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Some Journal Metrics for *Forensic Science International: Genetics*

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ABSTRACT

Forensic Science International: Genetics, which is the official journal of the International Society for Forensic Genetics, has grown in readership and impact factor since its introduction in 2007. This article reviews some metrics of the 32 issues available as of September 2013.

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1. Introduction

March 2007 marked the birth of *Forensic Science International: Genetics*, a daughter journal of *Forensic Science International* that focuses on forensic genetics [1]. Leadership for the journal began with Angel Carracedo from the University of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain serving as the editor-in-chief with associate editors Peter Schneider (Cologne, Germany) and John Butler (Gaithersburg, Maryland, USA). In 2012, Adrian Linacre (Adelaide, South Australia) and Leonor Gusmão (Porto, Portugal) were added as additional associate editors to aid work with non-human DNA and population genetics articles, respectively.

2. Journal metrics

Over the past five years, around 300 articles have been submitted each year to *FSI Genetics*. The journal has maintained a rejection rate of 55–60% in an attempt to keep article quality high and enable rapid publication times. The number of printed and electronic pages has increased each year to keep publication backlogs to a minimum. Articles are available on-line within a few weeks of acceptance and are now typically printed within six months after passing the peer-review process. Article-based publishing, where multiple issues are open simultaneously so that accepted articles can receive page numbers immediately, will reduce the time to print even more. The publisher has steadily granted more printed and electronic pages for each volume (Table 1). The number of printed issues has increased from three (2007) to four (2008, 2009) to five (2010, 2011) and now has stabilized at six issues per year (2012, 2013).

As the official journal of the International Society of Forensic Genetics, *FSI Genetics* has a world-wide readership. In 2012, 51% of corresponding authors were from Western Europe with authors from the U.S. and Canada contributing 19% of published articles, Asia 17%, Australia/New Zealand 5%, Eastern Europe 5%, and South America 2%.

3. Journal topics

A majority of articles appearing in the first 32 issues have focused on population data with autosomal, Y-chromosome, and X-chromosome short tandem repeats (STRs) although emerging efforts with RNA tissue typing and eye color phenotype determination are increasing (Table 2). Almost 40% (301) of the 768 articles accepted so far are population data studies. Guidelines for these types of studies were released in 2010 [2] and made more stringent in 2013 [3]. A minimum of 17 loci are requested now for autosomal STR and Y-STR studies and 12 loci are requested for X-chromosome markers. In addition, minimum sample numbers have been raised to 500 samples with autosomal, X-, and mitochondrial DNA data while 250 samples are a minimum for Y-chromosome results.

4. Journal impact factor

Impact factors are calculated each year by Thompson Reuters (New York City, NY) from the number of citations to recently published articles in a journal and are used as a measure of relative stature compared to similar journals [4,5]. A comparison of five forensic journals over the past five years shows the yearly improvement of *FSI Genetics* (Fig. 1). The 2012 impact factors, which were released in June 2013, ranked *FSI Genetics* #1 out of

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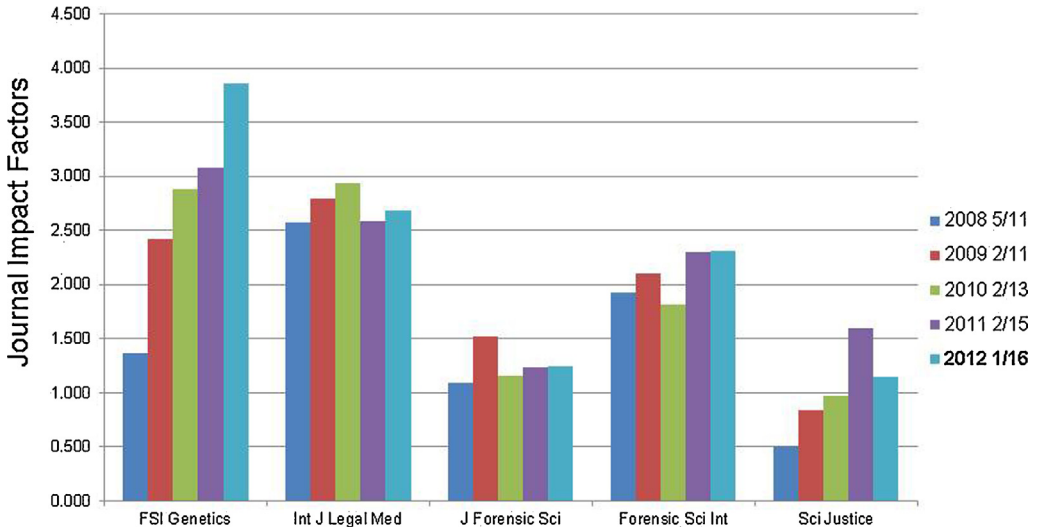

Fig. 1. Comparison of journal impact factors for 2008–2012.

Table 1
Review of 32 issues published from March 2007 to September 2013.

Issue – Date	#P	#E	Issue – Date	#P	#E	Issue – Date	#P	#E	Issue – Date	#P	#E
1(1) – Mar 2007	10	0	3(2) – Mar 2009	16	11	5(1) – Jan 2011	16	11	6(4) – July 2012	12	7
1(2) – June 2007	29	0	3(3) – June 2009	10	8	5(2) – Mar 2011	17	0	6(5) – Sept 2012	21	14
1(3/4) – Dec 2007	15	0	3(4) – Sept 2009	11	10	5(3) – June 2011	22	14	6(6) – Dec 2012	20	16
2(1) – Jan 2008	17	0	4(1) – Dec 2009	7	17	5(4) – Aug 2011	23	5	7(1) – Jan 2013	30	8
2(2) – Mar 2008	9	8	4(2) – Feb 2010	14	5	5(5) – Nov 2011	37	2	7(2) – Feb 2013	14	8
2(3) – June 2008	13	5	4(3) – Apr 2010	12	4	6(1) – Jan 2012	20	23	7(3) – May 2013	12	20
2(4) – Sept 2008	19	5	4(4) – July 2010	11	8	6(2) – Mar 2012	23	6	7(4) – July 2013	10	5
3(1) – Dec 2008	11	6	4(5) – Oct 2010	10	12	6(3) – May 2012	18	6	7(5) – Sept 2013	12	2

#P: number of articles appearing in print and possessing page numbers, #E: number of articles appearing only electronically.

Table 2
Selected topics covered in *FSI Genetics* from March 2007 to September 2013.

Category	Number of articles (from total of 768)
Population studies	301
Autosomal STR data	136
Y-STR data	95
X-STR data	43
mtDNA	27
SNPs	55
Non-human DNA	40
Relationship testing	37
RNA (e.g., tissue typing)	17
Phenotype (e.g., eye color)	15

16 journals in the "Medical, Legal" category with an impact factor of 3.861.

The relative journal ranking for *FSI Genetics* in the legal medicine category is indicated next to each year.

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Conflict of interest

The author is an associate editor of the journal, which is an unpaid, volunteer position.

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