GUIDELINES FOR TRANSFER OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS TO THE MLA ARCHIVES
(effective July 1, 2003)

I.   Scope

Documents that result from the fulfillment of official responsibilities in the Music Library Association (MLA) are the property of the Association and not of the incumbent.

These guidelines do not supersede more specific requirements that may exist pertaining to individual MLA positions.

II.   Definitions

Files. Documents in any physical format (text, image, sound, etc.) related to carrying out the position's work.

Primary documents. Documents created in the course of carrying out the position's work.

Secondary documents. Documents not generated by the position, committee, etc., to whose work they pertain.

III.   Who Should Transfer Files

Those in elected or appointed positions that include administrative responsibility for the work they undertake. Positions include:

national officers
committee, subcommittee and round table chairs
liaisons to other organizations
editors of publications (whatever the medium), including serials, monographs and
       conference documents

IV.   When Files Should Be Transferred

Upon leaving a position, transfer files to the MLA Archives if they will not be needed by your successor to carry out the business of the position.

MLA Publications (two copies) should be sent to the MLA archives as soon they appear.

V.   What to Send

Send files that, in your estimation, have or are likely to have historical value to the Music Library Association or to music librarianship generally. Send primary documents, including printouts of electronic files and essential secondary documents. For electronic files, see the separate policy, appended here. (Policy on Machine-Readable Records, 7/01 revision)

Examples of primary documents: letters of appointment; membership rosters or attendance records of the committee, etc.; statements of policy and official decisions relating to the position; calendars of activities; minutes of meetings; records of proposed and actual accomplishments; conference programs; budget requests; financial and audit reports; publicity; two "best copies" of MLA publications; official MLA artifacts.

Confidential files should be sent with suitable provisions for restricted access.

If you are uncertain whether to retain something for transfer to the MLA archives or to discard it, retain it.

Questions regarding retention may be directed to the Curator of the MLA Archives at the University of Maryland (see the roster of the JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE MLA ARCHIVES for contact information).

VI.   What Not to Send

Do not send in-force contracts, minor email exchanges, financial documents of only temporary value (e.g., cancelled checks), multiple copies of documents.

Do not send electronic files electronically unless specifically authorized to do so by the Curator.

VII.   Chapters

MLA Chapters should send two copies of all their publications to the MLA Archives, even if the chapter has another repository for its archives.

VIII.   How to Transfer Materials

Materials transferred to the MLA Archives should be accompanied by the official form, Transfer of Documents to the MLA Archives" (available in PDF format on the MLA website, JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE MLA ARCHIVES page). This serves as an inventory of what you are sending.

Label each folder or other container with the name of the position, committee, etc., and a subheading that includes the dates of the contents. (e.g.,"Publications Committee – minutes – 1995-1997."

For containers of analog or digital data, include technical specifications on the label of the container, floppy disk, etc.

Pack containers securely for mailing or other conveyance and send them to the address on the Transfer form. Postage is paid by the sender, but reimbursement may be available from MLA in the absence of such support from the institution with which the sender is affiliated. For electronic documents follow the policy that governs this medium.

IX. Questions

Persons with questions about these policies may e-mail the Chair of the Archives Committee or the Curator via the website at www.lib.umd.edu/PAL/SCPA/scparefreqform.html