
NACO/CONSER/SACO

*Richard A. Lammert, Technical Services and Systems Librarian,
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne*

ABSTRACT Annually, the Operations Committee (OpCo) of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) presents a two-day meeting in Washington, DC, to advise participants in the PCC programs of what they need to know to work cooperatively with all the other catalogers in the program. This year, as last year, an online meeting replaced the in-person meeting, but the purpose was the same. This Listen and Learn session will update Atla participants in the NACO, CONSER, or SACO funnels with the information that was presented at OpCo so that their work in the Atla funnels will adhere to the current practices in the PCC programs. The session also presents news of changes coming in programs and tools that funnel participants use.

This NACO/CONSER/SACO Listen and Learn session has two purposes. First, it provides an opportunity to review the state of the Atla PCC (Program for Cooperative Cataloging) funnels. Second—and chiefly—it serves to update Atla catalogers on current best practices for PCC cataloging, as well as a view to what to expect in the future.

During the last fiscal year of Atla (September 2020–August 2021), Atla catalogers contributed almost 1,100 new or changed name authority records in the NACO (name authority) funnel. For the period from September 2021 to date (approximately 75 percent of the fiscal year), contributions number slightly more than 600. The slight (annualized) decrease is not a concern. The number of active institutions in the funnel, however, does present a concern. For 2019–2020, there were nine active institutions. For 2020–2021, there were eight active institutions. Currently, there are seven active institutions. We can expect that number to continue to drop as experienced NACO catalogers retire, threatening the viability of the funnel.

The demise of the CONSER (serials) funnel has already happened. During the last fiscal year, one Atla cataloger contributed over 800 new or changed serials records. For the current fiscal year, the number is five records—with the one contributing member having moved to a new position. This part of the funnel will remain dor-

mant unless or until a new serials cataloger can contribute records through the CONSER funnel. The SACO (subject authority) funnel is much smaller, with nine new subject headings or LC classification numbers contributed last fiscal year, with thirteen to date in this fiscal year. This funnel will also suffer from cataloger retirements in the coming years.

The main purpose of the NACO/CONSER/SACO session is to provide a summary of the Operations Committee of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging held in May of each year. Much that affects the work of PCC catalogers is presented at this meeting; the remainder of this report is primarily a summary of what affects Atla catalogers the most. This year, the two-day meeting was completely virtual. The agenda for the meeting is available online (<https://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/documents/OpCo-2022/Agenda-OpCo-2022.pdf>); catalogers are encouraged to review the agenda to find out if there was anything significant to them that was not reported at this session, and to view the attached documents and recordings.

The Standing Committee on Applications reported that they have completed a project of creating an ISNI-to-Wikidata mapping. Currently, they are preparing to survey the potential implications of abolishing the practice of coding 008/29 (“Ref status” in OCLC) as “b” and including a 667 note in non-Latin script NARs.

The Standing Committee on Standards reported that they are considering possible exceptions to the Provider-Neutral Guidelines (by adding 506 fields for an open-access version). The committee has drafted some suggestions for place relationships in 370 subfields \$i and \$4. The presenter at the conference also provided an update on the BABEL project, the project for adding ISO 639-3 codes to MARC records for increased granularity in recording languages.

The activities of the Standing Committee on Training are probably the most important of all the PCC activities for Atla funnel catalogers. The committee is developing training material for using the Official RDA Toolkit, LC-PCC Policy Statements, and Metadata Guidance Documents in cataloging monographs. The introductory training has a target release date of fall 2022—coming before the Official RDA Toolkit becomes valid for actual work, which will not be before October 2022. The standing committee will release the complete training in winter 2022–2023. Other activities of the Standing Committee on Training include the completion of videos for training in the use of OCLC FAST; and the creation of FAQs on authority

control for authors and creators, as well as FAQs for catalogers on the process of contacting creators/contributors during creation of name authorities.

OCLC always provides an update on its activities at the Operations Committee meeting. The main report from OCLC this year was on their project of converting the OCLC-defined encoding level codes, and eventually eliminating those codes from the WorldCat database. OCLC has already completed some of the conversions, but the bulk of the project, converting and eliminating M-level records, is yet to come.

Identity management was a focus of the meeting this year. The Program for Cooperative Cataloging has several groups working on advising and providing leadership to the cataloging community as authority control shifts from an approach primarily based on creating text strings to an approach focused on managing identities and entities. Of particular interest was the follow-up to the Wikidata Pilot conducted last year. A survey of pilot participants showed that most supported the possibility of Wikidata becoming an official registry for PCC contributions. If this happens, there will be an additional opportunity for Atla catalogers to become involved in authority work, one that would probably not require as much training as the current NACO program.

RDA (or, more specifically, the Official RDA Toolkit) was a focus at the beginning of the two-day Operations Committee meeting, as well as a focus at the end of the two days. Here are a few highlights from those presentations: The implementation of the new RDA Toolkit will not be before October 2022 (although it appears likely that a proposed timeline for implementation will not even be presented to the PCC community before November 2022). Metadata Guidance Documents, which include examples and detailed guidance for the use of RDA, have been created and linked to the toolkit. Finally, although the revision to RDA does not permit the use of fictitious and real non-human entities as creators of works, the PCC will continue the policy of the original RDA that *does* allow such practice.

Atla NACO catalogers are encouraged to subscribe to the PCC discussion list (PCclist), which provides important updates throughout the year. For example, several months ago the PCC gave notice of a “Revised Report on Recording Gender in Personal Name Authority Records,” which all PCC participants should follow in their own work.

