Modern Language Association MLA

Dear Colleague,

You don't need me to tell you that the academy is going through one of the most difficult periods in its history. The MLA has responded to the current situation with additional travel grants for members who are most affected, with data on the realities we face, and with an online tool kit (http://www.mla.org/advocacy_kit) to give members the reports, guidelines, and information they need to advocate for changes in the academic workforce.

I write now to announce another major initiative. The Program Committee has just designated 6 January 2011, the first day of the Los Angeles convention, as a focal point for a series of panels and workshops on the theme The Academy in Hard Times. The Executive Council and several MLA committees have already begun planning sessions and a forum that will offer attendees insights on the situation and strategies for effective action.

We need the support of all 30,000 MLA members for this special initiative. Please plan to be there, and please submit sessions for consideration. Sessions on the topic can be proposed by individual members and by divisions, discussion groups, the American Literature Section, and allied and affiliate organizations. Special-session forms are now available on the MLA Web site; program copy forms will be available by the end of February. The staff members of the convention office (convention@mla.org) are happy to answer your questions about submitting session proposals.

No matter what your status in the profession is, I ask you to join together with your fellow members to take this important step in helping ensure the future of the academy.

Cordially,

Rosemary G. Feal

Rosemary G. Feal