I am grateful, excited, and humbled to be writing this piece opening my first official issue as editor of TETYC. Following a decade of leadership by Jeff Sommers (West Chester University) is daunting, and I will strive to maintain the high quality of rigorous scholarship that Jeff upheld during his tenure as the editor. With apologies to M. H. Abrams, I want to draw on the metaphor that was the title of his 1953 work of literary criticism. In this context, I’m repurposing it to frame my thinking about the role of scholarly journals in general and for Teaching English in the Two-Year College in particular. The metaphor of the mirror and the lamp speaks to me because it provides a figurative way to think about the necessary work of the scholarly publishing enterprise. Is the responsibility to be a mirror—to reflect the best of current work and the field as it is? Or is it to be a lamp—to move our field forward, lighting the way to new directions, new emphases, and responding to new and emerging needs? My goal moving ahead with the journal is to provide a balance of both; in this first (longer-than-will-be-usual) editor’s introduction, I outline my vision for the journal moving into the future. I also give a preview of what readers will find in this issue.

Drawn largely from a TYCA Workshop in 2012 that brought together participants and presenters interested in the evolving roles and responsibilities of the teacher-scholar of two-year college English, my essay “Research Gaps in Teaching English in the Two-Year College” appeared in the May 2013 issue of TETYC. My primary claim, after having reviewed 239 articles over a decade’s issues of TETYC, was the need for increasing systematic inquiry into teaching and learning in the two-year college, an argument my colleague Joanne Giordano and I also made in our 2013 College Composition and Communication article, “Occupy Writing Studies.” TETYC has effectively focused in the past on teacher narrative and reflection and on systematic research into teaching and learning, and it has directed readers to important publications in the field that can enhance their work. My piece called for more work with an assessment component and studies that undertook investigation into a research question, in the vein of scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). My subsequent column, “Inquiry,” appeared over the last three years in each issue of TETYC, outlining the typical steps in an SoTL project, one that starts with a focused question, undertakes a purposeful inquiry, collects and uses evidence of student learning, and situates findings within the context of published research. As editor of TETYC, I will strive to balance the need for teacher reflection and narrative with assessment and research-focused feature articles; this
emphasis continues to respond to the call made by CCCC Chair and two-year college teacher-scholar John C. Lovas in the 2002 CCC essay, “All Good Writing Develops at the Edge of Risk”:

Much of the theorizing in our profession about basic writing, assessment, grading practices, teaching methods, and text production by students has a thin empirical base. This is not to say that two-year college scholars have done an adequate job of documenting the work in these institutions. We are called the “invisible colleges” both because university researchers rarely study our programs and our students, and because two-year college departments rarely publish program and institutional-based studies of our programs and our students. Then, the small but useful body of scholarship on two-year college writing programs is simply ignored by scholars who do publish in our journals. (276)

Adding substance to the empirical base of what we know about teaching and learning inside and outside our English classrooms (not just in writing but in all aspects of the teaching of English in the two-year college) is a critical part of my vision for TETYC in the coming years, as is supporting the goals and standards outlined in the multiple position statements from TYCA on the scholarly preparation and scholarly engagement of two-year college English faculty (TYCA, “Characteristics”; TYCA, “Guidelines”; TYCA, “Research”).

Beyond contributing to the scholarly foundation in postsecondary English studies, TETYC fulfills the important and multifaceted function of addressing the professional and teaching needs of readers with diverse backgrounds and contexts. In “Research Gaps,” my observation was that while the literature, composition, and creative writing curricula were well represented, other topics had been less prevalent. I’ll aim in my editorship to offer a balance of pieces that meet readers’ needs for innovative teaching ideas with pieces that complement the increasingly diverse responsibilities of the TYC teacher, scholar, administrator, activist (see Sullivan). Many of us have responsibilities for program assessment, for writing centers, for faculty development work, and for evaluating instructors, among others. I hope to represent those topics in the journal and am especially interested in manuscripts that address this side of the work that we do in two-year college English departments. In this way, I see the journal as a mirror, reflecting the real needs of colleagues across the country.

Along with a change in editorship is a change in some of the features that the journal publishes. I’m introducing two new features very purposefully intended to address the needs of the busy two-year college teacher-scholar. The Symposium, outlined in the submission guidelines, is a genre where writers tackle an impor-
EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

I’ve started an Editor’s Blog that I hope will be one method to communicate with readers in between issues.

I invite proposals for symposia that bring together diverse voices on the selected topic and that map out the important perspectives on that topic. Some ideas for symposia that I would welcome are pieces that discuss developmental education reform, dual enrollment programs, articulation agreements and challenges between two-year and four-year campuses, evaluating the work of programs and instructors, professional development for two-year college instructors, and contingency in the two-year college. The Review Essay fulfills a similar function. In addition to reviews of individual books or electronic resources, the review essay should identify a cluster of related texts or sources that focus on a shared topic. The editorial team will accept or reject ideas for review essays and symposia and will work with the author(s) to complete the review and revision process. Ultimately, these two new features are intended to meet the needs of two-year college teachers who hold teaching-intensive positions and the wide range of responsibilities that character our jobs. These two new features offer an accessible avenue to staying up-to-date on new developments, trends, and scholarship in the field. I hope these features will be a tool for responding to the demands that two-year college faculty have on their time and to advance the participation of two-year college faculty in the current scholarly conversations. Jeff Andelora wrote in “Forging a National Identity: TYCA and the Two-Year College Teacher-Scholar” in 2008 that “[t]wo-year college English faculty are a vital part of the discipline” and urged TYC faculty to “find a way to take part in the discipline’s scholarship. What this requires, however, is that two-year college English faculty not only take the initiative in redefining what counts as viable scholarship, but also engage in that scholarship” (350). My aim is to support faculty in that project through new features, new digital resources, and ongoing mentoring and support in the future.

With new directions also come past traditions that are not pursued. In this case, I will be discontinuing the publication of poetry in the journal. Like College English, which previously published creative work but discontinued it under the editorship of Jeanne Gunner, I’ve decided to streamline the journal’s emphasis, focusing on the academic genres characteristic of peer-reviewed journals.

Along those lines, I’m working toward enhancing the digital presence of the journal. Of course, TETYC is already available online for subscribers. I’ve started an Editor’s Blog that I hope will be one method to communicate with readers in between issues (for example, announcements about calls for papers and special issues, reflections on the journal editing process, or sharing new digital resources). The first few blog posts are available at https://tetyc.wordpress.com/. Second, I hope to make the journal’s work more visible by continuing to add resources to the TETYC webpage. At the site (http://www.ncte.org/journals/tetyc), you can now find “TETYC Advice for Reviewers” that includes additional framing information.
for how to evaluate manuscripts and more detailed genre expectations for the Instructional Note feature of the journal. Further, Christie Toth and Patrick Sullivan’s coauthored piece in the March 2016 issue of TETYC offers suggestions for the professional needs of two-year college teacher-scholars—podcasts, virtual reading circles, and other ways of developing what they call “teacher-scholar communities of practice.” I’ll continue to seek ways to bring the professional resources of the journal to a broader readership—or put another way, I will continue to seek the ideas of readers and writers as a lamp, to guide my editorial work moving forward.

In this issue, I hope you’ll see a combination of reflection and light—pieces that offer ideas for the classroom to engage students in the complex work of literacy development, alongside pieces that contribute to the growing body of research into student learning. Readers looking for new ideas on using film or selecting readings for literature courses will find David B. Raymond’s “The Literature of Work: Developing a Thematic Unit on Work” and Allison Bressmer’s “Using Alfred Hitchcock’s Psycho to Demonstrate the Importance of Thoughtful Reading and Writing” in this issue, pieces that frame textual choices in the context of course learning goals. Lykourgos Vasileiou’s Instructional Note, “Online Peer Review across Sections,” similarly offers classroom insights drawn from integrating Web 2.0 technologies into an online writing class.

Other pieces in this issue speak to some of the new trends in the discipline, including the emerging disciplinary interest in threshold concepts (what Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle define as “concepts that are critical for epistemological participation in a discipline”), as J. Michael Rifenburg reports on a study of student–athletes and, he argues, undervalued forms of bodily literacy. Rifenburg’s study introduces the idea of play literacy, or “a form of literacy in which the body is positioned as a central mode of meaning-making for the construction, internalization, and delivery of these plays.” This essay builds on the work currently being done in writing studies to characterize threshold concepts, most recently articulated in Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies, edited by Adler-Kassner and Wardle.

This close examination of student learning is complemented by several other pieces that examine program-level efforts. Leah Anderst, Jennifer Maloy, and Jed Shahar have contributed their study, “Assessing the Accelerated Learning Program Model for Linguistically Diverse Developmental Writing Students.” With the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP)’s widespread implementation nationally, it’s increasingly important that the value of this model be traced, and this piece reports on a study of Queensborough Community College’s ALP students, specifically examining the program’s effectiveness for students with diverse educational and linguistic backgrounds. Cassandra Phillips and Joanne Baird Giordano’s “Developing a Cohesive Academic Literacy Program for Underprepared Students” is a program report. As the recipients of the 2015 Diana Hacker TYCA Outstanding Programs in English Awards for Two-Year Colleges and Teachers for Enhancing Developmental Education, Phillips and Giordano provide a comprehensive overview of the disciplinary and pedagogical underpinnings of the developmental and first-year writing
EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

Taking a similarly “program-level” examination is “Writing Center Efficacy at the Community College: How Students, Tutors, and Instructors Concur and Diverge in Their Perceptions of Services” by Ilona Missakian, Carol Booth Olson, Rebecca W. Black, and Tina Matuchniak, which reports on a study of the points of convergence and divergence in how various stakeholders conceive of the two-year college writing center.

Lastly, Asao B. Inoue’s review essay on Barbara Walvoord’s Assessing and Improving Student Writing in College and Ed White, Norbert Eliot, and Irvin Peckham’s Very Like a Whale: The Assessment of Writing Programs both provides readers with a glimpse into the strengths and weaknesses of these book-length volumes and gestures toward gaps in the scholarship on assessing student writing and assessing writing programs in ways that (like the lamp!) should make clear the future areas of research that are necessary in the discipline.

Moving into the future, readers can expect upcoming special issues on graduate and ongoing preparation of two-year college English faculty and academic freedom in the two-year college. I look forward to continuing to engage TETYC readers in the critical issues shaping and framing our daily teaching lives. On a related note, the Two-Year College English Association has created a listserv for two-year college English teachers—this is another way that members of our profession can continue to be engaged in between issues of the journal. To join, contact me at tetyc.editor@gmail.com.

Note

1. Because I regularly collaborate with Giordano and Phillips on research projects, their article was reviewed and handled exclusively by outgoing editor Jeff Sommers to avoid any conflict of interest.

Works Cited


