

Thoughts on the Advantages to CONSER Participation  
from an Administrative Perspective  
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December 21, 2005

### **Streamlining the Dataflow for SCP records**

Campuses receiving SCP serial records are moving in the direction of simply overlaying the existing local records, thereby positioning themselves to receive newer copies of the bibliographic description as often as SCP issues updates. If campuses become aware of any information belonging in the bibliographic record, CONSER membership would enable them to contribute it to the master record in OCLC directly. Because SCP uses the CONSER record, updates sent to campuses would also contain the maintenance performed on a campus. This is much more efficient than striving to protect locally-stored data from overlay or contacting SCP staff to make the changes on the campus' behalf.

### **Efficiency**

When a serial is copy cataloged at a non-CONSER library, the editing done at that time resides only in the ILS. Sometimes the non-CONSER library adds significantly to the record because it has newer issues and more current information. Generally, none of this can be shared with other libraries. Original cataloging contributed by non-CONSER libraries resides in OCLC but cannot be updated by that library in the future unless there are less than 10 holdings on the OCLC record. Subsequent work to handle title changes or other critical maintenance becomes inefficient and awkward when the local record is out of sync with the national record in OCLC. This can cause duplicate or extra work when the differences between the two records must first be dealt with before processing the title change. CONSER libraries are able to keep their records in sync by editing records just once directly in OCLC and avoiding backtracking to process bibliographic changes in the future.

### **Effective Use of Cataloger Time and Energy**

Taking on CONSER responsibilities should not cause the per-title cataloging time to go beyond 110% of what it is now. And the cooperative approach encourages reflection on the nature of the editing now done for correctness and completeness of the record. The world could be divided up this way: Things grievously wrong with records should lead to locking and replacing the master OCLC record. Lesser matters probably should be let go. This is a good opportunity to move away from unnecessary local customization.

### **Recruitment and Retention and Recognition for UC Catalogers**

If UC catalogers already strive to create records to the same CONSER standard that LC catalogers use, why not channel that original cataloging energy into the master records that everyone uses in OCLC? It is professionally rewarding to contribute cataloging to CONSER and in so doing have one's work matter far beyond the wall's of one's own institution.

### **Strengthening the Community of UC Catalogers**

PCC involvement represents a great training opportunity for catalogers, with a built-in chance to consult UC and other CONSER colleagues on cataloging problems and challenges. Shared communication improves common understanding of cataloging/metadata within the community and awareness of special strengths in the UC cataloging community (for consultation). Providing CONSER mentoring and training represent additional professional development opportunities. Activities such as these promote consistent system-wide cataloging standards and policies.

### **Influence on Cataloging Standards and Practices**

Through CONSER there are frequent opportunities to influence standards development or to advocate changes in practice, for the benefit of library operations and our users. When problems are found in bibliographic or authority records, CONSER catalogers are able to correct them, instead of writing to ask someone else to do it or working around the problem. If new LCSH are needed or language is outdated, CONSER catalogers are able to initiate proposals, instead of settling for the limits of existing terminology. When an identifier is needed to support a bibliographic service such as SFX, CONSER catalogers can formally request that an ISSN be assigned.

### **Giving as Much as We're Getting**

All of us in technical services are hopeful of finding a high hit rate for cataloging copy, largely usable as-is, so we can keep costs down. We are aware that LC cannot by itself support all the copy cataloging operations, without any contributions coming from ARL members and other institutions. We do not want to be "all take and no give."