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From Chaos to Community: Two Libraries Finding a Unified Direction

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Abstract

In January 2013, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents consolidated a health sciences university and a predominantly undergraduate liberal arts university. Each university had its own library, and the consolidation presented several challenges to the newly formed University Libraries. One major challenge was unifying the catalog as each library follows different classification standards. National Library of Medicine call numbers and Medical Subject Headings were utilized on the Health Sciences campus, and Library of Congress call numbers and subject headings were used on the liberal arts campus. After recognizing the differences in the catalog records, the Libraries asked “Where do we go from here?” A cataloging subcommittee was formed to identify ways to consolidate bibliographic records, streamline holdings, and turn chaos into community.

When an academic library and a medical library consolidate, there are two resulting options: chaos or community. In 2013 the University System of Georgia Board of Regents consolidated eight of their institutions into four. One of these consolidations was between Augusta State University, a primarily undergraduate liberal arts university, and Georgia Health Sciences University (formerly the Medical College of Georgia), the state’s public medical school; the resulting university became Georgia Regents University (GRU), the state’s fourth public research university (Board of Regents, n.d.). Effective December 1, 2015, Georgia Regents University will be called Augusta University.

Since each of the previous universities had their own library, the two libraries were consolidated under the umbrella of the University Libraries, which included the Reese Library on the Summerville campus, formerly the Augusta State University facility, and the Robert B. Greenblatt, MD Library on the Health Sciences campus. Each of the libraries had resources specific to the fields of study on their respective campuses.

Prior to consolidating the libraries, there was a lot of preliminary work done to merge some electronic resource subscriptions, clean up the backend of the ILS, and change the catalog interface. As with the other University System of

Georgia institutions, the GRU Libraries used the Voyager ILS. Throughout the state it is referred to as GIL—GALILEO Integrated Libraries. Previously, the Greenblatt Library used the classic GIL catalog, which functions via WebVoyage software and provides patrons with a simple, easy-to-read list of items in the catalog. Classic GIL also updates immediately so that when a new record is added it can be viewed from the patron’s perspective right away. Conversely, the Reese Library used the newer GIL-Find version that functions via VuFind software. It has an updated appearance with graphics for book covers providing visual appeal and links to Amazon reviews or Google Book previews. Records added into Voyager, however, appear in GIL-Find the next day after the update is run overnight. Upon consolidation, both libraries began using GIL-Find as their primary catalog interface.

After the initial consolidation of the libraries websites and catalogs was complete, some of the differences became noticeable. Where the Greenblatt Library utilizes the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM) call numbers, the Reese Library uses the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) and Library of Congress (LC) call numbers. When cataloging, the second indicator in the 6 hundred fields signifies the vocabulary from

where a heading comes; 0 in the field indicates LCSH and 2 indicates MeSH. There are some distinct differences between the two: MeSH uses the singular form of a subject and LCSH uses the plural; MeSH uses scientific terminology, LCSH uses common terminology; there is also the difference between generalized terms for MeSH and specific terms for LCSH (US Library of Congress, n.d.).

Both libraries had different physical locations for their resources. The Reese Library retained their print serials in the 2nd floor serials area whereas the Greenblatt Library kept them in the bound and unbound journals section on the second floor of their library. Both libraries had historical collections, but with different names. Reese's historic collection is called special collections, and Greenblatt's is called historical archives and collections. The book collections are maintained in various places, as well. Greenblatt's books are maintained in the book collection, core collection, reference, and historical reference. Reese's book collections, which number around 350,000, are held in various locations: browsing, reference, special collections, reserve, government info, and 3rd floor stacks. The Reese Library has been a Federal Depository Library for more than 50 years, and Government Information resources, including books, also appear in the catalog. The Government Information resources utilize Superintendent of Documents (SUDOC) call numbers.

If the same material was found at both libraries and used the same bibliographic record, the short display would show that it was available at the Greenblatt Library, as the display was showing the results in alphabetical order. If a different bib record was used for the same item, the resource would appear twice in the catalog, once for each library. The Reese library also used the same bib record for print journals and links to aggregated databases that contained the electronic version of the same journal. The Greenblatt Library had separate bib records for the print and electronic versions of the journals. The electronic journal links, however, for Greenblatt went directly to the publisher site.

As the catalog continued to be used, the discrepancies became more noticeable. A cataloging/link resolver committee was established to look at the differences between the two libraries; not only differences in the catalog for each library, but differences in the way each campus and library accessed their electronic resources. The Greenblatt Library utilized SFX™ for their electronic journals list and link resolver, and the Reese Library utilized EBSCO A-to-Z.

The cataloging/link resolver committee consisted of members of content management from Greenblatt Library and technical services at Reese Library, which are essentially the departments at each library performing the same functions such as managing serials, e-resources, and cataloging. The committee also included members from access services at both libraries and the systems librarian who is responsible for information technology at both libraries. The committee was given the charge to make usability easier for patrons.

Of this group, a cataloging subcommittee was created to identify disparities in the catalog and investigate ways to streamline the records. The group met monthly to identify the problems and made corrections. Other library catalogs from universities with both a medical campus and an academic campus were consulted to garner an understanding of how they handled similar situations. The University of Georgia Library's catalog was investigated as it has several libraries and locations.

One of the first decisions the committee made was to change some of the locations so there would be standardization. Previously the journal locations were the Reese serials area, 2nd floor, Greenblatt bound journals, and Greenblatt unbound journals (shelved with bound journals). The committee decided that there may be confusion for the patron when using the term "serial." Most professors require student to use academic "journals" for any research conducted. The term "serial" was replaced with "journal" in the location. The committee also opted that for each catalog entry's holding location, putting the library's name first; then the area designation,

followed by the floor of the library, so that the patrons would not be looking for an item in one library that was actually held by the other library. The systems librarian was able to make global location changes so that the new journal locations were the Reese journals, 2nd floor, and Greenblatt journals, 2nd floor.

A similar designation was determined for books. Instead of Greenblatt books and Reese 3rd floor stacks, the new book locations were Greenblatt reference, 1st floor, Greenblatt core, 1st floor, Greenblatt books, 1st floor, Reese reference, 1st floor, and Reese books, 3rd floor. Again the systems librarian made the location changes. Although the cataloging module in Voyager still uses the original location codes, the public OPAC interface utilizes the new location display names to make it easier for patrons to find materials.

One of the problems that arose originally was in regard to materials available at both libraries. The short display of GIL-Find would sometimes have the call number for one library appearing with the location for the other library. For example, a patron searching for the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* in the library catalog saw the short display, which indicated the book was available at the Reese Library, but showed the call number as WZ 345 A512p 2010, which is the NLM call number. The LC call number for the same book was BF76.7 .P83 2010. After the patron looked through the stacks at the Reese Library and could not locate any books with a call number of W, they requested assistance. Reviewing other library catalogs to see how similar circumstances were handled, the systems librarian changed the short display in the catalog interface to multiple locations and multiple call numbers. Once a patron clicks on the multiple locations link, the holdings information with the correct call number and library location are displayed.

The holdings information for print journals was also maintained in a different format. At the Reese Library, the holdings for print were listed as volume – volume on the first line; then date – date on the second line. Greenblatt listed their holdings as date – date, then volume – volume on

one line. The committee elected to use the standard MARC 21 format for holdings – volume (date – date) format all on one line.

In relation to journals that were available online, Reese had “Full text electronic journal List” as the visible note in the holdings for any journals. This referred patrons to the main EBSCO A-Z™ menu where they could type in the name of the journal again. Greenblatt’s holdings stated either “Available online” or “Full text available via link.” Both libraries’ holdings were changed to “Check online access” with the campus in parenthesis. Since many patrons are more familiar with the campus name when they are off-campus as opposed to the library name, the committee believed it would be easier for them to know which resource they could access. This was important as there are different subscriptions available on both campuses. Some resources are subscribed to for either one campus or the other, especially the medical resources. The systems librarian was able to establish an authentication process to enable patrons to access their campus-appropriate resources.

Another area which needed streamlining was the online resources available through the Reese Library. There were several locations for online materials including: e-books on EBSCOhost, e-books on EBSCOhost (GALILEO), Net Library, ebrary, GALILEO Films on Demand, and Reese Online. From the patron perspective there was an uncertainty about where all these locations could be found. By streamlining them all to say “Reese Online” and “Click here to access,” it became easier for the patron to access the information they wanted.

The committee identified the changes that would be most effective and easiest to rectify. They will continue to examine ways to make the catalog function better for patrons. Where there was chaos, a library community which includes SUDOC, LC, NLM, and MeSH now exists. An upcoming challenge for the cataloging subcommittee is the implementation of ALMA, which is anticipated to begin mid-2016. The subcommittee will be conducting data clean-up for migrating to this new cloud-based ILS.

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