---WHAT'S INSIDE---

YOUR 1988 BALLOT
Let's All Vote by April 15

* * * * *

LIBRARY RESEARCH SECTION
Responds to Strategic Plan

* * * * *

FOUR NEW COMMITTEES
Prepared for Action This Spring

* * * * *

RESEARCH RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Wants Your Input

* * * * *

FORGOT TO PAY YOUR DUES?
Here's Your Chance

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS--NEW ADDRESSES

* * * * *

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

RESEARCH AND MLA CE: OUR VIEW

Our MLA CE program has begun to recognize practicing librarians as both "users" and "doers" of library and information science research. By maintaining this distinction we can 1) admit that each role is viable and requires special skills, and 2) search for ways to acquire those skills.

Learning how to best use research data will ease the transfer of knowledge from the theoretical to the practical arena, a major issue in every discipline. Acquiring skillful appraisal techniques also applies here, mainly with regard to enhancing the duality of information services through "quality filtering."

While research "user" skills have wide application within our profession, those needed to conduct research are important to persons with an active interest in its pursuit. Thus, we must develop a CE research component which includes this duality, along with a goal statement reflecting that approach.

MLA members need more opportunities to acquire the skills to understand and use research and its results in library and information science; the ability to acquire and understand biomedical and health sciences research methods; and finally, the ability to apply social science research methods in library and information science research.

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 organiza-

tion, 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 reseacher'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 <u>MLA News</u> (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 Nationsl Library of Medicine, or other funding agency. We further recommend that MLA Headquarters be the locus 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.

4. Draft and publish articles/tutorials that inform/instruct on research-oriented guidelines in the "Challenge to Action" document and introduces strategies for implementation.

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.

G.G. Allen. Management and the Conduct of In-House Library Research. LISR 8, 155-162 (1986).

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) Kathlyn 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
Salem MA 01970

Ruth Fenske
123 Washington Blvd
Oak Park IL 60302

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RESEARCH REPORT FORM

The Research Resources Committee plans to establish a file of recently comple-
ted 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_____