Constitutional Research
Constitutional Research
• Constitutions (federal and state):
  – Establish form and limitations of the government.
  – Interpretation of the text.
  – Mandatory authority within that jurisdiction
Finding Constitutions

• Are usually published in the same set as the statutes

• Most common source for researching constitutions is the annotated codes

• There are also compilations of state and federal constitutions
U.S. Constitution

• Entered into force in 1789 and amended 27 times
• Interpretation by the courts is very important
U.S. Constitution

- Constitution of the United States of America Analysis and Interpretation (every 10 years)
- U.S. Code – 1st volume (text only)
- U.S.C.A. – first 10 volumes (text and annotations)
- U.S.C.A. – 7 volumes at the end (text and annotations)
State Constitutions

• Each state has its own constitution
• As with federal constitution, interpretation by courts is very important
Finding State Constitutions

• Starting point for research
  – State constitutional law sources
  – Annotated code for that state
  – Text only also in unannotated codes
State Constitutions

• Reference Guides to the State Constitutions of the US

• State Constitutional Conventions – material from the conventions helps courts interpret what authors of the constitution had in mind.