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John David Guillory Receives ADE March Award

The ADE Executive Committee has named John David Guillory the recipient of the 2015 Francis Andrew March Award. He will receive the award at the MLA Annual Convention's awards ceremony in Austin on 9 January 2016. Guillory is Silver Professor of English at New York University. He received his doctorate in English from Yale University in 1979. Guillory was originally a scholar of Spenser and Milton, and his theoretically informed work on canon formation in relation to cultural capital has fundamentally transformed how we understand the bodies of literature that we study. His work has extended our thinking in rich and rewarding ways about that foundational act of our field—reading—and cast new light on the literacy that is vital for our democratic society. Long a friend of the ADE, he has demonstrated real commitment to exploring important disciplinary questions in the context of department administration.

The ADE Francis Andrew March Award was established by the ADE Executive Committee in 1984 to honor exceptional service to the profession of English. The award is named for Francis March (1823–1911), professor of English at Lafayette College and the first professor of English in America.



JON BENJAMIN PHOTOGRAPHY

Malcolm Alan Compitello Receives ADFL Award

The ADFL Executive Committee has awarded the 2015 ADFL Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession to Malcolm Alan Compitello, professor of Spanish and head of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Arizona. Scholar, teacher, advocate for language education, mentor, and editor, Compitello is a model of dedication to the profession and to the evolving discipline of Hispanic cultural studies. He has expanded and reshaped the traditional language and literature curriculum toward a new multidisciplinary cultural definition, exemplifying innovation in his own research and through the journal he founded and serves as executive editor, the *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*. A session in Compitello's honor will be held at the 2016 MLA Annual Convention in Austin. The award will be presented at the convention's awards ceremony on 9 January 2016. Since 1994, the ADFL Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession has recognized eminent scholar-teachers who serve the profession in the larger community.



Making Suggestions for Committee Appointments

This year the MLA Executive Council will make appointments to seventeen standing committees of the association. The council invites members to consider suggesting themselves or other members for one of the anticipated vacancies on the seventeen committees. Members' suggestions will be accepted at the Web site (www.mla.org/commsugg) from mid-November through early February. The Web page for suggestions provides information on the factors relevant to this new round of committee appointments. Because these factors change from year to year, suggestions made the previous year are not brought forward for the council's consideration. Members will therefore need to deposit new or updated suggestions after consulting the new Web listing of vacancies.

The council will be making appointments to fill these vacancies at its February 2016 meeting. Any questions about committee suggestions should be addressed to Carol Zuses at the MLA office (czuses@mla.org).

Calls for Papers for the 2017 Convention

The 2017 MLA Annual Convention will be held in Philadelphia from 5 to 8 January. Calls for papers may be submitted through the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/conv_papers) from early November 2015 to 28 February 2016. Organizers are responsible for responding to all inquiries.

Calls for papers may be viewed online at www.mla.org/conv_papers from early November 2015 through 31 March 2016. Members should familiarize themselves with the guidelines for the MLA convention, which appear on the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/conv_procedures), before writing to the organizers listed in the calls for papers. If not provided, organizers' addresses are available in the members' directory on the MLA Web site. All participants in convention sessions must be MLA members by 7 April 2016. A member may participate (e.g., by facilitating a workshop, reading a paper, or serving as a speaker, presider, or respondent) only twice at a convention.

Participants must indicate their audiovisual needs when they respond to a call for papers and should check with the chair of the session or with the MLA convention office to be sure that the necessary equipment has been ordered by 1 April 2016. Because the need for audiovisual equipment is a major factor in the scheduling of meetings (and because the movement of equipment is both costly and hazardous), the 1 April deadline is firm.

Members without Internet access who need a printout of the calls for papers should write or call the MLA office to have a copy mailed to them (membership@mla.org; 646 576-5151).

Elections Committee Seeks Candidates

The MLA Elections Committee will meet on 29 January 2016 to begin the process of identifying candidates for the special-interest and regional seats in the Delegate Assembly that will fall vacant when current delegates complete their terms. Those elected in 2016 will serve in the assembly from 9 January 2017 through the close of the January 2020 convention and must attend the meetings of the assembly in January 2018, January 2019, and January 2020.

The Elections Committee is charged not only with nominating candidates and overseeing the elections but also with ensuring that the various groups within the MLA find representation in the Delegate Assembly. Committee members are therefore interested in hearing from all MLA members who are willing to be candidates in next year's Delegate Assembly elections. Members who would like to be considered should write to the Elections Committee, c/o Carol Zuses, at the MLA office (czuses@mla.org).

Honorary Fellows

Members are encouraged to submit suggestions for honorary fellows of the association. Honorary fellows are distinguished persons of letters of any nationality. Those recently elected include Maryse Condé, Louise Erdrich, Amitav Ghosh, Jacques Roubaud, Albert Wendt, and Mo Yan. The current rosters of honorary members and fellows can be found at the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/honorary_members).

Members who would like to recommend honorary fellows should refer to the instructions at www.mla.org/nominations_hon. (Note: The Executive Council is not currently accepting new suggestions for honorary members.)



University of Pennsylvania campus



Speaking for Interpretation

As our convention in Austin approaches, I've been reflecting on our profession as I have observed it from the vantage of president of the world's largest scholarly organization. My three previous columns noted several of the important initiatives that the MLA has recently begun and will continue: an extensive survey of present and past members, which has yielded valuable insights into their needs; the Action for Allies initiative, which confronts the disproportion of undergraduate teaching (as much as 75%) by non-tenure-track, often precariously employed, and poorly compensated faculty members; and the Connected Academics program, which encourages expanded career paths for humanities PhDs. The theme I proposed for our upcoming

convention in Austin—Literature and Its Publics: Past, Present, and Future—is meant to provide a common ground for many of the issues, intellectual as well as professional, that bring us together.

In this final column, I would like to address a topic that has been perceptible if not obvious in my past columns: the state of what I call the interpretive humanities. On a national scale, we hear laments over shrinking humanities enrollments and other symptoms of decline. It seems clear that we are witnessing a change in the place of the humanities in the larger culture. Are there any opportunities in these changes?

For example, there is one measure that seems to contradict any story of decline: the arts are booming in higher education. Colleges of all sorts are dedicating new buildings for the practice of the arts; in English departments that include majors in creative writing, those students are often in the majority; and public humanities programs are eager to put practitioners before their audiences. The arts are indispensable to the humanities, of course, but I wonder whether their appeal to administrators and donors indicates the health of the rest of our disciplines.

What goes untended in this story of institutional attention to the arts is one of the hardest capacities to cultivate, with no natural constituency. For intellectual and pragmatic reasons, we must invest in interpretation.

What do I mean by interpretation? To me it is the intellectual thread that runs through the professional lives of MLA members: it is what we do with literature, film, video, and the writing of our students. The weighing of evidence, the encounter with difficulty, the saying about a work (or a period or a cultural phenomenon) what it cannot say for itself—these things belong at the heart of a humanistic education and are the basis of citizenship and cosmopolitanism. Yet they can seem unrewarding (in every sense) to students who see themselves as makers rather than readers and who, with their parents,

may resist the slow accumulation of understanding and argument. As I see it, our challenge is to reconnect interpretation—as it happens in the student's response in writing or on video, the assistant professor's conference paper, and the senior scholar's book—with the public face of our discipline. This is part of what it means to trace the links between "literature and its publics." We ought to do this not only on our own behalf but in concert with our natural allies across the interpretive humanities and social sciences, the law, and the other disciplines as we make a renewed case for the particular kinds of knowledge we deliver.

The urgency of a reinvigorated sense of interpretation was on my mind as I assembled events for the convention in Austin. I wanted to feature speakers who are both artists and interpreters, who understand literary interpretation from the standpoint of the other disciplines, and who can speak to the role of interpretation in public life.

To mention a few highlights of our upcoming convention: the Irish writer Colm Tóibín will join us for an event called "The Novelist, the Critic, and the Public"; the world music legend Caetano Veloso, a founder of the Tropicalismo movement in Brazil, will be interviewed by Marjorie Perloff on his work as an interpreter of poetry in song; and we will welcome the historian Jo Guldi, the NEH chairman William Adams, and the United States Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer in a panel on interpretation as public work. These figures—and many more like them—are our counterparts, interlocutors, and supporters.

I hope you will join us in Austin to consider literature (or rhetoric, film, video, and so on) in dialogue with its publics and the role of interpretation in making that dialogue happen.

Roland Greene

Members are invited to comment on the president's column at president.commonsm.la.org.

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Exhibit Hall and MLA PubCentral

This year, the exhibit hall (Austin Convention Center, Ballroom D–G, level 4) will be conveniently located near the MLA registration and welcome center and convention sessions. Visit your favorite exhibitors, see the newest publications, and discover products and services during exhibit hall hours (8 and 9 January, 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; 10 January, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.). The Exhibit Hall Theater features presentations scheduled during the breaks between convention sessions and includes demonstrations and introductions to digital tools for professional editing, research, and publishing; a digital prototype for studying cultural and historical geography; and a book launch for a guide to English literary studies. A complete schedule appears in the Program, and updates will be listed online and in the *Convention Guide*. The *Convention Daily* provides updates to all exhibit hall events, including receptions, book signings, and the coffee stand schedule.

The MLA exhibit booth is located outside the exhibit hall entrance, in MLA PubCentral, and will be open on 7 January and during the exhibit hall hours. Shop for MLA products and receive a 30% discount on all MLA titles ordered at the booth. Join us for receptions celebrating new titles released by the MLA in 2015, ninety-five years of the *MLA International Bibliography*, and the launch of the MLA forums. Staff members from *MLA Commons* and the *MLA Bibliography* will be available to meet with attendees, and there will be a display of the 2015 MLA-prize-winning books to be honored at the MLA Awards Ceremony (9 January, 7:00 p.m., JW Marriott, Lone Star Ballroom D, level 3). Please check the *Convention Daily* and the MLA Annual Convention *Twitter* feed for up-to-date information.

Forum Sessions at the 2016 Convention

The 2016 convention in Austin marks the first time the newly created forums will hold sessions. Some forums are completely new (LLC Korean), some are reconfigured (MS Sound and MS Visual Culture), and many are renamed (LLC Indigenous Literatures of the United States and Canada). The creation of these forums took several years, with broad-based consultation among individual members, numerous MLA committees, and the Delegate Assembly.

This new structure was developed to allow more flexibility in responding to changes in the profession. To that end, the process continues. The Program Committee will invite the next round of prospective new forums noted in the original [list](#) to submit petitions in 2016. New forums not already on this list can also be proposed starting in 2016.

What are the forums doing? Visit the MLA Web site to check out a list of the sessions for 2016 and their forum sponsors (www.mla.org/program_browse_type?type=D).

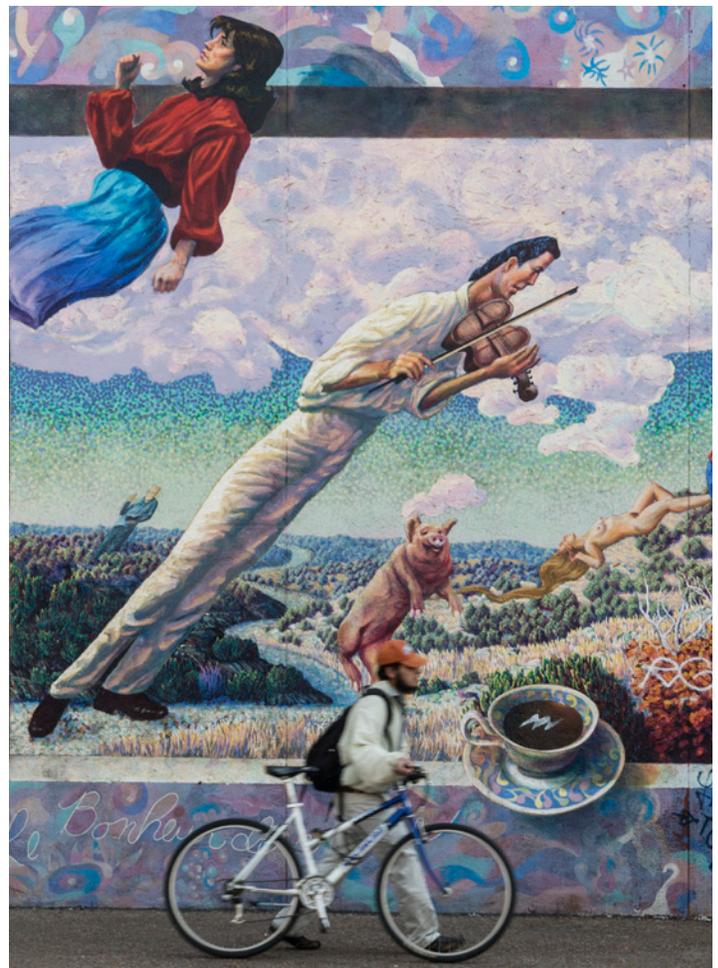
Want to get more involved? Join the *MLA Commons* group for the forums that interest you. Start or join a conversation about a session. Deposit your presentation on *CORE*, a library-quality repository on *MLA Commons*, and post the shareable URL generated by *CORE* on the convention group's [page](#).

Nominate yourself or your colleagues to stand for election to a forum executive committee and take a leadership role in building that forum's presence in the MLA and at the annual convention.

2016 MLA Delegate Assembly Meeting

MLA members are invited to attend the meeting of the 2016 Delegate Assembly during the convention in Austin. Members may speak to any of the items on the assembly's agenda. These items include regular staff and committee reports on association activities, a report from the Elections Committee on possible changes in the composition of the Delegate Assembly, and proposed constitutional amendments. Documents related to these agenda items will be posted at the MLA Web site in early December (see www.mla.org/Delegate-Assembly).

The assembly meeting will begin at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, 9 January, in JW Grand 5–6 in the JW Marriott Hotel. Because the assembly meeting is open-ended, even latecomers will have a chance to join in important discussions of association policies.



Le Bonheur de Vivre, mural by Doug Jacques and his students at Austin Community College. (The Lyda Hill Texas Collection of Photographs in Carol M. Highsmith's America Project, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)



Where Have You Gone, Paul Simon? A Nation Turns to Languages Once More

This past summer, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) announced the formation of the Commission on Language Learning, “a national effort to examine the current state of U.S. language education, to project what the nation’s education needs will be in the future, and to offer recommendations for ways to meet those needs” (American Academy). I represent the MLA on the commission, whose members include directors and presidents of associations dedicated to language education and to the humanities. This commission follows up on the work of the AAAS Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences (www.humanitiescommission.org), authors of *The Heart of the Matter* in 2013.

The Commission on Language Learning is the result of a bipartisan request by eight members of Congress from both chambers, who asked the AAAS to examine these questions: “What actions should the nation take to ensure excellence in all languages as well as international education and research, including how we may more effectively use current resources to advance language attainment?” and “How does language learning influence economic growth, cultural diplomacy, the productivity of future generations, and the fulfillment of all Americans?” That the need for language study should inspire bipartisan agreement is cause for hope.

This is not, however, the first time that a national commission has been formed to address the issue of language competence in the United States. The 1979 report of the President’s Commission on Foreign Language and International Study, *Strength through Wisdom*, offers a trenchant critique of attitudes and inaction. The report notes that “Americans’ scandalous incompetence in foreign languages” explains “our dangerously inadequate understanding of world affairs” (7). The sixty recommendations in the report mostly remained as desiderata, with one major exception. In 1980, Title VI legislation was incorporated into the Higher Education Act of 1965. Title VI programs began to focus on the value of international studies within the context of higher education rather than solely as support for government, military, and security needs.

Another significant outcome of the President’s Commission was the work of Senator Paul Simon, who served on the President’s Commission when he was in the House of Representatives and went on to publish *The Tongue-Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis* in 1980. Extending the work done in *Strength through Wisdom*, Simon points to the strong link between language competence and international relations, business, education, and other vital areas of national interest and identifies a resistance in the United States to the study of languages and world affairs, passionately arguing for an end to “the language crisis.”

Of course, we still face a crisis in language study, and conversations about it are ongoing. In my thirteen years as executive director of the MLA, I’ve been invited to many conferences and summits on the issue. I hear new research and I present data from the MLA language enrollment surveys (www.mla.org/flsurvey_search) and other association projects. Yet the research produced at these conferences points to the same basic conclusion that Simon reached thirty-five years ago: native English speakers are voluntarily tongue-challenged, primarily because language education is not accorded priority in the public school system.

At the local level, we see advances in curricular offerings in languages, increasing opportunities to study outside English-speaking countries, and technological facilitation of language acquisition and practice. We could also look to K–12 education, where exciting developments in dual immersion programs are taking place. The MLA, in fact, has established a working group to explore how higher education can cooperate with and learn from the many progressive initiatives taking place across the country at the local level (www.mla.org/working_group_k16).

But the sad truth is that far too few students are studying languages. At the national level, language study faces more obstacles than ever: the push for STEM careers coming from the White House and the general reduction of humanities offerings on college campuses discourages it. Further, as long as No Child Left Behind and its aftermath are driving the agenda in the Department of Education—and the appointment of John B. King, Jr., to replace Arne Duncan portends this—then language study won’t be prioritized at any level of the educational system.

So I ask myself, what will the new Commission on Language Learning recommend that hasn’t already been recommended? How can the commission possibly exert influence when a long line of heavily influential public figures has not? I look forward to consulting with our membership as I represent the association in this endeavor. And I imagine a day in which United States educational policy embraces Mary Louise Pratt’s dictum: “Monolingualism is a handicap. No child should be left behind” (8).

Rosemary G. Feal

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Members are invited to comment on this column at execdirector.commonsm्ला.org.

MLA Book Awards

Is your book eligible for an MLA book award? The MLA Committee on Honors and Awards invites authors and editors to compete for the association's publication prizes. There are nine annual and sixteen biennial MLA prizes that honor outstanding work in languages, literatures, and interdisciplinary studies and in specific genres (e.g., translation, bibliography, letters, scholarly edition). The inaugural Matei Calinescu Prize will honor a distinguished work of scholarship in twentieth- or twenty-first-century literature and thought. For information on the individual prizes, their deadlines, and the application process, please visit the MLA Web site (www.mla.org/award_competitions). You may also request detailed information on any MLA prize by contacting the programs office (646 576-5141; awards@mla.org).

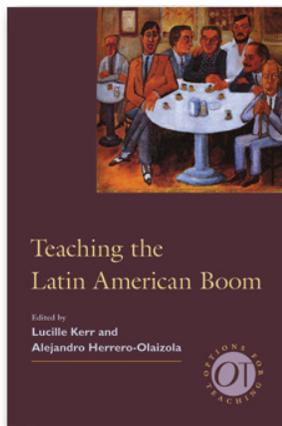
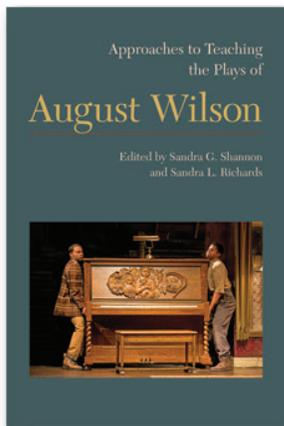
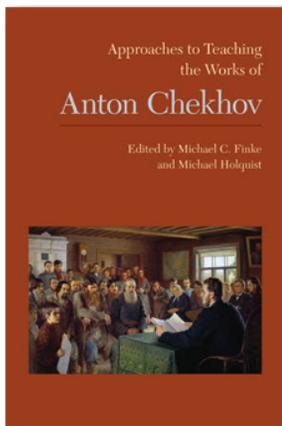
Call for Contributions to MLA Volumes

The volume *Approaches to Teaching Cooper's Leather-Stocking Tales and Other Works*, edited by Stephen Carl Arch and Keat Murray, is now in development in the MLA Approaches to Teaching World Literature series. The survey and call for essay proposals for this volume can be found at www.mla.org/approaches. The volume *Teaching Modernist Women's Writing in English*, edited by Janine Utell, is now in development in the MLA Options for Teaching series. The call for essay proposals can be found at www.mla.org/options.

New and Forthcoming MLA Titles

- *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Anton Chekhov*
- *Approaches to Teaching the Plays of August Wilson*
- *Teaching the Latin American Boom*

For complete information on these and other new titles, and to place orders, please visit www.mla.org/newtitles. MLA members receive 30% off list prices. These MLA titles will also be available in e-book formats.



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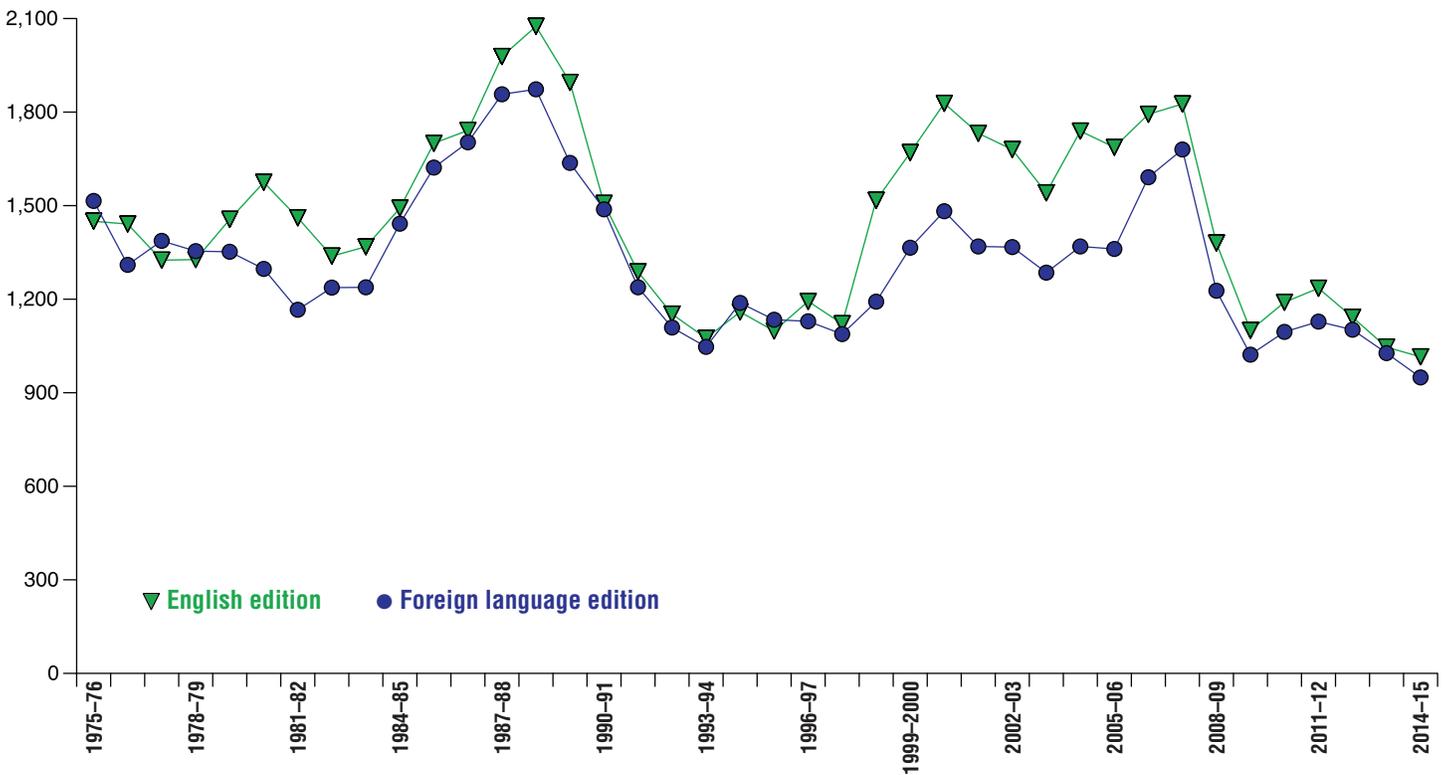
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17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Rosemary G. Feal, Executive Director

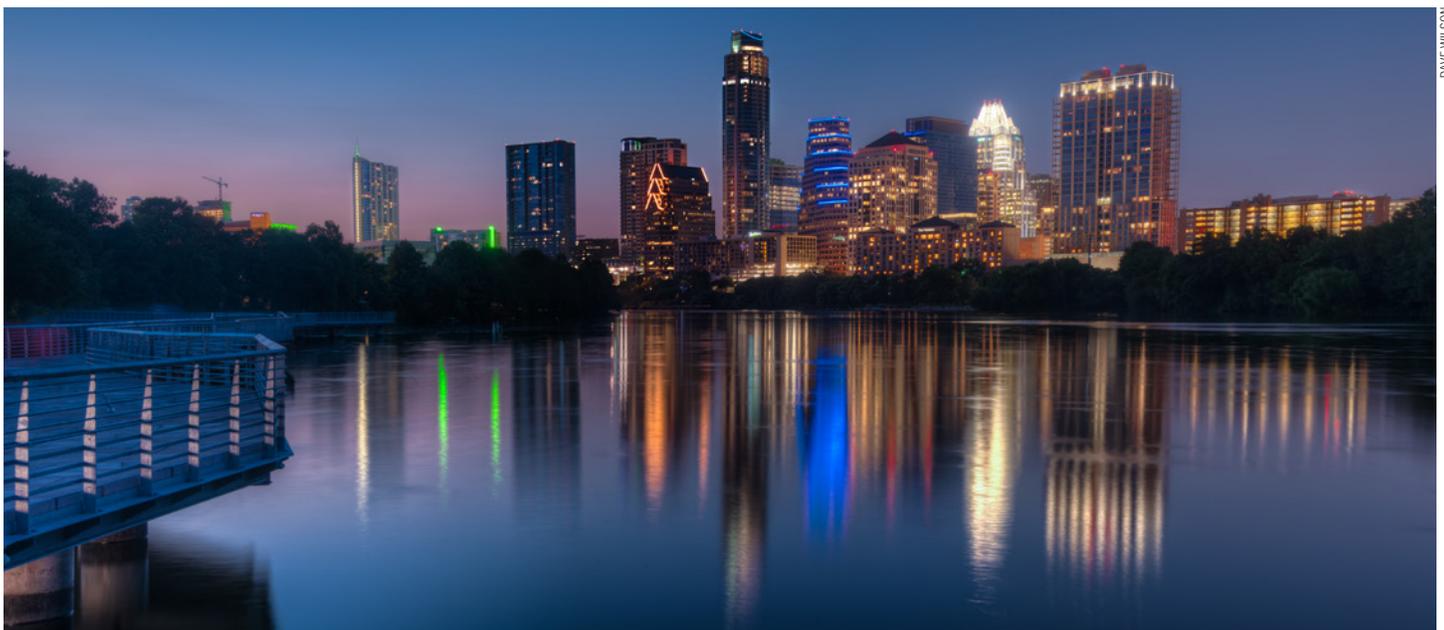
Number of Jobs Advertised in the *MLA Job Information List*, 1975–76 to 2014–15



Report on the *MLA Job Information List*

In 2014–15 the number of jobs advertised in the *MLA Job Information List (JIL)* fell for the third year in a row. The *JIL*'s English edition announced 1,015 jobs, 31 (3.0%) fewer than in 2013–14; the foreign language edition announced 949 jobs, 78 (7.6%) fewer than in 2013–14. The decreases of the past three years bring the number of jobs advertised to a new low, below the level reached after the severe drop between 2007–08 and 2009–10. The figure above shows the trend lines for the number of jobs advertised from 1975–76 to 2014–15. The 1,015 jobs in the English edition for 2014–15 are 85 (7.7%)

below the 1,100 advertised in 2009–10. The 949 jobs in the foreign language edition are 73 (7.1%) below the 1,022 advertised in 2009–10. This past year marks the sixth consecutive year the number of jobs advertised in the *JIL* has remained at a trough level, just below or just above 1,000 jobs in each edition. The persistent low level of the past six years has exceeded the trough of the mid-1990s in depth. The 2014–15 totals are 811 (44.4%) below and 731 (43.5%) below the 2007–08 prerecession peaks of 1,826 jobs for the English edition and 1,680 jobs for the foreign language edition, respectively.



Skyline of Austin, Texas

DAVE WILSON

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**Dated Material
Please deliver by 3 December**

The screenshot shows the MLA website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following links: About Us, Convention, Membership, MLA Style, Publications, and Resources. To the right of the navigation bar are links for 'MLA COMMONS', 'LOG IN', and a search box. The main content area features three large tiles on the left, each with a photograph and a text overlay: 'Get Involved' (with a photo of a crowd), 'Career Center' (with a photo of people in a meeting), and 'Writing a Paper?' (with a photo of a person using a laptop). To the right of these tiles is a large text block with the heading 'Scholarship, Teaching, Service' and the text 'For over a hundred years the Modern Language Association and its members have worked to strengthen the study and teaching of language and literature.' Below this text is a blue link that says 'Learn more.'

The new MLA Web site launched at the end of October. Designed to be easier to use on mobile devices, mla.org now includes a calendar of MLA events and deadlines and improved search of the many resources it holds. The ADE and the ADFL have been integrated into the site.