

The *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*: Premium Space!

More than ever before in our 75 years, the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* is awash with excellent submissions. At present only one-third can eventually be accepted, requiring that many worthy manuscripts be declined. Compounding the problem of too many deserving original studies, the editors agree that a portion of our contractually limited pages is best used on commentaries that summarize key articles and place them in context for readers not intimately acquainted with the field. Still other pages are devoted to Perspectives and Reviews by noted authorities, again with a goal of assisting the entire research community, as well as trainees and clinicians, to appreciate the significance of recent work in a wide variety of our field's subdisciplines. The popularity of these interpretive features speaks to their importance for our readership. Still, a distinct tension persists because the first responsibility of the *JID* will always be the publication of high-quality original research.

The problem is not new. In January 2010, then Editor-in-Chief Paul Bergstresser instituted page limits to ensure that we publish as many as possible of our field's important findings. A limit of 3,500 words—with up to six figures and/or tables, all to occupy no more than seven journal pages—was judged adequate to present Original Articles in a responsible manner (Bergstresser, 2009). More stringent limits were established for Letters to the Editor (1,000 words and two figures and/or tables). Virtually unlimited online-only supplementary text and figures were allowed, at a minimal additional charge. As a result of these constraints, the average length for Original Articles fell by more than two pages. The policy, along with *JID*'s increased rejection rate during his term (from 50 to 70%), is widely credited with the welcome increase in *JID*'s Impact Factor from 5.543 for 2009 to 6.314 for 2011. However, page creep is increasingly evident in recent publications. While attributable in part to reviewers'

requests for additional information, another factor is that many authors interpret the six-figure limit as allowing that number of *full-page, multipanel figures*. Our calculations, however, were based on a figure size of one-quarter of a page; therefore, many submissions meeting the stated word limit have surpassed the intended (but not previously clearly stated) quarter-page figure size for purposes of article-length estimation.

To combat this trend and to prevent our having to further increase our rejection rate, effective 1 January 2013 all new submissions and revised manuscripts must meet the word, figure, and figure-legend limits prior to review. Often, the first place authors look to cut is Materials and Methods; we advise against this. The Materials and Methods in the main body of the text must be adequate to allow reproduction of the current study. Instead, authors are encouraged to use concise wording, avoid repetition, and present figures carefully. As before, 500 words of text may be substituted for an additional quarter-page figure, or vice versa. Submissions exceeding the stated limit (or the equivalent) will be returned to the authors for revision. It may be necessary to present some information as Supplementary Material, to be published online only.

The Editor will consider overage requests, but if extra pages are granted, authors will be charged \$500 for each additional printed page or portion thereof. Like all policy changes, the stricter enforcement of article length will be carefully monitored for both positive and negative impacts. Feedback from submitting authors and *JID* readers will be carefully considered.

We believe that by publishing concise, carefully worded reports, we will better serve our readers—and our authors. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit!

Barbara A. Gilchrest, M.D.
Editor

REFERENCE

Bergstresser PR (2009) Saying more with less. *J Invest Dermatol* 129:2323

Journal of Investigative Dermatology (2012) **132**, 2671.
doi:10.1038/jid.2012.316