

State of the Journal 2010: Managing Growth, Extending Our Reach—Now the Official Journal for the Society of Surgical Oncology and the American Society of Breast Surgeons

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We begin this first issue of 2010 by welcoming the 3,000 members of the American Society of Breast Surgeons and assessing the growth of the *Annals of Surgical Oncology*.

The *Annals* is now the official journal for both the Society of Surgical Oncology and the American Society of Breast Surgeons (ASBS). The ASBS brings with it a membership whose mission aligns nicely with the strategic vision of the Society of Surgical Oncology (SSO) and the *Annals*. The ASBS will have a special ASO edition to be published in October 2010, which will be a valuable additional resource for both ASBS members and SSO members.

The growth of the *Annals*, both in size and content, has been impressive! Over the last 5 years, submissions and resubmissions of original work have almost tripled (approximately 600 articles submitted in 2005–2006 vs. more than 1600 in 2008–2009). The number of reviewers volunteering their critical expertise to the peer review process grew from 750 in 2006 to over 2000 experts in 2009, with an average number of reviews completed per reviewer declining from 2.5 to 1.6. This growth in the number of peer review experts and the range in their expertise reflects the journal's continuing expansion of breadth, depth, and range of subject matter. We thank them for their voluntary effort that shapes the scientific excellence of the journal.

The *Annals* now covers 18 content areas, as reflected in the structure of the Editorial Board (Table 1). New

additions in 2009 include a section on Colorectal Cancer led by Heidi Nelson, MD, and an expansion of Translational Research to include Biomarkers, led by James Cusack, MD. The journal continues to be especially strong in Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Tumor papers, now broken into two distinct groups led by Michael Choti, MD, and Andrew Lowy, MD, respectively. Gastrointestinal, Melanoma, and Breast Oncology sections continue to grow as well.

STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

This successful relationship with ASBS and the *Annals* provides a model for the establishment of other educational partnerships with societies worldwide. Relationships have also been established with Latin American Federation of Surgery, the Hellenic Society of Surgical Oncology, and the Society of Oncology and Cancer Research in Nigeria. The goal of pursuing these partnerships is to increase visibility, usage, and citations of the journal. A number of other international societies have expressed interest in developing such a relationship with the journal, and discussions are continuing with the editors and the SSO leadership.

INTERNATIONAL REACH

Manuscript submissions from North America continue to be the primary source of content. However, the *Annals* has experienced worldwide growth in manuscript submissions, with a particular increase from Asia and Europe. Likewise, online access by readers has grown substantially beyond the borders of North America. Downloads of manuscripts from the Web site indicate that nearly two-

TABLE 1 2009–2010 Editorial Board sections and section editors

Bone and soft tissue sarcomas	Section editor—Alessandro Gronchi
Breast oncology	Section editor—Lisa A. Newman
Colorectal cancer	Section editor—Heidi Nelson
Endocrine tumors	Section editor—Alan Dackiw
Gastrointestinal oncology	Section editor—Kenneth K. Tanabe
Gynecologic oncology	Section editor—Larry Copeland
Head and neck oncology	Section editor—Jeffrey N. Myers
Healthcare policy and outcomes	Section editor—Frederick Greene
Hepatobiliary tumors	Section editor—Michael Choti
Medical oncology	Section editor—Jose Baselga
Melanomas	Section editor—Kelly M. McMasters
Multimedia	Section editor—Vijay Khatri
Neuro-oncology	Section editor—Ziya L. Gokaslan
Pancreatic tumors	Section editor—Andrew Lowy
Pediatric oncology	Section editor—Charles N. Pavidas
Radiation oncology	Section editor—Thomas A. Buchholz
Reconstructive oncology	Section editor—Grant W. Carlson
Thoracic oncology	Section editor—Stephen Yang

thirds of our readers are from countries other than the United States, with primary concentrations in Europe and Asia. International participation in the journal reflects the significance of *Annals* in the research arena globally; the journal is pleased to see its position as an educational resource extended to surgeons and other readers around the globe.

VISION, MISSION, AND EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP

Vision and mission statements for the *Annals* were drafted by editors and approved by the SSO Executive Council in fall 2008 (Table 2). These statements of identity

TABLE 2 Strategic plan: vision and mission

<i>Vision</i>
The <i>Annals of Surgical Oncology</i> (ASO) promotes high-quality surgical oncology management by communicating advances in research and education that are relevant and valuable to the provision of contemporary multidisciplinary care for patients with cancer. ASO, the official journal of the Society of Surgical Oncology (SSO), is the journal of choice of surgical oncologists worldwide regarding surgical oncology research and education
<i>Mission</i>
The mission of the journal is to serve its readers by:
1. Representing and advancing the profession of surgical oncology throughout the nation and the world
2. Promoting the highest quality multidisciplinary patient care and practice management
3. Providing relevant cancer education and research training materials using print and electronic media
4. Promoting clinical and translational cancer research, with an emphasis on clinical trials
5. Facilitating the career development of surgical trainees and their transition into academic and community-based practice
6. Promoting public policy and patient advocacy issues related to surgical patient with cancer

and purpose represent the journal's commitment to the highest level of quality. Journal editors recently revisited the *Annals* Strategic Plan to again prioritize the activities relevant to each of the Plan's six goals, which are structured in the following areas: Goal 1, Multispecialty Member Needs; Goal 2, Education and Training; Goal 3, Clinical and Translational Research; Goal 4, Career Development; Goal 5, Quality of Cancer Care and Practice Management; and Goal 6, Governance and Operations. *Annals* is active in all these goal areas, and the editors continue to track and assess related progress and accomplishments.

RESOURCES

Efficient use of resources has become an important topic for the journal. In addition to the journal's availability on the publisher's Web program, SpringerLink, *Annals* articles and other journal information are now also online on the journal's new portal, <http://www.annsurgoncol.org/>. The portal is designed to be an easy and intuitive search tool for individual readers and to be a delivery vehicle for the most important and up-to-date journal information.

The journal's Editorial Office is staffed under the leadership of Deb Whippen (info@asoeditorial) and two editorial staff—Julie Leneghan and Joe Wiggs—who have accommodated the significant increase in manuscript volume (Fig. 1) and its related author, reviewer, and editor support needs. The publishing program for *Annals* has also grown through the journal's association with Springer and

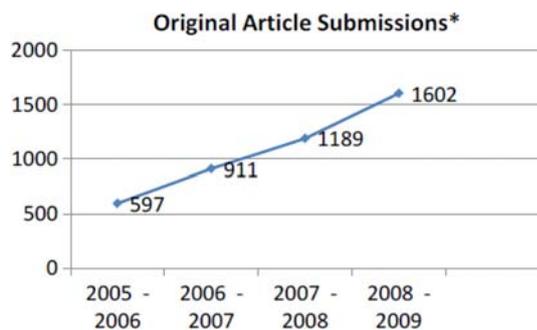


FIG. 1 Three-year comparison of original article submissions to *Annals*, including revisions. There were 1,880 total submissions from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009, including editorials, streaming videos, and letters-to-the-editor

the able leadership and expertise of Annie Cimino, Yvonne Chan, Anna Uger, and Ben Ellis.

Regarding the print issues, the *Annals* published fewer pages in 2009 than in either of the previous 2 years. The tripling of manuscript submissions since 2006 has improved the quality, but it has become a challenge to manage the page budget. The *Annals* will fulfill its mission

through publication of the highest-quality articles, and the continuing growth of submissions will mean that more papers will be not found acceptable for publication.

A new policy to be effective in 2010 is to enforce a word limit for manuscripts and to limit the number of tables and figures per paper. As the Instruction for Authors in this issue shows, the word limit for journal articles is now 3000 words with a maximum of six tables and figures. We thank authors in advance for their adherence to these new guidelines and encourage them to send us their very best research. We also thank reviewers for helping the editors of the journal assess the priority of each manuscript as well as its quality and the economy with which manuscripts deliver their message.

The continuing partnership of the journal with SSO and ASBS members, the publisher Springer, expert authors, critical reviewers, and devoted members of the Editorial Board, including section editors and associate editors, defines its scientific and educational impact, that in turn influences multidisciplinary cancer care worldwide, both in 2010 and in the years to come. We thank the many people who continue to contribute to the *Annals'* success.