Provides citations and summaries of articles from over 4,000 publications, with many in full-text. Indexes a broad range of social sciences publications, numerous general-interest magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*, and recent issues of major newspapers. Use the * (asterisk) to substitute for word endings. **E-mail: articles.**

Search Tip #1: Before you search, you can limit the number of databases you look at: click on “Databases Selected” (which is under the “Basic Search” tab), and then click on “clear all databases.” you can further limit your search to the Research Library Core, International Module, Military Module, and the Social Science Module or other modules.

Search Tip #2: You can specify a “date range” in the box below the main search box.

Search Tip #3: After entering your basic search, look at the “suggested topics” above the results you get. Clicking on one of the special topics will retrieve only the items that focus most on each topic listed.

Search Tip #4: After entering your basic search, look at the list of results. From the titles of the articles listed, you may see other words or terms that will focus your topic better.

LexisNexis Academic, 1973-. (Online)

Best source for full-text newspaper articles. Also indexes business, legal, and medical information and general reference sources. Access other Lexis-Nexis products from *Academic’s* search page. **Search Tip:** Use the ! (exclamation mark) to substitute for word endings. **E-mail: articles.**

Specialized journal or magazine articles: If ProQuest and InfoTrac don't have what you need for your assignment, consider a more specialized database for scholarly articles on your topic.

Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Need an article on a topic?” → Enter database name into search box.

Worldwide Political Science Abstracts (WPSA), 1975-. (Online)

Provides citations, abstracts, and indexing of the international serials literature in political science and its complementary fields, including international relations, law, and public administration / policy.

Search Tip: Use the * (asterisk) to substitute for word endings. **E-mail: citations.**

Search Tip: After entering your basic search, look at the “suggested topics” above the results you get. Those provide only the items that focus most on each topic listed.


Index to Legal Periodicals Full Text, 1918-. (Online)


Cites articles from more than 615 legal periodicals and indexes some 2000 law books. Coverage includes law reviews, bar association journals, university publications, yearbooks, institutes, and government publications. ILP covers all areas of jurisprudence, including recent court decisions, new legislation, and original scholarship. Indexing covers 1918-present. Full text coverage begins in 1982. Choose both “Legal Periodicals Full Text” and “Legal Periodicals Retro” for pre-1982 material. Use the * (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.

JSTOR. (Online) and Project MUSE. (Online) (Online)

Full-text electronic backfiles of core scholarly journals on many subjects. JSTOR's full-text coverage begins at the first issue of each journal and usually ends within five years of the present. Project MUSE has more current issues, but covers fewer journals.

A specific journal, magazine or newspaper: Many of our article databases have fulltext (the whole article is in the database). However, sometimes you'll only get a citation for an article that looks perfect for your paper.

If there is a  button, click it for links that will check for fulltext copies or to see if we subscribe to the journal title through Acorn, the library catalog.

If there is no  button, look up the title of the journal or magazine (not the title of the article) in Acorn to find out whether or not Vanderbilt subscribes to it. If we have any online access to the journal (from another database),

Acorn will have a  button at the top of the record.

Not Available at Vandy? If we don't have what you need at Vanderbilt, you can go to other resources like Athena or Kudzu or WorldCat and use our InterLibrary Loan service. Just remember these generally take between 3 days to 2 weeks to deliver requested materials.

Internet Sites

Google (<http://www.google.com/>)

Professors, librarians, and researchers of all kinds use Google, and there's no reason that you shouldn't. However, beware that there is nobody who checks for accuracy or fairness on the Internet. **To narrow your Google search to more dependable web sites, click on “Advanced Search” and choose one or both of these options:**

Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com/>). Searches specifically for scholarly literature, including peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, preprints, abstracts and technical reports from all broad areas of research.

Google U.S. Government Search (formerly Uncle Sam) (<http://www.google.com/ig/usgov>) -- Searches all U.S. federal, state and local government .gov and .mil sites, as well as select government sites with .com, .us, and .edu domains (e.g., .usps.com, .ca.us, and .ndu.edu).

Library home page → “Get Help with Research” (lower right) → “Subject Guides”

Government Information: U.S. Courts / Judicial Branch

(<http://lib11.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib/ginfol.pl?searchtext=Courts&Type=Simple&Resource=DB&Website=GOVTINFO>).

Political Science (<http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/romans/polsci/>)

Remember! Evaluate whether or not any website you find will meet your Professor's requirements.