

© Copyright 2007 by the American Chemical Society

## Join JOC in the Fast Lane!

We are pleased that JOC serves as the medium for publishing high quality manuscripts from all subdisciplines of organic chemistry. In 2005, the last year for which data are available, JOC was cited just under 80,000 times, an increase of just over 6% from the previous year, and continues to be the most-cited among the 55 journals listed in the ISI Organic Chemistry category. Web access to JOC increased to over 5.7 million hits worldwide in 2005. With an impact factor of 3.675, JOC continues to rank highest among all organic chemistry journals that publish full articles. We want to express our appreciation to you as authors and reviewers for your efforts in helping us maintain the broad scope and high quality of the journal and look forward to working with you in 2007.

Much of the credit for the success of JOC belongs to the Associate Editors. In addition to handling almost 300 manuscripts a year, they provide important advice about all aspects of the journal's operation. This year, after having served for 14 years, Jim Marshall is retiring from the Editorial Board at the end of March. Jim joined JOC when Clayton Heathcock was Editor-in-Chief and provided important insights about the journal as two subsequent Editors-in-Chief came on board. His wise council and quick wit will be missed, along with his expert advice about wine. Jim's vacancy will be filled by Scott Rychnovsky. Scott brings valuable expertise in organic synthesis to the Editorial Board, and we look forward to working with him.

Early this year, JOC will switch to the new web-based Paragon Plus system for processing manuscripts. Through their home page, authors can monitor the progress of the peer review process, submit revisions, respond to questions from the editors, and view and comment on their galley proofs. They can enter coauthors into the system and allow them to follow the progress of the manuscript on their own Paragon Plus home page. The systems absorbs all author source files, including illustrations and Supporting Information, and automatically creates a single, watermarked, and line-numbered PDF file as well as an HTML file for the reviewers. Authors can also upload a signed and completed Copyright Status Form at any time during the submission/revision process. Manuscripts received at the main JOC office will be available to the editors immediately after assignments are made and reviewer information will be updated immediately upon request for a review. It is important that authors, with manuscripts undergoing revision, request an extension from the editor if the manuscript cannot be returned within 45 days of the initial request for revisions. If alternative arrangements have not been made with the editor, the manuscript will be inactivated after 45 days and removed from the author's home page on the Paragon Plus web site. Posting a review will be straightforward with the new Paragon Plus system. Reviewers can respond to an e-mail invitation and go directly to the review with a single click. Reviews in progress can be saved for completion and submission at a later date. By logging on to the peer-review home page, a reviewer can see a list of all assigned reviews, with due dates, for all ACS journals. Review-

ers also have access to all of their completed reviews via the home page. The staff at ACS Publications and JOC have worked hard to make the new system user-friendly and effective.

Along with electronic submission of manuscripts has come a substantial increase in the number that are incomplete or improperly formatted. In some cases, the problems are sufficiently minor that the manuscripts can be assigned to editors and sent for review. Since it is important that the reviewers see a version that is similar to what will appear in print, processing of a large number of submitted manuscripts is delayed while the main office waits for revisions. Beginning in 2007, JOC will assign "received" dates to manuscripts on the day that they are ready to be assigned to editors. We will provide "priority processing" for those manuscripts that arrive in the main office in a complete and properly formatted form.

On a more somber note, there has also been a noticeable increase in violations of the ethical guidelines by authors, including cases of plagiarism, simultaneous submission of the same body of work to JOC and another journal, submission of manuscripts that did not properly acknowledge where the work was performed, omission of obvious coauthors, and fabrication of data. Serious violations of this nature lead to a five-year ban from publication in JOC for the first offense and a permanent ban for a second violation. The manuscripts are withdrawn, and an "Addition/Correction", which specifies the reason for the withdrawal, is published by the editor. The corresponding author assumes responsibility for a manuscript on behalf of all coauthors, including when the task of posting the manuscript is assigned to a co-worker. The Paragon Plus system informs corresponding authors when a manuscript has been submitted.

The continuing increase in submissions has put considerable pressure on reviewers, JOC staff, and the editors, especially when trying to provide authors with useful and timely evaluations. Manuscripts that fall at the "LPU" (least publishable unit) borderline are common. The determination of which side of the borderline a manuscript falls is often in the eyes of the beholder. It is an author's responsibility to inform the editor of submitted or recently published work related to the subject of the manuscript so that the reviewers and editors have the information they need to make informed decisions about the suitability of a manuscript for publication in JOC.

The JOC editors and staff are committed to providing authors with prompt and fair consideration of their manuscripts. The median time of eight weeks from receipt to acceptance for JOC manuscripts is the fastest for review of articles by ACS journals. We are also committed to providing readers with descriptions of novel, timely, high quality research in organic chemistry. We welcome your comments about what we can do to improve our service to you.

C. Dale Poulter, Editor-in-Chief

November 30, 2006

JO0633184