I am pleased to report on the association’s activities in 2019.

Office of Scholarly Communication

The Office of Scholarly Communication is responsible for the development of the association’s major print and electronic publications—including *PMLA*, book publications, the *MLA Handbook* and *Style Center*—and other scholarly communication initiatives, including the development and community management of the *MLA Commons* and *Humanities Commons*. In addition, the editing and production of association publications are housed within the office. The office is under the direction of Angela Gibson.

*PMLA*

Submission statistics and topic coverage are given in detail in Wai Chee Dimock’s report (see Annex No. 15). Annex 12 addresses the search for a new editor. Annex 10 includes an update on the results of the RFP for a publishing partner.

**Book Publications**

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 guides to teaching, materials suitable for instruction in language classes and English composition, and classroom editions of familiar and lesser-known texts from around the world in their original languages and in English translations, as well as reference works. The association maintains a backlist of nearly 300 titles, and book publications remain an important service to members and contribution to pedagogy, scholarship, and professional development in the humanities. The MLA expects to publish 18 new titles in its established book series in 2019. The book program has begun outreach to expand its list in rhetoric and writing studies and now has several promising titles in production. Volumes are in development that include sections on teaching at the secondary school level and that, in some cases, included high school teachers as coeditors. It continues to pursue books on works in non-European languages, including Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese.

This calendar year’s new titles to date, in order of publication, are as follows:

1. Thomas A. Goodmann, ed., *Approaches to Teaching Langland’s Piers Plowman*

2. Jo Ann Cavallo, ed., *Teaching Italian Renaissance Romance Epic*

3. Gaurav Desai and John Hawley, eds., *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Amitav Ghosh*

4. Miriam Fuchs, Sarita Rai, and Yves Loiseau, eds., *Study Abroad: Traditions and New Directions*

5. Colette Moore and Chris C. Palmer, eds., *Teaching the History of the English Language*

6. Evan R. Davis and Nicholas D. Nace, eds., *Teaching Modern British and American Satire*

7. Elizabeth Brookbank and H. Faye Christenberry, *MLA Guide to Undergraduate Research in Literature*
8. Miriam Fuchs and Sarita Rai, with Yves Loiseau, eds., *Study Abroad: Traditions and New Directions*

9. Tarshia L. Stanley, ed., *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Octavia E. Butler*

10. John Wharton Lowe and Herman Beavers, eds., *Approaches to Teaching Gaines’s The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman and Other Works*

11. Robert Donahoo and Marshall Bruce Gentry, eds., *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Flannery O’Connor*

12. Stephen J. Burn and Mary K. Holland, eds., *Approaches to Teaching the Works of David Foster Wallace*


We additionally expect to publish the *MLA Guide to Digital Literacy, Options for Teaching Modern Latin American Poetries, Sina: A Story by the Author of Heidi* (a German-language title in the Text and Translation series), and *Foreign Language Teaching and the Environment* by the end of January. Thirty-four additional titles are accepted and in preparation for publication; approximately sixty-five new projects are in development.

**MLA Style Resources**

The Office of Scholarly Communication develops MLA style resources, including the *MLA Handbook*, which is the association’s best-selling title, and *The MLA Style Center*, a free, regularly updated companion site to the handbook and the most heavily visited MLA Web site. The ninth edition of the *MLA Handbook* is being developed for spring 2021 launch. The *Style Center* features user-submitted questions answered by MLA staff editors; teaching resources; writing tips; sample papers; posts written by MLA editors, teachers, librarians, and students. Since its launch in May 2016, the site has seen steadily increased traffic. Over the past year, the site’s page views have increased nearly 80%, and the users by 20%:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Page views</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>10,121,474</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>4,526,340</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>5,655,304</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2,500,105</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>4,190,606</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1,550966</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1,420,318</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>372,520</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Aug. start)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note that the numbers reflected in the chart above mark corrections from previous reporting: they are substantially higher, because previous reporting did not accurately account for the totality of pages on the site.

The Style Center’s e-mail newsletter, The Source, prepared in collaboration with the office of outreach, has over 100,000 subscribers.

The office, in collaboration with outreach and information systems, is also developing the first MLA style video course, to be sold through the site, eventually with other related courses.

**Digital Initiatives: MLA Commons and Humanities Commons**

MLA Commons, launched in 2013, is an online collaboration platform for members. It is used by the MLA a publishing platform (currently in production is Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities) and as the primary workspace and document repository for committees. This year, the convention and scholarly communication staff are collaborating on an initiative to drive activity in the forums by using MLA Commons. Over the next year, operational oversight of Humanities Commons, the larger network of which MLA Commons is part, and its repository CORE (Commons Open Repository Exchange) will be transferred to Michigan State University (this includes Web hosting, end-user support, and much of the development work). The MLA is working in close collaboration with MSU to ensure a successful transfer, including recommending MSU for grants (with the understanding that the MLA will be written into those grants) and developing a shared governance model.

**Editorial and Production Activities**

The Office of Scholarly Communication edits the full range of association publications and communications, including membership and promotional materials, print books and digital anthologies, PMLA, the ADE Bulletin, the ADFL Bulletin, Profession, the Job Information List, the convention program, the MLA Newsletter, material for the MLA Web site, and reports. The editors’ work informs the development of MLA style resources, including webinars, workshops, and resources written by staff members on The MLA Style Center.

The production unit, responsible for the MLA’s print and PDF publications, worked on the MLA Newsletter, the Symposium program, PMLA and the convention program, the ADE and ADFL Bulletins, the publications catalog, membership and marketing materials, books in print and accessible e-book format, and more.

**Office of Bibliographic Information Services (BIS)**

The Office of Bibliographic Information Services (BIS) produces the MLA International Bibliography, including the Directory of Periodicals and the MLA Thesaurus. Since the retirement of Barbara Chen in December 2018, BIS has been directed by Mary Onorato. Associate Director Gregory M. Grazevich is now also the editor of the bibliography. The bibliography database contained 2,933,110 records as of the December 2018 update. In 2018, we indexed 78,699 publications. The Directory of Periodicals, which members can access through the MLA Web site, included 4,773 active titles, 768 of which were e-journals, and historical information on more than 2,500 additional periodicals.

More than 100,000 publisher-provided abstracts are available to subscribers. Full-text links to resources such as Project MUSE, ProQuest’s Dissertations and Theses database, and JSTOR articles and books are now available for 12.7% of citations. In addition, the bibliography now includes over 450,000 DOIs (digital object identifiers) and links to more than 2,600 indexed scholarly Web sites.
The MLA staff members who index publications received assistance in 2019 from ninety-eight scholar-bibliographers in the field (eighteen distinguished bibliographers, twelve senior bibliographers, sixty-five bibliographers, and three assistant bibliographers). The MLA Bibliography fellowship program, which was introduced in 2004 with the approval of the Executive Council, allowed the appointment of ten more fellows in 2019. Three fellows are on track to complete their terms in 2019 and will be awarded certificates during the 2020 MLA convention.

The *MLA International Bibliography with Full Text* on EBSCOhost debuted in mid-June 2018. The product adds to the bibliography full text of more than 1,000 books and journals EBSCO has licensed for the product. From June 2018 through August 2019 the full-text product generated royalties of $1,376,166.29, helping put our total bibliography royalties for FY 2018/2019 at $9,117,022.07. This is $191,249.75 more than FY 2017/2018 and $57,557.72 more than the $9,059,464.35 guaranteed in our contract with EBSCO. (The guaranteed amount reflected our previous highest annual royalties total, in FY 2016/2017.)

Since 2017, BIS staff members have been working with an outside firm to design and implement a new production platform for the database. The new platform went live at the end of April 2019, with staff training conducted in May and June. Some work is still being done in the legacy platform to complete indexing work started there, but we anticipate retiring the old platform by December 2019. The new platform offers a much more intuitive interface as well as more advanced features for searching, tracking of coverage, and generating reports. BIS staff have produced a series of webinars to instruct field bibliographers in using the new platform.

Since 2015, MLA BibLink has helped scholars who have ORCID identifiers search the *MLA International Bibliography* for their works, including those published under variant names, and add them to their ORCID profiles. We created a tutorial, *Building Your Scholarly Identity with the MLA International Bibliography and ORCID*, to guide scholars on the process. To date, over 31,000 identifiers have been added to the database.

In order to support and encourage use of the bibliography, we continue to add to the roster of video tutorials freely available to faculty members, librarians, and students on the Vimeo platform. In spring 2019 we released “Researching Writing Studies in the *MLA International Bibliography.*” By the end of 2019 we will have added “Researching Literature in the *MLA International Bibliography*” as well as a Japanese-language version of our introductory tutorial, “What Is the *MLA International Bibliography* on EBSCO?” and a Spanish version of “Keyword Search vs. Subject Search in the *MLA International Bibliography.*” The tutorials accumulated 16,456 views in the 2018 calendar year, an increase of 38% from the 10,207 views from in the previous year (1 January 2017—31 Dec. 2017). We continue to see rapid growth in the number of views, with views in the first half of September 2019 being approximately equal to views during the whole month of September 2018.

*Understanding the MLA International Bibliography: An Online Course* was introduced in May 2017. This free online course, composed of five units, provides instruction in how to use the *MLA International Bibliography* for college-level research. Each unit presents a lesson, a set of questions designed to reinforce the lesson through active engagement with the bibliography, and a quiz. Students receive a badge after passing each quiz and a course-completion badge after completing all the lessons and passing all five quizzes. Lesson plans, assignments, and an instructor’s guide to integrating the online course into class curricula are also available on *The MLA Style Center* “Teaching Resources” page (style.mla.org/teaching-resources/). Subject area modules for linguistics, film, folklore, and writing studies were added in January 2018. An additional subject area module on researching literary studies
will release in fall 2019.

More than 1,000 main course completion badges and 250 subject area badges have been awarded as of 19 October 2019, more than tripling the 325 main course completions in the course’s first 15 months (June 2017-September 2018). September activity rates are not available yet as of this writing, but August 2019 showed 23,283 student activities logged, more than double the 10,811 activities logged in August 2018.

In addition to promoting the online course through social media and by engaging visitors to MLA exhibits at academic and library conferences, at the BIS session at the 2018 Convention, staff members Angie Ecklund and Julie Frick Wade gave a presentation on the online course and demonstrated a classroom exercise making use of the bibliography. In April 2019 we presented a Webcast, “Engaging Students: Using the MLA International Bibliography to Teach the Research Process,” in which Angie Ecklund presented the online course and Prof. Claire Buck of Wheaton University discussed how she uses the bibliography in her teaching. More than 100 librarians and faculty members attended the live Webcast, and the recording, which is available for on-demand viewing, has since been viewed more than 150 times. In October 2019, Angie will be joined by Prof. Tamara O’Callaghan of Northern Kentucky University in making a similar presentation at an EBSCO user group conference for North American academic librarians. The online course was also featured in poster sessions at the ADE and ADFL summer seminars.

In October 2019, a panel session at the American Folklore Society annual conference will be dedicated to the role of the *MLA International Bibliography* in folklore research. Bibliography Editor Greg Grazevich will be joined by BIS staff member Farrah Lehman Den, Associate Index Editor and Instructional Technology Producer, and Moira Marsh, Librarian for Anthropology, Folklore, and Sociology at Indiana University Bloomington. In addition, various BIS staff members presented on using the bibliography in research and teaching at the Boston Rhetoric and Writing Network summer institute, at the annual conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing in Amherst, at the Bibliostar library conference in Milan, and at EBSCO events in Boston for librarians from Latin American universities and in San Antonio, Texas, for North American academic librarians.

Bibliography staff members serve the wider profession by serving on various committees of the National Federation of Advanced Information Services (NFAIS). In 2018-19 staff members served on the NFAIS standards committee, the NFAIS annual conference planning committee, and the NFAIS humanities round table planning committee. In spring 2019 NFAIS merged with the National Information Standards Organization (NISO). Bibliography Editor Greg Grazevich currently serves on the NISO board.

**Office of Programs**

The Office of Programs, directed by Dennis Looney, oversees activities in the fields of English and languages and the work of the Association of Departments of English and the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages. Activities previously undertaken through the Office of Research, have been folded into Programs, with a staff member, Natalia Lusin, now designated Associate Director of Programs and Head of Research. MLA Academic Program Services (MAPS), launched in 2019, is a new designation that includes ADE, ADFL, Career Services, and other projects related to the profession.
In 2018-2019, staff members from Programs represented the MLA at the following meetings and spoke or organized sessions and/or workshops on the topics in parentheses: NEMLA (countering the decline in language enrollments), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (language enrollments), the Foreign Language Standards Collaborative Board (language requirements), the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (models of successful programs), the National Council of Teachers of English (K-16 alliances), the College Language Association (the English major), the Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (the English major), and the Joint National Committee for Languages (advocacy).

Programs staff members collaborated on projects stemming from the 2016 MLA Language Enrollment Census, an ongoing project which collects and analyzes language enrollments in higher education in the United States, producing a long report with inserts on successful and effective programs in June 2019. A complementary project collecting data on language requirements from the approximately 2600 institutions in the census has completed its initial phase of data collection; this project will allow the coordination of enrollment data from the 2016 census with information on requirements on each respective institution that participated in the census. The preliminary report on jobs from the 2017-2018 year’s Job Information List was posted on the MLA Web site, The Trend, in June 2019; publication of the long report is projected for November 2019.

Staff members from the programs office organized and/or participated in site visits to a variety of campuses, twenty-four, in connection with the ADFL-MLA language consultancy service from the fall of 2018 through the fall of 2019. Begun in 2010 as a project overseen by working groups appointed by the Executive Council, the Language Consultancy provides assistance to language departments, programs, or centers that seek to implement recommendations from the 2007 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages. ADFL and ADE (discussed below) consultants are faculty members with a wide range of experience in administration; many have served as program directors, chairs, and deans or held other positions in upper-level administration. MLA staff work to help consultants prepare for visits. Sixteen consultancies were carried out in departments of global or world languages across the country and they mainly addressed questions about undergraduate enrollments, majors and minors, and curricular innovation. Additional consultancies were carried out in departments or programs of Asian Studies (1), French and Italian (4), German (1), and Spanish (2). The twenty-four consultancies were conducted in eighteen different states. Thirteen consultancies were conducted at private institutions; eleven were conducted at public institutions.

Staff members worked with the ADE Executive Committee to establish an analogous service for departments of English, the ADE-MLA Consultancy Service in 2017-2018. In the first year of the ADE-MLA Consultancy Service, 2018-2019, the office arranged five consultancies at a mix of private and public institutions, both small and large. The departments seeking consultants had a wide range of concerns from the very specific (e.g., the place of world literature in the curriculum, the place of creative writing within English, or difficulty in effective directorship of a composition program) to the very general (e.g., dissatisfaction with and confusion over declining enrollments in English or preparation for a program review). Four consultancies have been scheduled thus far in 2019-20, suggesting that the total number might double from 2018-19. Whether in English or languages other than English, the consultancy project identifies successful programs and collects materials in connection with them that showcase effective curricular models and pedagogical strategies. It also provides informational materials and resources that departments utilize in the revision of their programs and practices.

The office curates the MLA Language Map and the MLA Language Map Data Center, which continue to serve many visitors. Using aggregated data from the 2006–2010 American Community
Survey, the map displays the locations and numbers of speakers of thirty languages commonly spoken in the United States. It also displays the locations of and enrollments in college and university programs in the languages the user is researching by using data from the fall 2016 enrollment survey, which has been added to the map following the publication of the 2016 census long report.

The office makes available at no cost two brochures in PDF format that can 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*.

**ADE and ADFL**

In the year ending August 2019, the ADE, directed by Doug Steward, had 540 member departments; the ADFL, directed by Dennis Looney, had 652 member departments, one-year declines of 17 and 4, respectively. The directors are working with Outreach staff to contact all lapsed members and potential members to build on these numbers. The introduction of MAPS creates an opportunity to expand institutional membership. The ADE and the ADFL have a common dues structure and schedule, with dues based on the size of departments’ faculties. Since it allows multiple departments to renew their ADE and ADFL memberships together, the common dues structure encourages departmental collaboration and institution-wide participation in the ADE and the ADFL while preserving the individual department as the unit of membership in each organization. ADE and ADFL membership provides communal support for graduate students’ and other job seekers’ free access to search the MLA *Job List*. Membership in the ADE or the ADFL is no longer required, however, for a department to provide *Job List* access to its own faculty members and students.

The ADE and the ADFL sponsor sessions at the MLA Annual Convention on the profession in general; in particular the executive committees organize and run sessions and workshops of use to job candidates and members of hiring committees. At the 2019 convention in Chicago, former ADE President Emily Todd and then current ADFL President Gary B. Schmidt led a preconvention workshop for department chairs and departmental leaders on “Advocating for Your Department.” ADFL organized a roundtable on “Career Pathways for Job Seekers in Languages” with representatives of different types of institutions, as well as from fields outside the academy, who discussed career trajectories. The roundtable was followed by a workshop that offered small-group mentoring on the job search—inside and outside the academy. ADE organized a “Preconvention Workshop on Career Directions for PhDs in English.” At the Career Center’s job counseling service for candidates on the academic market, 10 ADE counselors offered individual sessions for 34 candidates on the job market; 11 ADFL counselors worked with 32 candidates in languages. For the first time at the convention ADE and ADFL ran one-on-one consultancy sessions that enabled department leaders to discuss managing departments or programs with experienced consultants. The Career Center also had 5 counselors who discussed non-academic opportunities with 24 candidates. Valerie B. Lee received the ADE Francis Andrew March Award and Rosemary G. Feal received the ADFL Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession.

The ADE and 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 for departmental administrators. In 2019, ADFL Seminar West was hosted in Spokane, WA, 22–25 May, by Gonzaga University, with additional support from Gonzaga Preparatory School, Spokane Falls Community College, Washington State University, and Whitworth University. The ADFL Summer Seminar West’s focus was on “Innovative Approaches to Strengthening Language Departments” and it
attracted 90 participants. Three one-day workshops preceded the seminar: New Chairs in Languages (7); Managing Small Programs (8); Teaching Language through Literature (6). ADE Seminar Midwest was hosted in Milwaukee, WI, 9-12 July, by the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, with Marquette University and attracted 82 participants. Its focus was on “Innovations in English: If We Build It, Will They Come?” Three one-day workshops preceded the seminar: New Chairs in English (12), Attracting Students to the English Major (22); Graduate Curricula and Careers (11). An interesting feature of the seminar in Milwaukee was a discussion session on what faculty members can do about the graduate student mental health crisis.

The ADE and the ADFL organized a joint summer seminar in Pittsburgh, PA, 5-9 June 2019, on how to define and cultivate humanities expertise and how to share it across campus through innovative programs, general education and core curricula, and through the work of centers and programs in addition to departments. The seminar was hosted by three local institutions: Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, and the University of Pittsburgh; with additional support from four regional partners: Allegheny College, Slippery Rock University, Washington and Jefferson College, and West Virginia University. The seminar, “Translating Humanities Expertise: How to Talk to Everybody,” attracted 116 participants. It was preceded by a series of one-day workshops: New Chairs in English (12); New Chairs in Foreign Languages (11); Responding to the Decline in English Majors and Enrollments (18); Strategic Planning in the Humanities Department (6). It concluded on Sunday with a postseminar working group run by Paula Krebs and Kirstin Wilcox on “Skills, Values, Perspectives: Help Your Majors Know and Show What They’ve Learned” (29). The 2019 ADE-ADFL summer seminar in Pittsburgh was the first to involve graduate students directly. On Friday, 7 June, doctoral students from the host institutions participated in a two-part skill-building and professional development workshop, with a dedicated lunch in between the sessions to continue conversations informally. Students were also able to participate in the Friday plenary sessions.

The 2019 seminars provided opportunities for department chairs, directors of B.A., M.A. and doctoral programs, and other departmental representatives to discuss pressing curricular issues that affect undergraduate and graduate programs from the perspective of career preparation, transferable skills, and explorations of the humanities ecosystem. All three seminars were redesigned to maximize conversation and the exchange of information; in addition to plenary sessions and discussion groups, each seminar included an extensive showcase of innovative courses, majors, programs. Lori Askeland and Anna W. Stenport opened the “Innovation Showcase” in Pittsburgh with observations on the challenges of changing the curriculum, undergraduate and graduate, in English and languages. The respective showcases at each seminar presented successful models for imitation at various points across the curriculum. Participants were unanimous in welcoming these opportunities to learn first hand about effective programming. ADE and ADFL are committed to organizing all summer seminars in the future with this new feature.

The ADE and ADFL bulletins are now e-journals; their Web sites 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. ADE Bulletin published volume 157 in 2019; ADFL Bulletin published volume 45.2 in 2019. The ADE and ADFL executive committees collaborate on a joint web site on the MLA Commons, Connected Departments, which offers readers valuable information and a forum for discussion of critical topics such as recruiting for the major in English and other modern languages, the economic value of college majors, and defending the humanities. Ask the Chair is a popular blog on the site.
Throughout the year, the ADE and ADFL chairs’ electronic discussion lists provide communal support and allow members to address a wide variety of curricular, administrative, and human resources issues.

**Office of Convention and Events**

Karin L. Bagnall serves as the director of convention and events; the office was created in the summer of 2019. The director is responsible for the association's annual convention, the international symposium, and works collaboratively with other MLA offices to organize other association conferences and events.

**The Annual Convention**

The 2019 convention in Chicago drew 4,500 attendees, of whom 1,063 (24%) were graduate students. There were 745 convention sessions, with approximately 2,915 speakers from over 789 universities and colleges and other institutions. The convention program broke down as follows: 199 special sessions, linked sessions, and plenaries organized by members (including the presidential plenary and its linked sessions); 299 forum sessions, 85 MLA committee sessions, and 134 allied organization sessions (89 of these 516 sessions were nonguaranteed sessions that the Program Committee approved); and 23 special events (including creative conversations) and social events. The working group format returned for 2019; four working groups were scheduled to meet twice during the convention (one working group had to cancel the second meeting of the group). The exhibit hall had 95 booths, representing 79 companies and institutions, including the MLA.

Two new initiatives have been undertaken for the 2020 convention in Seattle: Just-in-Time sessions and an open call for proposals to take part in the 2020 Humanities in Five. Just-in-Time sessions were instituted to allow members to address significant events in the field, higher education, the world, etc. that took place after the 1 April deadline for regular sessions. Eighteen Just-in-Time proposals and forty-two proposals to participate in Humanities in Five were submitted by the September deadline.

As of 27 November, 3,561 people had registered for the Seattle convention. (Last year at this time, there were 72 fewer registrants.) General information about the convention is available on the MLA Web site, along with convention registration and housing reservation forms. Approximately 70.3% of the registrants are regular members, 18% are student members, 6.1% are unemployed members or members employed part-time, and 2.4% are emeritus members. The remaining registrants (3.2%) are nonmembers (0.7% of those are student nonmembers).

Members were given priority discounted access to convention registration through the MLA Web site. Many members took advantage of this service: 2,689 members (14%) of the total membership) registered at the Web site during the early registration period (prior to 8 October). Thus far 81 exhibit booths have been sold, which is fourteen fewer than the total number of booths sold by this time last year. The convention program became available at the MLA Web site on 7 October and was mailed on 19 September.

The 2021 MLA Annual Convention will be held from 7 through 10 January in Toronto. Members could submit 2021 calls for papers through the MLA Web site beginning on 12 November. The submission system posts calls for papers as members submit them online.
The 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 annual conventions will be held in Seattle; Toronto; Washington, DC; San Francisco, Philadelphia, and New Orleans respectively.

*The International Symposium*

The 2019 International Symposium was held in Lisbon, Portugal at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 23–25 July 2019. Further details on the symposium can be found in annex 14.

The next International Symposium will be held in Glasgow, Scotland at the Scottish Event Campus Centre and on the campus of the University of Glasgow, 17–19 June 2021.

**Office of Outreach**

The office of outreach was created in the summer of 2015 with the goal of increasing the MLA’s reach and impact. Until July 2019, the office consisted of three units: convention programs, headed by Karin Bagnall; marketing and sales, headed by Kathleen Hansen; and communications, headed by Anna Chang. After the departure of the former director of outreach, Siovahn Walker, the convention programs unit became the office of convention and events and Anna Chang took on the directorship of the remaining units. The office of outreach works independently and in cooperation with other MLA offices to promote and coordinate a unified communications, marketing, development, and outreach strategy designed to increase constituent engagement, membership, event attendance, sales, and donations.

Since its last report in October 2018, the office of outreach has worked not only to improve the MLA’s reach, capacity, and impact but to improve its ways of measuring these outcomes. We have implemented changes to our online properties to better track the impact of our campaigns, created a new interface to analyze these results, and worked to ensure that our counts of members are more accurate. Because the move to rolling membership along with the implementation of a new customer relationship management system created challenges in getting accurate member counts, we no longer feel confident in the posted 4.2% increase in unique members (from 25,305 to 26,384) for the January 2018 to January 2019 membership year and we expect to see a correction in the January 2020 counts. The total number of unique individuals holding MLA memberships in the period from 15 January 2019 to 25 September 2019 was 23,837, a 5.9% decline from the total number of unique individuals holding MLA memberships during this same period last year. The current (i.e., snapshot) membership count as of 25 September 2019 is 19,522, a 7.0% decline over last year on the same date, when the count was 20,987.

Thanks to vigorous promotional efforts and the creation of a new Web site, the 2019 MLA International Symposium saw a 120% increase in attendance over the 2016 symposium (339 registrants in 2016 vs. 748 in 2019). Since last year’s report the MLA has seen a 20% rise in *Facebook* likes (23,000 likes).

The office of outreach has collaborated with other MLA offices on a number of new projects including the new *Job List* site. Outreach staff members worked with our vendor on customizing the design of the new *Job List* site and on promoting the site to our traditional advertisers (chairs of English and other language departments) and to new audiences (leaders of other humanities departments and programs and human resources departments). The new site removes the log-in barrier for job seekers and allows them to set up customized job alerts; it also offers advertisers new features like year-round posting and more regular site updates (essential requirements for recruiters posting positions outside of higher education teaching). As of 21 September, revenue from the new site was 12.5% higher than the same date last year.
The office has also worked with the office of programs to launch MLA Academic Program Services (MAPS), an umbrella organization that encompasses ADE and ADFL members but that can be promoted to leaders of other humanities departments and programs. This will give current ADE and ADFL members a larger network of expertise to draw on and potentially increase attendance at the summer seminars. Institutional membership also shifted from a fixed to a rolling membership cycle, which will allow those who join at any time of year to receive a full year of benefits.

As part of its engagement initiatives, outreach created a new speed mentoring event that debuted in June 2019 in the MLA offices. The event brought together approximately fifty mentors and mentees for brief conversations about professional development. Feedback from attendees was universally positive and so the office of programs has planned a speed mentoring event for the Seattle convention and anticipates regional events throughout the year.

Despite these achievements, there remain areas of significant concern, most notably, book sales. The MLA Handbook continues to experience a decline in sales due to competition from free, online services like Purdue OWL and an overall decline in the textbook market.

On the personnel front, the office of outreach recently hired a new development officer, Susan Kenny. It saw the departure of archivist Liza Young.

Marketing and Sales

While backlist titles outperformed projections and new title sales were close to target, in fiscal year 2018–19, sales of the MLA Handbook continued to decline relative to initial projections. At the start of the year we projected $475,000 in Handbook sales, but ended the year with $385,721 in sales. This decline is the result not only of the life cycle of the edition—released in March 2016—but also of structural changes affecting the entire textbook market and of competition from free online resources such as Purdue OWL and similar platforms. This decrease in book income continues a pattern which began roughly ten years ago and has resulted in a reduction in total MLA book revenue of $3.35 million dollars, from $3,876,824 in fiscal year 2008–09 (when the seventh edition of the MLA Handbook was released) to $525,429 in fiscal year 2018–19.

To counteract this trend and promote MLA books, the marketing and sales unit has worked energetically. It has advertised MLA books in over one hundred publications and Web sites, and mailed 20,000 printed catalogs to bookstores, libraries, and MLA members. We increased backlist sales by 19% over 2018 with a summer sale offer to MLA members and other constituents. New titles sales were up compared to 2018 as well, by 14%. Throughout the year, new titles were featured in our monthly news digest, the MLA Newsletter, and in social media. Additional efforts to stimulate book sales in 2018–19 included e-mail and search-advertising campaigns promoting specific titles to relevant MLA forums. We also worked directly with authors on promoting their titles at appropriate and targeted conferences and meetings, and sent review copies of each title to scholarly journals and other publications.

We routinely receive reviews in journals and other publications, but it is difficult to estimate the impact on sales from these reviews. Authors expect us to send our titles to reviewers, though we do not send preview galleys (only the finished books). Nonetheless, to further support reviewer marketing in non-U.S. markets, we have contracted with Edelweiss to provide digital review copy distribution to better reach international publications.
Continuing efforts to promote the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* have also included landing pages, advertisements, and free webinars on MLA style. We will send a representative to promote MLA style at the International Writing Centers Association Conference in October 2019, the Council of Writing Program Administrators Conference in July 2020, and to the CCCC Conference in March 2020. We will offer a free MLA style workshop that will be open to the public at the MLA convention in Seattle in January 2020. We will promote this workshop to all levels of teachers in the Seattle area. Numerous Google AdWords campaigns were created and refined during fiscal year 2018–19 to increase awareness of the *MLA Handbook* and to drive purchases and gather leads for *The Source*, the MLA style e-newsletter. We will promote the *MLA Handbook* and MLA style at over forty exhibits in 2019 and 2020 at exhibits featuring the *MLA International Bibliography with Full Text*. Moreover, we continue to work with our overseas distributor, Eurospan, on *MLA Handbook* marketing efforts both overseas and in Asia. We recently worked with our e-book distributor, NetRead, to upgrade the MLA’s data feed to better sell Kindle and e-book versions of the *Handbook* to our largest customer, Amazon.

Now entering our second year of partnership with EBSCO to promote the *MLA International Bibliography with Full Text*, the marketing and sales unit works with EBSCO to manage a $500,000 annual marketing budget. These funds are used for exhibits and sponsorships at more than forty meetings and conferences in 2019 and 2020, including the American Folklore Society, the Charleston Conference, NEMLA, and the International Congress on Medieval Studies. Collateral printing, premium giveaways, and promotion for all conferences are also being managed by the marketing and sales unit. We also work with EBSCO to create and manage a $100,000 worldwide advertising campaign targeted to librarians (including ads in *Choice*, *Research Information*, and *Library Journal*). In these advertisements and on the *MLA Bibliography*’s social media pages, we highlight not only the full-text product, but also our free online course and tutorial videos. We will continue to work on an ongoing basis with EBSCO to create content such as blog posts and e-mail messaging to potential customers.

Staff members in the marketing and sales unit are also tasked with helping to promote MLA membership and increase the number of members. The automated renewal series designed to optimize renewal rates so far appears to have increased average renewal rates by 5.43% since 2017. Since last October the unit has created a similar series for ADE and ADFL renewals.

The marketing and sales unit also works to promote the MLA Annual Convention, the MLA International Symposium, and the ADE and ADFL Summer Seminars. These efforts include direct mail, e-mail marketing campaigns, and exhibit management.

To better track our efforts, we recently instituted membership e-commerce tracking through Google Analytics. This will allow staff members to make data-driven decisions about the efficacy of digital and print marketing campaigns moving forward.

Members of the marketing team also focused on optimizing our Google Ads search campaign advertising via our Google Ad Grant program. This has helped the MLA reach highly motivated users who are actively engaging with topics such as MLA format, the MLA Annual Convention, pedagogy, and advocacy.

The unit also established new tracking protocols for the MLA’s bulk e-mails and created a Google Data Studio dashboard that allows for the integration of open-rate and click-rate statistics with Google analytics for the MLA’s online properties and enables staff members to better measure the efficacy of engagement and promotional messages.
Communications

Since last year’s report, communications staff members launched the redesigned Profession Web site and published three seasonal issues of the new magazine. Each issue focused on a broadly relevant theme (contingent labor, academic freedom, and public humanities) but also included nontheme articles and practical guidelines pieces. The site also features news items and listings of calls for papers, grants and awards, and other opportunities. In conjunction with the site launch, the staff designed a new dedicated e-mail to announce each issue’s publication to members and those who’ve subscribed to the MLA’s career and professional development list. Since the 23 October 2018 launch, the site has received 114,900 page views, a 230% increase over the page views for October 2017 to September 2018.

As part of the revamping of MLA Newsletter, which is mailed quarterly to MLA members and posted on the MLA Web site, the office has expanded the number of items written by members and the range of member work covered, from digital humanities to indigenous language programs to the translation of classical works. Increasing member contributions to the publication not only allows members to learn about the work of their fellow members but also helps increase contributors’ investment in the association.

As of this summer, the office finished switching bulk e-mail platforms; we are now sending all bulk messages through the MLA’s customer relations management system (CiviCRM), which allows the association to increase its customization of messages sent to members and constituents. We are now able to dynamically add seasonal content (e.g., reminders about convention registration) to the MLA’s membership renewal series. As the MLA is able to move additional data into the CRM, communications and marketing will be able to further customize messaging to better connect to members’ history and interests.

Development

The MLA held its third annual Benefit for the Humanities at the 2019 convention in Chicago. A cocktail reception, the benefit took place at the Fairmont Chicago on 5 January and featured special guests Geoffrey R. Stone (First Amendment expert), Natasha Trethewey (former Poet Laureate of the United States) and Rachel Davis Mersey (journalism scholar). Attendees were required to donate $200 or more to attend.

The 2019 Benefit for the Humanities raised a total of $108,775, surpassing the MLA’s $100,000 projection. This was achieved through a combination of individual donations ($32,025) and institutional sponsorships ($76,750). The money was raised as part of the MLA’s ongoing fund-raising campaign, Paving the Way: For the Future of the Humanities, which funds advocacy and lobbying on behalf of humanities education and direct support for graduate students and contingent faculty members. As in previous years, we relied heavily on current and former members of the Executive Council to serve as fund-raisers and ambassadors. The fourth Benefit for the Humanities will be held during the 2020 annual convention, on 10 January 2020 at the Sheraton Grand Seattle at 8:00 p.m.

On 1 May 2019, the MLA held its second apartment fundraiser at the home of Domna K. Stanton. The event’s featured guest was Claudia Rankine, author of Citizen: An American Lyric; Rankine was introduced by Gayatri Spivak. Fifty-five people from both inside and outside the academy attended. The average donation was $328, and the total raised was $18,050, just under 8% of the MLA’s FY18–19 fundraising total of $235,293.
Although we have continued its planned giving and donor cultivation efforts, and have now received three planning giving pledges, our efforts have been disrupted by staff turnover. With a new development officer hired in August 2019, we expect to ramp up our efforts on these fronts. The development officer will also oversee the MLA Conversation Series engagement events, which include Public Conversations and Community Conversations. Since last October, the MLA has held two Public Conversations: a talk, “Survival Strategies: Shakespeare on Power” with Stephen Greenblatt at the Providence Athenaeum and “Readers (and Fans) Write Back to Books,” a free and open session at the 2019 convention in Chicago. The series is supported by sponsorships.

As a result of our fund-raising efforts in support of the Paving the Way campaign, the MLA has given out two rounds of Professional Development Grants for Part-time Faculty Member (twenty-two grants) since October 2018. These grants provide each recipient with $1,000 to support professional development (technology purchases, conference travel, etc.). The association also awarded five Humanities Innovation Course Development Grants, which provide grantees $3,000 each to support innovative humanities course development. In September the MLA launched a new grant program, Support the Census Grants, which will fund language-based projects related to the 2020 census. Those grants will be awarded in November 2019.

Contributions

The MLA has a number of restricted funds that support particular activities. Contributions to the various funds totaled $218,938 in the 2019 membership year, which represents a decrease of 5.5% from 2018. The number of individuals and sponsors making contributions was 1,661, an increase of 12.7% from 2018, when we had 1,474 contributors.

The Paving the Way Fund saw a slight increase, of 1%, in contribution dollars. Contributions to the Paving the Way Fund in 2019 totaled $156,950; in 2018, contributions totaled $155,327. The Paving the Way campaign has changed the distribution of donations received into the MLA’s various funds, resulting in a drop in donations to several other funds.

The Endowment Fund saw an increase, of 9.1%, in contribution dollars. Contributions to the Endowment Fund in 2019 totaled $21,075; in 2018, contributions totaled $19,320. While total donations were up, the number of individuals contributing to the Endowment Fund decreased by 16.7%, from 293 contributors in 2018 to 244 contributors in 2019.

Contributions to the Professional Education Assistance Funds totaled $29,504 in 2019, a decrease of 32.1% over 2018. A total of 651 individuals contributed to the funds, a decrease of 26.4% over 2018. However, Paving the Way covers the cost of convention travel grants not covered by this fund.

The Fund for the Promotion of the Profession received $1,101 in contributions in 2019, a decrease of 18.2% from 2018. The number of contributors to this fund decreased by 57.1%. The fund that supports the Phyllis Franklin Award for Public Advocacy of the Humanities received $4,325 in contributions in 2019, a decrease of 23.8% over the previous year. The number of contributors to this fund decreased by 36.3%. Contributions to the Good Neighbor Fund totaled $5,823 in 2019, a decrease of 9.8% from 2018; the number of contributors to this fund decreased by 36.6%.

Those individuals who 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 $137,916 in 2019, 17.1% higher than in 2018. Contributions of $200 to $499 totaled $35,929 in 2019, 13.3% lower than in 2018. Overall, 239 donors gave $200 or more in 2019, 2.6% more than the previous year.

MLA Membership and Association Administration

Membership Trends

Current Statistics

Terrence Callaghan, director of administration and finance, reports that the total number of unique individuals holding MLA memberships in the period from 15 January 2019 to 25 September 2019 was 23,837. The total number of unique individuals holding MLA memberships during this same period last year was 25,357. The unique member count is a count of the total number of unique persons holding an MLA membership within a given membership year (Jan 15 – Jan 14) and, since the move to rolling membership, has been used as our headline count of MLA members.

The current (i.e., snapshot) membership count as of 25 September 2019 is 19,522. Last year on the same date it was 20,987. This statistic is the total number of members at close of a given day with the membership year.

Membership dues income decreased by 3.4% in fiscal year 2018-19. Membership income in fiscal year 2017-18 was $1,619,909; in 2018-19 it was $1,564,120.

Of the total number of individuals that were members of the association from 15 January 2019 to 25 September 2019; 15,212 (63.8%) are regular members, 4,337 (18.2%) are student members, 4,218 (17.7%) are life members, and 70 (0.3%) are honorary or complimentary members. During this same period last year, there were; 16,233 (64%) regular members, 4,565 (18%) student members, 4,321 (17%) life members and 238 (1%) honorary or complimentary members.

Honors and Awards

Each year at the convention, the association recognizes outstanding achievements in scholarship. The 2019 publication prizes that we plan to award at the January 2020 convention number eighteen, including the William Riley Parker Prize for an outstanding essay in PMLA. A total of 794 titles competed for publication prizes this year. Of these, 337 (42.4%) competed for either the James Russell Lowell Prize or the MLA Prize for a First Book. Ninety-five (11.9%) competed for the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work and the Lois Roth Award. The number of publications that competed for the remainder of the awards was 362 (45.5%).

In May 2015, the Executive Council approved a new policy on simultaneous submissions for book prize competitions. The policy allows a book to compete simultaneously for one of the association’s major prizes—the James Russell Lowell Prize or the MLA Prize for a First Book—and one of the more specialized prizes. Of the 143 books submitted for the Lowell Prize, 53 also competed for a specialized prize. Sixty-five of the 194 books submitted for the Prize for a First Book were also submitted for a specialized prize.

Graduate Student Travel Grants are available each year for travel to the convention. The council allocated funds for up to 240 awards for the January 2019 convention. We received 248 applications for
these awards. All of the applicants were eligible, but only 209 attended the convention and therefore received grants. (The number of eligible applicants for 2019 convention grants was down 9.8% from the previous year.)

The association also offers grants to defray the cost of traveling to the convention to MLA members who are contingent non-tenure-track faculty members or are unemployed. There were 42 applications for these grants for the 2019 convention. All the applicants were eligible, but 4 canceled their plans to attend the convention. We therefore awarded a total of 38 grants, 8 more than for the 2018 convention. Thirty-two of the grants went to contingent non-tenure-track faculty members, at thirty institutions. The grant program is designed to encourage institutions to support the professional development of their faculty members by providing matching funds. Nine of the thirty institutions (30%) provided such funds. The percentage the previous year was 50%.

Regular and life members who reside outside the United States and Canada and who planned to attend the 2019 convention could apply for a third type of travel grant. We received 15 applications, and all the applicants were eligible. All but one applicant attended the convention so we awarded fourteen grants, four fewer than the previous year.

Office of Information Systems

The Office of Information Systems (IS) is responsible for ensuring the operation of technical systems and networks, for data management and analytics, for software development and maintenance of new and existing digital properties and products, and for the project management of major technology initiatives and the quality assurance of all technical work. Thanh Trinh, director of information systems and chief information officer, oversees the office’s four IS units: data design, software development, systems and networks, and technical project management.

Working with Innodata as a development partner, members of the systems and networks staff, along with colleagues in Bibliographic Information Services, have completed phase 2B of the new MLA International Bibliography production platform, which both improved the indexing and validation workflow and enhanced the taxonomy. Metadata ingestion and data output to EBSCO functionalities are now live, as is the platform’s API integrations with ORCID IDs and CrossRef DOIs. The team is currently working on additional enhancements including two-factor authentication, mass editing and global change functionality, and a functional recycle bin for deleted records.

Meanwhile, systems and networks staff has begun Windows 10, MS Office, and Symantec upgrades for staff PC users and has planned a series of server operating system upgrades to maintain the stability and security of the organization's IS infrastructure. The team designed and implemented an in-house disaster recovery plan for the MLA’s hosted CoreSite data center. Leveraging VMWare Site Recovery Manager (SRM) CoreSite now delivers automated syncing and failover, in case of disaster to our servers located at 85 Broad Street. Staff also contributed to a successful MLA interoffice relocation.

The software development team maintains and improves the interfaces for internal administrative applications and forms as well as external interfaces on mla.org, MLA Commons, Humanities Commons, and related sites. Working with colleagues across IS, developers created an MLA WordPress service in Amazon Web Services (AWS) that includes development, staging, and production environments. The team then migrated The MLA Style Center and Profession sites to this new service. Working with the data design group, developers improved the existing CiviCRM service in AWS by deploying a web
application firewall across environments to enhance system security while adding real time threat monitoring. Staff also worked with the Office of Programs to select and implement the new *MLA Job List* and are currently contributing to an MLA Style video course project.

The team collaborated with colleagues in the Office of Scholarly Communication to launch *Humanities Commons* groups for the Association of University Presses network and with consultants to simplify that platform’s identity management software. *Humanities Commons* membership now exceeds 18,000 registered members. Staff developers are now completing work for the online publication *Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities*.

The data design team continues to manage the MLA’s databases and help colleagues conduct data analysis. Working with the technical project management team, staff members were instrumental to the successful implementation of the new *MLA Job List* as well as the ongoing migration of association data to CiviCRM. Staff members have also consolidated data reports into one reporting tool, allowing the association to achieve substantial cost savings. Finally, the team replaced the existing batch replication of data from Oracle to CiviCRM with a more robust real-time replication solution.

The technical project management team launched a roadmap this past year, allowing senior staff to prioritize technology work and project managers to allocate resources appropriately. Team members built this roadmap by conducting systems audits and business analysis interviews with department leaders across the association. To date, project managers have delivered 13 roadmap initiatives, ranging from the launch of the *MLA Job List* to DevOps capability expansions. In the coming year, it plans to enrich the roadmap with more quantitative data to help project prioritization.

The team continues to conduct quality assurance for the MLA’s systems and digital products and properties through user acceptance and regression testing. Team members also triage, prioritize, and resolve day-to-day technical issues with other IS teams as well as with key technology vendors, such as Confex, Contextual Code, and Madgex (responsible for convention management software, mla.org development, and the *MLA Job List* respectively).

**Advocacy Efforts and National Coalitions**

The following statements were issued by the MLA Executive Council in 2019. The first, a joint statement, was signed by fifteen other organizations. The third replaces the council’s May 2013 statement on the same subject. The fourth, a joint statement, was signed by eighteen other organizations. Council statements are posted at https://www.mla.org/About-Us/Governance/Executive-Council/Executive-Council-Actions.

- Joint Statement on Proposed Program Cuts at the University of Tulsa

- MLA Statement on Continuing Threats to Academic Freedom and Higher Education in Turkey

- Statement in Support of University Presses

- Joint Statement Expressing Concern about the Department of Education’s Interpretation of Title VI
On issues affecting our fields, the MLA works with three Washington, DC–based organizations: the National Humanities Alliance (NHA), which has more than 170 members from local, state, and national organizations and institutions, including scholarly societies, libraries, museums, higher education associations, and colleges and universities; the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL), which represents more than 300,000 professionals and has over 100 members, including the ADFL and other national, regional, and state organizations encompassing most areas of the K–16 language field; and the Coalition for International Education (CIE), which is made up of more than thirty national higher education organizations, focuses on promoting and supporting Fulbright-Hays grants and programs authorized under Title VI of the Higher Education Act, and works to inform policy makers, education and private sector officials, and the media about national needs in international and foreign language education.

The NHA is the leading advocate for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and also advocates for policies that advance humanities research, programming, preservation, and teaching. This year the MLA once again participated in 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. It 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 NHA’s 2019 annual meeting and Humanities Advocacy Day was held on 11–12 March in Washington, DC. Over the two-day period, 227 advocates participated in 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 to request support for the NEH and for federally funded language programs.

The MLA supports the event by paying transportation expenses for members from states whose legislators represented key votes on support for humanities funding. MLA member Margaret Johnson, professor of English at Idaho State University, kindly agreed to travel to Washington, DC to meet with the Idaho delegation. I met with staffers from the offices of Senators Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Jack Reed (D-RI) and Representatives David Cicilline (D-RI) and Jim Langevin (D-RI). Johnson met with staffers from the offices of Senators Mike Crapo (R-ID) and James Risch (R-ID) and Representatives Russ Fulcher (R-ID) and Mike Simpson (R-ID). In addition, she and other advocates met with Senator James Risch (R-ID) and Representative Russ Fulcher (R-ID).

The JNCL promotes public awareness of language issues through its Language Advocacy Day and annual Delegate Assembly meeting in Washington, DC. Dennis Looney, the MLA’s director of programs and ADFL, represents the MLA at the JNCL Delegate Assembly meetings, but he did not attend this year.

The CIE lobbies the leadership of the federal departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, requesting support for the aforementioned programs. In May 2019, the MLA signed on to two of the CIE’s letters, which urged the Senate and House appropriations committees to increase federal support for International Education and Foreign Language Studies, and Fulbright-Hays programs.

On 13–14 March, Lydia Tang, the MLA’s assistant director of programs, attended a series of meetings on Capitol Hill organized by the CIE. International educators from thirty-eight institutions of
higher education and nine organizations participated in the 2019 advocacy event. Tang joined a group of faculty members from institutions of higher education in New York State who met with staffers from the offices of Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Representatives Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Grace Meng (D-NY), and Nita M. Lowey (D-NY). These meetings stressed the importance of the Department of Education’s international and foreign language education programs, such as Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. In addition, Dennis Looney participated in CIE teleconferences concerning funding for international education programs and other Department of Education programs.

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 Executive Officers (CEO). The CEO functions as the primary vehicle for maintaining and enhancing relations among the constituent learned societies and between the societies and the ACLS. The CEO 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 the incoming chief elected officers and chief administrative officers of member societies. I attended the 2019 Learned Society Leadership Seminar with First Vice President Judith Butler. The MLA’s delegate to the ACLS annual meeting is Gaurav Desai.

**Implementation of Delegate Assembly Actions**

**Constitutional Amendments**

The 2019 Delegate Assembly approved three multipart constitutional amendments that, taken together, clarify the scope of and the distinction between motions and resolutions and provide for changes in the association’s resolution process recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee on Advocacy Policies and Procedures (CAPP). The council determined that the amendments posed no fiduciary problems and so forwarded the amendments to the membership for the required ratification vote. This vote was completed on 15 May. All members in good standing as of 1 April who were also members on 5 January, the date of the Delegate Assembly meeting, were eligible to vote. Of the 19,140 eligible voters, 1,221 (6.4%) returned ballots. The vote on the first amendment was 1,079 yes and 63 no; the vote on the second amendment was 1,082 yes and 62 no; the vote on the third amendment was 1,075 yes and 87 no. The outcome of the ratification vote was reported on MLA Commons. The amendments have been incorporated into the text of the constitution at the Web site (www.mla.org/About-Us/Governance/MLA-Constitution) and the various Web pages relating to the resolution process have been updated to reflect the constitutional changes.

The 2019 assembly also initiated a constitutional amendment that was based on another recommendation from CAPP: that a new category of motions--emergency motions--be provided for in the constitution. The Committee on Amendments to the Constitution formulated the amendment in late spring and forwarded the proposed amendment to the assembly for action at its 11 January 2020 meeting in Seattle.

**Confirmation of Dues Increase**

The 2017 Delegate Assembly approved an automatic annual increase of 2.5% in the dues amount for every membership category, an increase that is subject to confirmation by the assembly at its meeting each January. The 2019 assembly confirmed its approval of the increase, and the Executive Council confirmed the assembly’s action. The new dues schedule (see below) took effect in September 2019.
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**Changed Fee for Paid Life Membership**

Pursuant to a recommendation from the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee, the assembly approved a change in the fee for paid life membership that was in keeping with recent changes in the association’s dues structure pertaining to both granted and paid life membership. Though the threshold for the unconditional granting of life membership had been changed from forty years of membership to fifty and the constitution had been amended to allow the assembly to align the provision for paid life membership with this new threshold for granted life membership, the assembly had never been asked to change the fee structure for paid life membership to specify a one-fifth reduction in the fee for each completed decade of membership instead of a one-fourth reduction. The one-fifth reduction was needed to align with the new fifty-year threshold for the granting of life membership. The assembly approved the change in the fee structure, and the Executive Council confirmed the assembly’s action at the February 2019 council meeting. The new fee structure became effective immediately.

**Open Discussion of Power Differentials in Graduate Education**

At its February 2019 meeting, the Executive Council received a transcript of comments and recommendations that delegates made during the 2019 assembly’s discussion of power differentials in graduate education and decided to establish a task force whose main task would be to prepare a set of guidelines and recommendations aimed at eradicating abuses of power and exploitation in faculty/student relations and at increasing transparency and equity in all aspects of graduate education. The task force, which was appointed in May, submitted its report to the council in October. The assembly will have an opportunity to discuss the task force’s report at the 2020 assembly meeting in Seattle.