CANDIDATE INFORMATION

2013 MLA Elections

Contents

Background Information

Notes on Association Governance 1
Elections for Second Vice President, Executive Council, Delegate Assembly 1
Elections for Division and Discussion Group Executive Committees 1
Making Suggestions for the 2013 Executive Committee Elections 2
Abbreviations Used in Biographical Summaries 2

Candidate Information

Voting for Second Vice President 3
Voting for At-Large Members of the Executive Council 7
Voting for Special-Interest Delegates 14
Voting for Regional Delegates 33
Region 1: New England and Eastern Canada 33
Region 2: New York State 38
Region 3: Middle Atlantic 45
Region 4: Great Lakes 50
Region 5: South 57
Region 6: Central and Rocky Mountain 63
Region 7: Western United States and Western Canada 66
Candidate Information
2013 MLA Elections

Note: To be counted, online ballots must be submitted by midnight EST on 10 December 2013 and paper ballots must be received at the MLA office no later than 10 December 2013.

Notes on Association Governance

- Two elected bodies play a role in association governance. The Executive Council is a fiduciary body and has responsibility for managing the business of the association. It has seventeen voting members (the three officers and fourteen members) and one nonvoting member (the executive director). The Delegate Assembly, which has over 270 voting members, recommends actions to the council regarding the conduct of association business and the association’s directions, goals, and structure.
- The MLA constitution (see www.mla.org/mla_constitution) outlines the specific duties of the officers, the council, and the assembly in articles 5, 7, and 9, respectively.

Elections for Second Vice President, Executive Council, Delegate Assembly

- MLA elections are held annually in the fall to elect a second vice president of the association and to fill vacancies on the Executive Council and in the Delegate Assembly. Nominations have been made by the Nominating and Elections Committees, whose members are elected by the Delegate Assembly.
- Nominees to elected positions in the association are asked to submit biographical summaries and are invited to submit statements on matters of professional concern. This document contains summaries and statements submitted by this year’s nominees, and it is intended for use by those members who request paper ballots for the 2013 elections. Candidate information appears in the same order as the nominees’ names appear on the paper ballot, and, for the Delegate Assembly elections, the number preceding each nominee’s name corresponds to the number assigned to the nominee on the ballot. Specific details about each of the election categories precede the candidate information for that category.
- The candidate information in this document is also included in the online ballot system that all 2013 MLA members have been invited to use to cast their votes in the 2013 elections. In the online system, the names of the candidates for second vice president, the Executive Council, and the Delegate Assembly are links. Clicking on a candidate’s name will open a window containing the candidate’s biographical summary and election statement.

Elections for Division and Discussion Group Executive Committees

- Elections are held each fall to replace outgoing members of the executive committees. Nominations are made by the membership and by the executive committees.
- Instructions for voting appear on the paper ballot sheet. The names of the candidates appear on the accompanying sheet. The online ballot system includes all division and discussion group executive committee contests.
Making Suggestions for the 2014 Executive Committee Elections

- At the bottom of the paper ballot is a space that members can use to suggest nominees for the 2014 division and discussion group executive committee elections. Names written in on the ballot will be forwarded to the appropriate executive committees, which must select at least one nominee each year from the names suggested by the membership.

- It is also possible to suggest nominees through the MLA Web site. When exiting the online ballot system, members will be given the opportunity to use the online suggestion form. The form can also be accessed directly from the About Committees page.

Abbreviations Used in Biographical Summaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAAS</td>
<td>Association for Asian American Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AATF</td>
<td>American Association of Teachers of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AATG</td>
<td>American Association of Teachers of German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AATI</td>
<td>American Association of Teachers of Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AATSEEL</td>
<td>American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AATSP</td>
<td>American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAUP</td>
<td>American Association of University Professors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAUW</td>
<td>American Association of University Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACLA</td>
<td>American Comparative Literature Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACLS</td>
<td>American Council of Learned Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTFL</td>
<td>American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADE</td>
<td>Association of Departments of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADFL</td>
<td>Association of Departments of Foreign Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA</td>
<td>American Studies Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASECS</td>
<td>American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWP</td>
<td>Association of Writers and Writing Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCC</td>
<td>Conference on College Composition and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEA</td>
<td>College English Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIES</td>
<td>Council for International Exchange of Scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>College Language Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAAD</td>
<td>Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETS</td>
<td>Educational Testing Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIPSE</td>
<td>Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAS</td>
<td>Foreign Language and Area Studies (fellowship prog. in the US Dept. of Educ.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HASTAC</td>
<td>Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICLA</td>
<td>International Comparative Literature Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IREX</td>
<td>International Research and Exchanges Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASA</td>
<td>Latin American Studies Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELUS</td>
<td>Society for the Study of the Multietnic Literature of the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMLA</td>
<td>Midwest Modern Language Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACCS</td>
<td>National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCTE</td>
<td>National Council of Teachers of English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part I: Voting for Second Vice President

The person elected second vice president will serve in that office from 13 January 2014 through the close of the January 2015 convention and will automatically become first vice president in 2015, serving in that office through the close of the January 2016 convention, and president of the MLA in 2016, serving in that office through the close of the January 2017 convention. This year all nominees are from the field of English or American language and literature; the MLA constitution (article 6.D) stipulates that the second vice president shall be elected from the field of English or American only in alternate years. (From 13 Jan. 2014 through 11 Jan. 2015, the first vice president will be Roland Greene, comparative literature, Stanford Univ., and the president will be Margaret W. Ferguson, English, Univ. of California, Davis.)

The Hare voting method will be used in the election of second vice president. (Using this voting method will, except in the case of a tie, eliminate the need for a separate runoff election in the spring.) Members are asked to rank the candidates listed below in order of preference. On the ballot sheet, members should write “1” next to the name of their first choice, “2” next to the name of their second choice, and “3” next to the name of their third choice. Please note that voting for only one candidate means casting no vote in the second round of balloting that the Hare voting method incorporates.

Rank these candidates in order of preference.

Kwame Anthony Appiah. Laurance S. Rockefeller Univ. Prof. of Philosophy and the Univ. Center for Human Values, Princeton Univ.

We live in an age of wonderful new scholarship and marvelous new tools for sharing and developing a humanistic understanding. The ideal of a liberal education in which the sciences and the humanities together prepare people for lives as free men and women is as vital as it has ever been. Without liberal education, our culture founders, our public discourse festers, our social bonds are frayed, and our individual lives are impoverished. The humanities, like the sciences, are an enormous public good, and their support depends on a broader recognition of that fact. We in the MLA have a crucial role to play in communicating their significance to our students and their parents and to public officials. Only if we take up this task with the enthusiasm that we ourselves feel about our work, making that enthusiasm contagious, can we reverse the
decline in support for the humanities in general and for the literary humanities in particular. We will then be able to protect them from the Gradgrinds who disdain the ideal of the scholar-teacher and seek to turn more and more of our teaching into preparation not for life as a whole but for work alone. At a time when too many classrooms have been turned over to overworked, underpaid adjuncts and when the liberal arts have increasingly been pushed aside by the preprofessionalization of college, we need a vigorous defense of our vocation.

David J. Bartholomae. Prof. English and Charles Crow Ch., Univ. of Pittsburgh.


Statement

I’ve spent my career working with the lower division, with language and literature courses designed to serve the mission of general education. If I were elected, I would bring this focus to my term as an MLA officer.

I believe that research and teaching are impoverished when the profession loses touch with the lower division. I’m eager to showcase best practices in teaching, including innovations that bring advanced research to a broad audience. I’d like to explore ways to better promote research on the varieties of reading and writing, listening and speaking, central to the lives and learning of students, including those not our majors. I’d like to review the costs and promises of new instructional technologies, from MOOCs to essay-grading software.

Through my work with the ADE, I know the degree to which questions about the lower division engage questions about hiring practices. The MLA has done much to advance the discussion of non-tenure-track employment. We must attend to the increasing use of part-time instructors, but we also need to pay close attention to the increasing numbers of full-time non-tenure track faculty members, the “teaching” faculty whose labor, it is assumed, can support a smaller (more expensive) “research” faculty. This distinction between a teaching faculty and a research faculty has become fundamental to institutional thinking, serving the desires of departments as well as deans. I would welcome the opportunity to review the consequences of this distinction and to once again engage in public conversation on staffing in the humanities.

Garrett Stewart. James O. Freedman Prof. of Letters, Univ. of Iowa.


Statement

You don’t need, like me, to spend your career teaching mostly at state universities to recognize that higher education in the humanities needs the MLA’s lobbying efforts as never before. Though performed
behind the scenes of ongoing scholarly dialogue, such political work commands its own public stage in dramatizing the contributions—and tribulations—of our linked disciplines.

From the outside looking in, first as nervous job seeker, then as habitual conventioneer, it’s easy to contract a certain MLAise. One sure cure is a serial dose of committee assignments, which no skepticism can survive. Over the years I’ve been teamed with colleagues deciding on convention rosters, on journal articles about film and literature, on volumes in one MLA pedagogical series or another, and on awards to books elsewhere published. The seriousness of these deliberations has been guided by an expert staff as devoted to critical rigor as to advocacy in the funding arena and equity in the academic workplace.

I’m honored to stand for election because of how often I’ve been seated on committees so, yes, committed. All efforts must be redoubled in these straitened days, where, among other challenges, clarified models of evaluation are called for in the fields of online pedagogy as well as digital scholarship. The very future of tenure may depend on it. If elected, I would work to further the association’s fight against institutional downsizing and intellectual indifference so that the compromises we have to make are never with our own standards and aspirations.

Part II: Voting for At-Large Members of the Executive Council

Three persons will be elected for four-year terms that will begin 13 January 2014 and run through the close of the January 2018 convention. The MLA constitution (article 8.A.5) stipulates that the at-large membership of the council must include at least one and no more than six representatives from each of the following fields: English or American, French, German, Spanish, and other (e.g., other languages and literatures, comparative literature, folklore, linguistics). Since all these fields will continue to be represented on the council in 2014, candidates from any field may be elected this year. Moreover, because no designated field is represented by more than three council members, all three persons elected this year may be from the same field.

The MLA constitution (art. 8) also states that the at-large membership of the council “shall also include at least one representative, but no more than eight, from each of the eligible membership levels (i.e., regular, graduate student, and life), except that the number of regular members on the council shall always be in proportion to the regular membership of the association.” Because regular members compose 62.5% of the membership, they are constitutionally entitled to eight of the twelve at-large council seats. Since seven of the nine at-large members of the council with continuing terms in 2014 are regular members (see the listing below, in which student members are marked with an *), one and only one regular member must be elected. Since none of the continuing council members is a life member and since there are no student-member candidates, the other persons elected this year will be life members. (Note: The names of the nominees who are life members are preceded by a §.)

Maria Herrera-Sobek, Spanish, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara (2011–11 Jan. 2015)
Lutz Koepnick, German, Washington Univ. in St. Louis (2012–10 Jan. 2016)
**Vote for any three nominees.**

**Douglas M. Armato.** Dir., Univ. of Minnesota Press.


Publications include articles in *Against the Grain, AAUP Exchange, Library Journal*.

**Statement**

In being considered for election to the Executive Council, my hope is to bring to that body the benefit of my thirty-five years of experience in scholarly publishing, which have been centered throughout in humanities research and advocacy. I have been a leader in the university press community, serving two terms on the board of directors and one term as president of our national association and representing our profession to library groups, learned societies, academic leaders, foundations, and media. But I have increasingly found many of the most valuable perspectives on scholarly publishing and communication come from discussions with faculty members and graduate students, and I worry that those voices are often unheard in the negotiations that are restructuring how knowledge will be evaluated, accessed, preserved—and potentially restructured. As a council member, I would hope to play a role in amplifying those voices.

Though my responsibilities at the University of Minnesota Press are largely administrative, I also act as editor in, among other areas, digital culture and as such closely monitor and engage both the promise and peril of the emerging environment for scholarship, culture, and politics. I am excited to see the MLA, with the launch of *MLA Commons*, take a vigorous role in advancing new modes of scholarly collaboration and communication, and I believe there are important ways in which that pioneering effort can productively interact with the formal system of scholarly publication represented by university presses and, in doing so, become a model for other disciplines.

**Brian Croxall.** Digital Humanities Strategist and lecturer English, Emory Univ.


Publications include: contrib., #alt-academy (2011), *Hacking the Academy: A Book Crowdsourced in One Week* (2011); articles in *Neo-Victorian Studies, Writing and Pedagogy*. 
Statement

I am a former adjunct who now works off the tenure track building digital humanities projects and programs. My experience—shared with countless others—suggests that the MLA must lead graduate education reform that includes thoughtful preparation for nonprofessorial employment. The MLA must help its members believe about themselves what we say about our undergraduates: that the study of languages and literatures prepares one for many careers.

On the Executive Council, I will work to introduce something new at the annual convention: a job fair with government and private-sector exhibitors. In so doing, the MLA will put its imprimatur on nonacademic outcomes for graduate training, which will help individual departments institute the changes necessary to reimagine graduate studies.

Concurrent with this expansion of what graduate training means, the MLA should expand how it conceives of its membership. At present, our association is largely composed of those who research and teach modern languages and literatures. We must reframe the organization to represent and advocate for those who have studied these subjects in the past. Those in other career paths need to feel not just welcome but valued as continuing members of the MLA.

Once we expand representation, the MLA will be better able to demonstrate the many outcomes of an education in language and literature because our members will be everywhere. By making visible the many pathways available to those trained in modern languages, we will show the public and ourselves the usefulness of a humanities education.


**Statement**

I apologize for a short statement about momentous issues. The MLA, as the most significant professional intersection in the humanities, often finds itself in a position like mine. Attempting to account for so much to so many can water down its strongest efforts to transmit information, preserve key traditions, inspire, advocate members’ interests, and serve as an agent of change while offering a broad, balanced, responsible view. Serving on three MLA committees—first as cochair of the Committee on Scholarly Editions formulating new standards for digital scholarship, next as a member of the Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion recommending constructive responses to profound shifts in scholarly communication, and currently as a member of the Publications Committee—I have experienced the satisfaction of participation in timely and useful MLA activities. I would welcome membership on the Executive Council as a new opportunity for collaboration. The opportunity seems again meaningful and timely because I sense, as you may, that the horizon of change has moved from the horizon to underfoot, and the pace keeps increasing. Keeping our balance is a challenge: we must move forward, and we must maintain professional integrity as we go. Altogether this is a very tall order with many unforeseeable consequences. But the MLA, our MLA, must lead. We have much to do.

§**Margaret R. Higonnet.** Prof. English and comparative lit., Univ. of Connecticut, Storrs.


**Statement**

Over many years my service with MLA committees (Elections, Radio, Women in the Profession), several divisions (Children’s Literature, 19th- and 20th-century comparative literature), and the Delegate Assembly has challenged me to respond to the interests and needs of a broad range of members, including the tenured and untenured, full- and part-time teachers, graduate students, and independent scholars. One of the MLA’s strengths is its ability to embrace that diversity. In our “vulnerable times,” as Marianne Hirsch puts it, we should attend to that diversity and protect fields, such as less taught languages, that are at risk for political and economic reasons. Facing a protracted financial crisis, we must welcome the American Academy of Arts and Sciences report (2013), which defends the humanities and social sciences as the heart of our future; it stresses the broad national value of increased investment in language proficiency, cultural understanding, interdisciplinary research, and analytic proficiency. Institutional means to achieve those goals are at hand: outreach programs that connect university research to secondary school teachers and AP programs, research partnerships with undergraduates, and study abroad, as well as more diversified immersion and bilingual schools. Greater collaboration across educational institutions should not only heighten hunger for the humanities among undergraduates but also enhance the prospects of graduate students, our future teachers. In another domain, the MLA can encourage scholarship through the development of digital tools that enable access to rare books and material culture, reinvent hypertextual ways of reading, and provoke innovative modes of analysis.

§**Anton Kaes.** Class of 1939 Prof. of German and prof. film and media, Univ. of California, Berkeley.


Publications include: Expressionismus in Amerika. Rezeption und Innovation (1975), Deutschlandbilder. Die Wiederkehr der Geschichte als Film (1987), From Hitler to Heimat: The Return of

Statement

The importance of the MLA cannot be overstated at a time when modern language programs are struggling for survival and the humanities are under threat. During the current crisis, a professional organization is absolutely essential in shaping educational policy at the national level and publicly defending a broad liberal arts education. As a former member of the PMLA Editorial Board and former chair of the MLA Committee on Honors and Awards, I am particularly interested in the effects of a changing media environment on our scholarly and pedagogical work. While new media have invigorated archival research and multidisciplinary teaching, the practice of online education is still subject to debate. As knowledge circulates faster than ever across the globe, the MLA should partner with equivalent organizations outside the United States. Such an initiative might open up alternative perspectives on our own mission and, more practically, bring international job markets to the attention of our members. At the same time, the Executive Council should highlight the rich legacy of less commonly taught languages, especially in the light of recent demographic shifts in the United States. Above all, it should strive to develop new strategies for promoting the humanities in a digital world. Having taught literature, film, and media for nearly forty years, I would be honored to represent the interests and needs of our membership at this critical juncture.

§Tracy Denean Sharpley-Whiting. Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Distinguished Prof. of French and African Amer. and Diaspora Studies, Vanderbilt Univ.


Statement

Since joining the MLA as a graduate student in 1993 and continuing as a full-time faculty member from 1994 on, I have witnessed the organization’s forward-leaning evolution as it embraced issues of interdisciplinarity and diversity and plurality in unparalleled and meaningful ways—a academically and as a matter of equity and representation. As a scholar who straddles multiple fields, I experienced these commitments first-hand during my three-year term on the Advisory Committee on Foreign Languages and Literatures, first as a member and then as chair of that committee. I find myself again today moved by an issue that the MLA is now poised (and has attempted) to address: faculty governance and the role of non-tenure-stream faculty members.

Colleges and universities today are undeniably in more complex and indeed precarious environments. Harnessing their strengths and balancing commitments to the highest quality teaching, discovery, and service as productively and seamlessly as before are increasingly challenging. And though there will be no one-size-fits-all resolution to this issue, I believe we have to find a way forward. As a member of the Executive Council, I would assist in developing institutional strategies and practices for greater inclusion on faculty matters of those voices that help, in this new challenging environment, to maintain our commitments to excellence.


Statement

“If the world could write by itself, it would write like Tolstoy”: so said Isaac Babel, and his claim is revealingly suspect. A foundational truth of our professional lives is that the world cannot write by itself. It takes human beings to write the world, and they write versions of it that are inexhaustibly compelling and noninnocent. This profusion of versions is made of language, and we are the minders of language. The MLA: it is language that joins us, our shared investment in our medium’s pitfalls and promises, its capacity for enchantment, its need of critique, and its power to critique. The vexing resourcefulness of words is the lifeblood we live on.

I run for the Executive Council because I believe our professional investment in language is imperiled. Increasingly, people in our country (and the institutions they represent) believe that the slippery waywardness of language is (finally) about to be replaced by nonlinguistic technological breakthroughs. Sophisticated computer systems work with data—and come up with answers—at exponentially faster speeds. Ambivalence, many hope, will become a thing of the past; productivity will come into its own. We in the humanities know this utopian vision is reductive and flawed. Over the past decades at Swarthmore College, I’ve taught my courses, written my books, and thought about the values that make liberal education liberal. At a time when our country wonders out loud whether young people still need liberal education, the MLA should be in the forefront of explaining why.

Part III: Voting for Special-Interest Delegates

Seventeen persons will be elected to replace delegates whose terms expire on 12 January 2014. The term of office will be from 13 January 2014 through the close of the January 2017 convention. The numbers preceding the nominees’ names correspond to the numbers assigned to the nominees on the paper ballot sheet.

The names of the special-interest delegates with continuing terms in 2014 appear at the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/del_assembly_members).

Vote for one nominee in any or all of the seventeen special-interest contests.

I. Composition, Rhetoric, and Writing (1 contest)


Publications include: contrib., Service-Learning and Writing: Paving the Way for Literacy(ies) through Community Engagement (2012); articles in College Composition and Communication, College English; review in Community Literacy Journal.
Statement
As a writing studies scholar in a multidisciplinary department of humanities (which includes modern languages, literature, rhetoric, technical communication, philosophy, cultural studies, and composition), I am acutely aware of the rhetorical challenges of and opportunities for representing the liberal arts within and beyond the academy. For instance, against the backdrop of financial and ideological resistance to liberal arts education, one growing challenge is the relation between digital technologies and the humanities, which is strained by divisive initiatives such as automated writing evaluation and for-profit, online education models. I believe that such challenges must be addressed directly through interdisciplinary, liberal arts perspectives, which can lead to productive outcomes for all involved.

Along these lines, it is my hope that the MLA can continue to foster connections with entities located beyond the traditional bounds of MLA membership. Within discussions of written communication and writing pedagogy, in particular, lies potential for the MLA to bridge divisions between fields within the liberal arts; between the liberal arts and science, technology, and engineering programs; and, above all, between the academy and national and global publics. I will gladly participate in conversations geared toward partnerships between the MLA and disciplinary outsiders, beginning with mutual commitments to writing and communication pedagogies. Beyond the arena of writing and pedagogy—motivated by my work with writers, researchers, and learners in university-community collaborations—I will contribute to discussions about why and how we might consider going public with our work through community outreach, mass-audience publication, and discussions of public policy.


Statement
My scholarly work and activism focus on access in academic contexts and are grounded in composition/rhetoric and disability studies. As a member of the MLA’s Delegate Assembly, I will encourage greater attention to and perceptibility of the experiences within the MLA for disabled people, people of color, LGBTQI students and faculty members, first-generation students and faculty members, and women. I will also work to increase the visibility of composition, rhetoric, and writing scholars within the MLA and advocate for strong mentoring networks within the organization to enable broader systems of access.

II. Continuing and Distance Education (1 contest)

Publications include: coed., Rethinking Third Cinema: The Role of Anti-colonial Media and Aesthetics in Postmodernity (2009); contrib., Land and Landscape in Francograhic Literature: Remapping
Statement

How do recent changes to the landscape of online education affect questions of global access, power and inequality? The widely publicized MOOC (massive open online courses) movement poses important challenges that the MLA needs to address. If elected, I will work to provide strategic guidance on MOOCs and the ways in which they can be used to enhance and improve—rather than replace—current educational offerings. At the same time, I will bring to the forefront the critical role that liberal arts institutions and community colleges should play in this reshaping of higher education, as pedagogy has always been the center of their institutional missions.

My scholarly and online trajectory has been dedicated to exploring how the online environment can be used to address issues of global inequality in relation to race, class, gender, and disability. This work includes my organization of the Rewriting Wikipedia Project, an effort to reshape Wikipedia content from global and minority perspectives; a free and open-access Postcolonial Digital Humanities Summer School in 2013 to engage the academic community in questions of global race, class, and gender in the digital humanities; and my spearheading of an open Digital Humanities Liberal Arts Virtual Consortium, which will launch in fall 2013. If elected, I will bring the same emphasis on challenging global inequality to the MLA agenda on higher education.


Statement

The growth of university-sponsored MOOCs has spurred a national conversation about institutional practices in higher education. Yet, even as the massive and online characteristics of MOOCs seem novel, MOOCs do little to promote innovation in how a course of teaching or learning is conducted. Unfortunately, distance learning efforts often replicate modes of scientific management from the industrial age that are poorly adapted to collaboration based on social and ubiquitous computing.

As a candidate I combine the perspectives of theory and practice. I have published peer-reviewed criticism on digital pedagogy for over twelve years. My forthcoming book from MIT Press, The War on Learning: Gaining Ground in the Digital University, explores the assumptions that digital media deeply divide students and teachers and that a once-covert war between us and them has turned into an open battle between our technologies and their technologies. I am also an organizing member of two national efforts to
support in-class experimentation with connected learning: Reclaim Open Learning and Feminist Dialogues on Technology.

In a time of pressure for rapid adoption of new instructional technologies, it is important to consider the historical legacies of past efforts and the future implications for our profession as higher education continues to be transformed by social interactions shaped by computational media and distributed networks. As a long-time digital humanities practitioner who has had to negotiate conflicts created by new forms of digital labor and intellectual property, I would represent the concerns of many different types of stakeholders.

III. Creative Writing (1 contest)


Statement

The MLA has a crucial role to play in issuing recommendations regarding best practices for designing and staffing creative writing programs and courses within academic departments. Topics for MLA consideration include the ideal and maximum sizes for creative writing workshops, clear and equitable policies for the promotion and tenuring of faculty creative writers, and fair conditions for creative writing adjunct faculty members. My experience well suits me to contribute a voice in these matters: I have both a creative writing MA and a literature PhD; I helped design and implement a creative writing concentration within English at Boston College; I teach both poetry and fiction workshops; I have published extensively in three genres across a wide spectrum of formats—with a New York publishing house and a small press, in commercial periodicals and literary journals; I have experience teaching in a low-residency MFA program; I currently chair an English department; and I have served in editorial, judging, and event-programming roles. I’ve had the perspective of a graduate student in a creative writing program as well as that of the chair of a large and heterogeneous department. I have insights into what is at stake for student writers and writing faculty members as well as for department chairs in conversation with deans over policies and budgets. I would be happy to draw on this experience in the service of creative writers and creative writing as a delegate to the MLA.

15. Susan Wheeler. Prof. creative writing, Princeton Univ.

Patrick W. Anderson.  Assoc. prof. ethnic studies and communication, Univ. of California, San Diego.


in *E-misfréica*, *Cultural Studies, PMLA, Radical History Review, TDR: The Drama Review, Women and Performance*.

**Statement**

As an interdisciplinary scholar and teacher, I am primarily concerned with the increasing challenges to accessibility in higher education as colleges and universities turn to digital/online and (especially) corporatized classroom models. I understand the problem of accessibility to include (1) the diminishing opportunities for students from underserved communities to access (and afford) institutions of higher learning; (2) the entrenched resistance of many institutions to respond productively and proactively to the wide variety of learning and communication styles within groups marked as disabled; and (3) the availability of research in the arts and humanities for broader public constituencies (for example, in the practice of open-access publishing and in public-policy and advocacy partnerships). I believe these to be overlapping and interrelated concerns, and I am interested in working with the MLA to foster support for progressive and experimental responses to them.


**Statement**

Two related issues have landed squarely on the profession’s plate: growing inequalities within the profession and rapid administrative support for online technologies. Departments of English and languages, and the humanities broadly, will feel the impact of these issues keenly. Our current and future employment structures, as well as our pedagogy and its value, stand to change. The MLA will need to gather data, craft and circulate analyses, contribute to discussions with administrations, and advocate for its membership. As a representative to the Delegate Assembly for disability issues, I would explore how online technologies might be adapted to address disability issues and create meaningful access and how such technologies might be implemented in ways that reduce inequalities within the profession.

**V. Ethnic Studies (3 contests)**

18. **Channette Romero.** Assoc. prof. English, Univ. of Georgia.


**Statement**

We are facing a national assault on inclusive education through the suppression of ethnic studies programs, the censorship of texts that reflect the richness of identity, and exclusive enrollment policies that harm the composition of our student bodies. Such trends join other troubling fiscal changes in higher education and limit our ability to prepare our students to participate and work in a global society. While serving on the executive committee of the Division on American Indian Literatures, I became keenly aware of the MLA’s role as an advocate for cultural inclusivity in education. As a member of the Delegate Assembly, I will work publicly to articulate the necessity of a diversity of languages, literatures, and cultures. This diversity requires that we extend the walls of our classrooms to include community engagement and outreach, both to improve student learning and to gain community support for humanities education.


**Statement**

My teaching career spans sixteen years and includes full-time positions in a Navajo Nation high school in New Mexico, at a community college in Arizona, and at a four-year historically black university in Louisiana. I am currently an assistant professor of multiethnic United States literature at a small, liberal arts university in North Carolina. My teaching experiences combined with my doctoral studies at a large, public research institution have given me a kaleidoscopic perspective of higher education that enhances my awareness of the gaps between tenured and tenure-track faculty members’ and adjunct faculty members’ rights and benefits, between minority culture’s and dominant culture’s socioeconomic opportunities, and between public and private funding. As an ethnic studies representative to the MLA Delegate Assembly, I would be an advocate for institutional support of ethnic studies programs across the United States, especially in the light of recent attacks on the field, as in the case of the Tucson Unified School District. I appreciate the MLA’s backing of tenure and would like to see more institutions improve their ratio of tenured and tenure-track faculty members to adjunct faculty members. I would also support further work by the MLA to provide professionalization opportunities for graduate students, particularly training in the different kinds of employment available to advanced-degree holders in language, literature, and cultural studies.

20. **Maryse Jayasuriya.** Asst. prof. English, Univ. of Texas, El Paso.


Statement

I have been and will continue to be a vigorous advocate for diversity and inclusiveness in the literature curriculum. My work with the South Asian Literary Association as a member of the executive committee and as newsletter editor has taught me the importance of calling attention to accomplishments in scholarship in areas that have often been perceived as marginal within the field. I have been especially concerned to bring unfamiliar texts to students and the public through pedagogy and community outreach. My status as a faculty member at an institution on the United States–Mexico border means that I also have had the opportunity to bring members of underrepresented groups into discussions of the field, which I regard as a vital contribution.


Publications include articles in Asian Cinema, Modern Chinese Literature and Culture, Xin wenxue pinglun (Modern Chinese Literature Criticism), Frontiers of Literary Studies in China, Wenhua yanjiu (Cultural Studies), Journal of the Southwest Conference on Asian Studies.

Statement

It is an honor to be nominated to the Delegate Assembly as a special-interest representative for ethnic studies. As a junior faculty member working in a non-European language field, I am well aware of the declining position of the humanities as a whole and the peripheral status of minorities in the humanities in higher education. At this crucial moment in history, when the world becomes more and more connected and knowledge about other cultures is a necessity rather than an option, it is distressing to witness the return of conservatism that is determined to downplay the heterogeneity and multiplicity that American higher education has sought to achieve. I believe it is important to assert our minority position and make our voice heard to realize a multicultural, global space on campus.


Publications include articles in Black Arts Quarterly, CLA Journal.

Statement

I am greatly concerned with pseudo-academic open-access journals, many of which have names that are the same as or similar to the names of established, reputable journals. We have all seen the diluting effect that for-profit education has had on higher education. Now some so-called open-access journals are perpetuating the same scheme by soliciting professors to publish in their journals, usually for a large fee. The fee itself is not the main concern, though some can be excessive. Some of these journals publish without the type of peer reviewing that characterizes quality academic publishing. The existence of these journals and of degrees received from for-profit institutions means that all in the profession must be more scrupulous when reviewing degrees and publications. Organizations like the MLA that represent the standards of our profession must continue to be vigilant in filtering out the bad while trying to find the positives of the increasingly complex and dangerous technology of the open-access journal that threatens the fundamental foundations of academic integrity. Through educational forums and other professional activities, organizational pillars must continue to shine their academic light through the darkness and confusion of our increasingly complex profession as new technology emerges.


VI. Foreign Language Teaching (1 contest)


Statement

It would be an honor to serve the MLA in the Delegate Assembly to represent the field of foreign language teaching. As a language program director I have gained a unique insight into the interface of language, literature, and culture as well as into what is at stake in foreign language education in the United States. The 2007 report from the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages has opened exciting perspectives and opportunities to enhance what we are doing in the classroom as well as to develop new approaches and pedagogical practices both in and outside of class. Furthermore, I find that the MLA—through all its constituencies—engages topics of increased importance and relevance in our quest to educate the socially responsible citizens of tomorrow and cast a critical gaze on today’s society. Additionally, the MLA continues to open attractive interdisciplinary windows. Consequently, in the light of these considerations, I would like to contribute in my role as a delegate to further develop and cultivate these initiatives. As an applied linguist in a professional organization known for its literary leanings, I relish the opportunity to build bridges that will further advance our interests as scholars and teachers, our profession, and our students.


Statement

I have been a student of language for most of my life, having spent significant time abroad living in France and in francophone West Africa. I have been fortunate to be able to share my experience with
secondary and postsecondary students of French at a number of educational institutions for more than a decade, and I am pleased to stand for election as delegate to the MLA for the field of foreign language teaching.

My interest in language teaching is based on the premise that language is an essential function of cognition and a primary mechanism for cultural production. As the technologies of the twenty-first century bring the different peoples of the world into closer contact, language learning is paramount to successful negotiation of the intercultural dynamics that increasingly shape every professional field.

Hence, I understand that the primary goal of language teaching at all levels is not only to assist students in their acquisition of communicative competencies and mastery of fundamental linguistic structures but also to promote a broad understanding of cultural diversity that has found a mode of expression through the language that is being studied. I welcome the opportunity to further promote culturally sensitive, content-based, communicative foreign language instruction through service to Delegate Assembly of the MLA.

VII. Gays and Lesbians in the Profession (1 contest)


Statement

As a delegate representing the gay and lesbian sectors of the Modern Language Association, I will be committed to addressing issues related to equal opportunities, facilitating the association’s engagement with the current political challenges related to LGBT communities, and enhancing scholarship related to sexual diversity and gender discussions in academia. The vulnerability of LGBT scholars in the processes of hiring, promotion, and access to benefits must be discussed in our association as one of the items included in the equal opportunities agenda. The MLA, as an association dealing with education and research, must be proactive in the political debates regarding underrepresented groups, such as the LGBT population. Sponsoring theoretical and methodological developments from lesbian and gay studies, queer theory, and, in general, gender studies, will be one of my main concerns. As an interdisciplinary field, the study of gender and sexuality has become one of the most productive conversations in our profession. My experience with research groups including researchers in the humanities and social sciences, on the one hand, and my involvement in community projects, on the other, have provided me with organizational experience and conceptual tools that have enriched the way I conceive of our profession as going beyond the production of knowledge, as a social commitment. It is my ambition to offer leadership that deems this connection between knowledge and commitment a priority.
27. Lawrence M. La Fountain-Stokes. Assoc. prof. Amer. culture, Romance langs. and lits., and women’s studies, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor.


Statement

While great strides have been made, academia can still be an inhospitable work environment for LGBT individuals. Questions of disclosure of personal information, prejudice, and health coverage and challenges for partner hiring are some of the issues faced by persons who are or are perceived to be LGBT. These issues can be compounded by other factors such as racism, misogyny, and ableism. At the same time, great opportunities and particular challenges arise, such as the possibilities for student and faculty mentorship and campus and workplace activism. I am committed to representing the needs of LGBT faculty members, staff members, and students and to advocating for broader awareness in the MLA.

VIII. Independent Scholars and Alternative Careers (2 contests)


29. Patrick Williams. Librarian, Syracuse Univ.

PhD (information studies), Univ. of Texas, Austin. Ed. board, Syracuse Univ. Press; ed. advisory board, Evidence Based Library and Information Practice.

**Statement**

I am honored to have been nominated for the MLA Delegate Assembly. My work as an academic librarian positions me at the intersection of scholarship and technology, where the channels through which they are produced, engaged, and disseminated in the humanities originate. My research deals with the social experience of reading and writing with others in electronic environments, and I have worked in instructional technology and multimedia production. In addition, I am well acquainted with the changes and challenges afoot in scholarly communication from my work with our institution’s digital repository and my role on the editorial board of Syracuse University Press. I am excited by the collaborative opportunities afforded by our rapidly changing research and teaching contexts and am particularly interested in the work of scholars in nontraditional academic roles. It is very important to me that our structures and assumptions account for the variety and complexity of scholarship in the digital age and that we are well aware of the diversity of human skills and talents that drive it. As a delegate, I would focus on the realities of collaborative work in the humanities and seek to highlight the far-reaching effects of our scholarly communication practices.


**Statement**

Having had multiple careers—as a teacher of United States literatures, American studies, law, and public policy at four colleges and universities and as a public- and private-sector lawyer, academic editor, musician, and nonacademic writer and editor (e.g., of travel guides and legal treatises)—I believe I can bring a multidisciplinary sensibility to this position.

Those in this special-interest category are canaries on a collier’s night out; the changes affecting academia as a whole often affect those in this group earlier and more severely than they do those in traditional academic positions. With fewer institutional buffers or filters, we tend to have a heightened awareness that academia sometimes offers few career paths and few objective criteria of evaluation. As with much in the United States, the humanities are becoming increasingly polarized between the haves and have-nots. (I am also convinced from experience that universities situate law and business schools as far as possible from humanities departments to conceal the economic disparities).
As an active independent scholar, I’m familiar with the constraints of the job market, with teaching as a visiting professor, with funding one’s own conference travel and research, and with an academic publishing industry that is increasingly market-driven. I think I have an informed perspective of the intellectual, economic, technological, and cultural factors that are changing the profession and of the particular challenges facing nontraditional scholars. And now you can make a decision; do you want an apple or do you want an orange? That’s democracy.

31. F. Bart Miller. Independent scholar, Jacksonville, FL.


Statement

My academic background is in modern foreign languages and literatures, more specifically French Caribbean literature. I was educated at the Universities of Evansville (Indiana) and Liverpool (England). My BA at Evansville was in French and creative writing, and my PhD at Liverpool was in French. I’m running for a seat in the Delegate Assembly because I think a lot can be done to represent the ever-increasing number of scholars in the community who are, for whatever reason, not affiliated full time with any particular institution. Some independent scholars work closely with universities; others have chosen careers in other fields; still others are seeking full-time careers in academic life. My particular strength in this position would be in representing independent scholars who are currently seeking full-time employment in academia. In addition to making your feedback known, I would address the following key issues facing independent and alternative modern languages scholars and affiliates: (1) promotion of the versatility of modern languages degrees, (2) potential for cooperation between the academic and nonacademic forums in our fields, and (3) facilitation of continuing professional relationships between established and emergent scholars. Thank you for your time and consideration.

IX. Less-Taught Languages (1 contest)


Statement

I am deeply invested in the cause and practice of higher education, both as a vehicle for the instruction and intellectual development of students and as a means of preserving and promoting knowledge for its own sake. Despite the increasing popularity of an economics-oriented approach to education as straightforward job training, I am convinced that our society cannot function without the depth, breadth, and texture provided by literature, foreign languages, and the arts. I am an advocate for the centrality of the humanities not only to the mission of universities and colleges but also to the quality of human life and happiness, in large part because of the unique ability of the humanities to facilitate intercultural communication and understanding across linguistic and political borders. Each culture has valuable insights,
ideas, and arts to share, regardless of the number of speakers of a given language or the geographical size of a particular country. In my own work as a professor of Scandinavian studies, I strive to integrate different genres, media, and cultural traditions to explore and illuminate the connections between disciplines and peoples. As a member of the MLA Delegate Assembly, I will enthusiastically defend the importance and represent the needs of both the humanities in general and less-taught languages in particular.

33. **Rebecca Jane Stanton.** Asst. prof. Russian, Barnard Coll.


**Statement**

We all know the threats facing the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs): budget cuts, calls for education to be narrowly practical, a rising tide of assessment swamping already-overworked faculty members and forcing us to justify our existence despite small enrollments. Even our core work as scholars and teachers compels us to get creatively interdisciplinary and to forge alliances with—and pull in students from—other fields. But the MLA is one place where we don’t have to defend ourselves or the validity of language and literary studies. I want to use the size and diversity of the MLA to foster solidarity among LCTL faculty members and to draw attention to the vibrancy and, yes, practicality of our field.

Fashionable proponents of interdisciplinarity too often overlook the LCTLs, which have long been interdisciplinary. Amid gloomy assessments of college learning outcomes, we offer good old-fashioned rigor; and we can point to concrete evidence of our students’ learning—the ability to communicate with people who don’t speak English. Language and literature students enhance their cognitive function, acquire competence in foreign cultures and perspectives on their own, and contribute to the prestige of their institutions by winning Fulbrights and other scholarships. These tangible accomplishments, and the academic departments that produce them, should be celebrated.

As a delegate, I hope to advance the work the MLA does to support members of the profession and to make the case, both on and off campus, for the absolute centrality of foreign languages and literatures to higher education.

X. **Politics and the Profession (1 contest)**

34. **Salah D. Hassan.** Assoc. prof. English, Michigan State Univ.


Politics in the profession and the profession of politics are features of every workplace. This generalization manifests itself in a distinct manner within the North American academy, especially in the humanities. A range of political concerns has assumed an increasingly significant place over the last two decades: from temporary and graduate student labor to post-tenure review to the Palestine-Israel conflict, to name only a few noteworthy examples. These specific issues can’t be disassociated from the decreases in public funding for the humanities, which have produced a state of political emergency. If at one time, an education in the humanities, notably the study of languages, literature, art, philosophy, and religion, was understood to have value in itself, now it requires justification in practical terms. The imperative to justify a humanistic education as applied knowledge has had the effect of silencing unconventional or controversial political positions. Perhaps a consequence of the changes produced by the culture wars of the 1980s, the current backlash against the humanities is an assault on those disciplines that are among the most open to women, minorities, and LGBT scholars and also promote the study of socially contestatory positions. As university administrators move to raise tuition, seek private donations, bid on corporate grants, and hire more temporary faculty members to make up for the shortfalls in state subsidies, the humanities—despite its value beyond the academy—has found itself embattled, struggling to assert its relevance in an environment governed by pedagogical utilitarianism.

   PhD, Emory Univ. Outstanding Untenured Faculty Member, California State Univ., Fullerton, 2013.
   Statement
   I believe that an important mission of the Modern Language Association is to help frame the public’s view of academe, especially in a time of increased doubts about the value of higher education. The problem, as I see it, is that the political debate about higher education has been framed and determined by those outside the profession, and therefore the MLA needs to take on a stronger role in changing the terms of the current discussion. After all, language defines our profession, and the Modern Language Association is uniquely placed to combat the various discourses that have been mobilized against higher education. In this regard, our most pressing issue is to counter attempts to depoliticize disciplinary changes (getting rid of foreign language departments, the consolidation of the humanities in general) in the name of funding. In short, I believe the MLA should make stronger efforts to make visible the way these apparently financial decisions always have political effects, and I hope to work in the Delegate Assembly to help bring about this shift in public discourse.

XI. Two-Year Colleges (2 contests)

   PhD, Graduate Center, City Univ. of New York.
   Statement
   I would be honored to represent two-year colleges and welcome the opportunity to address the concerns of my colleagues at these institutions in particular and in the profession in general. Enrollments are
soaring and funding shrinking at institutions of higher education nationwide. Two-year college faculty members face these challenges in ways specific to our institutions, which are usually the lowest funding priority for large state university systems. How can faculty members serve the diverse student body of the two-year college? Some students are taking a step toward a higher degree, while others are pursuing a trade; many require extensive remediation; others are newly arrived from abroad; still others are primed for academic challenge and rigor. What is the responsible use of online learning for students with unequal access to and familiarity with technology? How can academic standards best be set and maintained with the expansion of higher education’s “market” to include students without the academic skills and habits previously taken for granted? How might collaboration between two-year colleges and secondary education systems reduce the need for remediation? How can transfer to four-year colleges be facilitated? Other concerns of our profession as a whole are also intensified at the two-year college: deprofessionalization of the full-time faculty; attacks on faculty governance and academic freedom; increased reliance on unsupported, oft-exploited contingent faculty members; and increasing workload demands, including assessment. Accountability measures increasingly based on completion and job placement fail to recognize the realities confronting the nontraditional students who largely populate two-year colleges.

37. **Valerie Holliday.** Assoc. prof. film and English, Baton Rouge Community Coll., LA.


**Statement**

The role of the community college in the American education system is an uneasy one, although the goals and mission of the American community college are fairly clear: provide developmental education, offer general education courses and associate degrees for transfer, afford students efficient pathways to the workplace, and contribute to the development of a workforce suitable to a college’s regional industries.

These goals are worthy, to be sure, but they are also extremely diverse and remarkably challenging. It is not the problem of community college administrators alone to adjust to this changing higher education market; the entire American higher education system stands to gain or lose in this shifting landscape. If the community college fails in any of these pursuits, the four-year institution will suffer as a result. The matter of the community college requires a long and comprehensive vision that includes all stakeholders. Both applied education and liberal arts education are at issue; the entire American higher education structure and all its ancillary professional organizations must take charge of this discussion about our collective future.

38. **Ginny Carney.** Pres. emerita, Leech Lake Tribal Coll., MN.


Statement

While serving several years ago as a member of the executive committee on the Division on American Indian Literatures and, later, as a member of the Committee on Community Colleges, I was greatly encouraged by the support of the MLA for two-year institutions, including our nation’s thirty-seven tribal colleges. As the president of a two-year tribal college, I became painfully aware of the dearth of ethnic minority and low-income students completing graduate programs; however, I have also been privileged to observe the persistence and determination of hundreds of students who have earned a two-year associate degree, have gone on to complete higher degrees, and now serve their respective communities as teachers, business leaders, health personnel, lawyers, and scientists.

According to the College Board, a two-year college degree program currently costs only about $6,262; on the other hand, driven by a high demand for people with so-called middle skills, wages have increased for two-year college graduates. In fact, Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce reports that “nearly 30% of Americans with associate degrees now make more than those with bachelor’s degrees” (CNN Money, 26 Feb. 2013). Over time, that salary advantage will narrow, however, and as a member of the Delegate Assembly, I will work diligently with others to determine innovative ways in which two-year colleges might collaborate with four-year institutions to recruit, retain, and graduate associate degree earners who aspire not only to become financially stable but also to become professional leaders in their chosen careers.

39. Linda Weinhous. Prof. English, Community Coll. of Baltimore County, Essex Campus, MD.


Statement

As a professor at a community college, I am well aware of the challenge of combining a 5-5 teaching load and committee and advising obligations with a scholarly career. Therefore, one of my goals is to enable my colleagues to explore issues of workload and identity. For example, this year I organized and chaired a panel at the MLA, “This Is Not the Ivy Tower: Scholarship at Community Colleges,” at which the panelists introduced ideas for a redefinition of scholarship and presented proposals for collaborative writing among two-year-college faculty members. I organized another MLA panel in 2012 entitled “The Webs We Weave: Online Pedagogy in Community Colleges.” That panel demonstrated the importance of research on pedagogical issues and brought this type of research to the attention of all our colleagues at the MLA. Moreover, I have applied my own research interest in postcolonial literature to the classroom. Students at the community college respond to the enthusiasm that a professor who has researched a particular area of literature or pedagogy can bring to the classroom. I taught postcolonial literature at my college and will be teaching a course on South African literature this fall. Every semester, I also offer a section of Holocaust
literature online. I perceive the MLA as the ideal forum in which two- and four-year colleagues, overburdened by class size, schedules, and committee work, can come together to create solutions and alternatives that will allow us to achieve satisfaction and effectiveness in our professional lives.

**XII. Women in the Profession (2 contests)**

40. **Miriam L. Bailin.** Assoc. prof. English, Washington Univ. in St. Louis.


**Statement**

My candidacy for a special-interest seat representing women in the profession is informed by many years of activism on behalf of women faculty members, both tenured and untenured, at Washington University. I was a founding member of our Association of Women Faculty (AWF) and president of that organization for two years. In its now two decades of operation, AWF has achieved important goals related to workplace conditions, including a functioning parental-leave policy, the establishment of an on-site daycare center, grant-writing information sessions, and a mandated survey on gender pay equity every five years. I also served on the AWF committee that drafted a non-tenure-track policy that was then adopted by the university. As chair of the English department, it was one of my central aims to improve the number of women on our department faculty and to provide improved conditions (salary, offices, and computer equipment) for our non-tenure-track faculty members. My current concerns about the status of women in the profession have largely to do with pay equity and the disparity between the numbers of men and women promoted to full professor. There are many reasons for this disparity, some of which can and, in my view, should be addressed institutionally.

41. **Angelika Bammer.** Assoc. prof. interdisciplinary humanities, Emory Univ.


Statement
The deconstruction and the critical expansion of conventional gender categories over the past few decades have changed how we think of gender, including what women and men can mean. Yet this rethinking does not make the MLA’s express attention to the status of women in the profession any less critical than when the Commission on the Status of Women was first appointed in 1969 or made a standing committee of the MLA in 1990. Gender—who we experience ourselves and are perceived to be according to ongoing and conventional standards—still matters in real and measurable ways. Our deconstruction of gender notwithstanding, most of us most of the time still find ourselves grouped under either the woman or the man heading—sometimes for better, often for worse, but rarely as a matter of indifference. The difference the woman classification still makes in our profession is a matter of ongoing concern to me, both on the level of fact-gathering and inquiry and on the level of intervention and change. Most important, I approach what was once called “the Woman Question” not merely as an issue of discriminatory practices but as a site of potential transformation. Many of the possibilities for change envisioned in the early decades of second-wave feminism—changes in how we live and work and connect the two, changes in how we write and what we write about, changes in how we teach and toward what ends—remain challenges I would like us to take up.


Statement
I am honored to be nominated for a Delegate Assembly seat representing women in the profession. My research on African American literature and visual culture focuses broadly on the ways visual definitions of women too often shape women’s reality in their professional lives. We see this across campuses as women find themselves sought out for service roles deemed nurturing and supportive even as they pursue rigorous research agendas. I am interested in how the MLA might lead by identifying the most effective models for policies related to women in academia. As a newly tenured minority woman teaching at a large public university, I am particularly aware of the challenges women face as they progress professionally in institutional environments that often lack clearly defined and supportive policies on issues ranging from maternity leave to assessing service requirements for tenure. As economic difficulties place extra burdens on academic institutions and as sources of research support become increasingly scarce, women will be well served by best-practice examples compiled by the MLA to which women might appeal and which they might share with their home institutions. If elected, I look forward to working with colleagues who share my desire to lead on this issue.
43. Rebecca F. Stern. Assoc. prof. English, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia.


Statement

Within the ostensibly liberated space of the academy, sexism has become subtle stuff, though its effects remain potent. Discrimination is most visible in the distribution of powers and financial resources (those in the highest salary brackets still tend to be men), but its more prevalent forms are discreet (the distribution of speaking time at meetings, the distribution of actual work on committees, the distribution of authority for decisions large and small). It isn’t easy to address these subtle imbalances: perpetrators are often unconscious of the implications of their behaviors, and remedies often take the form of private venting rather than public redress. I am interested in thinking through effective methods (both overt and more muted) of addressing the subtler forms of modern sexism in the academy so that both male and female colleagues can lead happier and more balanced professional lives.

Part IV: Voting for Regional Delegates

Thirty-eight persons will be elected to replace delegates whose terms expire on 12 January 2014. The term of office will be from 13 January 2014 through the close of the January 2017 convention. The numbers preceding the nominees’ names correspond to the numbers assigned to the nominees on the paper ballot sheet.

The names of the regional delegates with continuing terms in 2014 appear at the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/del_assembly_members).

Vote in only one region but in any or all of the contests within that one region.

I. New England and Eastern Canada (5 contests)

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont; New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Québec


101. **Jeremy A. Lopez.** Assoc. prof. English, Univ. of Toronto.

PhD, Cornell Univ. NEH research fellowship, Folger Shakespeare Library, 2010–11.


**Statement**

As an American-trained academic working in a Canadian institution I am concerned in both practical and abstract terms with the sometimes awkward interaction between Canadian professionalization and the (predominantly) American job market.

As someone who enjoys teaching large classes at a large public institution, I am concerned with the ever-increasing availability of wireless technology in the classroom and the effects (positive and negative) it has on the demands students and teachers make of one another.

☼

102. **Stephen David Powell.** Assoc. prof. English, Univ. of Guelph.

PhD, Univ. of Toronto. Distinguished Prof. Award, Univ. of Guelph Faculty Assn., 2011. Conseil d’administration, Fondation Metropolis Bleu (Montréal), 2012–; English programming comm., Blue Metropolis Montréal Intl. Literary Festival, 2013–.


**Statement**

What should the MLA do now? With fewer and fewer full-time jobs and sustained government efforts to promote the STEM disciplines over the humanities, it’s almost possible to succumb to the rhetoric that the humanities are dying.

We must do more than insist on the relevance of what we teach and research. We must lead a major effort to reintegrate languages and literatures into a central place in our society. Instead of allowing ourselves to be defined into oblivion, we must take concrete action. We must launch projects and reach out to other civic institutions. We must innovate—with rigor—in how we teach and to whom. We must lead a renaissance of engagement with the ideas, texts, and skills that remain foundational to civil life.

As we do so, we must change with the times, and not for mere survival. More crucially, we must adapt because when academic disciplines stagnate or lose touch with their cultural sponsors, then they are doomed to die.

The changes wrought by economic pressures, technological innovations in pedagogy and research, and cultural norms have changed the work of MLA members, and that will accelerate, whether we want it or not. These changes will determine if future graduate students have satisfying career opportunities, and they will shape the trajectories of part-time faculty members, too. They will change civic life and our institutions.

Do we lead the response to these changes, making them work for us, or do we allow the changes to govern us?

103. **Adam Sol.** Assoc. prof. English, Laurentian Univ., Barrie Campus.

PhD, Univ. of Cincinnati; MFA, Indiana Univ. Fellowship, Jacob Rader Marcus Center, Amer. Jewish Archives (Cincinnati), 2001; Canada Arts Council grant, 2001, 2003; Ontario Arts Council grant, 2004; Leighton Studios Residency, Banff Centre for the Arts, 2010. Trillium Book Award for Poetry (for *Crowd of Sounds*), Ontario Media Development Corp. (agency of the govt. of Ontario), 2004; nominee,


Statement

I am honored (and honoured!) to have the opportunity to serve as a regional delegate for New England and Eastern Canada in the MLA Delegate Assembly. I am a native New Englander who has lived in Canada for the past fifteen years; my career and interests straddle the fields of traditional academic scholarship and creative writing; and my home institution is a hybrid satellite campus of a research university housed at a community college. I hope to bring this range of experiences to the assembly and will do my best to represent these various interests during this most turbulent time for academia and the humanities.


Statement

Times are hard. As Richard Ohmann and Ellen Schrecker have recently reminded us, the very notion of profession—in our profession, too—may be on its last legs. The MLA has made worthy gestures in the direction of support for contingent faculty workers and for improving conditions across the range of campuses (from small colleges to large public institutions). As a delegate, I would work to sharpen and develop these efforts and to amplify the MLA’s nourishment of the humanities across (and beyond) the university.

105. Alex Mueller. Asst. prof. English, Univ. of Massachusetts, Boston.


Statement

My research and teaching are attempts to apply the spirit of open-sourcing—the free sharing of computing source code—to the collection and dissemination of knowledge produced within the academy.
Instead of turning to university-trained specialists for reliable information, the public is increasingly investing in the collective intelligence of the crowd, which digital databases such as Wikipedia are harnessing outside the classroom with success never witnessed before. Yet, the same core principles of open access, free use, and collaborative generosity that inform these online projects have always been central to the work of the academy, even if they are sometimes hidden beneath the veneers of disciplinary specialization and avuncular elitism. As an MLA delegate, I seek to peel back or make transparent these layers of exclusion to encourage a para-academic culture that values the contributions of all parties, both inside and outside of the university. Unfortunately, many students do not believe that they are valued participants, and it is difficult to blame them for their lack of faith in educational empowerment. I know these students well because they have been my school companions throughout my entire life. From my elementary school to my doctoral program to my current time at UMass, Boston, I have experienced classroom education exclusively within the walls of the public school. And through that time and experience, I have enthusiastically adopted the public mission to educate everyone, to make higher education accessible to all, and to make public our work, our struggles, and our success.


Statement

I am honored to stand for election to the MLA’s Delegate Assembly.

I have direct experience with many areas in which the MLA reviews and shapes best practices: pedagogy and standards in the teaching and learning of foreign languages; curricular development, review, and oversight; benefits and labor issues for adjuncts and non-tenure-track faculty members; mandates for family leave and work-life balance; academic publishing and tenure standards; grant opportunities and institutional support for research and career development; mentoring initiatives; graduate student training and professionalization; study abroad and global initiatives.

The MLA’s constituency includes graduate students and part-time adjuncts, tenured and emeriti professors, and freshly-minted PhDs hopeful of achieving tenure. We work at two-year community colleges or in the Ivy League, at large state universities or at small liberal arts colleges. What unites us are our common belief in the importance of language and literature to the lives of our students and our society and our perseverance in our work despite every difficulty.

Institutional pressures, market forces, shifts in public policy, and the attitudes rampant in popular discourse affect each of us according to our place in this landscape, but they do affect us all. Rather than repeat here the litany of challenges now faced by teachers, the humanities, or, indeed, all of higher education, I will make something like a campaign promise. If elected, I will work collaboratively and conscientiously, with diligence, perseverance, and creativity, toward the MLA’s goal of substantively improving working conditions, job security, and educational outcomes for all.


**Statement**

Members of the MLA share a recognition of the power of language and a commitment to communication and exchange. The organization offers us a broad aegis for discussion of pedagogy and scholarship, as well as a forum for advocacy. Reenvisioning our work—for example, in a shift from chronological to geographical categories of study—will help shape our students’ view of literature and history. And bringing our voices to bear on issues of curriculum development, faculty governance, and workplace equity confirms and enhances our educational mission.

108. **Christopher Eldrett.** Grad. student Hispanic lit., Boston Univ.

MA, Univ. of Washington, Seattle.

**Statement**

It would be a great honor to represent my region in the MLA assembly. As you can see I have studied in a variety of regions across the United States, and I hope that as a delegate I can use this wide perspective to help frame language and literature studies through a global framework. Additionally, I have lived and worked abroad in areas as diverse, and as similar, as Mexico, Spain, Panama, and Costa Rica. It is within this context that I hope to foster communication within arts and cultures. My studies have taken a transatlantic perspective, and as a third-year graduate student I am focusing my dissertation research on the Peruvian poet César Vallejo, particularly his last book of poetry, written between Paris and Spain during the Spanish Civil War. During this moment of transition in the study of the humanities, both in the United States and abroad, I believe it is important to bear in mind our global academic community when deciding how we wish to shape our own institutions.

109. **Antonio Guijarro-Donadiós.** Grad. student Spanish, Univ. of Connecticut, Storrs.

Publications include articles in *Hipogrifo: Revista de literatura y cultura del Siglo de Oro*, *Teatro: Revista de estudios culturales*, *Anagnórisis: Revista de investigación teatral*.

**Statement**

As a member of the Department of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages at the University of Connecticut and the recipient of the Graduate Dissertation Fellowship at the Humanities Institute, I believe in collaboration across disciplines to enhance and enrich general understanding of the human condition. We are experiencing hard times, but I have great expectations for academia. The digital humanities is regenerating interest in what is published, and ideas are spread worldwide in an instant, which is helping bridge the gap between different generations of scholars and teachers.

**II. New York State (6 contests)**


**Statement**

As a scholar of Latin American literature working in an interdisciplinary writing and world literature department, I am aware of the intellectual possibilities opened by active interaction with colleagues from different fields and of the difficulties raised by academic diversity. How can one evaluate colleagues from different yet related fields when publication venues and, on occasion, analytic trends differ? This is an issue of growing concern given the fact that world literature departments are increasingly replacing those studying specific literary traditions.

The challenge of shrinking and evolving traditional departments is directly related to two other problems facing the profession: the reduction in tenured positions and the decreasing importance of linguistic competence in the study of national and transnational literary traditions. After all, how many tenured or full-time Latin Americanists or Slavicists does a world literature or liberal arts department need? By the same token, it is pivotal to the future of the MLA that part-time faculty members, achieve the respect and remuneration their work deserves. Likewise, the proven centrality of language training is a continuing necessity in our globalized present, even if it often goes unacknowledged by administrators who insist on teaching courses in translation.

Despite these and many other challenges, the MLA is and should continue to be an influential agent working on behalf of the humanities and language acquisition and for the respect of all professionals working on our fields. My contribution would lie in bringing these issues to the forefront of relevant discussions.

111. **Matthew W. Lessig.** Assoc. prof. Amer. lit., State Univ. of New York, Coll. at Cortland.

PhD, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana. Ch., Dept. of English, State Univ. of New York, Coll. at Cortland, 2009–. Exec. board (2005–09) and pres. (2007–08), NEMLA.
Publications include articles in *Arizona Quarterly, Modern Fiction Studies, Mississippi Quarterly, Southern Quarterly.*

**Statement**

The MLA must continue to advocate for the values of humanities study and liberal arts education amid the increasing privatization and politicization of public higher education. While shaping public debates over the role of higher education, we need also to advocate for improved working conditions for all employed within our profession, whether as tenure-track or contingent faculty members. As a delegate for New York State, I hope to contribute to the MLA’s ongoing efforts with these and other issues vital to the interests of faculty members at New York’s two- and four-year institutions.

112. **Emily S. Apter.** Prof. French and comparative lit., New York Univ.


Statement

The politics of language, translation, gender, literary theory, and literary history have been longstanding subjects of engagement in my academic work, shaping my commitment to experimental pedagogies within and outside the institutional framework of the university. As someone based in New York City, with previous experience teaching at an upstate school (Cornell), and as one who has fostered links to NYU’s Fales Library (its Downtown collection) as well as to journals, museums, and arts programs that seek to include a critical studies–humanities dimension in their public programming, I believe I am in a good position to work on issues of state and national policy relating to education. The negative impact of runaway student debt, immigration restrictions, low adjunct pay and benefits, and reckless university expansionism is already of concern to MLA regional delegates. I would be committed to advancing this concern, to furthering an activist understanding of how the politics of instruction intersects with specific topics in the humanities, including the right to language, the future of plurilingualism, sovereign borders and checkpoints in the cartography of the humanities, and the stakes of teaching literature (itself a problematic medium in the era of transmedial dissemination) as an academic field in the university.

113. Roberta Lyles Krueger. Burgess Prof. of French, Hamilton Coll.


Statement

I am honored to stand for election as a regional delegate for New York State. I have served on the Delegate Assembly for two successive terms (1999–2001, 2002–04) and was a member of the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee, which I chaired in 2008. The issues that MLA delegates tackled then continue to be of paramount importance—in particular, improving the terms of contracts for contingent
faculty members, advocating for programs in English and modern languages at universities across the country, and promoting foreign language study in the classroom and abroad. (I will direct Hamilton’s program in France for the ninth time in 2013–14.) Since my previous terms in the assembly, the economic crisis has placed increasing pressure on our departments and programs; the price of students’ education continues to rise, even as educational resources are stretched. But opportunities in interdisciplinary programs and the digital humanities are even richer. As a professor of French language and literature at a liberal arts college, I am intensely committed to the centrality of teaching to our mission; as a parent of three kids in college and graduate school, even as I’m aware of the hard choices that families must make, I’m convinced more than ever of the transformational role played by fine teachers in young people’s lives. The MLA’s mission should be to foster excellence in teaching in all fields of the humanities, to encourage best professional practices within institutions, to promote interdisciplinary and intercultural endeavors, and to advocate for innovation, creativity, and discovery.


Publications include: articles in Chaucer Review, Early Theatre; reviews in Ars Lyrica, Modern Language Review.

Statement

The MLA has been an important voice in the debate surrounding our current professional climate of increasing corporatization, proliferating MOOCs, teaching for deliverables, and the general crisis in the humanities. The role of the MLA will undoubtedly continue to grow as these trends in higher education evolve over the coming years and as debates about the role and status of the university press forward. As a delegate for New York State, I would work with my fellow delegates to participate actively and openly in this conversation, addressing the stakes for all sectors of our membership in an effort to promote the integrity of our work among the multiple communities we serve. I would be an eager sounding board for and give voice to the needs of a range of professionals in our region, from graduate students to adjunct professors to tenured and tenure-track faculty members, from teachers at community colleges to those in the SUNY system to those in small and large private institutions. I would advocate for sustained institutional support of our constituency, equity in compensation and treatment at all levels of employment, honest assessment of our advancement toward local and collective goals, and responsiveness to that advancement as we look to and prepare for the future. I am honored to be nominated as a New York delegate and would be proud to represent my region as we meet the opportunities and challenges of the coming years head-on, with collaborative spirit and committed resolve.


PhD, Univ. of Texas, Austin. Mike Hogg Endowed Fellowship, Grad. School, Univ. of Texas, Austin, 2008–09. Outstanding Teaching Asst. Award, Dept. of English, Univ. of Texas, Austin, 2003–04.

Publications include articles in Milton Studies, Philological Quarterly.

Statement

I find myself at the beginning of a career and quite worried. I was dismayed when the University at Albany decided to discontinue its French, Italian, and Russian majors, and I am watching the small college where I teach struggle to keep its liberal arts identity as it diverts resources into professional programs. These decisions seem to foretell a future in which serious study of modern languages will be limited to the small number of students attending elite institutions. If, however, exposure to literature and culture is still offered to large numbers of students, will they receive it only in the debased form of massive open online courses (MOOCs) supplemented by minimal live interaction with overstretched, job-insecure faculty members? I would use my service in the Delegate Assembly to advocate for the MLA to continue to support policies and
technologies (e.g., open-access publishing, measures to reduce student debt) that truly democratize academia and to reject those policies and technologies that don’t. I would argue that concessions to the dominant corporate paradigm, such as playing up the economic value of language study, should be strategic and only granted in the context of a strenuous reaffirmation of the personal and civic value of the liberal arts.

116. **Jonathan Baldo.** Prof. English, Eastman School of Music, Univ. of Rochester.


**Statement**

Like many in our profession, I once faced a choice between a career in the sciences and a far more precarious one in the humanities. Having chosen the more uncertain option because of a passionate interest in joining the ongoing, vigorous conversation between and among our various cultural traditions, I have felt my interest in and commitment to that conversation continue to strengthen and grow.

Over time, I have seen our profession flourish intellectually and suffer financially. The gap between the work that our profession does and the recognition (financial and otherwise) of the importance of that work by the culture at large is immense. Closing that gap is perhaps the broadest and most pressing issue that we face collectively, and it requires all of our collaborative and creative energies.

As the humanities have become increasingly marginalized over the past several decades, their role has become ever more crucial. In particular, the study of literature as it has been broadly reconceived provides a model for the dialogical use of language and an antidote to the frequently coercive public rhetoric of our time. I would be proud to join the MLA in its ongoing efforts to publicly affirm the value of studying language and literature, to forcefully advocate for better conditions and improved compensation, to create opportunities for growth, and to take action on behalf of all those who labor in our wonderful profession.

117. **Nicholas G. Salvato.** Assoc. prof. theatre, Cornell Univ.


**Statement**

The Delegate Assembly of the Modern Language Association, alongside other bodies within the MLA, has been and will continue to be at the forefront of vital conversations about the problems, issues, and
challenges that face teachers and students of the humanities in higher education. These problems, issues, and challenges—so ongoing that they must be called chronic rather than constitutive of a crisis in the academy—include the thoroughgoing corporatization of colleges and universities, the contraction of support for humanities programs and initiatives, the casualization of academic labor and the erosion of the tenure system, the unsustainability of our current publishing models and criteria, attritions in library collecting, threats to open access and fair use, and inadequate funding for graduate students. As a member of the Delegate Assembly, I would hope to address these and related concerns on behalf of my colleagues at the very plural and diverse academic institutions of New York State.

118. Lisa Berglund. Prof. English, Buffalo State Coll., State Univ. of New York.

PhD, Univ. of Virginia. Ch., Dept. of English, Buffalo State Coll., State Univ. of New York, 2013–.


Statement

I look forward to participating in what I hope will be a substantial and inventive conversation about the myriad problems and opportunities created by distance learning, the digital humanities, SmartBoards, clickers, and other new educational technologies. Problems include the erosion of departmental control over the literature and language curriculum and the increased use of underpaid, undersupported adjunct faculty members. Among the opportunities are those afforded by the development of innovative ways to engage students and the need to revolutionize our thinking when creating and assessing scholarship. I want to talk about how we in the humanities—especially those of us at comprehensive universities and those engaged in English education—can strengthen our programs and concretely meet the needs of our students in a political and economic climate that has become increasingly hostile to or dismissive of humanistic study. Finally, I would like to speak to the need to reinvigorate eighteenth-century studies within the MLA.


Statement
My concerns in higher education are broad and deep. I will continue to be engaged in issues specific to contingent labor, as I believe that these are of central import to the future of the academy. I am also dedicated to issues of access—not just for students but also for instructors and research associates of various types. My institutional role as director of both a first-year program and a civic-engagement initiative will also continue to inform my sense of what higher education can and should be—specifically, a welcoming arena in which individuals from all backgrounds enjoy studies and practica that lead to responsible citizenship and global awareness. Recently my scholarship has included cocurating an interdisciplinary museum exhibition on class issues in the United States (Classless Society), which reflects a long-standing interest in the dynamics of socioeconomic power; this interest is reflected in my attitudes toward higher education generally and in my work with literary and visual texts.

120. Christopher Eng. Grad. student English, Graduate Center, City Univ. of New York.

Publications include review in Journal of Asian American Studies.

Statement
I enthusiastically submit my name for consideration as a delegate for New York State. I have been an engaged member of both my PhD program in English and the CUNY Graduate Center, advocating on behalf of my fellow students as a representative on several program committees and the Doctoral Student Council. Critical diversity is a top priority for me. Along with a colleague, I spearheaded the Mentoring Future Faculty of Color Project, which offered scholarly and professional mentorship to students of color in CUNY PhD programs by bringing in faculty members of color from a variety of United States universities to share both their scholarship and their experiences in navigating the academy. This initiative opened a crucial program-wide discussion of structural issues surrounding race and diversity in academia. If elected, I will draw from my experiences in advocating on behalf of students, creating spaces for further dialogue between students and faculty members, providing students with resources and guidance for professional development, extending critical diversity work, and working toward transforming the precarious institutional situation of graduate students and adjunct faculty members. I will also aim to create more opportunities for conversations among constituents in New York State and to serve as a liaison in contacting state policymakers to advocate for the humanities and funding to public education. I will work diligently with the Delegate Assembly at both the annual meetings and beyond to further its admirable efforts to realize these goals.

121. Akash Kumar. Grad. student Italian and comparative lit., Columbia Univ.

**Statement**

As a newly minted PhD just beginning to set out on a career in humanities education, I would look to represent the interests of a new generation of scholars who are faced with an increasingly difficult job market and yet remain committed to the importance of the liberal arts for which the MLA so stridently advocates. I am honored to be nominated to stand for election to the Delegate Assembly from New York State, where I have remained for the entirety of my higher education. I believe that my experience has granted me insight into the issues and dynamics of our region. As a scholar of Italian literature with comparative interests and a lecturer in Columbia University’s Core Curriculum, I am in a position to represent the importance of foreign language education and to look beyond disciplinary boundaries to find that vital, common defense of the humanities that will serve us in the challenging years to come.

**III. Middle Atlantic (5 contests)**

_Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia_

122. **Peter Mallios.** Assoc. prof. English and Amer. studies, Univ. of Maryland, College Park.


**Statement**

Public empowerment through education is for me, as I know it is for many of us, an underlying concern of my efforts as a teacher, scholar, and member of the academic community. Though you’ll see several Conrad mentions above in my bio, this is a little misleading: I’m principally an Americanist, albeit one significantly concerned with how global practices of literature (like Conrad’s) do cultural and political work in and in relation to the United States and with matters such as law, constitutionality, and democracy; immigration and ethnicity; digital media and its public potentialities (and problems); and the changing shape of higher education, including issues of both university access and fair treatment of all ranges of faculty members and students—all of which seem to me grounded in fundamental questions of citizenship and public accountability and empowerment, both in the United States and in relation to the world generally. As an MLA delegate, I’d very much like to be a part of clarifying discussions and active efforts that place the university and the humanities at the heart of these questions: as a site and an arena where important issues of technology, economics, educational entitlement and empowerment, curricular content, minority access and opportunity, global literacy and sensitivity and nationalized modes of public engagement, and the shape of the university and its communities generally are deliberated in terms answerable to priorities other than corporate profit and efficiency or the mandate of the current dominant political authority.
123. **Bernard McKenna.** Assoc. prof. English, Univ. of Delaware, Newark.

PhD, Univ. of Miami. Excellence in teaching award, Univ. of Delaware, 2011.


**Statement**

Issues associated with graduate student compensation, adjunct faculty members, and non-tenure-track faculty members are extremely important and have received and will continue to receive attention by the MLA.

In addition, issues concerning departmental autonomy, the preservation of the tenure system, and the active and aggressive promotion of the liberal arts are areas of key concern. Many departments have witnessed (note passive voice) their transformation away from the liberal arts to vocational programs staffed by non-tenure-track faculty members. Despite persuasive arguments regarding the necessity of a core humanities-based education, administrations continue to bleed departments white, transforming them into job-prep programs. In response, the MLA should issue a statement urging colleges and universities to permit departments to make their own hiring decisions and to hire tenure-track faculty members rather than adjunct faculty members.

124. **Keith D. Leonard.** Assoc. prof. lit., American Univ.


**Statement**

In our current situation I see opportunity. As universities pilot online degrees, three-year BAs, hyperprofessionalized graduate programs, outsourced instruction, and even for-profit models (e.g., for state schools in Texas) and as the public and various experts assess the value of college education, we in the humanities do in fact confront a crisis. But I want to embrace this moment as an invitation to innovation and a call to new ways of operating that will give us new terms for presenting the sociocultural value of our work to university administrators and to the general public. As chair of my department, I have seen how we, as university leaders in the humanities, can successfully navigate these troubling waters at our individual schools. The MLA is positioned to do so on a national level. I want to contribute to setting its course.

If elected, I would look forward to collaborating with my colleagues to highlight our best practices as gleaned from our membership and to communicate those practices to our members and to the public. I would urge a positive engagement even with the debilitating economic terms of this crisis to tout, among other strengths, interdisciplinary study, the astute use of technology to supplement (not to replace) classroom instruction, educative collaboration with public and private institutions, and the market value of our distinctive capacity to produce students highly capable of innovative thinking and communication. We can answer the current challenges. Let us collaborate on the solutions that will validate our work.


Statement

We must continue to advocate for the values and needs of humanistic study on its own terms and not merely as a set of skills to be deployed in the marketplace. This will increasingly involve an engagement with new forms of learning and teaching but also a principled critique of those forms insofar as they contribute both to the ongoing corporatization of the academy and to a sort of techno-evangelism that sees advances in technology as goals in and of themselves. My commitment is to protecting the value of academic freedom for all instructors in research and in the classroom, in-person and engaged pedagogy, and the productive rigors of independent critical thought.

126. Cynthia Schmidt-Cruz.  Assoc. prof. Spanish and Portuguese, Univ. of Delaware, Newark.


Statement

I am honored to be nominated as a candidate for the Delegate Assembly of the MLA, the most important advocate for the study of languages, literature, and cultures. In this climate of economic uncertainty, we are seeing a deterioration of support for the study of the humanities. Thus the MLA’s ongoing work to make the case for the values of a liberal arts education becomes more important than ever, and I am committed to participating in and furthering these discussions. As university budget models push for bigger class sizes and as MOOCs gain popularity, we must defend small face-to-face classes as the most effective way for students to develop skills in foreign language acquisition and literary analysis. Another major concern facing the profession is the increasing dependence on adjunct and non-tenure-track faculty members. While the MLA has made important advances in advocating for exploited groups within the academy, it must continue its work to address this critical issue.


PhD, Rutgers Univ.  Fulbright-Hays dissertation research grant (Buenos Aires), 2004–05. Exec. board, Hemispheric Inst. of Performance and Politics, New York Univ., 2009–.

**Statement**

I am honored to be nominated for the MLA Delegate Assembly. As a professor in the Department of World Languages and Cultures, I am committed to supporting the role of foreign language teaching and scholarship in languages other than English in the humanities. I believe that a focus on multilingual modes of teaching and scholarship promotes intellectual dialogue and professional exchange that transcends disciplines and geographical borders. Greater acceptance of publications in languages other than English, a renewed look at the significance of translation studies in the humanities, and engagement with digital technologies are all strategies that help to strengthen the visibility and increase the impact of the humanities in and beyond the communities that support our institutions locally. While these issues are of primary concern to me, my ultimate objective would be to represent the ideas, interests, and concerns that are most important to institutions in the Middle Atlantic region.

128. **Michelle Jeannette Brazier.** Instructor English, Raritan Valley Community Coll., NJ.

PhD, Rutgers Univ. President’s Recognition Prog. Bridge Award (for collaborative service, as member of Information Development Subcomm. of Task Force on Undergrad. Educ.), 2008.


**Statement**

At one time, a community college job offer was hardly a cause for celebration for a recent PhD from a research university. Those days are long gone. Just this spring, my graduate school alma mater invited me to address advanced graduate students about my first two years of employment at Raritan Valley Community College. Here is what I told them. The relation between two-year and four-year institutions is becoming closer every year, with increased student transfers and faculty appointments and shared educational visions. From county and state officials to the president of the United States, many recognize that community colleges provide a desirable educational and financial option for many traditionally-aged and adult students.

What are the most pressing issues of access and success for community college students transferring to four-year colleges and universities? What kinds of articulation agreements between two-year and four-year schools are most effective for students and institutions? What issues need to be and can be addressed by the MLA? However we answer these questions, the number of community college-educated students at four-year schools will increase over the next decade. The same workforce issues that face four-year schools face two-year schools, such as the reliance on adjunct faculty members as government appropriations shrink and students figuring out their work-life balance while seeking personal and professional advancement. These are the issues I will focus on as a delegate. I ask you for the opportunity to serve the Middle Atlantic region for the next three years. Thank you.

129. **Maria Hanna Makowiecka.** Prof. English, Bergen Community Coll., NJ.


Statement
I am truly honored to be nominated, and, if elected, I will work to support the mission of the Modern Language Association to promote the humanities, including foreign language programs, in two- and four-year colleges in my region and to increase awareness of the benefits of MLA membership for institutions and individual professors. As a member of the MLA Committee on Community Colleges, I participated in discussions of the increasing role of two-year institutions and of employment and promotion practices at colleges and universities across the nation. I will join the effort to address the undesirable transformation of teaching institutions into corporate models, including the erosion of tenure, “behavioral course objectives,” and the new “objective student assessment.” I will advocate for greater inclusion of ethnic studies, interdisciplinary programs, and foreign language studies in our increasingly culturally complex region.


Statement
On a recent research trip to London, a friend in the nonprofit sector asked me, “In your work, how are you morally improving the world?”

An easy dodge would be to reply that morality and humanistic analysis are distinct. But what if we insisted that humanists must answer this kind of question head on? That humanistic analysis is, in fact, our students’ primary means of social engagement and interpreting cultural systems? With our United Kingdom colleagues facing increasing demands to explain their work’s public value, the White House pushing for open access to all federally-funded research, and the SSHRC having worked toward open access for nearly ten years, we humanists should embrace our profession’s innate engagement with the wider world. The MLA should call for the assignment of greater value to digitally published and open-access work and should open forums on the increasingly differentiated publishing ecosystem.

The academic jobs crisis has not abated despite signs of recovery in the global economy, and graduate students and postdocs face increasing pressures to professionalize. The MLA should create venues for discussing early-career professionalization and for discussing career options outside the tenure-track system.

Additionally, we should show solidarity with early-career parents and call for enhanced parental support and child care resources for graduate students, postdocs, and junior faculty members. Although areas with high costs of living—the Middle Atlantic being one such region—can feel this concern differently, support for early-career parenthood is a matter of concern for the entire profession in all regions.

131. Rob Wakeman. Grad. student English, Univ. of Maryland, College Park.


Statement

Advocacy for the value of studying language and literature is the central mission of the MLA. Thinking critically about language and poetically about the world deserves a place of prominence in colleges and universities. As a regional delegate, my goal is to build on my record of success advocating for undergraduate students, graduate students, adjunct faculty members, and tenure-track faculty members. Each of us faces unique challenges at community colleges, liberal arts schools, and research universities and in alt- ac positions. I am eager to help shape the future of our professional organization so that it may attend to our diverse needs. I hope to devote myself to four areas of professional concern: (1) the changing dimensions of undergraduate majors and general education requirements, (2) fostering pedagogical and professional mentoring for graduate students and adjunct and junior faculty members, (3) engagement with new media platforms for publishing, collaboration, and academic conferencing, and (4) support for research endeavors when research budgets in the humanities are diminishing at colleges and universities. As a teacher (I have taught composition, Shakespeare, a British literature survey from Beowulf to Equiano, and LGBT literatures), I am concerned that too many undergraduates view English classes as hurdles to graduation rather than as opportunities to think about complexities of rhetoric and poetics. As a graduate student, I am concerned about the pressure time-to-degree initiatives are placing on funding TA lines. If elected, I will be committed to listening to and working with all MLA members to achieve our goals.

IV. Great Lakes (6 contests)

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin

132. Todd Herzog. Assoc. prof. German studies, Univ. of Cincinnati.


Statement

I am honored to be nominated to represent the Great Lakes region in the Delegate Assembly of the MLA. The MLA is the most important advocate for teaching and scholarship in modern languages, and these days, as we all know, we need a powerful advocate if we want to continue to do what we got into this profession to do: advance and disseminate knowledge. Like most MLA members, I came to this career to teach and conduct research, not to administer and serve in political positions. But I’ve learned not only that effective administration and political service are important but that they can be creative, scholarly acts. If elected, I will advocate for effective ways to bridge divides among fields of study; among faculty members,
students, and administration; and between the scholarly careers we imagined as graduate students and the realities of operating in today’s world of higher education.

133. **Edgar Landgraf.** Assoc. prof. German, Bowling Green State Univ.


   **Statement**

   Working for a midsized state university, I would like to represent the needs and interests of smaller foreign language departments that have to balance their research activities with increased teaching and service demands. We are also in a time when the support for German and for other less commonly taught languages is no longer guaranteed, forcing us to do our best to keep enrollment numbers and numbers of majors and minors up. In the case of my department, this has meant developing innovative and interdisciplinary course offerings, implementing curricular changes, and offering more distance-learning courses; it has also meant increased extracurricular and recruitment activities and a renewed emphasis on our study-abroad programs. As a member of the Delegate Assembly, I would look for expanded support by the MLA in all of these areas.

134. **Jeffrey E. Cordell.** Asst. prof. English, Madonna Univ.


   Publications include articles in *Studies in Philology*, *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*.

   **Statement**

   If elected, I will advocate for the pleasures of reading, teaching, and researching in the fields of the humanities represented by the MLA. The many problems facing the humanities are widely acknowledged: the defunding of public universities by the states; the low esteem in which the humanities are held in a culture that values money and utility over beauty and pleasure; the exploitation of graduate students and part-time and adjunct faculty members; and, perhaps most chillingly, the defunding of foreign language study. Each of these things must be fought against, but we, as members of the MLA, should not cede too much ground to the very assumptions that are causing the humanities to face a scarcity of both money and esteem. In an effort to save the humanities, we should not so change our presentation of their nature (by arguing for their utility) that we change their nature itself, presenting what must necessarily be a pursuit without clear economic outcomes as economically advantageous to its students and to the state. The outcomes of the love and study of the humanities are, in terms of economic and social benefit, largely indeterminate: that is their strength, not their weakness, and we should present it as such to the larger world.

PhD, Univ. of California, Los Angeles. Grant, Stillman Drake Fund for Faculty Development, Reed Coll., 2009.


**Statement**

After five years of teaching at two liberal arts colleges, I see the need for action on several fronts: the marginalization of the voice of the faculty in college governance, the problematic two-tier system of labor, the questionable long-term viability of the financial models that control how our institutions operate, and, in the Great Lakes region specifically, the demographic and economic challenges that our institutions and our families and students face. I am most interested, though, in two interrelated issues that the MLA is uniquely positioned to address: diversity and the hiring, development, and retention of faculty members. As an Asian American and a postcolonialist, I have been drawn into a number of efforts to address the pressing issue of diversity in the faculty, the student body, and the curriculum. Particularly in the wake of the economic crisis, efforts to promote and, just as significantly, support diversity on college campuses have been allowed to stall. This needs to change. One part of building a stronger professoriat must be ensuring that the hiring practices our institutions employ are as open and fair as possible; however, we must also extend our efforts into faculty development. The demands of a heavy course load, a research agenda, service commitments, and a seemingly 24/7 job are difficult for all of us to manage. The MLA has a crucial role to play in fostering faculty development, particularly, though not exclusively, through the mentoring of recent entrants into the profession and those not on a tenure track.

─


**Statement**

One of the urgent issues facing our profession is the question of mission. What is the social function of our research? To whom is it directed? How do we measure, or at least describe, the benefits it provides to the young people we teach in our classes and to society as a whole? It won’t do to bridle at the requirement that humanistic scholarship give a compelling account of its importance and relevance: this demand is placed on other forms of inquiry as well, and indeed on the institution of higher education as a whole. Rapid changes in media forms also bear on the question of mission. How do we disseminate our work? What defines timeliness, or long-range impact, for current practitioners of advanced scholarship? What aspects of older defenses of liberal arts education do we think are still viable, and which ones simply are not? Our current moment, it seems to me, requires us to take some time from specialized research for more general and institutional reflection. The social good we may be able to do in the world—in encouraging access to education, in expanding and revitalizing our understanding of historical tradition, in helping to create both the skills and the motivation in our students to question the status quo—depends on a newly vital, clear, and compelling narrative about the value of our work as teachers, thinkers, and scholars.

─

137. **Morris Young.** Prof. English, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison.

PhD, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor. W. Ross Winterowd Award (for *Minor Re/Visions*), *JAC*, 2004; Outstanding Book Award (for *Minor Re/Visions*), CCCC, 2006; honorable mention (for


Statement

The current global and local economic and political climate has illustrated the power of language to evoke fear, soothe worries, create deception, or persuade us to specific courses of action. As teachers and scholars of language, literature, and writing, we understand how texts can affect issues and effect actions, reaching beyond a classroom, a community, a moment.

In the current climate where uncertainty creates anxiety, we must seize an opportunity to examine and explore our educational economies so that we understand more clearly how language, literature, and writing connect us to one another across our communities and institutions. In challenging economic conditions, we must rearticulate why education matters broadly and how the humanities specifically can create opportunities for civil discourse and reflective action. As a profession we must continue to examine, promote, and support the diversity of our membership, whether by encouraging scholarship in new research areas, mentoring teachers and scholars, or making the range of diversity more visible.

The challenge for the MLA is not just to articulate our purpose for a wider public but to renew our commitment and to rearticulate our purpose and goals to our membership: to provide an intellectual and professional space for teachers and scholars of language, literature, and writing and to support and be advocates for the work they do.


Statement

As a candidate for the MLA Delegate Assembly, I am concerned about the lack of public understanding of and respect for academic work that does not offer clear and immediately measurable workplace skills—the kind of research and teaching that many of us do. This lack of understanding feeds the accusation that we faculty members are “not doing our jobs”—an accusation from a body politic that is withdrawing resources from education at a time when they are most sorely needed.

Faculty members in English are rarely consulted about the learning we know the most about, and we seem to have less and less input into national conversations about the meaning and value of higher education, or about the best preparation for it. This marginalization is exacerbated by the increasing use of contingent labor in more and more courses and by the acceptance of the idea that this exploitation is a legitimate means of dealing with declining budgets. Leaders of the MLA must find ways to make the voices of our members heard and to be proactive in articulating the value of our work to a public that has been taught to devalue it.

139. Cynthia L. Selfe. Humanities Distinguished Professor of English, Ohio State Univ., Columbus.


Statement

My scholarly efforts in composition studies and digital media studies, my experience as the cofounder and senior executive editor of Computers and Composition Digital Press, and my experience as an editor of the international journal Computers and Composition will inform my work in the Delegate Assembly. If I am elected, I will focus on the appropriate roles and uses of digital technologies in the
humanities and the ways in which such digital tools can support a range of scholarly research, the diverse efforts of teachers in classrooms, and expanded publishing opportunities for scholars. Like other members of the MLA, I have been involved in exploring ways to more successfully integrate digital technologies and networks into our professional lives and maintain a focus on the humanistic values that rest at the heart of our discipline. As a past department chair and a scholar in this arena, I am aware of the challenges that digital scholarship poses in departments of English, and I would work within the MLA to continue its leadership on issues of tenure and promotion, new venues and forms of scholarly publication, and support for scholars in emerging fields. Tenure and promotion guidelines should support intellectual efforts and innovative scholarly projects instead of limiting and restricting them unnecessarily. I am also deeply committed to the education of graduate students and their preparation as colleagues, and I will continue to support mentoring projects that prepare them for careers in rapidly changing academic settings.


Publications include articles in James Joyce Literary Supplement, Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics.

Statement

I am excited, and a little surprised, to have been nominated for a seat in the Delegate Assembly. I find this opportunity exciting because I am eager to contribute to the important conversations taking place in the humanities. I am a little surprised because I am, relatively speaking, an inexperienced graduate student. Over my admittedly short academic career, I have admired the sort of scholarship and professional discourse that the MLA has produced and supported, but the organization itself has always been a bit of a mystery to me. If elected, I would like to use my position to work on bridging this mysterious gap. I am interested in demystifying the MLA for graduate students who, like me, see it as a gatekeeping institution. Beyond this, I share many other delegates’ concerns regarding pay equity among all faculty members, the nationwide shift toward a business model approach to higher education, and keeping the humanities human. We all live these concerns—and we will continue to do so for the foreseeable future—so I look forward to taking part in the discussion about how we should navigate this terrain.

141. Kaitlin Marks-Dubbs. Grad. student writing studies, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana.


Publications include article in First Monday.


Publications include article in *Romanica Silesiana*.

143. Jenelle Grant. Grad. student French, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana.


Publications include article in *Women in French Studies*.

**Statement**

Inflated reactions to real fiscal concerns can disguise ideological pressures to reduce the kinds of academic work that function as vital sources of critical, counter-discursive thinking. Effects of these pressures include the corporatization of the university, the resulting threats to academic freedom, the exploitation of graduate student and adjunct labor, the increasing debt burden on students, and the devalorization of literary, cultural and language studies. My service as the graduate representative in departmental meetings at two universities and my work with my TA union to contest state definitions of graduate student labor that make some students in the humanities pay taxes on their tuition waiver out of a stipend already well below a living wage, I am struck by the urgency of two functions of the MLA: coordinating local and national dialogues to promote the redefinition of the humanities as a cultural imperative and not a class privilege and professionalizing young academics to be able not only to reach across disciplines—for political as well as intellectual collaboration—but also to engage knowledgeably with administration, even to learn corporate language and tactics to better negotiate for the future of academe. If selected as a delegate, I would support initiatives to protect academic freedom, combat the erosion of tenure, evaluate publication practices in the context of the digital turn, foster equitable treatment of graduate and adjunct workers, promote family-friendly policies, and create avenues for professionalization in this rapidly evolving market.
V. South (6 contests)
Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virgin Islands, Virginia


PhD, Univ. of Pennsylvania. Travel grant, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith Coll., 2007; Dorot Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Jewish Studies, Harry Ransom Center, Univ. of Texas, Austin, 2010; postdoctoral fellowship, Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Emory Univ., 2009–10; travel grant, Wood Inst. for the History of Medicine, Coll. of Physicians of Philadelphia, 2011; Early Career Fellowship, Humanities Center, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 2011–12. Semifinalist, Dissertation/First Book Prize in Queer Studies, State Univ. of New York Press, 2008; Outstanding Grad. Faculty Award, English Grad. Student Assn., Louisiana State Univ., 2013.


**Statement**
As a candidate for the Delegate Assembly, I understand the MLA to be simultaneously a scholarly organization and a professional one. Of the many issues, theoretical and practical, facing our profession today, undoubtedly the dire job market is the most urgent. I am interested in thinking creatively about how we can begin to redress the pressures on the labor market. In my own department, I spend a lot of time helping graduate students to apply for fellowships, market themselves for jobs, and find alternative funding sources. This year the graduate students in my department named me the Most Outstanding Graduate Mentor. In addition to these practical concerns, I am deeply invested in asking searching theoretical questions and attending to the vibrancy of debate. My own research and teaching is centered in sexuality studies and modernism. Diversity and social justice are, thus, core values for me.


**Statement**
As the academy in general and the humanities in particular confront the challenges of the information revolution and decreased public funding for higher education and scholarly research, it is important that the MLA maintain a purity of purpose regarding the value of education and knowledge production. Our goal must be to promote an academy that is as democratic in its governance and funding as it is in its access, one that serves as space aside from the marketplace and in which politics means more than party. By reaffirming our commitment to shared governance and the collective production of knowledge we reiterate our belief that education is about equality, that scholarly research demands transparency, and that learning is a fundamental right. The MLA can work toward these goals by championing scholars who struggle to gain access to research tools, contingent faculty members who remain on the margins of the university, and students who need a strong liberal arts education, not simply a degree. As a delegate I would be honored to serve the region in pursuit of these grand goals while focusing on the following three areas: (1) providing more professional training for graduate students in preparation for the academic and alt-ac job markets; (2) exploring the possibilities of MOOCs, while being cautious about the potentially too rapid move toward online education; (3) using this elected position to represent and advocate for a more democratic academic workplace at all levels of the academy.
146. **Jürgen E. Grandt.** Asst. prof. English, Univ. of North Georgia  
PhD, Univ. of Georgia. Swiss Assn. for North Amer. Studies research award, 2005–06. Member, host comm. (for 2005 convention), CLA.  
**Statement**  
With teaching experience in three different countries on two different continents, I am particularly attuned to the unique position that the MLA occupies and the opportunities it affords its members. As my professional career has included positions at research universities as well as small liberal arts colleges, I am also sensitized to the concerns and needs of the various constituencies that make up the association.  
In these vulnerable times, I believe it imperative that the MLA intensify its commitment to connectivity—we can, and should, do a better job explaining our activities as scholars and teachers not just to one another but especially to those beyond the borders of our respective disciplines and our profession. What we do, as individuals and as a collective, matters, but defending and reinvigorating the relevance of the liberal arts requires that we step up our dedication to connectivity on all levels. After all, the evolution of advocacy is shaped by the production of knowledge, which depends in turn on an engagement with difference. Therefore, two key matters in the discussion of which I would be eager to participate are (1) the opportunities and challenges the digital turn presents to book culture and (2) the dilution of tenure and the working conditions of contingent labor amid the corporatization of higher education. But my most immediate task as a regional delegate would be to connect with your concerns and give them a voice in the assembly and beyond.

147. **Jason M. Richards.** Asst. prof. English, Rhodes Coll.  
PhD, Univ. of Florida. Longman Award for World Lit. Teaching, Auburn Univ., 2006.  
Publications include articles in *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature, Novel, American Transcendental Quarterly, Nineteenth-Century Prose*.  
**Statement**  
I am deeply honored to be nominated for the MLA Delegate Assembly as a regional representative for the South. During my academic career, I worked at various colleges and universities as an adjunct, a full-time instructor, and a visiting assistant professor before starting on the tenure track. My background has given me a wide range of institutional experience and an understanding of certain challenges faced by those working in academia. Among those challenges are the devaluation of our profession and the scarcity of resources for the humanities—problems that stem from a general unawareness of the social importance of a liberal arts education. At a time when our discipline is underfunded and under attack, communicating the value of the humanities is more vital than ever. To gain more state and public support, we must highlight the importance of our cultural work more effectively. Much as critical theory in the late 1960s made literary studies more politically aware and engaged, the transnational turn in the humanities has made our field especially relevant to the twenty-first century. By interrogating nationalist paradigms and uncovering connections between cultures, we can prepare our students to become more socially responsible, globally aware citizens. That’s why we at the MLA must continue promoting the cultural, political, and transformative power of humanistic inquiry.

PhD, Louisiana State Univ. Dir., Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, Southern Univ.

Publications include: contrib., *African American National Biography;* article in *CLA Journal.*

**Statement**

It is a great honor to have been nominated to serve in this capacity. As a fervent advocate for humanities programs, a former English department chair, and a current director of a teaching and learning center, my primary interest is in ensuring that humanities educators are provided with opportunities to continue sharing their craft with confidence and security. At many state-funded institutions of higher learning, severe budget cuts have wreaked havoc on humanities programming. There are fewer scholarships, fewer full-time tenure-track faculty members, and fewer students who are willing to embrace their love of language and literature by majoring in English. One of my goals is to shine a bright light on the inequities leveled on nonbusiness and non-STEM college programming and the effects of diminished funding on the recruitment, retention, and graduation of humanities majors.

149. **Anna Lillios.** Assoc. prof. English, Univ. of Central Florida.


**Statement**

I’m honored to run for a position in the MLA Delegate Assembly, and, if elected, I will do my best to represent the concerns of my region. Now is the best—and worst—of times for the ten universities in my state. Massive budget cuts, threats to end tenure, closure of departments, and loss of student aid challenge us all. Yet, I’ve never been more excited about my profession. Technological advances have not only opened up new areas of knowledge but link us together in meaningful ways. It’s now possible to be both local and global simultaneously. For example, my research on Zora Neale Hurston, whose hometown is a few miles from my home, has both local and global applications. Locally, I assist Eatonville town planners with the annual Zora! Festival, thus giving my students a chance to see the relevance of storytelling in the life of a community. Globally, I collaborate with a Russian professor on a Hurston project, and our students have now begun to visit one another’s campuses. This type of cross-cultural exchange is the way of the future, according to Yale president Richard Levin, who claims that today’s students will need to learn not only all the skills required in the past but also “the capacity for cross-cultural understanding” in order to “realize the best aspirations of humanity.” Thus, my goal as a delegate is to foster diversity, inclusiveness, and cross-culturalism. I believe that storytelling, writing, and critical thinking are keys in bringing people closer together.
150. **Shalyn Claggett.** Assoc. prof. English, Mississippi State Univ.


**Statement**

As an associate professor of English and program coordinator for Mississippi State University’s Institute for the Humanities, I have often had the opportunity to engage with colleagues and visiting scholars about the issues facing our profession. I believe that the MLA should take action to mediate the replacement of tenure-track lines with instructional or adjunct faculty appointments. I also believe that the association should offer universities guidance on how to weigh the need for lower-division teachers against the production of potentially noncompetitive PhDs. Finally, I believe the MLA should publish protocols for interviews that are conducted away from the convention, particularly given the budgetary concerns faced by many departments.

As a professor at a southern land-grant university, I am also particularly attuned to the difficulties faced by humanities faculty members, who must make a bid for relevance within an institutional structure that privileges disciplines with more obviously practical applications. This problem is compounded in the South, where first-generation students from rural areas feel compelled to pursue degrees that more transparently fit a particular profession. While language and literature faculty members are increasingly devalued for a perceived lack of usefulness, they are nonetheless expected to execute the most practical of tasks: providing students with requisite reading and writing skills, often by filling in the gaps left by an underfunded public school system. As a delegate, I would hope to participate in discussions about resolving this double bind and about other issues brought to my attention by MLA members in my region.


**Statement**

Having taught in two southern universities, I am honored to represent the South as a candidate for regional delegate to the MLA. As a member of the language-teaching profession for over twenty years, I teach at a historically black university in Montgomery, Alabama, the heart of the civil rights movement. Having lived abroad as a child, I am deeply concerned with what I believe to be a current lack of focus regarding the teaching of language in the academy—that is, what languages should be taught and how, whether the emphasis should accent conversation or a more hybrid approach, and which languages should be taught and by whom. These questions underlie my concerns in a climate of economic uncertainty and as we prepare to enter a world that is becoming more and more globalized. I feel that there is a need for more sustained focus on languages in the academy that would encompass a reenergized communication between administrators and faculty members among various disciplines of the humanities. I would therefore support pluridisciplinary approaches involving experiential learning and ways in which the teaching of language might invigorate classrooms in other areas of the liberal arts.
152. **William Hutchings.** Prof. English, Univ. of Alabama, Birmingham.


**Statement**

In our rapidly changing times, amid unprecedented financial constraints on all aspects of higher education and unrelenting efforts to undermine the academic profession, the MLA and individual members must act and argue aggressively to affirm the integrity of higher education. Its adversaries include—but are not limited to—public officeholders at all levels who understand and respect only corporate models of governance and putative efficiency. Accordingly, the MLA must advocate, support, and maintain the right of all students to be instructed by fully and appropriately qualified professionals—whatever their level of experience and whatever their expertise, whether they are tenured, tenure-seeking, or in non-tenure-earning positions—and the right of such professionals, including adjunct faculty members and teaching assistants, to adequate institutional support, including office space and other material needs. We must reaffirm our commitment to represent and defend our profession in every available venue.

Concerning the student debt crisis, the MLA must insist that debts incurred at accredited colleges and universities (public or private) differ fundamentally from those incurred at unaccredited or for-profit institutions with inordinate attrition rates and unduly lax admission criteria.

Serving as a regional representative in the Delegate Assembly for the past three years has been a fascinating, highly informative experience. If reelected, I welcome the opportunity to continue the work being accomplished there. I have a 100% attendance record during my previous term, for Delegate Assembly meetings and for the open hearings that precede each assembly meeting.

153. **Frank A. Palmeri.** Prof. English, Univ. of Miami.


Statement

Now is the time to think through and establish programs and curricula that will help us prepare new PhDs in English and the modern languages for positions outside tenure-earning college and university teaching—in administration, libraries, digital humanities, foundations, editing, and teaching at other levels. We need to continue to work for better salaries and conditions for non-tenure-track and adjunct faculty members. It is important as well to communicate our openness to possibilities of new habits of reading and writing opened up by recent developments in digital technologies and their diffusion—to the potential for interpretation of new genres and media by our students and their students, from narrative video games to social media and blogs as electronic public spheres.


Statement

I have had the unique opportunity to study in two English PhD programs, providing me the chance to see different approaches to training future scholars. As a PhD student just finishing coursework, I am both looking forward to the job search and back over my recent experiences as a student. I believe that much of what makes a successful PhD student occurs outside the classroom, through participating in a strong, interdisciplinary community. Ensuring graduate students’ entrance into this community requires a continued emphasis on professionalization during graduate study, professionalization that supports and encourages students to engage in the greater intellectual community while also completing their degree.

This professionalization produces young teachers who understand not only how to think critically about culture and language but also how to cultivate these skills in others. This focus ties into the greater intellectual community by emphasizing the transferability of these skills across university curricula. The recent emphasis on the digital humanities shows that, as professional readers and writers, we should stress all the ways that the humanities help develop and produce undergraduates with the critical skills necessary to enter a digitized, global workplace.

As a delegate, I would highlight the growing need for graduate students to engage in interdisciplinary study, cooperation, and instruction in order to be prepared for the ever-growing demands of the profession. I will advocate for new institutional approaches to graduate teaching opportunities and institutional focus on the necessary and exciting intellectual work occurring outside the classroom.

155. Zackary Vernon. Grad. student English, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.


Publications include articles in *South Carolina Review, Carolina Quarterly*.

**Statement**

My pedagogical philosophy is built on the belief that research in the humanities has significant and extensive social utility. Throughout my years of higher education, I have witnessed the steady decline of funding to humanities programs, as the value of the humanities is increasingly called into question. Yet, I am more and more confident that the study of the arts can provide useful models for identifying and rectifying current political, ethical, and philosophical issues. Therefore, whether I am teaching a course on literature, film, or history, I always begin with a discussion of William Faulkner’s Nobel Prize acceptance speech, in which he asserts, “The poet’s, the writer’s, duty is . . . to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past.” To me, Faulkner’s speech is a stirring plea for the inherent and far-reaching value of studying art, history, and intersections between art and history. As a graduate student, I’d like to see the MLA create additional resources to foster pedagogical commitment and professionalization among graduate students.

**VI. Central and Rocky Mountain (4 contests)**

*Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wyoming*

156. **Nathan Grant.** Assoc. prof. English, Saint Louis Univ.


**Statement**

I have been thinking about the issue of shared governance over the last few years, not only at my own institution but also at others in the Midwest and elsewhere.  It is eroding at an alarming rate, institution by institution.  Humanities departments suffer when shared governance is thwarted or ignored by administrations; they suffer all the more when such dismissal is tacitly accepted by departments and colleges.  We all know what shared governance is, but its importance is sometimes missed even by our most well-meaning and dedicated (albeit extraordinarily busy) colleagues.  Shared governance is crucial to the funding of graduate and undergraduate programs, because everyone deserves to know where the money goes.  It is decisive for the future of tenure because, without an understanding or realization of local threats to tenure, an under- or misinformed faculty cannot accurately determine its department’s future, nor can junior faculty members feel secure in the place where their work, homes, and lives are now situated.  Our graduate students, in particular, will depend on what we know and can convey about institutional policies, for it is this knowledge that both secures and furthers their careers in institutions.

Where meaningful conversation along these lines has been lacking, I think that we can renew discussion.  The MLA has historically led the way in developing means of constructive, respectful discourse,
and, with the stakes perhaps as high as they have ever been for higher education, I am pleased to join any 
effort to work toward this end.

157. No candidate

158. **Katie Kane.** Prof. English and cultural studies, Univ. of Montana, Missoula.


**Statement**

  Among the great issues facing the United States academy in crisis is labor, and the problems are 
manifold. I am currently most concerned with the rights of scholars to research and write about matters that 
concern them without being forced into uninhabitable subject positions. Equally, I am concerned about the 
economics of the academy, which are abysmal on almost all fronts but worst in the area of temporary, 
adjunct, and graduate student labor. Moreover, I am deeply concerned about the emerging issue of faculty 
rights. Institutions of higher learning have historically failed to provide contractual or official rights or 
protection to their faculty members, such that in the case of a student complaint a faculty member can be left 
unprotected, caught between the needs of the institution and the needs of the student. This is especially so 
when categories of identity enter the picture: race, class, gender, sexuality—all complicate matters of faculty 
rights on procedural and intellectual grounds. Work for equality is unfinished business in the academy, and 
the MLA must keep working to apply pressure for change in the context of an increasingly profit-motivated 
educational sphere.

  In addition to these large-scale concerns, there are issues that are specific to institutions like mine. For example, when one’s population includes a significant rural demographic, distance learning and 
educational access begin to take on very different meanings. Our state is also ground zero for environmental 
degradation and the new energy colonization, as those issues intersect with culture and literature.

159. **Susan M. Stone.** Assoc. prof. English and Native Amer. studies, Loras Coll.

  PhD, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia. Cardinal O’Connor Ch. of Catholic Thought, Loras Coll., 
2011–; ch., Faculty Senate, Loras Coll., 2012–. Fellow, Kucera Center for Catholic Thought, Loras Coll., 
2009; Newberry Library summer research grant, 2012. Advisor of the Year, Loras Coll., 2007; Linda and 
Michael J. Budde Award for Excellence in Teaching and Service, Loras Coll., 2008; Community 
Engagement Award, Iowa Campus Compact, 2013. Member and grader, State of South Carolina Entrance 


**Statement**

  I am honored to be nominated to represent the Central and Rocky Mountain region. Having served 
as chair of SAMLAs Graduate Student Forum over a decade ago, and having since taught literature, writing,
gender studies, and Native American studies at a small liberal arts college, I welcome the opportunity to actively pursue our region’s specific interests, to advocate for academic freedom and intellectual property rights, and to raise awareness about and seek solutions for the frightening escalation of student debt and the ever-changing nature of the humanities in a fragile economy and shifting digital climate.

As a delegate, I would articulate and seek answers for the challenges we face in trying to balance teaching, service, scholarship, and professional development. In addition, I would encourage discussion about ethical and equitable employment and tenure expectations, adjunct and full-time faculty workload and welfare concerns, and ways in which we might more productively prepare undergraduates to succeed in graduate school and the real world. These are issues I deal with daily as a teacher, adviser, senator, diversity task force member, and chair of faculty governance, and I believe I am prepared to capably address them and any other regional concerns.

If elected, I would proudly promote the MLA’s ongoing traditions of inclusivity and advocacy, encouraging awareness about the unique challenges facing women and racial minorities in higher education. Indeed, I hope to strengthen collaboration and action in the Delegate Assembly and to improve conditions for those who study and teach in our disciplines.

160. Mariana Bolivar Rubin. Grad. student Spanish, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder.


Publications include: article in Afro-Hispanic Review; review in Colorado Review of Hispanic Studies; creative works in Colorado Review, Rocky Mountain Bullhorn.

Statement

If elected to the Delegate Assembly for the Central and Rocky Mountain region, I will seek to raise issues that are critical to higher education today. We face a variety of challenges that affect our academic pursuits and teaching practices. I am particularly concerned about the role of foreign language studies in the humanities. Developing interrelations between the humanities and digital media is critical in order to sustain and expand career opportunities in our field. I believe we can foster interest in our discipline on the part of the generation of global citizens we teach by strengthening our commitment to innovative curricular programs like study abroad and cross- and interdisciplinary research. Particularly in this economy, it is essential to advocate for fair working conditions and compensation across our multiple institutional employment levels, including those of graduate students, lecturers, adjuncts, and tenured and non-tenure-track faculty members. As a delegate, I will advocate actively for all of these concerns and do my utmost to serve the interests of my constituents throughout the region.


162. **Constance Bailey.** Grad. student English, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia.


Publications include an article in *Western Journal of Black Studies* and a review in *Journal of American Folklore*.

163. **Delphine Red Shirt.** Grad. student Amer. Indian studies, Univ. of Arizona.


**Statement**

I am interested primarily in how academic knowledge about American Indians relates to the past and contemporary experience of American Indian peoples and communities and ultimately in providing representation in the Delegate Assembly that is responsive to these constituencies. I will join efforts to promote scholarly and professional undertakings within these areas of interest and concern. I am most interested in American Indian literatures, but I am also interested in language, literature, and writing in general and teaching as a profession. As First Americans, the literatures of Indigenous peoples should be represented in the teaching of literature at all levels in American education. I will work to raise awareness.

Recently, I had the opportunity to teach a course as a lecturer in Stanford University’s Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, where issues of race and ethnicity in our twenty-first-century multicultural and multicultural world are examined. Of major interest is an understanding of how race and ethnicity shape an individual’s identity. In thinking about what to teach, I rely on my strengths in language and literature. I am bilingual, which allows me to understand the difficulties other minorities in the ever-changing American population face in an English language–based academic environment. I can provide insight from these perspectives into issues that come before the MLA assembly. I will support fully the MLA’s mission to strengthen the study and teaching of language and literature.

**VII. Western US and Western Canada (6 contests)**

*Alaska, California, Guam, Hawai’i, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington; Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan*

164. **David C. Lloyd.** Distinguished prof. English, Univ. of California, Riverside.

PhD, Univ. of Cambridge. Resident fellow, Univ. of California Humanities Research Inst., 1994; Rockefeller fellowship, Center for Cultural Studies, Univ. of California, Santa Cruz; fellow, Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Univ. of Southern California, 2004; NEH research fellowship, 2008–09; fellow, New Directions in Feminist Research Seminar, Center for Feminist Research, Univ. of Southern California, 2011–12. Visiting appointments: Univ. of Alberta, 2000; Distinguished Prof. of Irish Studies and senior


Statement

Scholars in the humanities are all too aware of the challenges we face from a set of interrelated tendencies. These include the decline in funding for research and teaching in the humanities; the often arbitrary closure of language departments or of PhD programs in languages and other disciplines; the decline in student enrollment in humanities courses, impelled in large part by the increasing pressure on public universities to privatize more and more and to increase student fees; the related growth in the size and cost of administrations and the corresponding decline in faculty governance; the increasing reliance on ill-paid temporary or adjunct teaching labor; and the roll-back of the past gains of affirmative action. Too often, these challenges have simply been accepted as the new realities of the profession, and such measures as the transformation of PhD programs into virtual teacher-training schools or the adoption of more online courses are recommended and prescribed. But the challenges we face are not neutral effects of changing times. They are the result of long-term political agendas that include the roll-back of public education, the vocationalization of degrees, increasing stratification of institutions, and the containment of critical thinking. This situation makes it incumbent on academics to respond to changing conditions with a clear and political public voice, not merely to adapt. If elected to the Delegate Assembly, I would look forward to working with other delegates to frame and articulate an alternative vision of the future of humanities education.

165. William Beatty Warner. Prof. English, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara.


Statement

Although we are all weary of hearing the word “crisis” applied to the literary humanities, it has been thrust upon us. You don’t need a weatherman to feel the tangible evidence of the withering of the profession of literary studies. The MLA should use its public position and intellectual resources to develop new ways to conceptualize and promulgate what we do and why it is essential to humankind’s collective future.

☼


Publications include articles in MLN, Chaucer Review, Viator, Philological Quarterly, Medievalia et Humanistica.

Statement

I am concerned about the welfare of adjunct instructors and their lack of standing within the institutions employing them. I am troubled by the growing emphasis on assessment and the need to justify in utilitarian terms the immediate benefits of critical inquiry. I worry about the long-term effects of MOOCs. I am dismayed by mounting student debt.

These worries may sound contradictory. Critics of academia claim that the rising cost of higher education has to do with the expense of instruction and that the erosion of tenure and the move to online courses significantly trim bloated budgets. But related to these efforts to cut costs is a diminishing of our society’s intellectual vibrancy. Public discourse has become fractured and dumbed down. And an education seems too expensive if our society cannot recognize its value. The amount sometimes cited as the average debt burden of a 2011 graduate—$26,000—is too large, I concur, but it is about the cost of a Toyota Prius; one would hope that an education lasts longer than a car.)

We can and should continue the work the MLA has already done, as in the reports of the Committee on Contingent Labor in the Profession and the guidelines on teaching practices produced by the MLA, ADE, and ADFL. But I would also like to see the MLA make the humanities more visible in society at large to change the public’s perception of the relevance of what we do as teachers of language, literature, writing, and thought.


Statement

As a delegate, I would do my best to represent the views of members in my region responsibly and imaginatively.

168. King-Kok Cheung. Prof. English and Asian Amer. studies, Univ. of California, Los Angeles.


169. **Rosaura Sanchez.** Prof. lit., Univ. of California, San Diego.


**Statement**

If elected to the MLA Delegate Assembly, I would represent the concerns of colleagues in the western region, especially the concerns of progressive, minority, and women faculty members and of those who oppose the corporatization of public education and the undermining of the humanities. There are as well a number of labor and political concerns that I will support, especially with respect to freedom of expression for faculty members and students, the rights of contingent faculty members, and the labor rights of university employees.

170. **Margaret Hanzimanolis.** Adjunct asst. prof. English, De Anza Coll., CA; adjunct instructor English, City Coll. of San Francisco, CA; adjunct English, Cañada Coll., CA.

the more support we get professionally, the better we can serve our students.

especially support for research. Most important, I bring a love of our profession and a deep commitment to advancement.

Those with disabilities. I would also advocate for the fair and equal treatment of the growing number of non-color, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, those of different sexual orientations, immigrants, and those with disabilities. I would also advocate for the fair and equal treatment of the growing number of non-tenure-track faculty members, both part-time and full-time, promoting opportunities for their professional advancement and their participation in institutional governance and calling for job security, benefits, and especially support for research. Most important, I bring a love of our profession and a deep commitment to helping our students become better readers and writers of literature and lovers of language—understanding that the more support we get professionally, the better we can serve our students.

Statement

I am interested in workplace justice issues: resistance to privatization, two-tiered tuition pricing, and administrative interference in curricular matters. We need better integration of community-college and part-time faculty members (PTF) in the MLA and ways to link emerging educational technologies to the social justice principles that form the bedrock of all of our work.

These are areas that the MLA can and should be addressing. The National Center for Education Statistics announced this year that part-time faculty members are now the majority of the teaching force (2011 figures). Because PTF are typically not well-integrated into the governance of their institutions and disciplinary organizations, we might be tempted to say that the professoriat has irreparably fractured into the ghetto and the gated community. And because PTF experience inferior academic freedoms, substandard pay, and few professional growth opportunities, we might consider this our era’s greatest challenge, out of which all other academic challenges arise: falling student performance, the low status and relevance of the humanities, the invasion of ill-conceived MOOCs, the growing impotence of faculty governance, and legislative overreach into pedagogical issues. The privatization of many sectors of higher education and the newly authorized two-tiered tuition pricing in California public institutions appear to be following the models we know so well in K–12 education, health care, prisons, and military privatization. I seek your vote so that I can be a voice in the Delegate Assembly to challenge the intentional dismantling of higher education as a pathway to civic and intellectual engagement.

171. Loretta Kane. Instructor English, Berkeley City Coll., CA; lecturer educ., San José State Univ. PhD, Univ. of California, Berkeley. Nominee, Outstanding Dissertation Award, Univ. of California, Berkeley, 2005. Board of directors, Community Alliance for Learning (San Francisco Bay Area), 2007–.


Statement

I have many years of varied experience teaching literature as well as a passion for, and deep commitment to, the understanding and development of language, particularly written language, to bring to the Delegate Assembly. As a delegate, I would work to address any professional issues teachers of language and literature face, especially the devaluing of the study and teaching of language and literature within academic institutions, as evidenced by the cutting of humanities programs due to so-called budget constraints. In addition, I have an open-minded and progressive set of values regarding social justice issues. If elected, I would represent the professional interests of all faculty members in my region and the academic interests of their students, being especially mindful, however, of traditionally underrepresented faculty members and students: women, those of color, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, those of different sexual orientations, immigrants, and those with disabilities. I would also advocate for the fair and equal treatment of the growing number of non-tenure-track faculty members, both part-time and full-time, promoting opportunities for their professional advancement and their participation in institutional governance and calling for job security, benefits, and especially support for research. Most important, I bring a love of our profession and a deep commitment to helping our students become better readers and writers of literature and lovers of language—understanding that the more support we get professionally, the better we can serve our students.

☼
172. **Lucy M. Alford.** Grad. student comparative lit., Stanford Univ.


    Publications include: articles in *Warwick Review, Dicta & Contradicta, Philosophy and Literature;* review in *MLN.*

    **Statement**

    Coming from diverse backgrounds and with very different goals, foci, and challenges, we all share a commitment to education, critical thinking, rigorous questioning, and the significance of languages and literatures at a time when these are not the priorities of national and institutional budgets. Having pursued doctoral study in both the United Kingdom and the United States, I have experienced the challenges of graduate work in very different academic contexts. I am committed to representing the needs of graduate students in the western United States and Canada within the greater scholarly community of the MLA. Widespread budget cuts have exacerbated graduate underfunding across the region, meaning heavier teaching requirements, more self-funded students, greater dependence on part- and full-time jobs in addition to research, and greater institutional reliance on adjunct faculty members. All of this directly impacts graduate student well-being, time to completion, and career prospects. As a delegate I will promote (1) increased graduate funding opportunities; (2) dissertation-stage support networks; (3) more proactive career planning, including exploring nonacademic careers with equally significant intellectual engagement; (4) greater graduate visibility in scholarly research; and (5) improving the situation of current adjuncts while working to decrease the systemic overreliance on these positions. Finally, I will promote the role that grads’ and adjuncts’ creative problem-solving can play in shaping the future of literary education. Given the right support, the graduate student community can be a powerful source of innovation, new thinking, and energy, both in academia and in the wider community.

173. **Erin Sweeney.** Grad. student Amer. lit., Univ. of California, Irvine.


    Publications include article in *Mark Twain Annual.*

    **Statement**

    I am honored to be nominated to represent graduate students in the MLA Delegate Assembly. As the newest members of the academic community, we have the most at stake in long-term planning about our profession. We who are preparing for and actively seeking full-time academic jobs in shrinking humanities
departments need to convey the mixed benefits and pressures of the upsurge in early career professionalization: balancing personal wellness with teaching, research, conference participation, and publishing. As a graduate student representative, I will advocate for professionalization that is job training—and not just job-market training—for the portable skills required of employment in academia or in alternative careers. The MLA, as a centralized resource of support for the study and teaching of languages and literature, can do much to advocate for younger scholars in the early stages of their careers. I will work to facilitate communication and collaboration between younger scholars facing a changing profession and established academics who have battled the corporatization of the humanities and the diminishment of academic labor for years. If elected to a delegate position, I would work to promote (1) more robust and more forward-looking professionalization for graduate students; (2) forums to help graduate students share information and resources for success in alternative careers, research, teaching, and the promotion of the humanities in their institutions; and (3) the particular interests, needs, and concerns of graduate students in my region.