

Documenting and Preserving a Call Number System: Lessons Learned

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Why?

- Is the system still in use? Consider both staff and patron needs.
- Is it unique? Consider what it can tell us about library history.
- Does it represent a unique ontology or organizational structure? Consider who could find this information useful (e.g. gov't historians, philosophers, etc.)

How much detail?

Less detail

- Audience: Patrons
- Still in use? No
- Type: Classificatory

More detail

- Audience: Library staff
- Still in use? Yes
- Type: Provenance-based

Don't reinvent the wheel

- Seek external documentation for similar systems, notes left behind by previous librarians.
- Pull data from your ILS
 - Make your documentation match what you have in place, not the other way around.
 - Don't type more than you must!

Consider access and longevity

- Multiple formats:
 - Database
 - Web
 - PDF
- Save old documentation: cards will be stored in University Archives, other documentation is available online



For further information on this project, including a transcript of the audio portion, visit:

<https://neuiinfo.org/ilgov/ala2021/>

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Background

The Nakata-Strange Classification System was created by Yuri Nakata and Michele Strange in 1974.

It's an unusual system!

- For state publications, but not developed at the state library
- Only ever adopted by University of Illinois at Chicago and NEIU
- No collaboration between UIC and NEIU, so our implementation is unique

Our goals:

- Move documentation from cards to a more accessible system for both staff and patrons.
- Preserve our implementation of this system as unique library artifact

Reap the benefits

- Locating areas with uncataloged items
- Find and correct improperly classed materials
- What future research does this enable? How can we anticipate this as we create documentation?