EPC Exhibit 138-12.1

February 27, 2015

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Dewey Section

To: Jonathan Furner, Chair

 Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee

Cc: Members of the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee

 Karl E. Debus-López, Chief, U.S. Programs, Law, and Literature Division

From: Rebecca Green, Assistant Editor

Dewey Decimal Classification

OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc.

Via: Michael Panzer, Editor in Chief

 Dewey Decimal Classification

 OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc.

Re: 000 as assignable number

Over the past several years the question has periodically arisen whether 000 is an assignable number. This question arose most recently in conjunction with EPC Exhibit 137-12.2 Institutional repositories, where we considered the possibility of using “000, as a number representing a group of subjects so broad that even a broad specific subject cannot be defined.” In conjunction with this option we noted, “It has not been general practice at the Library of Congress to assign 000, although no directions are given not to use it. Our colleagues at Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, however, have assigned the number and suggest that if it is not meant to be used, some instruction to that effect should be given.”

**Should 000 be designated as an assignable number?**

Designating 000 as an assignable number is supported by the following factors:

* 000 is a syntactically well-formed DDC number
* The number is listed in the schedules, complete with caption
* The number is available through dewey.info (which is meant to be limited to assignable numbers)
* No notes appear at the schedule entry to prohibit its use

Not designating 000 as an assignable number is supported by the following factors:

* The notes that instruct classifiers to class a topic with the subject always designate the range of (assignable) numbers as 001–999 (or some subset thereof)
* The scope (“Description and appraisal of intellectual activity in general”) and class-here (“Class here discussion of ideas from many fields, interdisciplinary approach to knowledge “) notes at 001 Knowledge show it to be the relevant choice for much of what 000 might be considered appropriate for
* The scatter class-elsewhere note (“Class a compilation of knowledge in a specific form with the form, e.g., encyclopedias 030”) at 001 Knowledge indicates that any compilation of knowledge resources in a single form should be classed in the number for the form (in EPC 137-12.2 we decided with respect to institutional repositories that “form” can be interpreted broadly)

We believe that 001 and its notes account for practically every felt need for using 000 as an assignable number and that designating 000 as an assignable number would therefore be redundant.

**How should the assignability status of 000 be communicated?**

If, as we recommend, 000 is *not* to be treated as an assignable number, one or more notes could be added at 000 Computer science, information, general works to indicate this.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The only somewhat similar circumstances in the DDC occur at 201.52, 201.53, 780.268, and 780.269, each of which contains a note of the following form:

Use this number only for building other numbers, e.g., . . .  ; never use it by itself

But such a note would not apply at 000, as 000 is never used for building other numbers.

What we need instead at 000 are two notes: (1) a Manual-like note (because it will be unique to 000) that states unequivocally that 000 cannot be used and (2) a class-elsewhere note leading to 001. We propose the following:

 000 Computer science, information, general works

Do not use this number for classifying works or for number building

Class works treating a broad compilation of subjects in 001

1. Alternatively, a Manual note for 001 vs. 000 might be created. However, since notes in schedule entries are preferable to Manual notes, and since the information that needs to be communicated is straightforward, we will not consider the possibility of a Manual note further. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)