

POLITICAL SCIENCE 140A

ROADMAP

CLASS WEBSITE: <<http://www.library.ucla.edu/yrl/referenc/guides/polisci140a.htm>>

This is a quick guide to the steps you need to go through to complete your papers. Consult “*Legislative Searches: Federal Government*” for the location of all sources. This is linked from your class web page.

1. Choose your topic.

This is a crucial component for success in your assignment. You should pick something that is interesting to you and that generates some interest and discussion among legislators and the public. If you don’t have a specific bill in mind, *search through the online indexes of LEXIS/NEXIS Congressional, or the print Congressional Index, CQ Almanac, or the CIS Legislative History or Index volumes.* It is easier to follow a bill that has passed, because the CIS Index pulls the material together for you, but bills that have not passed can be traced. *After you choose your topic, make sure you have the correct Public Law number, or if it didn’t pass, the bill number and the Congress in which it was introduced.*

2. Find the Legislative History of your bill/law.

This is the progress of your bill through Congress. *For laws that have passed since 1970, you can find this in the CIS Legislative History volumes, or on LEXIS/NEXIS Congressional online; for bills that have not passed, use the Index of the CIS or Thomas.* If your bill is too recent, or died in committee before any action was taken, you may find very little to use for your paper.

3. Find references to your bill in the Congressional Record.

We have both paper and online copies of the Congressional Record; if you use the online Legislative History on LEXIS/NEXIS Congressional, you will find direct links to the online version relating to your bill, though some may be brief.

4. Locate Congressional documents in the library or online.

This includes reports, committee prints, hearings, and other Congressional documents. *LEXIS/NEXIS online or the CIS Index in print will lead you to the correct titles; consult the yellow handout for locations.* Most of these materials for recent years are online, except for full text hearings. Check the UCLA Catalog for individual titles of hearings.

5. Consult secondary sources that discuss the issues surrounding your bill.

These include CQ Electronic Library, CQ Almanac, National Journal, newspapers, and other journals. Remember also to consult *Politics in America* or *Almanac of American Politics* to see how the members of Congress who introduced your bill are rated by political groups.

Examples of Congressional Publication Citations

HR 22	House of Representatives, Bill 22
S 1586	Senate, Bill 1586
H.J. Res. 54	House Joint Resolution 54
S.Con.Res. 43	Senate Concurrent Resolution 43
H.Rpt. 105-12	House Report 12 from 105th Congress
PL 107-123	123rd Law Passed by the 107th Congress, (Public Law)
14 Stat 223	Volume 114, Statutes at Large , Section 223
29 USC 455	Title 29 US Code , Section 455
H521-42	CIS Abstract #

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