SCP Cataloging Priorities

This document provides an overview of the process for setting SCP cataloging priorities.

Background:
The Shared Cataloging Program (SCP) provides bibliographic records for remote access CDL-licensed and designated open access electronic resources. These records are sent to each UC Library for loading into their ILSs. Files of records are provided on a weekly basis. When first established, staff at SCP almost exclusively determined the cataloging priorities; there was very limited input from either CDL or the campuses. This was acceptable at the beginning since the number of packages was relatively small in number and backlogs, when they did arise, were readily dealt with. However, over time, and specifically in response to ever increasing workloads that meant the cataloging of some materials needed to delayed, a more formal process was established so as to account for the relative importance of one set of materials over another.

Process:
On a quarterly basis, SCP staff submits a report to the Joint Steering Committee for Shared Collections (JSC) which outlines SCP's planned cataloging priorities for the coming quarter. The JSC reviews and approves this list, adjusting priorities where necessary. The report breaks down the cataloging priorities into two categories, **standing** and **project-oriented**.

Standing priorities are general in nature, taking a macro view of the SCP workload, the collection systemwide, and prioritizes cataloging in broad categories. The current standing priorities are:

1. New content from currently licensed journal packages (transfers, additions, etc.)
2. End of year/new acquisitions
3. UC supported open access resources (e.g. eScholarship, BioMedCentral)
4. Other open access resources (by request only)
5. New content from other licensed packages

Since these priorities are based on an overall evaluation of the relative importance of cataloging the listed categories as a whole, the JSC determines these with limited input from SCP staff. Given the "big picture" nature of these priorities, it is not common for these to change in the short run.

Project-oriented priorities are specific in nature and are identified by SCP staff. In almost all cases a specific package is called out for focused attention for the quarter. Some of the most common reasons for prioritizing a specific package are: a large amount of new content is added to an existing package, a significant backlog has developed, it is a new package. SCP does take into account where the package fits within the standing priorities. As an example of a listing of project-oriented priorities, the following were the project-oriented priorities for third quarter 2011 (estimates of the number of titles requiring cataloging are given in parentheses):

1. IEEE Conference Proceedings (~2,000 titles)

    2. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences analytics (~1,900 titles)
    3. Early American Imprints Series II (~38,000 titles)
    4. Springer German language e-books (~6,000 titles)
    5. LexisNexis (~3,500 titles)

As a contrast, these are the project-oriented priorities submitted for fourth quarter 2011:

1. IEEE Conference Proceedings (~2,600 titles)
2. EEBO (~125,000 titles)
3. DOAJ (~1,100 titles)
4. LexisNexis (~3,500 titles)

To give you some context for these two examples, listing the IEEE conference proceedings reflected the fact that output from IEEE, especially more recently, had outstripped our regular efforts to stay current. Over time, a significant backlog developed which SCP wanted to address. As you can see, this cataloging priority was carried over to the next quarter since, while significant inroads were made, the output from IEEE continued to outstrip our efforts to catch up. Early American Imprints represent a different situation. It was listed as a third quarter priority as the result of SCP becoming aware that title level records for this resource, licensed several years ago, where now available. Similarly, the listing of EEBO for the fourth quarter came about after we learned that the vendor added some 30,000 new titles to the collection and had updated many of the older records. The Annals analytics were added as a priority because JSC approved a bibliographer's request for title level records. SCP added DOAJ because a CONSER project it had participated in had just been concluded and we wanted to add to our collection all the DOAJ titles our partners in that project had cataloged. The Springer and LexisNexis represent packages where backlogs existed.

Project-oriented priorities are not fixed. During any quarter, they may get bumped in response to changes in other packages or new acquisitions. When these things occur SCP staff are generally the ones who readjust priorities, as guided by where things lie on the standing priorities list. But there are cases when priorities are adjusted externally. For example, several quarters ago, we stopped work on our plan priorities to focus our cataloging on the Springer monographs. This was because the Springer package ended up being a pilot for the acquisitions of e-books and access to those monographs was required as quickly as possible.

Chinese Language Resources:
Supplementing the above is a side process for setting cataloging priorities for Chinese language materials. In this case the JSC delegated the task of determining cataloging priorities to the East Asian Bibliographers (EAB) Group. Setting up this side process seemed logical since the SCP Chinese cataloger had been hired only to catalog Chinese language materials. The EAB initially reviewed all the Chinese language packages available and set the cataloging priority for each package. Occasionally, since that initial review, the SCP Chinese cataloger has proposed changes to the priorities as new resources have been acquired or in response to other developments. Where approved by the EAB, the cataloger has adjusted cataloging priorities accordingly.