UNDERSTANDING LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CALL NUMBERS
• It’s like an address – it tells you were to find a book on the shelf
• Each book in the library has a call number. It’s usually attached to the spine.
• The call number is also part of a book’s record in the on-line catalog.
WHAT DOES A CALL NUMBER MEAN?

BOOKS ARE ARRANGED BY SUBJECT, OR “CLASS”. THE FIRST PORTION OF A CALL NUMBER REPRESENTS THE SUBJECT OF THE BOOK.

A – General Works
B - Religion, Philosophy, Psychology
C – General History
D – Old World History
E – United States History
F – History of the Americas
G – Geography, Anthropology, Recreation
H – Social Sciences
J – Political Science
K – General Law
L – Education
M – Music
N – Fine Arts
P – Language and Literature
Q – Science
R – Medicine
S – Agriculture
T – Technology
U – Military
V – Naval
Z – Bibliographies, Library Science
THE SECOND SECTION OF THE CALL NUMBER OFTEN REPRESENTS THE AUTHOR’S NAME. THE LAST SECTION IS THE DATE OF PUBLICATION.

On the Road
by Jack Kerouac
PS 3521 .E735 O5 1991

PS 3521 -- American literature, 1900 – 1960
.E735 – Author’s last name (Kerouac)
O5 – Title (On the Road)
1991 – Publication date
HOW DO I READ A CALL NUMBER?

PS- Read this line in alphabetical order (e.g. NQ, NX, P, PA... PR, PS,...)

3521- Read the second line as a whole number (e.g. 3, 30, 30.2, 333, 3000)

.E735- Read the letter alphabetically. Read the number as a decimal (e.g. .6, .63, .7, .735, .8)

O5 - Same as above

1991- Year of publication. Read chronologically
Sometimes the call number will have a prefix to indicate the book is shelved someplace other than the stacks.

- **ref** – Shelved in the Reference Room on the main floor of the Library
- **cmc** – Shelved in the Curriculum Materials Center (CMC) on the bottom floor of the library
- **cmc juv** – Shelved in the juvenile literature section of the CMC
- **cmc text** – Shelved with K-12 textbooks in the CMC
- **rr** – Shelved in Recreational Reading in the group study area on the main floor of the Library
- **Music Library** – Shelved in the Reference Room with scores

Items in these collections have stickers near their call numbers.

- **Graphic Novels** – Shelved in the group study area on the main floor of the Library
- **Levy-Loewenstein Holocaust Collection** – Shelved on the 3rd floor of the Library
Additional Shelving Rules

- Nothing comes before something
- No date becomes before date
- Volumes are compared before copies
- Copies are compared before dates