

Editorial

The AALAS Journals: 2011 in Review

Linda A Toth, Susan Compton, and Ravi Tolwani

The November issue of the *Journal of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (JAALAS)* volume 50 and the December issue of *Comparative Medicine (CM)* volume 61 mark the end of another year for the AALAS journals. Our sincere thanks go again to the talented support the journals receive from art director Amy Tippet and scientific editor Amy Frazier, as well as to the AALAS staff, Melissa Bagaglio and John Farrar. This team together continues to sustain a timely flow of well-edited and professionally presented information through the entire process from manuscript submission to publication.

Perhaps the exciting change, which began its implementation in 2011 and will come to fruition in 2012, is that the February issue of *CM* and subsequent issues are now available under the FastTrack option through Ingenta. This means that the articles will now be available ahead of print on the journal website. This new system accelerates the exchange of scholarly information by

making content available before is published in the traditional printed version. This advance in our publication capabilities will allow the readership immediate access to accepted work and will benefit authors in allowing their work to be made public and cited at the earliest possible date.

Another change that was initiated midyear in 2011 was the transfer of clinical case reports from *JAALAS* to *CM*. This change is reflected in the high number of articles transferred from *JAALAS* to *CM* in 2011. This transfer of content served 2 purposes. First, it continued and reinforced our goal of creating distinct content for the 2 journals; *CM* will now contain all articles that deal with the "abnormal" animal, including research model assessment, whereas *JAALAS* will continue to focus on the "normal" animal and its biology and management. Second, this change has balanced the number of submissions for the 2 journals. We are now able to easily maintain our target of

Table 1. Journal statistics

<i>JAALAS</i>	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total submissions	65	62	82	62	60	98	68	119	132	172	167	191
International	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	31	52	61	52	71
% international	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	26	39	35	31	37
Disposition												
Referred to <i>CM</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	11	15	18	31
Rejected	6	5	7	4	8	26	24	37	35	41	43	55
Withdrawn	1	2	0	3	3	10	3	7	6	4	8	5
Accepted	58	55	75	55	49	62	41	61	73	93	91	90
Total accepted or rejected in 2010 *	64	60	82	59	57	88	65	98	108	134	134	145
% accepted	91	92	91	93	86	70	63	62	68	69	68	62
Time from submission to												
first decision (days)	35	34	32	34	32	34	28	32	28	28	28	28
acceptance (days)	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	55	66	64	62	62
Articles published **	53	60	61	68	44	63	62	65	62	68	90	96
Pages published	-	-	-	-	-	-	812	756	732	840	916	993
Impact factor								0.52	0.53	0.95	0.80	
<i>CM</i>	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total submissions	121	117	110	115	99	104	83	136	126	158	138	162
International	41	45	17	37	28	39	35	42	50	86	55	73
% international	34	38	15	32	28	38	42	31	40	54	40	45
Disposition												
Referred to <i>JAALAS</i>	14	10	7	9	5	29	18	27	24	39	36	31
Rejected	31	15	16	14	16	18	20	34	37	51	35	54
Withdrawn	1	10	5	6	12	4	1	7	8	6	6	4
Accepted	75	82	82	86	66	53	44	57	56	47	61	57
Total accepted or rejected in 2010 *	106	97	98	100	82	71	64	91	93	98	96	111
% accepted	71	85	84	86	81	75	69	63	60	48	64	51
Time from submission to												
first decision (days)	-	28	28	28	28	40	49	40	32	28	28	28
acceptance (days)	-	95	99	101	108	78	95	66	62	53	61	53
Articles published **	91	63	60	77	76	62	45	63	63	59	55	60
Pages published	704	488	601	696	744	560	452	614	623	613	520	576
Impact factor						1.08	0.99	1.15	1.09	1.09	1.20	

*, some articles submitted in 2011 are still under review

** , some of the articles published in 2011 were accepted in 2010

Table 2. Species focus and types of articles published

JAALAS	Species	Number			Types of articles	Number		
		2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011
	Mice	18	27	23	Biology	38	13	10
	NHP	10	21	22	Management	3	6	5
	Rats	14	11	10	Experimental techniques	14	27	20
	Rabbits	4	3	4	Health surveillance		8	7
	Swine	3	2	6	Reproduction		7	3
	Amphibians	4	4	3	Husbandry		7	16
	Multiple			4	Anesthesia/analgesia			14
	Other	13	14	17*	Other	3	3	1
	None	3	7	7	Case reports	11	18	20
Totals		69	89	96		69	89	96

*, 2 articles each on sheep, ferrets, hamsters, guinea pigs, and fish, and 1 each on reptiles, raccoons, goats, dogs, opossums, birds, and octopus

CM	Species	Number			Types of articles	Number		
		2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011
	Mice	21	14	20	Overviews	5	2	3
	NHP	9	11	16	Original research	50	53	64
	Rats	9	10	9	Case reports/studies	4	0	3
	Rabbits	4	2	2				
	Swine	4	5	5				
	Other	12	10	4*				
	Multiple	0	2	4				
Totals		59	55	60		59	55	60

** , 1 article each on ferrets and fish, and 2 articles on cats

10 articles per issue for *CM*, and have reduced our backlog of accepted articles for *JAALAS*. This change improves our ability to maintain high-quality content and timely publication of accepted articles for both journals.

The publication statistics for the journals remain strong, with numbers for most measures moving in a positive direction or remaining constant. In 2011, approximately 37% and 45% of the articles submitted to *JAALAS* and *CM*, respectively, came from authors and institutions outside the US, representing 26 countries for *JAALAS* and 25 for *CM*. The overall acceptance rates are now approximately 62% for *JAALAS* and 51% for *CM* (Table 1). We continue to anticipate that over time, rising standards of acceptability for publication and the more focused scope of each journal will increase the appeal of the journals to scientists, with a resultant increase in the numbers of quality submissions. Prospective authors should be cognizant of the higher standards that are developing, as these will further drop acceptance rates. For example, manuscripts that contain relatively little data (for example, only one table or figure) will be viewed as less desirable than articles that present a substantive and comprehensive investigation of a research question.

In 2011, we saw an unexpected drop in the impact factor for *JAALAS*. This change likely continues to reflect at least in part

the relatively small amount of content available for citation in *JAALAS* due to the change in the journal name 5 y ago. Scanning the citation list in many manuscripts shows frequent references to articles published in *Contemporary Topics in Laboratory Animal Science*. Unfortunately, these citations do not contribute to the impact factor of *JAALAS*. On the other hand, the impact factor for *CM* rose to 1.2. We continue to expect future increases in these established journal comparators as our content increases and improves.

The 2 journals remain similar in terms of the time required for review of submitted manuscripts, with 4 wk on average from submission to the first decision, and an additional month for final acceptance of manuscripts with satisfactory revisions. The species and topics covered in the journals were similar to those of previous years (Tables 2 and 3).

As always, we welcome your suggestions for improvements in the journals. We continue to seek special focus issues for both journals and 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. Plans for 2012 include a reviewers survey. We encourage you to respond with your opinions, perspective, concerns and suggestions. You have our continued thanks for your support in the development and growth of the journals.

Table 3. Most heavily represented topics

	2008	2009	2010	2011
<i>JAALAS</i>	Anesthesia Corticosterone Enrichment Fenbendazole Noroviruses	Anesthesia Enrichment Environment Euthanasia	Anesthesia Bacteria Drug administration Infection Parasites Reproduction Surgery	Analgesia Anesthesia Animal welfare Bacteria Cardiovascular Health surveillance Husbandry Infection Parasites
<i>CM</i>	Cancer Infectious diseases	Cancer Herpesviruses Obesity	Infection Bacteria Viruses Surgery Genetics	Cancer Cardiovascular Diet Viruses