

# Tisch Library Journal Salon: Improving Cross-Departmental Communication via Informal Professional Development

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**Abstract:** Effective communication across departments in academic libraries can be challenging, but the literature discussing this issue and potential solutions is sparse. In an attempt to address these issues, we implemented a library-wide Journal Salon at our institution not only to facilitate learning and knowledge sharing, but also to create the opportunity for staff from different departments to come together to discuss research and trends in our profession. In order to evaluate the impact of the Journal Salon, we surveyed participants to: learn how they had been keeping up with library research, learn more about how cross-departmental communication had been occurring prior to our endeavor, and to understand the perceptions of the impact that the Journal Salon has had thus far. We found that the majority of participants feel that barriers to communicating with colleagues outside of their department do exist, and that those who have been successful in navigating these barriers have done so by making an individual, interpersonal effort. While changes to communication structures take time, the survey responses suggest that our Journal Salon is a promising venue to facilitate interpersonal connections between staff who might not otherwise have the opportunity to interact on a regular basis.

**Keywords:** *library communication, professional development, knowledge sharing*



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## Introduction

Tisch Library is the main Arts & Sciences library on the Medford campus of Tufts University, and the largest of the six libraries across all of Tufts' four campuses. Tisch has eleven departments and employs over 60 staff members. In the spring of 2016, two librarians new to Tisch Library sought ways to build relationships with their colleagues across departments. To facilitate these connections, we started the Tisch Library Journal Salon, an informal venue for library staff to discuss professional issues and trends. In this article, we discuss the creation and implementation of the Tisch Library Journal Salon, as well as reflect on the impact it has had in improving cross-departmental communication at Tisch Library.

## Literature Review

There is limited literature on cross-departmental communication in libraries but the sources we found show a demonstrated effort to create a well-integrated library staff (Chalmers, Liedtka, & Bednar, 2006; Lubas & Bordeianu, 2013). One example of this is a desire to create a shared language across departments where one did not previously exist in order to create a more unified staff (Lubas & Bordeianu, 2013; Xu, 1996). Librarianship is an incredibly jargon-heavy profession and unique dialects exist within different departments, further complicating cross-departmental communication. Additionally, the literature reports that there is a desire among staff in different departments to be informed about what is happening in their library, but that existing structures hinder that information sharing (Mautino & Lorenzen, 2013; Chalmers et al., 2006; Gossen & Reynolds, 1990). Informal information sharing, like the "grapevine conversations" Chalmers, et. al. (2006) mention, are common information conduits when larger organizational structures do not lend themselves well to cross-departmental communication (p.186). Gossen and Reynolds (1990) found that some library staff felt isolated and that the departments within the library felt fragmented because the library lacked a

formal structure for cross-departmental communication (p.19). These feelings run counter to the ideal of unified library staff working toward a shared vision.

We were pleased to discover that the majority of the literature we reviewed focused on solutions for improving cross-departmental communication, with a strong emphasis on skill-sharing and cross-training. This skill-sharing and cross-training took a variety of different forms. Some librarians worked on cross-training solely to better understand what their counterparts in other departments did (Foley, Barbrow, & Hartline, 2015; Gossen & Reynolds, 1990). Others focused on skill-sharing to improve library user experience at various service points or training to ensure all library employees had support in developing leadership skills (Mautino & Lorenzen, 2013; Metzger, 2006). Lastly, some libraries found success in creating cross-departmental teams that collaborated on a project (Ghaphery et al., 2016; Lubas & Bordeianu, 2013). Inspired by these readings, we sought to create our own venue for cross-departmental communication, one that would help librarians and library staff from across the Tisch Library understand one another's perspectives on issues and trends in the library profession.

We identified journal clubs as one strategy for improving communication across departments. In journal clubs, groups of professionals read and then discuss current research in a particular discipline. The first description of a journal club for librarians was published in the *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association* in 1976 (Klein & Slowinski, 1976). Case studies of the adoption of journal clubs in different library contexts have since been published and highlight the specific motives of specialized groups. For instance, medical librarians at the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University participated in a journal club to obtain continuing education credits from the Medical Library Association (Seago, Turman, Horne, Croom, & Cary, 1994). Both tenure-track and non-tenure-track librarians participate in journal clubs to keep abreast of research for their publication

requirements, as a forum for discussing new ideas extending beyond their typical duties, and also as a way to interact with colleagues outside of their own department (Barsky, 2009; Hickman & Allen, 2005; Kraemer, 2007).

Journal clubs serve many purposes, most notably as a form of continuing education to keep professionals current on new developments in their field (Deenadayalan et al., 2008). Journal clubs create a forum for discussion and a way to share knowledge with colleagues, promote increased engagement with research, and have the potential to inspire evidence-based change or improvement of current practices (Fitzgibbons, 2015; Pearce-Smith, 2006; Young & Vilelle, 2011). Additionally, they support an institutional culture of continuous, collaborative learning and self-evaluation (Fitzgibbons, 2015).

The majority of case studies do not provide an evaluation of the outcomes of journal clubs beyond anecdotal evidence. Evaluation, however, is vital to determine the impact and value of journal clubs in different contexts and to identify best practices for their continued sustainability and success. In the only evaluative case study available, information specialists and health librarians located in Oxford developed a journal club in an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice in evidence-based librarianship (Pearce-Smith, 2006). After collecting survey responses, participants reported they read more library scholarship and felt more confident in their critical appraisal abilities than they did prior to the group discussions (Pearce-Smith, 2006). More recently, however, authors such as Fitzgibbons et al. (2017) and Young & Vilelle (2011) have begun to collect data from academic librarians about their own practices and perceptions of the value of journal clubs. Interview data collected by Fitzgibbons, Kloda and Miller suggests that academic librarians believe journal clubs can help in increasing professional development, creating meaningful collaborations, bringing theory to action, and encouraging an institutional culture where research is valued (Fitzgibbons, Kloda, & Miller-*Journal of New Librarianship*, 4(2019) pp. 212-240 10.21173/newlibs/6/16 215

Nesbitt, 2017). Reported outcomes of journal clubs from Young & Vilelle's (2011) survey included an increased feeling of community among colleagues and the provision of a low-stakes open forum for exchanging ideas. However, less than half of respondents reported any real changes occurring as a direct result of journal club participation.

While journal clubs are a popular way for healthcare professionals to keep up with new research affecting their practice (Deenadayalan, Grimmer-Somers, Prior, & Kumar, 2008), in our survey of the literature we found minimal information on this form of continuing education for librarians in general, let alone for the specific population of academic librarians we hoped to investigate. It has been suggested that the sparse amount of literature may indicate that journal clubs are not very common in academic libraries, or that librarians who do take part in this type of professional development are simply not publishing their outcomes (Hickman & Allen, 2005; Pearce-Smith, 2006). In 2011, Young and Vilelle sought to determine the extent that academic librarians are participating in journal clubs. The results of their survey indicated that journal clubs in academic libraries have become more common in the last decade (Young & Vilelle, 2011).

In this article, we hope to contribute to the small but potentially growing body of evaluative literature and provide a model for other academic librarians to facilitate knowledge sharing and cross-departmental communication.

### **Design and Implementation of the Tisch Library Journal Salon**

The practices and format of library journal clubs have been reported fairly consistently. Typically, a volunteer is responsible for selecting the reading(s) to be discussed during the meeting and facilitating the discussion itself (Young & Vilelle, 2011). This volunteer role may rotate among participants so that the responsibility doesn't always fall to the same person (Pearce-Smith, 2006). Scholarly, peer-reviewed sources are commonly selected as readings, both from within and outside of

library literature. In almost all cases, it is expected that attendees will have read the selected article(s) before the meeting. Meetings are held regularly, usually monthly, and last for 1 to 1.5 hours. The involvement of paraprofessionals in library clubs varies, with the majority of journal clubs reporting being open to all library staff members (Young & Vilelle, 2011). In one case students were also invited to join (Barsky, 2009), but the majority of participants are librarians.

After reviewing the literature about library journal clubs extensively, we began designing our version of a journal club for staff at Tisch Library. We felt very strongly that our meetings should be inclusive and open to all library staff in all library departments. While we acknowledge that journal clubs within research and instruction departments can provide a certain depth of conversation, we wanted to include cross-library perspectives in our meetings. In a further effort to make our club inclusive of all voices, we decided that meetings would start with a “seed article” to start the conversation, but that participants should come to each meeting with a related item to share. While the seed article is generally scholarly, the items participants bring to share can be anything, from infographics to YouTube videos. We feel there is a lot of value in nontraditional forms of scholarship and felt that not limiting participants to scholarly materials would make sharing less intimidating. Encouraging participants to bring items to share also circumvents the idea of the meeting facilitator as being a “sage on the stage,” instead putting the onus on all participants to shape the discussions. We chose to call our club the Journal Salon in order to place the value on the conversations that would take place therein. Our goal was not to dissect a piece of scholarly literature, but rather to learn from our colleagues across the library, with the literature serving as an inspiration for conversation.

Furthering the spirit of inclusivity, we scheduled the Journal Salon meetings quarterly, at times when the library was quieter and more people would be able to attend. The meetings are scheduled for an hour and a half in the late afternoon, so as not to interfere with hourly staff’s lunch hours, and light

refreshments are provided. The facilitator of each Salon is responsible for choosing the seed article and identifying the overall theme, which is distributed to all staff at least one week prior to the meeting to give participants ample reading time. The facilitator is also responsible for creating at least five open-ended discussion questions which are projected during the meeting to help guide the conversation. The first hour of each meeting is spent discussing the facilitator's questions and the last half hour is reserved for participants to share out the items they have brought that relate to the meeting's theme. The overall tone of the meetings is informal by design and all participants are encouraged to share their thoughts. While we served as facilitators for the first two meetings of the Journal Salon in order to establish a baseline for how meetings will be run, we have since solicited volunteers from the group to facilitate meetings. This will help avoid burnout by spreading facilitation duties among a larger group and helps to develop the egalitarian spirit of the Tisch Library Journal Salon.

We created a simple Wordpress site for the Journal Salon as a place to collect all of the items the participants brought to each meeting (<https://sites.tufts.edu/journalsalon/>). After each meeting, one of the authors updates the Meeting Resources page with links to all of the items brought to the meetings. The website also serves as a place to host the mission statement, procedures and the ground rules. We felt it was important to set the ground rules for the conversations in advance of our first meeting to reflect our vision of how possible conflicting opinions should be handled, but we have had no problems with the tone of conversations held within the Journal Salon. All of our meetings have been positive, engaging and an excellent opportunity to interface with staff with whom we may not otherwise get the opportunity to discuss professional issues and trends.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

Prior to the first Journal Salon meeting, we sent out a Qualtrics survey to all potential participants: staff at Tisch Library, which is the main library on Tufts' Medford campus; our affiliates,

including the Library at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and Lilly Music Library, as well as University Library Technology Services. Our intentions were twofold: (1) to better understand how our colleagues keep up with professional literature on their own, and (2) to determine whether research and trends in librarianship are discussed cross-departmentally, and if so, in what context these conversations occur. We did this to establish a baseline for how cross-departmental communication had been occurring prior to the Journal Salon. The survey included both open-ended and close-ended questions. For all open questions, we coded responses in order to interpret and analyze the results. All responses were anonymous.

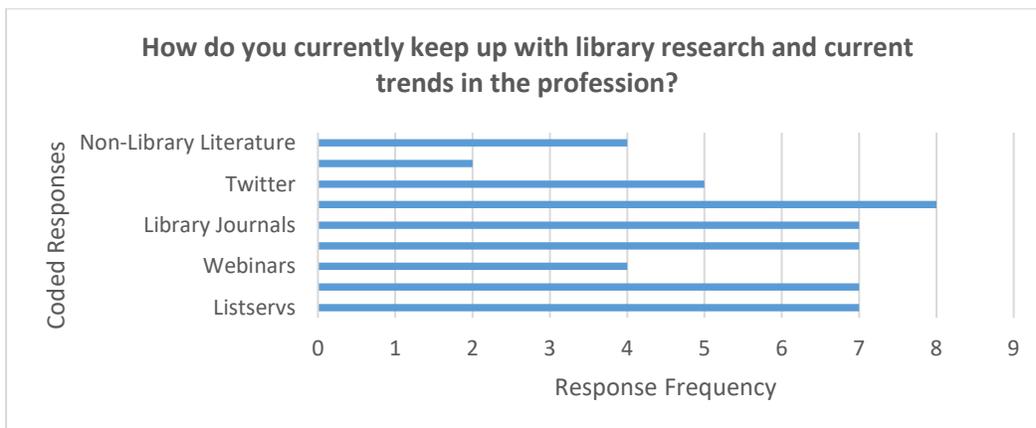
In September of 2016, after two Journal Salon meetings had taken place, we sent out a second Qualtrics survey to assess both the impact that the Journal Salon had thus far on cross-departmental communication, as well as to receive feedback from attendees for future improvements. All who responded to our survey attended at least one of the two meetings. We asked questions about the frequency, channels, and barriers for cross-departmental communication both prior to, as well as after the Journal Salon meetings. This survey consisted of both open-response and close-ended questions, with all open responses being coded for analysis. Responses were anonymous, but in this case respondents were given the option to identify in which department they work.

In August of 2018, after nearly two years and ten meetings, we sent out a third survey to further assess the impact of Journal Salon on cross-departmental communication. Additionally, we wanted to know if it was serving its purpose as an inclusive space for discussing noteworthy issues in academic libraries. This survey consisted primarily of close-ended Likert scales, with open response boxes for participants to suggest future topics for Journal Salon meetings and general suggestions for improvements.

Our study was reviewed by the Institutional Review Board and determined to be exempt. A list of our survey questions can be found in the Appendix.

### Discussion: Pre-Journal Salon Survey

This survey had a total of nineteen responses (which is approximately one third of the total library staff). We found that people keep current with the profession in a variety of ways. Conferences (15%), blogs (14%), library journals (14%), conversations with colleagues (14%), and listservs (14%) were the most frequently reported methods for keeping up to date with scholarship and trends in librarianship (Figure 1). This indicates that there is no one central or “preferred” way that staff learn, and informed our decision to encourage attendees to share materials at the Journal Salon beyond traditional scholarly journal articles. In being less prescriptive about the materials that are shared and discussed at meetings, we hoped to appeal to a wider audience and make people more inclined to share the responsibility of facilitating meetings thereby addressing the sustainability of these events over time (Young & Vilelle, 2011). Additionally, by encouraging the inclusion of more diverse materials in Journal Salon meetings, we hoped to work to legitimize other, less traditional, ways of learning about librarianship.



**Figure 1.** Responses to the open-ended question addressing how library staff had been keeping up with trends and research in librarianship, prior to the Journal Salon. 19 total responses.

Among the myriad of responses to the question of how our colleagues are keeping up with professional trends and scholarship, we also noted that learning and professional development tended to happen mostly via external communities (ie- blogs, webinars, conferences) as opposed to internal communities (ie. conversations with colleagues at Tisch Library).

In our pre-survey we also asked our colleagues about the contexts in which they have discussed librarianship cross-departmentally. The vast majority of responses (94%) confirm that library staff are discussing research & trends outside of their departments. The largest percentage of these conversations is happening at conferences (n=9, 26%), followed by informal internal discussions (n=8, 24%), and then cross-departmental meetings (n=6, 18%) (Figure 2). Responses to this question did indicate informal discussions were one of the most reported means of cross-departmental communication, however we did notice that fewer staff members (14%) indicated that they were “keeping up” with the profession through these conversations with colleagues (see **Figure 1**). We speculate that this could mean people do not feel as though they are learning from their colleagues in the same way that they learn through external, more formal sources like articles and blogs.

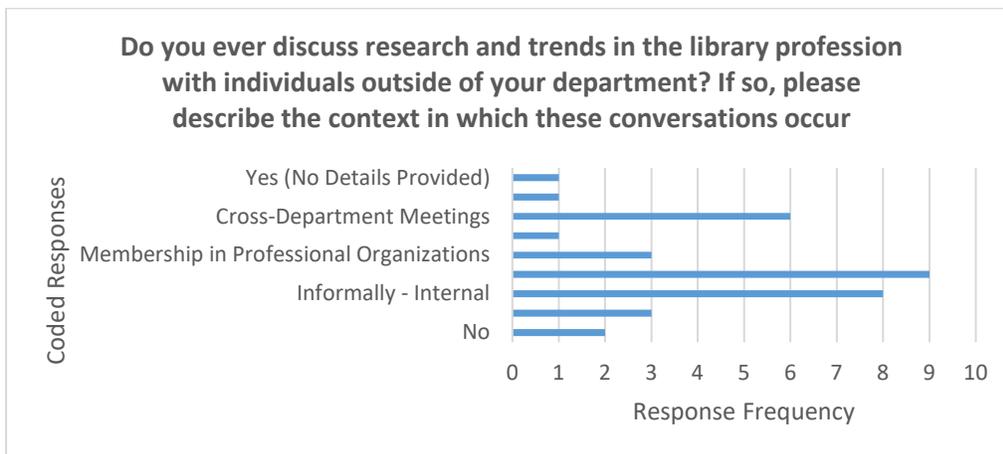


Figure 2. Coded responses to the open-ended question addressing the frequency and context in which cross-departmental communication occurred prior to the Journal Salon. We distinguished informal cross-departmental discussions as either “internal” (meaning they are occurring with colleagues within Tisch Library) or “external” (meaning they are occurring with colleagues outside of Tisch Library). 19 total responses.

When examining responses to the question of cross-departmental communication overall, we note that there are about equal mentions of external conversations occurring outside of Tisch Library (total n=16) and internal conversations occurring within Tisch Library (total n=15) (Table 1). Focusing on just the internal conversations, we noticed that there are roughly the same number of cross-departmental conversations happening in structured settings, such as cross-department projects (n=1) and meetings (n=6), as are happening informally (n=8) (Table 1). Taken together, these findings form the basis for the introduction of the Journal Salon at our institution as both an attempt to increase cross-departmental interaction within Tisch Library, and also to create a forum from which colleagues can learn from one other.

**Table 1. Frequency of External vs. Internal Conversations, Pre-Journal Salon.** This table discounts the following responses: (1) where no details were given on the context of the cross-departmental communication, and (2) when participants responded that they did not communicate outside of their department. 19 total responses.

Type of Cross-Departmental Communication	Frequency of Responses
<b>External Conversations</b>	<b>16</b>
Conferences (n=9)	
Membership in professional organizations (n=3)	
Informal discussions (n=3)	
Listserves (n=1)	
<b>Internal Conversations - Informal</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Internal Conversations – Formal</b>	<b>7</b>
Cross-department meetings (n=6)	
Cross-department projects (n=1)	

### Discussion: 2016 Post-Journal Salon Survey

This survey had a total of fifteen responses (which is approximately 25% of Tisch library staff). After two meetings of the Journal Salon had occurred, we asked participants if they had experienced any barriers to cross-departmental communication at Tisch Library. Ten out of fourteen responses indicated some barrier to communication at Tisch. There were mentions of things like “silos,”

confusion of who should be receiving various communications and that library departments feel “compartmentalized.” One respondent wrote:

The nature of my work and where my work occurs allows me to interact with some departments quite a bit. For other departments (such as Access [Services], the DDS [Digital Design Studio]), my work does not naturally bring me into such frequent contact with staff... Additionally, there might be something around the perceived departmental cultures. Some departments are thought to be more insular than others.

Another respondent wrote: “Personally, no, since I have to communicate with many people across departments all the time. But I do notice a lack of communication in general between departments, on a higher level (as opposed to people chatting “behind the scenes”) and a feeling of “they” vs. “us” in certain departments.” There was not any further explanation of the insularity of some departments from others, nor were any departments specifically named.

We also asked participants if they had been able to work around those barriers to communication successfully and if so, how they had accomplished it. We noticed that everyone who had indicated that they had been successful in working around the communication barriers had made an interpersonal effort, for example trying to be approachable, maintaining one-on-one relationships, finding ways to interact with one another, etc. All effort towards this end was done on the personal level, which seems to indicate that there are not necessarily institutional or structural supports in place for developing these relationships. We noticed that there were no mentions of things like staff meetings or other more formal venues for communication, rather all efforts appear to be individually-initiated and grassroots. One respondent wrote:

Somewhat, by looking for projects [that] can involve colleagues from other departments and by trying to be inclusive about when staff from multiple departments can get involved. It's not always easy or successful, and it seems like there is a limited number of people who are willing to work on cross-departmental projects.

While it is heartening to know that individual staff members are trying to reach out across departments, the lack of institutional or structural supports makes it challenging for such efforts to be

successful. We sought to provide a more neutral space for staff from different departments to discuss library issues and current trends, a space where the focus was on the discussion of shared experiences/challenges.

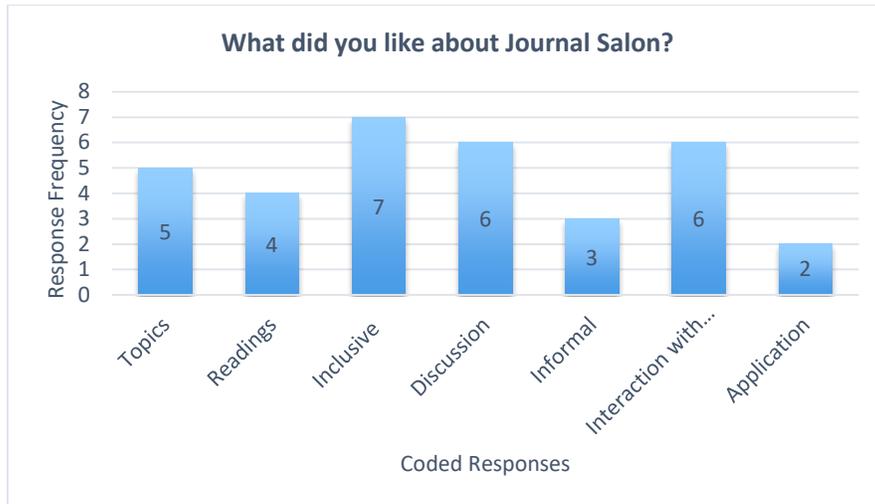


Figure 3. Coded responses to the open-ended question addressing what participants liked about the Journal Salon. 15 total responses.

When we asked participants what they liked about the Journal Salon, the majority of respondents indicated that they liked having a venue for inclusive discussion/interaction with their colleagues in an informal setting (Figure 3). The topics, readings and applicability to their work was secondary in importance to having conversations with their coworkers in other departments. One respondent wrote that they liked “Everything! Specifically that it was an opportunity for staff across the library to have an in-depth discussion of an issue. I also thought the structure of the salon was fantastic - inclusive and encouraged participation.” Another wrote that they liked “Hearing the opinions of people I don't interact with all that often. I work with such smart colleagues and it's nice to have a venue like the salon [to] hear ideas.” While it is too soon to tell whether or not the Journal Salon will have long-lasting impacts on cross-departmental communication at the Tisch Library, we were pleased that participants enjoyed having a time and place for conversations with colleagues.

### Discussion: 2018 Journal Salon Follow-Up Survey

There was a total of thirteen participants in this survey (which is approximately a 20% response rate), which we distributed two years and 10 meetings after the initial launch of the Tisch Library Journal Salon. We hoped to determine to what extent the Journal Salon had facilitated cross-departmental communication, as well as assess if it met our initial goal of being a welcoming and casual forum in which to discuss current issues affecting academic libraries. This section also contains some of our reflections on the challenges of maintaining Journal Salon, now that we are over two years into the project.

Most participants agreed or strongly agreed that Journal Salon is a place where they can discuss issues and trends with people outside of their own departments (n=10, **Figure 4**). Additionally, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Journal Salon has helped them understand the perspectives of people outside of their own departments (n=11). This agreement was not universal, however, as a minority (n=1 and n=2 respectively) strongly *disagreed* with these statements. While we have succeeded in having a member from each department at Tisch Library lead a Journal Salon discussion, we haven't had consistent, broad departmental participation during the last two years. There is a core group of participants who attend Journal Salon meetings (as well as other internal professional development events), the majority of whom are librarians. If we want to continue sparking rich discussion and attempt to include the broadest range of voices, we need to ensure we consistent participation from each department.

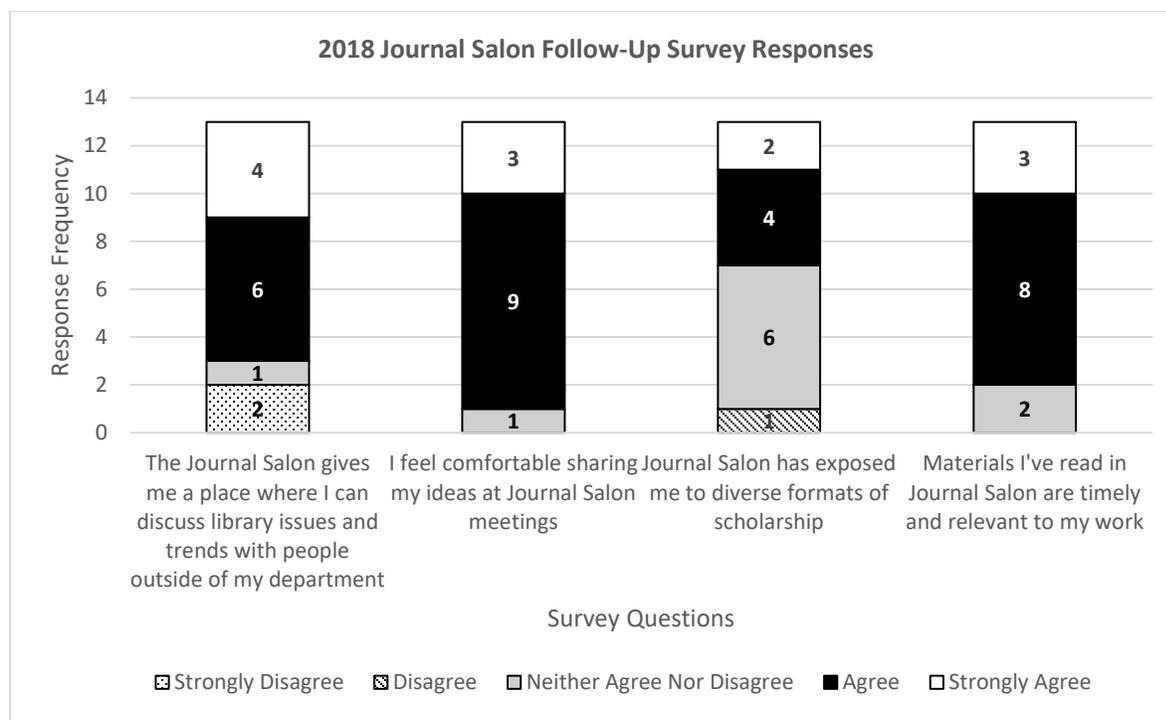


Figure 4. Frequency of responses to four Likert-Scale questions about the impact of Journal Salon from the survey sent in August 2018. 13 total responses.

When asked if they continued conversations with colleagues outside of Journal Salon, most participants agreed or strongly agreed, with no participants disagreeing (n=8, not represented in figure). Furthermore, the majority of respondents felt comfortable sharing their ideas at meetings- almost all agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (n=12, **Figure 4**), and no one disagreed. Taken together, we believe this is an indicator of the open and inclusive culture we've tried to cultivate through Journal Salon, as both a means for informal professional development and for creating connections between individuals whose daily work would not otherwise bring them into frequent contact. As mentioned by a respondent from our 2016 survey, a successful workaround to communication barriers was building interpersonal relationships. The fact that most staff are continuing conversations indicates that Journal Salon can help lay the groundwork for improved cross-departmental communication.

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Journal Salon exposed them to diverse perspectives in library literature (n=11, not represented in figure). We believe that it's been helpful to have library staff from different departments host Journal Salon meetings, in order to encourage discussion of diverse topics as well as bring a wide array of perspectives to the table. However, there were mixed responses to the statement: *Journal Salon has exposed me to diverse formats of scholarship*. Most respondents were split between agreement/strong agreement (n=6, **Figure 4**) and ambivalence (n=6, Figure 4). The primary resource type of the seed article is a traditional academic journal article, though participants are encouraged to bring any relevant item of interest to share out, regardless of format. While initially almost all participants brought an item to share with the group, participation in that regard has declined over time. Encouraging more people to bring share-out items may help to disseminate more diverse forms of scholarship to participants.

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that materials read for Journal Salon are timely and relevant to their work (n=11, Figure 4). We believe that this indicates the success of Journal Salon as an informal venue for professional development in the library. One of our primary goals for Journal Salon was to create a place for diverse experiences and perspectives to be shared, but we have run into the challenge of balancing facilitator autonomy with selecting topics of broad enough interest so that library staff from all departments will feel encouraged to attend. We have worked with facilitators to adjust their topics for a broader audience, and expect this to be part of our continued role as facilitators.

### **Discussion: Areas of Improvement for Journal Salon**

As part of the 2018 survey, respondents identified areas for improvement for Journal Salon via open response. Responses included:

**Wanting more people from different departments to attend:** As previously mentioned, this is related to the challenge of maintaining interest through readings of broad interest to all. While some meetings are less-attended than others, Journal Salon has seen a consistent group of colleagues participate over the last two years, though that core group is more homogenous than we would like. A possible solution to this problem would be to ask supervisors to encourage their employees to attend Journal Salon if possible, as part of their own professional development.

**Scheduling issues:** While we have tried to schedule Journal Salon meetings for times when the library is less busy during the academic year, the reality is that there won't ever be a perfect time that works for everyone. One respondent suggested that the organizers could share things throughout the year to keep everyone reading, which could be a good way to build community with people who cannot attend due to scheduling conflicts. Another participant wrote: "Even if I can't attend, I look at the readings and try to think about them in the context of my work." This illustrates the importance of having a place where these readings live, and the need to remind people that such a space exists. While we have maintained the Journal Salon website since the Salon's inception (<https://sites.tufts.edu/journalsalon/>), it has not gotten robust usage.

**Moving from discussion to action:** Our goal for Journal Salon has been to facilitate discussion and idea-sharing, but there has been a desire amongst participants to move those discussions forward into action. One respondent wrote: "*Work with managers/admin to help us find ways to connect the Journal Salon discussions to our collective day-to-day work.*" While we are heartened that people feel inspired by the conversations held in Journal Salon, movement towards actionable projects sits with department heads and library administration. Encouraging members of library leadership to attend Journal Salon could facilitate the movement from conversation to action.

**Space more conducive to discussions:** We currently hold Journal Salon meetings in a conference room with a large table in the center, that one participant says, “sometimes hampers the conversation into old patterns.” As facilitators, we have observed something similar: It took several meetings before people stopped raising their hands and waiting to be called on! We are limited on space options within the library that would cultivate a more casual, discussion-based atmosphere but will continue to think about ways to work within our space constraints.

### **Conclusions and Next Steps**

The results from our surveys regarding the impact Tisch Library Journal Salon had on cross-departmental communication provided some interesting insights, but little evidence of a library-wide culture change. While a grassroots project like the Journal Salon does help library staff strengthen relationships with their colleagues at the individual level, our literature review indicates that larger structural changes in communication would be necessary to improve cross-departmental communication more broadly. We also recognize that self-reporting is not the ideal way to measure cross-departmental communication, especially if one is looking to measure library-wide impact.

Over time, we have noticed that attendance has decreased slightly, and that the topics selected for some Journal Salon meetings have been areas that are perhaps of greater interest to research and instruction librarians than library staff as a whole. For example, past themes have included librarianship and the digital humanities, and scholarly communication via social networking platforms like Academia.edu. While encouraging participants to serve as discussion leaders has allowed diverse interests to be brought to the forefront and has helped with the sustainability of the Salon, we recognize the need to broaden the topic choices so that all library staff find them engaging and relevant to their practice. We are also considering reaching out to supervisors to ask them to encourage their staff to attend Journal Salon, in hopes of improving attendance and empowering more

people to volunteer to lead the discussion. Open calls for volunteers have not been particularly successful, but we have had success in targeted asks.

Space and scheduling are perennial challenges to robust participation in any internal professional development series, including Journal Salon. While we identified a list of more comfortable locations for group discussion outside of the library, we were concerned that moving the meetings to another building would further decrease attendance. We plan to send a poll to identify which days of the week/times would work best for the majority of participants and adjust the timing of the Salon accordingly.

We have collected positive feedback both formally through our surveys, and informally through conversation with colleagues, and identified areas for improvement for future Journal Salon meetings. The Journal Salon has provided a unique opportunity within our library for staff from all departments to come together and learn from each other, while building relationships. We hope that the continuation of these meetings will lead to more opportunities both interpersonally and professionally for staff across Tisch Library.

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## Appendix

### Pre-Journal Salon Survey

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#### Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 What time(s) would be most convenient for you to attend an hour-long Journal Salon meeting?

- Morning (1)
  - Lunch hour (2)
  - Afternoon (3)
  - Other (Please explain) (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q2 What day(s) of the week would work best for you to attend a Journal Salon meeting?

- Monday (1)
  - Tuesday (2)
  - Wednesday (3)
  - Thursday (4)
  - Friday (5)
-

Q3 Which of the following topics are you interested in discussing? Select all that apply.

- Diversity in libraries (1)
- Social media uses (e.g. as professional development, as outreach, etc.) (2)
- Innovative library instruction methods (3)
- Data & statistics (possible subtopics: data literacy, data visualization, etc.) (4)
- Copyright & Fair Use (5)
- User experience (6)
- Library services for specific populations (e.g. undergraduates, graduate students, 1st generation college students, etc.) (7)
- Accessibility (services, resources, spaces, etc.) (8)
- Library spaces (9)
- Open Access publishing (10)
- Librarian stereotypes/perceptions (11)
- Web/app development (12)

Q4 What other topics are you interested in discussing in a Journal Salon? All suggestions welcome!

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## 2016 Post-Journal Salon Survey

Q1 Did you attend both Journal Salon meetings?

- Yes (1)
  - No, just the May meeting. (2)
  - No, just the August Meeting. (3)
  - No, I did not attend either meeting. (4)
- 

Q2 How often did you communicate with Tisch Library staff members outside of your department prior to attending the Journal Salon?

- Daily (1)
  - Weekly (2)
  - Monthly (3)
  - Yearly (4)
  - Rarely/Never (5)
- 

Q3 In what context did that communication occur?

- Cross-departmental meetings (1)
  - Cross-departmental projects (2)
  - Informally (At the watercooler, grabbing a coffee, etc.) (3)
  - Via e-mail (4)
  - Other (Please explain) (5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q4 Have you experienced barriers to cross-departmental communication at Tisch? If so, please elaborate:

\_\_\_\_\_

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Q5 Have you been able to work around any of these barriers successfully? If so, how?

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Q6 What did you like about Journal Salon?

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Q7 How much do you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Please explain: (1)
The Journal Salon has improved my cross-departmental communication habits. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The Journal Salon has helped me keep up with professional literature. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The Journal Salon has exposed me to diverse perspectives. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
I felt comfortable sharing my ideas at the Journal Salon. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Q8 How frequently would you like to have Journal Salon meetings?

- More frequently (1)
- Less frequently (2)
- Quarterly is just right. (3)

---

Q9 What changes would you like to see to the structure of the Journal Salon meetings?

	Less time (1)	Keep as is (2)	More time (3)
Time for share-outs (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time for discussion of seed article (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time for social conversation (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q10 Did you visit the Journal Salon website?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- There's a Journal Salon website?? (3)

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Q11 What improvements can we make to the Journal Salon?

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Q12 Optional: What department do you work in?

- DDS (1)
- LTS (2)
- DCA (3)
- Technical Services (4)
- Access Services (5)
- Research & Instruction (6)
- SMFA (7)
- Administrative Services (8)
- Scholarly Communications & Collections (9)
- Lilly (10)

End of Block: Default Question Block

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### 2018 Journal Salon Follow-Up Survey

Q12 How many meetings of the Journal Salon have you attended?

- 1-3 (1)
- 4-6 (2)
- 7-9 (3)

Q1 The Journal Salon gives me a place where I can discuss library issues and trends with people outside of my department.

- Strongly disagree (1)
  - Disagree (2)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Agree (4)
  - Strongly agree (5)
- 

Q2 Attending Journal Salon has helped me to understand perspectives of people outside of my own department.

- Strongly disagree (1)
  - Disagree (2)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Agree (4)
  - Strongly agree (5)
- 

Q3 After Journal Salon has ended, I continue conversations about library issues and trends with my colleagues.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

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Q4 I feel comfortable sharing my ideas at Journal Salon meetings.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q5 Journal Salon is my primary means of keeping up with library issues and trends.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q6 Journal Salon has exposed me to diverse perspectives in library literature.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q7 Journal Salon has exposed me to diverse formats of scholarship.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q8 Materials I've read in Journal Salon are timely and relevant to my work.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

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Q9 What improvements can we make to Journal Salon?

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Q10 What topics would you like to discuss at future meetings?

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Q11 Optional: In what department do you work?

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End of Block: Default Question Block