YOUR 1988 BALLOT
Let's All Vote by April 15

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LIBRARY RESEARCH SECTION
Responds to Strategic Plan

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FOUR NEW COMMITTEES
Prepared for Action This Spring

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RESEARCH RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Wants Your Input

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FORGOT TO PAY YOUR DUES?
Here's Your Chance

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NEW MEMBERS--NEW ADDRESSES

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NEW ORLEANS DATES TO REMEMBER:
MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR:
Sunday, May 23, 1988
3:30 - 5:00 pm.
Joint Contributed Paper Session
5:00 - 6:00 pm.
Research Section Business Meeting

OFFICERS 1987/88

CHAIRMAN
CHAIR-ELECT
SECRETARY/TREAS
COUNCIL REP.
COUNCIL ALT.
GOVT. REL. LIASON

ERIKA LOVE
CAROL FENICHEL
ANN WELLER
PHYLLIS LANSING
MARK FUNK
KAREN BREWER
MLA RESEARCH SECTION RESPONDS TO STRATEGIC PLAN:
TOWARD A RESEARCH ACTION AGENDA

Having identified research as one of three major goals in its strategic plan, MLA now faces not only the challenge of creating a forum for research-related activities and fostering a broader base of support among its members: it also must assume responsibility for developing human and material resources to realize this goal.

The MLA Library Research Section welcomes the opportunity to be part of this effort, and hopes to participate in an ongoing dialogue with others in the organization, especially regarding efforts initiated by the Board of Directors to develop a research action agenda. The MLA Library Research Section identifies several principal "players" in the research effort:

1. Schools of library and information science
2. MLA institutional members
3. MLA CE program
4. MLA Board of Directors/other units involved
5. The individual member
6. Potential funding sources

A. Roles of principal players.

1. Schools of library and information science. Traditionally, medical library practitioners are not researchers. Practice and research are, in general, performed by two different groups. If we hope to build bridges, our planning process must involve both those who practice and those who educate and do research.

2. MLA institutional members. Member institutions, especially academic and larger health sciences libraries, need to demonstrate a commitment to research by instigating policies that encourage and support librarians' research activities as part of their job. (Example: administrative leave for research; sabbaticals.) MLA should begin to develop documentation and consider a position statement related to these issues (Publications Panel?)

3. MLA CE Program. A beginning has been made in MLA's Continuing Education efforts to develop a strong program in research-related skills for its membership. Through joint efforts of the Research Section, the CE Committee and MLA Headquarters, two research-related courses will be offered for the first time at New Orleans in 1988.

4. MLA Board/other units. Sections, chapters and committees have been invited to participate by submitting their specific contributions toward implementing the strategy plan. Two-way communication and feedback from the Board and Headquarters is a critical component to success. How will sections, chapters and committees be informed about how the Board plans to deal with their particular proposals? A no-response, no-reaction posture would render their efforts an apparent exercise in futility.

5. The individual member. Since MLA is not recognized as a research-oriented organization, we may have trouble recruiting prospective members with research skills. By what means can we identify such individuals? What incentives can we offer? Because MLA is not yet prepared to make such recruitment feasible, we might better focus our attention on present members who are interested in research, providing them with more opportunities to acquire skills, and sharing each others' interests and experiences, especially at the chapter level. At a future point we may be ready to recruit new members who are researchers.

6. Potential funding sources. As a volunteer organization, MLA needs visible, tangible evidence of a commitment to research-related issues and activities at MLA Headquarters, i.e., dedicated manpower and resources on an ongoing basis to attract and pursue outside funding.

B. Library Research Section Response to Action Plans for Goal III. (Draft of the Executive Committee, MLA Board of Directors)

1. "Develop a research agenda for Board approval."

A research "agenda" may provide a focus, a range of choices. It may open the door for new topics or ideas to be identified later by researchers.

On the other hand, it can also become a document that invites myopia. It has been said that research usually occurs as a result of "a proper combination of four elements: a) need, b) interest, c) resources, and d) prior work in the area.

a) Needs are volatile. We cannot predict tomorrow's needs today. Technologies and our environment change constantly.

b) Interest. We cannot assume that researchers will respond to a call to address problems which they, themselves, did not identify.

c) Resources. The sponsor who supplies the resources (time, dollars, facilities) is a powerful partner in the research process, and can determine the relationship of sponsor to partner which, in turn, affects the project. In the grants process, the sponsor provides resources toward the researcher's goals. In a contractual relationship, the sponsor is hiring the researcher to work toward the sponsor's goals. If MLA develops a research agenda, it seems to be moving toward contract research.

d) Prior work in the area. A research agenda cannot be generated in a cognitive vacuum, but must be anchored in existing knowledge, i.e., research which has occurred earlier. The Task Force for a research agenda, chaired by Jackie
Bastille, acknowledges this fact in its draft policy: "Create a knowledge base of research directions and ongoing research projects...." Such an effort takes time and resources.

The Research Section is not comfortable with this concept. We prefer a less definitive approach to identify research issues. A "research agenda" would have to be submitted to an extensive review process and can, potentially, be extremely vulnerable to criticism for either omissions or biases. Research agenda have been viewed as "political documents." Do we want that or are we talking about an "action agenda?"

See our comment under A.5.

3. "Present a CE course on basic and applied research in health information science or collaborate in such development."

See our comment under A.3.

4. "Develop and present a forum for the advancement of state-of-the-art knowledge in basic and applied research by 1991."

We don't understand what is meant by this terminology. A critical step here is the definition of terms-defining basic concepts. Basic and applied research in library science? In information science? Without a clear understanding of these terms, a productive dialogue will be difficult.

5. "Identify knowledge and skills necessary to conduct basic and applied research in health information science."

This statement invites a host of questions, such as:

a) Will this include a study or examination of library school curricula?

b) Who will make good health information science researchers? Must types of people be identified, i.e., personality characteristics, educational background, etc.?

We are not clear what this means, and how credentialing relates to this issue.

6. "Facilitate the dissemination of research results through publication and other means."

Whose research results? MLA members? We propose to begin with a Research Report Form in MLA News (draft attached) to stimulate interest in this project, and to provide a forum for sharing information about ongoing--or completed--research projects.

7. "Develop and implement a plan for 1) forming coalitions with organizations having similar research goals and 2) collaboration on CE."

Initially, we propose to look for such coalition not in global terms, but with specific goals in mind, and with emphasis on continuing education collaboration.

C. Library Research Section Proposal.

To solidify MLA's thinking concerning research and research-related issues, the Research Section proposes a special conference that will launch MLA's research program and give it the visibility it deserves--and needs.

We recommend that a planning committee be established to prepare a conceptual background paper which will serve as the basis for a grant proposal to the Council on Library Resources, the National Library of Medicine, or other funding agency. We further recommend that MLA Headquarters be the focus for preparing this grant proposal.

We feel that, as a national organization, MLA must address a broad range of issues related to health sciences library research, and by doing so, will be better able to identify those which are relevant to its basic mission.

Planning activities for the conference should anticipate wide participation, recognizing that it can foster interest and promote support for library-related research among MLA members. A well-defined planning process should be one of the desired outcomes in the grant proposal, rather than focusing solely on the conference itself. We further recommend that the planning document clearly identify what form the published conference proceedings/reports will take, as well as where and how they will be published and distributed.

Summary

We consider the development of human resources in our profession, and the development of skills among our members of supreme importance. We are further convinced that promoting a renewed emphasis on research in Schools of Library and Information Science is vital to strengthening library related research in our field. Finally, MLA must develop broad membership support for Goal III; a strong CE program focusing on research skills and research-related activities at the chapter level are important steps in that direction. We believe these prerequisites will prepare us to begin implementing Goal III.

Submitted to MLA Board of Directors November 24, 1987
FOUR NEW COMMITTEES
Prepared for Action This Spring

CE Liaison Committee - Estab. 3/88

Committee is composed of six members, two appointed annually for three-year terms. The Chair remains for a fourth year, and a Chair-designate, selected from third year members, succeeds as Chair.

The Committee shall:

1. Maintain a productive Liaison with the MLA CE Committee and MLA Headquarters CE Staff to foster ongoing communication.
2. Work with CE Committee and Headquarters to strengthen research-related CE activities within MLA and introduce appropriate educational opportunities to the membership.
3. Seek out qualified individuals to develop courses, seminars and tutorials designed to foster research skills among MLA members and make recommendations to the CE Committee.
4. Recommend to CE Committee and Headquarters courses or seminars developed outside MLA appropriate for MLA's CE programs.
5. Work with Chapter CE Committees to promote research related courses at regional meetings.
6. Publicize the work of the Committee.

Committee
(2) Karen Hackleman, Chair
GGEAR Program
University of Maryland at Baltimore
520 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
301/328-4327

(1) Nancy Nuell
(1) Elizabeth Wood
(2) Fran Johnson
(3) Prudence W. Dalrymple
(3) Marie Reidelbach
(3) Joan Stoddard

MLA Research Issues Committee - Estab. 3/88

Committee is composed of six members, two appointed annually for three-year terms. The Chair remains for a fourth year, and a Chair-designate, selected from third year members, succeeds as Chair.

The Committee shall:

1. Monitor progress to implement goal III-Research in MLA's strategic plan.
2. Develop, promote and publicize guidelines for evaluation criteria for MLA sponsored contributed paper sessions.
3. Develop prototype guidelines for establishing sabbatical/research leave and release time for research projects within member institutions in the academic community.
5. Publicize work of the Committee.

Committee
(2) Jacqueline D. Bastille, Chair
Treadwell Library
Massachusetts General Hospital
Fruit Street
Boston, MA 02114
617/726-8604 FAX 617/726-2093

(1) Rya Ben-Shir
(1) Susan Crawford
(2) Nancy Fazzone
(2) Ada M. Seltzer
(3) David King
(3) Peter Vigil

....in-house research is an activity that should be encouraged, even demanded, by library managements because without it there can hardly be any objective assessment of services, performance, or needs. It must also be seen as a significant element in the personal development of library staff and in the continuing evolution of librarianship as a profession. The role of management in this sub-system of library operations is critical for management controls, if it does not actually create the conditions in which the staff operate.

Research Resources Committee - Estab. 3/88

Committee is composed of six members, two appointed annually for three-year terms. The Chair remains for a fourth year, and a Chair-designate, selected from third year members, succeeds as Chair.

The Committee shall:

1. Promote the reporting of and publicize ongoing research activities among MLA members and member institutions.
2. Publish and distribute an annual bibliography on library research.
3. Establish and maintain a file of research resources, such as research results and data on file in institutions and Schools of Library and Information Science, as well as human resources and expertise.
4. Publicize and share information concerning committee activities to stimulate and support interest in library-related research among MLA members.

Committee

(1) Phyllis S. Lansing, Chair
705 Shelley Road
Towson, MD 21204
301/328-7373

(2) Alice Brand
(3) Kathryn Reed
(3) Neil Rambo
(1) Dottie Eakin
(2) Ruth Fenske

MLA Membership Committee - Estab. 3/88

Committee consists of one member from each Chapter, each member serving a three-year term, with one-third of the membership rotating each year.

The Committee shall:

1. Promote membership in the Section at the national level.
2. Develop a working relationship with each chapter to promote the Section at the Chapter level.
3. Maintain a mailing list.
4. Submit names of new members to the newsletter editor.
5. Report its activities at the annual business meeting of the Section.
6. Serve as liaison to Chapters on legislation and governmental issues of interest to the Research Section.

Committee

(2) Ann C. Weller, Chair
Library of the Health Sciences
The University of Illinois at Chicago
1750 Polk Street
Chicago, IL 60612
312/996-8985 FAX 312/733-6440

(1) Barbara Laynor
(1) Josephine Lim
(2) Joanne Marshall
(3) Rochelle Clary
(3) Pat Craig
(3) Phyllis Self
(3) Carol Weaver

ATTENTION: LAST CALL TO PAY YOUR DUES!
Become a member--and stay a member in good standing

MLA LIBRARY RESEARCH SECTION
MEMBERSHIP DUES 1988

Name________________________________________ Telephone________________

Institution________________________________________

Preferred Mailing Address________________________________________

Membership Renewal _____ New Member _____

Make check for $5.00 payable to: Ann Weller, Secy/Treas Research Section and mail to her: Library of the Health Sciences
The University of Illinois at Chicago
1750 West Polk Street
Chicago IL 60612
Rya Ben-Shir  
Health Science Resource Center  
MacNeal Hospital  
3249 S. Oak Park Avenue  
Berwyn IL 60402

James Pat Craig, Director  
LSU School of Medicine Library  
P.O. Box 33932  
Shreveport LA 71103

Prudence W. Dalrymple  
Library of the Health Sciences  
College of Medicine at Rockford  
1601 Park View Avenue  
Rockford IL 61107

Carol Doms (formerly Poglitsch)  
School of Dentistry Library  
University of Missouri - Kansas City  
650 East 25th Street  
Kansas City MO 64108

Jon Eldredge  
Medical Center Library  
University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque NM 87131

Nancy B. Fazzone  
Health Sciences Library  
Salem Hospital  
81 Highland Avenue  
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Ruth Fenske  
123 Washington Blvd  
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Karen Hackleman  
GGEAR Program  
University of Maryland at Baltimore  
520 West Lombard Street  
Baltimore MD 21044

Alice Hadley  
Medical Library  
U.S. Naval Hospital, GUAM  
P.O. Box 7747  
FPO San Francisco CA 96630-1649

Frances E. Johnson  
Division of Extramural Programs  
National Library of Medicine  
8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda MD 20894

Millard F. Johnson  
Medical Library  
Oregon Health Sciences University  
3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Road  
Portland OR 97201

Josefina P. Lim  
Montefiore Medical Center Library  
111 East 210th Street  
Bronx NY 10467

Nina Long  
Episcopal Hospital Medical Library  
Front Street and Lehigh Avenue  
Philadelphia PA 19125

Joanne Gard Marshall, Faculty of  
Library and Information Science  
University of Toronto  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1

Nancy Nuell  
Health Sciences Library  
University of Maryland  
111 South Greene Street  
Baltimore MD 21201

Kathlyn L. Reed  
2686 Murworth No. 1205  
Houston TX 77054

Justine Roberts  
152 Sycamore Ave.  
Mill Valley CA 94941

Ada M. Seltzer  
Rowland Medical Library  
University of Mississippi  
2500 North State Street  
Jackson MS 39216

Phyllis Self  
223 Shadowbrook Drive  
Burlington NC 27215
Sheryl Stevens  
Sladen Library  
Henry Ford Hospital  
2799 West Grand Blvd  
Detroit MI

Frieda O. Weise  
University of Maryland at Baltimore  
111 Greene Street  
Baltimore MD 21201

Joan M. Stoddart  
Eccles Health Sciences Library  
University of Utah - Bldg 89  
Salt Lake City UT 84112

Ann White  
Div. of Library & Information Mgmt  
American Medical Association  
535 North Dearborn Street  
Chicago IL 60610

Helen Stonehill  
Int'l Center for the Disabled  
345 Avenue C  
New York NY 10009

Judith Wood  
School of Inf. & Library Studies  
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CB #3360 Manning Hall  
Chapel Hill NC 27599-3360

Peter Vigil  
Library of the Health Sciences  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
1750 West Polk Street  
Chicago IL 60602

RESEARCH REPORT FORM

The Research Resources Committee plans to establish a file of recently completed and ongoing research projects. The Committee also hopes to retain a list of those persons with research interests to serve as the basis for a clearing house on research resources. If you are currently involved in a research project, or know someone who is, please complete and mail the form below to:

Phyllis Lansing, Chair, Research Resources Committee  
University of Maryland  
111 South Green Street  
Baltimore MA 21201

Your Name_________________________________________ Date________________________

Position Title________________________________________

Address________________________________________

Title or Topic of research project________________________________________

If in progress, what is its approximate completion date?________________________________________

If completed, is your research project published? _____Yes _____No

Is it available for distribution? _____Yes_____ No

If yes, please provide mailing address for requesting copies:

The following individual is involved/or has active interest in research:

Name________________________________________________ Institution________________