

Communications Committee Policy and Procedures Manual

Committee Objectives

1. To communicate information concerning the Chapter to its members and other interested individuals.
2. To communicate information selectively about MLA and its Chapters and Sections, and other items of professional interest.
3. To determine the topics or items to be included in each issue of *Southern Expressions*.
4. To create a record of the Chapter=s activities.
5. To establish publication dates and reporting deadlines for *Southern Expressions*.
6. To carry out any other charges that the Executive Committee deems appropriate.

Newsletter

The newsletter, Southern Expressions, shall be the established communication mechanism for the Southern Chapter/MLA. There will be at least four issues per year.

Editor

The Editor is appointed by the Executive Committee for an indefinite term, renewable from year to year. The Editor is responsible for preparing and distributing *Southern Expressions* within the policies, guidelines, and budget established by the Executive Committee, with input from the Communications Committee. The Editor is a member of the Executive Committee.

An Assistant Editor may be appointed by the Executive Committee upon request of the Editor. The Assistant Editor will aid and advise the Editor in her/his duties. The Assistant Editor will represent the Editor when necessary.

Electronic Discussion Group Moderator

The Electronic Discussion Group Moderator is appointed by the Executive Committee for an indefinite term, renewable from year to year. He/she is responsible for moderating and maintaining the chapter Electronic Discussion Group.

Web Site Coordinator

The Web Site Coordinator is appointed by the Executive Committee for an indefinite term, renewable from year to year. The Web Site Coordinator is responsible for editing and updating the Chapter web site, with input from the Communications Committee.

An Assistant Web Site Coordinator may be appointed by the Executive Committee upon request of the Web Site Coordinator. The Assistant Web Site Coordinator will aid and advise the Web Site Coordinator in her/his duties. The Assistant Web Site Coordinator will represent the Web Site Coordinator when necessary.

Communications Committee Members

Members of the committee consist of the Chair, Southern Expressions Editor, Southern Expressions Assistant Editor, Web Site Coordinator, Electronic Discussion Group Moderator, and a representative from each state. The Communications Committee advises the Editor, Web

Site Coordinator and Electronic Discussion Group Moderator in matters related to all means of communication. They are appointed for two years.

State representative members solicit or contribute articles, columns, or news items about institutions, events, and people within their state. Committee liaison members report information concerning their committee.

The Chair governs the committee and identifies relevant issues. The Chair reviews the Communications Committee Manual annually and makes changes when appropriate. The Chair is a member of the Executive Committee.

Southern Expressions

Reporters

Reporters are those who have officially expressed interest in reporting information for the newsletter, but are not members of the Communications Committee. They report information to the Editor within the publication deadlines of Southern Expressions.

Southern Expressions Content

Regular Features (generally in this order)

1. Message from the chair--each issue
2. Chapter Information page--each issue; current listing of officers, committee chairs, and their addresses; also the masthead with the publishing information should appear on this page.

Statements and opinions expressed in *Southern Expressions* do not necessarily represent the official position of its editor or the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association. Contributions may be edited for brevity, clarity, or conformity to style. Final decisions on the content of *Southern Expressions* shall be left to the discretion of the Editor with the advice of the Communications Committee of the Southern Chapter/Medical Library Association.®

3. Chapter Council News--each issue; report from the Chapter Council Representative
4. Committee Reports--if committees have been active since the last issue, the chair of the committee should submit a report
5. Annual Meeting Announcement--if the issue precedes the annual meeting, Conference chair (or designate) should write an article
6. Annual Meeting Report--if the issue follows the annual meeting, Past Chair and/or Conference chair (or designate) should write a report
7. Chapter News--as reported
8. Research Spotlight--submitted by the Research Committee, this section highlights a SC/MLA member for their research accomplishments or reports on research opportunities available.
9. Coming Up--meetings, CE opportunities
10. Around the South--reports about new services, special programs, etc. at places within Chapter boundaries
11. Regional and MLA news
12. Personals--information about Chapter members, generally: a) appointments, b) presentations, publications, professional activities, c) obituaries, d) kudos, e) attaining AHIP membership

Note: See also the attached list from Strategic Plan which mention action items to be communicated through *Southern Expressions*

Southern Expressions Format

Format (such as font, number of columns, margins, etc.) is largely left to the discretion of the Editor; however, consistency throughout the issue and between issues in a single

volume should be maintained as much possible. Major design changes to the logo and title area should be instituted at a volume change or after consultation with Communication Committee.

Volume Designations:

One volume per year. 1998 is Volume 14.

Issues are designated as: Winter, issue 1; Spring issue 2; Summer, issue3; and Fall, issue 4

Page & Paper:

8-1/2 x 11

double-side facing pages of 11 x 17 folded in book fashion (for print)

If photographs (b/w or color) are included, matte stock paper of a higher grade is used (for print) (Additional cost is about \$30.00/job)

Length:

Generally, between 8 and 20 pages

Format

Southern Expressions may be published in print and/or electronic, at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Electronic only publication began with volume 21, 2005

Procedures & Tips for Preparing Southern Expressions

Notification of Reporters

- Approximately three weeks prior to the reporter=s deadline, send out an e-mail message to the Executive Committee, Communication Committee, reporters, and other committee chairs to notify them of the deadline and other pertinent information.
- An e-mail message may also be sent to the membership via the SOCHAP-L electronic discussion group to invite submissions and notify them of the deadline and other pertinent information.
- Indicate to Membership Database manager when you need the mailing labels & envelopes (generally two weeks before publication deadline).
- **Standard Deadline Schedule:**
 - Winter Issue: Submissions: December 15 Mailing: January 15
 - Special Features: SC/MLA highlights, Call for Papers for next SC/MLA.
Chapter Sharing Roundtable notice for MLA
 - Spring Issue: Submissions: March 15 Mailing: April 15
 - Special Features:
 - Summer Issue: Submissions: June 15 Mailing: July 15
 - Special Features: MLA highlights, Invitation to SC/MLA meeting
 - Fall Issue: Submissions: August 15 Mailing: September 15
 - Special Features: Last reminder of annual meeting

Submissions

Mailed, written copy will need to be typed or scanned into the standard format.

Mailed disks will need to be transferred into the standard format and a printed copy made (if not included with disk) for the Received and Entered folders.

Faxed items will need to be typed into the standard format.

Filing systems should include at least a Received folder (for all items received in any format), and an entered folder (for all items that have been entered in standard format)

Creating the Newsletter

Make volume, issue, and date changes on master pages

Length and printing considerations:

Multiples of 4 are highly desired because of the physical layout. (for print)

Sixteen (16) pages is the preferred length by offset presses because it represents one sheet in their process. (for print)

For odd lengths, try to make the loose sheet something logical to separate such as A Call for Papers.@

Check the Chapter Information page (Officers, Committee chairs, etc.) for updates to names and addresses and make corrections.

Place stories in order indicated under Content.

Check after each section (Chapter News, Around the South, etc.) To be sure all stories are included.

Proofread, proofread, proofread.

Obtain a membership count from the Membership Database Manager prior to printing. To obtain the numbers of copies needed, consider the following:

Numbers of members

Additional copies for other newsletter editors & co-editors (12-20), MLA headquarters(12)

Additional copies for new members (particularly for 1st issue of the year)

Sample copies to be given out at Chapter Booth at MLA Annual Meeting (@50)

Send to copy center. May have to allow up to two weeks for return.

Mailing the Print Newsletter

Obtain mailing labels, envelopes, and return address labels from Membership Database Manager.

Add labels & envelopes for Editors of other Chapter newsletter.

Place newsletter in envelopes and affix stamps. (Membership Database Manager is currently placing labels and return addresses on the envelopes.)

Mail. Have one weighed and priced. (Usually 55 cents for 10 pages or less, and 78 cents for 10 pages.) Non-US addresses usually require approximately 3 times the postage per item. Membership is not currently large enough to qualify for bulk mailing rates.

As long as bulk mail is not used, the envelopes do not have to be received in ZIP code order. If bulk mail (>500) becomes an option, envelopes will need to be in ZIP code order and bundled in specific ways. (Jan98)

- Pass on information about any returned mail to Membership Database Manager.
- The Editor is also responsible for keeping the list of other newsletter recipients up-to-date and promptly informing the Membership Database Manager of any needed changes.
 - Other people who get a copy of *Southern Expressions*
 - MLA News editor
 - MLA News Chapter Column editor
 - MLA Headquarters (12 copies for distribution)
 - SEA Currents* editor (newsletter of the Southeastern Atlantic region RML)
 - National Network* (newsletter of the Hospital Libraries Section of MLA) editor

Recovering Costs

- No formal budget exists. Costs of approximately \$400-450 for printing and \$200-225 for postage seem about average. The issue after the annual meeting may be more expensive if photos are included.
- Submit cost statement to Southern Chapter Bookkeeper. Postage costs are generally paid by the Editor and reimbursed. Printing charges may be billed and paid directly by the Bookkeeper. (See sample letter in appendix.)
SC/MLA is NOT currently sales-tax exempt even though it is classified as a nonprofit organization.

Reporting to the Executive Committee & Membership

The Editors are placed on the agenda at the executive board meetings, which are generally held thrice annually (two at the SC/MLA annual meeting and one at the MLA annual meeting.) A report should be prepared annually for the first board meeting at the SC/MLA meeting outlining the activities and expenses incurred by the newsletter over the past year. Items in the written report should include:

- Number of copies of each issue printed
- Number of copies of each issue distributed
- Cost of printing for each issue
- Cost of postage for each issue

The Editor is also placed on the agenda at the SC/MLA annual business meeting. An abbreviated report of activities, a call for participation, etc. may be given here.

Archives: Issues of *Southern Expressions* are in the official SC/MLA archives at Emory.

The Editor also needs to maintain an archive.

Extra copies of all issues in the current volume should be maintain and sent to new members who are added during the year.

Electronic Discussion Group, SOCHAP-L, Procedures

History

SOCHAP-L was begun in January 1996 as a communication vehicle for members of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association, whose members reside in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The list is used for the dissemination of news and the discussion of business and issues related specifically to the Southern Chapter. This list is not intended to serve as a forum for the discussion of general medical librarianship issues such as those addressed on MEDLIB-L.

SOCHAP-L was originally housed on the UA1VM server at the University of Alabama (UA) but was moved to the BAMA server, also at UA, in 1998. Martha (Tillotson) Cook served as the list owner from its beginning until Fall 2000, when Nelle Williams at UA took over. The original list address was SOCHAP-L@UA1VM. The current address is SOCHAP-L@bama.ua.edu.

Information on use of LISTSERV software is found on the LISTSERV home page "Welcome to LISTSERV!" at <http://bama.ua.edu/cgi-bin/wa>. Management functions for list owners are performed through the Mailing List Management Interface link on that page. There are also links to the online mailing list archives and online documentation.

List Parameters

A group of list header keywords determine how the list operates. The SC/MLA Executive Board decided on the following list control keywords which were assigned to SOCHAP-L:

- Attachments= No** To prevent the spread of viruses, in June 2000 the UA computer center implemented security measures to reject attachments sent to the list. At the same time the computer center also limited the length of messages to 500 lines to prevent server overload.
- Review= Private** This is a private list. Only the list owner may review the names and network addresses of those subscribed to the list.
- Subscription= Closed** Users are not allowed to subscribe automatically. Their subscription requests are not forwarded to the list owner. Subscribers are added upon joining the Chapter or by request to the list owner when there is an address change.
- Send= Private** Only those who are subscribed to the list can send mail to the list.
- Reply to= List,Respect** If there is no "Reply to:" tag specified in the sender's message, replies go to the list. If there is a "Reply to:" in the sender's message, it is kept.

Confidential= Yes The list is hidden from users and will not be displayed to users on the “List” command output.

Stats= Normal,Owner Statistics are to be maintained for the list and may be retrieved only by the owner.

Notebook= Yes,/util/listserv/notebook/sochap-l,Monthly,Private
An automatic log of every piece of mail sent to the list is kept in a monthly “notebook” file which may only be viewed by users subscribed to the list.

Errors-to= Owner All rejection mail for the list is sent to the list owner.

Auto-delete= Yes,Full-auto
After a certain number of rejections, the listserv software automatically deletes users whose accounts have expired or whose systems have permanently disconnected.

Owner=nwilliam@cchs.ua.edu Nelle Williams
Nelle Williams is the list owner and receives all communication from the server related to the list (error messages, computer center communication, etc.) She can perform all functions allowed for list owners.

Responsibilities of the List Owner

1. Serve as an ex officio member of the Communications Committee and the Executive Board of Southern Chapter.
2. Work with the Membership Database Manager to add all new members to the list when they join the Chapter. Delete those who are no longer members upon notification from the Membership Database Manager.
3. Update e-mail addresses using information provided by the Membership Database Manager and individual members. Inform Membership Database Manager of changes reported by members.
4. Receive and respond to questions directed to the SOCHAP-L listserv owner. Assist and educate subscribers in the use of listserv commands. Screen all messages that come in regarding subscriptions, requests for deletion from the list, and e-mail address changes, and take appropriate action.
5. Periodically check error messages to determine address corrections and deletions that need to be made. At the annual business meeting, present a list of e-mail addresses that have repeatedly caused error messages, and request assistance from the membership in

resolving the problems.

6. Work with members who are having difficulty posting to the list because of address problems.
7. Post messages to the list for non-subscribers in cases where there is information of interest to Chapter members.
8. Remind subscribers of policies set for the list to maintain focus. Post reminders about misuse or abuse of the list when necessary--e.g., inadvertently replying to the list instead of to an individual.
9. Submit an annual report to the Chair of the Communications Committee prior to the annual meeting. Include information about number of subscribers, percentage of membership subscribed, amount of list activity, and any changes or problems encountered. (List statistics are available through the listserv software.)
10. Work with the Executive Board to address new issues as they arise and develop appropriate policies for handling these issues in the future.

Content and Use Policies

1. SOCHAP-L was originated as a communication tool for the dissemination of news and the discussion of business and issues related specifically to the Southern Chapter. This list is not intended to serve as a forum for the discussion of general medical librarianship issues such as those addressed on MEDLIB-L. The Executive Board made this decision in order to avoid overburdening Chapter members with messages and thus causing them to remove themselves from the list.
2. SOCHAP-L is not intended to be used for advertising purposes, unless such information is approved by the list owner and/or the Executive Board. If the list owner is unsure about a request for posting, the question should be referred to the Executive Board, either at a meeting or through the SCEXEC discussion list.
3. The e-mail address list of subscribers to SOCHAP-L shall not be distributed to any individual or group without the consent of the Executive Board.

Webpage Procedures

The Website Coordinator:

- Works with the Executive Committee and other members of the SC/MLA to update the website
- Determines which submissions are appropriate for the web page, consulting with the SC/MLA Chair and/or the Communications Committee, when needed
- Follows procedure to update the web page in a timely manner
- Works with the Chair of the Communications Committee on policies and issues related to the web page.

Communications Committee information written/modified by Pat Higginbottom; updated by Judy Burnham
Southern Expressions information written/modified by Martha Verchot; updated by Clista Clanton
SOCHAP-L information written by Nelle Williams
Web Site Coordinator information updated by Taneya Koonce
Revision: 30 March 1998
Revised August 2004

**Recommended Actions for the Communications Committee
as stated in the SC/MLA Strategic Plan (1989/90; revised 10/97)**

(Timetable for each action is noted in parentheses)

- 1.A.1.f Report on implementation strategies for *Platform for Change* recommendations in *Southern Expressions*, such as how to design a personal professional growth plan, with examples. (ANNUALLY)
- 1.A.1.h Identify and spotlight in *Southern Expressions* professional development courses offered on the local level that proved to be valuable opportunities for addressing *Platform for Change* initiatives. (ONGOING)
- 1.A.3.a Publish calendar of education opportunities in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- 1.A.9.a Encourage and promote Southern Chapter members= participation in the MLA Journal Club (including new guidelines as they are finalized) and self-study opportunities. (ONGOING)
- 1.A.9.b Report on MLA Journal Club activities in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- 1.B.1.a Continue routine communication of MLA and MLA chapters/sections educational activities to Southern Chapter members. (ONGOING)
- 1.B.3.a Continue timely notification of education/professional development programming by health related organizations in the southeast through *Southern Expressions* or other means. (ONGOING)
- 1.C.4.b Continue to report in *Southern Expressions* column on items from Chapter Council and MLA Board of Directors meetings. (ONGOING)
- 1.C.5.a Provide link to MLA Code of Ethics on SC/MLA home page. (1998)
- 2.A.3.b Encourage individual investigators within the chapter by:
 - 2.A.3.b.1 Spotlighting a research project of a Southern Chapter member in every issue of *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
 - 2.A.3.b.2 Advertising the SC/MLA Research Award in *Southern Expressions* and in state association Newsletters. (ANNUALLY)
- 2.A.5.a Provide opportunities for presenting research results at the annual Southern Chapter meeting and in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- 3.A.2.a Continue to publish such (new library technologies) articles. (ONGOING)
- A.03.a Publish the reports of officers and committees, at least annually, in *Southern Expressions*, on SoChap-L (Listserv) and on the web. (ONGOING)
- A.06.a Continue to present Chapter Council activities at chapter meetings, in *Southern Expressions*, SoChap-L (Listserv) and on the web. (ONGOING)
- B.01.a Publish newsletter at least three times, preferably four times, per year, incorporating photos when possible. (ANNUALLY)
- B.01.b Monitor costs of *Southern Expressions* and Southern Chapter=s ability to support. (ANNUALLY)
- B.01.c Review/revise *Southern Expressions* policies and guidelines. (ANNUALLY)

- B.01.d Begin planning to offer *Southern Expressions* in electronic format. (1997)
- B.02.a Continue to publish annual membership list with addresses, telephone numbers, Southern Chapter by-laws, officer history, strategic plan, committee rosters, annual report to MLA, etc. (ONGOING - in June each year with an update in December to reflect annual meeting actions.)
- B.03.b Maintain and promote Southern Chapter Listserv and web page. (ONGOING)
- B.05.a Publish a summary of the annual meeting evaluations in *Southern Expressions* to make members aware of the evaluation process and its importance. (ONGOING)
- C.07.a Publish honors and awards criteria and guidelines in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- C.08.c Encourage SC/MLA members to invite students to their libraries and to join the chapter. (ONGOING)
- C.09.a Publish a list of new members in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- C.10.a Publish acknowledgments of retiring members in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- C.11.b Recognize in *Southern Expressions* and at the annual Southern Chapter business meeting. Southern Chapter members who have been so honored. (ONGOING)
- C.14.a Publicize criteria for consideration by Executive Board. (1997)
- C.15.a List committee memberships in the *Southern Expressions* issue published after the annual meeting. (ONGOING)
- C.16.a Solicit and publicize member achievements in *Southern Expressions*. (ONGOING)
- C.18.a Publish criteria for the Hospital Librarian of the Year Award. (ONGOING)

Sample Letter from Southern Expressions Editor to SC/MLA Treasurer

Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences
University of Alabama at Birmingham
700 University Blvd.
Birmingham, AL 35294-0013
March 16, 1998

Sharon Cann
Library
Georgia Baptist College of Nursing
274 Blvd NE
Atlanta, GA 30312

Dear Sharon:

Enclosed, at last, are the expenses for the _____ issue of *Southern Expressions*. _____

- \$_____ The printing bill. Please send payment to the company.
- \$_____ The postage. Please send reimbursement to me.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

Martha Verchot
Southern Expressions, Editor

Winter 1998 Weight 2.4 oz. 78 cents each standard rate
16 pages + one sheet flyer (call for papers)
Includes a 2-page spread of 13 b/w photos from annual meeting

354 members stamped
13 members hand carried
3 non-US members extra postage (\$2.20 each)
11 newsletter editors
12 MLA Headquarters copies
493 total

Sample Communications Committee Annual Report

Communications Committee Southern Chapter/Medical Library Association Annual Report October 1997

Committee Membership

Members of the committee for 1996-1997 are listed on the web page. New members will need to be selected for Florida and Tennessee. The Executive Board needs to consider adding the SC/MLA Webmaster and Listserv moderator as Ex Officio members of the Communications Committee.

Southern Expressions

As the new editor Martha Verchot has published three issues of our newsletter. Reporting schedule is back on track.

Chapter Listserv

As of October 6, 1997, there were 303 subscribers on SOCHAP-L. From February 15, 1996, until October 6, 1997, (599 days), there were 126 postings to the list.

Chapter Web Page

The SC/MLA web page is available at <http://www.uab.edu/lister/scmla>
Added this year were:

- \$ committee charges and members
- \$ bylaws
- \$ strategic plan
- \$ membership information and form
- \$ annual meeting information
- \$ grants and award information
- \$ chapter history

New Chapter Logo

The committee is currently working on developing a new logo for the chapter. Suggested logos can be viewed at <http://www.uab.edu/lister/scmla/logo.htm>

Submitted by
Patricia Higginbottom, Chair
October 15, 1997

Sample Communications Committee Mid-Year Report

**Communications Committee
Southern Chapter/Medical Library Association
Mid-Year Report
May 26, 1997**

Committee Membership

All of the openings on the committee have been filled. A list of members is available on the web page.

Southern Expressions

The editor of the newsletter has changed from Jane Bridges to Martha Verchot. Martha has published her first issue.

I=d like to thank Jane for all her hard work and thank Martha for taking over the job. Deadlines for the rest of the year are:

Volume 13, Number 3

June 15, 1997 reporting deadline

July 15, 1997 mailing date

Volume 13, Number 4

Aug 15, 1997 reporting deadline

Sept 15, 1997 mailing date

Volume 14, Number 1

Dec 15, 1997 reporting deadline

Jan 15, 1998 mailing date

Chapter Listserv

The Chapter listserv, SOCHAP-L, has 269 members. Since February 15, 1996 (453 days) we have had 94 postings.(Statistics as of May 13)

Chapter Web Page

The web page has been updated with current information regarding committees, (their members and charges.)

URLs for Libraries are being added as received. Future projects include adding forms for membership, research and awards. Also information about the history of the chapter will be added when it is ready. Information is requested from other committee chairs to publish on the web.

Submitted by
Patricia Higginbottom, Chair
May 26, 1997