Lobby Project Search Guidelines

The following packet is broken down into a number of searches designed to simplify and organize the collection of a large amount of information. Each search explains where to search what to look for and where and how to save the documents you find. Before moving on to the searches, there are some general guidelines that pertain to all searching

Any questions about the project generally, task guidelines or specific files and documents are encouraged and welcomed at the weekly meeting or at any time by email to Frank, Marie, the graduate students or the interviewing professor on your issue.

General Guidelines for All Searches

1) We are interested only in information from 1/1/1999 to 12/31/2000.

2) All work should always be saved on the **p: drive** not on the C drive.

3) Use Internet **EXPLORER** not Netscape Navigator to search any and all sites. When you go to save a document in Internet Explorer click *File - Save*, use default of Complete Web page. This will get all graphics and links. **Netscape will not copy all the links and graphics.**

4) Please remember that you must save all relevant pages not just pages with links to relevant pages. The links may no longer function in the future as websites are updated.

5) Be sure to report all searches in your issue's Research Status spreadsheet.
> **Name** = your name or initials
> **Date** = the date you conducted the search
> **Source** = Thomas, Organization's name, Agency name, etc. (The source is specified for each task).
> **Search Strings** = keywords (please specify if "and" "w/10" etc. were used), there should be an entry line for every keyword for every site. Please be very exact when entering what keyword you searched with.
> If there was no search option note: Manual search and explain the "path" in the Organizational, Congressional or Agency URL document.
> **Findings** = YES, you did find and save info. or NO, you found no relevant information to save.

PRE-SEARCH PREPARATION

1. When you receive a new issue, the first thing you should do is read all the completed advocate summaries on the issue and the case overview if available. These documents can be found on the P: drive under Lobby - CASE_FILES - *Your Issue Short Title* - Advocate Summaries, and Lobby – CASE_Files – *Your Issue*, respectively. Also read any follow-up summaries that are available.

2. This information will be helpful in defining the parameters of the issue, thus giving you a better understanding of the topic. After reading these summaries, compile a list of possible keywords for your issue (try to limit it to five or less). Include keywords with "AND", "w/10" and "not" when necessary. Record these in the word document entitled *Keywords.doc* found in your issue folder.

3. While reading the advocate summaries you should be looking for participants (federal agencies, organizations/interest groups, senators, and representatives) who <u>support or oppose</u> or otherwise take an interest in the issue. Participants will be listed in the advocate summaries under coalition partners and other participants. This information should be recorded in the keyword document under the Participants subheading, [please group participants by 1) Federal Agencies, 2) Organizations (Interest Groups) and 3) Members of Congress].

4. Next, check the filing cabinet in the Lobby Project office for information given out during the interviews. Sometimes you will have a lot of information and sometimes there will be none or very little. You do not need to read every word of this information – just skim it so that you have a good feel for your issue.

5. The last section of the keyword document that needs to be filled out is the section that begins, *As I understand it, this issue is about…* Write 3-5 sentences explaining what your issue is about(as well as what it is not about). You do not need to re-list who is involved. Instead, provide an explanation of the issue in your own words.

6. Finally try your proposed keywords on some of the search sites, such as Thomas, the House and a sample of your organizational webpages. Note the terms and combinations of terms you tried and the results.

7. Now, you need to e-mail your keyword document to the head graduate assistants, who will review the format and help with any keyword difficulties. Then they will let you know to e-mail the document to the professor who conducted the interviews on your issue for review. Sometimes the professor will make changes, sometimes you'll be asked to make changes, and sometimes the document you send will be approved. You should not begin any searches for information until the keywords, participants, and issue definition that are in the keyword document are approved. Once this list (and the participants list) is finalized it is **NOT** to be changed without approval from the professor!

   The only exception: in special circumstances a professor may approve a modification to your keywords for certain searches. If this occurs you must document the exception in the Research Status. If, in the course of your searching, you are continually running across participants that were not included on the original participant list or you encounter terms to

describe your issue that are not on the keyword list, please bring it to the attention of the professor who conducted the interview.

SEARCHING THE WEBSITES OF INTEREST GROUPS

This task involves collecting information from interest group websites (only those groups interviewed, named in advocate summaries, or named in follow-up interviews). These groups should be listed on your keyword document under participants / organizations.

The information you are gathering from these websites will include any document posted that conveys or illustrates the group's position on the issue. Documents you may find include: talking points, model legislation, lists of proponents, lists of opponents or press releases (from the organization). We are **not** interested in saving general newspaper articles, press releases from members of Congress or other organizations, or testimony given at congressional committee hearings.

<u>**Search Steps**</u>

1. If the web address of the group is not given in the advocate summary use www.google.com to search for the group's address.

2. Some of these interest group websites will have "search" features in which case you would use your approved keywords to search the site. Otherwise, you will need to "search" the site yourself looking for information applicable to your issue.

3. When you find a relevant document to save there are two steps you will need to follow.

    a. The first step is to save the page in the "Organizational Statements" folder for your case. Name the files by the name of the organization and name of the page. If the name of the page is long, please shorten it.

    b. The second step is to complete the "Organizational URL's" document, in the "Organizational Statements" folder.

        When completed this is how an entry should look:

        AAMC -- 1/11/00 *(organizational name -- date the website was searched)*
        http://www.aamc.org/ *(main homepage URL)*

        Searched the site using approved keywords *(How the site was searched)*

        AAMC Senators Collect Signatures on Letter Calling for Additional BBA Relief *(page that was saved)*
        AAMC_Letter_Calling_For_BBA_Relief_071400 *(name you gave the page when saved)*
        http://www.aamc.org/advocacy/washhigh/00jul14/_1.htm *(Complete URL of page saved)*

    c. For some websites you may find no relevant information even though the organization was mentioned in the advocate summary. In this case you should still record the organization name & date (line 1) as well as the main homepage URL (line 2). In this instance, line 3 would be no documents. (See example below)

Greater New York Hospital Association – 1/11/00
http://www.gnyha.com/

Searched the site using approved keywords

No Documents

4. Finally you will need to fill in Research Status, the **Source** being the organization's name.

**COLLECTING INFORMATION ABOUT RELEVANT BILLS
INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE OR SENATE**

This task involves collecting data on bills proposed in Congress (Bill Text, Bill Summary, Relevant Sections and Amendments) related to the issue you are researching.

Search Steps

1. Go to the website http://thomas.loc.gov. Click on the *Bill Text*, then on *106th.*
    Search **by word/phrase** using the approved keywords. For each keyword you will need to examine all the hits to determine whether the proposed bill is applicable.

    As you conduct research you may run into the same bill number with different suffixes. Suffixes may include IH, IS, or RH (these stand for Introduced in the House, Introduced in the Senate and Reported in the House). Regardless of the suffix, you should save only the most recent version of the bill.

2. When you find a bill relevant to your issue, rename a bill folder or create an additional folder. Name it by the abbreviation of their parent chamber, an underline and then their number (i.e. Hr_456).

3. Then the **Bill Text** will be saved in this folder (i.e. Bill_Text_Hr_456). Be sure you are saving the entire text of the bill by clicking on the *Full Display*.

4. After you have saved a bill then you will need to save the corresponding **Bill Summary** (i.e. Bill_Summary_Hr_456). To do this click on the *Bill Summary and Status File* link, from there click on the *All Bill Summary and Status Info* link, this is the page to be saved.

5. When the case is a small section of a much larger piece of legislation, you will need to save both the entire bill text and also the **Relevant Section**. Click on Full Display and then go to *Edit - Find* on the explorer menu. Next you will want to read through these areas to determine which sections are relevant and need to be saved. You will have to return to the main list of sections, click on the relevant section and save that page.

    Save in the format: Relevant_Section_Hr_456. If you have more than one relevant section for a bill then add a   _# For example: Relevant _Section_Hr_456_2

6. If there has been an **Amendment** to the bill then this will also need to be saved (i.e. Amendment_Hr_456).

7. So for a given issue you may have two bill folders:
    Hr_111
    Bill_Text_Hr_111
    Bill_Summary_Hr_111

    Hr_999
    Bill_Text_Hr_999
    Bill_Summary_Hr_999
    Relevant_Section_Hr_999
    Relevant_Section_Hr_999_2

8. *If you get 50 hits in the "articles containing your phrase **exactly as entered**," you will need to increase your total number of hits returned. Return to the search page, scroll to the bottom and you will find a box which states "specify number of documents to be returned." Change this box to 100. If you still get all 100 hits in the "articles containing your phrase **exactly as entered**," you will need to increase the number of articles desired on the search page to 150, and so on.*

9. ***Note****: if all of your keywords <u>together</u> return more than 50 relevant hits (eg, more than 50 items you would save), you'll need to do a random sample of the articles. Please see the random sample task sheet. You should also bring this up at the weekly project meeting to verify that you're drawing the random sample properly.*

10. Finally you will need to fill in Research Status the **Source** being Thomas – Bill Search.

SEARCHING GOVERNMENT AGENCY WEBSITES

This search involves collecting information from agency websites (only those agencies found in advocacy summaries or follow-up interviews). These agencies should be listed on your keyword document under participants / federal agencies.

Information you are gathering from these websites will include any document posted that conveys or illustrates the agency's position on the issue. Documents you may find include: talking points, lists of proponents, lists of opponents or press releases (from the agency). We are **not** interested in saving general newspaper articles, press releases from members of Congress or other organizations, or Congressional testimony given at congressional committee hearings.

Search Steps

1. If the web address of the group is not given in the advocate summary use www.google.com to search for the group's address.

2. Some of these websites will have "search" features in which case you would use your approved keywords to search the site. Otherwise, you will need to "search" the site yourself looking for information applicable to your issue.

3. When you find a relevant document to save there are two steps you will need to follow.

   a. The first step is to save the page in the "Agency Activities" folder for your case. Name the files by the name of the agency and name of the page. If the name of the page is long, please shorten it.

   b. The second step is to complete the "Agency URL's" document, in the "Agency Activities" folder.

      When completed this is how an entry should look:

      Health Care Financing Administration—2/5/01 (*agency name*)
      http://www.hcfa.gov (*agency URL*)
      Searched the site using modified keywords: risk adjustment and payments *(How the site was searched)*
      Medicare+Choice Cover Letter *(page that was saved)*
      HCFA_Cover_Letter *(name you titled page when saved)*
      http://www.hcfa.gov/stats/hmorates/cover00/default.htm *(Complete URL of page saved)*

   c. For some websites you may find no relevant information even though the organization was mentioned in the advocate summary. In this case you should still record the agency name & date (line 1) as well as the main homepage URL (line 2). In this instance, line 3 would be no documents. (See example below)

      Health Care Financing Administration -- 2/5/01
      http://www.hcfa.gov
      Searched using approved keywords

      No Documents

4. Finally you will need to fill in Research Status the **Source** being the agency name.

**SEARCHING THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD
AND SITES OF HOUSE MEMBERS AND SENATORS**

This search involves collecting information from Thomas, the House site and Senator's sites (only those interviewed, named in advocate summaries, or named in follow-up interviews). These senators should be listed on your keyword document under Members of Congress.

The information you are gathering from these websites will be statements made directly by Members of Congress. Documents you may find include: statements made by members on the floor, floor debates, letters members have written to other members to try and gain support for a particular bill ("Dear Colleague" letters), and press releases from the House website, as well as from individual Senator's web pages.

You may come across such things as 1) unpublished committee reports or 2) studies conducted pertaining to an issue you are searching. We **do want** to save these. This category should also include congressional statements that may not be directly linked to a specific member but that is relevant to your issue and we are not picking up anywhere else.

We **do not want** to save newspaper articles that will be searched in Congressional Universe (Lexis/Nexus). However, if you find an article from a newspaper that is not included in the Lexis/Nexus search then save it. Attached is a copy of the list of newspapers contained in Congressional Universe searches.

Search Steps

1. http://thomas.loc.gov

- Save documents in "Thomas" folder.
- On the Thomas homepage you will see a section called "Congressional Record," and you should click on *Text Search 101st- 107th.* At the top of this page you will see "Select Congress" and you should click on *106*, this will search 1999 and 2000.
- Go down to **1. Word/Phrase** and type in your key words to conduct your search. The default at the bottom of the page is 50 and this is what we will use.
- *Note: If you get 50 hits in the "articles containing your phrase **exactly as entered**," you will need to increase your total number of hits returned. Return to the search page, scroll to the bottom and you will find a box which states "specify number of documents to be returned." Change this box to 100. If you still get all 100 hits in the "articles containing your phrase **exactly as entered**," you will need to increase the number of articles desired on the search page to 150. If there are more than 50 relevant hits you will need to draw a random sample.*
- You will then need to read through the results and determine which ones are applicable to your issue.
   1) if the statement is a single page then click on *full display* and save.
   2) if it is a list option, click on *full display* and search the document for your keywords by clicking on "*Edit*" on the tool bar and "*Find (on this page)."*

- Read the areas around your keywords, if the area is relevant, go back to the list click on the area's section and save each relevant section page.

- Name the file with the abbreviation of the parent chamber (either the House or the Senate (if joint then use J)), the name of the person (if multiple names appear then save using the first same listed followed by et al.), and then the date (i.e. H_Conyers_031400)

  If you need to save a document that has no date or name of a member of Congress, then save it like this:
  > H_Function_Health

  For relevant sections of a larger document save single pages as:
  > H_Conyers_Relevant_Section__031400

  When saving multiple pages be sure to add a _# (including 1) for each page (Remember if multiple names appear then save using the first same listed followed by et al.)
  > H_Conyers_etal_ Relevant_Section_031400_1 (for the first)
  > H_Conyers_etal_ Relevant_Section_031400_2 (for the second, etc.)

- Finally you will need to fill in Research Status, the **Source** being Thomas - Congressional Record.

2. www.house.gov

- Save documents in "House" folder.
- From the house home page click on *Search House Sites* then click on *Search All Sites- Search across Committee and Member Web Sites*.
- Here you enter your key words to conduct a search. If you have search terms that contain "and" &/or "or" you will need to read through the "Search Tips" to determine the best way to go about conducting your search. If you have questions about this you can ask the professor who conducted the interviews for your issue or ask at the weekly meeting.
- We **<u>do not want</u>** to save floor remarks here, as we should have already saved them in the Thomas Congressional Record search were they are complete.
- Save the documents with the abbreviation of the parent chamber, the member's last name and the date of the document (i.e. H_Brown_072500).

  If no date is given for a document, simply shorten the title of the page (i.e. H_Smith_Supports_AIDS_Funding).

- Now you will need to complete the "Congressional URLs" document in the Congressional Statements folder.

Line 1 = House
Line 2 = www.house.gov
Line 3 = How the site was searched – actual keywords or "site map" (this may vary from entry to entry)
Line 4 = Page that was saved -- or No Documents
Line 5 = (name you titled the page when saved)
Line 6 = Complete URL of page saved

- Finally you will need to fill in Research Status, the **Source** being House.

3. www.senate.gov

For **ONLY THE SENATE** search of Congressional Statements -- we only want to search for member statements from the approved participants list you have in your keyword document. **Do not save** any documents from any participants other than those that appear on your approved participant list.

- Save documents in "Senate" folder.
- From the senate home page, click on *Senators*. You will see an alphabetical list of senators. Locate the one you want to search and click on his or her name to link to their home page.
- Each senator has his or her individual home page, and as a result, they are all different. If the senator has a search option on his or her home page you should use it. If he or she does not have a search option, then you should manually search the page. Be on the lookout for things such as: "Issues"; "Press"; "Newsroom"; and "Speeches."
- When saving these pages, name them as we did when searching the Congressional Record (see above).

- Now you will need to complete the "Congressional URLs" document in the Congressional Statements folder.

    Line 1 = Senator's Name
    Line 2 = Senators web address
    Line 3 = How the site was searched – actual keywords or "site map" (this may vary from entry to entry
    Line 4 = Page that was saved -- or No Documents
    Line 5 = (name you titled the page when saved)
    Line 6 = Complete URL of page saved

- Finally you will need to fill in Research Status, the **Source** being the Senator's name.

SEARCHING FOR NEWSPAPER STORIES AND
STORIES IN THE *NATIONAL JOURNAL*

You will search for stories about your issue that appeared in major newspapers (using Lexi-Nexis), and for stories that appeared in *National Journal* (using the *National Journal* website).

Search Steps

1. **Major Newspapers**
   Go to Lexis-Nexis (PSU Library homepage - Databases- All of Them – Lexis-Nexis – go there).
   a. Select Academic Universe – News – General News – Major Newspapers – click on the **MORE OPTIONS** tab – then select **FULL TEXT** search (instead of just a headline search) – when using keywords instead of using AND to connect the phrases use **W/10**, and set the date parameters from 1/1/1999 to 12/31/2000.

   b. You will need to save all of the national (not international) news articles found up to 50. If you find more than 50 (excluding international stories) you may have to draw a random sample (ask about whether you should do this and how it's done).

   c. For news stories, name the files by the name of the source and the date. For example, a story from the Boston Globe on December 12th, 1999, would be saved as Boston_Globe_121299.htm**.**

   d. Save in Research Status the **Source** being Lexis-Nexis/Major Newspapers.

2. **National Journal**
   Go to www.nationaljournal.com.
   a. Click on "Advanced Search," uncheck the bolded "All Features" and "All Publications," then check "National Journal" and put in the date parameters, 01-01-99 to 12-31-00.

   b. Put in your key words (the search feature has an "and" "or" option) and "Submit Search"

   c. If your search produces more than 50 relevant hits you may have to perform a random search (ask about whether you need to do this and how it's done).

   d. Save in Research Status the **Source** being National Journal.

SEARCHING THE VANDERBILT TELEVISION NEWS ARCHIVES

This search involves collecting abstracts of issue-related stories that appeared on the network television early evening news. You will be saving only excerpts of news stories – the full text of these stories is not available.

Unlike some of the other searches you have done, your keyword (as entered) may not appear in the story abstract. The search engine looks for words associated with the full story even though we only see the abstract. As always, save any story that is relevant to your issue. However, never save commercials. Commercials may appear on your list of hits when upcoming stories that are linked to your keyword are mentioned during the commercial.

<u>Search Steps</u>

1. Go to http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/. Select the option for *Evening News Abstracts*. Choose the search option that allows you to *Search the Abstracts*.

2. Before you begin the search, check out *How to Search the Databases*. This brief "how to" will clarify how the search engine processes the keywords you enter. The use of AND, OR, and * may help you specify your search. Do not, however, use capital letters when you search – the search engine treats them differently and the site warns that results are unpredictable when capital letters are used.

3. Return to *Search the abstracts by year or keyword*. Check 1999 and 2000 in the grid of years and set the maximum results to 200. This gives you a maximum of 100 hits per year. Finally, enter your keyword in the search phrase box.

   a. If you find the complete set of your keywords <u>together</u> return more than 50 relevant hits – that is, more than 50 items you would save – you will need to draw a random sample.

4. When you find an abstract for an issue-related story you will save the abstract in the **TV_ News folder** for your case. Name the abstract by the network source and the date. So an abstract for a story that appeared on NBC on June 9th, 2000 would be saved as NBC_060900.

5. Finally you will need to fill in Research Status, the **Source** being Vanderbilt TV News Archive.

SEARCHING FOR CONGRESSIONAL HEARING INFORMATION

This task involves collecting two types of information about issue-related congressional hearings: (1) abstracts of the hearings, and (2) testimony presented at the hearings or submitted to the hearing records (including opening statements from committee chairs and ranking members and question and answer sessions that take place during the hearing).

Do not save documents other than those mentioned above. You will need to be attentive to what you save because Lexis-Nexis is not. For example, even when you search for testimony specifically, Lexis-Nexis sometimes retrieves records of media events and press conferences.

Search Steps

You will need to create two folders in your Congressional_Hearings folder. The first should be called Abstracts and the second Testimony.

Congressional Hearing Abstracts

1. Access Lexis-Nexis through the Databases portion of the library's web site. Select *Congressional Universe, CIS Index*, and then *Subject*.

2. The *Search by Subject* page will appear and offer you up to three lines to enter your search keywords. (Look at *Completing the Form* on this page to determine how best to use AND, OR, or other operators.) Enter your keywords.

3. Enter the appropriate dates for the search (1/1/99 and 12/31/00) and leave the default *all words in summary* as the search option. Finally, click on the *Search* key.

4. When the list of items located appears, hearings will be noted separately from the other documents turned up. These are the hearing abstracts of interest. Look at the hearing abstracts listed and when you find an abstract for an issue-related hearing you will save the abstract in the **Abstracts folder**.

Name the hearing abstract using abbreviations for the chamber and the committee, and then list the date. So an abstract for a hearing held by the Senate Committee on Health, Environment, Labor and Pensions on June 9th, 2000 would be saved as S_HELP_060900. If a subcommittee is involved in holding the hearing, add their name to the file name. For example, if the House Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee on Agriculture held a hearing on February 20, 1999, the abstract for that hearing would be saved as H_WM_Ag_022099.

5. Finally you will need to fill in Research Status the **Source** being CIS Index

Congressional Hearing Testimony

1. Access Lexis-Nexis through the Databases portion of the library's web site. Select *Congressional Universe*, and then *Testimony*.

2. The *Search testimony from congressional hearings* page will appear and offer you a single line to enter your search keywords. (As mentioned above, be sure to look at *Completing the Form, Enter Keyword(s)* on this page to determine how best to use AND, OR, or other operators.) Enter your keywords. Leave blank both the *and given by this witness* and *limit the search to testimony given before* sections.

3. Enter the appropriate dates for the search (1/1/99 and 12/31/00). Finally, click on the *Search* key.

4. You will need to look closely at the list of items that are located with your keywords and save only relevant testimony (not transcripts of media events, etc.). *You should save any testimony that is relevant to your issue even if the hearing is not held specifically to discuss your issue.* For example, the possibility of repealing the estate tax came up during the hearings for Lawrence Summers' nomination to serve as Treasury Secretary. Testimony given at the Summers' nomination would be saved for the estate tax issue as would testimony that was given at hearings specifically on the estate tax.

Another reason to look closely at the list of items that appear is that some items may be duplicates even for a search with a single keyword. This happens because Lexis-Nexis relies on more than one source for information. Save only one copy of each piece of testimony. But do recognize that the same individual may testify at more than one hearing – in this case, you save the testimony from each appearance even if it seems redundant.

When you find a piece of testimony that is related to your issue you will save it in the **Testimony folder.** Name the testimony using abbreviations for the chamber and the committee and subcommittee, and then list the name of the individual who gave the testimony and the date. Testimony given by Giovanni Coratolo before the House Committee on Small Business subcommittee on Government Programs and Oversight on September 28th, 2000 would be saved as H_SmBus_GovtProg_092800. Opening statements made by committee or subcommittee chairs and ranking members can be saved similarly but you can add et al to indicate more than one individual is speaking (if that's necessary). For example, the opening remarks made by Senator Grassley and others at the opening of hearings held by the Senate Committee on Aging on September 5th, 2000 would be saved as S_Aging_Grassley_etal_090500.

5. Finally you will need to fill in Research Status the **Source** being Congressional Universe, Testimony

Special Circumstances
1) It is unlikely that there will be anywhere near 50 hearings in a given congressional session on a single issue. *If your set of keywords together* return more than 50 relevant hearings (hearings that really pertain to your issue), ask about how to proceed. Don't save any of the hearings until we talk about how to proceed.
2) Congressional testimony may be more numerous. *If you find the complete set of your keywords together return more than 50 relevant hits – that is, more than 50 items you would save – you may need to draw a random sample of the testimony, opening remarks, etc.* Ask about how to proceed if you find 50 relevant hits.