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Library of Congress' Class L: Education, Table L7: An Expansion for Local Use

Abstract: Table L7 provides ranges of Cutter numbers, with no directions for the allocation of the numbers within the ranges. For an extensive collection such as a library might assemble of its parent institution's output, more guidance is needed. Between normal institutional changes and multiple catalogers of varying degrees of expertise, the chances of maintaining a logical shelf arrangement over time become vanishingly small. This case study describes the problem that developed as the table was applied to the institutional publications of Georgia State University, and proposes an explicit expansion of Table L7 for local use as a solution. With suitable adaptations to accommodate their specific administrative and academic divisions, this expansion of Table L7 could be helpful to other "one-number institutions" using both Table L7 and Table L13.

Keywords: Classification systems – Library of Congress
Class L: Education
University publications, Classification

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Introduction

This case study describes a problem that developed at the Georgia State University's Pullen Library in applying the classification number for official publications of institutions. Georgia State University has been assigned a single whole number in the LD schedule making it a "one-number institution." The solution to the problem, an explicit expansion of "Table L7, Tables of Subdivisions: Institutions With One Number or Cutter Number in Americas, Great Britain," can be adapted for use by other "one-number institutions."

Table 1 lists the serials part of GSU's existing shelflist to illustrate why more explicit guidance in applying Table L7 was felt to be needed. The expansion of the table that was developed is provided in Table 2. Table 3 illustrates the application of the expansion to the same publications listed in Table 1.

To understand how the problem with the classification of the institutional publications at GSU developed, brief reviews of the evolution of the University and of the relevant developments within the L Schedule itself are in order.

Georgia State University

Georgia State University was founded in 1913 as the Georgia Tech Evening School of Commerce. It became an independent college within the newly established University System of Georgia in 1933, but in 1947 it was incorporated into the program of the University of Georgia as its Atlanta Division. It was separated again by the Board of Regents in 1955 and renamed Georgia State College of Business Administration. As the institution expanded beyond its original focus on business, the name was changed in 1961 to simply Georgia State College, and in 1969, having achieved university status, to Georgia

State University. GSU is now the second largest of the 34 public institutions of higher learning in Georgia.[1]

Class L: Education

In the Library of Congress classification scheme, publications about individual educational institutions are assigned single numbers or ranges of numbers in the LD and LE Schedules, and these numbers are applied in accordance with tables. In the 3rd edition of *Class L: Education*, published in 1951, the table for institutions to which one number is assigned appeared thus:

TABLE V
(Institutions to which *one number* is assigned)

.A1-7 Official publications
.A8-Z Other works, by author[2]

It was expanded slightly in the "Additions and Changes to April 1966":

TABLE V
(Institutions to which *one number* is assigned)

.A1-7 Official publications
.A1-4 Serial
.A5-7 Nonserial
.A8-Z Other works. By author
Including student yearbooks, etc.[3]

The 4th edition of *Classification, Class L: Education*, published in 1984, extended Table V to institutions to which one Cutter number is assigned.[4] In the 1995[5] and 1998[6]

editions the table is designated "L7, Tables of Subdivisions: Institutions With One Number or Cutter Number in Americas, Great Britain," but otherwise remains unchanged. An identical Table, numbered L13, was then established for institutions located in continental Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania.

. In *Immroth's Guide to the Library of Congress Classification,* the chapter on the L Schedule is very brief because the schedule "presents no serious problems to the classifier." The tables of subdivisions for subarranging numbers assigned to individual institutions of education are considered "relatively easy to use," "similar to tables already covered [in the guide] and so need little further discussion."[7]

For those tables that prescribe explicit numbers for particular uses this is, indeed, very true. The tables, L7 and L13, for publications about institutions that have been assigned a single whole number or Cutter number, however, are extremely basic: they provide ranges of Cutter numbers only, with no directions as to the allocation of the numbers within the ranges. Few libraries are likely to acquire extensive collections of the official publications of educational institutions other than their own parent institution. For the scattered publications of other institutions a library may acquire, a haphazard application of the ranges provided in Tables L7 and L13 may be acceptable, but for a comprehensive collection such as a university library might assemble of its parent institution's output, a more systematic approach is needed. An individual cataloger might be able to apply the tables, as they stand, consistently, and achieve a logical shelf arrangement, but in the long run, with multiple catalogers of varying degrees of expertise applying the tables, the chances of maintaining a logical shelf arrangement become vanishingly small. More guidance in the

distribution of these ranges, either from Immroth's Guide or within the schedule itself would have been genuinely helpful to catalogers who have had to apply them over the years.

Classification of GSU's Publications

From 1955, when Georgia State became a separate institution, through the 1960s there was no class number explicitly assigned to the college in the LD Schedule, so local catalogers interpolated LD 1961.G8. The number LD 1965 was assigned to the University at some point between publication of the 1966 printing of the 3rd edition, which includes "Additions and Changes to April 1966," and the publication of the 4th edition in 1984. There is evidence from Pullen Library's old paper shelflist, and in older volumes that had been reprocessed, that a reclassification project was carried out in 1972. This suggests that LD 1965 was assigned to GSU about 1971, probably as a result of the change to university status.

The possibility that a problem had developed was first noticed by the serials cataloging unit. With serials, entry changes follow routinely in the wake of institutional growth and change, and the older cataloging records are revisited on a regular basis. The perception of a possible problem in the way catalogers were applying the assigned classification reached a higher level of awareness when Dr. Noah Langdale, Jr., President of the University from 1957 to 1987, donated to Pullen Library personal copies of his annual reports to the Chancellor of the University System, as well as his personal locally-bound compilations of the annual reports of the divisions of the University to the President. It seemed logical that these university level documents should stand among the first titles in

the LD 1965 serial sequence, but those numbers had been assigned to other, more limited, titles.

These considerations led to a long overdue examination of all the existing LD 1965 call numbers in the serials shelflist. It appeared that over the last 25 years at the hands of successive catalogers of varying degrees of skill, confusion over how to allocate the range of Cutters .A1-7, and more particularly .A1-4 Serials, had led to the current disarray.

[Insert Table 1]

As Table 1 illustrates, there is no readily apparent system or logic to the current arrangement. In the reclassification project of 1972 it appears that an attempt was made to spread the publications across the range alphabetically by subordinate unit of the University. This arrangement, which would have worked well enough if applied consistently and explained to new catalogers, appears to have been muddled by subsequent attempts to insert new titles alphabetically by title. Later catalogers, attempting to apply the table hierarchically, merely added to the disorder.

Further impetus for dealing with the problem that was being observed was the knowledge that a long-term goal that had been identified for the Catalog Department in a recent round of strategic planning was to catalog the Georgia State publications in the Archives Collection. The titles selected for Pullen Library's circulating collection represent only a small fraction of the University's output and so this seemed a logical time to rectify the existing situation and establish an explicit scheme.

Obviously, the key to a logical shelf arrangement is to choose one approach and apply it consistently. Having analyzed the situation, it was decided to establish an explicit

expansion of Table L7 for local use and reclassify the circulating collection of GSU serials while it was still a manageable size.

An Explicit Expansion of Table L7

The expansion that was developed is a hierarchical one. That is, it follows the pattern of general-to-specific found throughout the LC classification schedules: broad topics stand before narrower aspects of topics; works about a country as a whole stand before works about regions or states, which stand before works about cities; alphabetical or chronological breakdowns only occur at the narrower levels to subarrange topics of equal importance. In the case of institutions, works about the whole institution would stand before works about subdivisions of the institution.

This hierarchical approach was chosen for two reasons. First, an alphabetical arrangement, whether by title or by the name of a subordinate administrative unit, soon loses coherence and becomes imperceptible if publications or units change title or name, split, or merge, as dynamic entities are apt to do. To maintain a strictly alphabetic arrangement one must be willing to tolerate scattering related items randomly through the alphabet. The second reason for preferring the hierarchical approach is that all the other tables for institutions (L3, L4, L5, L6, L8, L9, L10, L11, and L12) are organized hierarchically. It seemed reasonable to assume that the Cutter ranges in Tables L7 and L13 were intended to be distributed the same way. This expansion of Table L7 borrows extensively from the other tables between L3 and L12, and especially heavily from L4. The result is shown in Table 2.

[Insert Table 2]

In the range .A1-4 Serials, A1 is dedicated to University level administrative reports, .A2 to College level publications, .A3 to Other Academic Units, and .A4 to Public and Alumni relations. In the expansion as given in Table 2 the range .A22 to .A28 refers to Georgia State University's six colleges, and the range .A32 to .A36 refers to Georgia State University's other academic units. Since the addition of new colleges is rare, sliding the .A2 Cutter only one digit works for GSU and leaves some room for growth. Larger institutions so unfortunate as to be assigned only one number may need to slide the .A2 Cutter two digits to accommodate all their colleges and allow room for growth. Academic Centers and Institutes are more volatile at GSU than the Colleges. They may grow into a College, change name or be discontinued as funding or the perception of their value changes within the institution. The latest edition of GSU's Faculty handbook includes a current list of centers and institutes, and the alphabetical arrangement stipulated in .A35 and .A36 is intended to be based on that list. Other institutions desiring to adapt this expansion to their own use would need to find some similar authoritative list.

To illustrate how this expansion works out in practice, Table 3 shows the same publications listed in Table 1 with new call numbers assigned according to the expansion.

[Insert Table 3]

The examples in Tables 1 and 3 are only the serials that were in GSU's circulating collection at the time work began on this project. Just as the Library on Congress classification as a whole was originally based on literary warrant, the development of this expansion on Table L7 began with an attempt to rationalize the shelf arrangement of these particular serial publications. The identification of a long-term goal to catalog the archival

collection of all the university's publications raised the possibility of extending the project to official nonserial publications with the cooperation of GSU monograph catalogers.

With that possibility in mind, it became necessary to do more that provide a simple breakdown of .A1-4 Serials. For instance, there is no need for an elaborate Biography and History section for serials but the four digit number for the Alumni directory parallels the anticipated expansion under this topic for Monographs which is borrowed from Table L4, substituting "17" for the first digit in the "12" through "15" range of that table. To follow through on the logic of the hierarchical arrangement as exemplified by the other tables, it was necessary to insert a place for nonserial institutional level publications such as the University Charter before .A1. The resulting expansion, which goes far beyond the original intent to regularize a small area of a specific collection, may potentially be of use to catalogers elsewhere.

Conclusion

This case study describes a problem in classification that developed over time at a single institution. On the surface this may seem to be a criticism of the institution's catalogers. In truth, the source of the problem lies in the normal evolution of the institution and the lack of guidance in the use of a table. These factors apply at many institutions. It seems likely that GSU is not an isolated case. The larger an institution that has been assigned a single number by LC grows, the more urgent becomes the need for an explicit framework for the arrangement of its publications. This expansion of "L7, Tables of Subdivisions: Institutions With One Number or Cutter Number in Americas, Great Britain" can be adapted to accommodate the specific administrative and academic divisions of any

“one-number institution,: including institutions that use “L13, Tables of Subdivisions: Institutions, Continental Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania.” While this expansion is primarily intended for local use by “one-number institutions” in arranging their own publications, it can also be useful to any cataloger anywhere for those scattered publications of other institutions their library may acquire.

Table 1. Georgia State publications with existing call numbers.

Present call no.	Title
LD 1965 .A12	Alumni directory
LD 1965 .A13	Bulletin/General catalog (4 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A15	Staff and faculty directory
LD 1965 .A15	Faculty and staff directory
LD 1965 .A153	Directory of faculty, staff, and students
LD 1965 .A153	Student directory
LD 1965 .A153	Student telephone directory
LD 1965 .A154	Student, faculty & staff directory
LD 1965 .A16	… financial report [of the University]
LD 1965 .A165	Institutional retention report
LD 1965 .A168	Original budget for the year ending …
LD 1965 .A17	Student handbook
LD 1965 .A24	Graduate bulletin [Health Sciences] (3 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A245	General information and admission bulletin [Law]
LD 1965 .A25	Admission activity report to the general faculty
LD 1965 .A27	Graduate program bulletin [Institute of Governmental Administration] (2 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A287	Abstracts of institutional research
LD 1965 .A3	… factbook
LD 1965 .A325	G book
LD 1965 .A325	On campus
LD 1965 .A42	Catalog [Arts and Sciences. Graduate Division] (3 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A424	C.B.A.: … report [Business Administration]
LD 1965 .A425	Bulletin [Business Administration. Graduate Division] (4 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A427	EMBA examiner [College of Business Administration Executive MBA Program]
LD 1965 .A434	Annual report [Education]
LD 1965 .A435	Graduate studies catalog [Education] (4 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A475	Graduate handbook [Urban Life]
LD 1965 .A476	Catalog [Urban Life Graduate Division] (3 successive entries so far)
LD 1965 .A478	Thesis and internship handbook [Urban Life]
LD 1965 .A56	Affirmative action plan (3 successive entries so far)

Table 2. Expansion of Table L7.

.A03	University charter, statutes, bylaws, etc.
.A05	Heraldry. Seal
.A1-4	Official serials
.A1	University level administrative reports
	General works. Office reports
.A12	President
.A125	Treasurer
.A127	Registrar
.A129	Other administrative reports
	Special
.A13	Finance
.A132	Endowment
.A134	Appropriations and grants. By date
.A1345	Bequests, donations, etc.
.A1346	Scholarships
.A14	Policy and organization
.A145	Personnel management
.A1455	Salaries, pensions, etc.
.A15	Catalogs and bulletins, requirements for admission
.A16	Directories
.A17	Biography and History
.A172	Biography
	Collective
	Alumni
.A1723	Directories
.A174	History
.A18	Student life and customs
.A183	Handbooks
.A185	Student societies and clubs
	For fraternities, see LJ. For undergraduate publications, see LH
.A2	College level publications Slide the first Cutter to arrange the Colleges of the institution in alphabetical order. Subarrange each College as follows using work letters as needed: .x2 Administrative reports .x3 Finance .x4 Policy and organization .x5 Catalogs and bulletins, requirements for admission .x6 Directories .x7 History .x8 Student handbooks .x95 Special programs, A-Z

.A22	Arts and Sciences
.A23	Business Administration
.A24	Education
.A25	Health Sciences (later called Health and Human Sciences)
.A26	Law
.A28	Urban Life (later called Public and Urban Affairs)
.A3	Other Academic Units Subarrange each Unit like .A2 above
.A32	Developmental Studies
.A33	Continuing Education
.A34	Counseling Center
.A35	Academic Centers, A-Z by Center
.A36	Institutes, A-Z by Institute
	Library see Z
.A4	Public and alumni relations, A-Z by title. (For alumni publications see LH)
.A5-7	Nonserial
.A5	like .A1 University level publications
.A6	like .A2 College level publications
.A71-78	like .A3 Other Academic Units
.A79	like .A4 Public and Alumni Relations

Table 3. Application of expanded Table L7 to Georgia State publications

Proposed expansion of Table L7 .A1-.A4 Serials		Examples using currently held publications	
		Call no.	Publication
.A1	University level publications		
.A12	President/Provost	LD 1965 .A12a	Annual report of the president [to the chancellor]
		LD 1965 .A12b	[Annual reports of the divisions] (local compilation)
.A125	Treasurer	LD 1965 .A125a	Original budget for the year ending …
		LD 1965 .A125b	… financial report
.A127	Registrar	LD 1965 .A127a	Admissions activity report to the general faculty
		LD 1965 .A127b	Institutional retention report
.A129	Other administrative reports	LD 1965 .A129a	Abstracts of institutional research
.A145	Personnel management	LD 1965 .A145a	Affirmative action plan (3 successive entries so far)
.A15	Catalogs, registers, bulletins	LD 1965 .A15	Bulletin/General catalog (4 successive entries so far)
.A16	Directories	LD 1965 .A16a- .A16c	[Directories of faculty, staff, and students; 6 titles in various combinations involving mergers and splits with work letters used to preserve chronological seequence]
.A1723	Alumni directories	LD 1965 .A1723a	Alumni directory
	For Alumni publications see LH 1.G46, A-Z by title		
.A183	Handbooks	LD 1965 .A183a	Student handbook
		LD 1965 .A183b	G book (continued by) On campus
		LD 1965 .A183c	… factbook
	For student yearbooks see .A8-Z Other works. For other undergraduate publications see LH 1 .G46 A-Z by title.		

.A2	College level publications		
.A22	Arts and Sciences	LD 1965 .A225	Catalog/bulletin (3 successive entries so far)
.A23	Business Administration	LD 1965 .A232	C.B.A. … report
		LD 1965 .A235	Graduate bulletin (4 successive entries so far)
		LD 1965 .A2395 E9918	EMBA examiner [Executive MBA Program]
.A24	Education	LD 1965 .A242	Annual report
		LD 1965 .A245	Catalog/bulletin (4 successive entries so far)
.A25	Health Sciences (later Health and Human Sciences)	LD 1965 .A255	Catalog/bulletin (3 successive entries so far)
.A26	Law	LD 1965 .A265	General information and admission bulletin
.A28	Urban Life (later Public and Urban Affairs)	LD 1965 .A285	Bulletin/Catalog (3 successive entries so far)
		LD 1965 .A2883a	Graduate handbook
		LD 1965 .A2883b	Thesis and internship handbook
.A3	Other Academic Units		
.A36	Institutes A-Z by Institute		
.A36 G	Governmental Administration	LD 1965 .A36 G65	Bulletin (2 successive entries so far

Notes

[1] *Fact book, 1990/91*. 21st ed. (Atlanta, Ga.: Georgia State University, Office of Institutional Research, 1991): 68.

[2] *Class L: Education*, 3rd ed. (with supplementary pages). (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Processing Dept., Subject Cataloging Division, 1951, reprinted 1966): 175.

[3] See note 2 above, supplementary p.59.

[4] *Classification, Class L: Education.* 4th ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Processing Services, Subject Cataloging Division, 1984): 312.

[5] *Library of Congress Classification. L, Education.* 1995 ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Cataloging Distribution Service, 1995): 306, 313.

[6] *Library of Congress Classification. L, Education.* 1998 ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Cataloging Distribution Service, 1998: 315, 322.

[7] Lois M. Chan, *Immroth's Guide to the Library of Congress Classification.* 4th ed. (Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1990): 209.