

In 2013, under the leadership of the Executive Council, the association made progress on three major initiatives: rethinking doctoral education, revising the division and discussion group structure, and providing leadership on careers beyond the college classroom. The fiscal year 2012–13 saw a surplus in the unrestricted and restricted funds, a result of higher than expected revenue and reductions in spending along with deferral of some expenses into the following year.

The Executive Council authorized the creation of the Office of Scholarly Communication in 2011. A grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation enabled the office to initiate work on *MLA Commons*, an interactive platform that will give members new opportunities to disseminate scholarship and undertake collaborations. The *Commons* was launched at the 2013 convention; to date, around 10% of MLA members have participated.

The 2013 convention in Boston was the third to be held on the new January dates. Attendance figures were strong, and participants enjoyed cultural excursions and special pre-convention workshops. A THATCamp (The Humanities and Technology Camp) affiliated with the convention took place at Northeastern University. Convention attendees reacted positively to the MLA's meeting in Boston, the first since 1952.

The first seven sections of this report discuss the activities of the MLA in 2013. The eighth and last section lists the actions taken by the 2013 Delegate Assembly and indicates what has been done to implement those actions.

### MLA Convention

Maribeth T. Kraus, director of convention programs, plans for and organizes the MLA's annual convention and other association conferences. She reports that the final count of attendees at the 2013 convention in Boston was 7,713. Of this number, 1,880 (24.4%) were graduate students and 133 (1.7%) were emeritus members. The convention program broke down as follows: 289 special sessions, linked sessions, and forums organized by members (including the presidential forum and its linked sessions); 262 division and discussion group sessions, 53 MLA committee sessions, and 158 allied organization sessions (81 of these 473 sessions were nonguaranteed sessions that the Program Committee approved); and 31 special events and social events.

### **Plans for the 2014 Convention in Chicago**

As of 17 October 3,784 people had registered for the Chicago convention. (Last year at this time, we had 31 more registrants.) General information about the convention is available at the MLA Web site, along with convention registration and housing reservation forms. Travel arrangements can also be made through the MLA Web site. To date, 97.3% of registrants have registered at the MLA Web site; 2.7% have chosen to mail in their forms. Approximately 60.7% of the registrants are regular members, 23.4% are student members, 6.8% are unemployed members or members employed part-time, 3.8% are members residing outside the United States and Canada, and 2% are

emeritus members. The remaining registrants (3.3%) are nonmembers. Members were given priority discounted access to convention registration through the MLA Web site. Many members took advantage of this service: 1,132 members (4% of the total membership) registered at the Web site in September. Thus far 112 exhibit booths have been sold, which is 4 fewer than last year at this time. The convention program was mailed in mid-October and became available at the MLA Web site on 18 September.

### **Future Conventions**

The 2015 MLA Annual Convention will be held from 8 through 11 January in Vancouver. Members must submit 2015 calls for papers through the MLA Web site. The submission system posts calls for papers as members submit them online.

### **Honors and Awards**

Each year at the convention, the association recognizes outstanding achievements in scholarship. This year we plan to award 16 publication prizes, including the William Riley Parker Prize for an outstanding essay in *PMLA*. A total of 611 titles competed for publication prizes this year. Two hundred twenty-nine (37.5%) of these titles competed for either the James Russell Lowell Prize or the MLA Prize for a First Book. Seventy-five (12.3%) competed for the Lois Roth Award for a translation of a literary work. The number of publications that competed for the remainder of the awards was 307 (50.2%).

Graduate Student Travel Reimbursement Grants are available each year for graduate students. The association allocated funds for up to 300 awards in 2013. We received 394 applications for travel to the January 2013 convention; all of the applicants were eligible. (The number of eligible applicants for 2013 convention grants was up 14.5% from the previous year.) Of the eligible applicants, 273 attended the convention and received grants, 27 fewer than we had budgeted for.

Travel Grants for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members or Unemployed Members are also available; the association allocated funds for up to 100 awards in 2013. We received 106 applications for the January 2013 convention; all of the applicants were eligible. Since 41 applicants did not attend the convention, we awarded a total of 65 grants, 35 fewer than the budget allowed for.

Regular and life members who reside outside the United States and Canada and who planned to attend the 2013 convention could apply for a third type of travel grant. We received twenty-eight applications, and all applicants were eligible. Twenty of the eligible applicants received grants; eight did not attend the convention.

## MLA Publications

### ***MLA International Bibliography***

The *MLA International Bibliography* continues to be available as a subscription database through three vendors: EBSCO, ProQuest, and Cengage (Gale). Sales results for the fiscal year 2012–13 are still being calculated but are expected to equal the previous year's income. The *Bibliography* is also available through four discovery services: Worldcat Local (OCLC), EBSCO

Discovery Service, Primo Central (ExLibris), and Summon (Serials Solution). Inclusion on these platforms provides greater exposure to *Bibliography* records, especially to undergraduate students.

MLA staff members and 83 scholar-bibliographers from the field (16 distinguished bibliographers, 10 senior bibliographers, 53 bibliographers, and 4 assistant bibliographers) indexed print and electronic publications for the 2012 file. In the past year 22 new field bibliographers participated in an online training program to introduce them to *Bibliography* rules and procedures.

The 2012 file closed with a total of 66,357 records. The first 2013 file was sent to vendors in early February. As of the April 2013 retrospective update, over 47,000 publisher-provided abstracts were made available to our electronic subscribers. Digitization of the 1970–75 MLA abstracts volumes was completed in May 2013. The number of *Bibliography* records containing full-text links continues to grow; in April, they represented almost 13% of the total number of citations, which number over 2.5 million records. There are now links to more than 49,000 Project Muse articles, more than 69,000 online dissertations deposited in ProQuest’s Dissertations and Theses database, and more than 140,000 JSTOR articles.

License agreements signed with DeGruyter, Waxmann, Intellect Books, Wiley-Blackwell, Palgrave-Macmillan, and Taylor & Francis/Routledge have allowed us to further expand the number of full-text links and abstracts in the database. Libraries that subscribe to these services are able to give their users seamless access to full text. The *Bibliography* now includes over 263,000 digital object identifiers.

The *Directory of Periodicals*, available at the MLA Web site as a benefit of membership, includes 4,914 active titles (6,824 total), 444 of which are electronic journals. Members also have access to over 1,800 Web sites that are indexed in the *Bibliography*.

In July 2013, the first two online tutorials relating to searching the *MLA Bibliography* were made available to users through the MLA Web site, *Bibliography’s Facebook* page, and *MLA Commons*. They are entitled “What is the *MLA International Bibliography*?” and “How to Search for Names as Subjects in the *MLA Bibliography* on EBSCO.” Another tutorial, “How to Search for Names as Subjects in the *MLA Bibliography* on ProQuest” was added later in the summer. More tutorials are expected throughout the year.

The tenth group of *Bibliography* fellows was appointed in April, and new fellows received online training during the summer. One 2009 fellow completed the fellowship requirements and was recognized during the awards ceremony at the 2013 MLA convention in Boston.

### **Scholarly Communication**

Kathleen Fitzpatrick, director of scholarly communication, reports the expansion of significant digital initiatives for disseminating MLA publications and increasing their impact, as well as for increasing the visibility of members’ work and facilitating member-to-member engagement. Most significant among these initiatives is *MLA Commons*, a growing platform for scholarly communication that launched at the annual convention in January 2013. By the end of the four-day meeting, 500 members had created accounts, and many had begun using the new network as a means of continuing conversations they’d begun during convention sessions. Just over eight

months later, the site has over 2,750 registered members who are communicating with one another in 230 groups and reaching out to the world via more than 100 blogs.

Among the numerous projects already being hosted by *MLA Commons* is the MLA's first entirely online open-access collection of essays, *Literary Studies in the Digital Age*. The platform also hosts a range of member initiatives, including a reading group in Early Modern French Studies and the dissertations-in-progress being posted by two graduate students. Moreover, the association has begun using the *Commons* as a platform for much of its official communication with the membership. We migrated our biweekly News Digest to the site, and we publish regularly updated blogs by the president, members of the Executive Council, the executive director, and the director of research. The MLA has received a planning grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, under the auspices of which the second phase of *Commons* development will begin.

The office continues to oversee the MLA Web site, collaborating with other departments to update existing Web pages and develop new features. This year, in conjunction with staff members from the electronic production and information technology departments, the office began planning an upgrade and redesign of the site, including a move to a new content management system. The changes will give members more robust search options and multiple methods for navigating the site. Working with the editorial staff, scholarly communication staff members also update members on association news through the News from the MLA blog. The office is responsible for the online edition of the *Literary Research Guide*, an award-winning annotated listing of reference sources in English literary studies, as well as the online edition of the *MLA Handbook*.

This year, the Office of Scholarly Communication began working on the next generation of MLA documentation style and the new print and digital products through which it will be communicated. The office has also begun development of a new edition of the online *Literary Research Guide*, including a streamlined library licensing model and a new individual licensing plan. We are likewise expanding our plans for e-book development and for electronic publication of *Profession*.

At the January 2013 convention the winner of the first New Variorum Shakespeare Digital Challenge was announced; the MLA is currently sponsoring a second round of this competition. We have released the XML files and schema from both *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Winter's Tale* under a Creative Commons license and invited scholars to submit projects that not only present innovative means of displaying, representing, and exploring the data but also remix those data with another online project, such as the Internet Shakespeare Editions, Open Source Shakespeare, or the Folger Digital Texts.

The association's book publications program continues to publish a diverse set of peer-reviewed books. To support teaching and scholarship in the modern languages and literatures, the MLA publishes reference works, collections of scholarly articles, guides to teaching, textbooks for instruction in foreign languages and English composition, and classroom editions of important texts from around the world in their original language and in English translation. The association maintains a backlist of nearly 300 titles, and book sales continue to provide an important source of revenue. The MLA expects to publish six new titles in its established book series in 2013. New books in the Approaches to Teaching series address the work of authors Carmen Martín Gaité, John

Dryden, and Italo Calvino as well as *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Oroonoko*. The book publications program is beginning to experiment with using *MLA Commons* as a venue for the open development of new titles while continuing to produce rigorously reviewed and edited publications in traditional formats.

This year's new titles are as follows:

Brown, Joan L., ed. *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Carmen Martín Gaité*.

Dupuis, Margaret, and Grace Tiffany, eds. *Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew*.

Lewis, Jayne, and Lisa Zunshine, eds., *Approaches to Teaching the Works of John Dryden*.

Price, Kenneth M., and Ray Siemens, eds. *Literary Studies in the Digital Age: An Evolving Anthology*. Online publication.

Ricci, Franco, ed. *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Italo Calvino*.

Richards, Cynthia, and Mary Ann O'Donnell, eds. *Approaches to Teaching Aphra Behn's Oroonoko*.

In addition to these titles, seventeen titles are accepted and in preparation for publication; about eighty new projects are in development.

### ***PMLA***

The 128th volume of *PMLA* is covered in detail in Simon Gikandi's report (see Item No. 5 [f]). The volume includes eighteen regular essays. The special features Criticism in Translation and Little-Known Documents are represented in two of the issues and continue to draw submissions from members. Shorter, commissioned essays appear in nearly every issue under the rubrics Theories and Methodologies and The Changing Profession. The Forum section in the volume comprises nine letters to the editor and four replies from authors.

The January issue begins with Gikandi's Editor's Column about the role that great libraries play for aspiring scholars and continues with five regular essays on various topics. A set of essays under Theories and Methodologies discusses the fourteen published translations of Ferdinand Oyono's classic African novel *Une vie de boy*, while eight essays under The Changing Profession explore how digital technology has changed reading.

In lieu of an Editor's Column, the March issue offers a guest column by Julie Ellison on new initiatives in the public humanities. Her observations are complemented later in the issue by Alan Liu's essay, under The Changing Profession, about the state of the digital humanities. The issue also comprises five regular essays, Theories and Methodologies commentaries on Kenneth Warren's controversial book *What Was African American Literature?*, and four contributions to Criticism in Translation and Little-Known Documents—two of which involved facsimile-style reproductions by

the *PMLA* staff of idiosyncratic historical publications, such as an early Bible with glosses wrapped around and embedded in the text.

After opening with an Editor's Column on critics in exile and with Michael Bérubé's Presidential Address, the May issue features four regular essays. The rubric Theories and Methodologies encompasses twelve essays describing the place of comparatism in humanistic inquiry today and then a portfolio of commentaries assessing Carlos Fuentes's career and influence in the wake of his death. The issue finishes with four more contributions to Criticism in Translation and Little-Known Documents.

In the October number Gikandi's column looks at the linguistic richness to be encountered on a workaday commuter train between New York and New Jersey. The rest of the issue showcases four regular essays and, under Theories and Methodologies, nine essays on current developments in early American studies.

As of 31 August 2013, *PMLA* had received 151 submissions in 2013, down from 162 for the same period in 2012. The acceptance rate for submitted articles is around 9.8%.

As noted above, the November issue of *PMLA*, the print version of the convention program, was mailed in mid-October; it became available on the MLA Web site on 18 September. The mobile version will be available in December.

### ***Profession***

*Profession*, the association's annual journal, appears in December. The executive director serves as editor; Carol Zuses is managing editor. The 2012 issue contains twenty-eight items divided into two sections.

The first section presents the essays from the Presidential Forum that Russell A. Berman organized for the January 2012 convention, Language, Literature, Learning. The section includes Berman's introductory remarks and contributions from Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Christopher Freeburg, Jack Halberstam, B. Venkat Mani, and Imani Perry.

To mark the journal's thirty-fifth anniversary, the second section features a retrospective sampling of articles that illustrate the evolution of the profession and of the professional issues the journal has addressed since its inception in 1977. The section includes articles by Wayne C. Booth; Heidi Byrnes; James A. Castañeda; Erik D. Curren; Reed Way Dasenbrock; Henry Louis Gates, Jr.; Gerald Graff; John Guillory; Carolyn G. Heilbrun; Mara Holt and Leon Anderson; Dorothy James; Claire J. Kramsch; George Levine; Philip Lewis; Alan Liu; Helene Moglen; Christopher Newfield; Mary Louise Pratt; Judith Ryan; Jack H. Schuster; and Donna C. Stanton.

In 2012, *Profession* received twenty-one individual submissions and twenty-five additional submissions in five clusters. It usually attracts between two and three dozen submissions each year on a wide variety of subjects. As in years past, the 2012 *Profession* Advisory Committee and the directors of two MLA offices, research and programs, assisted the editor in evaluating submissions and selecting articles for publication.

### **Publishing Operations Activities**

In addition to providing support for the editor and the editorial board of *PMLA*, Judy Goulding oversees the production of MLA publications, including books, journals, and promotional material. She also serves as associate executive director. The department worked on the six books scheduled for publication in 2013 and on sixteen other book projects that are in various stages of production. One of the titles published this year was the association's first born-digital book, *Literary Studies in the Digital Age*, which is hosted on *MLA Commons*. Four titles published in 2012 and 2013 are now available as e-books; other e-books are in development. This process required significant investment of staff time to define and implement new procedures for the constantly changing e-book platforms. Publication quality control is a significant challenge when using an emerging technology. User support for and ongoing maintenance of the *MLA Handbook*, *Literary Research Guide*, *MLA Commons*, and *MLA Journals* Web sites continue to be handled among a number of departments at the MLA office.

The *Job Information List*, *ADE Bulletin*, and *ADFL Bulletin* are now published online only. Members whose departments belong to the ADE or the ADFL have access to the contents of the bulletins when they log in at the MLA site.

After the hurricane in October 2012, the production and IT units worked off-site to set up a temporary Web site. Once we were able to return to the office, more work had to be done to relocate some resources elsewhere. The two units have continued to work closely to consolidate and virtualize the servers and update the disaster-recovery plans.

Our continuing efforts to promote the *MLA International Bibliography* have included a more visible presence at librarians' conferences. We had a successful exhibit at the Association of College and Research Libraries conference in April 2013, and we are planning to exhibit at the Charleston Conference for reference librarians this November. We advertise the bibliography in publications and on Web sites targeted to librarians (including *Choice*, *Against the Grain*, and *Library Journal*). At Barbara Chen's invitation, we met with EBSCO to coordinate efforts to enhance their sales efforts to domestic and international libraries. We will also promote the bibliography at the upcoming MLA convention in Chicago, where EBSCO will give a presentation in the exhibit hall theater on searching the bibliography.

To promote our book publications, we mailed four catalogs in 2013: the Approaches to Teaching World Literature catalog, the Options for Teaching catalog, a members' catalog, and a catalog for bookstores and libraries. The members' catalog is sent to nearly forty thousand addresses, and the bookstore catalog is sent to approximately seventeen thousand recipients. We advertise MLA books in over one hundred publications and Web sites annually. Additional efforts to stimulate book sales in 2013 included a discounted offer for volumes in the Approaches to Teaching World Literature series and targeted e-mail campaigns to specific MLA divisions and discussion groups. We work with authors on promotions of their titles and contract with Scholar's Choice to exhibit MLA titles at scholarly meetings throughout the year.

We have upgraded our e-mail marketing system, streamlining our communication with members and using surveys to learn more about the value that MLA members place on association services and activities. Working on an annual schedule and using the News Digest to send out notices

about membership-related activities, we are able to schedule regular reminders and special messages to members, including monthly e-mail messages to nonrenewed members. We have also increased our efforts to thank members for the many contributions that they make to association activities. We worked with the scholarly communication office in developing a marketing plan to promote *MLA Commons*.

### Office of Research

David Laurence oversees the Office of Research, which supports the association's data-collection projects and administers the *Job Information List (JIL)*, including the annual tabulation and analysis of the number of ads departments posted to the list and the number of jobs *JIL* ads announced.

The report on jobs in the 2012–13 *JIL* will be posted on the MLA Web site in late October. The number of jobs advertised declined after two years of modest increases. Compared with 2011–12, the number of positions advertised fell by 93 (7.5%) in the English edition and by 26 (2.3%) in the foreign language edition. The 1,142 positions advertised this past year in the *JIL*'s English edition stand 684 (37.5%) below the 2007–08 peak of 1,826; the 1,102 jobs advertised in the foreign language edition stand 578 (34.4%) below the 2007–08 peak of 1,680.

The *JIL* database launched in September 2013 with a redesigned search interface and a new distribution model—free of charge to all users. Access to search the list at no cost is no longer limited to those affiliated with departments that maintain memberships in the Association of Departments of English (ADE) or the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (ADFL). The new search interface allows job seekers to retrieve listings placed in both the *JIL*'s English and foreign language editions; the two editions no longer need to be searched separately. MLA members may use their member log-in credentials to reach the new *JIL* search interface, and nonmembers may create free accounts. As a new feature introduced this year, search results display first as short snippets that allow job seekers to browse ads quickly. Users click the job title in a snippet to reach the full ad and a link through which they can apply for the position from an Interfolio Dossier account. Job seekers using the *JIL* can create an Interfolio Dossier account or renew an existing account at no charge. When an advertising department uses the Interfolio ByCommittee platform to manage a search, candidates incur no charges to transmit application documents from their Interfolio Dossier accounts. The option to use ByCommittee is included in the cost of a *JIL* ad; departments that are members of the ADE or the ADFL receive a 35% discount off the *JIL*'s standard ad insertion rate of \$575. There is no additional charge for using Interfolio ByCommittee and no discount for not using the platform.

For decades, MLA members and members of the profession at large have expressed concern about the costs job searches impose on graduate students and other job seekers as well as on hiring departments. Free searching and free access to the dossier services Interfolio offers through the *JIL* address these long-standing concerns. When departments adopt Interfolio's ByCommittee platform, searching the *JIL*, applying for a position, and transmitting documents and letters of recommendation imposes no cost on job seekers.

To support of the work of the MLA Task Force on Doctoral Study in Modern Language and Literature, the office developed information from MLA surveys about employment placements of doctoral program graduates; comparative information from the United States government's Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) about graduates' time-to-degree and post-graduation plans across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences; and information from the human resources components of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) on the distribution and changing balance of full- and part-time, tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty appointments in United States postsecondary institutions. At the request of the office, NORC (the independent research organization that administers the SED for the National Science Foundation) prepared a special data run showing the percentage of graduates across the different disciplines graduating with shorter and longer median times-to-degree, in five-year groupings from 1961–65 to 2006–10. Presentations of these data were prepared for the task force and also for meetings at the 2013 ADE and ADFL summer seminars.

The office is also working on the survey instrument to be used to further the aims of the joint project that the MLA and the American Historical Association have undertaken this year (see Special Projects in 2013, below).

This year the Office of Research, in collaboration with the Office of Programs, completed a major two-year project integrating and rationalizing the database of historical information across the twenty-two surveys of foreign language enrollments that the association has conducted since 1958, the latest in 2009. Over the survey series, numerous institutions merged, closed, acquired new names, or modified their focus (for example, agricultural colleges and normal schools). Naming conventions for some languages also saw changes: in some survey years, reports refer to Chinese, in others to Mandarin and Cantonese. The revamped database takes account of these anomalies and oddities so that searches retrieve the complete historical record for a given institution or language, even when an institution's name changed or its reportage was inconsistent. The historical database of language enrollments, 1958–2009, is accessible online at the MLA Web site through a newly designed search interface ([http://www.mla.org/flsurvey\\_search](http://www.mla.org/flsurvey_search)). The database is designed to accommodate change going forward as well as past changes. With support of a \$30,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, data collection for a new survey of enrollments in languages other than English launched in fall 2013, covering enrollments in the fall 2013 term or semester.

Drawing on United States government databases from IPEDS, the office tracks trends in degree completions and in the changing balance of full- and part-time, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty positions in the higher education academic workforce. An updated report, "A Profile of the Non-Tenure-Track Academic Workforce," is included in a special joint issue of the ADE and ADFL bulletins on contingent faculty issues, curated by the MLA's Committee on Contingent Labor in the Profession.

In May the final meeting for an NEH-funded project on the evaluation of digital scholarship in the humanities took place at the MLA office. The project—the NINES/NEH Summer Institute on Evaluating Digital Scholarship—brought together faculty members and chairs of literature departments from a range of colleges and universities to address issues surrounding the evaluation of literary scholarship in digital media. The May 2013 working group conducted discussions about these issues at the department and administrative levels, especially the phenomenon of Massive

Online Open Courses (MOOCs), the place of smaller liberal arts institutions in online consortiums such as Coursera and EdX, the need to provide department chairs and members of tenure and review committees with the resources and expertise to assess innovative digital scholarship, and the importance of training the younger generations of scholars, who will go on to hold administrative positions and serve as chairs.

In July the office launched *The Trend*, its blog on *MLA Commons*. The inaugural post offered a comment on the misuse of historical data on bachelor's degree completions that has been characteristic of media coverage of the humanities since the 1980s. (The post responded to a new round of examples following the June 2013 release of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences report on the humanities and social sciences.)

In 2012–13 the office was represented at the annual meetings of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and the College Language Association.

#### Office of Programs

The Office of Programs, directed by Nelly Furman, oversees activities in the fields of English and foreign languages and the projects of the ADE and the ADFL.

The office curates the MLA Language Map and the MLA Language Map Data Center, which continue to serve many visitors. Between 1 January 2013 and 25 September 2013, tracking software recorded 16,252 visitors to the map and 12,418 visitors to the data center. The average visitor to the Language Map called up 5.7 maps. The most frequently sought maps displayed the distribution of speakers of Spanish, English, French, German, Chinese, all languages other than English combined, and Italian. The state maps most frequently requested were for California, Pennsylvania, New York, Texas, Massachusetts, and Washington. In all, 73,694 maps were requested. Visitors to the Language Map Data Center performed over 64,445 searches. The maps now display summary data for 2005–10 from the American Community Survey (ACS). The data center includes data from ACS 2001–10 and Census 2000; this enables the data center to offer comparative bar charts and tables for 2000 and 2010, tracing changes in language communities across the decade. The Language Map also displays the locations and enrollments of college and university programs in the languages the user is researching by using data from the fall 2009 enrollment survey. A new feature displays enrollments in individual African, Native American, and Scandinavian languages and separates Chinese enrollments into Mandarin and Cantonese.

The office makes available at no cost two brochures that can also be downloaded from the MLA Web site: *Why Learn Another Language? Knowing Other Languages Brings Opportunities*, designed primarily for secondary schools, and *Foreign Language Study in the Age of Globalization: The College-Level Experience*.

In 2013 staff members in the Office of Programs participated in sessions at the meeting of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and at the Language Flagship of the National Security Education Program (NSEP). Staff members from the office

consulted on a joint project of the Asia Society and the Longview Foundation that aims to create an interactive map combining data from educational, governmental, and commercial sources about America's global connections. The MLA will contribute data from the 2009 language enrollments survey. Staff members attended a "World Languages Enrollment Summit," at which representatives of organizations that collect data about enrollments in languages other than English (ACTFL, MLA, American Councils for International Education, NSEP, and the Center for Applied Linguistics) discussed possible collaboration and survey needs. Staff members from the office are scheduled to represent the MLA at meetings of ACTFL and the Foreign Language Standards Collaborative Board in November.

### **ADE and ADFL**

In the year ending August 2013, the ADE, directed by David Laurence, had 704 member departments (down from 722 in 2011–12); the ADFL, directed by Nelly Furman, had 853 member departments (up from 796 in 2011–12). Beginning with renewals for the 2012–13 academic year, the ADE and the ADFL implemented a common dues structure and schedule, with dues based on the size of departments' faculties. The new arrangement preserves the individual department's organizational structure while encouraging departmental collaboration and institution-wide participation in both the ADE and the ADFL. The ADE decrease and the ADFL increase in membership may reflect in part the shift to the common dues schedule.

The ADE and the ADFL sponsor sessions at the MLA annual convention to aid job candidates and hiring committees. Catharine R. Stimpson received the ADE Francis Andrew March Award and Galal Walker received the ADFL Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession at the Boston convention.

The ADE and the ADFL summer seminars provide opportunities for department chairs, directors of graduate studies, and others with departmental administrative responsibilities to exchange information, form networks for professional support, gain wider perspective on issues confronting their departments' graduate and undergraduate programs, and participate in professional development workshops aimed at departmental administration. In 2013, the ADE and the ADFL held a joint summer seminar hosted by the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which attracted 126 participants. ADE Seminar South, hosted by the English department at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, attracted 92 participants. ADFL Seminar South was hosted by the Center for the Study of Languages at Rice University in Houston, Texas, and attracted 50 participants.

At the 2013 joint ADE-ADFL seminar in Pittsburgh the following issues were the focus of plenary sessions: vectors of change in graduate and undergraduate education, institutional policy, staffing practices and student success, legal and personal issues for administrators, and common problems in department administration. Attendees at the joint ADE-ADFL seminar had an opportunity to hear MLA President Marianne Hirsch lead a discussion on potential changes to the MLA division and discussion group structure. Preseminar workshops were held for new chairs in English and foreign languages, directors of graduate studies in English, and department reviewers.

Attendees at ADE Seminar South, in addition to participating in workshops for new chairs and directors of undergraduate studies, had the opportunity to hear presentations on sustaining a

vibrant curriculum in the major, working with upper administration, dealing with difficult colleagues, conducting learning outcome assessments, and carrying out research in digital environments. ADFL Seminar South offered workshops for new chairs and program reviewers and a workshop on teaching language through literature. The main topics of sessions were graduate education, language centers, models of curriculum and governance, legal and personnel issues for chairs, and the humanities in a STEM world.

The ADE and ADFL bulletins are now e-journals, and they offer faculty members and students in member departments the full text of articles from current and back issues. Tables of contents and bibliographic information for all issues are openly available. Library subscriptions to the bulletins are available; libraries receive the *JIL* and the ADE and ADFL bulletins at specified IP address ranges.

In 2012–13, the *ADE Bulletin* published articles on transforming doctoral education; responding to the crisis in the humanities; transnational and interdisciplinary studies; queer administration; literature, literacy, and media; teaching reading in the new media; and writing external letters of evaluation. The *ADFL Bulletin* published articles on disciplinary boundaries; changes in the undergraduate curriculum; global studies and departmental structures; academic freedom; interdisciplinarity, interculturality, and foreign language education; electronic portfolios and assessment; and a study of Rosetta Stone. A joint issue of the ADE and ADFL bulletins curated by the Committee on Contingent Labor in the Profession (CLIP) is scheduled to be published this fall. Its table of content lists articles focusing on national, institutional, and individual perspectives regarding contingent labor and CLIP's documents on professional employment practices for non-tenure track faculty members and the committee's position paper.

Discussion on the ADE chairs' list addressed the following issues: recruiting foreign students to United States English programs, forms of support for research after tenure, numbers of composition courses offered in fall versus spring semesters, metrics for how much income a department generates for the institution, tenure and promotion practices in the age of digital publications, and policies and procedures for students retaking special topics courses. The following topics were chief among those raised on the ADFL chairs' electronic discussion list: placement testing versus reliance on high school transcripts; alternative placement tests to WebCAPE; issues involved in starting a program in Chinese, including using Confucius Institute funding; changing the department name (e.g., Foreign Languages to World Languages); protocols for determining the qualifications of graduate teaching assistants; work in digital humanities and promotion and tenure; the function of a language requirement in boosting enrollments; the qualifications of language teachers for a program in language and international trade; and finding arguments to support the study of Spanish.

#### Advocacy Efforts and National Coalitions

On issues affecting the humanities, the MLA works with colleagues in the National Humanities Alliance (NHA). I currently serve on the NHA's board of directors and executive committee and act as the MLA's voting representative at the alliance's annual meeting.

The NHA is the leading advocate for the National Endowment for the Humanities. The NHA also provides congressional testimony as needed, helps organize events on Capitol Hill that promote an understanding of the importance and vitality of the humanities, confers the Sidney R. Yates Award for Distinguished Public Service to the Humanities, and keeps its members informed about the status of the appropriations process. Additional information about the NHA's work is available at the NHA Web site ([www.nhalliance.org](http://www.nhalliance.org)).

On issues affecting languages and international studies, the MLA works with colleagues in the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the Coalition for International Education (CIE). The JNCL represents more than 300,000 professionals and has over 60 members, including national, regional, and state organizations encompassing most areas of the K–16 language field. The JNCL holds its annual Delegate Assembly meeting in Washington, DC, where members promote public awareness of language issues. Former MLA Executive Council member Karin Ryding represented the MLA at the JNCL Delegate Assembly meeting this year.

The CIE is made up of more than 30 national higher education organizations. It informs policy makers, education and private sector officials, and the media about national needs in international and foreign language education and focuses on promoting and supporting Fulbright-Hays grants and programs authorized under Title VI of the Higher Education Act. In July 2013, the MLA signed on to letters to the members and staff of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies of both the House of Representatives and the Senate urging the restoration of funding to support international education and foreign language studies. In August 2013, the MLA also signed on to the CIE's letter to the House Education and the Workforce Committee asking for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. In mid-September 2013, the CIE hosted a one-hour congressional briefing in the House of Representatives to discuss the importance of funding Title VI and the effectiveness of international and foreign language education in the United States. At least twenty congressional staff members were among the more than sixty individuals who attended the briefing. Among the speakers at the briefing were Brigadier General Kevin Ryan (retired), director of the Defense and Intelligence Project at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, and Dr. Michelle Dunne, vice president of the Atlantic Council and director of the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. They stressed the importance of international studies and foreign language education in attaining global competence and how such programs helped them professionally and personally. I participated in CIE teleconferences concerning the president's budget proposal for international education programs for the 2014 fiscal year and funding for other Department of Education programs.

The NEH receives funding through the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. The Department of Education is funded through the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Department of Education programs of interest to the language community include the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), Title VI programs for international education and foreign language studies in higher education, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), and English Language Acquisition State Grants (formerly Bilingual and Immigrant Education).

This year's budget process started in March, when the House Budget Committee released its budget resolution for the 2014 fiscal year with a spending plan designed to eliminate the federal budget deficit within ten years. If enacted, the overall spending level called for in the resolution would translate into cuts in discretionary spending that are significantly deeper than those called for by the Budget Control Act (or sequestration). While the Budget Committee left most of the details of complying with the overall spending levels to the Appropriations Committee, the Budget Committee did call for particular spending reductions, including the complete elimination of funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities. The resolution stated that programs funded by the NEH "go beyond the core mission of the federal government, and they are generally enjoyed by people of higher-income levels, making them a wealth transfer from poorer to wealthier citizens."

In April, the president released his budget for the 2014 fiscal year. In contrast to the House budget resolution, it called for \$154 million for the NEH, an increase of nearly 10 percent, or \$15 million, over 2013 funding. In July, the Republican-led House appropriations subcommittee that oversees NEH funding approved just \$75 million in funding for the NEH in its spending bill. The bill, which contained deep cuts to an array of programs, stalled in early August without a final vote by the full Appropriations Committee, as House Republicans realized that the bill's drastic cuts were politically untenable. Just before adjourning for the August recess, the Democratic-led Senate subcommittee that handles NEH appropriations backed the president's full request of \$154 million.

In his detailed budget for the 2014 fiscal year, President Obama requested \$71 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Education (4.5% more than the pre-sequester level in the 2013 fiscal year). In this budget proposal, FLAP was not reinstated. Foreign language studies were once again consolidated with several other programs that focus on higher education partnerships and content-based activities into a new program called Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education. The president requested \$75 million in funding for the program, but the Senate did not request funding for any of the programs in the group. (The yet-to-be-authorized program was not funded in 2013.) The president and the Senate proposed \$80.9 million for Title VI programs, a \$10.7 million increase above the final amount appropriated in 2013. Programs authorized under Title VI of the Higher Education Act include Centers for International Business Education, Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships, the Institute for International Public Policy, language resource centers, and Fulbright-Hays training grants and seminars abroad. Unfortunately, a number of Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs remain canceled for the 2014 fiscal year (e.g., Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program, American Overseas Research Centers, International Research and Studies). The president's proposal for FIPSE funding was \$260 million. Of that sum, up to \$175 million would support "an evidence-based grant competition, which would apply the lessons of the successful Investing in Innovation (i3) program for K-12 to the challenge of improving college attainment and productivity." The Senate's proposal for FIPSE was \$4.7 million. Both proposals represent increases over the 2013 appropriation of \$2.2 million. For English Language Acquisition State Grants, the president proposed \$732.1 million and the Senate proposed \$730.6 million in funding. Their proposals represent increases over the \$694 million appropriated in 2013.

When Congress reconvened in September, it was unable to reconcile the difference between the House and Senate in overall spending levels. Thus, both chambers began to negotiate a

continuing resolution (CR) to keep the federal government funded once the new fiscal year began on 1 October. The proposed CR would have temporarily funded the government at 2012 funding levels. After House Republicans tied passage of the CR to their effort to defund the Affordable Care Act, the House and Senate reached an impasse on funding the government for 2014. As a result, the federal government shut down on October 1 for the first time in seventeen years. The budget impasse came to an end on 16 October, the day before the government's borrowing authority was due to run out. It was because of this second deadline that a bipartisan group in the Senate drafted a CR that funds the federal government through 15 January 2014 and extends the government's borrowing authority through 7 February 2014. This CR was approved by the Senate and the House on 16 October and signed into law by President Obama on 17 October, allowing the government to reopen the same day.

This year the MLA once again sponsored Humanities Advocacy Day, an annual event coordinated by the NHA. The purpose of the event is to promote federal support for scholarly research, education, public programs, and preservation in the humanities. On 18 and 19 March, MLA Executive Council member Lanisa Kitchiner and Douglas Steward, the MLA's associate director of programs and the Association of Departments of English, attended the NHA's 2013 annual meeting and Humanities Advocacy Day in Washington, DC. Over the two-day period, approximately two hundred attendees participated in a range of activities that included advocacy training, an NEH grants workshop, a humanities grants overview session, panel presentations, a keynote luncheon, policy briefings, a Capitol Hill reception, and visits to congressional offices. Kitchiner visited the offices of California's members of Congress, and Steward visited those who represent New York. Humanities Advocacy Day provides the MLA and other national organizations with a crucial opportunity to deliver to Congress and the administration a unified message on funding needs and priorities for the NEH and other federal agencies, including the Department of Education, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The MLA is a founding member of the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW), an informal coalition with no headquarters or staff. CAW's purpose is to discourage the excessive use of part- and full-time non-tenure-track faculty members in higher education and to help ensure that they receive fair treatment. Representatives of the twenty-seven member associations participate in meetings and activities. CAW's Web site ([www.academicworkforce.org](http://www.academicworkforce.org)) links to the home pages of its member associations; data, reports, and surveys from them; and statements they issue on the use of contingent academic labor. The MLA continues to maintain responsibility for this Web site. In summer 2013, the Organization of American Historians and the College Art Association published reports that analyze a subset of the 2010 CAW survey of contingent faculty members and instructors, looking only at respondents who indicated that they work in the disciplines that they represent. Results were published on the organizations' respective Web sites, with links from the CAW Web site.

The MLA is a member of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). The principal administrator from each of the constituent learned societies serves as a member of the Conference of Administrative Officers (CAO). The CAO functions as the primary vehicle for maintaining and enhancing relations among the constituent learned societies and between the societies and the ACLS. The CAO meets twice a year to discuss substantive issues in the humanities as well as

practical and organizational aspects of society management. The ACLS offers a leadership seminar each fall for learned societies' incoming chief elected officer and the chief administrative officer. I attended the 2013 Learned Society Leadership Seminar with First Vice President Margaret Ferguson.

### MLA Membership and Association Administration

#### **Membership Trends**

Terrence Callaghan, director of administration and finance, reports that MLA membership enrollment decreased by 2.9% in 2013. The total number of MLA members at the close of the 2013 membership year was 27,736 (it was 28,563 in 2012), of whom 17,676 (63.8%) were regular members, 6,141 (22.1%) were student members, and 3,919 (14.1%) were life members. A total of 1,549 (5.5%) members paid dues at income levels above \$100,000 in 2013, up from 5.4% in 2012.

Student member renewals showed a slight decrease in 2013—50.6% of 2012 student members paid student dues in 2013, whereas 53.6% of 2011 student members paid student dues in 2012. The movement of student members into regular dues categories increased in 2013—15.7% of 2012 student members renewed in nonstudent dues categories in 2013, whereas 13.8% of 2011 student members renewed in nonstudent dues categories in 2012. In 2013, 2,242 (33.7%) 2012 student members did not renew their membership; in 2012, 2,296 (32.6%) members who were students in 2011 did not renew. We will continue to focus attention on new and student members as we pursue our efforts both to retain members and to attract new ones.

#### **Contributions**

The MLA has a number of restricted funds that support particular activities. Contributions to the various funds totaled \$102,744 in the 2013 membership year. This represents an increase of 0.7% over 2012 giving and the second time we have received over \$100,000 in contributions. The number of individuals making contributions remained stable in 2013. In 2013, 2,439 individuals contributed to the various funds; in 2012, we had 2,441 contributors.

The Endowment Fund saw a decrease of 6.3% in contribution dollars. Contributions to the Endowment Fund in 2012 totaled \$35,349; in 2013, the total amount of contributions was \$33,122. The number of individuals contributing to the Endowment Fund increased by 3.5%, with 404 contributors in 2012 and 418 contributors in 2013.

Contributions to the Professional Education Assistance Fund for Graduate Students increased by 2.1% in 2013. Contributions totaled \$32,881 in 2012 and \$33,582 in 2013. The number of individuals contributing to this fund decreased by 2.9%. The Professional Education Assistance Fund for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members and Unemployed Members received \$15,767 in contributions in 2013, a decrease of 2.3% from 2012. The number of individuals contributing to this fund decreased by 2.8%.

The Fund for the Promotion of the Profession received \$7,178 in contributions in 2013, an increase of 12.1% over 2012. The number of contributors to this fund increased by 6.2%. The fund that supports the Phyllis Franklin Award for Public Advocacy of the Humanities received \$5,803 in contributions in 2013, an increase of 6.5% over the previous year. The number of contributors to

this fund increased by 4.9%. Contributions to the Good Neighbor Fund totaled \$7,292 in 2013, an increase of 25.2% over 2012; the number of contributors to this fund increased by 3.1%.

Those individuals who generously donate \$200 or more to the various MLA funds are listed at the MLA Web site on the Leading Contributors page. Individuals who contribute \$500 or more are given special recognition on the Leading Contributors Web page. Contributions of over \$500 amounted to \$23,935 in 2013, 7.8% less than in 2012. Contributions of \$200 to \$499 totaled \$22,168, a 0.9% increase over 2012. Leading Contributor contributions totaled \$46,103 in 2013, 3.8% less than in 2012.

### **Information Technology**

To support the information technology (IT) requirements of the association, the staff has been systematically virtualizing the MLA server farm and decreasing the amount of physical hardware needed. Virtualization allows us to colocate discrete server systems on the same physical piece of hardware rather than maintain separate machines for each server function. With the work nearly completed, the MLA's 23 Windows servers (including 6 Web servers) and 2 Linux servers now run on 3 physical computers, substantially reducing the amount of space and resources needed in the server room.

After a review of the MLA's disaster-recovery contract, the staff instructed SunGard to update our agreement to include a new feature: in the event of a disaster declaration, SunGard would restore the MLA servers to the cloud within 24 hours. Our previous contract enabled us to restore servers ourselves to replacement physical hardware at the nearest available SunGard facility. The new agreement would shorten the time needed to regain full functionality in an emergency and would not require travel to a specific facility under what might be difficult circumstances. The recovery-to-cloud procedures were successfully tested in June.

In preparation for the planned implementation of a new content management system (CMS), the staff is updating its system documentation on database structures, table relationships, and field level descriptions. Working closely with colleagues in the production unit, the IT staff is developing stored procedures to enable data abstraction for application program interfaces that can be used by the new CMS.

To support the anticipated high volume of traffic to the MLA Web site during the launch of the *Job Information List*, now available to all at no cost, we added one additional virtual server to the Web server farm and to the load balancer, bringing the number of virtual Web servers to six. No performance issues were reported.

The IT department continues to create and modify scripts, interfaces, and databases to support the bibliography system. The number of bibliography records containing full-text links continues to grow; nine publishers now send us data for which scripts have been written that import the data into shell records for indexing. Using newly created matching algorithms, we are now able to import *Choice* reviews and add them to existing citation records.

In collaboration with colleagues in other departments, the IT staff completed the conversion of our e-mail platform from Lotus Notes to Gmail, implemented and assisted with staff adoption of

Google Calendar and Google Drive (file sharing), refreshed the searchable 1958–2009 Language Enrollment Database with enhancements, completed the update of the Language Map and Data Center with summary ACS data from 2006 through 2010, and redesigned the database and administrator interface to reinforce data accuracy for the upcoming 2013 foreign language enrollments survey.

### Special Projects in 2013

#### **Broadening the Career Horizons of Language and Literature PhDs**

The general focus of the project is on expanding the career horizons customarily imagined by students who undertake advanced study in language and literature doctoral programs and by the faculty members who teach in and direct these programs. The American Historical Association (AHA) and the MLA are conducting similar projects that share research, ideas, and a general framework and on occasion convene jointly. This approach—at times parallel and at times overlapping—has been structured to enable the two disciplines to tailor the project to specific disciplinary cultures, employment markets, and intellectual orientations while taking advantage of opportunities for comparison and collaboration. David Laurence and Rosemary G. Feal are staff liaisons for this project, and the MLA Task Force on Doctoral Study in Modern Language and Literature (see next subsection) also provides input.

Broadening employment opportunities for PhDs is one aspect of a larger mission: to evaluate current approaches to graduate education and to recommend desirable shifts so that PhDs today receive adequate preparation beyond their academic specializations. Further, our project encompasses the doctoral dissertation and thus presents an opportunity for rethinking the “protomonograph” as the only means of fulfilling degree requirements. We explore alternatives such as collaborative dissertations, digital humanities projects, and non-monographic treatment of research topics.

We are working collaboratively with the AHA to develop a survey instrument designed to gather information about career outcomes and career paths of PhDs and possibly ABDs as well. We have endeavored to keep the respondents’ burden as low as possible while being vigilant about what messages the instrument itself may be communicating to those who come to complete it. Our collaboration has illuminated several thorny issues, such as the importance of learning about the kind of work PhDs do and not simply collecting their job titles or places of employment. The survey has undergone multiple drafts, and we will launch it this fall once we’ve resolved the remaining problems.

In an effort to obtain a representative sample for this part of the project, the MLA drew on records from *Dissertation Abstracts* in the *MLA International Bibliography* to develop a database of more than 45,000 doctorate recipients from United States universities, their degree-granting institutions, and their dissertation titles from 1996 to 2011. From this information, we are using Internet searches to begin gathering public information about a sample of these individuals and their employment and employers.

In addition to pursuing these initiatives, the MLA is also building on existing work by deepening analysis of a dataset that MLA staff member Katina Rogers collected in her previous position with the Scholarly Communication Institute of the University of Virginia Library. The dataset is publicly available for continued exploration. The study, which consisted of two confidential surveys, investigated perceptions of career preparation among humanities scholars working outside of tenure-track roles. The findings reveal a number of effective interventions that graduate programs can undertake and that would benefit all students, regardless of their intended career paths.

Staff members from the MLA and the AHA have volunteered to participate at sessions about our project at each organization's 2014 annual convention (the AHA in Washington, DC, and the MLA in Chicago, IL). The 2014 MLA convention features many additional project-related sessions on topics such as careers in the federal government and using language skills in translation and interpretation jobs.

### **Language Consultancy**

The Executive Council created a working group in 2010 to explore how the MLA could be of greater assistance to language departments that seek to implement recommendations from the 2007 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages. The working group, headed by Catherine Porter, conducted successful workshops at the 2012 convention in Seattle and the 2013 convention in Boston. Workshop participants had an opportunity to review best practices in curricular structure and revision and to acquire leadership skills for effecting change within departments.

In 2012, the council expanded the functions and membership of the group by establishing a joint MLA-ADFL committee, the Steering Committee on New Structures for Languages in Higher Education (SCNSL). The new committee, cochaired by Porter (representing the MLA) and Jane Hacking (representing the ADFL), is articulating a plan for the language consultancy project that has the following elements: appointing a group of experts who can consult with departments seeking to implement recommendations from the 2007 report and give informational talks on MLA resources; creating a Web-based resource that can showcase good work that departments are doing; distributing materials that departments may find useful for revising practices; and providing a means to apply to the consultancy program. To date, members of the SCNSL have served as consultants for the Department of Modern Languages at DePaul University, the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics at the University of Oklahoma, the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York, and the Department of Modern Languages at Loyola University, Chicago.

### **Working Group on the Revision of the Divisions and Discussion Groups**

Created in 2011 and headed by MLA Vice President (now President) Marianne Hirsch, the Working Group on the Revision of the Divisions and Discussion Groups began to look critically at the association's division and discussion group structure, which was set in place in 1974. The objects of study, methods, and scholarly mappings in our fields have changed dramatically since then, and the working group has consulted widely about the possibilities for revising the structure so

that it serves the association and the field well in the twenty-first century. Nelly Furman and Maribeth Kraus serve as liaisons to the working group.

The group first convened at the MLA office in September 2011. Hirsch then worked with the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee to stage an illuminating open discussion at the 2012 Delegate Assembly meeting. The group also sponsored an open session at the 2012 ADE-ADFL Summer Seminar in Nashville. During the 2013 convention, the working group sponsored a forum and two linked sessions that allowed members to contribute their ideas on how the division and discussion group structure might change. Members also had the opportunity to comment during a special session and roundtables sponsored by the ADE and the ADFL.

The group also worked on a brief survey that was sent to members of the division and discussion group executive committees in October 2012. The group reviewed responses to the survey at its December 2012 meeting.

To follow up on the survey responses, the group wrote to members of division and discussion group executive committees again in spring 2013. Responses to those messages were used to develop a draft proposal for MLA groups. That proposal was posted on *MLA Commons* in fall 2013; MLA members were invited to comment. The Executive Council will review progress on the proposal at its October 2013 meeting. The working group will reconvene on 6 December 2013.

During the 2014 MLA Annual Convention, an “Open Hearing on the Future of the MLA Divisions and Discussion Groups” will be held on 9 January, from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. in Chicago VI of the Sheraton Chicago Hotel.

### **Task Force on Doctoral Education**

In February 2012 the Executive Council appointed a new eight-member Task Force on Doctoral Study in Modern Language and Literature, chaired by 2011–12 MLA President Russell Berman, to consider prospects for doctoral study in language and literature in the light of transformations in higher education and scholarly communication, including developments in the academic job market, changing conditions and expectations for new faculty members, and placements in nonfaculty positions. The task force met at the MLA office in November 2012 and April 2013 and at the MLA convention in January 2013. To learn about developments currently affecting doctoral programs in the modern languages, the task force convened a focus group of representatives from PhD-granting departments at the 2013 convention. It also sponsored a roundtable session where members were able to hear and offer comments about the task force’s charge and the leading topics of its first discussions—time-to-degree, the dissertation, and the experience of graduate school in relation to students’ career aspirations, career preparation and placements, and departmental and institutional advising and career services. In June, Berman traveled to the 2013 joint ADE-ADFL Summer Seminar in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he spoke with department chairs, directors of graduate studies, and department placement officers. The task force will have a final meeting at the MLA office in November 2013. The 2014 joint ADE-ADFL Summer Seminar, to be hosted by the University of Washington’s Simpson Humanities Center, will feature sessions organized around the work of the task force and its anticipated report and recommendations. Kathleen Fitzpatrick and David Laurence provide staff support for the task force.

## Implementation of Delegate Assembly Actions

### **Constitutional Amendment**

The assembly approved an amendment to article 3.C of the MLA constitution, the intent of which is to align the process for changing the dues structure for life members with the process for changing the dues structure for regular and student members. In February 2013, the Executive Council reviewed the amendment, as required by the MLA constitution (art. 13.D). The council determined that the resolution did not pose fiduciary problems and so forwarded the amendment to the membership for the required ratification vote. The ratification vote will be completed on 10 December; the outcome of the ratification vote will be reported in the Spring 2014 issue of the *MLA Newsletter* and at the MLA Web site.

### **Motion**

At its 2013 meeting in Boston, the Delegate Assembly approved a motion that was transmitted to the council as a recommendation. The MLA constitution (art. 7.B.2) requires the council to “act on the recommendations of the Delegate Assembly and to inform it of actions taken. Such actions may include implementation, modification, referral to an appropriate committee of the association (including the Organizing Committee of the Delegate Assembly), and return to the Delegate Assembly for reconsideration.”

The motion (Motion 2013-1) called on the MLA to pursue a number of actions related to the collection and dissemination of data on part-time faculty members’ compensation and working conditions, to support a request that the U.S. Department of Labor establish the eligibility of adjuncts for unemployment benefits between terms, and generally to support “efforts to improve the professional conditions of labor in higher education.” The council reviewed the motion at its February 2013 meeting and noted the many existing and planned MLA activities that fulfill the objectives of the motion. The council also identified two additional implementation measures. It authorized the staff to work in support of the request regarding unemployment benefits for adjuncts and recommended that the staff undertake a new staffing survey before 2016, the date of the next scheduled survey. As required by the constitution, the Executive Council will report to the 2014 Delegate Assembly on the implementation of Motion 2013-1 (see Item No 5 [b]).

### **Resolutions**

The assembly approved two resolutions. The first resolution dealt generally with faculty control of the curriculum and specifically with the role of faculty members in the approval of a new general-education curriculum at the City University of New York. The second called on the MLA to endorse the Statement on Gun Violence in America issued by the Association of American Universities. In February and May 2013, the Executive Council reviewed the resolutions, as required by the MLA constitution (art. 7.B.3). The council determined that the resolutions did not pose constitutional, legal, or fiduciary problems, so the council authorized nonsubstantive copyediting changes to the wording of the resolutions and forwarded them to the membership for the required ratification vote. The ratification vote will be completed on 10 December; the outcome of the ratification vote will be reported in the Spring 2014 issue of the *MLA Newsletter* and at the MLA Web site.