

## Better consistency of the UDC system moving Medicine from section 61 to section 4

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**Abstract:** Over 45 years ago it was decided to move the class 4 for Language to the section 8 together with Literature. Since then class 4 has not been used. A recent master thesis at the school of librarianship in Borås, "UDC, A Proposal to Basic Class 4" by Fredrik Hultqvist, (Magisteruppsats; 2006:39) proved the possibility of moving Medicine from the section 61 to the empty class 4. This is not a new idea, but has never been implemented. Reasons are given to support this proposal, based on the need to find a better collocation of the subject while at the same time providing a solution for shorter notations.

**Keywords:** UDC revision, Medicine in UDC.

### 1. Introduction

One important requirement of a good classification system is that notations are as short as possible. Lengthy notations make the system more difficult to use. Therefore, we should pay attention to all the changes of the system and see if they are according to this principle, not forgetting, of course, to other important classification principles and canons.

Another important requirement is that we use the space available in the schedules as much as it is possible, without leaving empty places at the first levels of subdivision.

We all know that section 4 has been empty for 43 years. It is a long time. The decision of moving section 4 for language to section 8 together with literature was done 45 years ago. It was improved in 1964. Since then section 4 has not been used.

The fact that section 4 has been empty for a long time, being a class that could be used for a main discipline when we only have ten classes available, is no longer acceptable if we want the UDC to survive.

The future of UDC relies also in these apparently not so important issues. For many librarians it is important to see how the UDC uses its possibilities of notation economically and in a balanced way. It makes it possible for better search methods, arrangements in the shelves and so on.

### 2. Current research and earlier proposals

A recent master thesis at the school of librarianship in Borås, "*UDC, A Proposal to Basic Class 4*" by Fredrik Hultqvist (Magisteruppsats ; 2006:39) proved the possibility of moving medicine from section 61 to the empty class 4. This idea is not new. It has been suggested from time to time, but without success until now.

Fredrik Hultqvist has analyzed the discussions before and directly after the change of Language from section 4 to section 8. For a long time almost nothing happened in this matter. Later in the 90's some proposals appeared and medicine became a strong candidate to be moved into section 4.

Fredric Hultqvist (2005: p. 33) has gone through the P-notes and other documents from FID and the UDC. He found that Lloyd and Dubuc had proposed to move four classes from section 6 to section 4. They were 61 (medicine), 63 (agriculture), 64 (home economics) and 65 (business). I find this proposal logical, but it solves only part of the problem as medicine and the mentioned disciplines remain part of a larger section.

Hultqvist (2005: p. 34) reports also about la McIlwaine's proposal to move six classes from the main sections 5 and 6 and even from class 1. The proposal of McIlwaine kept medicine still together with some other technical classes such as 63. The positive aspect identified from her proposal was the proximity to biological disciplines.

### **3. The new revision of Medicine**

#### **The proposal by N.J. Williamson**

We have had the possibility of following the tremendous work of restructuring class 61 - Medicine. Every year since 1999 parts of the restructuring of medicine have been published in *Extensions and Corrections to the UDC* and the work came to an end in 2006. We must be very thankful for the time spent in making the restructuring of class 61. I think Nancy Williamson who has undertaken the task of revision of the whole discipline of Medicine could have benefited from a decision of moving Medicine before she started the revision work. Nevertheless, the work is already done. It remains to be tested out in the practical work in libraries and this is why my proposal today is to move class 61 Medicine to class 4, before the actual restructuring work of applying it begins in libraries.

#### **Hultqvist's and my proposal**

My proposal, which is in accordance with the research conducted by Hultqvist, is simple and easy to make, keeping the rest of the classes untouched and keeping the subsections of Medicine in the same place as they are in the proposed revision and possible forthcoming changes.

#### **Three practical reasons to move Medicine to section 4**

There is a strong reason that can facilitate the change just now. Medicine has been subjected to readjustments and proposals of change presented during a period of years in *Extensions and Corrections to the UDC* and this work is more or less completed. The change of notation 61 with notation 4 does not make the work done for the revision of medicine obsolete; on the contrary, it facilitates the change in libraries as they anyway need to change the notations of the entire discipline, with some exceptions. The move to class 4 facilitates the restructuring of the class also for librarians as they don't need to remember or mix with the old notations.

The second reason is that the change from 61 to 4 makes medicine a digit shorter in all the subdivisions. This is an opportunity which will not appear again.

The third practical reason is that it makes space free in Technology, which has been overcrowded.

#### **4. The theoretical approach**

The theoretical reason to move Medicine from the technical section 6 can be found analysing some other classification systems. It seems that only the Dewey system, and therefore UDC, has Medicine together with other practical technical disciplines in the same section. Other systems have Medicine as a main discipline with a division of its own.

For many people "Medicine" should come after "Natural Sciences", close to "Biology". On the other hand, this is not so important when we only have ten main divisions available. More important, nevertheless, is that a discipline is not far away from related disciplines. This was just one of the arguments of moving the old section 4 Language to section 8 together with Literature. Philosophy and Religion are placed after each other; although in systems other than the UDC in the reverse order, but still close to each other.

Therefore, moving section 61 to class 4 does not change so much the structure of the UDC system. On the other hand, it benefits from the separation from Applied Sciences and Technology which contains subjects of very little relation to Medicine.

These changes facilitate the later use of section 61 for the purpose of adding a theoretical approach to applied sciences or to some of the new coming technological subjects.

Fredrik Hultqvist (2005: p. 30 ff) looked at different systems such as Spencer Classification of Sciences (1864) and found Medicine as part of Biology.

Looking at the LCC, he found R for Medicine and T for Technology with S for Agriculture in between. The same happens with the Swedish classification system where Technology is placed in P and Medicine in V. Even in Bliss classification is Medicine placed in section H Physical anthropology, human biology and health sciences, while technology and engineering are placed in section U/V. Ranganathan placed Medicine in section L in his Colon Classification, while engineering is to be found in section D.

I hope that this short presentation is enough to explain my argument that there are no concrete reasons for keeping Medicine in 61 together with other technical subjects any longer.

Proposal in E&C 61	The new section 4	Medicine
611	41	Anatomy and physiology
612	42	Health sciences, Medical sciences
613	43	Health
614	44	Clinical medicine and Pathology
615	45	Diseases and pathology
616/619	46/49	Parts, organs, systems of the body
617	47	Cardiovascular system. Nervous system. Glandular system
618	48	
619	49	Digestive system. Alimentary system. Nutrition process

**Table I** Medicine main subdivisions (Source: *Extensions and Corrections to the UDC*, 1999-2006)

Proposal in E&C 61	The new section 4	Medicine
611.5	415	Biophysics of the human organism
612.1/.3	421/423	The health professions
612.5	425	Technical procedures, materials and equipments
613.1/.4	431/434	Health, Hygiene and preventive medicine
613.5/.9	435/439	Curative medicine
614.8	448	Surgery
614.9	449	Systems, schools of therapy. Alternativ medicin
615.11/.15	451.1/.5	Pathology
615.64	456.4	Meningitis
615.8	458	
615.862	458.62	Diabetes and metabolic disorders
615.933.241.1	459.332.411	General allergies
616/619	46/49	Parts, organs, systems of the body
616.1-51	461-51	Head and neck
616.9	469	Skin, dermatology, cutaneous system
617.1/.5	471/475	Cardiovascular system
617.6/.9	476/479	Nervous system, Neurology
617.8	478	Central nervous system
617.9	479	Sense organs and special senses
618.112	481.12	Endocrine system
618.2/.5	482/485	Respiratory system
618.55	485.5	Diaphragm
619	49	Digestive system. Alimentary system. Nutrition process
619.1	491	Digestive system
619.3	493	Dental system. Dentistry. Odontology
619.321.2	493.212	Dental hygiene

**Table II** Some other subdivisions of Medicine (Source: *Extensions and Corrections to the UDC*, 1999-2006)

## 5. The importance of shortness and mnemonics in the UDC system

When we choose a placement for a discipline or a class and make subclasses in a hierarchical way adding a new digit, we are at the same time looking for a way of making the notation shorter.

Therefore, we use slash to shorten the length of the notations throughout the schedules of the UDC. Instead of using a notation and dividing it with a new digit, we create the general class by putting together the first and the last number of belonging subclasses. This has been done all the time because we believe that shortness of notations play an important role.

Example: 662.1/.4 with subclasses 662.1 662.2 662.3 662.4  
Instead of: 662.1 and subclasses 662.11 662.12 662.13 662.14

We even use another way of shortening notations, for instance, using a number for a subject and the continuation of numbers in the same array for subdivisions of that subject. One example in earlier editions of the UDC is 598.2 for Birds. We could use 598.3 and subsequent numbers for different kinds of birds. This is not possible in the new tables, but is a good example of the possibilities of the system. Another example still in use is 592 for *Invertebrata* with subdivisions 593, 594 and 595 instead of 592.3, 592.4 and 592.4.

This way of assigning numbers breaks the hierarchical principle, but it is a good economic practice in cases where there is empty space available in the same array. The notation could be very long if we apply the hierarchical principle strictly for every new subdivision. This is also used in the Swedish classification system SAB, where you can find *ljc* for musical instruments in general and *ljd*, *lje*, etc., for specific kinds of instruments.

Another aspect is mnemonics: a shorter notation is always easier to remember. This is also a reason for implementing the proposal.

## 6. Another useful subject relocation in the UDC which is easy to make

All over UDC there is a need for not making the notation longer than necessary. A good example of another possible change with small relocation problems is the class 159.9 for Psychology, which should benefit from moving to 19, thus making the notation two digits shorter while at the same time moving it from being in between different philosophical subjects to a place of itself. No other changes are needed within the class to make this possible.

I have not investigated the initial reason behind changing the notation of Psychology from 15 as it is in the DDC to 159.9 in UDC. Today the decision seems awkward. Many people would like to see Psychology separated from Philosophy, instead of being between a sub-subject of philosophy. As there are still two subdivisions available after 17 the change would not influence the rest of the schedule.

<b>Today 1</b>	<b>Proposal 1</b>	<b>Philosophy, Psychology</b>
		<b>Unchanged</b>
11	11	Metaphysics
122/129	122/129	Special metaphysics
13	13	Philosophy of mind and spirit. Metaphysics of spiritual life
14	14	Philosophical systems and points of view
16	16	Logic. Epistemology. Theory of knowledge. Methodology of logic
17	17	Moral philosophy. Ethics. Practical philosophy
		<b>Proposed changes</b>
<b>159.9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Psychology</b>
159.91	191	Psychophysiology (physiological psychology). Mental physiology
159.92	192	Mental development and capacity. Comparative psychology
159.922.7	192.27	Child psychology. Paedology. Paedopsychology
159.929	192.9	Biopsychology. Comparative psychology
159.93	193	Sensation. Sensory perception
159.95	195	Higher mental processes
159.96	196	Special mental states and processes
159.963	196.3	Sleep and dreams
159.97	197	Abnormal psychology
159.98	198	Applied psychology (psychotechnology)in general

**Table III** The possible relocation of Psychology

## References

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**Hultqvist, F.** (2006) *UDK: ett förslag till huvudklass 4* [UDC : a proposal to basic class 4]. Borås : Högsk. i Borås, Bibliotekshögskolan/Biblioteks- och informationsvetenskap. (Magisteruppsats i biblioteks- och informationsvetenskap vid Bibliotekshögskolan/ Biblioteks- och informationsvetenskap; 2006:39).

[End]