

# FDLP Conference

## October 2015

Arlington, VA



This library is a congressionally designated depository for U.S. Government documents. Public access to the government documents collection is guaranteed by public law. (Title 44 United States Code)

## Open and Closed: Brigham Young University's Experience with Service Implications on Open Access with a Closed Stacks Documents Collection

- ▶ Academic libraries have long enhanced their contributions to democracy and education by collecting a variety of useful primary sources, including government documents—BYU is no exception.



## However,

- ▶ 21<sup>st</sup> century brick-and-mortar libraries have a variety of organizational challenges, not least of which are funding or space.
- ▶ Repurposing is also a major interest:
- ▶ <http://www.lib.utah.edu/services/family-reading-room.php>



## Why have a closed government documents collection?

Space—and funding for space—in many academic libraries is becoming a significant collections management issue. On- and off-site storage options for collections increasingly look to closed stacks or remote storage options, few of which explore any legal or Title 44 implications. However, US federal paper documents may be housed in closed stacks if specific service options are provided. This presentation examines some of the issues related to honoring the concept of open access to government information while managing a closed documents collection by illustrating BYU's experience with a closed documents collection.



## Some of the applicable FDLP regulations concerning closed-stacks operations include:

- ▶ Under section entitled, "**Physical Facilities and Maintenance of the Collection**", we find:
- ▶ Para 19. "All depository materials must be housed in a manner that facilitates timely access."
- ▶ Para 21. RE: ADA: "... reasonable alternative to ensure access."
- ▶ Under section entitled, "**Public Services**", we find:
- ▶ Para 33. "The depository collection and services must be visible to library users and potential users."
- ▶ Para 35. "Depository services and assistance for depository information resources must be of the same quality or comparable to that for other collections and services in the library."
- ▶ Para 37. "Access to the depository collection must be provided in a reasonable amount of time regardless of its format ... [] [A]ccess must be provided in a reasonable amount of time regardless of their housing arrangement; documents must be retrievable if they are stored off-site or in closed stacks."

## How wide-spread is closed government documents collections?

- ▶ Selected examples:
- ▶ Houston Public <http://houstonlibrary.org/research/government-documents>
- ▶ "The Government Documents collection is a closed-stack, non-circulating collection. ... Materials must be retrieved by staff members for use in the library."
- ▶ William Jewel College <http://www.jewell.edu/governmentdocuments>
- ▶ "Most of the documents are shelved in closed stacks. Ask at the circulation desk for them (by their classification number) or contact the Government Documents Librarian."

## Selected Examples cont'd:

- ▶ Baylor University <http://www.baylor.edu/lib/rli/index.php?id=72125>
- ▶ “**Gov Docs Compact Shelving** and **Gov Docs Periodicals** are location designations found in BearCat. These documents are in a closed stack area, but can be retrieved by a library staff member.”
- ▶ University of Michigan [http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7-160-50206\\_18637-53073--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7-160-50206_18637-53073--,00.html)
- ▶ “ ... the Official Michigan Documents collection contains the first, and sometimes only, copy of each document and is located in a closed stack area. Official documents do not circulate, but can be used in the library by request through the Reference Desk on the 2nd floor.”

## Which is the long way 'round ...

- ▶ To saying that several academic and research libraries have US federal documents in closed stacks.



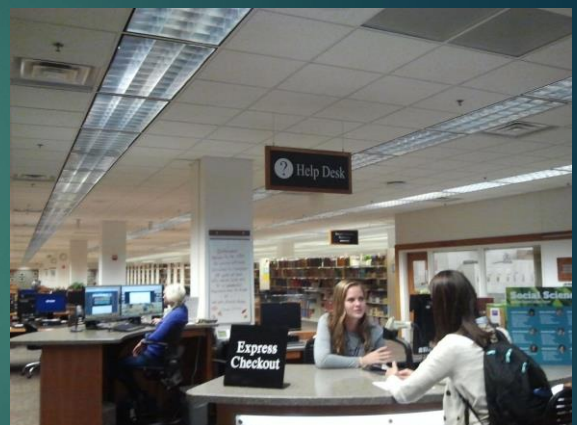
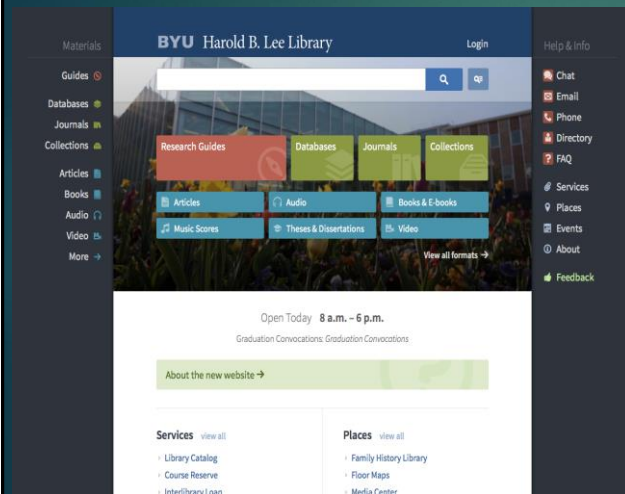


# BYU has its closed stacks (also known as Auxilliary Storage, or AuxStor):



# How do we do it at BYU?

- ▶ All US federal documents found in the Catalog direct patrons to the Social Sciences Help Desk to assist with any government document question.



# The entrance to AuxStor and GovDocs:

- ▶ A card-swipe security door



# The leading edge of government documents:



## Government documents in AuxStor:

- ▶ In manual-driven compact storage



## How to obtain US federal documents at BYU:

- ▶ Because the collection is closed, "browsing" is only permitted through the Catalog.
- ▶ All US federal documents in the Catalog also contain a phrase directing patrons to the Social Sciences Help Desk for assistance.
- ▶ Individual patron requests for known documents or for items discovered during a reference interview are paged by Library staff in one of two ways:



# Paging requests can be submitted to

- ▶ 1. The Social Sciences Help Desk
- ▶ Or, 2. at the main floor
- ▶ Circulation Desk



# Paging data:

- ▶ Number of pages by Library staff:
- ▶ 2014 = 51
- ▶ 2015 = 47 (as of 31 August 2015)
- ▶ Projected 2015 year-end data = 59
- ▶ Net change of +15%





## Paging data cont'd:

- ▶ Number of Docs-related questions at the Social Sciences Help Desk:  
2014 = 67
- ▶ 2015 = 52 (as of 31 August 2015)
- ▶ Projected 2015 year-end data = 65
- ▶ Net change of -3%



## Paging data cont'd:

- ▶ US Federal Gov Docs Circulations:  
2014 = 289
- ▶ 2015 = 260 (as of 31 August 2015)
- ▶ Projected 2015 year-end data = 325
- ▶ Net change of +11%



# Shelving

- ▶ Due to the specialized nature of SuDoc classifications, only Social Sciences Help Desk students reshelve government documents.



## Possible Implications of Closed Stacks Documents collections:

- ▶ Two kinds of possible implications: Service and Collections
- ▶ Service Implications
- ▶ According to FDLP Regulations, paging from a closed documents collection is permissible.
- ▶ Both patrons and staff need to know which Library service points can accept a documents request, and non-accepting service points need to be aware—through consistent training—of which service points will serve patrons.
- ▶ Additionally, accepting service points must follow FDLP Regulations Para 35. “Depository services and assistance for depository information resources must be of the **same quality or comparable to that for other** ... services in the library.” And,
- ▶ Para 37. “Access to the depository collection **must be provided in a reasonable amount of time** regardless of its format ... [A]ccess must be provided in a reasonable amount of time regardless of their housing arrangement; documents **must be retrievable** if they are stored off-site or in closed stacks.” (emphasis added).

## Implications cont'd

- ▶ Collections
- ▶ In addition to the usual best collections management practices, it appears that documents collections may be located anywhere so long as it is accessible in a timely manner, and in ways consistent with other Library service deliveries.
- ▶ It is possible that many selective depository collections are static, in the sense that digital versions of formerly print documents leads to near-zero collection growth.
- ▶ Collections may therefore reside in space-definite areas within the Library, and, with timely public services, be in full compliance with Title 44.

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