

Evaluating a Cataloging Department:

Loyola Marymount University

Lindsay Davis

Joanna Ritchie

Jeffrey Sabol

San José State University

R. Ellett

LIBR 249

17 May 2011

Abstract

This paper uses a survey study that was conducted by Elaine Sanchez (2007) as the foundation for describing and evaluating Loyola Marymount University's cataloging department at the William H. Hannon Library. An on-site interview was conducted in which LMU's Head of Acquisitions and Serials, Charles Hillen, and the Head of Cataloging, Walter Walker, were asked questions related to the issues Sanchez brought forth in her paper about the cataloging departments of several academic libraries. Among other issues, this paper focuses on how LMU catalogs its resources, the relationship between its cataloging and acquisitions departments, upcoming changes in cataloging standards, and special challenges the cataloging department faces. It also offers a comparative analysis between the other libraries Sanchez interviewed.

Keywords: Loyola Marymount University, academic libraries, cataloging department, technical services, acquisitions

Introduction

The world of library cataloging is often shrouded in mystery. Many departments are behind the scenes of libraries, nestled in quiet, distinct places. Cataloging, however, is the means through which library patrons can type in searches for items and retrieve results (or lack thereof). For many years, the Anglo American Cataloging Rules, 2nd edition (AACR2) has been the primary rulebook used to dictate MARC records. In recent years, the growth of non-traditional and web resources has pushed the library world into considering other means and formats to increase access to items while also incorporating the strengths that AACR2 has provided. In just less than a month, the Library of Congress will announce whether or not a new standard, Resource Description and Access (RDA), will replace AACR2. These are exciting times for cataloging, and it is fitting to explore the ways in which real-world cataloging departments work and find out what it is they really do and what they plan to do if and when RDA is put in place. This report and evaluation of Loyola Marymount University's cataloging department at the William H. Hannon Library is based on a report published by Elaine Sanchez in 2007, "Emerging Issues in Academic Library Cataloging & Technical Services."

Description of Loyola Marymount University

Loyola Marymount University (LMU), which was founded in 1911, is located in Los Angeles, California. According to LMU's *History* webpage, the early history of the university involved a series of incorporations and moves in the Los Angeles area. "The present University is the successor to the pioneer Catholic college and first institution of higher learning in Southern California" (Loyola Marymount University [LMU], 2011a). The current campus opened in 1929, and, in 1930, the Loyola College of Los Angeles, as LMU was known then, received university

status and became Loyola University. The university became the Loyola Marymount University when Marymount College was incorporated in 1973. Marymount College, which was founded by the Religious of Sacred Heart of Mary and later joined by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Orange, had been sharing facilities with the Loyola campus since 1968. Today, LMU is the “largest Catholic university on the West Coast” (LMU, 2011b).

The university has a number of majors, minors, and degree types. LMU offers “56 major and 57 minor undergraduate degrees and programs...38 master's degrees, one doctoral degree [sic] and 13 credential programs” (2011b). The university school’s include the Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts; College of Business Administration; College of Communication and Fine Arts; Frank R. Seaver College of Science and Engineering; Loyola Law School; School of Education; School of Film and Television (2011b).

According to figures from the 2010-2011 academic school year, the University has over 9,000 students. There are 5,797 undergraduates, 1,961 graduate students, and 1,312 law students (2011b). Most of the students who attend are from California. 53.5 percent of the students are Caucasian, and 21 percent are Hispanic/Latino (2011b). Other racial and ethnic groups comprise the student population, as well, but the figures are much smaller.

Description of the Loyola Marymount Library and Staffing

LMU has two libraries, the William H. Hannon Library and the Rains Law School Library. The LMU cataloging department evaluated in this report is that of the William H. Hannon Library. The William H. Hannon Library opened in 2009. It “was designed and built by AECOM” (LMU, 2009a). The new building has five levels, three above ground and “a two-story

basement below ground for high density collections storage” (2009a). The Library can now seat 865 students, house 250,000 volumes, and “store an additional 1 million volumes” (2009a).

“Loyola Marymount University is a Roman Catholic institution, which, in the Jesuit and Marymount traditions, emphasizes the encouragement of learning, the education of the whole person, the service of faith and the promotion of justice” (2009b). The mission of the LMU Library is to support the university’s mission “by working with other campus groups to fulfill the information needs of the university community” (2009b).

According to LMU’s *Library Statistics* webpage (2009c), in the 2008/2009 fiscal year, the library had 444,200 books; 99,383 bound periodicals; 42,670 CDs, DVDs, and other media; 4,612 linear feet in archival materials, 1,794 paper periodical subscriptions; and 1,028,393 postcards. The library had access to 47,525 e-books, 19,133 e-periodical subscriptions, and 254 e-reference databases. The 2008/2009 statistics indicate that the library is greatly used. The number of check-outs and in-house use of items totaled 95,979. There were 9,221 reference questions and 134,251 e-reserves hits. 3,734 students received library instruction.

The William H. Hannon Library has various departments. These include the Acquisitions/Serials Department, headed by Charles Hillen; Administration, which is headed by the dean, Kristine Brancolini; Archives & Special Collections, headed by Cynthia Becht; Cataloging, headed by Walter Walker; Circulation, headed by Rhonda Rosen; Collection Development, which is handled by Glenn Johnson-Grau; the Digital Library Program, handled by Carmen Mitchell; Document Delivery and the Media & Reserve Services are both also headed by Rhonda Rosen; Reference & Instruction Services, headed by Susan Gardner; and Systems, which is handed by Meghan Weeks.

The Cataloging Department is comprised of six employees. There are three cataloging librarians and three library assistants. E-serials and e-book cataloging is outsourced, and items that belong to Archives & Special Collections are cataloged by a Special Collections cataloger in that department. The Cataloging Department at LMU is responsible for the cataloging of all physical items—excepting those that belong to Archives & Special Collections—which includes books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, and other media. According to Walter Walker, the department head for the last 7 years, the priorities of the department are to catalog these items and “provide bibliographic description and classification” (personal communication, May 11, 2011).

Although LMU is a large library, interdepartmental communication is very much at work. It is mandatory for all professional librarians to be scheduled to work at the reference desk during either the fall or spring semester of the school year for a single three-hour shift each week, so catalogers and librarians in other departments do have experience helping end-users and understand the work that reference does. Acquisitions/Serials and Cataloging share a good working relationship, especially as some of their work overlaps. While Acquisitions/Serials is in charge of looking over records for electronic items that are added to the catalog from a private company, any records that seem uncertain are flagged for cataloging staff to check.

Cataloging Productivity

According to Sanchez, the cataloging departments at Curry College, University of North Dakota, Haverford College, University of Washington, Yale University, Brigham Young University, Illinois State University, Louisiana State University, and Pennsylvania State University “[a]ll...use core-level cataloging if it is found on OCLC...” (p. 10, 2007). Of the nine participating libraries, only one cataloging department stated that “...it was moving toward

making core the basic cataloging level, as it is trying to simplify its heavy workflow” (p. 10, 2008). Yale University’s Sterling Memorial Library, for instance, “...uses a variety of cataloging levels but is mainly a full-cataloging shop. They are, however, moving to core level as the base level (Sanchez, p. 62, 2007). To increase accessibility to their collections, libraries sometimes require different levels of description for certain records.

The LMU cataloging department primarily creates full-level records for their bibliographic database. However, sometimes core-level is accepted based on the type of resource and how often the resource is expected to be used by students. Walter Walker, the head of cataloging at LMU, gave an example of how gift donations can sometimes be cataloged in bulk, instead of on an individual item basis. Walker explained that the library had received a Gospel music collection as a donation. While some of the items are CDs, some are LPs. The library speculates that these are to be used rarely by their students. There are over 2,000 LPs that will be cataloged at a minimal basis as they will not be in high demand (personal communication, May 11, 2011).

LMU’s cataloging department catalogs all physical items, including books, periodicals, CDs, DVDs, and other media. Items which belong to Archives & Special Collections are cataloged by a Special Collections librarian. The library contracts with a company for provision of e-resources, and these are uploaded to the catalog. Approximately 30,000 e-resources and records are loaded per year (Walker, personal communication, May 11, 2011). The department, however, does some work with these, as updates and changes do need to be made to the records. The cataloging department does not have cataloging quotas; Walker sets productivity goals for each employee in the department. The goals are set depending on how many other duties the staff member has and what kind of resource they are cataloging. These goals are helpful for

employee performance reviews. Walker estimates that the library catalogs 15,000 a year, 600 to 700 of which are original records.

Cataloging of Web Sites and Digital, Special Collections

Sanchez (2007) observed that outsourcing is a common element among each academic library she interviewed. The types of records that are outsourced tend to differ. While the LMU library catalogs all physical items that do not belong to special collections, all e-serials and e-books are contracted with a private company in which records are loaded in batches. The purchased records are full MARC records and are reviewed first by the acquisitions/serials department, and if any records are flagged by acquisitions/serials department, they are checked by the cataloging department. These actions concur with Fischer, Lugg, and Boese's (2004) business idea that a cataloging department should "maximize [the] use of available resources" (p. 51). By first having the acquisitions/serials department review purchased records, the cataloging department can focus on original cataloging, and only have to review the records flagged by the acquisitions/serials department. This practice also alleviates any repetition of work done by either the acquisitions/serials department or the cataloging department.

LMU no longer catalogs websites; the library relies on the use of LibGuides for library recommended websites. Walker, the head of cataloging, remarked that until the implementation of LibGuides, he personally cataloged all librarian recommended websites (personal communication, May 11, 2011). While the website records still exist, they are suppressed in the online catalog in favor of directing students to LibGuides for websites recommendations and library approved websites.

The Digital Projects librarian at LMU, Carmen Mitchell, who was unavailable for an interview, does all special collections cataloging. The mission of the digital projects librarian is

to digitize and classify unique materials from the library's print, media, and archival collections (LMU, 2009). Walker explained that several digitization projects have started in the recent year, all developed by the digital projects librarian in conjunction with the special collections librarian and implemented with the assistance of library interns. Unlike most cataloging departments in academic libraries, as evidenced in Sanchez's (2007) report, Digital Projects at LMU has its own department within the library. The digital projects librarian often collaborates with the acquisitions and serials and cataloging departments.

New Technologies, Enhancement of Online Catalogs

Many academic libraries are working to facilitate the finding process for end users. Part of this responsibility lies in making use of new technologies to enhance online public access catalogs (OPACs). As Janet L. Balas remarks in her article about integrated library systems, "[u]sers have never had so many resources available to them, and it's our job to design...the systems that manage these resources so users can more easily find exactly what they need" (p. 43, 2007).

In Sanchez's 2007 study, she observed that all nine academic libraries enhance their OPACs with new technologies. Some of the libraries she interviewed were experimenting with federated search options and accessibility to the catalog through Internet search engines. According to Walker, LMU also uses new technologies to enhance their catalogs. LMU uses federated searching, which can help streamline the search process because users can view many records for lots of different databases in one locale, but LMU has observed that it is not used much and that the current tool is not as helpful as it could be. Curry College, in Sanchez's study, was also interested in federated searching and was seeking a vendor (p. 20). Interestingly, Haverford College also shares LMU's opinion that they have "...yet to see a tool that they

believe will enhance the user experience” (Sanchez, 2007, p. 42). Walker is on a task force that is focusing on the purchase of a discovery service. LMU is using Ebsco Discovery Service as a trial but is also considering Summit, another discovery service (personal communication, May 11, 2011). Discovery services allow patrons to see records from many databases in one search, rather than searching in individual databases. Many patrons often do not know which database to start in, so products like these alleviate some of that confusion.

Transition to Metadata Standards

Sanchez noted in her report that most of the nine academic cataloging departments she interviewed had begun using metadata.

In the seven agencies that had metadata experience, the Head of the Cataloging Department usually took the lead, working with digital projects and special collections as the primary usage for metadata. Four of the nine agencies have metadata librarian positions that report directly to a cataloging supervisor. (Sanchez, p. 11, 2007)

While staff members from the cataloging department, special collections, and digital collections at LMU do work together in projects that use metadata, the relationship is a little different than the pattern Sanchez found in her study. The cataloging department at LMU is separate from both Special Collections and the newly established Digital Collections departments. As such, Special Collections and Digital Collections do their own cataloging; the head of Cataloging, Walter Walker, does not supervise these endeavors. One Cataloging Department librarian works with the Special Collections librarian and library school student interns in using metadata.

Library Catalog/Metadata Training and Presentation

The LMU Library's cataloging department handles most training and presentations through informal methods. Walker indicates that most training is done through e-mails and face-to-face interactions, mainly with the circulation department and reference department. Recounting one employee who had considerable cataloging experience in public libraries but needed some training in Library of Congress Classification, Walker mentioned that when he trains a new employee or current employee in how to catalog a resource in which she or he has not cataloged before or in a new format, he checks their work as a teaching tool for the first few months, allowing staff to strengthen their skills and correct mistakes. Walker mentioned that non-professional cataloging staff members do not necessarily need training in cataloging theory, such as the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR), as it is not essential to performing their jobs. Many of the cataloging staff actually learned cataloging on the job rather than taking graduate cataloging courses (personal communication, May 11, 2011).

While a form does exist for the reference and circulation department to report problems with bibliographic records in the catalog, most problems of this type are done either by alerting the cataloging department by phone, in person, or by e-mail. The practice of informally reporting problems that is employed by LMU can be compared to smaller libraries such as Curry College which was studied in Sanchez's (2007) report (p. 21). Curry College has only two staff in cataloging, "so the interaction with the public, and public services is normal, daily, and constant," and while LMU's cataloging department is much bigger, it still tries to maintain constant contact as well as a great working relationship with the circulation and reference departments (Sanchez, 2007, p.21; Walker, personal communication, May 11, 2011).

Database Maintenance, Holding, and Physical Processing

Sanchez (2007) found that most bibliographic database maintenance is done in house; even records that are outsourced tend to be reviewed by catalogers, especially certain MARC fields. Some of the fields Pennsylvania State reviews include "... descriptive fields (1xx, 2xx, 6xx, name and uniform title headings, 7xx access points)... holdings in 300 field... series (4xx, 8xx)... contents note (505 field)... subject fields (65x)... [and] URLs (856 fields)..." (p. 109, 2007).

As previously described, all e-serials and e-books at LMU are contracted with a private company in which records are then loaded to the catalog. Walker estimates that 30,000 e-resources are added to the catalog a year. The purchased records are full MARC records and are reviewed first by the acquisitions/serials department, and if any records are flagged by acquisitions/serials department, they are checked by the cataloging department. Records for the batch loaded items also require updating. Items that belong to Archives & Special collections are cataloged by a Special Collections cataloger. The LMU cataloging department processes over 15,000 physical items a year. Of these, between 600 and 700 are original cataloging records.

Relationship with Acquisitions Department

While there are different missions for the cataloging department and the acquisitions department, both departments and both the department heads enjoy a great working relationship. One factor contributing to this great working relationship is that the two department heads' offices are located adjacent to each other. The close proximity allow for daily interaction and collaboration. In addition to mandatory reference desk hours for the cataloging department, the acquisitions department also has the same mandatory hours, which also builds the working relationship between the acquisitions and serials, circulation, and reference departments.

Charles Hillen, the acquisitions/serials department head indicated that the mission of the acquisitions/serials department is to conform to the University's policies and procedures regarding budget procedures which are quite different than the policies of the cataloging department, which is mainly to provide access to materials through classification of those materials (personal communication, May 11, 2011). All purchases are made through the acquisitions department, except rare books, which are done by the special collections department.

The acquisitions/serials department has seven members, but the department head stated that ideally he could use three more staff members to complete and address all of the work that is currently assigned to the department. One area that has exploded with growth is e-journals. While the number of print journals hovers around 1,388, the number of e-journals to which the LMU Library currently subscribes is 126,896 and continues to grow.

Staff Education

At the Innovative Users Group (IUG) conference, which was held from April 13th to 16th, 2011, Ken Wells, the main speaker reviewing Resource Description and Access (RDA), pointed out that tech people already love it, so it's here to stay. Concurring with this opinion, Walker indicated that while he has started a webinar training program for his professional staff, he, too, believed that the libraries that conducted the RDA trial will continue to transition to this standard, regardless of whether the Library of Congress adopts it or not. Besides subscribing to five RDA webinars, Walker notes that he wants to wait to see if RDA is officially implemented before committing more time and money to RDA training. The head of the acquisitions/serials department stated that while the need is great for acquisitions/serials staff to be familiar with

RDA, he was also waiting for an official announcement that RDA was the standard to replace AACR2.

Other Issues Facing Library Cataloging Staff

One of the main issues that will be affecting library cataloging staff is if RDA is implemented as the new cataloging standard. As mentioned previously, if this happens, the library will focus its efforts in training staff. Another issue not previously mentioned is that the School of Education at LMU will start having access to juvenile literature, as many other education programs do, so cataloging staff will need to figure out how to approach children's items in terms of cataloging over the summer of 2011 (Walker, personal communication, May 11, 2011).

Conclusion

After interviewing the two departments at LMU that are responsible for acquisitions, serials, and cataloging, common elements begin to emerge among the practices at various academic library institutes. Like many of the libraries Sanchez surveyed in her article, LMU often uses a combination of internal and external resources to create records for its resources, expresses interest in using new technologies to help students better search for items in the catalog and library holdings, is using some metadata in digitization projects, and is aware of the need to keep up with new cataloging standards, including more training in RDA if and when it is implemented as the new standard. Both Hillen and Walker, the respective Head of Acquisitions & Serials and Head of Cataloging, agree that open dialogue between the departments is a requirement to ensure the healthy functioning of all aspects of the library. The emerging issues in the academic world that Sanchez found are integral to LMUs successful interdepartmental relationship, ultimately benefiting the end-users at the William H. Hannon Library.

References

- Balas, J. L. (2007). Will the ILS soon be as obsolete as the card catalog? *Computers in Libraries*, 27(9), 41-43.
- Fischer, R., Lugg, R., & Boese, K.C. (2004). Cataloging: how to take a business approach. *The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances*, 17(2), 50-54.
- Loyola Marymount University [LMU]. (2009a). *Library history*. Retrieved from http://library.lmu.edu/about/Library_History.htm
- . (2009b). *Mission statement*. Retrieved from http://library.lmu.edu/about/Mission_Statement.htm
- . (2009c). *Library statistics*. Retrieved from http://library.lmu.edu/about/Library_Statistics.htm
- . (2009). *Staff page—Carmen Mitchell*. Retrieved from <http://library.lmu.edu/staff/mitchell.htm>
- . (2011a). *History*. Retrieved from <http://www.lmu.edu/about/History.htm>
- . (2011b). *Quick facts*. Retrieved from <http://www.lmu.edu/about/facts.htm>
- Sanchez, E. (2007). *Emerging issues in academic library cataloging & technical services*.
Primary Research Group, Inc.