Selected Resources for U.S. Economic Indicators

by Rachel Walker
Research Librarian for Business

Economic indicators are characteristics of an economy that economists use to determine the health of the economy. Indicators are used to measure inflation, set interest rates, view growth rate deviations, job growth and overall consumer confidence and spending. The Ryan-Matura library has put together a list of selected resources that will be helpful in interpreting and better understanding the impact of these indicators on our nation's economy.

General Reference Resources

Handbook of U.S. labor statistics; employment, earnings, prices, productivity and other labor data
Current and historical data on U.S. employment, earnings, prices, productivity, living conditions and related topics.
Location: Ref. HD 8051 .H36 2008

Guide to Economic Indicators
This resource offers explanations of over 60 macroeconomic statistical indicators gathered mostly by the US government. Includes such items as the average weekly earnings and the value of the dollar.
Location: Ref. HC 103 .F9 2006

Guide to Economic Indicators: making sense of economics
Guide that interprets economic indicators relating to GDP and GNI (GDP); growth, trends, and cycles; population and employment; government; consumers; investment and savings; industry and commerce; balance of payments; exchange rates; and money and financial markets.
Location: Ref. HA 29 .E28 2007

Data & Statistics

Business Statistics of the United States
A comprehensive and practical collection of data relevant to the nation's economic performance since World War II. It provides up to 77 years of annual data in regional, demographic and industrial detail for key indicators such as gross domestic product, personal income, spending, saving, employment, unemployment, the capital stock, and more.
Location: Ref. HA 3001 .B875 2008

Statistical Abstract of the United States
Tables cover specific indicators such as employment, income, saving, poverty, construction, housing, consumer price indexes, and others. A well indexed, comprehensive collection of statistics in tabular format. Includes basic statistics for a wide range of economic indicators. The index leads to specific table numbers. Each table lists the source of the statistics for further reference.
Location: Ref. HA 202 .S7 2009

Current Employment Statistics
http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm
The Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey of payroll records covers over 300,000 businesses on a monthly basis and provides detailed industry data on employment, hours, and earnings of workers on nonfarm payrolls for the Nation.

Demographic Data

Distribution of Income http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/incomestats.html
Labor/Employment Distribution of Wealth (Survey of Consumer Finances)
Poverty

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http://library.sacredheart.edu/
Word from the Stacks...

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Rachel Walker, MBA, MLIS joined the library as Research Librarian for Business in November 2007.
Word From the Stacks Crossword Puzzle: 
Women’s History

ACROSS
1. Title VII of this Act bans discrimination in employment on the basis of sex and race.
6. The first American woman to be pictured on a coin.
8. The first woman nominated to run for President of the United States.
10. The first female Supreme Court justice.
12. She opened the first birth control clinic and later founded the American Birth Control League.
13. A co-founder of Hull House in Chicago and winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace.
18. She was appointed the chairwoman of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women in 1963.
19. Founder and original editor of Ms. magazine.
20. She beat Bobby Riggs in the “Battle of the Sexes” tennis match.

DOWN
2. His painting “Rosie the Riveter” paid tribute to women who took men’s jobs during WWII.
3. The first female astronaut in space.
4. The 19th amendment gave women the right to do this.
5. She refused to move to the back of the bus.
7. Famous for her “Ain’t I Woman?” speech at the Ohio Woman’s Rights Convention.
9. The first women’s rights conference was held in this town.
11. The first African-American woman to serve in the U.S. Congress.
14. This U.S. territory was the first to allow women to vote.
15. The Rockford Peaches played this professional sport.
16. She wrote “The Feminine Mystique”.
17. The first woman elected to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

This issue’s puzzle was created by Kim Macomber. 
For the solution to the SHU Trivia puzzle from the last issue of the newsletter turn to page 7.
The current international economic troubles harken back to the Great Depression (1929—ca. 1939) in many ways. The reassuring presence and political savvy of an unflappable new President (then: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in office 1933-1945) ushered in an era of experimentation with government that sought national recovery through a variety of means, such as the WPA (Works Progress Administration), including projects for writers and photographers.

Many Depression-era documents eventually found their way to the Library of Congress, which in the last two decades has created the sprawling American Memory project. Its goal is to make available all kinds of American historical and cultural resources free to everyone on the Web. The Library has organized American Memory into "collections," several of which give a vivid and enduring image of America in the Great Depression. Four of these in particular are worth looking at.

Color and black-and-white photographs fill America from the Great Depression to World War II: Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1935-1945 (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html). The Farm Security Administration sent photographers to record rural and agricultural life during the nadir of the 1930s. This work was continued by the Office of War Information Collection after 1941. The photographs are organized by geographic location, creator, and subjects. Two frequently-requested collections are the "Migrant Mother Photographs" (http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/128_migm.html) by Dorothea Lange, and "Photographs of Signs Enforcing Racial Discrimination" (http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/085_disc.html) by various photographers.

Voices of the Dust Bowl publishes the work of Charles Todd and Robert Sonkin, two New Yorkers from City College who took equipment to migrant camps in central California in 1940 and 1941. The web site (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aftcsthtml/tshome.html) publishes this multi-format ethnographic field collection of song texts, audio files, photographs, and interviews of performers and other Dust Bowl Refugees, and brings to life this era and natural disaster in startling detail.

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project 1936-1940 (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintr/wpahome.html) publishes accounts of the lives of ordinary people taken down by otherwise unemployed writers working for the WPA Writers' Project (a project which nurtured numerous young American writers during their vulnerable early years). This is a textual site, which preserves both images of the manuscript pages and transcribes numerous life accounts for easier reading.

Finally By the People: For the People: Posters from the WPA 1936-1940 (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpa/posters/wpahome.html) displays images of numerous posters created by WPA artists to publicize arts events and make public service announcements, many silk-screened or lithographed. This aspect of the WPA became the first significant Federal support for the arts, a sort of forerunner of the National Endowment for the Arts—and the posters provided a workshop for numerous designers and graphic artists to develop their skills and trade in impossible economic times.

Gavin Ferriby, Ph. D. joined the Library as Assistant University Librarian in June 2006. By training both a historian and a librarian, he lives in Hamden with his family, enjoys Korean food and rows on the Housatonic River with the New Haven Rowing Club. Dr. Ferriby became Interim University Librarian in February 2009.
Higher Education is changing. According to Julian Keniry, of the National Wildlife Federation, by December 2008, over six hundred college and university presidents had committed to achieve climate neutrality by the year 2050.1 According to Anthony Cortese, Co-Director of the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, implementing this commitment involves reducing and eventually neutralizing greenhouse gas emissions, and accelerating research and educational efforts to equip society to do the same.2 Cortese insists that Higher Education has a critical role in providing the vision and setting the example for what needs to be done.3 He states that leading society to a low carbon economy fits “squarely into the educational, research, and public service missions of higher education.”4

Many colleges and universities have already taken action. Maine’s College of the Atlantic achieved carbon neutrality on December 18, 20075 and now powers its campus primarily on hydro-power.6 The University of New Hampshire is converting its campus to run on landfill gas.7 Minnesota’s Carleton College generates about 40 percent of its power from a wind turbine.8 Butte College, a two-year community college in Oroville, California, uses solar panels to generate about 28% percent of its electricity and plans to expand that to meet all campus electricity needs.9

Connecticut’s Sacred Heart University envisions a future in which the use of “environmentally sustainable designs and construction techniques” will be “important priorities for ongoing campus improvements.”10 Sacred Heart is thinking about putting “green roofing” on buildings to slow water drainage and to provide additional “insulation to take the load off heating and cooling systems, and about “increasing the number of trees and grassy areas around parking areas” to “decrease the heat radiance from existing black-top.”11 During the Fall 2008 semester Sacred Heart renovated a student lounge, installing “thermo pane windows,” new air conditioning and heating units with “state-of-the-art controls for maximum efficiency and energy conservation,” and the “most energy efficient bulbs” for lighting.12

Imagine the future. Imagine a university where the entire campus exemplifies the design philosophy of the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies at Oberlin College. The grounds, the buildings, and the facilities would all be part of the curriculum, part of the education of students and the community, promoting “the practical skills and analytic abilities necessary to reweave the human presence in the world.”13

Notes
3Cortese, 4.
4Cortese, 5.
7Rockler-Gladen.
8Rockler-Gladen.
9Keniry.
11Carrier.
12Carrier.
14Sacred Heart University. SHU Master Plan: Envisioning our Future. GOING GREEN. http://www.sacredheart.edu/pages/18932_going_green.cfm
15Sacred Heart University. SHU Master Plan: Envisioning our Future.

Grant Walker, Ph. D. is an Associate Professor of Sociology who has been at Sacred Heart University since 1973. He teaches a course called “Society and the Environment” and has served as a leader of the Sacred Heart University Campus Ecology Team and as Faculty Advisor to the students of the Society and Environment Club.
The presidential inaugural trip was an experience that included a lecture on the 2008 presidential election, a guided tour of national monuments, free time for independent exploration, the swearing-in ceremony of the vice-president and president, and the inaugural parade. As in the past, trip participants were lodged at the Quality Inn Governor in Falls Church, Virginia, which is approximately 30 minutes outside of DC. The crowd for the 2009 inauguration was estimated to be over 2 million people. Of that number, only 240,000 people were allotted tickets. Ticket holders had access to the lawn on the west side of the Capitol, which is where the inaugural ceremony was conducted. Those persons without tickets stood in the mall area and observed the ceremony from afar. Fortunately however, Jumbotron were located throughout the area so that attendees could observe and feel a part of the ceremony. The audience extended to the Lincoln Monument! Fifty tickets were secured by Dr. Rose for previous inaugural ceremonies. For this trip, however, inaugural tickets were not a possibility. Congression and Senate offices, rather than distribute tickets to groups, as they have done in the past, distributed tickets by way of a lottery. Students nevertheless witnessed the inaugural ceremony and experienced all aspects of this most historic event.

Every inaugural trip is unique and provides memories that last a lifetime. Regardless of whether or not students agree with the new president’s position on foreign and domestic policies, or whether or not they voted for the newly inaugurated president, everyone who experiences a presidential inauguration leaves the nation’s capital with a feeling that they have been a part of a very rich and uniquely American experience. When Barack Obama was inaugurated as our nation’s forty-fourth president, students observed a peaceful transfer of power from one political party to the next. In many countries around the globe, the transfer of political power is accomplished not through civil elections or an inaugural ceremony, but instead through revolution or a coup d’etat. The peaceful transfer of power from one party to another is a tradition which began with the election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800. This tradition has continued unabated in American politics for more than 200 years. It is a tradition that should never be taken for granted and one which underscores the beauty and magnificence of the American Constitution. President Obama assumes the American presidency at a time of great peril. The American economy is in recession, unemployment is rising, the banking industry is in a state of collapse, our nation’s health care system is in crisis, and roads, buildings and bridges are in desperate need of repair. At the same time, a stateless enemy lurks in the shadows determined to inflict great harm on the American people and the American way of life. Moreover, expectations for President Obama are extremely high and the American people are demanding change. Whether or not our forty-fourth president can deliver on his campaign promises remains to be seen; history suggests that change never comes easy in American politics. President Obama’s ability to effectuate change will determine how this presidency will ultimately be judged.
Spring Hours & Numbers

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For more information, please call:
Reference desk: x7726 (203-371-7726)
Circulation desk: x7702 (203-371-7702)

For a list of special hours please visit our website at
http://www.sacredheart.edu/pages/232_ryan_matura_library.cfm

Cambridge Branch Hours & Numbers

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For more information, please call:
Cambridge desk: x4872 (203-365-4872)

Last Issue’s Crossword Puzzle Solution


Need to Know!!!

Do your students have problems finding the resources necessary to produce a well-written and researched paper?
Do you have a personal research need that could use the touch of an information professional?
Do you wish you knew just a little bit more about how to navigate resources on the web or in the library?
The Reference Desk at the Ryan-Matura Library stands at the ready to assist you and your students with any of your research needs. Call us at (203) 371-7726 or email us at reference@sacredheart.edu

Editorial Policy

Submission of articles or opinion letters:
All submissions of articles or opinion letters must be sent to the editor via e-mail at francol@sacredheart.edu for publishing consideration. Submissions must be received by deadline date to be considered for upcoming publication. Space availability will be considered when deciding whether to incorporate an article. Byline of the author submitting article or opinion letter will be published. Submissions without bylines will not be published. Any submissions by a group or a committee must have all the members’ names on the piece.

Content:
Submitted articles can deal with any number of issues either controversial or not. The editor reserves the right to deem an article inappropriate for publication, if it is used for personal attacks or complaints. The editor also reserves the right to edit either the style or length of any submitted article.
Robert Ellsberg
The Ryan-Matura Library, the College of Arts & Sciences, the Department of Religious Studies, and the Center for Catholic Thought, Ethics and Culture (CCTEC) will be co-sponsoring a discussion/book signing event on March 19, 2009 at 7:00pm in the University Commons. The guest speaker will be Robert Ellsberg.

Biography:
Robert Ellsberg is the publisher and editor in chief at Orbis Books, a division of Maryknoll. He became a Catholic in 1980, largely through the influence of Dorothy Day, while he was living at the Catholic Worker House in lower Manhattan. After studying theology at Harvard Divinity School he joined Orbis as editor in chief in 1987. He is married, has three children, and lives in Ossining, New York. He is the author of three books on saints, All Saints, The Saint’s Guide to Happiness and Blessed Among All Women. He has also edited the diaries (1934-1980) of Catholic Worker founder Dorothy Day and now is working on a collection of Day’s letters.

Judith Barr
The Ryan-Matura Library and The Center for Financial Education will be hosting Judith Barr, M.S. for a discussion/book signing event on April 15, 2009 at 2:00pm in the Library.

Biography:
Judith Barr has been a depth psychotherapist in private practice since 1975, now practices in Brookfield, CT, and has earned an M.S. in Counseling and licensure as a Mental Health Counselor in Florida, New York, and Connecticut. She is also a Financial Services Affiliate of NAPFA. She has published a book, Power Abused, Power Healed, as well as an audio series, The Spoken Word on Behalf of the Feminine.

Judith offers her healing expertise in an array of formats, including working with individuals, groups, workshops, and consultations. In addition to this she offers training and supervision programs for healing arts professionals. Through her numerous speaking engagements, and radio, TV and print interviews, Judith touches lives, teaching and inspiring us to live from the inside-out.

Please contact Renata Cioffi at 203-371-7700 or via email at cioffim@sacredheart.edu to reserve a space or for further information. Copies of the book will be available for purchase at the SHU Bookstore in March.

Mr. Ellsberg will be discussing Dorothy Day’s work and his experiences working with her during his visit at Sacred Heart University.

Please contact Renata Cioffi at 203-371-7700 or via email at cioffim@sacredheart.edu to reserve a space or for further information. Copies of the book will be available for purchase at the SHU Bookstore at the end of February.