State of the Journal

January is the time for “state of the…” reports so I think it’s appropriate to give IOVS readers a state of the journal report and a look to the future.

Last year brought IOVS record numbers of submissions, with over 1,700 predicted at the time of this writing in early December. Accompanying this there has been an increase in the acceptance rate because of the high quality of the submissions received. While we’ve seen a slightly slower time to the final decision (+2 weeks), the new organization with five Associate Editors and a full Editorial Board has greatly facilitated the review of articles by experts at the highest level.

The higher acceptance rate has resulted in a slight backlog of articles that will be cleared by the March issue and we should see a marked improvement in the time from submission to publication. Even with this slight increase in the review time, the average time from submission to publication is less than nine months, the best time of the top journals in the field. In addition, IOVS continues to publish the unedited articles online as soon as they are accepted, as much as twelve weeks before the article of record is published.

All members who have chosen to receive e-mails from ARVO will notice that they are receiving electronic Tables of Contents and alerts every month when a new issue is published. The alerts include links to all the articles. ARVO set this feature up whether you have activated your subscription or not.

Looking Forward

New Editorial Sections

Starting with this issue, IOVS is available online only. If you have not done so yet, activate your subscription now at http://www.iovs.org/cgi/activate/basic. Visit the new IOVS home page and look for the newly designed text pages in April. Going online-only has allowed ARVO to reduce the color charges to $100 per PDF page, regardless of the number of color figures on the page; this nominal charge covers the expense of producing the color. The charge per page will, however, increase to $70 per page for the first eight pages. Excess page fees remain unchanged.

To meet the needs of ARVO members, this year we are introducing three new editorial sections that you can choose when you submit your articles: Genetics, Nanotechnology, and Ophthalmic Imaging. These sections parallel those introduced by ARVO two years ago as Cross Sectional Groups. Since a quarter of all ARVO members have joined at least one of these Groups, it is appropriate that the journal reflect these interests.

In addition to the new editorial sections, there will be two sections added to broaden the appeal and scope of the journal: Reviews and Point/Counter Point. Both will be invited by me with considerable input from the Associate Editors and the Editorial Board, and suggestions from readers are very welcome. Reviews will be in-depth summaries of topics of general interest to the vision community and will include historical perspective as well as the latest information. The first of these will be by Lois Smith. Point/Counter Point will be two or more opposing views on a current topic, the first of which will be on Lens Fluid Circulation Hypothesis. There will be no page charges and one color figure will be free for these new sections. IOVS will continue the Perspectives column, which is the personal viewpoint on a topic of broad interest to the community written by someone other than the Editors.

We also encourage you to submit your translational research to IOVS and to include a clear statement of the translational implications of the article.

ARVO believes that these editorial features will help improve the Impact Factor over time. While IOVS has the highest Impact Factor of all original vision research, currently 3,582, and is cited almost 10,000 more times in the literature than any of its competitors, the goal is to continue to improve its ranking.

New Features

Later this year, electronic reprints will be introduced so that anyone can order a copy of an article. Authors will be able to order the set number of e-prints to distribute to colleagues. New functionality will be introduced, including having short movies and animated art (.gif files) included in the article. Movies, data sets, extensive tables, and even PowerPoint slides may continue to be included as supplementary data and will be reviewed with the article. Since the article of record is the online article, we hope that authors will take advantage of these features.

By early 2011 at the latest, IOVS will join the Journal of Vision in publishing articles as they are ready, rather than just once a month. Articles will still be considered as part of an issue each month but will publish continually throughout the month. Readers will be able to opt to receive article alerts when a new article is published.

On the peer-review side, we will be using iThenticate, a tool to identify possible dual submissions/publications, which is a growing problem across scientific journals, including IOVS.

In closing, your journal is healthy and growing. The Editorial Board and I look forward to continuing to receive and review the best our field has to offer.

Paul L. Kaufman
Editor-in-Chief