

Highlights of the CBE Views Survey Responses

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The survey “Review the *Views*” was distributed at the 1996 CBE Annual Meeting and was also printed in the June-July issue of *CBE Views*. Of the 60 members who responded to the survey, 46 responded at the annual meeting and 14 responded to the survey in *CBE Views*. Because the survey was not designed to randomly sample the CBE membership and because the total response represents only 5% of the membership (60 of 1226 members), the results (pages 101 and 102) must be interpreted with caution.

The survey was designed to learn how well our periodical is serving members and to find out whether members wanted *CBE Views*, or a new CBE publication, to be devoted to peer-reviewed, research-based articles on the scholarly publication of science.

About 62% of respondents said that within the next 3 to 5 years, they would like to see *CBE Views* retain the mix of content and the format it now has (item 20). As a publication to meet member needs, 62% of respondents said *CBE Views* was very effective or effective (item 6). When asked how *CBE Views* measures up as a “calling card” to promote CBE membership, 47% of respondents said it was very effective or effective, and another 32% said it was somewhat

effective (item 7). As a way to keep up with CBE news and activities, 37% of respondents said *CBE Views* was very effective, and another 52% said it was effective (item 8).

Respondents had numerous comments about publishing the reports of annual meeting sessions (items 14, 15, 21). Several were frustrated by the length of time it takes to publish all the reports, and some suggested that all annual meeting reports should appear in 1 publication as soon as possible after the annual meeting, either as a special issue of *CBE Views* or as another publication. In the past it has usually taken a full year after the annual meeting to publish all meeting reports. Other respondents thought that annual meeting reports were not necessary because they had attended the meeting, perhaps forgetting that less than 25% of members travel to our meetings. And even those who do attend often face tough choices about participation in concurrent sessions.

In seeking to meet member needs over the next few years, respondents were asked to list their greatest challenges in scientific publishing (item 12). Of the numerous comments, Internet technology, online editing, and other electronic technology issues emerged as a theme, as did the pressure of deadlines, staff shortages, and generally trying to do more with less.

When asked how *CBE Views* could help

meet their challenges (item 13), many respondents seemed to focus on articles that would help with specific tasks—managing an editorial office; descriptions of “how others do it”; questions and answers about the style manual, changes in publishing, peer review, and shared experiences.

In response to the question about expansions or additions to *CBE Views* (item 14), a variety of directly applicable, practical features were listed: problem-solving features, information for those new in the field; more job announcements; “nitty-gritty editing stuff”. Other suggestions included more global information, more in-depth articles, and more on ethics, electronic publishing, and nonmedical topics. Two of the 31 responses recommended no expansion.

If *CBE Views* were to be shortened (item 15), some aspects to be deleted included “Looking Back” and annual meeting reports (but publish them in a separate publication or publish selected reports). Several called for more concise writing.

In general, many members who responded to the survey seem to be pleased with the changes in *CBE Views* under the editorship of Martha Tacker, and from their comments, look forward to continued improvements. 📖