

## Editorial

# The AALAS Journals: 2008 in Review

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The November issue of *JAALAS* volume 47 and the December issue of *Comparative Medicine* volume 58 bring to an end the third full year of reorganization of the AALAS journals. The changes introduced to the journals continue to be both cosmetic and substantive. On the cosmetic side, the beauty of the new cover designs continues to astonish us and can really be appreciated by laying together the six annual issues of each journal. The art director, Amy Tippett, deserves a hearty thank you for the visual appeal and clarity she continues to maintain. Numerous authors, including the editors, benefit substantially from the excellent contributions of our scientific editor, Amy Frazier. Finally, the AALAS office staff members who support the journals, John Farrar and Melissa Bagaglio, continue to maintain a sustained and timely flow of material through the process from submission to publication.

As the journals mature, the editors and editorial staff have continued to define and better delineate our editorial and management practices. As a result, during the past year, several policies and practices have either been newly introduced or more firmly

established. First, triggered by the input of an interested author, Stephanie Murphy, we have formalized the journal policy of secondary (editorial) review of submitted manuscripts. Second, a subcommittee of the Editorial Review Board, led by Claire Hankenson and comprised of Robert Dysko, Sally Thomas, Deb Benner, and Jerald Silverman, has developed a Competing Interests Policy for editor, authors, and reviewers. This policy has been submitted to the Board of Trustees for their review. This committee also assisted the editors in formalizing procedures regarding the use of vendor names in scientific articles published in the journals. Finally, we have now published the journal policy regarding letters to the editor, which we continue to encourage.

A change that we hope is also apparent to readers is the increasing standard of quality and focus being applied to articles selected for publication in both journals. The acceptance rate for *JAALAS* has gone from a high of over 90% in 2003 to less than 70% in 2008. In the same time frame, the acceptance rate has gone from a high of over 80% to the current 60% for *CM*. The number of annual submissions is stable or increasing, allowing a continued emphasis on

**Table 1.** Journal statistics

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>JAALAS</b>									
Total submissions	65	62	82	62	60	98	68	119	132
Referred to CM	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	4	11
Rejected	6	5	7	4	8	26	24	37	35
Withdrawn	1	2	0	3	3	10	3	7	6
Accepted	58	55	75	55	49	62	41	61	73
Acceptance rate (%)	91	92	92	93	86	71	63	62	68
Time from submission to first decision (days)	35	34	32	34	32	34	28	32	28
Acceptance (days)	–	–	–	–	–	–	50	55	66
Publication (days)	–	–	–	–	–	–	120	120	160
Articles published	53	60	61	68	44	63	62	65	62
Pages published	–	–	–	–	–	–	812	756	732
<b>CM</b>									
Total submissions	121	117	110	115	99	104	83	136	126
Referred to JAALAS	14	10	7	9	5	29	18	27	24
Rejected	31	15	16	14	16	18	20	34	37
Withdrawn	1	10	5	6	12	4	1	7	8
Accepted	75	82	82	86	66	53	44	57	56
Acceptance rate (%)	71	84	84	86	80	75	69	63	60
Time from submission to first decision (days)	–	28	28	28	28	40	49	40	32
acceptance (days)	–	95	99	101	108	78	95	66	62
publication (days)	–	–	–	–	–	–	120	160	180
Articles published	91	63	60	77	76	62	45	63	63
Pages published	704	488	601	696	744	560	452	614	623

**Table 2.** Species focus and types of articles published in 2008

JAALAS*	Species	Number	Types of articles	Number
	Mice	25	Biology	33
	NHP	13	Management	11
	Rats	11	Experimental techniques	7
	Rabbits	3	Case reports	11
	Frogs	2		
	Other**	8		
Totals		62		62
CM***	Species	Number	Types of articles	Number
	Mice	19	Overviews	13
	NHP	16	Original research	46
	Rats	7	Case studies	4
	Rabbits	5		
	Swine	5		
	Hamsters	2		
	Dogs	2		
	Other****	7		
Totals		63		63

\*1 special topic issue was published, featuring 10 articles relevant to caging systems.

\*\*1 article each on tortoises, cats, deer, voles, dogs, guinea pigs, and multiple species.

\*\*\*2 special topic issues were published. One featured 12 articles relevant to "Infectious Diseases in Non-human Primates;" the other featured 11 articles relevant to "Animal Models in the Study of Cancer."

\*\*\*\*1 article each on guinea pigs, ferrets, cats, and fish; 3 articles involving multiple species.

content focus and quality. In the long run, this high standard and continued focus of the journals should gradually raise the impact factors, increase the appeal of the journals to authors, and result in even greater numbers of high quality submissions.

In 2008, 61 articles were published in *JAALAS* and 63 in *CM* (Table 2), which is consistent with our target of 10 articles per issue. Specific topics that were heavily represented in *JAALAS*, (i.e., topics represented by 4 or more articles during the year based on evaluation of the topic index in the last issue of 2008) were anesthesia, noroviruses, enrichment, fenbendazole, and corticosterone. We continue to encourage readers to consider submitting articles relevant to management, including management case reports and scholarly overviews, to *JAALAS*.

With regard to *CM*, the journal published 14 articles relevant to

infectious diseases and 11 relevant to cancer in 2008. Some of this emphasis derived from the *CM* special focus issues. In compiling our special focus issues in the past, we have learned that our product is more comprehensive when a guest editor coordinates the effort of defining the scope and soliciting relevant overviews and research articles from colleagues. Therefore, I invite anyone interested in volunteering to serve as a guest editor for a specific special topic issue of either journal to contact me to discuss the idea. With regard to the focus of the 2009 national AALAS meeting in Denver, a guest editor to develop a special topic issue focused on diabetes would be particularly welcome.

As always, your suggestions for improvements in the journals are welcomed. Thank you for your support in the development and growth of the journals.