
Editorial: Focusing on What Matters most--Quality Chiropractic Education

The *Journal of Chiropractic Education (JCE)* has witnessed substantial growth and improvements over the past two decades. As any periodical matures, it is natural that people will desire to influence the development of it. It is assumed that the impetus for peoples' interest in shaping the *JCE* resides is a strong desire to enhance the quality of chiropractic education and educational scholarship. Recently, there have been a few suggestions to limit participation on the editorial board, and in authorship and peer-review, to individuals from specific colleges or with specific degrees. The purpose of this editorial is to clarify the policy of the *JCE* as it pertains to membership on the board or in the peer-review pool and in authorship.

The *JCE* was first published in 1987. As stated by the *JCE* founding editor, Grace Jacobs, DA (written communication, January 8, 2009), "From the beginning, the *JCE* sought to have at least one advocate of quality education on every campus - someone who would work to promulgate the best of current standards for chiropractic education (no matter what organization generated them), encourage scholarship within the faculty, and support *JCE* through services." Service from various contributors included article peer-review, encouraging potential authors, or producing scholarly work. Dr. Jacobs continues, "Such campus advocates were chosen based on their commitment to quality education rather than on their particular degree, the unique characteristics of the institution where they serve the profession, or to which associations they or the institutions belong." It is hoped, that as volunteers grow through the dialog that comes from being associated with the *JCE* that they will promote high quality chiropractic education scholarship. Thus, this journal has always focused on providing a useful service to chiropractic educators, regardless of their location of employment, origin, or type of their degree (eg, MD, DC, PhD, etc).

The journal's scholarly and supportive approach is clearly presented in the journal mission statement:

"The mission of the *Journal of Chiropractic Education* is to promote excellence in chiropractic education through the publication of research and scholarly articles concerned with educational theory, methods, and content relevant to the practice of chiropractic; to encourage and contribute to the professional development of chiropractic educators; and to recognize their achievements."

There is no limitation in the mission statement that one may only be an author, editor, reviewer, or on the editorial board if he or she is vetted by a particular organization or fraternity. There has never been, nor should there be, a requirement that a particular pair of letters is required in order to work with or contribute to the journal. As examples, scholars who possess a PhD, MEd, MChiro, MSPT (but not a DC degree) are welcome to submit a manuscript to, or peer review for, the *JCE* and may serve on the editorial board. The quality of contributions should

stand on their own and not be judged by the letters after one's name or the location from which the author is affiliated.

Further, the Association of Chiropractic Colleges has, for the past two years, worked diligently toward one of its goals, which is to encourage scholarship in the field of chiropractic education worldwide.¹ The *JCE* is a major part of the effort to support worldwide chiropractic education and will continue to provide this service. One way to fulfill the mission of the journal is by involving chiropractic educators from all parts of the globe with their rich and diverse experiences, some coming from areas that are only now starting to develop chiropractic educational programs. Just as in the early years of the journal, it is important to bring much needed information to these developing programs and to immerse faculty members and administrators from these programs into the global dialog of chiropractic in an effort to potentiate growth. To cut off communication and participation due to prejudice or bias would defeat the purpose of open communication and scholarly contribution. Participants from all over the globe have much to add to the dialog of chiropractic education: for far too many years the chiropractic profession has been unable to view itself from outside North America. We have now broken beyond this barrier and I hope that we will wisely use this as an opportunity for continued improvement. Reciprocally, established colleges may have much to learn from the struggles and innovations of new programs. Therefore, it is especially important to include all educators in the dialog of chiropractic education.

It takes a team effort to referee the content of the *JCE* and our team is comprised of the editor, the former editors, the editorial board, the authors, and additional peer-reviewers who are not listed on the masthead. Journals do not expect the editorial board to carry all of the workload of peer-review and will often call upon other experts in the field to provide review. From this pool of additional reviewers and scholars come the editorial board members of tomorrow. Over time, as these reviewers demonstrate high quality and timely reviews, they may be invited to be an editorial board member if they can commit to providing the extra duties of being a board member. Thus, the position of editorial board member is a position that is earned and not granted as a favor. I am incredibly grateful for the unwavering support and goodwill of my entirely volunteer team. It is, perhaps, the devotion of this international group of experts that represents the heartbeat of this journal.

The *JCE* publishes deserving, high quality, peer-reviewed papers, which we are proud to have included in major indexing systems, such as PubMed, ICL, CINAHL, and MANTIS. According to the World Association of Medical Editors,² "Decisions about a manuscript should be based only on its importance, originality, clarity, and relevance to the journal's scope and content." To make it clear, the *JCE* selects editorial board members, peer-reviewers, and papers for publication based upon the quality of scholarly product, as deemed by peer-review, and does not discriminate against volunteers based upon their academic affiliations, degrees, or geographic location. Decisions about the participation of volunteers and the acceptance of papers for publication in the *JCE* will continue to be made in a manner that is congruent with this policy, the mission statement, and a benevolent history of service to one master—quality chiropractic education.

Should there be any commentary, I welcome dialog at jchiroed@aol.com.

REFERENCES

1. Green BN. Editorial: Globalization of the Journal of Chiropractic Education. *J Chiropr Educ* 2007;21(2):v-vi.

2. World Association of Medical Editors [homepage on the Internet]. Geneva: Chicago: The Association; c2000-2008 [updated 2004 Mar 23; cited 2009 Jan 9]. WAME Policy Statements: Geopolitical Intrusion on Editorial Decisions; [about 1 screen]. Available from: <http://www.wame.org/resources/policies#geopolitical>

Bart Green, DC, MEd
Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Chiropractic Education*