

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	xi
<b>Introducing the Research Skills Series</b> .....	xiii
<b>Chapter 1 Before You Start Your Research</b> .....	1
§ 1.0 Plan Your Research .....	2
§ 1.1 Identify the Precise Question You Are Trying to Answer .....	2
§ 1.2 Map Your Research Strategy .....	3
§ 1.3 Be Aware of Copyright or Other Restrictions on Re-use .....	4
§ 1.4 Have a Plan for Documenting Your Work and Research Results .....	4
§ 1.10 Research Is a Process .....	5
§ 1.99 Chapter Summary and Review Questions .....	7
<b>Chapter 2 Going Beyond Google</b> .....	9
§ 2.0 Know the Full Range of Information Sources .....	10
§ 2.1 Major Search Engines .....	10
§ 2.2 Limitations of General Search Engines .....	11
§ 2.3 Handy Guides .....	12
§ 2.10 Know How to Start from Scratch .....	12
§ 2.11 Starting Points on the Web .....	12
§ 2.12 Starting Points in Print .....	13
§ 2.20 Know What You Are Searching .....	14
§ 2.21 How Do You Learn about a Database’s Content? .....	14
§ 2.30 Know How to Search the Database .....	15
§ 2.31 What Do You Need to Know before You Search? .....	15
§ 2.32 Help! .....	15
§ 2.33 Planning and Conducting an Online Search .....	16
§ 2.34 Constructing a Search with Boolean Operators .....	17
§ 2.35 Searching and Limiting When You Get Too Much .....	18
§ 2.36 Dates .....	18
§ 2.37 Example for Limiting When You Get Too Much .....	19
§ 2.38 Learn from the Pros .....	20

- § 2.40 Review Search Results Critically ..... 20
  - § 2.41 Evaluating Information ..... 20
  - § 2.42 Fact-Checking Resources ..... 21
  - § 2.43 Evaluating a Web Site ..... 21
  - § 2.44 Web Tools for Evaluating Web Sites ..... 22
- § 2.50 Stay Informed ..... 23
  - § 2.51 Email Alert Services: A Selected Sample ..... 23
  - § 2.52 Avoid Information Overload ..... 23
  - § 2.53 Blogs: A Selected Sample ..... 24
  - § 2.54 Selected RSS Readers ..... 24
  - § 2.55 RSS News Feeds: A Selected Sample ..... 24
  - § 2.56 Commercial Online Services ..... 25
- § 2.60 Remember, It's Not All Online ..... 25
  - § 2.61 We Have So Many Records That . . . ..... 26
- § 2.99 Chapter Summary and Review Questions ..... 26

**Chapter 3 Legislative Branch Research ..... 27**

- § 3.0 Legislative Process Flowchart ..... 28
- § 3.10 Quick Reference for Legislative Researchers ..... 29
  - § 3.11 Types of Legislation ..... 29
  - § 3.12 Continuing Resolutions ..... 29
  - § 3.13 Major Versions of Legislation ..... 30
  - § 3.14 Dates of Previous Congresses ..... 30
  - § 3.15 Legislative Glossaries ..... 31
- § 3.20 Documents on THOMAS and GPO Access ..... 31
  - § 3.21 GPO Access and the Federal Digital System ..... 32
- § 3.30 THOMAS: Legislative Information on the Internet ..... 32
  - § 3.31 Thomas Home Page ..... 35
  - § 3.32 Thomas Bills and Resolutions Search Page ..... 36
- § 3.40 Appropriations Legislation ..... 37
  - § 3.41 Appropriations Committees and Subcommittees ..... 38
  - § 3.42 Appropriations Conference Committee Reports ..... 38
  - § 3.43 Limitations, Earmarks, and General Provisions ..... 39

§ 3.50	Monitoring Legislation: Alert Services .....	40
§ 2.51	Recorded Congressional Information.....	41
§ 3.60	From Bills to Laws: Documents and Information Resources.....	42
§ 3.70	United States Code Titles.....	44
§ 3.80	Additional Legislative Branch Sources.....	46
§ 3.81	Congressional Research Service Reports .....	46
§ 3.82	Lobbyist Registrations .....	47
§ 3.99	Chapter Summary and Review Questions .....	47
<b>Chapter 4 Judicial Branch Research.....</b>		<b>49</b>
§ 4.0	Federal Court System Structure.....	50
§ 4.10	Regional Federal Court Circuits— Geographic Coverage.....	51
§ 4.20	Sources of Supreme Court Opinions Online .....	52
§ 4.30	The Federal Courts: Selected Internet Resources.....	53
§ 4.31	Low-Cost Legal Research Sources.....	54
§ 4.40	Citing the Law .....	55
§ 4.41	Citing Decisions at the Federal Level—Examples.....	55
§ 4.50	Law Dictionaries .....	56
§ 4.99	Chapter Summary and Review Questions .....	56
<b>Chapter 5 Executive Branch Research.....</b>		<b>57</b>
§ 5.0	Executive Branch Organization .....	58
§ 5.10	USA.gov.....	59
§ 5.11	USA.gov Home Page .....	61
§ 5.12	Government Search Engines.....	62
§ 5.20	Sources for Presidential and Other White House Documents.....	62
§ 5.21	Presidential Documents on Government Web Sites.....	62
§ 5.22	Presidential Documents on Nongovernment Web Sites .....	63
§ 5.23	President’s Budget Documents.....	64
§ 5.24	Office of Management and Budget Documents .....	65

§ 5.30	Agency Web Site Content.....	65
§ 5.40	Federal Regulations.....	66
§ 5.41	Federal Register.....	66
§ 5.42	Overview of the Rulemaking Process.....	67
§ 5.43	GPO FDsys: Federal Register.....	68
§ 5.44	Code of Federal Regulations.....	69
§ 5.45	GPO Access: Code of Federal Regulations.....	70
§ 5.46	Code of Federal Regulations Titles.....	71
§ 5.47	CFR Titles.....	72
§ 5.48	Additional Regulatory Research Sources.....	73
§ 5.50	Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).....	75
§ 5.51	Resources for Learning about and Using FOIA.....	76
§ 5.60	Federal Regulatory Agencies: Filings Databases.....	77
§ 5.99	Chapter Summary and Review Questions.....	78

## **Chapter 6 State and International Research.....** 79

§ 6.0	State Government Information Resources.....	80
§ 6.1	Search State Government Sites.....	80
§ 6.2	State News and Statistics.....	81
§ 6.3	Find State Government Information by Branch.....	81
§ 6.4	State Legislative Branch Resources.....	81
§ 6.5	State Executive Branch Resources.....	82
§ 6.6	State Judicial Branch Resources.....	83
§ 6.10	International Government Internet Resources.....	83
§ 6.11	Web Directories.....	83
§ 6.12	Country Information.....	84
§ 6.13	World Legal Information.....	84
§ 6.14	Global Search, News, and Statistics.....	85
§ 6.99	Chapter Summary and Review Questions.....	85

## **Chapter 7 Experts and Insiders.....** 87

§ 7.0	Offline Resources: People.....	88
§ 7.1	When to Use People as an Information Source.....	88

§ 7.2	Preparing to Make an Information-Gathering Phone Call.....	88
§ 7.3	Making the Call.....	88
§ 7.10	Washington Contacts: Phone and Email .....	89
§ 7.11	Congress.....	89
§ 7.12	Executive Departments and Agencies .....	90
§ 7.13	Media Contacts.....	90
§ 7.14	Selected Media Web Sites .....	91
§ 7.15	Think Tanks.....	92
§ 7.16	Trade and Professional Associations.....	92
§ 7.20	Think Tanks Online .....	92
§ 7.21	Finding Think Tanks Online .....	93
§ 7.22	Selected Policy Institutes and Think Tanks .....	94
§ 7.99	Chapter Summary and Review Questions .....	95
	<b>Table of Web Sites.....</b>	<b>97</b>
	<b>Index .....</b>	<b>113</b>