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LIS 882

Fall 2020

**Individual Report**

As with any group project, there was definitely an adjustment period as everyone found their roles. I also think there was a lot of uncertainty but once the MAP was mostly filled in, it became a lot easier to figure out what to do. We also flip-flopped our decision between VRACore and MODS a lot and that seemed to be based in what made people more comfortable rather than what was best for the project. I’m happy we settled on MODS because it is the best choice for our specific collection (focusing on born digital photographs). I’m also glad I found the DublinCore/MODS crosswalk (adapted from the Miller textbook) online because it made it a lot easier to move forward. It was a lot broader than we needed it to be, but it was easy to adapt it to our needs.

I think the area our group could improve on is decisiveness and communication. At the beginning, I felt like I was very alone in making suggestions without any feedback, which made it difficult to start. Isa did a good job of asking a lot of questions, but Emily was pretty unresponsive until the last week or so. She did explain that she was overwhelmed with other classes, which is understandable, but it does create a difficult dynamic when two of the three are making decisions without the other group member. However, within the last week she did a lot of work in checking our metadata records against each other’s and the MAP. This was helpful because my weakness was definitely double-checking the small details.

The biggest topic of debate was the difference between dateCreated and dateCaptured in MODS. A large part of the problem is that the definitions are purposely vague and can apply to many situations. However, in our situation, I did not think that dateCaptured was relevant. In the Miller MODS chapter, it says "dateCreated" is the known date of creation" and "dateCaptured" is "the date on which the resource was digitized or a subsequent/additional snapshot was taken" (Miller, 2011, pp. 178–179). I thought it would be dateCreated in this case because it's when the image was created not recorded or digitized. However, both Emily and Isa insisted it was dateCaptured. Eventually, we resolved it by consulting the professor who admitted that the terms were vague but dateCreated should work in our case. I think if we had done this assignment individually, we all would have gone with our first instinct and our documents would differ slightly as a result.

After this assignment, I have a better appreciation for the simplicity of Dublin Core and the complexity of MODS. Working with them side to side like this really put into perspective their benefits and shortcomings. I also have a better understanding of how and why metadata can vary so widely, even within a single institution. For instance, one group member insisted on using the MODS element “classification” even though the others thought “subject” was sufficient. Ultimately, you can strongly suggest proper use of elements, but the final decision is usually up to the individual cataloger. All of the group followed the MAP but we still made subjective choices and prioritized some details over others. I also realized that, as much as you try, a MAP/Crosswalk will never be perfect and can never truly account for every situation. This realization is both frustrating and relieving because I now truly understand how subjective and variable metadata can be when created by humans.

**Resources**

Miller, S. J. (2011). *Dublin Core, MODS, and VRA Element Mappings*. ALA Store; ALA.org. <https://www.alastore.ala.org/sites/default/files/MDC_DC-MODS-VRA_Mapping_Table.pdf>

Miller, S. J. (2011). *Metadata for digital collections: A how-to-do-it manual*. Neal-Schuman Publishers.