EDITORIAL

How Are We Doing?

As members of the ASMS, you probably wonder how your society journal is doing with respect to other journals. A partial answer came recently to you in an e-mail from Springer, our publisher, indicating our 2011 Impact Factor is 4.002 (Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports® 2011), a new record for us. For the last 4 years *JASMS* has seen the following Impact-Factor trend:

Year	Impact Factor	Citations
2011	4.002	8794
2010	3.830	7900
2009	3.391	7329
2008	3.181	6075

Breaking the 4.0 barrier is a landmark for *JASMS*. The journal has come close in the past, but we now hope that the recent growth in ranking can be sustained.

Although the impact factor is not the only and may not even be the best way to rank a journal, it does have the advantage of the simplicity of a single number. It works by measuring how many citations in a given year, say 2011, were made for papers published in the previous 2 years (i.e., 2010 and 2009). The ranking takes on more meaning when journals are compared, especially those in a given category. With respect to other analytical chemistry journals (Table 1), *JASMS* is number five for journals that publish principally research papers (I removed from the comparison those journals that publish mainly reviews because these articles are usually cited more heavily than research articles).

Another appropriate comparison is with spectroscopy journals, another category used by Thomson Reuters. Here, *JASMS* ranks no. 4, but the three higher ranked journals are principally review journals (Table 2).

To provide additional perspective on impact for journals like *JASMS*, I created a new category of journals, “Methods.” Combining the Thomson Reuters categories of

“Chemistry-Analytical” and “Spectroscopy” and looking at the top 60 cited journals, I classified 48 as “method journals” (i.e., those covering MS, NMR, chromatography, sensors, optical spectroscopy). To make a fair comparison, I excluded review and general analytical journals (e.g., *MSR*, *Anal Chem*, *Analyst*, etc.). The results show that *JASMS* ranks third in this category. In 2009, *JASMS* ranked fourth. Included in the comparison are the other mass spectrometry journals that publish principally research articles (Table 3).

Journals, like researchers, can be ranked in terms of an h-index, a controversial indicator that also has appeal as a single number. It is the number of papers published that have that number of total citations. For example, a researcher’s h-index of 60 means that 60 of his/her papers have been cited at least 60 times. As an aside, leading chemists have h-factors of greater than 100. I chose to determine the h-factor of *JASMS* in comparison with other MS journals over a period of 5 years (2007–2011) by searching with Scopus for a given title and sorting the articles according to number of citations. The list allows one to locate that article whose number order is equal to the number of citations (Table 4). One complaint about h-indices is that to achieve a high value, you must publish a large number of articles. The same complaint is true for a journal comparison. Therefore, I restricted the comparison to MS journals despite the differences in the fractional amounts of content published by those journals, ranging from 5 % to 40 %.

I included in Table 4 a relatively new measure called the SJR indicator, a size-independent metric aimed at measuring the current “average prestige per paper” of journals. The indicator counts, more heavily, cites from higher cited journals than lower cited ones on a citation time window of 3 years, taking its citation data from Scopus. This indicator also shows that the impact of *JASMS* is greater than that of other MS journals. (SCImago (2007). SJR—SCImago Journal and

Table 1. Comparison with Analytical Chemistry Journals (from ISI)

Journal title	No. of cites	2011 Impact Factor	5-Year Impact Factor
<i>Anal Chem</i>	95262	5.856	5.983
<i>Biosens Bioelectron</i>	20029	5.602	5.637
<i>Anal Chim Acta</i>	38343	4.555	4.144
<i>J Chromatogr A</i>	60179	4.531	4.362
<i>Analyst</i>	14243	4.230	4.119
<i>JASMS</i>	8794	4.002	3.746

Table 2. Comparison with Spectroscopy Journals

Journal title	2011 Cites	Impact Factor	5-Year Impact Factor
<i>Mass Spectrom Rev</i>	3994	10.461	11.676
<i>Annu Rev Anal Chem</i>	876	9.048	11.806
<i>Prog Nucl Mag Res Sp</i>	1765	5.214	6.296
<i>JASMS</i>	8794	4.002	3.746

Table 3. Comparison with "Methods" Journals

Journal title	2011 Impact Factor	5-Year Impact Factor	Number of articles (2011)	Number of cites
<i>Biosensors/Bioelectronics</i>	5.602	5.637	704	20,029
<i>J Chromatogr A</i>	4.531	4.362	1104	60,179
<i>JASMS</i>	4.002	3.746	228	8794
<i>J Mass Spectrometry</i>	3.268	3.301	143	5549
<i>Rapid Commun MS</i>	2.790	2.782	426	13,453
<i>Int J Mass Spectrom</i>	2.549	2.241	297	7305
<i>European JMS</i>	1.207	1.249	50	566

Country Rank. Retrieved August 30, 2012, from <http://www.scimagojr.com>).

Credit for much of our progress is due to our authors who show a commitment to *JASMS* by submitting strong papers. Credit also goes to our associate editors and reviewers who

Table 4. *JASMS* h-factor and Those of Other MS Journals (as of 9/7/12)

Journal	h-Factor	Number of articles	% of Total content	% With 50 cites or more	% With 10 cites or more	% With 3 cites or more	SJR Ranking (5-year average)
<i>JASMS</i>	38	1190	22 %	1.5 %	35 %	77 %	0.394
<i>RCMS</i>	37	2168	40 %	0.5 %	28 %	69 %	0.244
<i>JMS</i>	29	633	12 %	1.5 %	24 %	64 %	0.293
<i>IJMS</i>	28	1155	21 %	0.8 %	20 %	63 %	0.193
<i>EJMS</i>	14	263	05 %	0.7 %	9 %	38 %	0.118
<i>Anal Chem</i>	83	6272	na	4.9 %	nd	nd	0.568

na = not applicable

nd = not determined

demonstrate a strong sense of pride in the journal and apply high standards in article review. The journal's special features, particularly critical insights and focus sections, add to the utility of *JASMS* and increase its value to you, the MS community. I thank the associate editors, authors, and reviewers for their commitment and support. Thanks are also owed to the ASMS and its board of directors and professional organizers who have supported the journal for nearly a quarter of a century, and to managing editor Joyce Neff, who has worked tirelessly for *JASMS* for 15 years.

Part of our progress is due to the "new look" of *JASMS* resulting from changes made in collaboration with our new publisher, Springer. We have used cover art for many years now, but our new cover, while still in "*JASMS* red," is more attractive and interesting, has a more uniform appearance from month to month, and now draws attention to articles contained in the journal. The editor now orders the articles, putting articles of related subjects together so they can be browsed rapidly and read comparatively. We hope these improvements in rankings and layout encourage authors to use *JASMS* as a venue for publication.

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