Missouri Documents Reclassification

A Challenge

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The Missouri State University (MSU) Library has been a government documents depository for several decades; the library has been collecting federal documents since 1963, Missouri documents since the state depository began in 1977, and UN documents since 2000. Although there was no official program for Missouri government publications until 1977, previous government documents librarians collected a large number of the documents produced by the state of Missouri. Some were in the catalog, but some were not. Those older documents in the catalog were given Library of Congress (LC) classification numbers. After the Missouri government began the official program, the librarians at the Missouri State Library developed a Missouri documents classification (MO DOC) system based on the Superintendent of Documents classification (SU DOC). The shipments from the Missouri State Library came in boxes with shipping lists, very much like the ones issued by the Government Publishing Office (GPO). The Government Documents faculty and staff then were able to do more processing within the department, using the class numbers provided on the shipping list. This meant the documents could not be interfiled with the older documents with LC call numbers, so a second Missouri documents collection was created. The documents cataloged in Missouri documents classification were labeled "MO DOC," and those cataloged in LC were labeled "DOC MO." We continued to catalog selected materials, especially the serials, in LC classification, while most of the monographs and new serials published after the program began were classified in MO DOCS. The catalog, however, only reflected that the items were in the Missouri documents section, not whether they were in the LC section or the MO DOC section. This created a challenge for processing, shelving, and finding documents. Because of this lack of differentiation, patrons often found it difficult and confusing to locate specific documents. To overcome this issue, staff had to be aware that they needed to look at the call number to determine whether an item was in the LC part or the MO DOCS part of the collection. Since this caused a lot of confusion and increased the time required by staff to support patrons when searching, it was determined that both collections should be merged under one class scheme.

During the 2004 academic year, the Government Documents and Cataloging faculty at MSU Libraries created a plan to merge the collections into one class scheme. Prior to beginning the reclassification project, an initial decision was made to convert the LC entries into MO DOCS. Since converting documents to LC would have required reclassifying all the documents, as well as any future documents, it was decided that the Government Documents Department would do much more of the work, reclassifying the LC documents into MO DOCS. This would be an easier task since the MO DOC numbers for the new items were included on the shipping lists. However, approximately six months after the MSU faculty began the project, the Missouri State Library announced that all of Missouri's public documents would be created and distributed in electronic format only. This meant that there would no longer be hard copies available to depository libraries, except when items were sent directly from the agency.

This decision drastically changed the dynamics of the reclassification plan. Student workers would no longer be processing documents from shipping lists, nullifying the benefits of converting older document to the MO DOC classification scheme. Additionally, students who already used the main book collection would be more familiar with LC subject arrangement and, thus, would have an easier time finding documents. Because of these issues, the Government Documents and Cataloging staff once again met to discuss the best approach for moving forward in merging the classification schemes. Since the project

Figure 1. An example of a MO DOC call number label written as a new or replacement label for a document contained in MSU's Missouri documents collection.

had already started, it was decided to continue reclassifying the documents in MO DOCS. If LC had been chosen, the primary responsibility for cataloging the government documents would still have shifted primarily to cataloging staff and faculty, thus increasing their workload. Instead, if the reclassification continued with MO DOCS, the Documents Librarian would feel comfortable assigning the class numbers. Ultimately, it was decided to continue going to MO DOCS.

Once a final reclassification plan was agreed upon, the next question was how to make the necessary label changes in the neatest, most expedient way possible. Labels were used to change and block out existing call numbers. MO DOCS call numbers were written on 3 ½ x 7/16" rectangular labels (figure 1). These labels were placed in the upper left-hand corner of the document. Documents originally cataloged using the LC system had classification numbers located on the lower front of the book or the spine. These numbers were covered with a wider label and sometimes the new MO DOCS call number was written on this label. All labels were taped down using clear book tape to keep them secure. Relabeling was completed by student workers in the Government Documents Department, which later merged with the Reference Department to become the Reference and Government Information Department. The decision was made to work in an alphabetical and numerical order by agency, meaning the process would begin with documents from the Missouri Department of Agriculture. It was also determined that moving the most popular serials with long runs would expedite the process by allowing larger chunks to be done quicker. Many serials titles already had call numbers assigned by the Missouri State Library and were in the MSU catalog. Since they already existed in the MSU catalog, these serials only needed to be located, relabeled, and have their LC call number changed to MO DOC in the online catalog. This could be accomplished without the need for the documents to go through the Cataloging Department.

A plan was developed to maximize efficiency, reduce handling, and minimize the shifting of documents. Fortunately, several empty shelves were located along the back side of the last range of the Missouri documents. All documents beginning with call numbers after "A" were shifted backwards into these empty ranges. Once shifted, the new open spaces were used

to begin the work of reclassifying the Missouri Department of Agriculture documents and the more popular journals, the latest issues of which were kept on a magazine rack. This allowed for the rapid identification of major journal titles and their MO DOC numbers. Once the MO DOC number for each item was noted, each title was pulled and relabeled with a new MO DOCS number, the catalog records were edited, and then the items were re-shelved.

Once the larger serials and popular magazines and journals were completed, we began planning to develop the best way to manage monographs. The MSU Libraries used Innovative Interface's Millennium and then later Sierra as its cataloging software, which allows staff to quickly and easily create lists. Because it had previously been determined that reclassification would be done alphabetically by Missouri agency name, the first agency to be reclassified in the monographs was the Missouri Department of Agriculture. The Government Documents Librarian conducted a search by author for the Missouri Department of Agriculture. When the list was returned, the items from the Missouri Documents collection with LC call numbers were selected and a list was printed. Working from this list, the student workers pulled the documents from the LC collection and brought them to the librarian to be reclassified. This procedure continued alphabetically through the list of Missouri agencies. Two tools that proved invaluable in this process were:

> Missouri State Library, *Depository Library Handbook: State Publications Depository Library System* (Jefferson City, MO, January 1996).
> Missouri State Library, *Missouri List of Classes* (Jefferson City, MO, 2002)

These manuals allowed the Government Documents Librarian to rapidly search and build lists of all Missouri governmental agencies. The *Depository Library Handbook* was used to review all policies and to ensure all requirements were being met. The *Missouri List of Classes* was used as an alphabetical list of all Missouri governmental agencies both past and present, including their changes in administration. This process worked well with documents that were already cataloged. However, after completing those documents, any remaining items in LC had to be processed individually, shelf by shelf.

Items often had to be processed as time permitted because there were several times during the project that other duties took priority. Also, over the period of time required to complete the project, catalogers and student workers changed and retraining had to be done.

Additional problems occurred throughout the process. These problems included: items with barcodes which were not attached to a record in the catalog, documents with a barcode that did not have a matching item record, and items that were missing and could not be located. The items in the collection with no record in the catalog were taken to catalogers for copy or original cataloging. In order to keep track of the items as they progressed through each step of the process, the Government Documents Librarian maintained a spreadsheet that noted the call number, title, and barcode of each item. The Government Documents Librarian could look at this list and tell if an item was being cataloged, was being labeled, or had been completed and re-shelved.

MSU Libraries accepted an offer from the University of Missouri's Ellis Library to include this project in a grant request, which was awarded in 2014. This provided funds for completing the reclassification, relabeling, and inventory of the Missouri government documents collection. Monies in the grant allowed for the hiring of a part-time cataloger whose sole responsibility was to catalog and inventory documents specifically for this project. The Documents Librarian continued to assign call numbers, while student workers continued to do the relabeling and shelving. The grant period was from June 2014 to June 2015, with an extension awarded through October 31, 2015. As a result of the work of the contracted cataloger, the reclassification of items was completed between September 2014 and January 2015. Beginning in January 2015, a shelf-by-shelf inventory was started.

Concurrent with the inventory that was initiated in January 2015, a space study of MSU Meyer Library was done, and it was determined that the Missouri documents collection would be moved to a different location in the building. Even as the cataloger was conducting the inventory, the Missouri documents collection was being moved. Finally, all Missouri government documents were moved to the new area with the last document being moved and re-shelved on March 10, 2015.

The final project was completed in October 2015 and compared items with the MO DOC location code with a LC classification number in the item and/or check-in records. A search on the general collection shelves was conducted to determine if these items were misshelved or were no longer a part of the government documents collection. These items were again checked in OCLC for holdings. Items found with no holdings in OCLC were added. Items that were no longer in the collection but still had holdings were deleted from the online catalog, as were holdings from OCLC.

There were a total of 15,822 items in the Missouri State University Missouri documents collection, and each item was checked in the MSU online catalog, MOBIUS (a consortium catalog), and OCLC. Of the 15,822 documents on file, 7,847 needed copy cataloging and 937 needed original cataloging. The remaining were already in the catalog and needed only updates to RDA rules or changes in MARC for RDA. Holdings were added to OCLC as needed.

Through prior work and the cooperative grant between Missouri State University and the University of Missouri, which lasted from September 2014 through October 2015, a complete reclassification and inventory of the MSU Missouri documents collection was completed. As a result of this reclassification project, the MSU Missouri documents collection is completely migrated to one cataloging arrangement and has been completely vetted to ensure accuracy in content. Additionally, all items are now in the online catalog and have been checked in OCLC to ensure only current holdings are listed. The result of this project is a more concise, easily accessible system for all MSU Meyer Library patrons, as well as the users from other MOBIUS consortium members and interlibrary loan.

Acknowledgments

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