Toward Local Teacher-Scholar Communities of Practice: Findings from a National TYCA Survey

Christie Toth and Patrick Sullivan

Drawing on findings from a national survey of TYCA members about how and why they access published scholarship, this article makes recommendations for fostering local teacher-scholar communities of practice within two-year college English departments.

This article emerged from our work as editors of Teaching Composition in the Two-Year College, a new addition to Bedford/St. Martin’s Background Readings series for college English teachers. Our collection is the first volume in the series to compile key academic scholarship specifically for two-year college composition instructors, and it features readings that examine the unique complexities, challenges, and opportunities of teaching writing at open admissions institutions. From the outset, we wanted our colleagues at two-year colleges to help shape the collection’s scope and character. To achieve this end, we conducted a national survey of Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) members. The survey posed a variety of questions—both multiple choice and open response—about how faculty find and use published scholarship (see the Appendix). The response rate was modest: 175 (9.7%) of the 1,775 TYCA-affiliated National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) members we contacted answered the survey. Thus, our findings are not generalizable to the entire TYCA membership, or to the broader population of two-year college English instructors nationwide. Nonetheless, those who did respond constitute an important subset of professionally engaged two-year college faculty, and their answers offer rich insight into how scholarship shapes their teaching, administrative practices, and professional identities.

To our knowledge, this is the first survey ever conducted about the use of academic scholarship among two-year college English faculty—an important group of educators who teach roughly half of all composition classes nationwide—and we therefore approached this research with multiple goals. Our most immediate objective was to identify scholarship that TYCA members found useful to their work as teachers, administrators, and professionals for possible inclusion in our Bedford collection. However, we also saw the survey as an opportunity to gather
two-year college faculty perspectives about how TYCA, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), and the field of writing studies might better serve their needs when it comes to producing and disseminating scholarship. Furthermore, we hoped the survey would provide us with some sense of how our colleagues are living up to TYCA’s ambitious professional ideal of the “teacher-scholar.”

The notion of the two-year college teacher-scholar is relatively new, dating back to two TYCA statements from the early 2000s (“Research”; “Guidelines”; see also Andelora, “Teacher/Scholar”). The “Research and Scholarship in the Two-Year College” statement eloquently articulates the rationale for this professional model:

At two-year colleges, good teaching matters most, but this committee views scholarship as a prerequisite and a corequisite for good teaching—because teachers’ scholarship legitimizes their expertise, informs their classroom practice, and provides their students with models for intellectual inquiry. (TYCA, “Research” 3–4)

Given the working conditions at many two-year colleges, however, this ideal can be challenging to enact. How realistic is the teacher-scholar model, we wondered, when most two-year college faculty teach five courses a term—including several labor-intensive sections of composition—and many must also find time for administrative responsibilities that include providing leadership for assessment programs, assessment, curriculum design, and articulation with local high schools and universities?

This article offers a provisional answer to that question, asserting that the teacher-scholar ideal appears to be alive and well among at least a subset of our two-year college colleagues. Indeed, many of our respondents report high levels of engagement with academic scholarship—as readers, as participants in disciplinary professional communities, and, in many cases, as researchers themselves. They read published scholarship frequently, often across multiple disciplines, despite persistent pressures on their time and limited access to the kind of research infrastructure taken for granted at universities. They assign high value to staying current in their discipline, even though some are frustrated by what they perceive as a lack of composition research relevant to two-year college contexts, and many report working within departmental or institutional cultures that provide little support for scholarly activity. However, for many respondents, engaging with scholarship seems to be a largely solitary, individual pursuit, rather than a collaborative activity undertaken with departmental colleagues. In light of these findings, we seek to initiate a conversation within the disciplinary professional community about how we might consciously cultivate local teacher-scholar communities of practice, a professional model in which scholarly engagement becomes an integral part of a department’s teaching and administrative work. Such communities would situate teacher-scholarship within shared day-to-day departmental practices, fostering faculty professional identities grounded in both local and disciplinary knowledge making.

We begin by reviewing the literature on two-year college English faculty’s relationships with research, situating this study within TYCA’s efforts to construct a
distinctive two-year college teacher-scholar professional identity. Next, we provide an overview of the study methodology, including response rates and limitations related to our study design and sample. We then present select survey findings, followed by a discussion of implications and future directions for two-year college faculty, their programs and departments, and the larger disciplinary community.

The Two-Year College Teacher-Scholar

Articulating the relationship between scholarship and teaching has been central to the disciplinary formation of rhetoric and composition, or, as it is increasingly being reconstituted, writing studies. Although powerful voices seek to move the field beyond the “pedagogical imperative” (Kopelson 752)—that is, the need to frame all writing-related research in terms of the implications for teaching—most would agree that college composition instruction has benefited from the discipline’s sustained theoretical and empirical examinations of literacy and learning over the last half-century. However, those who do most of the actual teaching of composition—graduate students, contingent faculty, and, of course, two-year college faculty, both full- and part-time—often have the fewest opportunities to learn about or contribute to scholarship in our field. This issue has been at the heart of TYCA’s efforts to construct a professional identity for two-year college English faculty that foregrounds engagement with scholarship.

As Jeffrey Andelora has documented (“Teacher/Scholar”; “Forging a National Identity”), leaders in the national two-year college English-teaching community have been working since at least the early 1990s to define the unique dimensions of their intellectual work. At the heart of this endeavor has been effort to involve two-year college faculty in academic knowledge making. Howard Tinberg has been exhorting two-year college faculty to see themselves as knowledge makers for decades (e.g., Tinberg, “Model,” “Seeing Ourselves,” “We Do Theory,” Border Talk; Tinberg, Duffy, and Mino; Tinberg and Nadeau), arguing that engagement with research and scholarship helps counter long-standing misperceptions of two-year colleges and their faculty. He suggests that, in recent years, “the old and tired construction of two-year college faculty as workhorse teachers with little time or inclination to engage in research and theory” has been “replaced by an altogether different construct here: that of a faculty willing and able to be scholars as well as teachers” (“We Do Theory” 949). Along with other two-year college leaders such as Mark Reynolds, Sylvia Holladay-Hicks, Barry Alford, Keith Kroll, Jeff Sommers, John Lovas, Frank Madden, Elizabeth Nist, and Helon Raines, Tinberg has helped construct the “teacher-scholar” as a normative two-year college professional identity (Andelora, “Teacher/Scholar”). These efforts have been bolstered by the wider Scholarship of Teaching and Learning movement, spurred by Ernest Boyer’s Scholarship Reconsidered (Sommers; Tinberg, Duffy, and Mino; TYCA, "Research"), which validates the kind of applied, locally situated pedagogical knowledge that two-year college English faculty are particularly well positioned to make.

The expectation that faculty will engage with scholarship, both as readers
and as researchers, is most clearly articulated in two TYCA-endorsed documents: the “Guidelines for the Academic Preparation of Two-Year College English Faculty,” published in 2004, and “Research and Scholarship in the Two-Year College,” which was approved in 2003 and later revised by a committee of TYCA members in 2010. Both documents assert the importance of grounding teaching in theory and research and of participating in the disciplinary communities that produce and disseminate such scholarship. The “Research” document defines the “two-year college teacher-scholar” as “that faculty member for whom teaching is informed by both reflective practice and by the application of the best available theoretical approaches.” It goes on to state, “we invite such faculty to employ the skills and knowledge base that will allow them to become capable researchers whose pursuit of knowledge enriches the intellectual lives of their students” (10). In short, TYCA takes the position that ongoing engagement with published scholarship is a professional necessity for two-year college English faculty because it has the power to shape teaching practice in transformative ways.

Despite these efforts, the teacher-scholar model may still be more aspirational than descriptive of the majority of two-year college English faculty. They remain widely underrepresented within the membership of NCTE and among the attendees at its national conventions, and relatively few of the nearly 30,000 two-year college English instructors nationwide attend regional TYCA conferences (Toth). Likewise, while two-year college faculty have published articles in most of the discipline’s major professional journals, they still constitute only a small fraction of these journals’ contributors (Hassel and Giordano). As Holly Hassel recently observed, two-year college faculty are even underrepresented in Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC), the flagship journal for two-year college English teachers (353). The existing portrait of two-year college instructors’ scholarly activity, however, tends to rely on relatively easy-to-tabulate metrics: paid membership in professional organizations, presence on conference programs and registration rolls, and bylines in academic publications. Far more difficult to measure are the ways that two-year college English faculty access and use published scholarship in the course of their daily working lives. One goal of our survey was to move beyond these traditional metrics to develop a more nuanced understanding of our colleagues’ engagement with scholarship.

Advocates of the teacher-scholar model have identified important reasons why two-year college faculty should engage with scholarship: doing so “legitimizes their expertise, informs their classroom practice, and provides their students with models for intellectual inquiry” (TYCA, “Research” 8). It fosters reflective practice and helps faculty maintain a sense of disciplinary and professional identity (“Research”), and it also enables instructors to stay current with rapidly evolving research technologies (Sligh). However, nearly every advocate who has written about two-year college teacher-scholarship also identifies a number of barriers to this kind of engagement.

First and foremost, of course, are time constraints: two-year college faculty carry heavy teaching, grading, and (in some cases) administrative loads that limit
the time they have available for finding and reading scholarship (Tinberg, “Enlargement,” Border Talk; Tinberg, Duffy, and Mino; Reynolds, “Intellectual Work,” Two-Year-College”; Madden; Sligh; TYCA, “Research”). There is also the issue of professional preparation. Two-year college English faculty come from a range of disciplinary backgrounds—including literature, creative writing, education, and applied linguistics—and some may have relatively little knowledge of the scholarly literature in rhetoric and composition/writing studies (Calhoon-Dillahunt; Hassel and Giordano). Those with master’s rather than doctoral degrees sometimes have limited training or experience conducting research (Reynolds, “Intellectual Work”; Tinberg and Nadeau; TYCA, “Research”). Furthermore, many two-year college faculty describe a lack of support or incentive at their colleges for scholarly activity. They sometimes operate within institutional or departmental cultures that neither expect nor appreciate their efforts to engage with scholarship (Madden; Sligh; Reynolds, “Two-Year-College”; Tinberg, Duffy, and Mino; TYCA, “Research”; Ostman; Toth). At some colleges, these cultures are changing. Andelora, for example, describes Mesa Community College’s recent efforts to encourage scholarly activity and reward faculty for ongoing professional development (“Teacher/Scholar/Activist”). In many departments, however, such engagement remains the exception rather than the rule (Toth). All of these challenges are exacerbated for part-time adjunct faculty, who make up the majority of the two-year college teaching force (TYCA, “Research”; Ostman; Toth, Griffiths, and Thirolf).

In addition to the barriers presented by working conditions at two-year colleges, there are also barriers to scholarly engagement emanating from the discipline itself. Even for those faculty who are committed to grounding their teaching and administrative decisions in theory and research, finding scholarship relevant to the distinctive missions, student populations, and institutional resources at two-year colleges can be difficult. As John C. Lovas, Barry Alford, and, more recently, Holly Hassel and Joanne Giordano have argued, knowledge making in writing studies continues to be conducted primarily at universities and often reflects the missions and teaching conditions of those institutional contexts. Thus, the existing research sometimes has limited applicability in two-year college settings, while many pressing issues faced by community college writing instructors and students go under-examined. Two-year college English faculty are often quite innovative in their efforts to translate scholarship to their local contexts, but some also express dissatisfaction with a disciplinary community that they perceive to be uninterested in or dismissive of two-year colleges (Toth, Griffiths, and Thirolf; Toth).

Overall, the findings of our survey affirm that a significant subset of TYCA members embody the teacher-scholar model advanced by our primary professional organization. Their responses also confirm the difficulties of scholarly engagement described in the literature and point to additional structural barriers to access. Furthermore, our research suggests that, within their departments, many faculty who embody the teacher-scholar model engage with scholarship in relative isolation. Based on these findings, we argue that broadening teacher-scholarship from a laudable minority of two-year college faculty to a true professional norm is not
simply a matter of finding more time for individual instructors to engage with scholarship (although more time is, of course, always welcome). Rather, we believe such efforts hinge on finding new ways to integrate engagement with scholarship into the daily work of two-year college English departments. In short, we propose moving away from an individualized conceptualization of “the teacher-scholar” and instead turning our efforts toward cultivating local teacher-scholar communities of practice, which have the potential to transform professional identities and practices within departments. Our survey findings suggest steps that the discipline and its professional organizations can take to improve access to scholarship for two-year college faculty and foster such communities. We discuss these findings presently; first, we provide an overview of our research methods.

Methods

Study Design

We chose to conduct a national survey of TYCA members because we wanted to gather insights from as many NCTE-affiliated two-year college faculty, from as wide a geographical and institutional range, as we could. Although surveys rely on respondent self-report, and therefore do not constitute a direct measure of scholarly engagement, this methodology enabled us to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on faculty’s self-described activities, experiences, and perspectives. It also allowed us to offer respondents anonymity, which we hoped would encourage them to report more freely on their departmental, institutional, organizational, and disciplinary experiences than might be possible in other situations.

We developed the initial draft of the survey questionnaire collaboratively—Christie has formal training in survey design and extensive experience with survey-based research—then solicited feedback from members of the TYCA Research Committee and Jeff Sommers, editor of TETYC. In its final version, the questionnaire included sixteen items: eleven multiple-choice and five open-response questions (see the Appendix). Both the TYCA Executive Committee and the University of Michigan’s Institutional Review Board approved the study design.1 With the help of NCTE support staff, we distributed the survey to all TYCA members via email in December 2013. We timed this distribution to coincide with the winter holiday, in the hopes that busy faculty would have more time to complete the survey when classes were not in session. The initial invitation was sent to the 1,775 TYCA-affiliated NCTE members for whom the organization had functional email addresses. The survey remained open for thirty days, with one reminder sent out in early January. We analyzed the multiple-choice items by calculating either the mean or percent response, depending on the question type. We coded the open response items qualitatively to identify key themes.

Sample

A total of 173 TYCA members completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 9.7%. More than two-thirds (68%) of the 126 respondents who provided informa-
tion about their current employment status were full-time two-year college faculty. Twenty-three respondents (18%) were part-time faculty at one or more two-year colleges or at both two- and four-year institutions. This pattern is the inverse of the demographics at most two-year colleges, where the majority of English faculty are employed part-time. On the other hand, twelve respondents identified themselves as full-time faculty at four-year institutions, and five indicated that they were in graduate school. Such respondents likely had different opportunities and incentives for accessing scholarship. For the purposes of identifying patterns of engagement among two-year college English faculty who do not necessarily have access to university research infrastructure, we removed the responses of graduate students and full-time four-year college faculty from the analysis, leaving a total of 156 respondents, or 8.8% of the 1,775 TYCA members initially invited to complete the survey. Not all respondents answered every question on the survey.

Academic preparation likely plays a role in how—and whether—faculty engage with scholarship. Because doctoral education demands extensive academic reading and provides specialized preparation for conducting research, we might expect faculty who have earned doctoral degrees to access scholarship more frequently. Of the 110 respondents who provided information about their academic preparation, 40 (36%) had earned doctoral degrees, and two (2%) indicated that they held “specialist” credentials, defined as thirty additional subject-area credit hours beyond the master’s. According to Arthur M. Cohen, Florence B. Brawer, and Carrie B. Kisker, roughly 25% of community college liberal arts faculty nationwide have doctoral degrees, which means our sample likely includes a greater percentage of doctoral degree holders than the overall population of two-year college English faculty.

The specific disciplinary professionalization that faculty received in their graduate program likely also shapes their engagement with scholarship. Among

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FACULTY ROLE</th>
<th>RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>% RESPONDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time faculty at a two-year college</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time faculty at a two-year college</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time faculty at both two- and four-year institutions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time faculty at multiple two-year colleges</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time faculty at a four-year institution</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate student (master’s or doctoral)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former/retired faculty at a two-year college</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Respondent Employment Status (n=156)
the 100 respondents who reported holding master’s degrees, the most common
disciplinary focus was English literature, which accounted for 38% of reported
MAs. More than a quarter (28%) of respondents, however, held specialized MAs in
rhetoric and composition. Other common master’s-level disciplinary backgrounds
included English education (14%), teaching English as a second language (TESOL)
(6%), and creative writing (6%). Meanwhile, 44% of reported doctoral degrees were
in rhetoric and composition, and 24% were in literature. Other doctoral disciplines
included applied linguistics/TESOL (11%), educational leadership or curriculum
and instruction (11%), and English education (10%).

Whatever discipline their degrees were in, more than two-thirds (69%) of
the 104 respondents who answered the question indicated that they had completed
significant graduate coursework in rhetoric and composition, and nearly as many
(68%) had done significant coursework in English literature. Other major areas of
coursework included English education (22%), curriculum and instruction (19%),
TESOL (18%), creative writing (14%), educational leadership (10%), and techni-
cal/professional writing (8%). This diverse academic preparation across a range of
disciplines, both within and beyond English studies, reflects the transdisciplinary
professional practices and identities characteristic of two-year college English fac-
culty (see Tinberg, Border Talk; Reynolds, “Two-Year-College”; Toth, Griffiths, and
Thirolf). While we do not have national data on two-year college English faculty’s
disciplinary backgrounds as a point of comparison, our NCTE-derived sample may
include a greater percentage of respondents with extensive graduate preparation
in rhetoric and composition than is the case for the wider population of two-year
college English faculty.

In sum, our survey respondents are probably not representative of the na-
tion’s two-year college English faculty in terms of their employment status, degree
attainment, or disciplinary backgrounds. Given that the majority of two-year col-
lege English faculty are not directly involved in TYCA (Toth), a survey limited
to TYCA members was unlikely to be representative of the broader profession.
Furthermore, TYCA members who have little involvement with scholarship may
have been less likely to respond to a survey on this topic, which would further bias
the sample. While we cannot claim that our survey data are representative of two-
year college English faculty as a whole, or even the wider membership of TYCA,
they do offer a rich portrait of a subset two-year college English faculty who are
inclined to participate in disciplinary professional organizations and have an inter-
est in discussing their scholarly activity. These faculty report patterns of engage-
ment with scholarship that seem to live up to the teacher-scholar role promoted
by TYCA. Their responses also provide useful insight into the structural barriers
to deeper scholarly engagement within many departments and colleges, revealing
important concerns that departmental leaders, the professional organizations, and
the discipline must address in order to broaden scholarly engagement at two-year
colleges. As we discuss, we believe our findings suggest the need to cultivate local
teacher-scholar communities of practice within departments.
Findings

Accessing Scholarship

One of the most pronounced findings of the survey was how often our respondents reported accessing published scholarship (Figure 1). When asked how often they had consulted a variety of publication types in the last year (with response options of “never,” “once,” “several times during the year,” “1 to 3 times a month,” “about once a week,” or “several times a week”), all respondents indicated that they read scholarly journal articles at least once a year, and 60% said they read such articles at least once a month. Likewise, 94% reported reading scholarly books at least once a year, and more than a quarter (28%) said they did so at least once a month. Given the teaching and administrative loads most full-time faculty carry, as well as the other barriers to engagement we discuss below, this frequency of engagement with scholarly publications is noteworthy. These responses suggest that a subset of faculty, at least, are able to carve out the time and motivation to access scholarship regularly.

Faculty stayed current in the field using a range of genres, media, and strategies. While scholarly journal articles were the most frequently accessed source, a majority of two-year college respondents also indicated that they read research-related popular news articles or items in professional newsletters at least once a month. Likewise, a majority read professional listserv messages or blog postings about research and scholarship several times a year or more, and nearly half said they consulted online aggregators or alert systems to keep up with recent publications. Although fewer respondents indicated that they accessed scholarship through video or audio formats—perhaps in part because relatively little research is available in

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Types of Scholarship</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly journal articles</td>
<td>98.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular news media</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional newsletters</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly books</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional listservs</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online videos</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online aggregators/alerts</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcasts</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 1.** Types of Scholarship Accessed “Several Times a Year” or More Often (% Respondents, n=156)
these media—nearly half of respondents reported that they learned about recent scholarship this way at least once in the last year. In short, respondents often went beyond traditional print-based academic publications to stay abreast of scholarly developments.

When researching specific topics or issues, respondents used a variety of strategies and technologies to locate relevant scholarship (Figure 2). By far the most common strategy was to conduct searches using subscription academic databases, presumably through common library interfaces like Ebscohost. Faculty were also likely to use the member resources available on the NCTE website, as well as open-access tools like general search engines or Google Scholar. Interestingly, respondents were less likely to use the disciplinary search tool CompPile.org, perhaps because this database is not directly affiliated with NCTE and is therefore less well known to TYCA members. Faculty sometimes consulted topical bibliographies and critical sourcebooks. In addition to these print and online resources, they also drew on the knowledge of people in their professional networks, including colleagues at their own colleges and at other two- and four-year institutions, as well as academic librarians. They were least likely to seek out relevant scholarship by querying listservs and social networking platforms.

Respondents’ motivations for engaging with scholarship reveal a great deal about the conditions in which two-year college teacher-scholars carry out their work. When asked how likely they were to access scholarship for a variety of different reasons, “personal interest in a topic” and “to stay current in the field” were the most highly rated (Figure 3). Thus, intellectual curiosity and a commitment to keeping up with disciplinary developments seemed to provide the strongest

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**Figure 2.** Average Likelihood of Using Search Tools
(Scale: 1–5, where 1 = “not at all likely” and 5 = “extremely likely”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search strategy</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search subscription academic database</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask colleagues at own college</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search NCTE website</td>
<td>3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General search engine</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Scholar</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult with a college/university</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult topical bibliography</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask colleagues at other 2-year colleges</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review sourcebooks</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask colleagues at 4-year institution</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Query listserv</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile.org</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Query social network</td>
<td>1.58</td>
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impetus for engaging with scholarship. Respondents also rated their efforts to produce scholarship, either in conference presentations or written publications, as important reasons for accessing published scholarship. This seems to affirm TYCA’s position that conducting research on teaching and learning encourages sustained and authentic engagement with disciplinary knowledge making (“Research”). On average, respondents were also “somewhat” to “very likely” to seek out scholarship that would help them address specific classroom or administrative issues. This suggests that respondents often access research with an eye toward application in their own classrooms and local contexts.

One striking pattern in faculty motivations for accessing scholarship is the extent to which they incline toward individual engagement. Although respondents reported that they were “somewhat” to “very likely” to read scholarly work on the recommendation of a colleague, structured professional development was the least likely reason to access scholarship. Indeed, 35% of respondents indicated that they were either “not at all” or “not very likely” to access scholarship for structured professional development activities or that this use of scholarship was “not applicable” in their department. Likewise, while 93% of respondents reported holding at least one personal scholarly journal subscription, only 14% indicated that their departments held such subscriptions to facilitate faculty access. This suggests that, in many two-year colleges settings, the teacher-scholar professional role may be solitary and highly individualized, rather than part of ongoing intellectual inquiry within departmental communities. As we discuss below, the issue of departmental culture and norms was one of the most frequently identified barriers to engaging with scholarship.

![Figure 3. Average Likelihood of Accessing Scholarship by Motivation Type](image-url)

*Figure 3. Average Likelihood of Accessing Scholarship by Motivation Type (Scale: 1–5, where 1 = “not at all likely” and 5 = “extremely likely”)
Barriers to Engaging with Scholarship

Despite reporting high levels of engagement with scholarship, survey respondents also identified a number of barriers (Figure 4). In many cases, these barriers echoed themes in the literature about how working conditions in two-year colleges can deter scholarly engagement. By far the most frequent challenge that faculty faced while seeking out scholarship was “finding time to research a topic you want to know more about.” Many respondents elaborated on this difficulty in their open responses. As one instructor wrote, “Finding TIME is a big one. Since I am perpetually on overload schedule teaching composition for a community college, it’s enough to keep up with my teaching load and family life.” Another respondent put it even more succinctly: “There is so little time when you teach 5 + 5 English courses!” In short, the teaching and grading load that most two-year college instructors carry—and the administrative burden shouldered by full-time faculty—can leave little time for finding and reading scholarship.

In their open responses, several faculty described another challenge often noted in the literature: the lack of incentive or support at their colleges for engaging with scholarship. As one respondent wrote: “Working in a geographically isolated two-year college, access to research is hard and not funded by my school. The general belief is that research in the field of rhetoric and composition is irrelevant for the problems we face in our school.” Such barriers could be institutional, departmental, or both. Another respondent observed: “Some of the colleagues in my department say that they ‘don’t believe in research’ . . . This challenge occasionally applies to administrators who aren’t always interested in research. It seems that not everyone in my college is interested or motivated by research.” One respondent’s description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to Accessing Scholarship</th>
<th>Average Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding time</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing journals without subscription</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding research relevant to 2-year colleges</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding research that will appeal to colleagues</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding research that will appeal to administrators</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding research on a desired topic</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreting disciplinary terminology/conventions</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4.** Average Frequency of Difficulties Accessing Scholarship (Scale: 1–5, where 1 = “never” and 5 = “always”)}
of her colleagues vividly illustrates how departmental culture can render scholarly engagement a highly individualized undertaking: “I hold subscriptions to CCC, College English, RTE, and TETYC, but none of my colleagues in my department (English) read or discuss scholarship. When proffered to my colleagues for flex day, they do not respond.” In some two-year college English departments, it seems that discussing scholarship with colleagues is not routinely practiced or supported.

Another frequently reported barrier, “accessing articles in journals to which you do not hold a subscription,” reflects the research infrastructure at many two-year colleges, which typically do not hold as many journal or academic database subscriptions as university libraries. As one respondent wrote, “Our library resources do not include access to the journals I need for composition and rhetoric, developmental writing, ESL writing. I can’t even search for what I need most of the time using the college library.” Journals that are only accessible to subscribers or organizational members can thus be quite difficult to acquire for some two-year college faculty. This material reality may shape the nature of the scholarship these faculty encounter. Furthermore, relying on the NCTE website for access to scholarship might give NCTE-published journals disproportionate influence in two-year colleges, while articles published in other relevant disciplinary journals, such as the Journal of Basic Writing or Writing Program Administration, do not have the impact in these settings that they might otherwise deserve.

Finally, some of the barriers two-year college English faculty face emanate from the discipline itself. The average survey respondent reported that he or she sometimes had difficulty locating research that was relevant to two-year colleges or that focused on the particular topics he or she wanted to investigate. As Hassel and Giordano have discussed, the field’s emphasis on four-year institutional contexts means that two-year college composition instruction often goes under-acknowledged and under-researched, producing biases in the literature. For example, one respondent noted that “[s]ome available research focuses too much on traditional age students.” Others more directly critiqued disciplinary professional organizations for failing to represent community college teaching in proportion to its role in the education landscape. For instance, one respondent wrote: “While NCTE claims to have a community college presence, almost everything is focused on K-12 matters . . . If community colleges teach 75% of all freshman composition students, then why are we often ignored in scholarly journals beyond TETYC?” Another common theme in our responses was the desire to see more practical applications of scholarship for classroom purposes. One respondent, for example, expressed impatience with the privileging of theory over student perspectives: “Research that I find is often overly theoretical or too preoccupied with the theoretical or psychological mindset of the teacher (or teacher-as-proxy for theory). I want to hear more directly from students themselves, especially as relates to entering or first-year composition students.” Faculty also reported that they sometimes had trouble finding research that would appeal to their departmental colleagues or administrators. The gap between how writing studies scholars present their research and the needs and preferences of
many two-year college faculty may contribute to respondents’ scholarly isolation. It is difficult to foster cultures of scholarly engagement within departments when the available research often makes little effort to speak to two-year college audiences.

Discussion

The findings of this national survey paint a complex portrait of two-year college English faculty engagement with scholarship. They confirm that a significant subset of faculty live up to the teacher-scholar professional model that TYCA advocates. These faculty value academic research, strive to stay current in the discipline, access scholarship frequently, and apply what they learn to their teaching and administrative work. They do so despite limitations on their time and, in many cases, a lack of institutional resources and support for scholarly engagement. Indeed, they do so even though disciplinary scholarship does not always recognize the importance of two-year colleges or produce research that addresses the distinctive missions and conditions in these institutions. However, their responses also suggest that two-year college teacher-scholars are not necessarily able to translate their individual scholarly engagement into collaborative engagement at the department level. In other words, the presence of a teacher-scholar on the faculty does not in and of itself produce a local teacher-scholar community of practice. This finding has important implications for our conceptualization of the teacher-scholar model and for the field of writing studies more broadly.

The concept of communities of practice was first popularized by anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991 and further developed by Wenger and his colleagues in subsequent publications. It has been taken up widely in organizational studies, in education research, and among scholars in literacy and writing studies. While theorizations of the term have proliferated and evolved, the foundational ideas behind the concept are widely embraced. They offer several key principles relevant to our discussion of two-year college teacher-scholars:

1. Knowledge—and therefore learning—is situated within communities engaged in shared practice (Wenger). In some contexts, including educational settings, these communities are explicitly engaged in the practice of building and sharing knowledge (Hoadley).

2. Theory and practice are interactive: practitioners’ theoretical understandings are continuously reshaped by their practical experiences and the meaning they make from those experiences through conversations within their communities (Wenger).

3. Learning, and thus professional development, is in part a process of coming to identify as a member of a community in which knowledge is situated in practice (Lave and Wenger).

These principles suggest that there are complex interrelationships between disciplinary knowledge making, locally situated teaching and administrative practices, and professional identity. Thinking through these interrelationships might enable us to
forge stronger and more meaningful connections between scholarship, pedagogy, and programmatic decision making in two-year college English departments. If teaching is improved by sustained and ongoing engagement with scholarship, then efforts to nurture departmental communities of practice that support the development of teacher-scholar professional identities might be a productive strategy for achieving this engagement. Such a strategy would acknowledge workload issues and the specific challenges faced by teachers of English in two-year colleges.

The existence of TYCA, the rich body of scholarly literature published in *TETYC*, and the findings of our survey all affirm that an important subset of two-year college faculty are active members of the disciplinary community of practice that is the field of writing studies. Indeed, they have carved out a distinctive teacher-scholar identity within that field. However, Christie’s previous research and the survey findings we present here also suggest that, at many institutions, there may be only tenuous connections between the national disciplinary community and the departmental communities of practice in which two-year college faculty do the day-in, day-out work of teaching and administering writing. This disconnect fuels some teacher-scholars’ frustration with the lack of scholarly engagement among their departmental colleagues. On the other hand, those colleagues may not identify as “teacher-scholars”—as members of the disciplinary community of practice—because they do not experience their own practices as situated within a national academic community that foregrounds engagement with scholarship.

Such disjunctures could be a function of graduate education in English studies, which frequently fails to bring future two-year college faculty into our disciplinary community of practice. Likewise, these disconnects may be exacerbated by the hiring and tenure criteria at many two-year colleges, which often do not expect or reward participation in the broader disciplinary community. Whatever the reasons, our findings suggest the need to move beyond constructing “the two-year college teacher-scholar” in terms of an individual faculty member’s professional identity and scholarly practices. Instead, we might turn our attention to fostering teacher-scholar communities of practice at the program or department level. This is not a radical change in orientation: the value of such communities is implicit in TYCA’s position statements. The “Guidelines for the Academic Preparation of English Faculty at Two-Year Colleges” document, for example, includes “collaborate with colleagues in developing curriculum” as one of its key “characteristics of effective two-year college English faculty” (8). Likewise, there are already departments cultivating community practices that align with this vision (e.g., Andelora, “Teacher/Scholar/Activist”; Toth). The shift we are calling for is really a matter of explicitness and emphasis, and perhaps most importantly, we call for the creation of resources that teacher-scholars can use within their departments to foster communities whose practices include engaging with scholarship in meaningful and locally situated ways. We close with some preliminary thoughts about how to undertake this project within departments, the professional organizations, and the discipline.
Fostering Local Teacher-Scholar Communities of Practice

At individual two-year colleges, cultivating local teacher-scholar communities of practice might require some reframing of the role of department chairs and program coordinators. While few of these suggestions are entirely new, adopting an explicit goal of cultivating teacher-scholar communities of practice might bring fresh focus and resources to such efforts. To begin offsetting the isolated nature of scholarly engagement, chairs and program coordinators may need to become proactive about foregrounding, disseminating, and privileging scholarship in the day-to-day work of their departments. Ideally, this would involve intentional and ongoing efforts to “benchmark” departmental initiatives using research—in other words, consistently and routinely framing departmental discussions, decision making, and programmatic and curricular development in relation to current scholarship. This might involve revising departmental deliberation procedures to set aside time for reading and reflection before decisions are made. Throughout this process, chairs and program coordinators could help their colleagues contextualize, historicize, and theorize departmental business within broader scholarly conversations. For example, Salt Lake Community College has recently used efforts to align its composition course sequence around “threshold concepts” in writing and rhetoric studies as an opportunity for department-wide conversations about scholarship in relation to the local context. This initiative has involved faculty from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and curricular specializations in the extended project of articulating shared departmental understandings about college writing that are grounded in theory and research (Justin Jory, personal communication, April 6, 2015).

Departmental leaders might also promote scholarly engagement as professional development. This could include setting aside time throughout the academic year to read and discuss research and scholarship together: successful models for this kind of shared practice already exist in some two-year college English departments (see, for example, Toth). Chairs and program coordinators might use departmental funds to maintain hard-copy subscriptions to key journals in our field—both those associated with NCTE and other relevant publications—or advocate for electronic access to these journals through their college libraries. Furthermore, chairs and program coordinators could actively encourage their colleagues to be knowledge makers themselves by recognizing, rewarding, and (if at all possible) funding locally situated scholarship of teaching and learning, conference participation, and publication across a variety of genres and media.

At every juncture, of course, such practices should be consciously inclusive of adjunct faculty, who too often have little access to professional community, either within their colleges or at conferences and other sites of scholarly engagement (Ostman; Toth, Griffiths, and Thirolf). As a recent report from the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) notes,

For many part-time faculty, contingent employment goes hand-in-hand with being marginalized within the faculty . . . [P]art-time faculty have infrequent
opportunities to interact with peers about teaching and learning. Perhaps most
concerning, they rarely are included in important campus discussions about the
kinds of change needed to improve student learning, academic progress, and col-
lege completion. (3)

Fostering departmental teacher-scholar communities of practice could provide
adjunct colleagues with more opportunities to engage with scholarship than they
currently encounter. Furthermore, these communities would make such an engage-
ment an authentic and collaborative component of teaching practice and, therefore,
of professional identity. As Kate Thirolf found in her research with part-time English
instructors, “Activities that positioned incoming adjunct faculty as professionals and
colleagues fostered professionalization more than mandatory trainings and required
mentoring” (Toth, Griffiths, and Thirolf 110). Local teacher-scholar communities
of practice could and should be an important means of integrating part-time fac-
ulty more fully into our departmental, professional, and disciplinary communities.

Encouraging this kind of scholarly engagement within departments will
also require some creative thinking from our national professional organizations.
Fortunately, our survey respondents had no shortage of ideas in this regard. Sev-
eral suggested that NCTE might consider making back issues of TETYC freely
accessible online—perhaps after a period of two years—thus providing access to
a wider cohort of two-year college teachers. Likewise, the journal could make
electronic subscriptions free for adjunct instructors and graduate students. Others
suggested that NCTE and TYCA provide various forms of research aggregation
for members, including app-based research alerts or regular emails with articles or
abstracts relevant to two-year college English teachers—respondents recommended
borrowing existing models from online publications like Inside Higher Ed and the
Huffington Post. Some explicitly called for professional development tools that
would foster scholarly engagement within their departmental communities
and
connect those communities with broader conversations in the field. For example,
one respondent wrote:

I want TYCA to sponsor, organize and administrate a series of monthly article-
reading groups using an on-line meeting platform. If TYCA could get me a
2-year college writing center reading group that met once a month—hosted and
moderated by someone from our community, I’d pay extra for it. We need to do
on-line conferences to share our experiences and ideas and research. I don’t have
$1000 to get to even the regional conference once a year.

Clearly, there is demand among two-year college teacher-scholars for greater ac-
cess to the scholarship currently being published, for more digital tools that will
help them stay current with relevant research, and for opportunities to engage as a
department with published scholarship and disciplinary professional communities.

In our view, TYCA and TETYC have an important role to play in creating
these kinds of resources. However, we would also like to see the broader disciplinary
community expand its scholarly practices to better include two-year colleges and
their faculty and students. Perhaps most obviously, this means responding to Hassel and Giordano’s call for writing studies research that is relevant in two-year college contexts. As Hassel asserts, “In the midst of disciplinary and public debates about education at open-access institutions, it’s more important than ever that we set a clear path for inquiry and scholarship that will meet the needs of our professional community” (343). The field does not have to guess about these needs. Our survey respondents provided a long list of areas that they believe have been underresearched:

> Two-year college faculty labor issues, work conditions, and professionalization, particularly for adjunct faculty
> Writing placement and assessment at two-year colleges
> Basic/developmental reading and writing in two-year colleges
> Language-level instruction, particularly for linguistically diverse students
> The needs and experiences of the student populations served at two-year colleges, particularly low-income, working-class, first-generation, and adult learners
> Issues of student success (i.e., persistence/retention, failure and resilience, and student services)
> Digital technologies, both in the two-year college classroom and online courses
> Two-year college writing centers and writing in the disciplines
> Connections between secondary institutions and two-year colleges, particularly dual/concurrent enrollment programs
> Two-year college transfer students’ experiences at four-year institutions

The concerns our respondents identified are, in fact, quite similar to the “research gaps” Hassel identifies in her review of the field. There is a great deal of work to be done by scholars at both two- and four-year colleges to fill these gaps and, in doing so, identify additional areas for inquiry.

As our respondents’ suggestions for online resources suggest, however, making writing studies scholarship more inclusive of two-year college faculty is not just a matter of research topics. It is also a matter of addressing the technical barriers to access. Scholars at all institutional types must acknowledge that our choice of publication venue is political. Because two-year college teacher-scholars often have difficulty accessing journal articles that are housed in subscription databases—particularly those journals that are not freely available to NCTE members through its website—choosing to publish work in such venues is a de facto decision to render one’s scholarship inaccessible to many colleagues at two-year colleges. In recognition of this disparity, we believe our disciplinary professional organizations should support efforts to make academic scholarship open-access. It is a matter of professional equity and of enabling all members of our disciplinary community to participate in our knowledge-sharing practices.

Finally, we believe our survey findings raise questions about the utility of our field’s most common scholarly genres for circulating research within local teacher-
scholar communities of practice. If genres are, as Carolyn R. Miller argues, typified social action, then the social action that these print-based genres typify is the kind of individualized inquiry that characterizes the scholarly practices of faculty at four-year institutions. These genres enable geographically dispersed scholars working in specialized subfields to read one another’s research and integrate those insights into their own scholarship. These genres did not emerge to facilitate collaborative scholarly engagement at the level of the department or program, particularly within the distinctive professional roles and resource constraints that shape two-year college teaching and administrative practice. Writing studies must begin to think rhetorically about two-year college audiences. As a field, we should be asking ourselves what genres and media might better foster the local teacher-scholar communities of practice we want to see.

For example, how might we use digital technologies to share scholarship in ways that facilitate conversation within departments? TETYC could create a monthly podcast featuring interviews with authors of recently published scholarship relevant to two-year college English teaching. Faculty could listen to these podcasts while commuting, exercising, or doing the dishes, and set aside time to discuss them at the next department meeting. Or CCC could showcase recent research in online videos designed to prompt conversations among instructors within writing programs or departments. Such resources would surely also have applications for professional development among communities of graduate student instructors, adjunct faculty, lecturers, and tenure-track faculty in writing programs at four-year institutions. These are just a few possibilities. The point is that NCTE and other disciplinary professional organizations should promote new forms of scholarship that consciously facilitate collaborative engagement within two-year college English departments, and should help ensure that such scholarship is recognized and rewarded.

Our own forthcoming collection, Teaching Composition in the Two-Year College, is a preliminary effort to facilitate scholarly engagement within local communities of practice. It aims to provide easy access to key scholarship on topics relevant to two-year college faculty—more than half of the readings are, in fact, written by two-year college teacher-scholars—and it is organized thematically, so that departments might use the volume to form reading groups or organize professional development sessions around issues that are pressing at their institutions. This collection is, however, just a start. It barely scratches the surface of the possibilities for bridging disciplinary and departmental communities of practice, particularly in the digital age. We hope that this article, which channels the voices and experiences of some of the most engaged teacher-scholars in our profession, will open a wider conversation about how we might use all available means to create a disciplinary community of practice that is enriched by both broad scholarly inquiry and the local pedagogical knowledge that two-year college English faculty are uniquely positioned to develop. We believe this is what means to, in Hassel and Giordano’s words, “rethink . . . college composition for the needs of the teaching majority” (117).
**APPENDIX: Survey Instrument**

1. In the last year, approximately how often have you done the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once</th>
<th>Several times during the year</th>
<th>1 to 3 times a month</th>
<th>About once a week</th>
<th>Several times a week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read scholarly books</td>
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<td>Read scholarly journal articles</td>
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<td>Read articles about research/scholarship in professional newsletters</td>
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<td>Read articles about research/scholarship in popular news media</td>
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<td>Read blogs about research/scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read professional listserv postings about research/scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viewed online aggregators or alerts about research/scholarship</td>
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<td>Watched online videos about research/scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listened to podcasts about research/scholarship</td>
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<td>Other means of accessing research/scholarship (please elaborate)</td>
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</table>

2. When it comes to accessing research and scholarship related to your teaching and administrative work, how often do you encounter the following difficulties?

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding time to research a topic you want to know more about</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding research/scholarship that addresses a topic you want to know more about</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding topic-specific research/scholarship that is applicable to two-year college settings</td>
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<td>Finding topic-specific research/scholarship that will appeal to colleagues in your department</td>
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<td>Finding topic-specific research/scholarship that will be helpful in conversations with administrators at your college</td>
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<td>Interpreting research/scholarship written using discipline-specific terminology, conventions, or methods</td>
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<td>Accessing articles in journals to which you do not hold a subscription</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other difficulties (please specify)</td>
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</table>
Researchers affiliated with national TYCA are compiling a list of research and scholarship that two-year college English faculty find valuable. This list will inform the selections for an edited volume intended to support two-year college faculty professional development.

3. What specific books, articles, or other pieces of research/scholarship have been particularly influential to your teaching practices?

4. What specific books, articles, or other pieces of research/scholarship have been particularly influential to your sense of what it means to be a two-year college English professional?

5. What specific books, articles, or other pieces of research/scholarship have been particularly influential to administrative or program-level practices in your department?

6. When you are looking for research/scholarship on a specific topic related to your professional activities (e.g. teaching, administration, etc.), how likely are you to do the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Not at all likely</th>
<th>Not very likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Extremely likely</th>
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<tr>
<td>Search for information using a general online search engine (e.g., Google)</td>
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<td>Search for sources using a subscription academic database (e.g., EbscoHost, Academic Search Premier)</td>
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<td>Search for sources using the CompPile.org database</td>
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<td>Search for information on the NCTE website</td>
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<td>Search for sources using Google Scholar</td>
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<td>Consult with a college or university librarian</td>
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<td>Consult topic-specific bibliographies</td>
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<td>Review topic-specific readers (e.g., Bedford/St. Martin’s <em>Teaching Developmental Writing</em>)</td>
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<td>Post queries to a professional listserv (e.g., WPA-L, CBW)</td>
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<td>Post queries on social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)</td>
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<td>Ask colleagues at your college</td>
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<td>Ask colleagues at other two-year colleges</td>
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<td>Ask colleagues at four-year institutions</td>
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7. How likely are you to access or consult published research and scholarship for each of the following reasons?

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<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Not at all likely</th>
<th>Not very likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Extremely likely</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
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<td>To address an issue or challenge you are facing in the classroom</td>
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<td>To address an administrative challenge or decision in your department</td>
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<td>or institution</td>
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<td>To research a topic you are presenting on at a conference</td>
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<td>To research a topic you are writing about for publication</td>
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<td>To research a topic you are writing about for graduate coursework</td>
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<td>To stay current in the field</td>
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<td>To follow the work of a particular researcher or scholar</td>
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<td>As part of structured professional development activities in your</td>
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<td>Because a colleague recommended a particular piece of research or</td>
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<td>scholarship</td>
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<td>Because of personal interest in a particular topic</td>
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<td>Other reasons (please specify)</td>
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8. In 2013, how many academic conferences did you attend? [0–5 or more]

9. Do you hold a personal subscription to any peer-reviewed academic journals? [YES/NO]

   If yes, which ones?

10. Does your department hold a subscription to any peer-reviewed academic journals? [YES/NO]

    If yes, which ones?

11. In your experience, what aspects of two-year college English teaching and professional life have been underresearched?

12. In your opinion, what could TYCA and NCTE/CCCC do to make research and scholarship more accessible to two-year college English faculty?
13. Which of the following courses do you regularly teach? (Please mark all that apply)
   - ESL/ESOL
   - Basic/developmental writing
   - Basic/developmental reading
   - First-year writing/college composition
   - Advanced argumentation or research writing
   - Professional/technical writing
   - Creative writing
   - Journalism
   - Literature
   - Humanities
   - Ethnic or gender studies
   - Graduate-level courses in composition theory or pedagogy
   - Graduate-level courses in teaching English in the two-year college
   - Other (please specify)

14. In which of the following areas have you earned an advanced degree? (select either
     Master’s and/or Doctoral for each)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Master’s</th>
<th>Doctoral</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric and composition or writing studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical/professional writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
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<td>Creative writing</td>
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<td>Journalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied linguistics/TESOL</td>
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<td>English education</td>
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<td>Educational curriculum and instruction</td>
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<td>Educational leadership</td>
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<td>Ethnic or gender studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. In which of the following areas have you completed significant graduate coursework? (Please mark all that apply)
   - Rhetoric and composition/writing studies
   - Technical/professional writing
   - Literature
   - Creative writing
   - Applied linguistics/TESOL
   - English education
   - Educational curriculum and instruction
   - Educational leadership
> Ethnic or gender studies
> Other (please specify)

16. How would you describe your current employment status? (Please mark all that apply)
> Graduate student (master’s)
> Graduate student (doctoral)
> Part-time faculty at a two-year college
> Part-time faculty at multiple two-year colleges
> Part-time faculty at both two- and four-year institutions
> Full-time faculty at a two-year college
> Full-time faculty at a four-year institution
> Former/retired faculty at a two-year college
> Former/retired faculty at a four-year institution
> Other (please specify)

Thank you for sharing your time and insight. The researchers will share findings from this survey with the TYCA membership in the near future.

Notes

1. At the time the survey was conducted, Christie was a graduate student at the University of Michigan.
2. This “expert generalist” role (Reynolds, “Twenty-Five” 233) was also evident in respondents’ teaching duties: while the vast majority of the 109 who responded to this question (90%) said they regularly taught first-year writing, 61% also taught literature; 49% taught basic/developmental writing; 45% taught advanced argumentation or research writing; 21% taught developmental reading; 19% taught professional or technical writing, 18% taught general humanities, 15% taught creative writing, and 6% taught English as a second language. Several also noted that they worked in their colleges’ writing centers.

Works Cited


Christie Toth is an assistant professor in the University of Utah’s Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies and has taught at several two-year colleges, most recently Diné College in Crownpoint, New Mexico. She has been an NCTE member since 2006. Patrick Sullivan teaches English at Manchester Community College in Manchester, Connecticut, and is the author of *A New Writing Classroom: Listening, Motivation, and Habits of Mind* (Utah State University Press, 2014). He has been an NCTE member for twenty years.

**THE NCTE RESEARCH FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2015 GRANT RECIPIENTS**

The NCTE Research Foundation has awarded research grants to Toby Emert, associate professor and chair of the Department of Education, Agnes Scott College, for “ESL Learners and High-Tech Storytelling: Promoting Academic Confidence”; Jennifer Escobar, English instructor, Moreno Valley College (with collaborator Aja Henriquez), for “Examining the Effects of a Critical Reading Selection Framework and Process in the Community College Classroom”; and Robert Marx, doctoral candidate, Vanderbilt University, for “‘My Sadness Is a Knife’: Spoken Word Poetry in the English Language Arts Classroom.” For more information on these projects, please visit http://www.ncte.org/research-foundation/recipients.