

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the 'REC'

What exactly is the REC?

The REC is the Regional Executive Committee. Each of the seven TYCA regionals is guided by an executive committee.

What does the REC do?

The REC oversees the direction of the regional. Its primary aim is to advance the TYCA mission, which is “to promote the teaching and study of English in the two-year college, to advance the theories and practices of teaching English in the two-year college, and to provide a national voice for the two-year college in postsecondary education.” Its chief means of achieving these goals is the annual TYCA Northeast fall conference.

Does the REC actually organize the annual conferences?

The REC itself does not organize or present the annual TYCA Northeast conference, but it provides support and guidance to those who do. The REC works with individuals from host institutions who do the actual planning and presenting of the annual conference. Several of those individuals serve on the REC during the year the conference is being planned and presented. These include the Program Chair, Assistant Program Chair and Local Arrangements Chair. Many who have served on the REC have had first-hand experience organizing and presenting conferences.

Are members of the REC elected or appointed?

At the core of the REC are the seven at-large elected members. Two of these positions come up every year for an election held at the fall conference. Those elected to these positions serve three-year terms. An individual may serve two consecutive terms. This includes the TYCA National Representative, who represents the regional at TYCA national meetings held at the CCCC and NCTE annual conferences.

Besides those elected at-large to the REC by the membership, there are also REC-elected positions; that is, individuals elected by the REC for specific duties. These currently include Archivist, Newsletter Editor, Web Tender, and the aforementioned Conference Program Chair, Assistant Program Chair and Local Arrangements Chair. When such positions become vacant, the REC puts out the word via the newsletter and web site, seeking those who might be interested.

How often does the REC meet?

The REC meets formally twice a year: once at the conclusion of the fall conference, usually Saturday afternoon, and then again sometime in the winter for a business meeting, which is usually held at the site of the upcoming fall conference.

What is it that members of the REC do?

Here's a quick rundown of the various REC roles.

Chair. The Chair presides at REC meetings; serves on the TYCA Executive Committee (i.e., the national TYCA committee), which meets at the annual CCCC and NCTE conventions each year; and serves as official contact person between the regional and the NCTE Associate Executive Director for Higher Education.

Vice Chair. Presides at REC meetings in the absence of the REC chair. The Vice Chair also works on special projects or projects designated by the REC.

Secretary. Keeps minutes of all meetings; forwards minutes to all members of REC.

Treasurer. Takes responsibility for financial transactions of the regional; maintains financial records; prepares regular financial reports to the REC and the NCTE and IRS.

Membership Chair. Maintains up-to-date list of names and addresses of regional members; works on strategies to increase regional membership.

Future Sites Chair. This is one of the most crucial positions on the REC. The future sites person works with individuals who are interested in hosting future conferences, makes recommendations to the REC for sites for conferences, and, once a site is approved by the REC, provides assistance to those hosting the conference in finding a suitable hotel, working out the contract details, and so on.

State Representatives Chair. This individual directs the activities of state representatives—volunteers who work within their states to spread word about TYCA and upcoming conferences. The state reps meet during the fall conference at a meeting organized by the State Reps Chair.

Representative to National TYCA Executive Committee. This person serves as liaison to TYCA Executive Committee. In so doing, the TYCA National Rep attends both the CCCC and NCTE annual conventions. Special executive meetings of representatives of all the regionals are held at these conferences. The TYCA National Rep also contributes to the “TYCA to You” column in *TETYC* and reports to the regional membership through a column in the *Nor'easter*, the regional newsletter.

Conference Program Chair. This is the person who takes responsibility for putting the program together for the upcoming conference. There is usually a committee or team from the host college that focuses on tasks related to the program. The Program Chair leads this group and serves as a liaison to the REC.

Assistant Program Chair. Works closely with the Program Chair.

Conference Local Arrangements Chair. This is the person who takes charge of all other arrangements outside of the program. This includes hotel arrangements and conference registrations. Again, this individual usually heads up a group from the host college.

Newsletter Editor. The newsletter editor solicits material for the twice-yearly issues of the *Nor'easter* newsletters, which is currently published in the spring and fall. The editor is responsible for overseeing all that goes into the production and mailing of the newsletter. This includes editing and selecting all material that is published.

Immediate Past Chair. The Immediate Past Chair serves as a resource to the incoming REC Chair and advises the REC when requested.

Archivist. Maintains documents collected over the organization's thirty-plus years. This includes all conference programs, financial reports, and minutes of REC meetings.

Web Tender. The Web Tender maintains and updates the TYCA Northeast web site. The web site currently provides back editions of the *Nor'easter*, information on upcoming conferences, and links to other vital sites, including NCTE and TYCA National.

Are these jobs really time consuming?

Time commitment varies from job to job. The REC Chair in particular has significant responsibilities and is often the "go to" person when questions arise. Those individuals who are most closely involved with organizing the annual conference have very large jobs indeed. Other jobs on the REC may involve a somewhat lesser time commitment, as the brief descriptions above suggest. Those who serve on the REC generally find a job that suits them, and the time commitments of a particular job are offset by the rewards such involvement offers.

What are some of those rewards?

First of all, it's a great experience working with like-minded, dedicated colleagues from across the region. Simply put, people who serve on the REC invariably are great people to spend time with. In addition, serving on the REC is an excellent way to learn about what goes on at other colleges across the region. However, the greatest satisfactions are found in knowing that one is making a significant contribution to the profession.

Let's say I'm interested in serving on the REC. What do I do?

Getting elected is one way to get on the REC. As mentioned above, there is an election each year at the fall conference. You could get in touch with any member of the Nominating Committee to express your interest in being included on the ballot. Here is this year's nominating committee:

- Dave Critchett dcritchett@ccri.edu
- Beth Butts ebutts@dccc.edu
- Tim McLaughlin tmclaughlin@bhcc.mass.edu

Appointment is another route to the REC. Again, it's important to let members of the REC know of your interest. As mentioned earlier, the REC will advertise openings for spots like Archivist and Newsletter Editor, as well as other special projects that may come up. And of course the REC is always looking for individuals who are interested in putting on a conference!

What are some of the other ways of getting more involved with the organization outside of the REC?

There are two important avenues to consider. One is serving on the Nominating Committee. Each year three individuals are elected to serve on this important committee. Contact any member of the current Nominating Committee for more information on this.

Serving as a state representative is also an excellent idea. The state reps comprise an informal body, volunteers all, whose main work is to spread the good word about TYCA to colleges in their area. The state reps meet each year at the fall conference, usually for breakfast on Saturday morning. They network, strategize and set goals for the year. This is another great way to meet colleagues from across the region and to contribute in a highly valuable way to our organization.