

OHIO DOCUMENTS CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

1975

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INTRODUCTION

For the past few years, documents librarians in the State of Ohio have been confronted with the task of classifying and providing reference services for Ohio documents collections without a classification scheme that reflected current state departmental structure and incorporated changes. Although some libraries attempted to circumvent this problem by cataloging all significant Ohio publications, over 50 of Ohio's depository libraries have relied on Judith Ann Houk's 1962 Classification System for Ohio State Documents. According to Ms. Houk, her notation system was intended to facilitate the recording and retrieving of state documents. Her classification was patterned after the Superintendent of Documents Classification, an author oriented scheme.

The need for a dynamic classification scheme that reflected the current status of all Ohio's department, divisions, independent agencies and their respective publications was apparent. After a great deal of discussion and deliberation, we decided to use the following methodology for the development of this classification scheme.

1. We surveyed the Union Bibliography of Ohio Printed State Documents, 1803-1970, Ohio Document annual list compiled by the State Library of Ohio as well as the Monthly checklist of State publications to include all significant departments, divisions and their respective publications. In so doing, we tried to classify documents according to their departmental author at the time of publication. Obviously, inaccuracies that were contained in those publications were probably included in our scheme unless we were able to determine that it was an incorrect citation. This frequently posed complications when a series was published by several different agencies but the Union Bibliography consolidated them all under the more prevalent author.

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2. We used Houk's numerical tables to construct the notations. The tables are delineated below.

Table I

A-2	G-8	M-14	S-20	Y-26
B-3	H-9	N-15	T-21	Z-27
C-4	I-10	O-16	U-22	
D-5	J-11	P-17	V-23	
E-6	K-12	Q-18	W-24	
F-7	L-13	R-19	X-25	

Table II

ab	cd	ef	gh	ijk	lmn	opqrst	vwxyz
(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Series form numbers*

- (1) annual reports
- (2) general publications
- (13) laws (rules, codes, acts, regulations, etc.)

Other general categories were frequently used, but were not series form numbers

- (3) bulletins
- (4) circulars
- (5) directories
- (9) handbook, manuals, guides
- (14) newsletters

* Number is used exclusively for that category

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We assigned alphabetical designations for the major departments by one of two methods.

- a. By combining the first two significant letters of the title
e.g. ED for Education (OED)
CM for Commerce (OCM)
- b. By combining the initial letters of the first two significant words
e.g. ES for Employment Services (OES)

The numerical designations for the individual divisions were created by combining Tables I and II.

- e.g. Consumer Protection Division (of Ohio Commerce Dept.)
is OCM 48, C is 4 in Table I. O is 8 in Table II.

The numbering of the independent agencies is the major exception to the above mentioned procedure. Our list of independent agencies is lengthy since we included all agencies regardless of whether or not they were known to publish. Therefore, for purposes of alphabetical sequence we arbitrarily assigned numbers to the independent agencies.

3. We created categories for publications using the following guidelines:

- a. When there were five or more of the same type of publication
e.g. laws, circulars, handbooks or guides, bulletins, etc.
- b. When there was a serial (newsletter) that was in existence for three or more volumes.

The state's universities were a major exception to this guideline. We made no attempt to be comprehensive in our treatment of the universities.

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It is our philosophy that too many categories create a numbering problem and are less useful for information retrieval purposes. As long as the classification scheme is used in conjunction with a shelf list that delineates the specific titles of general publications, the .2 can be used broadly for publications that do not fit into the other categories.

4. Whenever it was consistent with our alphabetical and numerical sequence, we attempted to adhere to Houk's classification designations. However, since our scheme is more comprehensive, this was not always desirable or practical.

5. The hallmarks of any dynamic classification scheme must always be flexibility, consistency, comprehensiveness and above all usefulness. These are the goals that we strived to adhere to when creating this classification . We do not claim that our scheme is completely comprehensive and at times were forced to be inconsistent with our stated methodology. However, we do hope that we have provided documents librarians in the State of Ohio with a useful resource tool for classifying and facilitating the retrieval of Ohio documents.

It is our understanding that the State Library will issue supplements to the classification scheme as publications are initiated and departmental reorganizations take place. This procedure should provide Ohio documents librarians with a dynamic classification scheme that constantly reflects the current status of Ohio's departments, divisions and independent agencies. All suggestions for additions or corrections are encouraged and should be directed to the State Library's Documents specialist.

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