About the MLA Convention

THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION, FIRST HELD in 1883, is an annual gathering of teachers and scholars in the field of language and literature study. The convention enables members of the profession to share their ideas and research with colleagues from other universities and colleges. Sessions and the exhibit hall will be in the Vancouver Convention Centre; the Job Information Center and child care will be in the Fairmont Waterfront. Sessions begin at 12:00 noon on 8 January, and there are workshops at 8:30 and 11:45 a.m. The last sessions will end at 3:00 p.m. on 11 January.

Convention sessions are organized by MLA members, but nonmembers are welcome to attend. All participants—members and nonmembers alike—must pay registration fees. Registrants receive badges, which entitle convention attendees to gain admittance to sessions, the Job Information Center, and the exhibit hall. Registrants who lose their badges may purchase replacements at the registration area.

Sessions

Most sessions at the 2015 MLA convention were arranged by the membership at large, either through the association's divisions and discussion groups or by individual members. Attendance is open to all convention registrants, but only current MLA members may organize or participate formally in sessions. On occasion, the membership requirement is waived for individuals whose main interests are in other disciplines. The kinds of sessions arranged for this year's convention are described below.

© 2014 THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2014.129.5.900 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Division Sessions

MLA divisions represent major areas of membership interest. Divisions are responsible for promoting scholarly and professional activities within their areas of concern; to this end, their executive committees advise on specific research and pedagogical needs, propose to the MLA Executive Council programs that might be undertaken on behalf of their divisions, compile information of interest to their members for publication in MLA periodicals or in special mailings, and elect division representatives to serve in the MLA Delegate Assembly.

Discussion Group Sessions

MLA discussion groups accommodate the scholarly and professional interests of constituencies within the association whose concern is with discrete literatures or with literary and linguistic matters that are not encompassed by one of the divisions. Like divisions, discussion groups are responsible for promoting scholarly and professional activities within their areas of concern.

Forums

Arranged by divisions, discussion groups, or individual members, forums are meetings on topics of broad interest. The MLA executive director, with the assistance of the Program Committee, has final responsibility for approving forums.

Special Sessions

MLA members whose scholarly or professional interests are not adequately accommodated through convention programs arranged by the divisions and discussion groups may propose special sessions. These sessions are the most specialized of all convention meetings and are intended to enable participants to exchange ideas on specific topics.

Allied Organization Sessions

Other scholarly, business, or social meetings are arranged in conjunction with the MLA convention by officially recognized allied organizations. Typically, these organizations are learned societies or professional associations whose purposes are closely allied with those of the MLA.

New Forum Structure

Beginning with the 2016 convention, existing divisions and discussion groups will become forums, and new forums that were approved in 2014 will sponsor sessions at the meeting. Sessions previously called forums will be called plenary sessions. More information about the new forum structure is available on *MLA Commons* (http://executivecouncil.commons.mla.org/2014/05/14/an-introduction-to-the-new-forum-structure/).

Organizing Sessions for 2016

Please see the Procedures for Organizing Meetings on the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/conv_procedures) for further details on all types of sessions. All program copy is due 1 April 2015 for the 2016 convention in Austin, Texas.

Sessions Organized by the New Forums

Because the executive committees of existing divisions and discussion groups will be carried over to the corresponding forum, members who have suggestions for a forum's sessions or who would like to participate in those sessions should correspond with the 2015 secretary of the appropriate division or discussion group, since 2015 secretaries become chairs for the 2016 convention (see the list of executive committee members that follows the sessions listing). For forums approved in 2014, the executive committee members will be listed on the MLA Web site in January 2015.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2014.129.5.900 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Special Sessions

Members who wish to organize a special session for the 2016 convention should carefully read the guidelines, available on the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/conv_procedures), governing the organization of these sessions and should observe the deadlines for 2015–16 announced in the Fall *MLA Newsletter* and on the MLA Web site. Proposals for special sessions must be submitted on the forms provided for this purpose; the forms and other useful information about submitting a proposal will be available on the MLA Web site.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2014.129.5.900 Published online by Cambridge University Press