

**Medical Library Association Annual Meeting
Attendee Evaluation Results
Phoenix Civic Plaza Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ
May 19 – 24, 2006**

Executive Summary

Total attendance for MLA'06 was 2,317. The meeting was a tad larger than MLA'05, which had 2,296. Attendee's rated MLA'06 high with an overall score of 3.9 on a 5-point scale. This is in-line with past ratings from MLA'05 (4.1) and MLA'04 (4.0).

Attendee's rated program quality (all sessions) at 3.8, which is close to last year's 4.1. Facilities received a rating of 3.6 compared with 4.1 for the convention center in San Antonio.

The keynote McGovern lecture by Dr. Atul Gawande received a rating of 4.3, which was not far off past ratings for keynotes for MLA'05 (4.4) by John J. Nance and MLA'04 (4.6) by Harm J.de Blij.

Plenary Session 4, "Integrating Reference Information into Electronic Health Record: Practices and Standards", received a good rating of 4.1. Evaluations continue to reveal that many do not attend the last session - a whopping 54% indicated "not applicable" to this rating, up from 52% last year. The NPC scheduled this high quality session to encourage attendees to stay through Noon on Wednesday. This session, along with other programming, is available on the audio CD.

Phoenix is a popular jumping off point for vacations in Arizona and surrounding areas. Initially MLA arranged 4 tours. The 3 local tours were cancelled due to low enrollment. However, the remaining post-conference tour to the Grand Canyon was sold out.

Many respondents (63%) report they plan to attend MLA'07. This is up from the 62% that indicated they would attend MLA'06 and much higher than the 56% that said they planned to go to MLA'04 in Washington, DC.

The registration database provided the following meeting demographics:

Attendance	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
	Phoenix AZ	San Antonio TX	Washington DC	San Diego CA	Dallas TX
Registrations, all categories	1,643	1,635	1,942	1,731	1,468
Exhibitors	674	661	702	681	631
Total attendees	2,317	2,296	2,644	2,412	2,099

The number of student registrants decreased to 68 from 81 at MLA'05 and up from 67 at MLA'04.

For registration, most attendees (64%) used the MLANET based online process. Fax use was 12%, down from 20%, and mail was 19%, up from 15%. The online process was highly rated with 4.3, close to MLA'05, which was 4.5.

Almost all registrants are from the United States. A comparative list of attendees who reside outside the U.S. follows:

Country	2006	2005	2004
Canada	64	51	19
United Kingdom	26	33	19
Japan	13	6	16
Australia	7		2
China	5		1
Hong Kong	4		
Philippines	3		
Qatar	2	2	2
Trinidad Tobago	2	1	
Netherlands	2		1
Switzerland	2		
UAE	2		
Malaysia	2		
Antigua Barbuda	1	1	2
St. Kitts Nevis	1	1	1
Sweden	1		2
Bahrain	1		2
Finland	1		1
Belize	1		1
Belgium	1		1
Mexico	1		
Grenada	1		
Bermuda	1		
Bahamas	1		
South Korea	1		
Saudi Arabia	1		
New Zealand	1		
Italy	1		
India	1		
Norway		2	1
Brazil		1	4
Singapore		1	
Malawi		1	
Germany		1	
Vietnam			3
Niger			3
Latvia			2
Vatican City			1
Neth Antilles			1
Kiribati			1
Jordan			1
Indonesia			1
Iceland			
Total	150	101 *	88

* Beginning 2005, list includes exhibitors

Evaluation Process

On Thursday, June 1, 2006, electronic evaluations were emailed to 1,538 registered attendees. By July 5, 2006, 705 people had responded and MLA staff summarized evaluation results. The response rate was over 2 times greater than the paper-based evaluations used in the past. Changing to an online survey and the higher response rate may have caused some rating variances for comparative years.

Composite evaluation results follow:

	2006 Phoenix	2005 San Antonio
MLA ANNUAL MEETING OVERALL	3.9	4.1
Rate the programming quality (all sessions)	3.8	4.1
Rate the meeting facilities at the Marriott	--	4.2
Rate the meeting facilities at the Convention Center	3.6	4.1
Rate the exhibits overall	3.9	4.2
Rate the Internet Café	3.5	3.3
Rate the Technology Showcases	3.8	3.9
Rate the city as a meeting site	2.7	4.4
Major Sessions		
Plenary Session 1, Dr. Atul Gawande	4.3	4.4
Plenary Session 3, Joycelyn Elders	N/A	4.3
Plenary Session 4, Integrating Reference Information into the Electronic Health Record: Practices and Standards	4.1	4.6
Section Programming	3.6	3.6
NETWORKING Events		
Awards Ceremony and Luncheon	4	4
Chapter Council Presents Sharing Roundtables	4	4.2
Job Placement Center	3.4	N/A
MLA Reception: The Final Transformation	3.6	3.7
Networking Lunch with Section	3.7	N/A
Poster Sessions	3.9	4.2
Sunrise Seminars	3.8	4
Welcome Reception and Hall of Exhibits Opening	3.7	3.9
Registration		
Online pre-registration process	4.3	4.5
Onsite MLA Registration Center	4.2	4.4
Online Program Planner/Itinerary Builder	3.6	3.6
OTHER		
Organization and design of the Official Program	3.6	N/A
MLA staff's overall, pre- and onsite meeting performance	4.3	N/A

MLA 2006 - MLA'06 Attendee Evaluation

1. What is your preference for speaker subjects at the PLENARY sessions? (Check up to TWO)

Related to information management (practical, hands-on)	279	40%
Related to health care (theoretical)	269	38%
Related to information management (theoretical)	262	37%
Related to health care (practical, hands-on)	243	34%
Unrelated to the profession (entertainment, inspiration)	221	31%

2. Describe your opinion on the amount of SECTION PROGRAMMING sessions available to attendees: (683 Responses)

Just right	291	43%
A few too many	166	24%
Not quite enough	114	17%
Too many	74	11%
Definitely not enough	38	6%

3. How often did you have to choose between conflicting sessions? (694 Responses)

3 or 4 times	313	45%
1 or 2 times	255	37%
5 or 6 times	69	10%
No conflicts	43	6%
More than 6 times	14	2%

4. About how many hours did you actually spend in the Hall of Exhibits? (700 Responses)

1 to 3 hours	325	46%
4 to 7 hours	304	43%
8 to 10 hours	49	7%
None	10	1%
11 to 14 hours	8	1%
15 hours or more	4	1%

5. Check the types of information or products you were looking for: (Check all that apply)

Database services	492	70%
Online services	484	69%
Publications	348	49%
Integrated information systems	209	30%
Subscription services	207	29%
Computer hardware & software	190	27%
Other health organizations	164	23%
Data-retrieval systems	140	20%
CD-ROM products	64	9%
Other (Please Specify)	62	9%
Films & videotapes	51	7%
Library furniture	48	7%
Preservation materials	44	6%
Security systems	30	4%
AV equipment	26	4%
Photocopying equipment	22	3%
Binding services	9	1%

6. Will the demonstrations and information you have seen in the Hall of Exhibits influence your future purchasing plans? (687 Responses)

Yes	366	53%
No	80	12%
Don't know	241	35%

7. What companies or types of companies would you like to see added to the Hall of Exhibits? (142 Responses)
Responses will be forwarded to exhibit management company.

8. Did you find a new vendor to do business with as a result of the time you spent in the exhibits? (666 Responses)

Yes	302	45%
No	364	55%

9. The Hall of Exhibits is important to me because... (Check all that apply)

I rely on it to bring me up-to-date on opportunities and developments in services and products.	483	69%
I can have face-to-face discussions that solve problems and give me new ideas.	468	66%
I can talk to and keep personal contact with vendors I currently use.	435	62%
I can establish an initial contact with new vendors for later follow-up.	417	59%
I can save time and money because I can visit many relevant vendors under one roof.	395	56%
It is the only exhibit that concentrates on the needs of medical libraries.	372	53%
I have an opportunity to compare and decide what products or services to buy.	327	46%
Other (Please Specify)	18	2%

10. Please describe your role in making decisions about purchases in your library (688 Responses)

Plan/recommend	366	53%
Final say in all purchases	187	27%
No role/not applicable	78	11%
Approval for purchases	57	8%

11. Which of the following BEST describes the institutional financial support you receive to attend this meeting? (697 Responses)

Full support	439	63%
More than 50%	178	26%
Less than 50%	41	6%
No institutional support	39	6%

Rank the TOP THREE reasons you decided to attend MLA'06. (1= strongest)

12. Location (162 Responses)

1	39	24%
2	43	27%
3	80	49%

13. Peer networking (432 Responses)

1	196	45%
2	134	31%
3	102	24%

14. Exhibits (213 Responses)

1	38	18%
2	92	43%
3	83	39%

15. CE courses (217 Responses)

1	94	43%
2	64	29%
3	59	27%

16. Speakers (207 Responses)

1	29	14%
2	87	42%
3	91	44%

17. Section programs (322 Responses)

1	64	20%
2	141	44%
3	117	36%

18. Committee, section, SIG responsibilities (296 Responses)

1	158	53%
2	78	26%
3	60	20%

19. Other reason (104 Responses)

1	67	64%
2	13	13%
3	24	23%

Other reasons listed on next page

20. Please specify other reason (104 Responses)

Poster/Paper Presenter	31
Professional requirement	12
Professional development and contribution	14
Networking/Updating Contacts	4
CE Course Instructor	4
Posters	6
Relatives in city	2
Section Program Presenter	2
NN/LM business	2
Other commitments/required meetings	2
Placement center	2
AHIP points for renewal r the job	1
Keeping an eye on competing vendors	1
Encouraged by your institution	1
Business meetings	1
Member of Local Assistance Committee	1
Sample MLA meeting culture	1
Chapter responsibilities	1
Awards lunch	1
MLS Student	1
Informal meeting	1
Personal	1
Taskforce Responsibilities	1
Received scholarship funding	1
Collaborators funded projects;project idea	1
Member of the editorial board	1
Non-MLA responsibilities	1
Opportunity to meet with key user group	1
Attending MLA is considered a job responsibility	1
I am the designated MLA representative	1
Because I was picked	1
Organization commitments	1
Financial. I was funded by a grant to attend	1
Get away from the Library	1

21. MLA '07 will be held in Philadelphia, PA, May 18–23. Are you planning to attend? (700 Responses)

Yes	440	63%
No	60	9%
Don't know	200	29%

22. If you answered No or Don't know in the above question, which of following influenced your answer. (Check all that apply) (442 Responses)

There may not be a budget for me to attend.	145	56%
The program may not provide enough content to help me in my current job.	75	29%
Other (Please Specify)	53	20%
The location does not interest me.	40	15%
All of the costs associated with attending make it out of the question for me to attend	39	15%
The program may not provide enough content to help me in a job that I aspire to.	25	10%
If I attend there would be no one to do my job while I am away.	21	8%
The location is too far from my home.	21	8%
None of the above applies to my situation.	15	6%
Networking with other health information professionals is not a priority for me.	8	3%

23. Which OTHER MEETINGS have you attended or will you most likely attend in 2006? (Check all that apply)

MLA chapter meeting	416	59%
State library group	215	30%
Other regional meeting	193	27%
Other national group	118	17%
SLA	63	9%
AAHSL	59	8%
None	53	8%
ALA	45	6%
Don't know/No answer	40	6%
AMIA	34	5%
CHLA	11	2%
National Online/IOLS	1	0%

24. Please check the one comment that most accurately describes your intent when deciding to attend the MLA Annual Meeting.(673 Responses)

I need to know more about the contents of the sessions before I decide to attend.	314	47%
I go every year, in any city.	286	42%
I attend in cities where I can vacation/ sightsee before or after the meeting.	57	8%
I attend when the meeting is close to my home (within 2 hours travel time).	16	2%

25. Please check the one comment that most accurately fits you. I prefer to attend the meeting when... (643 Responses)

It is all under one roof (hotel and exhibits are connected).	399	62%
The faculty doesn't matter, but the city does.	157	24%
It is in a resort type setting (contained campus setting).	62	10%
It is in a small city with a few hotels.	25	4%

26. Please check UP TO THREE locations where you would like to attend meetings in the future:

Vancouver	340	50%
San Francisco	336	50%
Seattle	319	47%
Minneapolis	202	30%
Las Vegas	191	28%
Nashville	157	23%
San Diego	153	23%
New Orleans	93	14%
Louisville	83	12%
Orlando	73	11%
Reno	47	7%
Houston	41	6%

27. Where did you stay during the conference? (699 Responses)

Hyatt Regency Phoenix	238	34%
Wyndham Phoenix	186	27%
Other (Please Specify)	173	25%
SpringHill Suites	45	6%
Holiday Inn Express	28	4%
Hilton Garden Inn	16	2%
Commuted from home	11	2%
Stayed at a colleague's house	2	0%

28. If you checked "other" above, please indicate the reasons: (Check all that apply) (207 Responses)

It cost less	129	62%
Other (Please Specify)	58	28%
I prefer not to stay at one of the official hotels	10	5%
It offered more upscale accommodations	6	3%
It offered a points/rewards program	4	2%

29. Did you purchase the audio CD-ROM? (697 Responses)

Yes	131	19%
No	566	81%

30. If No, which best describes why you did not? (Check all that apply) (595 Responses)

No interest in listening to sessions after the end of the conference	251	44%
Would want it if it were included with registration	155	27%
Other (Please Specify)	128	23%
Price too high	41	7%
Did not know about it (order at http://www.mlanet.org)	20	4%

31. If you wanted to listen to a past meeting session, how would you prefer to access it? (619 Responses)

Password protected Internet audio streaming	382	62%
Audio CD as it is now	202	33%
Other (Please Specify)	35	6%

32. Which current annual meeting print publications would you like to receive electronic-only (Check all that apply):

Preliminary Program	306	43%
Abstract Supplement	244	35%
Restaurant Guide	241	34%
Official Program	83	12%

33. Which communication vehicle is your preferred method to receive information about the next MLA annual meeting? (679 Responses)

Preliminary Program	323	48%
MLANET	145	21%
MLA News	117	17%
MLA-FOCUS	94	14%

Testimonials

34. If you would like to provide a testimonial to be used in promotional materials for the 2007 MLA Annual Meeting please provide your comments below: (38 Responses)

Love this meeting
The MLA Annual Meeting allows me to keep current in medical librarianship as well as to meet network with colleagues that I don t normally see throughout the year.
The MLA staff are the best, most responsive library association staff I have ever encountered!
Although it was a hot, hot city, I sure enjoyed the MLA Annual meeting in Phoenix,AZ. It only took me thirty years to work up the courage to submit an abstract to MLA for presentation, and I had a great time giving my paper and celebrating after it was over ! I can t think of a nicer bunch of people to sweat with than the members of MLA at our meeting in hot, hot Phoenix !
Fabulous networking experience. A rich banquet of connecting, learning, absorbing, and experiencing ones profession and colleagues.
One of the most important parts of MLA for me is networking with colleagues and learning of new developments in Library and Information services
The MLA Annual Conference is one of the most responsive programs designed to meet medical librarians needs: CE s, networking, evolving issues. I can get it all in a few days!
The MLA Annual Meeting offers members the opportunity to catch up on new research, new products, and old friends.
Even though it is expensive, I feel that the energizing courses and networking with librarians is priceless.
Great meeting!
It is my one time during the year that I have the opportunity to collaborate and network with constituents and vendors. If it weren t for MLA, there simply aren't enough hours in my week to connect with those I need to meet with.
The Virtual Classroom section program sponsored by the Educational Media and Technologies Section rocked! It was a shining example of how the sections and MLA members can contribute to the meeting - a high quality program that demonstrated evidence-based examples of employing technology to improve our teaching. Congratulations to EMTS. Give us more programs like that! The networking opportunities made the difference for me in 2006. I had stimulating exchanges at the Open Forum on developing managers, the MLA Reception, and even the Awards Luncheon.
This was my first MLA meeting and the think I was most impressed with was the high energy level amongst the participants. Although I am not a librarian, people I didn't t know were very friendly & helpful.
The speakers and programming were outstanding. I would especially like to mention the speech by Dr. Gawande, the speech on Swimming with the Sharks, the speeches by the outgoing and incoming presidents, and the HCUP breakfast.MLA is small enough that it is easy to get involved. I attended last year and this year. The networking opportunities have enabled me to get two articles published in the last year and I have a lead on another one. I would gladly come every year if my institution had money to send me.
I have only attended 2 meetings, but find the experience so helpful to my job. I come back with great ideas and even some great new vendors. I especially enjoy ce courses that deal with healthcare and the speakers are absolutely wonderful!
Dr. Gawande was a great opening speaker; he learned from us almost as much as we did from him. Great choice.

<p>MLA 06 was one of the best MLA s that I ve gone to! Lots of opportunities to network and great programming made the trip worthwhile!</p>
<p>Conference very enjoyable.</p>
<p>The Embase lecture this year was one of the best ever, with Dr Mehl Madrona, as the speaker.</p>
<p>I have belonged to many professional organizations. MLA staff truly meet the needs of those they serve. Kudos to MLA Staff!</p>
<p>Good job on having abstract available online prior to the meeting, as well as Online Program Planner, it was wonderful that you know in advance which one you want to attend.</p>
<p>The chapter and national meetings are both very important to my profession. They are different and their benefits complement each other. One without the other is not enough.</p>
<p>Thank you for doing business with MLA 2006. We value your business and relationship.</p>
<p>The CE courses are invaluable. It allows me to stop out of running a library and think about new ways of becoming a better librarian.</p>
<p>MLA planning committee always does a great job of providing opportunities to get new information, network and solve problems thru extensive programming. I always have to pick out important activities and miss others because of conflicts. It s nice to be able to choose among so many great choices.</p>
<p>Exhibit area wonderful - large space, well-lit, lots of time to talk to vendors.</p>
<p>Not for publication, but I always find new ideas from my peers at MLA - and this year was particularly good for idea-mining, I thought. Good papers and posters. The trip to the Poisoned Pen was outstanding. For me this was a highlight of the entire meeting.</p>
<p>Come see long time friends, Come make new friends, Pick up a couple of pearls of wisdom</p>
<p>a most valuable, professionally relevant conference with high quality presentations.</p>
<p>As a student, MLA 2006 was a great experience. The sessions I attended were instructional to my future in libraries. I networked on possible jobs for after graduation and met many interesting people committed to the profession.</p>
<p>Wonderful meeting. I returned home reinvigorated and excited once again about my profession.</p>
<p>MLA 2006 provided a golden opportunity to present my Virtual Medical Library Paper to the Medical Library Community. After spending so many months designing, implementing, and marketing it, presenting it at MLA 2006 was professionally, quite an honor.</p>
<p>Please offer more space for comments. Food in the civic center was awful - the few healthy things available (fruit, fruit salad) sold out at lightning speed. Please insist on healthy food vendors & choices and enough of it. Re: MLA staff - they are terrific, committed to solving member problems, large or small.</p>

Comments

35. Do you have any additional comments regarding the MLA Annual Meeting? Issues repeated with at least 3 comments are summarized below.

Quantity	Issue	Representative Comment
92	Venue	While the meeting content and opportunities to network were excellent, I found the city to be very difficult as a conference venue. Some of the problems were: lack of water in the meeting rooms, difficulty getting around due to the construction, weather, and high price of taxis, and few restaurants in the area
36	Compliments	Despite the heat and the long walk to and from the convention center, the MLA staff, program committee & local arrangements folks outdid themselves! Thank you all.
22	Facilities	I really dislike conferences for which the meeting rooms are not adjacent to or in the conference hotel. The Phoenix setup made it difficult to connect with colleagues.
17	Section Program Themes	Yes-the section programming needs a lot of work. Themes are much too narrow and then papers selected don't fit the themes or people just do a quick study on the theme in order to get credit for a paper. I would much rather have absolutely no theme and just get papers on interesting things libraries are doing. Instead these ideas/projects/research must be presented as posters. None of the themes are really in the forefront of things-they lag behind innovation by several years.
16	Poster Quantity	Too many posters this year. It was impossible to see them all. Please be more selective or restrict entries to those that are relevant to certain themes. Encourage more of the poster applicants to give talks.
10	Housing	Please try to reserve adequate hotel accommodations. The housing situation was really a trial.
9	Program	The printed program was confusing. Please consider having headers at the top of each page to specify what time period(s) and date(s) is covered on that page. Also, it's better when the conference hotel is closer to the conference center.
8	Section Program Schedule	Section programming is crammed into too short a time frame. I was constantly moving from one room to another and trying to gauge when the next presentation that I wanted to see would begin. This is frustrating and not conducive to a good learning environment. I would prefer to see less plenary sessions in the morning and section programming spread out to morning/afternoon, at least one of the days!
8	Future Sites	Please check the following location for future mtg: ASILOMAR, Pacific Grove, CA (near Monterey, CA)

7	Section Program Selection	More relevant paper sessions. The papers should reflect what people are actually doing that's interesting, innovative, or fun, not be selected based on arbitrary pre-categorization. Pick the BEST overall stuff and the content would be much more relevant and interesting. Be more selective with posters. Too many low-quality topics makes it difficult to get to all of the good stuff there is.
6	MLA Reception	Closing reception at Hyatt was very loud and intrusive to those of us staying at the hotel. Central location in the atrium with extremely loud music was quite off-putting.
5	Exhibits	- Hours for Exhibits definitely NEEDS TO BE EXTENDED.- Leave Posters up throughout ENTIRE conference in an area that we can get to at ANY TIME (I never got to see any posters as there were too many conflicting programs).
5	Value	Section presentations were all over the place. Not well described by abstracts and many were not useful at all. Meeting should include at least one free or very inexpensive (\$50 or less) CE activity. Much too expensive for the quality of the meeting itself.
4	McGovern Lecture 2	I was surprised that the plenary speaker did not seem to know or understand his audience. He was a good speaker but seemed surprised about the skills of a clinical librarian.
4	Poster Schedule	I never have enough time to see the posters. I would like them to be available more times of the day. The poster session conflicts with the other session.
4	Signage	I thought that there was too little signage to direct attendees around the convention center. It would have been nice if there were people designated at different locations to direct people. The location was not well designed for the event. Both of the classrooms I was in were very uncomfortable and had technical difficulties that everyone had to wait through.
3	Business Meetings	There are too many business meetings (MLA, sections, chapters, etc). Let's start doing business meetings electronically -- most of it is an exchange of reports. Have more time for discussion of papers, posters, informal exchanges, etc.
3	Chapter Roundtables	Roundables - e.g. copyright issues in electronic sharing of journal articles, more questions were raised than answers. It would be wonderful to have a person with more legal knowledge than the average attendee to be present at the table to offer insights.
3	Internet Café	there needs to be a printer in the Internet Cafe area!
3	Poster Content	I was very disappointed to see that our professional society accepted a poster that described how Texas A&M now owns a cat in their library. This is supposed to be a professional/scholarly meeting. I'll be attending HIMSS and AMIA next year where the content is more applicable to my professional development. We spend a lot of money to attend this meeting and expect higher quality content.