

The Journal of Biomechanical Engineering—The Next Step

It is indeed an honor to be the Editor of the *Journal of Biomechanical Engineering* (JBME). In looking through the list of previous Editors (e.g. Yin, Diller, Nerem, Fung), one feels the weight of the responsibility of JBME's legacy. One of the greatest strengths of JBME is its unifying concept of biomechanics in the broadest sense: kinematics, biological and bio-materials, heat transfer, modeling/simulation, all over the complete range of length scales. The ability for bioengineers to present cutting edge research in all areas of biomechanical engineering, coupled with a long, rich history of technical excellence makes JBME a unique venue in the bioengineering literature. While many authors continue the tradition of excellent work at the body, organ, and tissue scales, others are increasingly focused at the cellular and molecular scales. Still others are concentrating their efforts on translational approaches to move their studies from the benchtop to the bedside. Thus, a challenge for any bioengineering journal, including JBME, is how to encourage such amazing diversity while simultaneously maintaining a unique professional identity.

To achieve this, my goal for the JBME is straightforward: To make the JBME a more widely read, higher impact journal in the biomechanics, biomedical engineering, biomaterials, and related biomedical/life science communities. Yet, in planning any changes one should be careful not to focus entirely on impact factors. While bioengineering journals generally cannot compete with major life science journals, we can certainly improve. I have seen our sister disciplines (e.g., biomaterials, tissue engineering, cellular physiology, and molecular biophysics) excel in their ability to attract biomechanical engineers into their disciplines. Yet, while JBME continues to provide an excellent venue for the traditional biomechanical engineering areas, it could be more successful in recruiting authors from our sister engineering and scientific disciplines to publish quality biomechanical engineering related work

in the JBME. My overall concept is thus not to limit JBME to any one length scale or problem area, but rather broaden its appeal to both those already within the biomechanical engineering community and in closely related scientific fields.

This will be accomplished by making JBME a more attractive venue by focusing high profile special issues, invited reviews of recent and future trends, very fast review times, rapid online publishing, featured front cover art, and in the longer term an increase in the number of issues. To achieve these goals will take much hard work and dedication from our great team of Associate Editors, Reviewers, and the ASME staff. Already in the works for JBME are 11 new Associate Editors who will start their terms in 2008 to help streamline the review process. On the "outbound side" I am pleased to report that the ASME Journal Program is starting the "e-First" publishing model with the 2008 issues of all Transactions journals so that publication will occur as rapidly as possible after the completion of peer review. ASME is also moving to have all JBME back issues online for 1995–2000 by January 2008 and 1990–1995 by June 2008. Finally, I will be working with the ASME staff to implement other initiatives, such as featured cover art, within the next year. I very much look forward to working with colleagues in the biomechanical and the larger bioengineering and sister disciplines to make JBME the "go-to" journal for all biomechanical engineering related topics.

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