

Organic Letters Update

As we begin our 16th year I am pleased to report that *Organic Letters* continues to prosper with increased submissions, a higher impact factor, and the publication of outstanding research results. For the first time, the *Organic Letters* impact factor is now above 6! I thank the organic chemistry community for their continued support and efforts to submit, review, and read the exceptional science we are privileged to publish. *Organic Letters* is “exactly where you want to be”.

I would also like to take this opportunity to tell you about some significant changes for the journal. Starting with the first issue in 2014, *Organic Letters* is adopting a page format similar to that used by most of the journals in the ACS portfolio. Importantly, a new user-friendly template is now available on the *Organic Letters* home page. If, however, you have submitted a manuscript using our former template, or have your paper ready to go in the old format, there is no need to reformat. During the transition, the ACS production staff in Columbus will convert your submission into the new format. I hope you will find the new template easy to use. Please let us know.

While I regret the loss of some of our distinctive *Organic Letters* branding, I was persuaded that the advantages presented by moving to the new format outweighed my concerns and those of our Associate Editors. The new format will permit *Organic Letters* to take advantage of the current advanced, high speed editing and composition systems now in place at ACS Publications, which will ensure *Organic Letters* can (and will) incorporate the full advantages of the future enhancements that we anticipate, based on the new technology the ACS Publications Division is bringing to the publishing world.

Several benefits will start immediately:

- Authors will receive their proofs as much as a full day sooner than previously delivered.
- The proof correction process has been streamlined for faster publication. It is now possible to have your corrected proofs on the web within 24 hours!
- The new design provides more space for your important research content.
- The new simpler template eliminates manual insertion of the red bars surrounding graphics and tables when formatting your manuscript. The red bars will automatically be inserted during galley production.
- The template provides a more accurate estimation of the length of a paper vis-a-vis the four-page *Organic Letters* format.
- And finally, let us not forget that *Organic Letters*, like all of the ACS journals, provides free color to enhance your publications. Please take advantage of the color option.

Going forward, the new format will permit *Organic Letters* to benefit from innovations and enhancements both at ACS Publications and at *Chemical Abstracts* that will permit richer tagging and display of the content. *Organic Letters* will also be better able to take advantage of new applications to facilitate author compliance with funding agency requirements. Finally, and most importantly, *Organic Letters* will be positioned to use

new tools that will add functionality to references, graphics, and Supporting Information through the ACS web interface.

The new year also brings changes in our Associate Editors. Professors Zhenfeng Xi of Peking University and Shigehiro Yamaguchi of Nagoya University joined our editorial team in November. Professor Yamaguchi's research is broadly focused on the design and synthesis of functional organic molecules with intriguing photophysical and electronic properties. He is internationally recognized for creative work in main group chemistry with B, Si, or P elements directed toward advanced π -electron materials. Professor Xi's current research interests include the development and synthetic applications of organo-dimetallic reagents, organic synthesis and mechanistic studies based on reactive organometallic intermediates, as well as transition-metal-catalyzed synthesis of silacycles and azacycles via cleavage of Si–C and N–C bonds. I welcome both of these internationally distinguished organic chemists and look forward to working with them.

As of 2014, Professors Koichi Komatsu and Dan Yang are stepping down as Associate Editors, but pleasingly, they will continue their association with *Organic Letters* as members of our Editorial Advisory Board. I, and my colleagues at *Organic Letters* and at ACS Publications, sincerely thank both Koichi and Dan for their valuable contributions.

As we enter 2014, we continue to review and refine our author guidelines. In particular, we have clarified our guidelines regarding the content of papers focusing on the design, synthesis, and application of organic sensor compounds. For consideration by *Organic Letters*, papers must either describe the synthesis of a novel sensor(s) or a significantly improved route to a known sensor and/or must include appropriate improved sensing data. See Section 1.1 of our Guidelines for full details.

We have also clarified and expanded our guidelines on experimental/characterization data in the Supporting Information, particularly NMR data. ACS journal Editors for some time have been considering how the submission and publication of NMR data can be improved, with the goal of providing quality data for authors, reviewers, and readers. We applaud this effort and have taken their suggestions into consideration. In addition, we have also incorporated items based on our recent experience with closer examination of Supporting Information upon the addition of a Data Analyst to our staff in 2012. Please see Sections 3.17.1 through 3.17.3 of the Guidelines for full details. We have now had over a year of experience with our increased scrutiny of Supporting Information and on occasion have encountered a disturbing issue; modification (i.e., editing) of NMR spectra to hide impurities or solvents. In most cases, upon investigation, we have determined that the chemistry reported is valid. However, such manipulation of experimental data is a clear violation of research ethics that casts considerable doubt on the entire work that, in turn, can damage the

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reputation of researchers if the flawed data is published, or if already published, not corrected. This problem is likely not new, but with the actual spectra now available on the web, which can be examined at high magnification, evidence of spectra editing is more apparent. We will thus continue to refine our procedures to identify and to investigate possible ethical violations. For example, where appropriate, we will request FID data to confirm the data reported. We also invite the community to submit FID data as an optional part of their Supporting Information, especially when the results depend critically on the NMR data. The FID data will be published as part of the Supporting Information.

Our aim in this effort is not to present impediments to submitting your outstanding research, but to ensure the integrity of data we publish. Research has always been based on trust. We must and will, however, be diligent to ensure that *Organic Letters* meets the highest possible standards. In this regard, I urge all research group leaders to join us in redoubling our efforts to educate our co-workers regarding ethical presentation of research data. The ACS Ethical Guidelines to Publication of Chemical Research (<http://pubs.acs.org/userimages/ContentEditor/1218054468605/ethics.pdf>) provide a good framework for these discussions.

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