

Letter to Editor

Classification of journals in the Qualis system: time to broaden the discussion

Classificação dos periódicos no sistema Qualis: é o momento de ampliar a discussão

To the editor:

In its first edition of 2010, the *Jornal Brasileiro de Pneumologia* (Brazilian Journal of Pulmonology) published an editorial entitled "Classification of journals in the QUALIS system of CAPES – URGENT need of changing the criteria!"¹ The concern regarding the impact that the new classification of journals in the Qualis system has on scientific articles produced in Brazil is quite evident. The editorial was signed by 60 editors of Brazilian journals and listed a series of proposals developed based on a wide debate among directors of the *Associação Brasileira de Editores Científicos* (ABEC, Brazilian Association of Science Editors) and the coordinators of the Medicine areas II and III of the *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES, Coordination of the Advancement of Higher Education).

A similar discussion occurred at the 3rd Brazilian National Forum on Graduate Programs in the area of Health Sciences, held in the city of Porto de Galinhas, located in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil, on October 28-30, 2009. The forum brought together, in addition to the CAPES area coordinators, coordinators of graduate programs in the health area from all over the country. The central themes of the forum were the evaluation of graduate programs by CAPES and the Brazilian national policies for health research.

The new classification of journals in the Qualis System of CAPES is extremely important since it evaluates the generation of knowledge in Brazilian universities and influences the way in which this knowledge is disseminated. The Qualis system is a tool used to promote quality scientific production in graduate programs. The criteria used by CAPES in the evaluation of graduate programs will set the rules and goals that these programs will pursue over a three-year period. Therefore, the criteria should be discussed by all in the area of interest and established based on the understanding of the role of graduate programs in Brazil and on the awareness of the type and qualification of professionals completing these programs (researchers and professors).

The Graduate Programs in Pulmonology and Clinical Medicine belong to the Medicine area I

of CAPES. In this area, the impact that the classification of journals in the Qualis System has on the articles published in Brazilian journals can be even greater than that observed in the areas of Medicine II and III. This is due to the fact that, in Medicine I, a "governor" was created in order to limit the number of articles published in journals classified as B3, B4 or B5. Most Brazilian journals are in one of these strata. Over the three-year period, CAPES will consider a maximum of three articles per professor in each of these strata.

There is consensus that it is necessary to qualify Brazilian research and internationalize the scientific production of Brazil. The role that Brazilian journals have played in making the intellectual production of graduate programs visible in Brazil is also indisputable. Similarly, there is no doubt that the growth of Brazilian journals, which, in many cases, are funded by universities and professional scientific associations, should be promoted. The internationalization of these journals will be furthered by a broad discussion among major producers of science (graduate programs), ABEC representatives, organizations that foster research and the dissemination of knowledge and CAPES.

Therefore, this is the time to broaden the debate in universities and carry that debate to all professors and graduate students. One of the opportunities to foster this discussion is the forum for the development of the Brazilian National Plan for Graduate Studies. In this context, it is necessary to consider that the establishment of evaluation criteria that promote the growth of graduate programs, as well as the international insertion of Brazilian journals, is important for promoting research nationwide.

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References

1. Classification of journals in the QUALIS System of CAPES – URGENT need of changing the criteria! *J Bras Pneumol.* 2010;36(1):1-3.