

## Editorial

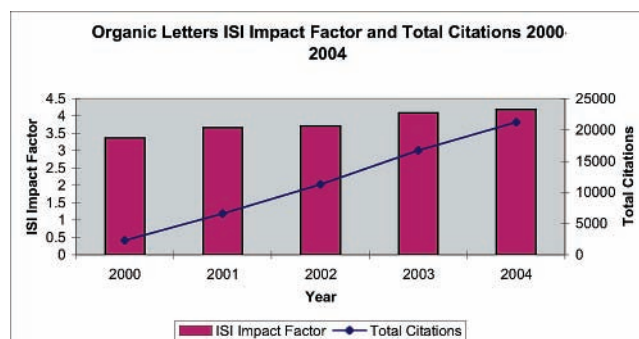
### Editorial 2006: Exciting and Challenging Times for *Organic Letters*

These are interesting and exciting times to be involved in publishing a research journal. Initiatives from both the private and public sectors espousing that “information should be free” continue to appear. However, even the most apostolic of the “free scientific information” adherents realize that there are significant costs attached both with providing top quality information and with maintaining a stable, reliable repository and access to valuable information. Many new models for publishing have emerged, some focused on how to shift the costs (e.g., from users to authors) and others on providing information in new ways (NIH-PubMed, University sponsored archives, self-publishing, etc.).

While all of us at ACS Publications believe it is important to search for new ways to improve the current system, it is critically important to *Organic Letters* to preserve the positive aspects of the chemical literature that have been developed now for more than 100 years. *Organic Letters* will continue to work hard “within the system” to provide the very best Letters possible. We are all in this together. Our Editors are active researchers who are aware of the problems and issues facing both today’s research communities and our home organizations as we struggle with rising costs and shrinking library and research budgets. Along with you, we at *Organic Letters* have a vital interest in maintaining a reliable, affordable, and cost-effective method to share the important results of your research.

As Editor-in-Chief of *Organic Letters*, I believe that authors and readers of *Organic Letters* will continue to see the critical need for the “value-added” that occurs upon careful peer review. Everyone has their “must read” as well as their “read when you get a chance” journals. Our goal at *Organic Letters* is to be the “must read” forum for the rapid communication of important research in all areas of organic chemistry, including organometallic and materials chemistry, physical and theoretical organic chemistry, natural products isolation and synthesis, new synthetic methodology, and bioorganic and medicinal chemistry. As we stated in our July 1999 inaugural issue, *Organic Letters* is “exactly where you want to be” both to read and to communicate your important research.

We at *Organic Letters* are extremely delighted with the reception that we have received from the chemical community. Particularly pleasing, the ISI impact factor for *Organic Letters* increased for the *fourth* consecutive year to 4.195 in 2004. Also, for the first time *Organic Letters* surpassed 20,000 citations in one year, recording 21,237 citations, a 27% increase over 2003 (see graph). To put this growth in perspective, citations as a whole in the Organic Chemistry category (58 organic related journals) grew by only 7.7%. Thus, the growth in *Organic Letters* citations is more than 3.5 times that of the Organic Chemistry category. Although the ISI impact factor and citation records are but two measures of the quality of a journal, we are encouraged that we are indeed on track with our goal to provide the community with the rapid publication of exciting, new high quality chemical research.



We do not plan to rest on our laurels. I call your attention to several items that the Associate Editors and I believe will improve both the overall quality of *Organic Letters* and the efficiency of our review process. First, we have further fine-tuned our guidelines for Supporting Information. While we recognize that *Organic Letters* comprises initial reports of exciting new chemistry, we are committed to providing the most reliable and well-documented experimental procedures and spectroscopic data for significant new reactions and compounds, respectively. Beginning in 2006, we will require

copies of carbon and proton spectra for new compounds that arise from key transformations.

Second, since the Supporting Information is a vital component of any paper, we expect the same care to be taken in compiling the Supporting Information as employed for the preparation of the manuscript. Inadequate or poor quality Supporting Information reflects poorly on the work published and, if submitted, will cause a delay in publication and/or rejection of the work. For some time *Organic Letters* manuscripts have been inactivated when insufficient or poor quality Supporting Information is received. To avoid delays, authors are therefore encouraged to read carefully the requirements for experimental procedures and spectral data presentation, as well as the current guidelines for manuscript submission. We will increase our efforts to ensure that the referees selected to review your manuscripts will carefully analyze the Supporting Information both for accuracy and consistency of the experimental results. Clear presentation of spectra is particularly important and should entail good quality reproductions. Axis labels and scales, peak frequencies, or chemical shifts, in conjunction with all other text and numerical information, must be clearly legible. All spectra should be labeled with both a structure number and a small graphic of the structure. We value our reviewers' time and will not ask them to review unidentified or poor quality spectra.

Third, to facilitate both readers' comprehension and reviewers' evaluation, we will require, with few exceptions, that all reagents and/or conditions be placed over the arrows in schemes within the manuscript. This new requirement will avoid the necessity of referring back and forth from scheme to scheme caption to understand or evaluate the depicted chemistry.

Fourth, I call your attention to a new policy for 2006 regarding formatting of manuscripts. All manuscripts must be formatted using the templates available at our submission website. Most of our authors (over 90%) currently employ the template. This requirement will facilitate rapid review of the work and will also permit authors to determine whether the texts, schemes, and figures fit into the maximum of 4 pages. We do however note that since the composition system employed by the ACS Publications Division results in a printed version slightly shorter than that of the template, submitted manuscripts employing the template can run slightly over the 4-page template limit. However manuscripts that are substantially over 4 pages (over 4.5 pages) will be inactivated and returned for shortening.

Turning to the review process, although many journals, including *Organic Letters*, are willing to consider a manu-

script that has previously been declined by another journal, it is important for authors to realize that if reviewers recommend *Organic Letters* as an alternative, this statement should not be taken as a guarantee that *Organic Letters* will accept the work. All such decisions are the prerogative of the Editor or Associate Editor of *Organic Letters*, who may or may not agree with the assessments of the previous reviewer(s). When submitting to *Organic Letters*, providing information regarding prior submission can significantly expedite the review process. In such cases, please provide the prior reviews and the letter from the Editor, plus a detailed explanation of the changes made in response to the reviewers' comments. In addition, please request that the previous Editor release the names of the reviewers to *Organic Letters*. Authors, of course, have the right to have their manuscripts reviewed without prejudice of a previous submission. However, experience teaches that the availability of the previous reviews greatly speeds the review process.

In our seventh year of *Organic Letters*, several changes to the Associate Editor staff have occurred. Eiichi Nakamura left us in April 2005 to take on his new responsibilities as Project Leader of an ERATO project on carbon clusters. We thank Eiichi for his service and hard work. Dan Rich, one of our founding Associate Editors stepped down in October 2005. We will certainly miss Dan's sage advice and expertise, which was invaluable as we planned and began *Organic Letters* and throughout his seven-year tenure. Finally, Fraser Stoddart will step down at the end of 2005 to devote more time to his research activities. Fraser's editorial experience and expertise in molecular recognition and materials chemistry clearly enriched *Organic Letters*. We are pleased that all of these former Associate Editors will continue to contribute to *Organic Letters* by serving on the Editorial Advisory Board.

In 2005, I was also extremely pleased to welcome two new Associate Editors to *Organic Letters*, Professor Koichi Komatsu of Kyoto University and Professor William Lubell of Université de Montréal. Professor Komatsu brings expertise in physical and theoretical organic chemistry, and Professor Lubell will provide important knowledge in asymmetric synthesis, peptide and heterocyclic chemistry, and solid-phase synthesis. I welcome both Koichi and Bill to *Organic Letters* and look forward to working with them.

Finally, I would like to thank again our reviewers. Without their dedicated and continuing service, we would not be able to bring to the organic chemistry community, the results of your exciting research. Clearly the community owes our reviewers great thanks for their service.

**Amos B. Smith, III**

*Editor-in-Chief*  
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