LIBRARY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ALMANAC  An updated collection of facts and data, either general in nature or for a specific subject.

ANNUAL  Updates information in a specific subject area or for a particular encyclopedia.

ATLAS  A visual resource that will include many maps and or diagrams. These are mostly geographical but may sometimes be graphic depictions of specific subject content, such as an atlas of anatomy.

BOOK  A handy, portable printed information storage device not requiring mediating technology for use.

DICTIONARY  Provides word or term definitions and correct grammatical usage. Dictionaries may be either general or subject specific.

DIRECTORY  A list of persons or organizations, systematically arranged, giving addresses, affiliations, etc., for individuals, and address, officers, functions, and similar data for organizations.

ENCYCLOPEDIA  A general information resource that provides articles on various branches of knowledge. Encyclopedias may be general or subject-specific.

GAZETTEER  Geographical dictionary of place names and features.

HANDBOOK/MANUAL  A general information source which provides quick reference for a given subject area. Handbooks may be general or subject-specific.

MONOGRAPH  A non-serial work complete in one part or set, usually on a narrowly defined single topic.

PAMPHLET  A short essay or treatise on a specific topic in unbound form.

STATISTICAL ABSTRACTS  are compilations of statistics for geographical and/or political entities.

SERIALS  are published at regular or irregular intervals. Not more than twice a year and intended to continue indefinitely.

PERIODICALS  are published at regular intervals (at least 3 times a year) and intended to be continued indefinitely.

MAGAZINES  contain popular articles that are usually short. Information is of an introductory or survey nature and is generally accompanied by many photographs and illustrations.
JOURNALS are frequently published by academic or association presses. Scholarly journals focus on empirical research that has been reviewed (refereed) by a committee of peers. Professional journals contain news or materials of current interest/application in a particular field of study.

PRIMARY SOURCES The original research or writings on a subject. Examples would include technical reports, empirical research results, conference literature and theses.

SECONDARY SOURCES Works that are not original manuscripts, records or documents associated with an event or endeavor, but which critique, comment on, or build upon these primary sources.