

Report from CAGER to the TSPC – Jan. 7, 2005

The CAGER Subcommittee has met rather sporadically over the past year. Several months we didn't meet due to schedule conflicts or lack of agenda items.

The meetings did serve as an information-sharing device among the members, sharing new developments in cataloging rules, exchanging news about new developments at each institution, and groaning over the difficulties of preparation and migration to Aleph. Naomi Young kept the committee abreast of new developments at CONSER.

In March the Subcommittee adopted a guidelines document for minimal level cataloging of locally digitized materials that had been developed by staff at the University of Florida. They especially needed it in order to implement a procedure for machine generation of MARC records from the metadata on digitized files.

Though the subject of vendor supplied MARC records had been bouncing around the state for several months, in late October, I "sat" in on the TSPC conference call when the topic was discussed there. About a month later, an ECC recommendation was circulated among the TSPC recommending that the decision about loading MARC records for electronic serials be made a local decision, and be funded locally. Shortly thereafter, UNF loaded Serials Solutions MARC records for their electronic serials. Pending a determination, CAGER was not sure whether to spend time working on a recommendation document for statewide application when it seemed to have become moot. Also, much of the evaluative effort has already been made by a Links Committee at UF (at least as it applies in their situation).

The Subcommittee members recognize that the way that electronic serials have already been handled in OPAC's has varied from institution to institution, and what works well at one may not work so well at another. This wide variation in treatment was the chief source of difficulty last year in developing recommendations about shared maintenance of cataloging records for electronic journals included in subscription packages and aggregators.

I have received, privately, a suggestion that, in the interest of maintaining the quality of the databases, that CAGER consider creating a "standards" document that would help each institution evaluate MARC records going into the database. Though I'm not sure of the Subcommittee's ability to do this, the suggestion went on to propose that perhaps CAGER could also make some recommendations/tips about how to treat batch loads, and supplied the name of a staff member at UF who might be willing to share the useful information they've already accumulated in doing numerous batch loads. If TSPC wishes to work this into a "charge" CAGER could begin to work on such a document for the TSPC's approval.

The other item I see on the agenda for today is that of the LTQF database. Although the MARC records in that database were created along guidelines developed by CAGER, the disposition of the database has been under the control of FCLA staff. It is my understanding that the LTQF database will remain intact in LUIS, with full capabilities of member libraries to add, delete and update, until the migration of all institutions to Aleph has been completed. It has been further communicated to me that there is serious doubt that the LTQF records can be incorporated into Aleph to function the same way we've grown accustomed to having them function in LUIS. That, either each institution will have to load the entire LTQF database into their institutional OPAC (and update it regularly) or else the LTQF database will have to exist as a separate file, and will have to be searched separately from institutional OPAC's.