

## **Bootstrapping Student Publication in the JDE: An ADEA Council of Students Initiative**

Dear Dr. Alvares:

I am writing to call to the attention of my fellow undergraduate dental and allied dental students an amazing opportunity for publishing student work, opinions, and ideas. The *Journal of Dental Education* (JDE) has a section specifically devoted to publishing articles by students, and I want to help students get their work published in this section.

In June 2003 the JDE added this section, "From the Students' Corner," specifically devoted to articles authored solely by undergraduate dental and allied dental students. However, in the fifty-one issues of the JDE since its inception, only twelve student articles have been published. The American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Council of Students has adopted the goal of substantially increasing the number of student publications in the JDE in the future. We appreciate the support of Dr. Alvares for our specific goal of publishing at least one article per monthly issue.

There is a new mechanism that we in the ADEA Council of Students are introducing to facilitate more student publications: the Council's student editor will serve as an intermediate editor to help students refine their articles prior to submission. Upon submission to the JDE, the article will be subject to peer review in the usual fashion; the student editor will help student authors prepare their manuscripts for this more rigorous process.

Upon introducing this section, Dr. Alvares wrote, "Articles in this section may cover the entire spectrum of academic dentistry from clinical and educational research to student perceptions of educational methodologies and critical issues in dental education."<sup>1</sup> A review of the articles published since the inception of this section illustrates the range of appropriate topics. Here are their titles: "The Art and Science of Swedish Dentistry: From Brånemark Implants to Problem-Based Learning,"<sup>2</sup> "Fourth-Year Clinical Scenarios at Harvard School of Dental Medicine,"<sup>3</sup> "Current Trends in Immediate Osseous Dental Implant Case Selection Criteria,"<sup>4</sup> "Dental Anxiety and Personality: Investigating the

Relationship Between Dental Anxiety and Self-Consciousness,"<sup>5</sup> "Dental Students with Hepatitis B: Issues to Be Considered When Defining Policies,"<sup>6</sup> "Enrollment, Cost, and Academic Admission Criteria of U.S. Dental Schools by Geographic Region and Institution Type,"<sup>7</sup> "Single-Unit Implants Versus Conventional Treatments for Compromised Teeth: A Brief Review of the Evidence,"<sup>8</sup> "Fiber Optic Fluorescence Microprobe for Endodontic Diagnosis,"<sup>9</sup> "Strategies for Making Research More Accessible to Dental Students,"<sup>10</sup> "A Review of Exam Accommodations for Dental Students with Disabilities,"<sup>11</sup> "A Survey of Dual-Degree Training Opportunities at U.S. Dental Schools,"<sup>12</sup> and "Increasing Access to Care with Diversity."<sup>13</sup>

Students should notice a distribution of topic foci, centering bimodally on 1) review of clinical treatment paradigms and 2) contemporary issues facing dental education.

While the first category, review of clinical treatment paradigms, might be an obvious set of topics for the journal, the possibility of publishing a review for a treatment modality of interest perhaps opens the concept to many of us who might not be profoundly aware of the complex issues facing dental education. Dental students of all types are often required to write this type of review. Why not submit something you've already written? If you have not written such a manuscript, why not review the methods, pros, and cons of your favorite protocol or material and submit it for publication?

Second, are students interested in improving the educational process? I have yet to meet anyone, including students, who believes dental schools and allied dental programs are perfect. If students have ideas on how to improve the process of preparing the dentists, dental hygienists, or dental assistants of the future or simply want to highlight a discrepancy affecting the field, they should submit an article in the second category on the contemporary education issue of their choice! The JDE has, for example, recently published a series of articles describing the

perspectives of dental students enrolled in 2003-04 from a large number of schools about information technology (laptops and the Internet), clinical teaching, strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, evaluation methods, and the overall learning environment in dental schools.<sup>14-17</sup> I'm sure many students in 2007 have thoughts and recommendations about these topics and other factors that influence their educational experience. Those involved in student organizations, committees, and student government are in particularly good positions to share ideas on improving various facets of the educational process. Those who have implemented changes in their schools are welcome to share assessments of progress that may then benefit other programs.

The one limitation on submissions in this category is that authors cannot be faculty, residents, or graduate students. Submissions are welcome from dental students, pre dental students, and all allied dental students.

Taking advantage of this opportunity will improve dentistry, expand student involvement in dental and allied dental education, and assist students interested in specialty programs, graduate programs, or faculty positions in reaching the next step in their careers.

Please contact me with presubmission versions of your article, brainstorming ideas, or questions.

Peace and thanks,

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