

Editorial

A Season of Change in Optometric Education

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While change can be beneficial, it can also be a challenge. This edition of the journal reflects that thought, as it highlights three major changes, each affecting either the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO), this journal, optometric education as a whole, or all of the above.

Leadership Change at ASCO; Longtime Executive Director Will Be Missed

Over the past 25 years, Marty Wall has served admirably as the Executive Director of ASCO. During that time, his responsibilities spanned many areas, including the Association's publications and a role in establishing and managing the Partnership Foundation for Optometric Education (now known as the Partnership Endowment). When I became editor of the journal in 2010, Marty provided support and encouragement. He was always available to answer questions and brainstorm. With his support, we improved the distribution of the journal, implemented the Educational Stater Grant program, digitalized the journal and reached out to individual institutions and faculty. His list of financial, organizational, managerial and development accomplishments in relation to running the organization is overwhelming. I was fortunate to work with someone who was genuinely interested in supporting the mission of the journal and the profession of optometric education. I would like to personally thank Marty for all his hard work and dedication to the journal and ASCO. Marty, I wish you all the best in your retirement. Enjoy the change to a new and exciting time of life.

Journal Changes Bring a More Technologically Advanced and User-Friendly Publication

With this edition, we introduce a new format for *Optometric Education*. All content is now available as a web page, which eliminates the need to open or download a PDF file and enables new capabilities.

Prior to 2008, the journal was printed and distributed by U.S. mail. Subsequently it became available only electronically, distributed as a PDF file via a link e-mailed to faculty. While the quality of the journal and the peer-review process remained unchanged, the move to digital provided a more cost-effective way to produce the journal, removed size limitations, eased distribution and allowed access anywhere

and anytime an Internet connection was available. However, a PDF file couldn't provide the technical advantages that are now available to us with the new journal format. It provides the potential for digital capabilities that will carry the journal into the future. Just a few of these capabilities are immediate feedback to and from authors, hyperlinks, blogs, discussion forums, sound and graphics embedded into articles and greater ease and capability in indexing.¹ Although some faculty still miss the print copy of the journal, most are adapting and embracing the change, which allows for new technological opportunities and advancements in information dissemination and professional interaction.

This Edition Explores How We Will Implement the IPE Culture Change

The concept of interprofessional education (IPE) represents a change in the way we educate students. This change involves working and educating in teams with other professionals, away from isolated silos. Although the concept of IPE has been around for more than 30 years, it is only in the past 10-15 years that healthcare educators have recognized and instituted innovative policies to change the culture. As defined by the World Health Organization, IPE occurs when "students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes."² Overall, there is a plethora of information, journals and conferences dedicated to this topic. However, in the profession of optometry there is much less information and evidence on the implementation of IPE programs and outcomes, which is why we dedicated this edition of the journal to the topic.

Identifying desired goals and objectives as well as reliable methods of outcomes assessment provides an essential component to evidence-based teaching and learning. IPE initiatives should include outcomes assessment and be directed by evidence-based research. It is irresponsible to dedicate time, effort and resources to implementing programs that have not proven to be valuable within a profession. Faculty and administrators who are involved in IPE should be dedicated to increasing the published evidence on this important change in the culture of optometric education.

References

1. Angell B, Smith G. Print Versus Electronic: Editors' Insights on the Costs and Benefits of Online Journals. *Journal of Technology Studies* [cited on June 10, 2015] Available from: <https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JOTS/Winter-Spring-1998/angell.html>.
2. Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice. Geneva: World Health Organization; [cited on June 10, 2015]. Available from: https://www.who.int/hrh/resources/framework_action/en/.

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