



# Your Journal, Our Journal: Still and Moving Forward

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It is a great privilege to assume the role of Editor in Chief of *Academic Psychiatry*. I am fortunate to be stepping in at a time when the journal is thriving, a result of the tremendous leadership and stewardship of Laura Roberts, M.D. Dr. Roberts' inaugural editorial [1] was titled "Your Journal, Our Journal," a credo that she had inherited from her editorial predecessor (and my mentor) Jonathan Borus, M.D. I am continuing this tradition in the title of this editorial, because it so beautifully expresses much of what I will try to say below. *Academic Psychiatry* is indeed *your* journal, created and governed by your professional organizations (see below) and existing to support your work as psychiatric educators and leaders. The editors also take very seriously *our* journal and our role as stewards of this enterprise.

Much of my first months of stewardship were actually occupied with moving the journal and its invaluable managing editor, Ann Tennier, to our new home at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, TX. This move was recently capped by gathering our editorial team, publishing editor, and governance committee for a retreat to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the journal. My thoughts about the journal were deepened and broadened by the contributions of the governance officers and editors at our retreat, and some of the specific ideas in this editorial were generated by that meeting.

Our retreat reaffirmed the mission and scope of the journal, which we updated to read as follows:

*Academic Psychiatry* is the international journal of the American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry, American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training, Association for Academic Psychiatry, and Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry.

*Academic Psychiatry* publishes original, scholarly work in psychiatry and the behavioral sciences that focuses on innovative education, academic leadership, and advocacy.

The scope of the journal includes work that furthers knowledge and stimulates evidence-based advances in academic psychiatry in the following domains: education and training, leadership and administration, career and professional development, ethics and professionalism, and health and well-being.

In this editorial, I want to share with you my appreciation for where the journal is today and where we are headed. I see this in three themes: (1) the journal as a site of scholarly work, (2) the journal as a component of our four sponsoring organizations, and (3) the journal as a source of professional development and formative growth.

## The Journal as a Site of Scholarly Work

The journal's mission to publish original scholarly work that is truly impactful has been successful by any measure. The last decade has seen a steady rise in the number of new submissions per year to the journal, which have doubled and are expected to reach 400 for the first time in 2019. Published articles are being downloaded and read at a similarly unprecedented rate. In 2018, *Academic Psychiatry* had just under 170,000 downloads of articles from its website. As the inflow of new manuscript submissions and the outflow of published articles read have grown, we have also seen a fairly steady rise of the journal's impact factor, most recently at 1.88. The impact factor is a measure of how often *Academic Psychiatry* papers are cited in other journals, which does create a probable ceiling for our impact factor. Because *Academic Psychiatry* is the only journal that specializes in psychiatry education, even highly influential papers that shape the course of psychiatry education may not add to the impact factor.

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At the center of the journal's work, we will continue to emphasize growing an evidence base in psychiatry education and academic leadership that is rooted in data (quantitative and qualitative). These papers (e.g., empirical reports, brief reports, and educational case reports) are our best guides in the choices we make as educators and as departments and training programs. At the same time, we will be making a special effort to create space for subjective voices and individual stories. As psychiatrists, we know that there is valuable truth and meaning that is sometimes only found in listening to an individual's experience. We have created two new article categories for this purpose. "Faculty Viewpoint" invites authors to share a personal experience, clinical vignette, or teaching moment in order to develop a broader point germane to the journal's mission. "The Learner's Voice" is a forum for us to hear about the challenges and inspirations involved in learning psychiatry or becoming a psychiatrist from those still in training.

The task of becoming a psychiatrist is a difficult one. This difficulty is partly because our clinical work requires that we bring our full selves to engage with persons whose suffering has (and should have) a real impact on us. Psychiatric illnesses cause damage and pain at the heart of our identities as human beings and in our most important, intimate relationships. It has never been easy to become a clinician who can help patients bear such illness. Our current health care systems do not always seem to support clinicians in doing this work. Residents and faculty are under time and productivity pressures, electronic record systems do not yet fulfill their promises, and burnout is a real threat. Our journal has a priority to generate scholarship that rigorously explores these challenges and analyzes problems and proposed solutions through consideration of the best available evidence.

The development of a psychiatrist is also difficult because psychiatry is a medical specialty that seems to exist in a perpetual state of debate about its identity. This debate is not, however, a problem of neurosis. It is an honest reflection of the reality that psychiatric illnesses are extraordinarily complicated. Psychiatric illnesses exist at an intersection of neurobiology, social conditions and culture, and individual narratives. We have an extraordinary amount of ground to cover, which necessitates difficult choices in the allocation of time during medical student education and resident and fellow training. *Academic Psychiatry* must continue to publish the best available scholarship that can guide our field in defining what a graduated psychiatrist should look like, what we expect psychiatrists to know and to advocate for, and what the most effective educational methods are for reaching those goals.

## The Journal as a Component of the Sponsoring Organizations

Our journal is unusual in being owned by four distinct sponsoring organizations: American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry (AACDP), American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training (AADPRT), Association for Academic Psychiatry (AAP), and Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry (ADMSEP). This consortium not only works but also provides a synergy and creative tension that results in something greater than the sum of its parts. Each organization approaches the realm of academic psychiatry from a different angle, emphasizing different aspects of our work, but ultimately all are well aligned around a set of shared values, as reflected in the journal's mission statement: innovative education, academic leadership, and advocacy. Each of the organizations provides a representative to serve on the journal's governance committee, where questions of the strategic direction of the journal are decided.

Any reader who has been involved with the sponsoring organizations will appreciate how special they are. Although we look forward to their annual meetings, each provides so much more than a yearly conference. The sponsoring organizations are crucial professional homes that provide training, development, leadership opportunities, and especially collegial support to psychiatry educators (some of whom would otherwise feel isolated with the demands and mandates of their roles). These organizations provide such value because they have vibrant, healthy cultures of dialog, debate, collaboration, and mentoring. I will never forget my first time attending AADPRT, ADMSEP, and AAP meetings as a very inexperienced faculty member. Not only did I feel I had found my "tribe," but I was amazed by how I was embraced, taken in, and offered support. (My much more recent experience of AACDP has been the same.) I know I am not alone in this feeling, and over the years, I have been delighted to hear from so many others about similar experiences.

Therefore, it is critical that the journal continue to be an expression and extension of the missions and culture of the sponsoring organizations. I will be looking for every opportunity to engage more closely with each organization in driving the content of the journal. I hope this will include suggestions from the organizations for special collections built around specific themes. Such collections would be in addition to our new tradition of generating virtual issues in concert with sponsoring organizations' annual meetings. In addition, I will be working close with the sponsoring organizations to fill positions on the journal's editorial board and to optimize these roles. Certainly one element of this optimization will be to promote a diversity of representation on the editorial board and among the editors that is reflective of the great range of different voices in our community.

## The Journal as a Site for Professional Development

*Academic Psychiatry* has a strong tradition of fostering the professional development of its authors through an approach to review and editing that is both rigorous and formative. In the early days of the journal, when submissions were far fewer, *Academic Psychiatry* became known for meticulous and generous editors who provided extensive feedback and guidance in helping an article to publication, often through numerous rewrites. While that degree of mentoring is not scalable to the current number of submissions, we must maintain that spirit. Our reviews and our editorial feedback should take the tone of constructive feedback, no different than if we were in the same room together face to face. It is never going to be easy to hear what is wrong with one's paper, which is an unavoidable stress of writing and publishing. But we are all educators, and that feedback should be conveyed in the spirit of a growth mindset that helps the author and the paper reach their potential.

The editors will continue to provide writing workshops at the annual meetings of the sponsoring organizations. Given the huge range of research experience among organization members, an emphasis on providing programming that teaches research methods for educators may be valuable. We hope to partner with the sponsoring organizations in this effort. Helping potential authors understand the principles of study construction can enhance the rigor of the published research in psychiatry education and the likelihood of a successful and satisfying experience for the eventual manuscript submission. We also encourage first-time authors to contact us directly if they would like to identify themselves as interested in a more mentored submission experience.

We will also emphasize trainings about how to be a reviewer. As the number of journal manuscript submissions keeps growing, we need to develop a deeper pool of peer reviewers. Reviewers know that the work is both a crucial contribution to the scholarly community and a great benefit to the reviewer. Many of us can attest to how helpful reviewing has been for our writing. It is easier to look objectively at someone else's paper, but this task, in turn, helps us take an objective look at our writing. Seeing the multiple drafts and resubmissions as a reviewer also helps take the sting out of the experience when we are the authors and helps make us more tolerant of our imperfect drafts. *Academic Psychiatry* needs to do all that it can to reward and appreciate its reviewers in ways that we hope are valuable to them in their institutional promotion processes. With this priority in mind, we decided at our retreat that the journal will present a Distinguished Reviewer Award annually to the top 10% of peer reviewers.

Another relevant outcome of the retreat is the new *Academic Psychiatry* Trainee Editorial Fellowship (see [Appendix](#)). The

fellowship will be an opportunity for psychiatry residents and fellows with a demonstrated interest in education, scholarship, and leadership to expand their skills in scholarly publication. This 1-year, unfunded fellowship will provide trainees in programs accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education with an opportunity to learn about and participate in peer review, the editing process, and editorial writing for our journal. The editors hope this experience will inspire the next generation to become our future replacements!

In conclusion, I have shared with you what I value in the journal and where I see the journal is headed, in the journal's three identities as a producer of scholarship, a citizen of its sponsoring organizations, and a supporter of professional development and growth. Now I invite you to share your feedback with me as we move forward. I need to hear from you about how the journal is doing in pursuit of our aspirations, what opportunities you see for growth and change, and especially when you feel we have stumbled or erred. Please reach out to me at [acadpsych@gmail.com](mailto:acadpsych@gmail.com). I look forward to the conversations!

## Compliance with Ethical Standards

**Disclosures** The author states that there is no conflict of interest.

## Appendix. Trainee Editorial Fellowship

The *Academic Psychiatry* Trainee Editorial Fellowship is an opportunity for psychiatry residents and fellows with a demonstrated interest in education, scholarship, and leadership to expand their skills in scholarly publication. This 1-year, unfunded fellowship will provide trainees in programs accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education with an opportunity to learn about and participate in the peer review and editing process for an academic medical journal.

## Duties

- Begin by being immersed in the peer review process via reviewing manuscripts submitted to *Academic Psychiatry* under the mentorship of an editorial board member.
- After demonstrating facility with the peer review process, shadow and work with an assigned journal manuscript handling editor from submission of new manuscripts to the final publication decisions.
- Co-author with an editor mentor an editorial to be published in the journal.
- Engage in an optional academic project related to the journal (e.g., teaching peers, writing, or research).
- Attend at least one journal editorial board meeting, held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency

Training (AADPRT) or the Association for Academic Psychiatry (AAP).

### Eligibility

- Resident in postgraduate year 3 or 4 or fellow in any psychiatry subspecialty.
- Demonstrated track record of interest in teaching, scholarly presentation(s), or scholarly publication(s).

### Application Materials

Please email the following materials to the attention of Ann Tennier, Managing Editor, at acadpsych@gmail.com between August 1 and September 15 for selection by end of November.

- Personal statement (not to exceed 500 words)
- Curriculum vitae
- Letter of recommendation from program director or mentor

### Selection Criteria

The selection committee will consider the following factors:

- Demonstrated interest and commitment to a career in academic psychiatry
- Demonstrated interest in academic writing
- Demonstrated interest in teaching
- The likely impact of the fellowship on the career of the applicant

### Reference

1. Roberts LW. Your journal, our journal. *Acad Psychiatry*. 2002;26:1–3.

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