

EDITORIAL

In this second issue of 2005 we start with a reflection on some of the issues we face at SERJ, and follow up with updates about changes and plans.

As an international journal, SERJ seeks both to report on research in diverse contexts in which teaching and learning of statistics is being studied, as well as to contribute knowledge relevant to researchers and practitioners across many countries and contexts of educational work. This dual task presents many challenges to members of SERJ's editorial board and to reviewers. We have to be aware of diversity and accommodate variations in many aspects of scientific reporting, from seemingly technical but non-trivial things such as terminology or writing styles, to understanding the nuances and impact of differences in systems of education or teaching/learning contexts, all the way to conceptions of what constitutes "current knowledge", "research", and equally important, "good research".

However, our conception of "current knowledge" is limited, not only by the small (though growing!) number of researchers interested in statistics learning and teaching, but also by language barriers. While English is the dominant language for scientific reporting, we as a research and practice community are hampered because many prospective authors and researchers, as well as practitioners, cannot read or communicate well in English. Potentially important research being carried out in countries where English is not spoken or read well cannot gain broad exposure. It is therefore not surprising that a disproportionate number of the papers being submitted to SERJ come from English-speaking countries. We hope to see this situation change over time.

The above serves as a backdrop for an important aspect of the present SERJ issue. In addition to three papers in English, we also publish a paper in French (the first in French that SERJ has published) *and* a paper in Spanish, yet with an important twist. The international standard used by journals that accept papers in more than one language is to publish the paper in its original language, with a brief abstract of 100-150 words in English. We find that such an abstract, while giving English readers a general idea of the issues addressed, is too short to be of much value in terms of the paper's contribution to scholarly and applied knowledge for a wide audience. Hence, for this issue we asked authors whose papers were not written in English to add an extended summary in English. Of course, this new feature places an extra burden both on authors and on our editorial board and it also makes for a slightly more complicated structure of the elements which precede the paper itself (i.e., title, keywords, and abstracts in two languages, and an extended summary in English). Yet, we hope that this new feature can give all readers better and deeper access to new research findings. Please give us your feedback.

We now turn to a report of changes and future plans at SERJ. We are happy to announce that Tom Short (Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA) will be the next SERJ co-editor and will start his four-year tenure in January 2006. Tom will replace Flavia Jolliffe, whose term is coming to an end in December, and joins Iddo Gal, who will continue as co-editor until the end of 2007. Tom was warmly nominated by the Search Committee appointed by the IASE president, Gilberte Schuyten, consisting of Chris Wild (chair), Iddo Gal (continuing editor), and Mike Shaughnessy (IASE member). The IASE Executive has unanimously approved this nomination. Tom brings with him, in addition to high motivation and interest, a strong background in the area of statistics

education and a substantial editorial experience. He has already worked successfully in the past with a diverse editorial board and with many referees and authors as editor of the Journal of Statistics Education, and has been involved both in applied work as a statistician as well as in various projects focused on statistics education and teacher training. In our next issue Tom will share his ideas and intentions regarding the Journal.

There are other changes in the SERJ editorial board. We welcome Carol Joyce Blumberg who joins us as an Associate Editor for a 3-year term. She has been involved with SERJ from the beginning in her role as IASE vice-president responsible for IASE publications. Chris Reading, who has been our trustworthy Assistant Editor in charge of editing and producing each issue ever since SERJ's first issue was published in 2002, will cease to take this role at the end of this year and instead continue as a regular Associate Editor. Please see more information and messages regarding Carol and Flavia later on this page, as well as a Call for Nominations for a new Assistant Editor.

Finally, we have started to process papers submitted for our special issue on research on "learning and reasoning about distributions", planned for November 2006. We are thinking about topics for other Special Issues later on, and encourage SERJ readers to propose relevant topics which can benefit from a focus by researchers. We also look forward to ICOTS7 in July 2006, where SERJ will arrange a workshop for prospective authors, similar to that which took place at ISI55 in Sydney in April 2005. There will also be a session on statistics education journals at ICOTS7 similar to one organised by Carol Joyce Blumberg at the Joint Statistical Meetings in August 2005. At this meeting Flavia presented a paper jointly written with Iddo which describes lessons learned at SERJ regarding typical problems with submitted papers and provides advice for prospective authors. This paper, along with other papers and presentations from JSM, is available at <http://www.stat.auckland.ac.nz/~iase/publications.php?show=jsm> and on the SERJ website.

IDDO GAL AND FLAVIA JOLLIFFE

Thanks from the SERJ editorial Board to Flavia Jolliffe: Our departing Co-Editor, Flavia Jolliffe, has been a founding editor of SERJ since 2001. Flavia has tirelessly devoted time and energy to SERJ as she handled incoming submissions and managed a continuous flow of correspondence with authors, reviewers, and associate editors. We thank Flavia for giving several years for work on behalf of SERJ and IASE.

Call for Nominations - New Assistant Editor: The Journal is looking for someone to join its Editorial Board as Assistant Editor starting in January 2006 for a 3-year term. The Assistant Editor is in charge of copy-editing and preparation of manuscripts accepted for publication, and for producing each issue in PDF format. Work is intermittent during the year and increases during the weeks leading to the publication of a new issue each May and November, when communication with authors and editors is also needed. Depending on qualifications, the Assistant Editor may also be involved in managing the SERJ website or take part in other activities of the SERJ editorial board. The ideal candidate will have excellent command of the English language, interest in editorial work, familiarity with basic desktop publishing or PDF-producing software, and some familiarity with research in statistics education.

Interested colleagues should send a letter of intent and a short curriculum vitae to Tom Short <tshort@iup.edu>, to whom any queries about the position may be addressed.