Modern Language Association of America
9–12 January 2020

MLA Convention Guide

MLA Convention App
Download the MLA 2020 app to create your own convention schedule and have easy access to session information, maps, and other convention details.

Program Online
A searchable program for the convention is available online (mla20.org).

Graduate Student Volunteer Program
Keep an eye out for graduate student volunteers, who are serving as welcome ambassadors for the convention. They’re available to help you locate meeting rooms, provide session information, and answer questions about local attractions and restaurants.

Paving the Way
The MLA’s Paving the Way campaign aims to support early career development, address academic workforce issues, and promote public advocacy for the humanities. Contributions to this campaign fund grants, internships, political lobbying, and projects like the MLA Action Network and regional career workshops. Show your support by making a donation today at www.mla.org/Paving-the-Way.

Refreshments!
Get your tea or coffee fix in the MLA exhibit hall (WSCC, Hall B, level 4). On Friday and Saturday, 10 and 11 January, a refreshment stand will be available in the hall starting at 9:00 a.m. Grab a sandwich or fruit with your beverage, and stay energized all day. Remember to wear your badge!

Twitter
Follow @MLAnews for updates throughout the convention, and tweet sessions using #mla20 and the session hashtag (e.g., #s415).

Wi-Fi Access
The MLA provides free wireless Internet access in the meeting rooms and public areas of the Sheraton Grand and in the WSCC. Follow these instructions to connect (connectivity is not guaranteed):

WSCC. Network: MLA2020; Password: MLAConvention
Sheraton Grand. Network: Sheraton-Seattle-Meeting-Room; Password: MLAConvention

Emergencies
Illness and Medical Emergencies
Procedures may vary from one location to another.

WSCC. Dial x5127 from any house phone or 206 694-5127 from any phone and alert MLA headquarters.
Sheraton Grand. Call 911 and alert MLA headquarters.

Weather or Other Emergency
If weather or an emergency in Seattle should delay or otherwise affect the scheduling of convention sessions, full information on such changes will be posted on the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/MLA-2020). If a local or personal emergency should cause you to have to delay or cancel your attendance at the convention, you should contact your hotel and airline carrier as early as possible. Visit www.mla.org/Registration-Hotels for the refund request form, deadlines (17 December submission deadline and badge postmark deadline), and other information about registration refunds. If you are scheduled to speak or participate in a session, please notify the session organizer, who should write to updates2020@mla.org to update the session listing.

Remember to wear your badge.
**MLA Awards Ceremony (Session 646)**

11 January, 7:00 p.m., Sheraton Grand, Grand A, second floor

The session is open to the public.

**MLA Benefit for the Humanities**

10 January, 8:00 p.m.

Attend the MLA Benefit for the Humanities and make it possible for us to expand MLA programs that support graduate students and contingent faculty members. This year’s benefit features poetry readings by the Cave Canem cofounders Toi Derricotte and Cornelius Eady as well as a special reading by the Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen. RSVP at outreach.mla.org/benefit-2020.

**A Celebration of Toni Morrison (Session 540A)**

11 January, 1:45 p.m., WSCC, 4C-4, level 4

Writers and critics discuss the life and work of the novelist, critic, and Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison.

This session is open to the public.

**Chat with an Editor**

10 and 11 January, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon, WSCC, 609, level 6

Experienced journal editors who are members of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals (CELJ) will be available for consultation and to offer advice to other editors and scholars who have questions about journal submission, peer review, and publishing processes. Beginning scholars (graduate students and entry-level professors) are particularly welcome.

**Cultural Excursions**

Preregistration is required. Visit the MLA membership desk (WSCC, Atrium, level 4) for on-site cancellations and questions.

9 January
Chihuly Garden and Glass
Seattle Central Library
Taylor Shellfish Oyster and Wine Tasting
Chef Dinner and Talk at FareStart

10 January
Chihuly Garden and Glass
Seattle Central Library
Wing Luke Museum Tour

**Delegate Assembly (Session 534A)**

11 January, 12:30 p.m., WSCC, 6A, level 6

This meeting is open only to MLA members and accredited journalists. For agenda information, visit www.mla.org/DA-Agenda-2020.

**Humanities in Five (Session 500)**

11 January, 12:00 noon, WSCC, 4C-4, level 4

Scholars from different fields present their research in five minutes, aiming to do justice to the complexity of the research and at the same time to make its significance clear to a nonspecialist audience.

This session is open to the public.

**Human Rights and the Human (Session 116)**

9 January, 5:15 p.m., WSCC, 6A, level 6

This plenary is open to the public.

**Just-in-Time Sessions**

Refer to the online program (mla20.org) and MLA 2020 convention app for these just-in-time sessions focusing on topics that have come to light since the 1 April session proposal deadline.

**Keywords for the Future (Session 339)**

10 January, 3:30 p.m., WSCC, 6A, level 6

This plenary is open to the public.

**Presidential Address (Session 415)**

10 January, 6:45 p.m., Sheraton Grand, Grand A, second floor

The session is open to the public.

**Presidential Plenary (Session 229)**

10 January, 10:15 a.m., WSCC, 6A, level 6

This plenary is open to the public.

**Special Events**

This year’s events include a screening of the documentary film Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin (2018) by Arwen Curry (10 January, 7:15–8:30 p.m., Sheraton Grand, Ravenna AB), the world premiere screening of Keywords: The Film (11 January, 7:15–8:30 p.m., Sheraton Grand, Aspen), and five Southeast Asian diasporic authors in conversation (12 January, 8:30–9:45 a.m., WSCC, Skagit 3).

These events are open to the public.
CAREERS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The MLA provides support to members at all stages in their careers. Explore over one hundred sessions and a variety of events at the 2020 MLA convention designed to help you build your network and enhance your career.

MLA Career Center

WSCC (Conference Center, Tahoma 4–5, third floor)
9 January: 8:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.
10–11 January: 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Career Center Lounge
A space for job seekers to sit and relax is located in the MLA Career Center during the hours that the center is open.

Interviews
The MLA Career Center provides tables for departments and programs that are not interviewing in hotel suites. Interviewing teams will be assigned a table upon arrival. Job candidates are reminded that almost no unscheduled academic interviews take place at the convention. Candidates and interviewers need to arrange interviews with each other before the convention. If your interview is scheduled for the interview area, ask an MLA Career Center staff member for the table number when you arrive at the center. If the interview is scheduled for a hotel suite, candidates need to contact the interviewer for the location.

Job Counseling
10 and 11 January
Sign up for one-on-one sessions to discuss job-search and career options on a wide spectrum of careers inside and outside the professoriat.

MLA Professional Development Workshops, Sessions, and Events

Scores of sessions are focused on professional development. Some highlights are listed below; to view a more expansive list, refer to the lists on the MLA 2020 app.

Mentoring Sessions for Job Seekers in Languages
9 January: 11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m. Career Pathways roundtable and 1:45–3:00 p.m. workshop (WSCC, Conference Center, Tahoma 1, third floor)

At the roundtable, representatives of various types of institutions and from fields outside the academy discuss work and career trajectories.

The workshop offers small-group mentoring on the job search—inside and outside the academy—focusing on applying to and working in different types of academic institutions and in different kinds of positions, and on nonacademic humanities career paths.

Consultancy Sessions
10 and 11 January (WSCC, Conference Center, Tahoma 4–5, third floor)
Experienced consultants from ADE and ADFL will be available in the MLA Career Center for one-on-one sessions to discuss questions connected with managing departments or programs. Contact ADE (dsteward@mla.org) or ADFL (dlooney@mla.org) to make specific arrangements.

Language and Literature Program Innovation Room
10 January: 8:30–11:30 a.m. (WSCC, 6C, level 6)
Discover successful and promising new programs, courses, and initiatives in areas such as strengthening the major, diversifying the curriculum, public humanities, interdisciplinary humanities careers, harmonizing literary and writing studies, and heritage language learning.

MLA Career Fair
10 January: 12:00 noon–3:00 p.m. (WSCC, Conference Center, Tahoma 1, third floor)
The career fair offers job seekers with advanced training in the humanities a chance to meet recruiters from mission-driven organizations and companies.

A Showcase of Career Diversity
10 January: 3:30–4:45 p.m. (WSCC, Conference Center, Tahoma 2, third floor)
Get to know a group of humanities PhDs who work in a variety of careers, and hear about their paths from advanced study in the humanities to fulfilling work in roles across the private and public sectors.

Speed Mentoring
11 January: 5:15–6:30 p.m. (WSCC, Conference Center, Tahoma 2, third floor)
Preregistration is required. Write to Brian DeGrazia (bdegrazia@mla.org) with questions.

Cash Bar and Networking
11 January: 7:15–8:30 p.m. (Sheraton Grand, Boren, fourth floor)
Connect with other attendees who share your interests at this cash bar and networking event arranged by MLA Career Services.

NEH Information
10 January, 3:30–5:30 p.m. (WSCC, Conference Center, Yakima 1, first floor)
Staff members from the National Endowment for the Humanities highlight recent awards and outline current funding opportunities.
Accessibility

The MLA is committed to making arrangements that allow all members of the association to participate in the convention.

Accessibility Desks (Access@mla.org)
WSCC, Atrium, level 4
WSCC, Lobby level
Sheraton Grand, Lobby level

These desks will be staffed with personnel who can provide assistance to convention attendees.

Accessible Transportation

Convention registrants who need accessible transportation during the convention are eligible to be reimbursed up to $150 for rides taken between official MLA locations during convention hours (9–12 January 2020). Printed receipts must include travel date, time, and cost as well as pickup and drop-off locations. Mail your reimbursement request and receipts by 22 January to Stacey Courtney, MLA, 85 Broad Street, suite 500, New York, NY 10004.

All-Access Restrooms

Single-occupant, wheelchair-accessible restrooms are available in the WSCC (Escalator lobby, level 4, near 4C) and in the Sheraton Grand (fourth floor, near Virginia and University).

American Sign Language Interpretation and CART

Sign language interpretation and real-time captioning at the convention are scheduled based on requests received by 13 November. Visit the accessibility desks or write to Access@mla.org for details. If resources are available, the convention office will make every effort to accommodate late requests.

Visit the MLA headquarters office (WSCC, Atrium, level 3) for on-site requests.

Childcare Reimbursement

MLA members who are registered for the convention and use childcare services provided by one of the convention hotels or another service are eligible for reimbursement (up to $400). Members should submit a request for reimbursement, along with supporting documentation such as a receipt from a childcare service, no later than 28 January 2020 to Karin Bagnall, director of convention and events, Modern Language Association, 85 Broad Street, suite 500, New York, NY 10004-2434.

Elevators

There are multiple elevator banks in the WSCC, and none go to all floors. Take the Union Street elevators, behind the main escalator bank, for the lobby through level 4. Enter the level 4 Atrium for elevators to level 6 (near 614). There are two elevator banks in the Sheraton Grand. Both go from the lobby to the third floor. Union Street Tower connects to fourth floor meeting rooms; Pike Street Tower express elevator skips the third floor and connects to the thirty-fifth floor.

Friends of Bill W.

Room 306 in the WSCC (level 3) is set aside for the Friends of Bill W. throughout convention hours. Meetings will be held 10 January, 7:00–8:15 p.m.; 11 January, 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. and 7:00–8:15 p.m.; and 12 January, 7:30–8:20 a.m.

Lactation Rooms

Space is available in the WSCC (Suites A and C, level 6) and in the Sheraton Grand (Chelan, Lobby level) during meeting hours.

Meeting Rooms

Meeting rooms at the convention are accessible by elevator, and the doors are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs.

Navigating between Venues

The best route with no stairs between the Sheraton Grand and WSCC is to use the Sheraton Grand Pike Street / 7th Avenue entrance near the restaurant and the WSCC Pike Street / 7th Avenue entrance. Both have elevators or lifts to bypass stairs. The best route to the WSCC Conference Center is to use the WSCC Pike Street / 8th Avenue entrance and the Pike Street / 8th Avenue crosswalks to the Conference Center’s main entrance.

Quiet Rooms

WSCC (305, level 3) and Sheraton Grand (Everett, third floor). We invite convention attendees to drop in to these quiet spaces removed from traffic and noise. We ask that visitors to these rooms arrive fragrance-free and keep any discussion to a minimum and at a low volume.

Scooter Rental

Attendees can rent scooters in advance from Scootaround (888 441-7575 or locations.scootaround.com/MLA) or from Seattle-based Access Medical Equipment (206 365-7700 or www.accessmedicalequipment.com/).

Service Animals

There is a designated pet relief area near the WSCC, outside the level 4 Atrium in Freeway Park.

Sessions

Speakers are encouraged to upload their presentations to the MLA’s open-access repository, CORE, and are asked to bring copies of their papers, even in draft form, for the use of members who wish to follow the written text. Speakers who use handouts should prepare some copies in a large-print format (14- to 16-point type size). Speakers should indicate whether they want their papers and handouts returned.

Business Centers

WSCC, FedEx Office Business Center, Lobby level, near Pike Street and 8th Avenue entrance
9–10 January, 7:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.
11–12 January, 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
Sheraton Grand, FedEx Office Business Center, second floor, near the windows
9–10 January, 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
11 January, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
12 January, 12:00 noon–6:00 p.m.

MLA Career Center

WSCC, Conference Center, Tahoma 4–5, third floor
9 January: 8:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.
10 and 11 January: 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
The MLA Career Center provides support to members at all stages in their careers. Refer to the Careers and Professional Development section for details.

Headquarters Offices

WSCC (304, level 3) and Sheraton Grand (Madrona, second floor)
Session organizers are asked to refer questions about meeting rooms or meeting facilities to the headquarters offices, not to the venue management.

Housing Desk

Near the MLA registration and welcome center (WSCC, Atrium, level 4)
**Internet Access by Hotel Guests**

Guests who booked their rooms through the MLA housing service will receive free Internet access in their rooms. Access details will be provided at check-in. Guests may have to accept an access charge temporarily, but it will be deleted before checkout if they booked their rooms through the MLA. Guests who booked with the hotel directly will have to pay the access fee.

**Lost and Found**

WSCC, Visit the MLA headquarters office, 304, level 3

Sheraton Grand, Visit the MLA headquarters office, Madrona, second floor

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**EXHIBIT HALL**

The exhibit hall is open to all convention registrants with a badge and to visitors with an official exhibit hall pass. Visit the exhibitor information booth (WSCC, Atrium, level 4) for passes and all exhibit hall questions.

**Exhibits**

WSCC, Exhibit Hall, Hall 4B, level 4
10 and 11 January: 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
12 January: 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Refer to the back page of this Convention Guide for a list of exhibitors and their locations.

**Exhibit Hall Passes**

Registrants may obtain free passes for guests they accompany through the hall. Unaccompanied visitors may purchase a one-day pass to the hall for $10.

**Professional Headshots**

Come to the exhibit hall for your complimentary professional headshot. The photographer will be available Friday, 10 January, and Saturday, 11 January, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Visit the Bedford / St. Martin’s exhibit booth (200 and 201) to sign up.

**Refreshment Stand**

10 and 11 January: 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m

Visit the refreshment stand to satisfy your coffee, tea, and food cravings. With coffee under $3 and sandwiches under $10, you can stay hydrated and fed on a budget.

**MLA PubCentral**

WSCC, Exhibit Hall, Hall 4B, level 4
10 and 11 January: 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
12 January: 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Visit MLA PubCentral for everything related to MLA publications. Get a great discount on the latest MLA titles, spin the MLA International Bibliography prize wheel to win free gifts, learn about what’s new with the MLA Style Center, update your MLA Commons profile, and browse the winners of the MLA’s publications prizes, all in one central location.

You can also purchase a copy of the MLA’s first cookbook, *MLA Members Cook!*, which contains recipes contributed by MLA members!

All MLA titles ordered at the exhibit booth will be discounted 30%, with free shipping available to domestic addresses. Eighteen new MLA titles were published in 2019, and all will be available for purchase at the PubCentral booth in Seattle. And if you buy more than $30 in MLA titles, you will receive a free copy of *MLA Members Cook!* (a $10 value!)

Finally, please join us for a wine and cheese reception to celebrate the MLA’s new titles and the MLA International Bibliography with Full Text. This reception is open to all attendees and will take place in MLA PubCentral on Friday, 10 January, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
**KEY**

**MLA Service Areas**
1. MLA headquarters office (304, level 3)
2. MLA registration and information (Atrium, level 4)
3. Members’ lounge (6E lobby, level 6)
4. Speaker ready room (309, level 3)
5. Exhibit hall (4B, level 4)
6. Accessibility desk (Lobby level and Atrium, level 4)
7. Graduate student lounge (602, level 6)
8. Pressroom (308, level 3)
10. Lactation rooms (Suites A and C, level 6)
11. Quiet room (305, level 3)
12. MLA Career Center (Tahoma 4–5, Conference Center, third floor)

**Meeting Rooms**
- 201–14, level 2
- 2A–B, level 2
- 303, level 3
- 401, 4C1–4, level 4
- 603–20, level 6
- 6A–B, level 6

**Conference Center**
- Skagit 1–5, lower level
- Yakima 1–2, level 1
- Chelan 1–5, level 2
- Tahoma 1–3, level 3
PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR YOUR BADGE.
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POLICIES

Appropriate Conduct at the MLA Annual Convention

The largest scholarly meeting in the humanities, the MLA Annual Convention brings together thousands of members to discuss new research, participate in workshops, and build their professional networks. The MLA is committed to providing an inclusive and harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, religion, or other group identity.

Attendees should be aware of the MLA’s policies on discrimination and harassment and on professional ethics. We also encourage those participating in interviews at the convention to review Dos and Don’ts for MLA Convention Interviews.

Behaviors that are unacceptable at the MLA convention include:
- Harassment or intimidation based on gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, religion, or other group identity
- Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact
- Shouting down or threatening speakers

Speakers are asked to frame discussions as openly and inclusively as possible and to be aware of how language or images may be perceived by others. Attendees may exercise their option to leave a session or a conversation.

Exhibitors must follow all MLA exhibits rules, regulations, and policies.

All attendees are expected to follow these guidelines in all convention venues, including online venues, and at convention social events. Attendees asked to stop a hostile or harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately. Please report any physical assault or threats to the Seattle police department.

Continue reading the MLA’s guidelines for appropriate conduct at the MLA Annual Convention at www.mla.org/Appropriate-Conduct.

Audio- and Videotaping at Sessions

Neither audiotaping nor videotaping of sessions is normally permitted. Occasional exceptions may be made for members of the media taping short segments designed to convey the convention atmosphere. Such arrangements must be made through the press office and require the consent of all speakers at a session. When taping is approved, a representative of the media staff will accompany the reporter and crew. The session organizer will announce to the audience that audio- or videotaping will take place during a part of the session. Only background taping is allowed, not the taping of an entire session.

Requests to film the convention as part of a creative or documentary project must have been submitted to the Executive Council by 11 October.

Badges

Badges are required for admission to convention sessions, the exhibit hall, and the MLA Career Center. Badge holders are available at the MLA registration and welcome centers, where attendees can also replace lost badges for $20.

Canceling Sessions

MLA sessions should only be canceled if nearly all the participants are unable to attend the convention. In such a situation, please write to updates2020@mla.org immediately so that convention attendees can be informed of the cancellation. Organizers should also inform all the session participants of the cancellation.

Fragrance

The Committee on Disability Issues in the Profession reminds attendees that refraining from using scented products will help ensure the comfort of everyone at the convention.

Guest Passes to Sessions

All MLA members and members of the profession that the MLA serves are required to register in order to participate in or attend sessions.

A convention speaker may obtain a pass for a guest who has no professional interest in language or literature; the pass is valid only to hear a presentation given by that speaker at a single session. The speaker must request the pass at the MLA registration and welcome center on the day of the session, before the center closes. Passes may not be requested by guests of speakers or by MLA members who have not registered for the convention.

Guest Passes to the Exhibit Hall

MLA convention registrants may obtain free passes to the exhibit hall for guests they accompany in the hall. Persons who are not registered for the convention and who are not accompanied by registrants may purchase a one-day pass to the exhibit hall for $10. These passes are available at the exhibitor information booth (WSCC, Atrium, level 4).

Identification

You may need to have a government-issued photo ID when you check in to your hotel. Security personnel may ask to see a hotel room key or that you be accompanied by a hotel guest with a room key, especially between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
Photography

To share the work of members and the atmosphere of the convention with a broader public, the convention will be photographed and recorded. Attendees may be photographed or recorded as part of this event.

The MLA’s Policies against Discrimination and Harassment

The MLA reminds participants in the convention that federal, state, and local laws prohibit discrimination in employment, including discrimination in the form of harassment, against any person. Please ensure that all individuals in your organization who are participating in the MLA’s convention as your representatives are made aware of and understand that they must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. Read the MLA’s full policies at www.mla.org/Discrimination-Harassment-Policies.

From the MLA’s Statement on Professional Ethics

As a community valuing free inquiry, we must be able to rely on the integrity and the good judgment of our members. For this reason, we should not exploit or discriminate against others on grounds such as race, ethnicity, national origin, religious creed, age, gender, sexual preference, or disability; sexually harass students, colleagues, or staff members; use language that is prejudicial or gratuitously derogatory; make capricious or arbitrary decisions affecting working conditions, professional status, or academic freedom; misuse confidential information; plagiarize the work of others; practice deceit or fraud on the academic community or the public.

Reading in Absentia

To encourage discussion and dialogue among panelists and attendees at convention sessions, reading in absentia (whether by Skype, videoconferencing, audio delivery, or presentation by surrogates) is not normally permitted. Presenters who are unable to attend the convention because of unforeseen emergencies may circulate their papers in advance through private or public groups on MLA Commons or upload them to CORE, the MLA’s open-access repository.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in most public places in Seattle.

HOTELS IN SEATTLE

Sheraton Grand Seattle
1400 6th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101
206 621-9000

Crowne Plaza Seattle Downtown
1113 6th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101
206 464-1980

Fairmont Olympic Hotel
411 University St, Seattle, WA 98101
206 621-1700

Grand Hyatt Seattle
721 Pine St, Seattle, WA 98101
206 774-1234

Hyatt at Olive 8
1635 8th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101
206 695-1234

Mayflower Park Hotel
405 Olive Way, Seattle, WA 98101
206 623-8700

Motif Seattle
1415 5th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101
206 971-8000

The Westin Seattle
1900 5th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101
206 728-1000

2021 CONVENTION

Calls for Papers
To post or review calls for papers for the 2021 MLA convention in Toronto (7–10 January 2021), visit www.mla.org/conv_papers.

Organizing Sessions
Forms and instructions for organizing sessions for the 2021 convention in Toronto will be available on the MLA Web site in March 2020 for submission by 1 April.

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