

# Prior Publication: Extended Abstracts, Proceedings Articles, Preprint Servers, and the Like

When presenting your work, it is important to consider the policies of the journal in which you would like to publish it. Specifically, prior publication policies describe whether parts of the manuscript (including text, figures, and other materials) may or may not be previously published in order to allow consideration by that journal. In today's world of greater online accessibility, prior publication includes any parts of the manuscript that are readily available in print or online and may extend to include Web sites, such as your group's research page, your institutional staff page, etc.

Prior publication policies vary widely from publisher to publisher, and even for different journals from a given publisher.<sup>1</sup> For *ACS Nano*, previous availability of the submitted materials in any form does not lead directly to rejection; however, prior availability has the effect of reducing the novelty of the work and thus raising the threshold for review and acceptance. The full policy for *ACS Nano* reads as follows:<sup>2</sup>

*"ACS Nano considers for publication only original work that has not been previously published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. When submitting a manuscript, an author should inform the editor of any prior dissemination of the content in print or electronic format. This includes electronic posting of conference presentations, posters, and preprints on institutional repositories and other Web sites."*

**Extended Abstracts.** Typically, short abstracts do not contain data nor sufficient detail or depth to constitute prior publication. Some conferences or other events require that speakers submit extended abstracts. Instead of the usual few dozen words for an abstract, these pieces may be a few pages in length and may include (or require) figures. If extended abstracts are published in a journal, an archived collection or book, or are posted online, they are considered published because they are readily accessible to researchers in the field and, in many cases, are citable pieces of work by some journals and publications. In addition to copyright issues, if figures and text from your journal submission are or will be available in the form of extended abstracts, please disclose this information in your cover letter. If you are including material that has already been or will be published elsewhere in your extended abstract, be sure to cite it, to get copyright permission, and to indicate all this in your abstract.

**Proceedings Articles.** Proceedings from conferences or symposia are often published in a book or a special issue of a journal. In this case, the chapters or articles are treated like normal journal articles, in terms of all the figures and text. In order to use figures from articles your group has already published, figure permissions must be secured from the publisher of the original work.

**Preprints on Institutional Repositories and Other Archiving Services.** There are a growing number of sites that allow open discussions of manuscripts that have not yet been submitted to a journal. This "pre-review" process may benefit the authors by giving them input on where additional experiments, theory, or calculations need to be completed, much like discussions following conference presentations and departmental seminars. In some fields, online collaboration is common, such as with the arXiv e-print archive. This situation poses a challenge in determining what constitutes a "publication", especially for interdisciplinary journals such as *ACS Nano*. Some journals will immediately reject an article that is posted on these sites or will require its removal before submission. At *ACS Nano*, we simply ask that you let us know where your content is (or was) available, and we consider the loss of novelty, as described above.

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Professor Reg Penner of the University of California, Irvine, joins *ACS Nano* as an associate editor.

We, as editors, know just how tricky these policies can be, especially when each journal/publisher has its own set of rules. The bottom line is (1) read the prior publication policy for the journal, and (2) if you are not sure where your prior “publication” may fit in, just ask!

In October, we welcome Prof. Reg Penner, Chancellor's Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Center for Solar Energy at the University of California, Irvine, as our newest associate editor. Prof. Penner is a leader in the area of nanomaterials for energy applications.

We also look forward to celebrating National Chemistry Week next month, October 21–27, with the theme “Nanotechnology: The Smallest BIG Idea in Science”. We hope that you will join in the global outreach on this 25th anniversary of the National Chemistry Week program.

Heather L. Tierney  
Managing Editor

Paula Hammond  
Associate Editor

Peter Nordlander  
Associate Editor

Paul S. Weiss  
Editor-in-Chief

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. ACS Journals Policy Summaries on Prior Publication – Author & Reviewer Resource Center (ACS Publications). <http://pubs.acs.org/page/policy/prior/index.html>.
2. Policy Summary on Prior Publication – *ACS Nano* (ACS Publications). <http://pubs.acs.org/page/ancac3/submission/prior.html>.