

Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography*  
Annual Report for 2011–12

### CHARGE

The Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography* (MLAIB) assesses the direction and philosophy of the *Bibliography*; advises the staff on policies and procedures for compiling and producing the *Bibliography* and on changes in its scope, methods, technology, or form; and aids in identifying and recruiting bibliographers from the academy.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS (2011–12)

William Baker, Mildred Jackson, James R. Kelly (minutes), Gesa E. Kirsch, Eduardo Lolo, Brian Vetruba (chair), Sarah G. Wenzel

### ANNUAL COMMITTEE MEETING

The committee met on 31 October–1 November 2011.

#### **A. Old Business**

##### 1. 2010 Statistics

The statistical package noted that 68,338 records were added for the calendar year 2010. As in previous years, the greatest number of citations (27,657) was added to European, Asian, African, and Latin American literatures.

The significant increase from 2009 to 2010 was attributed to the ten-month indexing year for 2009 compared to the twelve-month year for 2010.

A significant decrease was noted in coverage from 2009 to 2010 for some major classification areas: –35.21 percent for English Caribbean; –8.82 percent for African; and –4.06 percent for British/Irish. The advisory committee and MLA staff were asked to continue to monitor these trends and address them if they continue. Substantial increases were also noted: 63.25 percent for Commonwealth; 25.13 percent for Southern European; and 18.70 percent for Central European.

One hundred sixty-eight periodicals and 54 electronic journals were added to the 2010 Master List. In addition, 977 new non–Master List periodicals were added. One hundred four periodicals were dropped.

##### 2. Bibliography Session at the 2012 Convention

The session “How to Search the *MLA International Bibliography* like an Expert” was organized for the 2012 convention in Seattle. Gary Godfrey presided; product managers from Gale and ProQuest were present. Barbara Chen covered EBSCO.

Advisory committee members were asked to provide Chen with some sample search queries and issues for vendors to use and discuss during the session.

### 3. Foreign Dissertations

There has been discussion that not enough foreign dissertations are included in the *MLAIB*. ProQuest's Dissertation Abstracts International had been the main source, but not much foreign content is included. The committee mentioned some other possible sources to investigate, such as foreign journals that list dissertations in particular fields; DART (<http://www.dart-europe.eu/About/info.php>), a European portal to online European theses and dissertations; and Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (German National Library; <https://portal.dnb.de/>). An abstract is required for each dissertation entry in the *MLAIB*.

## B. Director's Report (Barbara Chen)

### 1. Field Bibliographers

There are 123 active bibliographers; of whom 93 contributed citations for 2010. Twenty-two field bibliographers were appointed and 11 dropped in 2010. Eight MLA Bibliography Fellowships for the term 2011–14 were awarded.

Helen Slavin and Barbara Chen continue to provide training to field bibliographers; 20 sessions were conducted using Teamviewer, which allows the trainer and the bibliographer to interact and view each other's screens remotely. Sessions were also conducted for bibliographers in Pakistan and Israel.

*Bibliography* staff member Daniel Connor has updated the field bibliographer's manual; the update will be released soon.

A need for bibliographers for Arabic materials was noted.

### 2. *Directory of Periodicals* (David Wright)

The MLA *Directory of Periodicals* is available online to all members via the MLA Web site as well as through the *MLAIB* vendors. The MLA is looking at how to integrate the *Directory* in discovery services.

The criteria for titles being added have been expanded. For example, a mathematics journal that occasionally has articles on literature topics can be added. There is also more flexibility with regard to format and numbering. The advisory committee felt that the change in criteria was a step forward.

The committee discussed whether "middle-state" publications, which are a cross between a blog and a journal, should be included. It was decided to table this until the discussion about indexing scholarly Web sites is taken up.

### 3. The MLA's Office of Scholarly Communication

Chen noted the establishment of the MLA's Office of Scholarly Communication, headed by Kathleen Fitzpatrick. The office is working on establishing the MLA Commons, a blog-like discussion platform for members that would include member profiles, discussion forums, and ties to convention sessions.

#### 4. New Edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*

The next edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* is being planned. The advisory committee was asked for feedback; Chen will forward specific questions to the group by e-mail.

### C. Scholarly Web Site Index

The MLA staff began soliciting members earlier in 2011 for suggestions of scholarly Web sites to be added to the *MLAIB*. Members can search these listings directly from the MLA Web site or in the *MLAIB* database.

The question of whether to include blogs, portals, personal Web sites, or Web sites for which there is no clear author or sponsoring agency was addressed. After reviewing examples, the committee decided on the following basic criteria for inclusion:

- the author or sponsoring agency must be clearly identified with appropriate credentials
- the Web site must contain original scholarly content or scholarly apparatus, including tools that add utility to a text
- the Web site must fall within the scope of the *Bibliography*, as determined by an indexer

Blogs, personal Web sites, and portal sites will not be included.

Chen volunteered to draft a proposal and circulate it to the group via e-mail. [After the advisory committee's 2011 meeting, members approved the text of the criteria. They have been posted to the MLA Web site: <http://www.mla.org/scholarlyWeb sites include>]

It was suggested that next year's advisory committee review the "Guidelines for the Inclusion of Electronic Journals."

### D. Template vs. Volume

Chen and MLA staff members introduced the eight new templates for classification and indexing in the *MLAIB*:

- templates 1–5: National Literatures
- template 6: Language
- template 7: Pedagogy/Profession
- template 8: General

These templates are to replace the print "volume" classification, which became obsolete with the elimination of printed volumes. The advisory committee agreed to implementation of this template classification in 2012.

The new template structure eliminates duplicative double strings. Furthermore, the new system allows for equal classification of more than one author. Chen and her staff will update the *Manual for Field Bibliographers*.

For next year's meeting, the advisory committee would like to review the effectiveness of the templates. In addition, the committee would like to look at multiple genres and how pedagogy is being classified. The committee felt that at some point in the future the entire indexing system should be reviewed.

### **E. Discovery Services**

Chen reported that the *MLAIB* has been or is in the process of being integrated into the following discovery services: OCLC's WorldCat Local, EBSCO Discovery Service, Ex Libris Primo Central, and Serials Solutions Summon. There has been a considerable delay by Serials Solutions in implementing the integration.

The licenses that the MLA negotiated require institutional subscriptions to the *MLAIB*, authentication of institutional users, and clear branding of *MLAIB* citations.

### **F. 2013 Convention Sessions**

The advisory committee has organized the following session at the 2013 convention: "Indexing for the *MLA International Bibliography*: Perspectives from the Field," which is being held Thursday, 3 January 2013 from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

Session Description: New and experienced field bibliographers (librarians, professors of literature, independent scholars) discuss how indexing for the *MLA Bibliography* has affected their careers and how their careers inform the indexing process. The panel will provide historical context for the bibliography, as well as technical discussions of the indexing process and database design. Fellowships will also be discussed. Session speakers include Matthew Harrick, William Baker, James Raymond Kelly, and Susan Oliver.

The advisory committee also has organized "Effective Subject Searching in the *MLA International Bibliography*," which is being held Friday, 4 January 2013 from 1:45 to 3:00 p.m. Barbara Chen and Greg Grazevich are session speakers.

### **G. New Record Type for Translations**

In an e-mail message dated 15 March 2012, Chen queried advisory committee members about whether there should be a new scholarly edition / translation record type in the *MLAIB* or whether editions and translations should be separated out as two distinct record types. Members were unanimous in support of two separate record types, one for scholarly editions and one for translations. This change will be implemented in the October 2012 update.

## H. New Business

1. Date for the next committee meeting. The fall 2012 meeting of the Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography* will be held 29–30 October 2012.
2. Topics for *MLA International Bibliography* Discussion Group at the American Library Association 2012 Mid-Winter Meeting. Sarah Wenzel, convener of this group, solicited topic ideas. Integration of the *MLAIB* in resource discovery tools, such as EBSCO's EDS and Serials Solutions' Summon, was suggested.
3. Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Liaison to the MLA. In her role as ACRL liaison to the MLA, Wenzel asked the advisory committee whether there were topics or issues from the MLA that needed to be brought to the ACRL's attention as well as ideas on what else she can do to fulfill her role as liaison. Advisory committee members were asked to e-mail her with suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Vetruba  
Chair (2011–12), Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography*

23 September 2012