

Commentary on: Tregar KL, Proni G. A review of forensic science education programs in the United States: bachelor's and master's degrees. *J Forensic Sci* 2010;55(6):1488–93.

Sir,

The article, “A Review of Forensic Science Higher Education Programs in the United States: Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees,” has significant factual errors and research design errors that render the entire part of the survey relating to faculty, suspect.

First, on page 1488, the authors state that FEPAC started as an *ad hoc* Committee of the AAFS and then became a standing committee and then became a commission. FEPAC was a commission from the start. It did become a standing committee of the AAFS and still is. They then go on to say that the FEPAC is composed of five forensic science educators. It is, but also has five members who are members of the American Society of Crime Lab Directors (ASCLD) and one public member.

Second, on the same page, in referring to the report of the National Academy of Sciences, on forensic science, the authors refer to the organization as the National Association of Sciences.

The most serious error is in the design of the survey itself. On page 1489, the authors state: “It was observed that the number of faculty in any given FORENSIC SCIENCE DEPARTMENT (emphasis mine) varied widely, from as few as one faculty member

to as many as 40. The majority were comprised of more than 10 faculty members.” There are no forensic science departments with 40 faculty in them in the U.S. and I dare say that there are few or none with as many as 10. The authors are clearly confused or misinformed here. Forensic science programs exist in a number of administrative areas of colleges and universities. For example, there are some in their own departments but these have only a few faculty members. Many or most forensic science programs exist within a department, such as chemistry or biology. These departments may have many faculty members, but few of them are forensic scientists or even interact with the program. Describing the characteristics of an entire chemistry department with 40 faculty members that houses a forensic science program with one or two faculty, does not give an accurate picture of the characteristics of the forensic science faculty. If this is who the authors are profiling, then all of the data relating to faculty in the article becomes suspect.

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