

Larry Romans, larry.romans@vanderbilt.edu, x22838  
 Frank Lester, frank.lester@vanderbilt.edu, x22838  
 Central Library, Vanderbilt University, February 2009

## CMST 100 - FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING/ CMST 204 – ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION

### PUBLIC POLICY ASSIGNMENT

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

Vanderbilt Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Search for Database by Name”

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.

**Part of the reason for finding out more about the topic is so that you can narrow the topic to something manageable. For example, if you were interested in “immigration,” you might narrow your topic to, say, “Congress should pass a law to provide amnesty for illegal immigrants who have been in the United States for more than five years.”**

★ *CQ Researcher.* ([Database](#))

**Best overview source for identifying what's at issue and how the topic developed.** Each report covers a single subject. **Browse by topic or search for keywords.** View it as a black & white PDF (choose at top right).

Update the CQ Researcher information by looking at *CQ Weekly [Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report]*

([Database](#)) for current developments on political issues and on activities of all three branches of government. **Choose Archive "Search Articles" and use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.**

★ *Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center.* ([Database](#))

Pro and con opinions about broad controversial issues. Online version also includes links to basic reference articles, selected magazine and newspaper articles, primary sources, statistics, and web sites of important organizations concerned with each issue. **Use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.**

*Pro & Con Online.* ([Database](#))

Pro & Con includes excerpts of pro and con statements (1) by members of Congress, representatives of international organizations or other countries, and interest group representatives, and (2) from Supreme Court briefs. Covers civil rights and the judiciary, economic and environmental policy, government and politics, and foreign policy. Each issue covers a single topic and features both sides of a single issue.

★ *Points of View.* ([Database](#))

Basic overview, point, and counterpoint for 200 topics. Includes text of relevant periodical and newspaper articles, as well as a few primary documents. **Use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.**

#### Periodical and Newspaper Articles

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

Start in a periodical database like Proquest or InfoTrac which both provide popular and scholarly articles on many topics. **SEARCH HINT: You need to critically evaluate your sources (especially websites). Use the C.R.A.P. Test.**

★ *Proquest.* ([Database](#))


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. **E-mail: articles.**

**Search Tip #1:** Use the \* (asterisk ) to substitute for word endings.

**Search Tip #2:** Before you search, you can limit the number of databases you look at: click on the downward arrow to the right of “Databases:” and choose “Interdisciplinary: Proquest Research Library.”

**Search Tip #3:** After entering your basic search, look at the “suggested topics” above the results you get. Click on the most appropriate one to get a list of the items that focus most on that topic.

Another tip: After entering your basic search, if you don't get many results, 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.

Some articles are available in full-text (the whole article is in ProQuest) directly on Proquest. You must look up others by clicking on “Find a copy” and then on the  button. See if the article is available online through another database or in print in the library. Also, click on “Cite this” and choose the citation style you want from the pull-down list, to find out how to cite the article.

## Books

Acorn is the catalog for all 9 libraries in the Heard Library system, as well as a few other libraries on campus (like the Women’s Center and the Family Resource Center). It lists almost all books in all Vanderbilt libraries and most U.S. government publications distributed after July 1976. It lists which periodicals we subscribe to, but does not list individual articles. Use the \$ (dollar sign) to substitute for word endings.

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

## U. S. Government Information

*Congressional Hearings* (GOVT Y 4.\_\_; Microfiche and online)

Testimony on proposed legislation, an existing government program, or an event by representatives for the administration, interest group representatives, state and local officials, members of Congress, and others. Search on *LEXIS-NEXIS Congressional* to identify hearings on your topic. To locate the full-text of an entire hearing, copy the title from *LexisNexis Congressional* and paste it into Acorn. Pre-1994 titles will likely be available only in print or microfiche. Beginning in with 1994 hearings look for a **Web Link** option at the top of the Acorn record to access the online PDF version. If the title does not appear in Acorn, go to GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/chearings/index.html>.

Vanderbilt Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Search for Database by Name”

★ *LexisNexis Congressional*, 1789-1969; 1970-. ([Database](#))

Indexes Congressional Research Service (CRS) Reports, Congressional hearings, and other Congressional publications. **CRS Reports** provide information on public policy issues for members of Congress. They often cover the issues involved and the possible alternative solutions. **Hearings** include the text of prepared statements given by expert witnesses at Congressional committee meetings. *The Congressional Record* contains the floor speeches of members of Congress. Use the ! (exclamation mark) to substitute for word endings.

## 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 sits, 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).

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

★ *Public Policy Issues and Groups* (<http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/romans/pubpol.html>)

Links to top Internet sites on a wide range of controversial issues ranging from abortion to welfare.

## Statistics

Vanderbilt Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Search for Database by Name”

★ *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (U.S. Bureau of the Census), 1879-. (Latest in GOVT REF Alcove C/2(2) C 3.134-- South Wall; also READY REF; [Database: http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2009edition.html](http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2009edition.html))

The basic annual U.S. statistical handbook with almost 1,600 tables, of social, economic, and political statistics. Use the source notes at the bottom of each table to lead you to other statistical publications on your topic.