Understanding Call Numbers in the University of Nevada, Reno Libraries

Read the call number line by line. Read the third line (& fourth, if there is one) as a decimal (e.g. C35 comes before C4).

What is a call number?

Books (as well as journals and any materials that accompany books) are arranged on the shelf by call numbers (alphabetically from A-Z). The call number is a unique identifier and is created using the Library of Congress Classification System. The rationale behind this alphanumeric system is to classify books by subject both broadly and specifically.

How to read a call number

A call number may be followed by:
- Year of publication
- Volume number
- Copy number

Note: This call number will be found vertically on the spine (or cover) of a book:

In this call number: HN is the class for Social history and conditions; 90 is the number for the United States; P8 is for public opinion; C35 is for the author’s name (Caldwell); and 2006 is the publication date.

General Outline of Library of Congress Classification System*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>CALL #</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNR Main Library</td>
<td>HN90.P8_C35_2006</td>
<td>NOT CHK'D OUT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*For a complete outline of the Library of Congress Classification System, go to: http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/lcco.html