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Theme and Variation: The Survey of MLA Personnel Characteristics

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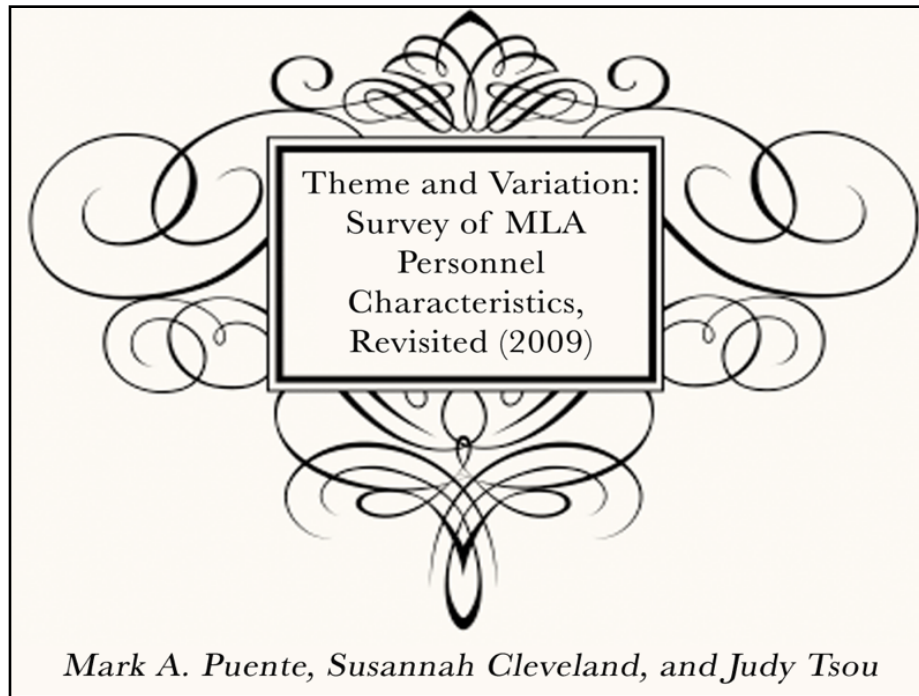


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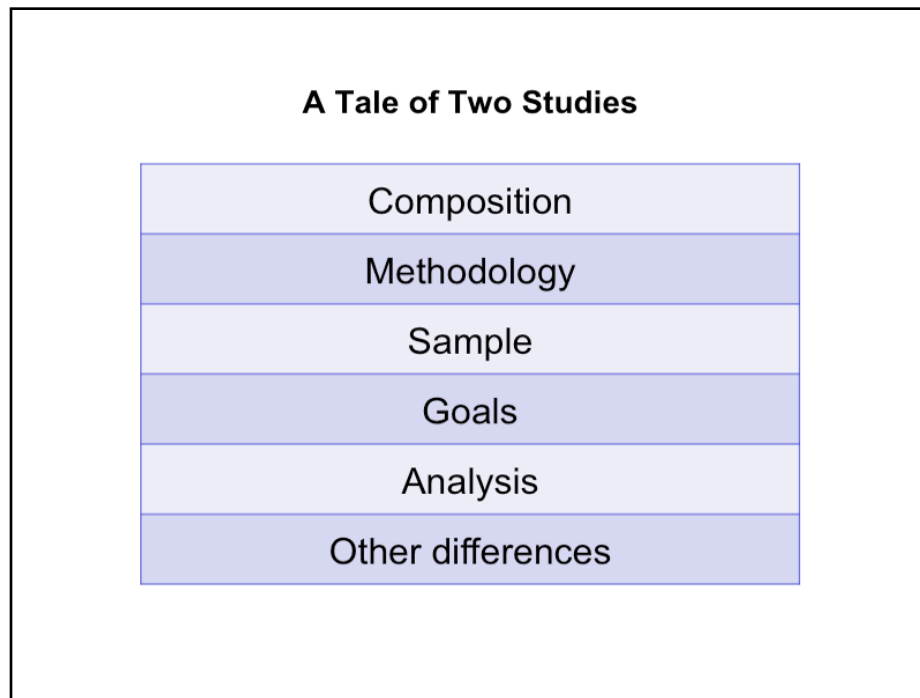
In 1997, MLA's Working Group Surveying Music Library Personnel Characteristics, conducted a survey of MLA personnel to get a picture of our profession They set out with the following objectives:

to create a "statistical portrait" of the organization in the late 1990s
to test whether or not certain commonly held assumptions about members' activities and about the organization were indeed true, and, finally,
to see if there were any reasons some individuals let their memberships lapse, or did not join MLA even though their interests would seem to coincide with those of members.

The report, still available from the MLA Clearinghouse, pointed out some interesting facts about the profession and its composition.

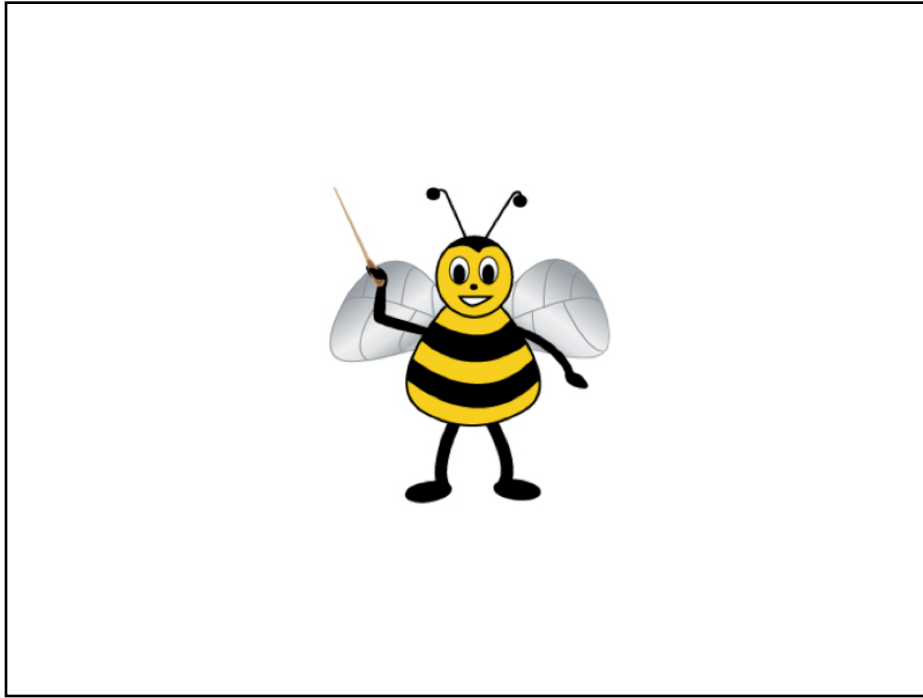
In 2007, Mark Puente and I started wondering if, in the past decade, there had been any significant changes to the data gathered in that first study or to the conclusions reached. Additionally, we were specifically curious about whether the diversity of our organization – that is, the inclusion of traditionally underrepresented groups – had seen any significant changes in the last decade.

David Lesniaski, Tim Cherubini, Charles Coldwell, Richard Griscom, Pat Fiskien, Michelle Koth, Renee McBride, and Cindy Richardson, "A Profile of the Music Library Association Membership: Report of the Working Group Surveying Music Library Personnel Characteristics," under "Introduction," http://library.music.indiana.edu/tech_s/mla/person/notesarticle.htm (accessed 24 February 2010).



One of our first aims in the new iteration of the survey was to compare our data to the data in the 1997 survey to determine if there had been any significant change. The sampling in the previous survey focused heavily on MLA membership by sending surveys directly to a random sample of 300 MLA members and 80 non-members.

Because of our sampling method, it seemed likely that we would have a larger group of non-MLA members amongst our respondents. Out of the 401 surveys completed (2 declined to give informed consent), 301 self-identified as MLA national members. 55 people explicitly said that they were not members, while 45 people skipped the question. For the sake of this presentation and the comparison to the 1997 study, we will be focusing on the sub-group of self-identified MLA members, since that was the target of the last data set and of most immediate interest to the MLA audience.



In reporting the data from the survey, we will mostly be giving percentages for the purposes of clarity and ease of comparison, but you will see more of the actual numbers and raw data later. We'll go through many of these numbers and charts quickly now, but we will make the presentation available for you to view after the conference as well as compiling a report with more thorough assessment later this year.

Education

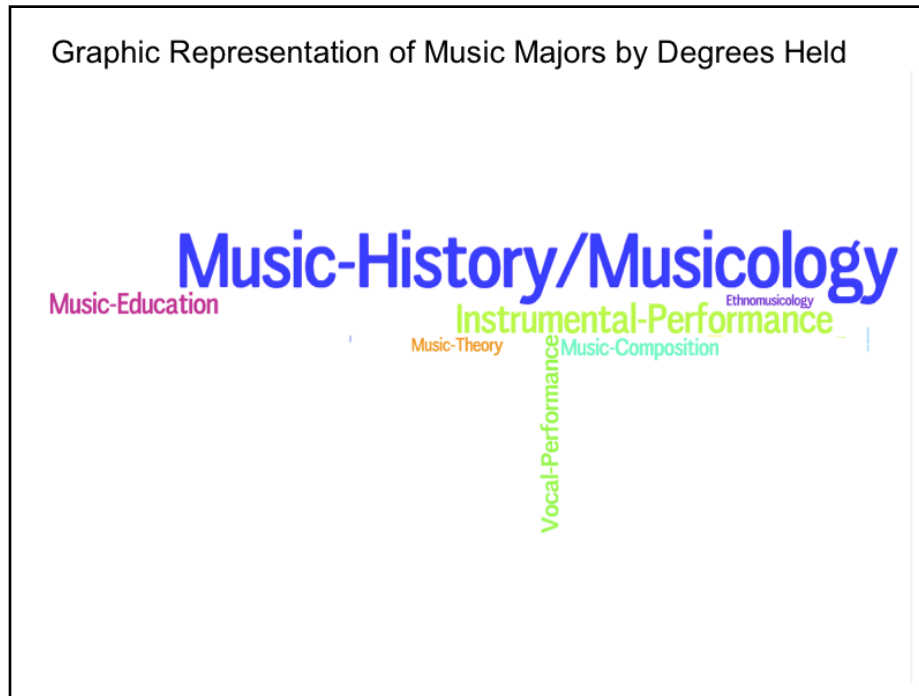


Numbers of Music Degrees

BA (or equivalent)	117
BM (or equivalent)	129
BS (or equivalent)	10
MA	84
MM, MME	103
PhD, DMA, EdD	32
Diploma	5
Undergraduate coursework in music but not major	19
Graduate coursework in music; no degree	46

We are, as you would expect, a highly educated group. The 301 member respondents hold, in total 494 music degrees, along with 5 diplomas and 5 incomplete PhDs. An additional 65 people completed coursework in music at the bachelor's or master's level without completing a degree in music.

Graphic Representation of Music Majors by Degrees Held



We won't go over the specific distribution of majors here, but this is a graphic representation where the size of the words indicates each major's relative proportion amongst our membership. (though I should note that this is not strict; I had to decrease the numbers of musicology and instrumental performance majors for any of the rest to be legible at all. Those tiny dots are music technology, music administration, and church music.

Numbers of Professional Library Degrees and/or Archival Certification

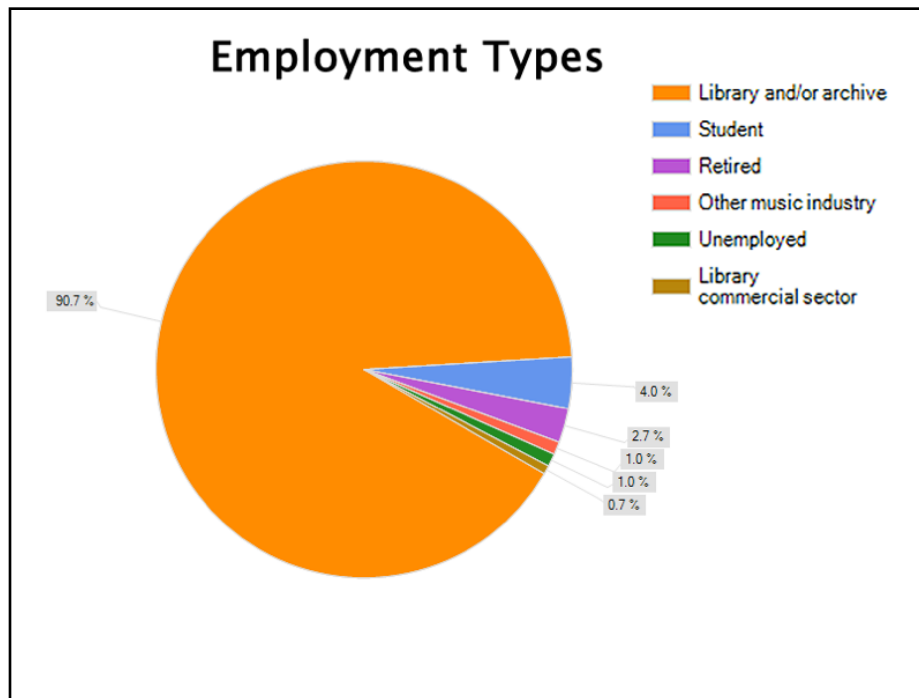
BA (or equivalent)	5
ALA-accredited Master's of Library and/or Information Science without music librarianship specialization	183
ALA-accredited Master's of Library and/or Information Science with music librarianship specialization	88
Non-ALA-accredited Master's of Library and/or Information Science without music librarianship specialization	1
Non-ALA-accredited Master's of Library and/or Information Science with music librarianship specialization	0
Archival Certification	2
PhD (in a subject besides music)	2
Other library degree and/or archival certification	10

Members collectively report holding 278 professional degrees or certifications in library science and/or archives. Most of these – 271 – are ALA-accredited degrees in library science either with or without a music specialization. Our members boast an additional 64 degrees at the bachelor’s or master’s level in subjects other than music or library science.

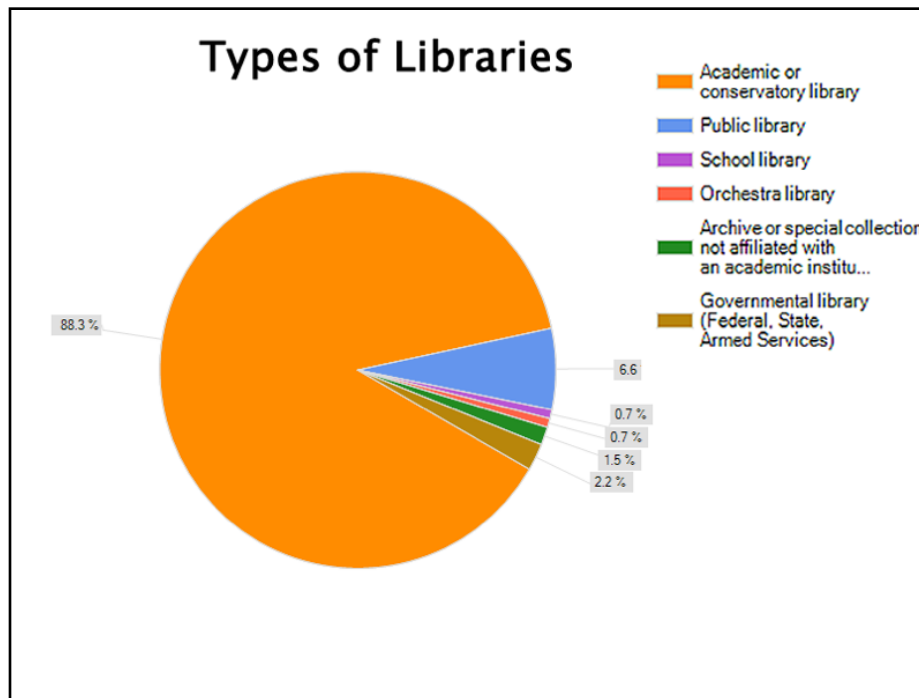
(if you’re curious, this comes to a total of 643 degrees divided amongst 301 people, though some people skipped some parts of that section)

*How our
Members
are Employed*





Amongst our members, almost 91% work in a library and/or archive. Four percent are students, and almost 3 percent are retired. One percent of our members are currently unemployed. The remaining members are divided between “Other music industry,” “The library commercial sector,” and other positions, such as music professors, composers, and musical directors. This overall data reveals a marked change from 1997 when 83% of members reported working in a library and/or archive, and 13% were retired, though part of this difference might result from the fact that in that survey, respondents were able to choose multiple options – and 18% did -- while in the current version, we asked them to select only one.

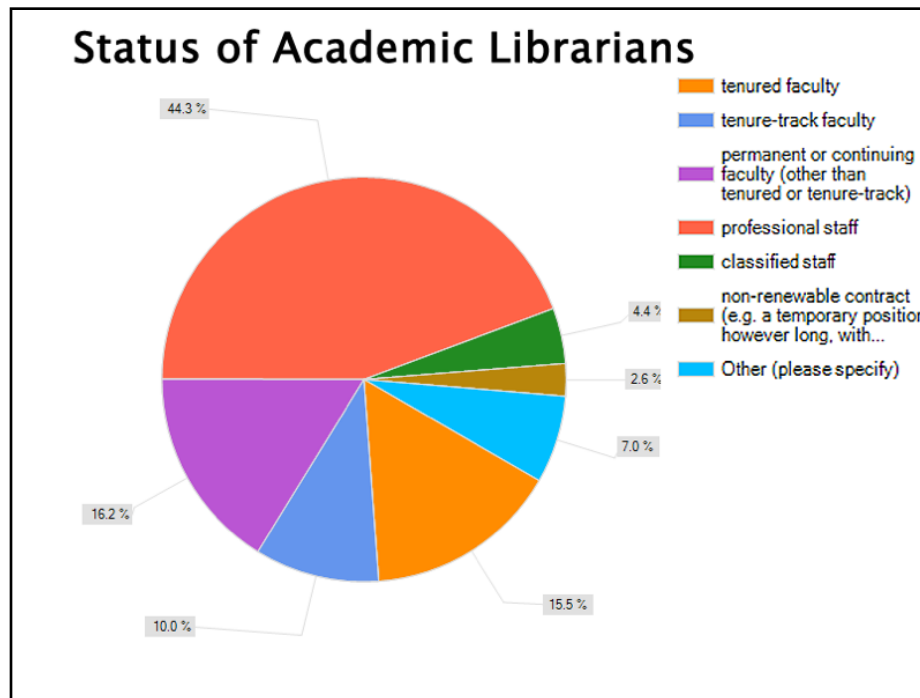


Just over 88% of our members who are librarians work in academic libraries, almost 7% work in public libraries, 1.5% work in archives or special collections not affiliated with an academic institution or public library, and 2.2% work in governmental libraries. Less than one percent work in school libraries with an identical figure for orchestra libraries. The distribution for non-members is almost an exact copy of that from 1997, with no additions to school or orchestra libraries, but several more academic, public, and government librarians in the intervening years.

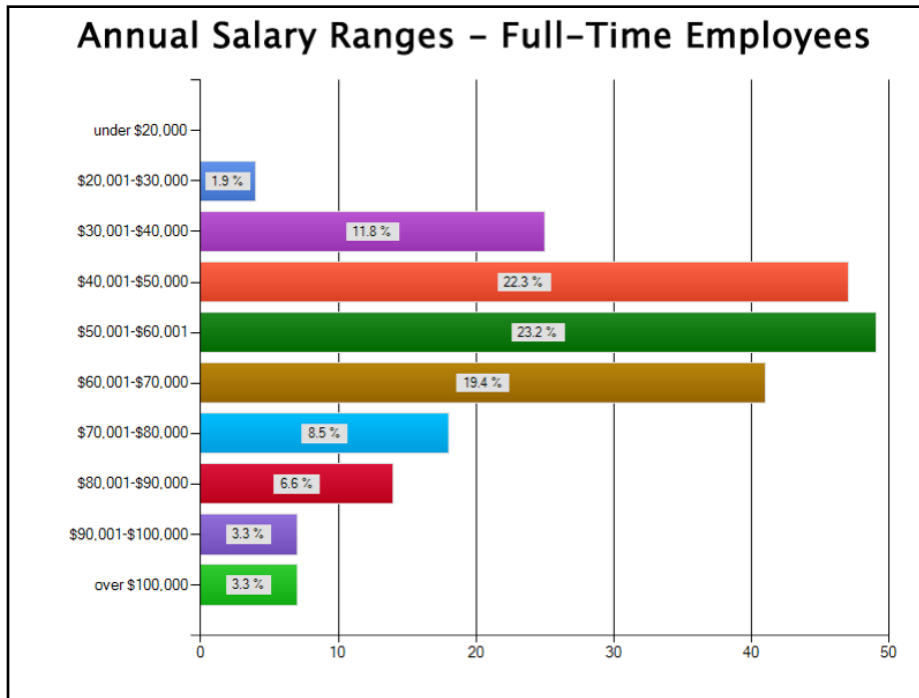
Of those working in academic libraries, approximately 50% work in doctoral-degree-granting institutions, almost 29% work in institutions with master's and/or post-baccalaureate programs, and almost 22% work in undergraduate-only institutions. This seems to be more of a shift towards doctoral institutions than in the earlier study. Slightly fewer work in state-supported institutions – just over 53% compared with 60% earlier – with just over 40% in private institutions and 15% in conservatory libraries. The majority of academic librarians – almost 62% – work at institutions with more than 10,000 students.

Status & Salaries

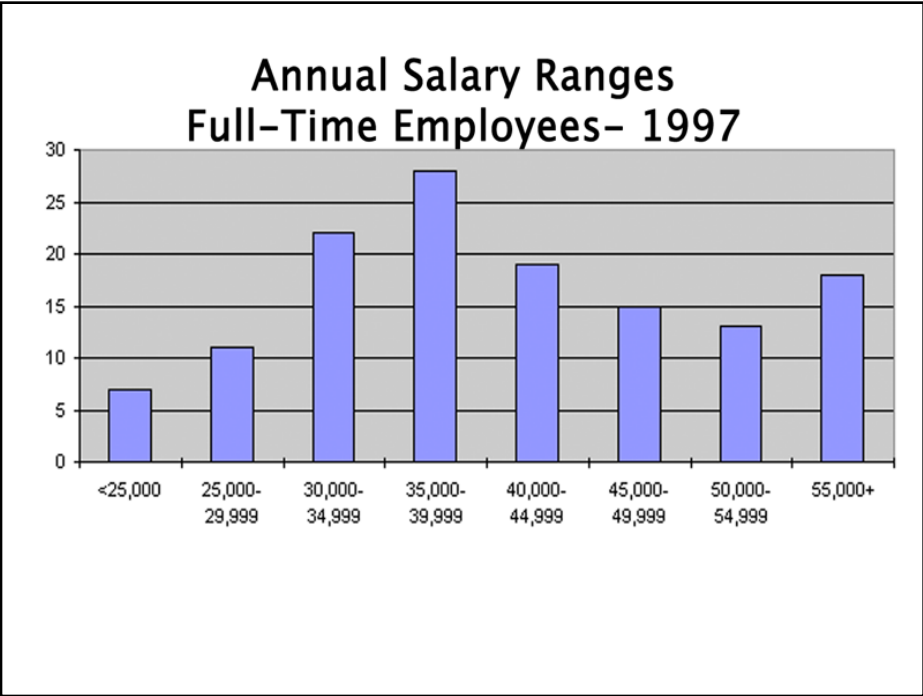




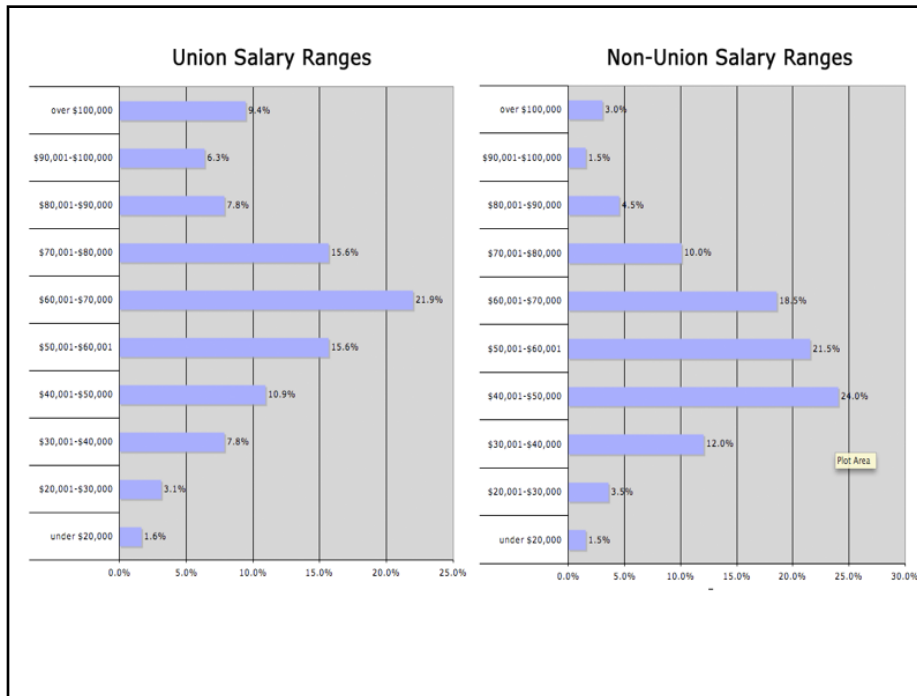
Since the last study, the percentage of music librarians with faculty status has risen to almost 42% from 33%. [note the three categories that go into “faculty”: tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, and permanent or continuing faculty, purple, blue, and orange] The largest number of our members working in academic libraries – just over 44% -- are considered professional staff. Almost 4.5% report being classified staff, although an additional 4 respondents noted that they were “paraprofessional staff” in the “Other” category; combining these two takes that total to almost 6%. Of the members who answered the question about how many hours are assigned to his or her position – 29 skipped it – 81% indicated that their position was full time, that is 37 hours or more per week. This figure is down 8% from the corresponding figure in 1997.



Of those who are currently employed full time, 1.9% had salary ranges in the \$20,000-\$30,000 range, 3.3% were in the over \$100,000 range. Others were distributed in between, with the largest group, 23.2% in the \$50,000-\$60,000 range.

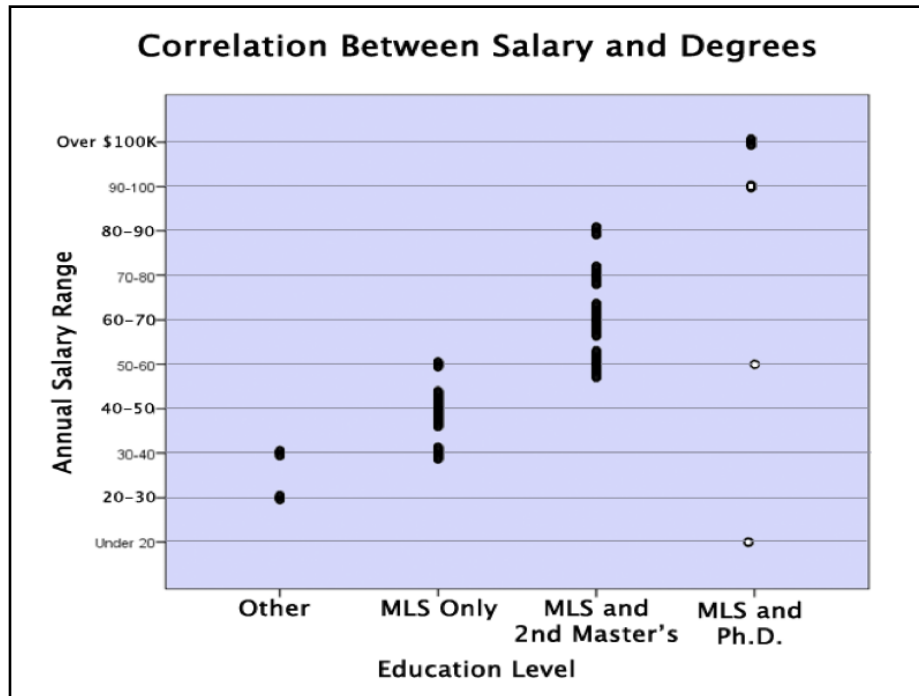


1997 salaries, for comparison



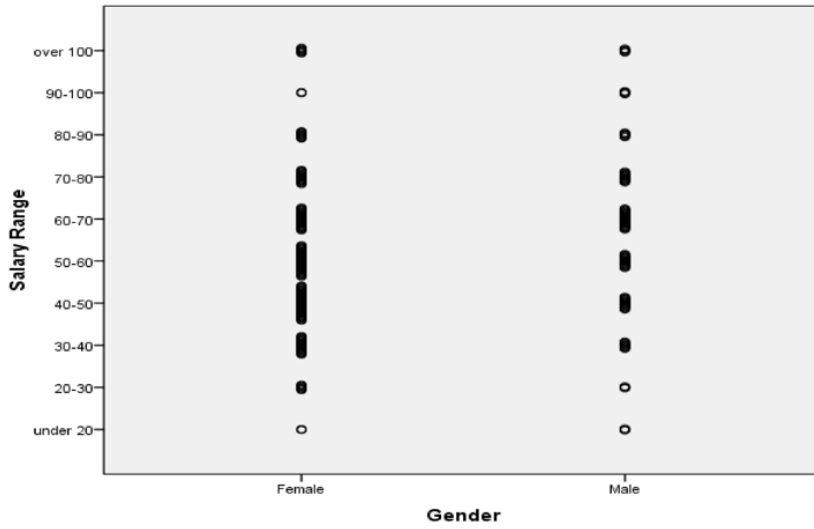
Our overall rate of unionization is almost identical to that ten years ago – almost 22% compared to 21% in 1997. 19% of academic librarians are unionized – compared with 20% before – while the rate of unionization amongst our public librarian members has climbed to 72% from 60%.

Salaries for union members do trend higher than do those for non-union members, as you can see on this chart. Note that the salary ranges are listed from high to low, descending. The largest portion of union members, 21.9%, have a salary in the range of \$60,000-\$70,000 while non-union members are situated most solidly in the area of \$40,000-\$50,000. This illustration includes all workers, not just full time workers.



We did encounter a significant correlation between education and salary levels. The vertical bars and dashes on this chart represent where members at each education level tended to fall in terms of salary ranges, which are listed on the left-hand side, with the highest salaries at the top. Notice that members with only an MLS tend to top out salary-wise right around the lowest salaries of those who have a second master's degree in addition to an MLS. The chart does not include every individual member, but the largest groupings at each level. The open circles here represent outliers who do not fall within the groupings.

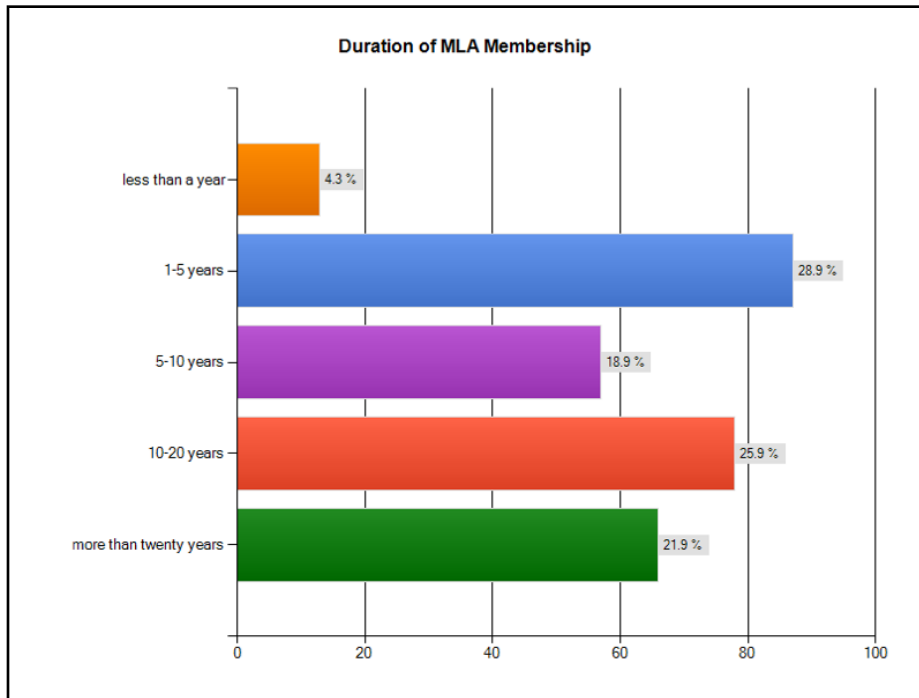
Correlation Between Salary and Gender



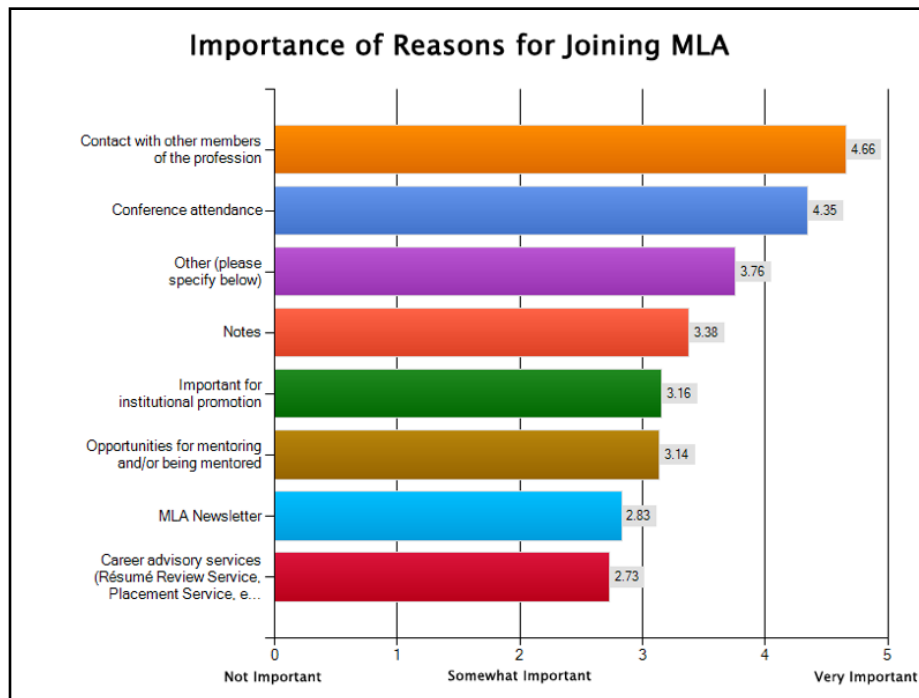
Activities & Memberships



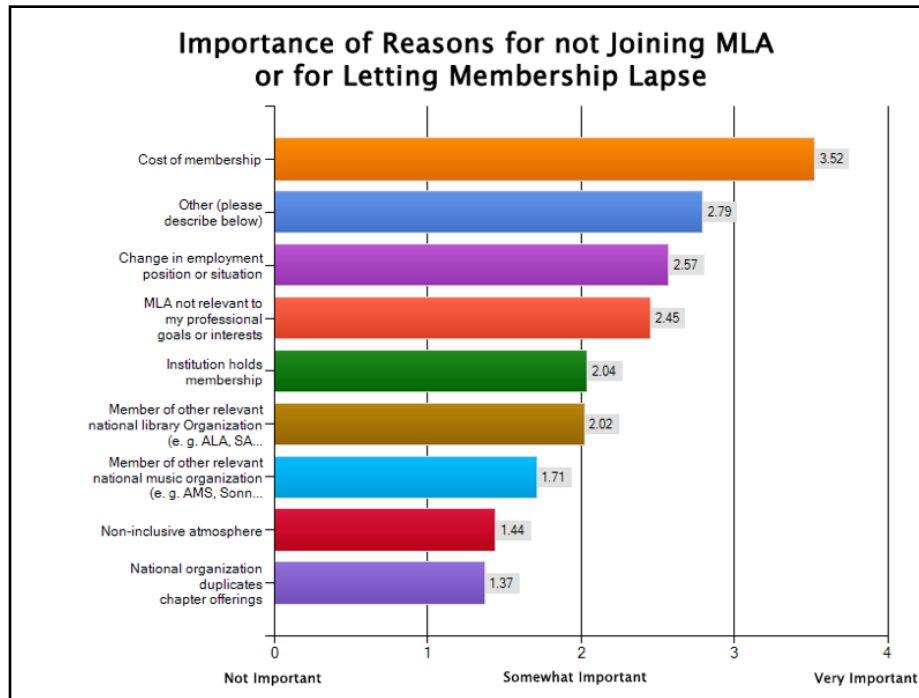
As we mentioned early on, 301 of the 401 people who completed surveys indicated that they were current members of MLA.



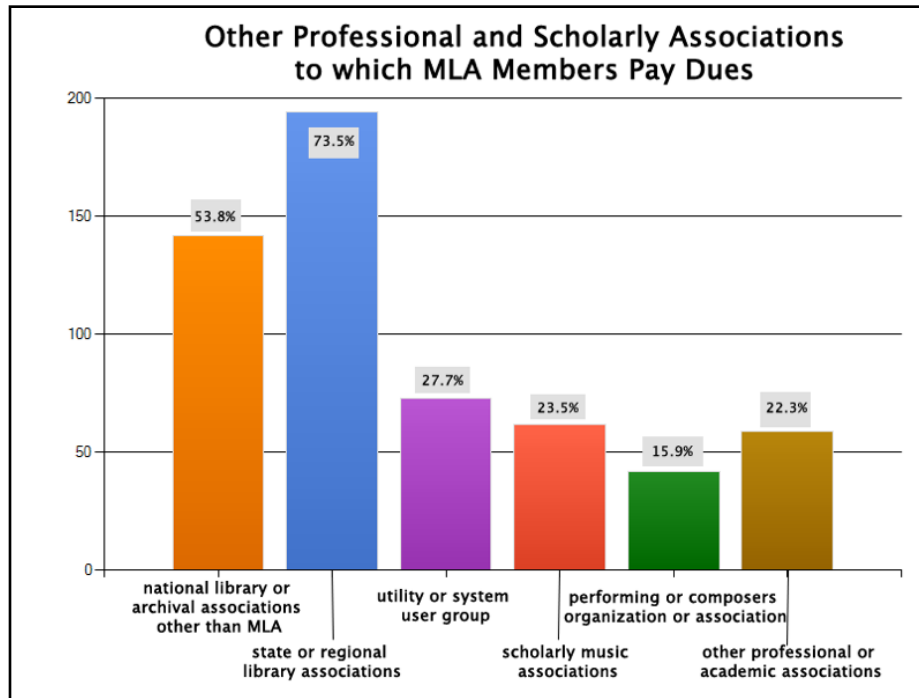
The largest group of our members – 28.9% have been members of MLA between 1 and 5 years, but as you can see here, almost 45% of our membership fall into the 5-20 year range.



People attributed several different factors to encouraging them to join MLA. Most important was the contact with other members of the profession, followed closely by conference attendance. Amongst reasons listed in “Other,” several people listed playing with the big band, the usefulness of MLA-L, access to continuing education, assistance with music cataloging, and the closeness of friendships formed.

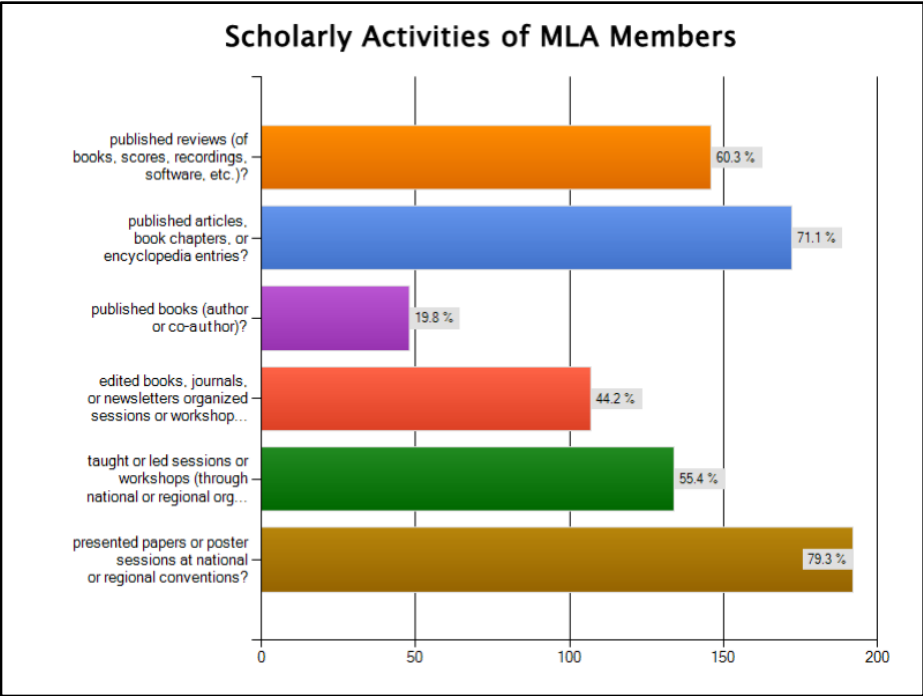


People who had not joined MLA or who had let their membership lapse at any time gave several explanations. Foremost among explicit reasons is the cost of joining, followed by change in employment, then the sense that MLA’s offerings are not relevant to specific professional goals. The “Other” section included several comments about the time and expense of involvement, several that indicated that some people had only ever been members to get access to *Notes* but now had institutional access, while one other felt that MLA was “like a boys club” and was not inclusive to those who were not insiders already.



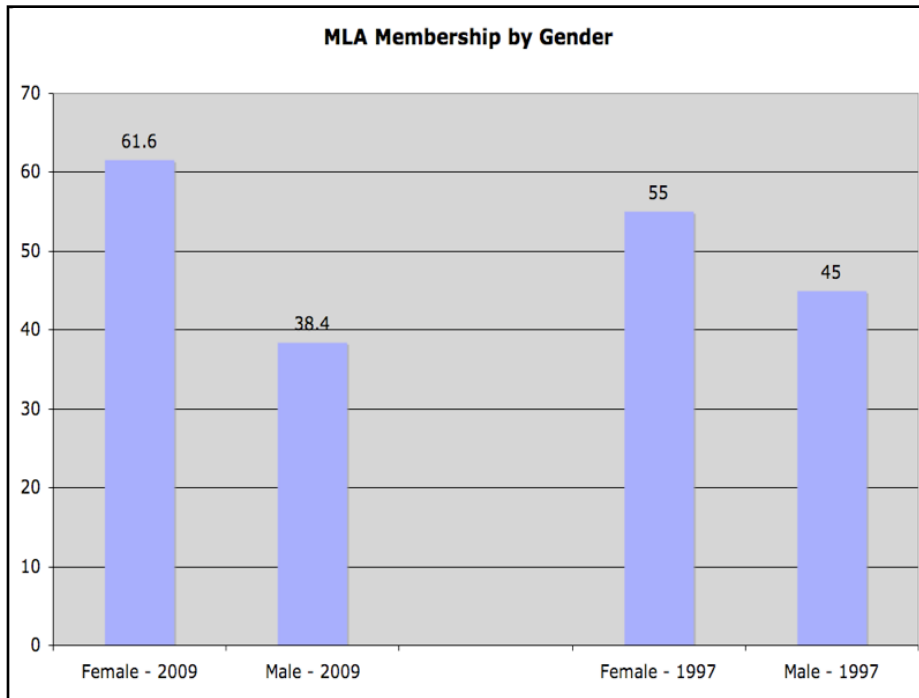
Our members are also active in many different organizations. The highest level of involvement – 194 of our 301 member respondents – also pay dues to state or regional library associations, which include state or regional MLA chapters.

Scholarly Activities of MLA Members

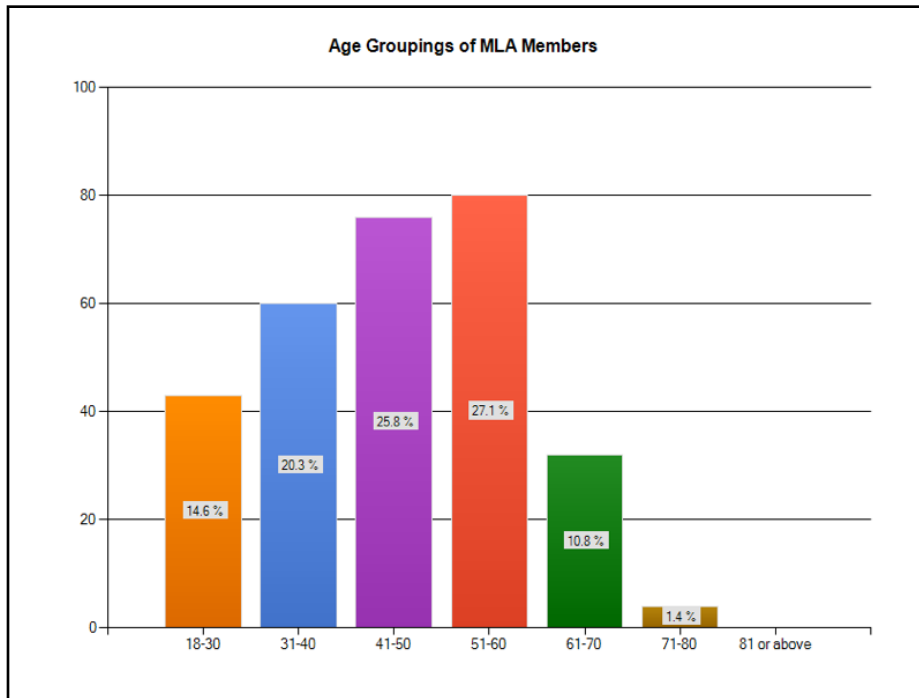


Demographics

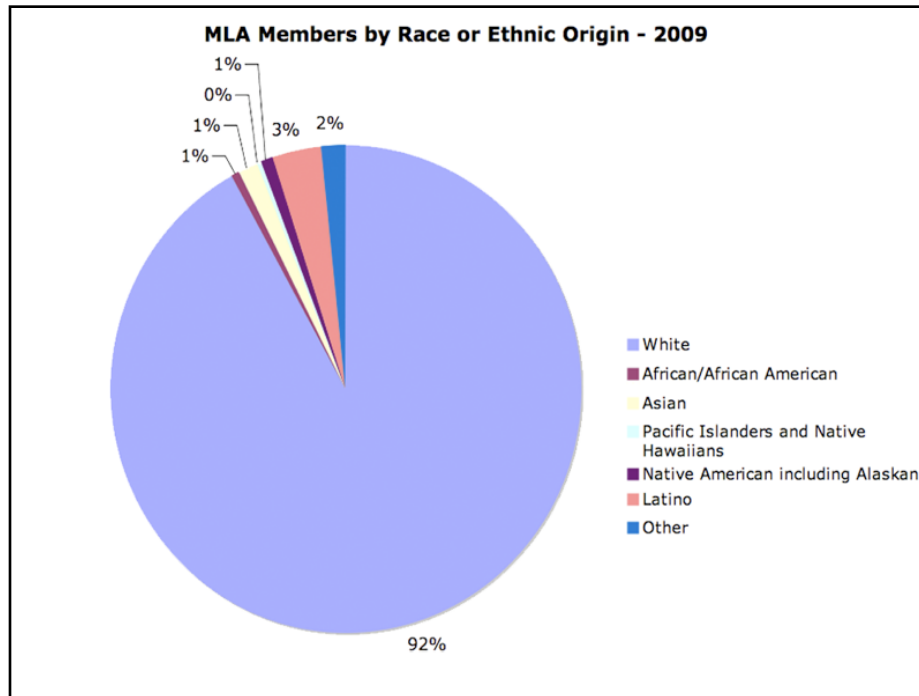




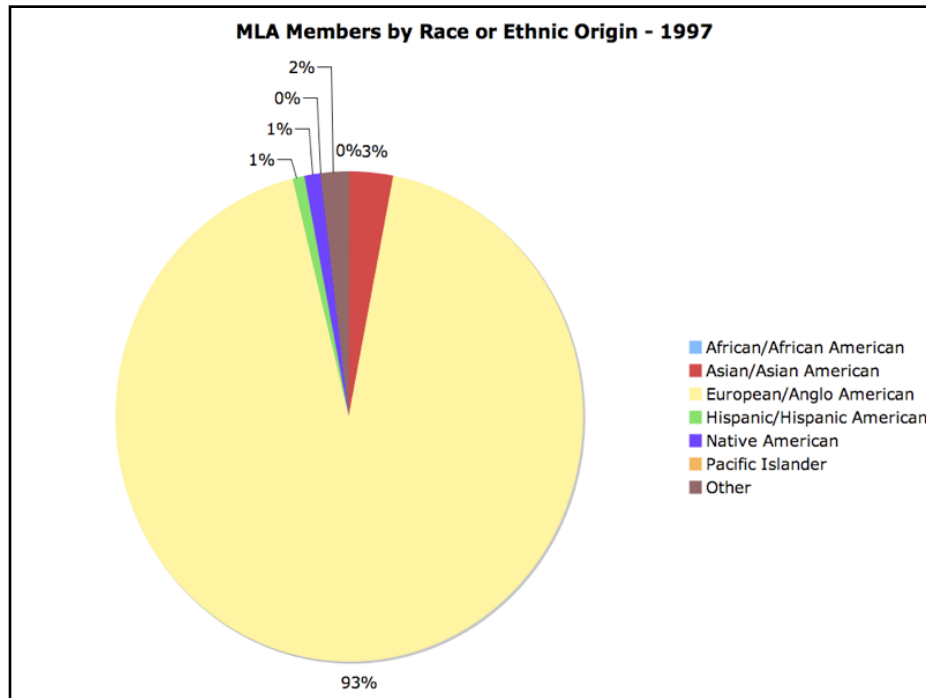
Of the 301 respondents, 183 (61.6%) were female while 114 (38.4%) were male; 4 MLA members skipped this question. This represents a shift from the 1997 study in which 55% of members were female and 45% were male.



Our current membership is concentrated most heavily in the age groups of 41-50 years old (almost 26% of membership) and 51-60 (just over 27.1% of membership). We used different age ranges than in the previous study, but the distribution was similar, with the two largest groups being 35-44 (25%) and 45-54 (34%).

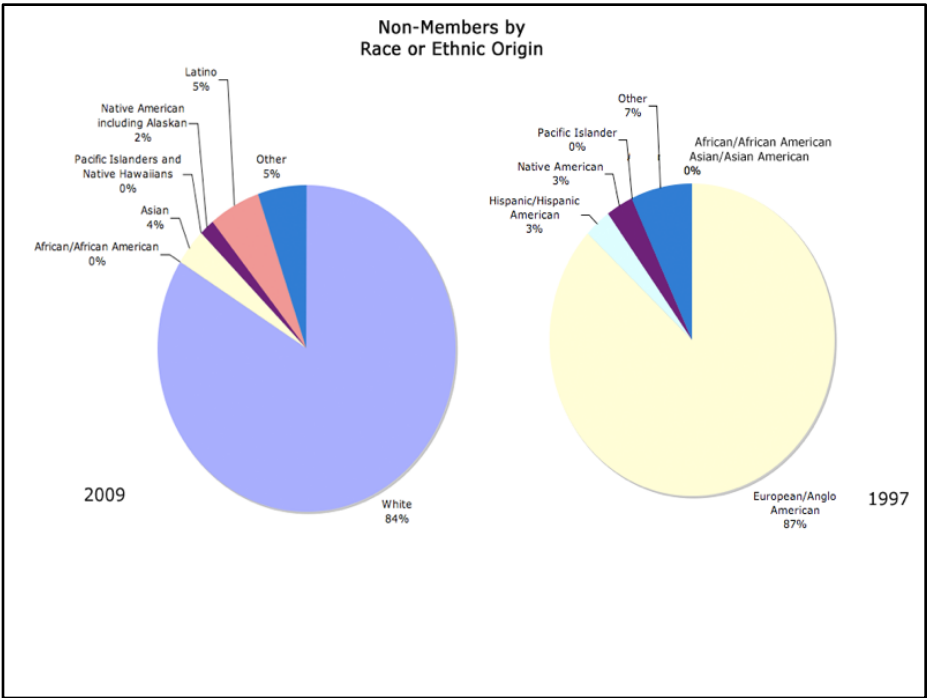


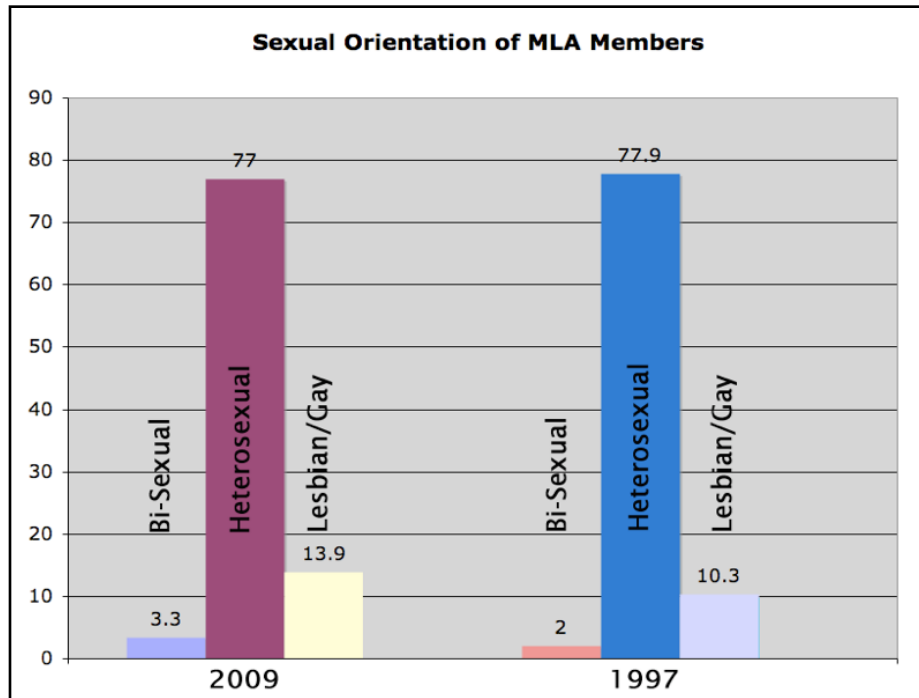
In our study, 95% of MLA members indicated that they were of “White” origin; in the 1997, the corresponding category, “European/Ango American heritage” accounted for 93% of respondents. While this initial figure shows an increase in this particular demographic, the remaining 5% did shows slightly greater diversity: 3.4% of respondents selected Latino, 1% Native American, including Alaskan, 1.3% Asian, .7% African /African American, .3% Pacific Islanders or Native Hawaiians, and 1.7% other. 3 people skipped this question.



In contrast, no respondents selected African/African American or Pacific Islander in the last study. Keeping in mind, however, the sizes of samples in both studies, the increases in these two particular groups only account for three people.

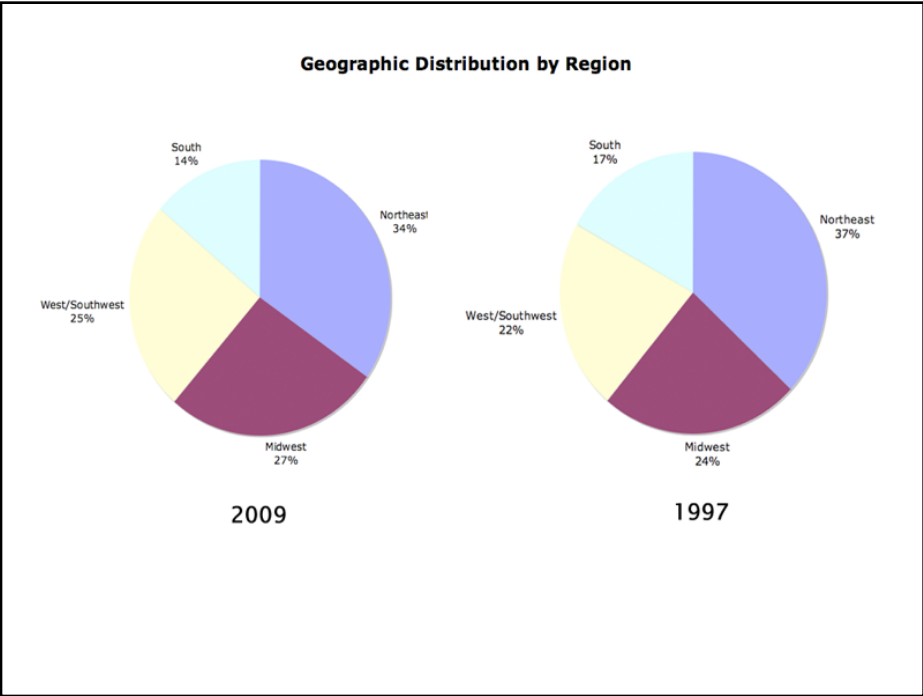
Non-Members by Race or Ethnic Origin



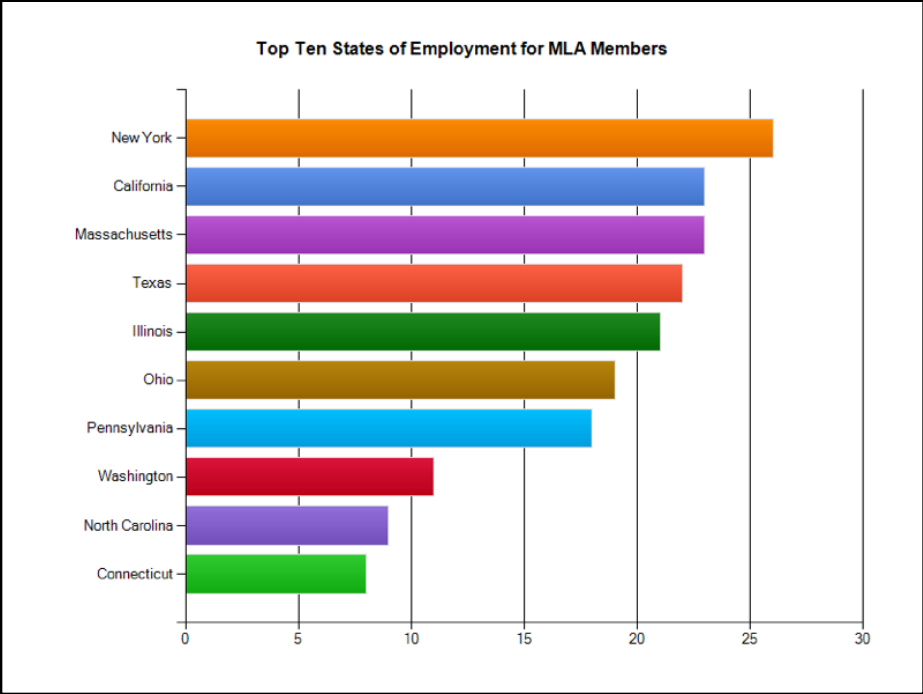


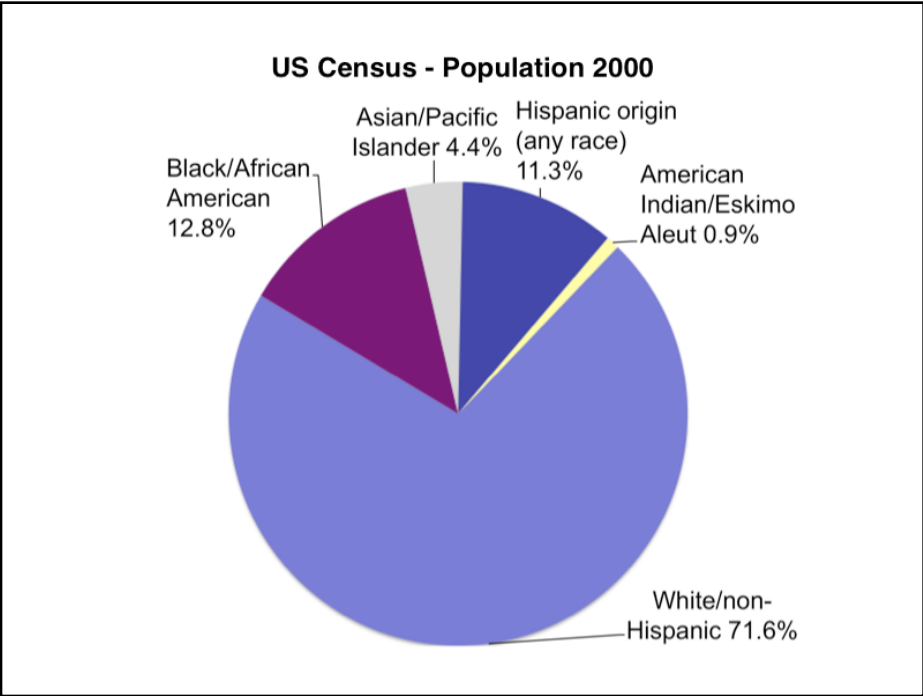
On the question of sexual preference, each category increased over the 1997 numbers, indicating a lower no-answer rate - almost 6% rather than the 10% rate in the last study. 81.7% of our respondents indicated their sexual preference/orientation as heterosexual, compared with 78% in 1997. 14.8% identified as lesbian/gay, compared with 10% earlier. 3.5% in our study identified as bisexual, compared with 2% in the last study. (current data is on the left in this chart with 1997 data on the right)

The number of members who work in the United States rose to 96% from 93%, while members who work in Canada rose to over 3% from 1%. No other country was selected as the place of work, but one person did skip this question.

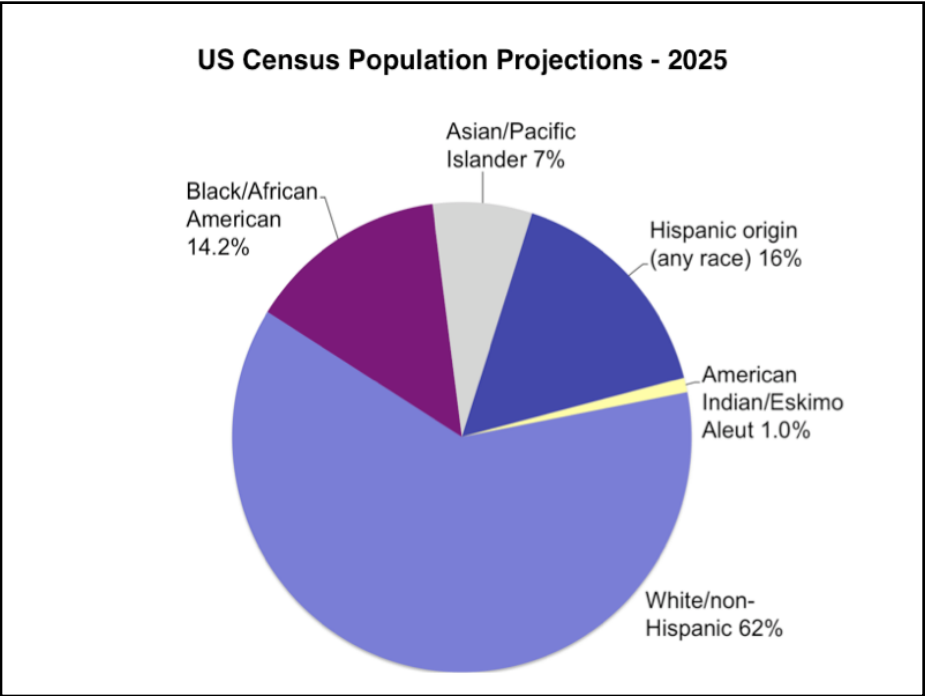


For the members working in the U.S. who indicated in which state they worked, the geographic distribution was not significantly different than in the last study with 35% in the Northeast, 27% in the Midwest, 25% in the West/Southwest, and 14% in the South.

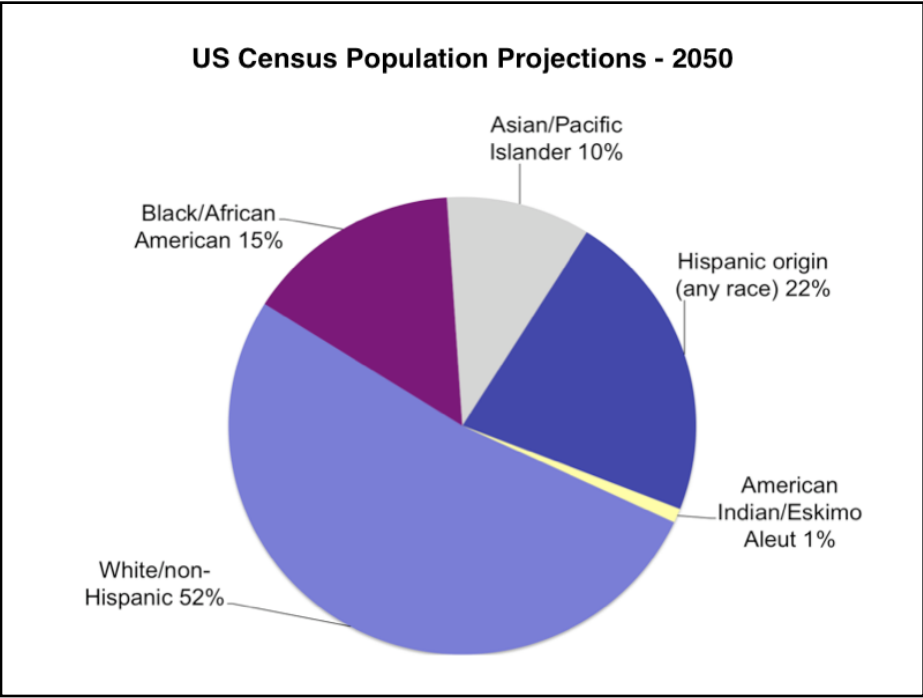




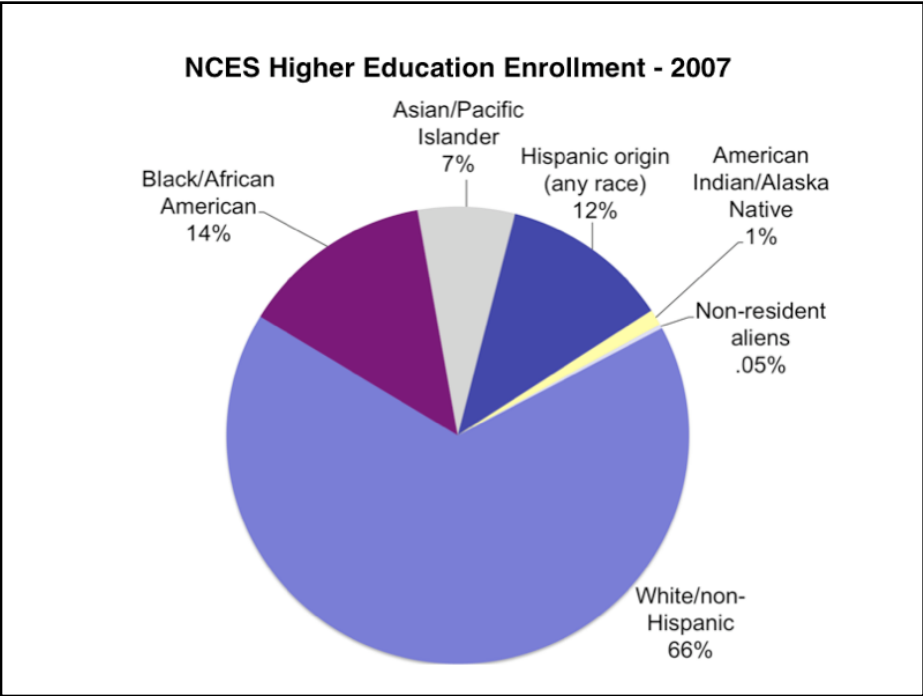
National population racial/ethnic breakdown



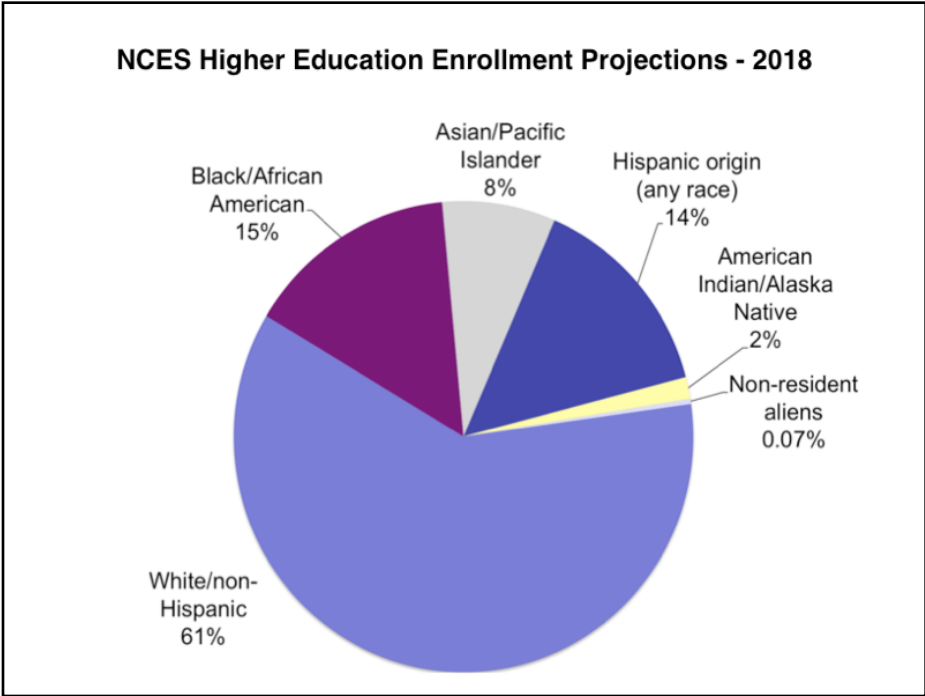
Projected national population racial/ethnic breakdown



Projected national population racial/ethnic breakdown



National Center for Education Statistics racial/ethnic breakdown



National Center for Education Statistics racial/ethnic breakdown projection

Diversity Resources

- Adkins, D. and I. Espinal. (2004). The diversity mandate. *Library Journal*, 129 (7): 52-54.
- Davis, D. and T. Hall. (2007). Diversity counts. American Library Association.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/divcounts.cfm>
- Lowry, C. and P. Hanges. (2008). What is the healthy organization? Organizational climate and diversity assessment: a research partnership. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 8 (1): 1–5.
- Neely, T. and L. Peterson. (2007) Achieving racial and ethnic diversity in academic and research libraries: the recruitment, retention, and advancement of librarians of color.
www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/whitepapers/whitepapersreports.cfm