

Editorial

JACS Policy on Manuscript Organization: Changes Concerning Back-to-Back Publications and Length of Communications

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The *Journal of the American Chemical Society*—a premier collection of Communications and Articles—is the preeminent medium for the dissemination of knowledge of broad, general interest in the field of chemistry worldwide. Since 1931, this knowledge has been organized in two formats, Communications and Articles. Communications are restricted to short reports of unusual urgency, novelty, timeliness, and significance. Readers of the *Journal* have come to expect and appreciate that the most stimulating and impacting Communications convey a single, self-contained advance in chemical knowledge. At their very best, Communications are “*candy for the mind*”—crystal clear in prose, influential, and inspirational in content. Articles, on the other hand, convey a more comprehensive and in-depth collection of findings that together unveil and elucidate new insights, ideas, or concepts, and in many instances provide a definitive answer to important questions and issues in a particular area of chemistry.

In the recent past, the *Journal* has maintained policies that restrict the organization and format of Communications and Articles. Back-to-back Communications and, with very rare exceptions, back-to-back Articles by the same author have not been permitted, and Communications have been limited in length. The length restriction reflects the expectation that Communications describe a single, breakthrough-level advance embodying a single concept. The back-to-back restriction reflects the low probability that a single author will meet the high standards of the *Journal* with two associated bodies of work. These policies have been consistently enforced, and have left virtually no room for exception other than that longer Communications are permitted when scientifically justified.

The policies currently in place no longer serve the needs of a diverse and modern chemistry community and will therefore be changed. With a first-rate group of Associate Editors and Editorial Advisors, the *Journal* need not inflexibly mandate the arrangement and length of its publications. The Associate Editors and scientific advisors, in consultation with our vast network of highly qualified peer reviewers, are fully capable of making the appropriate, sometimes difficult, decisions that best serve the authors and readers alike. Therefore, as a natural evolution of the *Journal* and to ensure that *JACS* maintains its role as the preeminent chemistry publication, from now on, manuscripts intended for back-to-back publication will be considered. These manuscripts will be judged independently on their individual merit to ensure that they meet the qualifications outlined in the Notice to Authors and that back-to-back presentation actually enhances the pedagogy and impact of the work. In addition, authors no longer need to petition for three-page Communications, realizing nonetheless that premium value is placed on the conciseness of the message. These changes will help the *Journal of the American Chemical Society* capture in its pages all of the most exciting advances that are certain to emanate from our field.

Peter J. Stang, Editor
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