

Original Cataloging Working Group Final Report

CUL Original Cataloging Working Group
Phase 1 Report
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Background information:

[Cornell's draft and notes for Phase 1 report](#)

[Columbia's draft and notes for Phase 1 report](#)

1. Summary of original cataloging staff and expertise at both Columbia and Cornell, including a comparison of current job assignments

- Summary of staffing in terms of approximate FTE:** Columbia has about 15.2 people who form the core of the original catalogers (10 in OSMC, 2.70 in the East Asian Library, 2.50 in MPS) as well as other staff who do some cataloging (some cataloging in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library as well as at Barnard and the Health Sciences Library; these are not part of 2CUL). Not all of them catalog full time.** Cornell has about 13 people who form the core of the original catalogers. Not all of them catalog full time.
- Cornell has more split and part-time cataloging assignments
- Many catalogers at both institutions have responsibilities that take precedence over some or all of their cataloging. For example, Alex Thurman works on the web archiving program and Teresa Mei helps scholars with reference questions.
- Columbia has a separate East Asian Library with its own technical services unit
- Both institutions catalog a wide variety of formats
- Both institutions have given NACO training to all original catalogers. Cornell catalogers do less NACO work than Columbia catalogers because of Cornell's greater use of non-PCC full, E/Lev 3 or 7 records.
- In both institutions the non-MARC catalogers are in the original cataloging units; their work will be covered by a separate 2CUL working group
- At both institutions Law cataloging is outside the 2CUL framework
- Both institutions have limited coverage of a number of languages including Hebrew, Armenian and South Asian languages
- Cornell makes greater use of student help; Columbia sometimes uses library school interns
- Columbia uses pairing of librarians with bibliographic assistants for special materials, such as for music, rare books, serials and metadata
- Columbia has made greater use of grant-funded positions for special projects (for example, a recent project to catalog Hebrew manuscripts)
- Columbia original catalogers do some quality control of vendor records before loading; At Cornell, vendor records are massaged by the Acquisitions Unit, with catalogers consulted as needed.

2. Summary of reporting and decision-making structures at both institutions

- At Columbia, OSMC librarians report to the Director, Original and Special Materials Cataloging. OSMC support staff report to one of the OSMC librarians. MPS librarians report to the Director, Monographic Processing Services. MPS support staff report to one of the MPS librarians. EAL librarians report to the Head, Technical Services, Starr East Asian Library. EAL support staff report to one of the EAL librarians. The cataloging department heads ("Catheads") meet regularly to discuss and finalize policies and priorities. Some topics also go up to Management Committee. The Law Library and The Augustus Long Health Sciences Library are administratively separate. [Org charts available here.](#)
- Cornell's cataloging operations are spread across the three Library Technical Services (LTS) departments, as shown in the [organization chart](#). In practice, staff in the three departments work closely together at all levels; high-level decisions that cross departmental boundaries are made by the Senior Management Team consisting of the Director of LTS, the three departmental directors, and the Electronic Resources User Experience Librarian.
- Cornell's original catalogers are in the Cataloging and Metadata Services department. The five catalogers on academic appointments report directly to the director of CMS, as does the Administrative Supervisor, who is responsible in turn for supervising the remaining nine original catalogers. The Law Library's technical services department is independent of LTS but has a close working relationship with it.
- At both institutions, individual staff may receive functional training and direction for specific duties from people other than their designated supervisors. Generally speaking, the relationship between academic librarians and support staff is looser at Cornell than at Columbia. Institutional factors (e.g. unionization at Columbia) can influence reporting lines and allocation of duties.

3. Summary of policies, practices and workflows involving original cataloging at both institutions including which department is responsible for which activities; summary of significant similarities and differences

- At Cornell most original cataloging is done in the Cataloging and Metadata Services Department; at Columbia most original cataloging is done in OSMC, MPS and EAL
- Both institutions maintain online documentation as well as wikis and other documents (Examples: Cornell's [Cataloging & Metadata procedures](#) and Columbia's [Cataloging Practices Manual](#))
- Catalogers at both institutions have autonomy in deciding what level of cataloging to give a particular item. Cornell has had a No Backlog policy since 1997. This leads to a wide use of level 3 and 7 records as well as various fast-track and other routines. Based on the [Strategic plan](#), Columbia has an emphasis on cataloging global, rare and unique items as well as materials from distinctive collections (Avery, RBML and EAL). PCC is the default cataloging level for most formats at Columbia. Columbia tends to use briefer and access-level records for free online resources and items in languages the catalogers cannot handle well. (See [Guidelines for access-level records](#))

- Columbia includes non-Latin fields where possible in bibliographic and authority records
- Cornell's Batch Processing and Metadata Management Unit takes care of authority file loads and maintenance; Columbia uses LTI and the loading is handled by the Library Information Technology Office
- Both institutions have outsourced some original cataloging to vendors; Columbia has shelf-ready books with YBP and Cornell with University of Hong Kong Library.
- Both institutions have some local classification schemes
- Columbia generally includes an 050 class number in the bib record even if not needed for shelving, such as for online resources and microforms
- Cornell generally catalogs in their local Voyager system; Columbia generally catalogs in OCLC
- Columbia emphasizes authority work for NACO including names, corporate bodies, conferences, series, geographics and author cutter proposals; Columbia recodes NACO records to RDA on encounter including adding all available elements
- Both institutions use 948 for statistics gathering; both use local fields to identify aggregations and special projects
- Catalogers at both institutions are involved with training and documentation
- At both institutions some catalogers are involved with the PCC and other professional activities; professional involvement is a factor in promotion and performance review

4. Summary of dependencies and limitations inherent in working with other units

Collection-related dependencies

Collection priorities have a large bearing on the specific demands made on original cataloging and on the policies adopted to address them.

- Columbia has a heavy commitment to cataloging rare and unique items, global materials, gifts and other special collections. Some collections are managed as distinct projects, while others are absorbed into the department's regular work. Cleanup work on existing holdings, e.g. cataloging for offsite transfers, are also a major part of OSMC's work.
- Although uncataloged items in Cornell's Rare and Manuscript Collections (RMC) are not considered part of the normal backlog, their extent is also considerable.
- In some areas collaborative collection development with an emphasis on unique materials is leading to an increased original cataloging workload.
- Digital projects can also have an impact on cataloging workload. The Human Rights Web Archive Portal at Columbia is one example using locally created MARC records outside the library catalog; but non-MARC projects also make demands on staff time.

System-related dependencies

In the current Voyager ILS environment, both institutions rely heavily on automated processes closely tailored to local workflows in areas such as:

- Authority control
- OCLC exports
- Batch searching of brief records in OCLC
- Preparation and loading of vendor records
- Quality control, database clean-up projects, reporting, and statistics

Some of these (e.g. vendor record work) are promising areas for collaboration in the short term, while in others (e.g. authorities) our approaches differ significantly. The move to Alma will necessitate a complete review of processes in all of these areas.

Also influencing cataloging practices and priorities at each institution are services that make use catalog data, such as Columbia's Human Rights Web Archive Portal, Cornell's Curated List of Library Resources (CuLLR), and Cornell's and Columbia's Blacklight discovery layers.

Other dependencies

- Both institutions make additional contributions to collaborative cataloging programs. For example, Columbia catalogs serial titles identified through cooperative CONSER agreements, and Cornell participates in LC's ECIP program.
- Cataloging at both institutions is also responsive to expectations by public services staff, curators, bibliographers, patrons and all others who use our records.

5. Summary of available or easily derivable baseline productivity numbers at the two CULs

- See attached spreadsheets for Columbia's cataloging statistics from 2010 to 2013. Each document has separate sheets for OSMC, MPS and EAL.

[Cataloging stats 2010-2013](#)

[By language 2006-2012](#)

[By format 2010-2013](#)

- See attached spreadsheets for Cornell's cataloging statistics from 2010 to 2013.

[Overall copy and original statistics](#)

[By language](#)

[By format](#)

- While Columbia has PCC as the default for most formats, some categories of material have been excluded in past years and are being folded in now. Free online resources (a big workflow) are usually cataloged as level 3 but generally with authority work for NACO; subject headings, and 050.

- Examples of recent authority work statistics for Columbia:

[NACO stats for OSMC and MPS for fiscal year 2012/2013](#)

216 new class numbers

296 series (105 new; 191 updates)

29 new SACO headings

1704 new names (personal, corporate, etc.)

3197 updated names

Grand total: 5442

Recent annual statistics for EAL included:

1035 new headings

350 updated headings.

- More recently, with recoding to RDA as part of Columbia's workflow NACO statistics have grown substantially. As an example, in June 2013 OSMC/MPS catalogers created 170 new NACO records and recoded 386 to RDA.

- Examples of recent authority work statistics for Cornell:

For fiscal year 2012/2013 (all libraries):

894 new names

684 updated names

6. Recommendations regarding a work plan and critical issues to explore in Phase 2

Below are some areas that we have identified for further exploration. Collaboration in some areas (e.g. training) can proceed more or less immediately, while others will need careful planning. We propose to continue to develop this list as we proceed with Phase 2.

- The Original and Copy Cataloging groups held joint discussions during Phase 1 and we recommend combining these two groups for Phase 2. This group will need to work closely with the acquisitions and batch processing groups to make recommendations on workflow and related issues such as cross-training.
- Training (and, where appropriate, documentation)
- Developing guidelines for collaborative cataloging covering such areas as balancing demand and capacity, workflow and handoffs, clarifying expectations, communication, etc.
- Identifying areas where changing collection priorities (e.g. as a result of collaborative collection development) may have an impact on cataloging workload
- Identifying and evaluating vendor services of potential interest, e.g. vendor-supplied cataloging, shelf-ready processing, vernacular data, etc. This may progress to joint negotiations with vendors and establishing common service expectations
- Representation on external bodies (e.g. CONSER) and associated activities including reporting and voting
- Joint policy and standards development: this needs to take place within a framework that will accommodate differences due to contrasting collection priorities and service expectations
- System-related services, including batch processing, reporting, troubleshooting, and their impact on workflow