

THESIS POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Last Revised: July 2023

I. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

March 1st of each year.

A. Internal Pathway

Candidate Members must submit an online membership application prior to thesis submission; supporting documents may be sent to Info@asoprs.org later.

Candidate Members are strongly encouraged to submit their thesis prior to finishing their fellowship. If the thesis is not submitted within the four-year timeframe allotted for completion of all membership steps, the Internal Pathway status is forfeited, and the candidate will be required to reapply on the External Pathway. See Membership Guidelines for more detail.

B. External Pathway

Prospective members are invited to submit a thesis after successful review of their membership application. See Membership Guidelines for more detail.

II. REVIEW

Submissions are reviewed by the Thesis Workgroup. See Membership Guidelines for more details.

III. REVISIONS

Candidates will be notified by email if the Thesis Workgroup requests major or minor revisions. The number of days by which the author must resubmit will be specified in the email. Additional time may be granted upon formal written request.

IV. THESIS ACCEPTANCE

A. Candidates will be notified of acceptance by email within two months after the deadline.

B. After acceptance of a thesis which has not been previously published or presented, the abstract may be submitted for consideration for presentation at the ASOPRS Fall Scientific Symposium.

V. SUITABLE THESIS TOPICS

A. Original research (clinical or basic science) involving new concepts or techniques in oculofacial plastic surgery (OPS), or studies which add to, modify, or challenge established concepts. Such research must be hypothesis-driven and appropriately powered to test the hypothesis using the scientific method.

- B. Comprehensive review with an exhaustive reference list on a pertinent topic related to OPS. Review must also include description of at least 3 previously unpublished cases illustrating the topic being reviewed.
- C. Case series with a minimum of ten (10) patients, testing a specific hypothesis. A control group is typically required. A new surgical technique would be appropriate for this category. A technique-oriented case series must clearly state and explain the clinical need for the new technique, provide a minimum of three (3) months follow-up, review the relevant literature, and include statistical analysis of the results.

VI. STUDY REQUIREMENTS

- A. The goal of the thesis submission is a peer-reviewed publication.
- B. **IMPORTANT** The thesis must be formatted according to *Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* (OPRS) [Guidelines for Manuscript Submission and Image File Preparation](#). Submissions that do not conform to OPRS submission guidelines will be returned without review.
- C. Preoperative and postoperative photographs are necessary to show the results of intervention. When required to document diagnosis and results, authors must submit substantiating materials such as radiographs, computed tomography, and histopathological illustrations. Photographs must be included according to the OPRS [Guidelines for Manuscript Submission and Image File Preparation](#). Photograph submissions that do not conform to OPRS Image File Preparation will be returned without review.
- D. Case series require a minimum of ten (10) patients. A formal request for an exception must be made in advance, addressed to the Thesis Chair and emailed to info@asoprs.org. The request will be masked to the Chair.
- E. The minimum postoperative follow-up period is three (3) months. A formal request for an exception must be made in advance, addressed to the Thesis Chair and emailed to info@asoprs.org. The request will be masked to the Chair.
- F. All clinical studies that utilize identifiable patient information during any part of the data-mining (e.g. chart review) should be undertaken with informed consent, IRB monitoring and clearly state compliance with the Helsinki declaration. All animal studies should be conducted in a humane and ethical manner, with monitoring by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).
- G. **IMPORTANT** The thesis must have ALL identifying information redacted. Any data or statements that reveal the author(s) or institution will result in the thesis being returned without review.
- H. The author is required to submit an identified and deidentified cover letter using the Cover Letter Template

VII. IRB REQUIREMENTS

- A. All studies must comply with the federal Common Rule, as published in the Federal Register in January 2019: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2017-01-19/pdf/2017-01058.pdf>
- B. All studies involving identifiable patient information, including retrospective studies, case series and case reports, must submit to monitoring by an IRB.
- C. A copy of the IRB approval letter must be included in the deidentified version of the thesis submission.
- D. Exemptions are granted by an IRB, not the Thesis Workgroup; a copy of the exemption letter must be included with the identified submission.
- E. If your institution doesn't provide a formal IRB waiver or exemption letter, you must include an IRB flowchart, screenshot, etc. of the exemption/waiver language and a statement of why the thesis was exempt per the institution's guidelines. This information must be included in your identified cover letter.
- F. If the author believes that IRB monitoring is unnecessary and places undue hardship on the study, a formal request for a waiver must be made in advance, addressed to the Thesis Chair and emailed to info@asoprs.org. Such requests will only be considered under extraordinary circumstances.

VIII. PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED OR PRESENTED THESIS

Publication of a manuscript does not guarantee acceptance of the thesis.

A. Internal Pathway

Internal Pathway Candidate Members may submit a thesis previously published in a peer-reviewed journal if:

- a. The study was initiated during their fellowship
- b. The candidate is first author of the paper
- c. The research article meets all guidelines and requirements outlined in this document.

Internal Pathway Candidate Members may submit a thesis previously presented at a national or international conference if:

- a. The study was presented during their ASOPRS-approved Fellowship Training Program.
- b. The study meets all guidelines and requirements outlined in this document.

B. External Pathway

External Pathway candidates may submit a thesis that was published in a peer reviewed journal within five (5) years before the date of the membership application.

IX. PUBLICATION (Submissions Not Previously Published)

- A. Authors are strongly encouraged to submit their thesis to *OPRS* after Thesis Workgroup acceptance.
- B. *OPRS* has the first right of refusal unless exceptions are made by the Editor.
- C. Thesis acceptance by the Thesis Workgroup does not guarantee *OPRS* publication.

X. AWARD ELIGIBILITY

Submissions are considered for the following:

- A. **Marvin Quickert Thesis Award.** One award is given annually for the most outstanding thesis submission. Only original studies, not previously presented, not pending publication, and not previously published, will be considered. Three (3) candidates are chosen who will present their thesis during the Thesis Session at the following ASOPRS Fall Scientific Symposium. The thesis may not be presented elsewhere, nor submitted for publication until after ASOPRS Fall Scientific Symposium.

IMPORTANT: Authors will be notified if chosen as a Quickert candidate. Authors may submit the thesis/abstract for consideration for the Fall Scientific Symposium prior to acceptance and/or Quickert candidacy notification.

- B. **Merrill Reeh Pathology Award.** If theses are deemed suitably outstanding by the Thesis Workgroup, the Thesis Workgroup Chair may recommend the submission(s) to the Awards Committee for consideration for the Merrill Reeh Pathology Award. The Pathology Award is presented during the ASOPRS Fall Scientific Symposium.

XI. THESIS SUBMISSION FORMAT

- A. **IMPORTANT** The thesis must be formatted according to *Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* (OPRS) [Guidelines for Manuscript Submission and Image File Preparation](#). Submissions that do not conform to OPRS submission guidelines will be returned without review.
- B. Theses must follow all submission guidelines, be formatted correctly, be completely deidentified, and include a cover letter or they will be returned without review. Once corrections are made, the thesis may be resubmitted at the next deadline.
- C. COVER LETTER/ATTESTATIONS: Include an identified and deidentified Cover Letter, using the Cover Letter Template.
- D. TWO DOCUMENTS must be submitted via the [ASOPRS Thesis Submission Form](#). Documents should be submitted as PDF attachments, NOT as online hosted documents (such as Google Share, iCloud, etc.). Video submissions are not accepted for thesis entries.
 - a. **Identified Version** (Title: Last Name_Identified Thesis)
Documents must be combined in the order below and submitted in pdf format:
 - 1. Cover Letter

2. IRB Documentation: Approval, Waiver Letter, or IRB Flowchart with Explanation.
3. Thesis
4. Figures

b. **De-identified Version** (Title: Last Name_Deidentified Thesis)

The identified thesis must be COMPLETELY DEIDENTIFIED and submitted as a separate document, in pdf format.

Documents must be combined in the order below and submitted in pdf format:

1. Deidentified Cover Letter
2. Deidentified Thesis
3. Figures

NOTE:

THE IRB documentation does not need to be included in the deidentified version.

A deidentified version must be submitted even if the study was previously published.

All items must be deidentified or the thesis will be returned without review.