

Our Impact

In the year since the Davis office assumed editorial responsibilities for the Annals of Biomedical Engineering, we have streamlined the editorial process and restructured our entire approach. The Annals now boasts an average decision time of less than three weeks—20 days to be exact. On average, manuscripts we send out for review are evaluated by three independent reviewers, the Associate Editor, as well as the Editor-in-Chief. We have cleared the backlog of pending manuscripts; time to review is less than 14 days; and our overall number of submissions has increased by 30%. We have invited associate editors from all over the world and industry, and improved communication and cooperation with reviewers and authors. We are happy about the progress but we still have a great amount of work to do.

The culmination of our efforts should be an increase in our *impact factor*. Of course, we will not know the effect of our efforts until June 2012 when the evaluation of ABME's 2010 papers is released. As a reminder, the impact factor is a measure that is supposed to represent the relative importance of a journal, such that a larger number indicates a more impactful journal. It is a ratio of all citations divided by the citable components in the journal. Citable components are all original and review articles. For example, all 2012 citations of papers appearing in the Annals in 2010 and 2011 will be divided by the total number of 2010–11 articles to arrive at the journal's 2012 impact factor; the latter will be made available in 2013 and it will be the first impact factor of the Annals fully under the Davis editorial office. In 2012, ABME's impact factor will represent 2011 citations of papers published

in 2009 and 2010, so about half of the papers will be pre-Davis.

Though any such indices or factors inevitably seem to elicit criticisms about validity and system manipulation, this is what we have and this is what we should all collectively strive to improve upon. To this end, I urge you to submit your best work to our journal because our best papers are the ones most often cited. I ask you to help the journal by advertising it and discussing it any time you have an opportunity. Please make sure that you participate in ABME activities by being thorough and prompt reviewers.

Journals can game the system by publishing an inordinate amount of review articles since reviews enjoy significantly higher citation numbers, or by demanding that all articles cite other articles appearing in the journal. We do not want to game the system. Through excellence in all aspects of the ABME process (attracting solid scientific studies or exciting review articles, prompt and thorough review process, quick publication, and aesthetically-pleasing collections), we want to elevate the BMES flagship journal where it naturally belongs. We want ABME to be the top broad-spectrum journal in biomedical engineering and bioengineering.

We are off to a good first year. Please keep in mind that no single editors or publishers can make a journal reach the top. All of us collectively, as a team, can help the process.

Respectfully submitted,
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