Organic Process Research & Development

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Editorial

To widen the scope of the journal, the Editorial Advisory Board, which has been considerably expanded since last year, has suggested that different types of articles be considered. The first is what I call a "concept" article, which may be of a more general nature, may have a "teaching" element, or may be of a more philosophical nature, describing thoughts on how to carry out a particular aspect of process R&D or scale up in a better manner. Your suggestions for possible titles and authors for these articles are invited. I have already contacted some potential authors and hope to have articles on some of the following topics, with the first one(s) in the January/February edition of 2000.

Possible titles include:

- Second Generation Process Development
- The Role and Contribution of Chemical Engineers to Chemical Process Development
- Regulatory Issues in Process R&D
- Accelerating Process Development
- Outsourcing of Process R&D
- The Use of Automation/Robotics in Process R&D
- The Design of a Flexible Pilot Plant

These articles would essentially be discussion articles but should have examples to illustrate the points made. They may, however, cover work already published as full papers, so in that aspect they will resemble a short review, or possibly a "lecture transcript". In fact, lectures at conferences are the ideal forum for concept or discussion articles; thus, if you are to give a lecture in the future at an important meeting why not write it up for publication in OPR&D at the same time?

The second new type of article envisaged by the Editorial Advisory Board was a communication. Whilst OPR&D communications would not necessarily have the urgency normally associated with communications in journals such as Chemical Communications, Organic Letters, or Tetrahedron Letters, (unless they contained safety issues), they would have the brevity. Essentially I see these communications as a brief description of a piece of work which is a fragment of a larger project, but which is of interest to the process R&D community.

Examples could be:

- A brief description of the optimized synthesis of just one compound. The communication would detail the thought processes that went into the design of the synthesis, the choice of reagent/solvent, conditions, etc. and of the issues involved in scale up. It may describe only a single reaction in detail, focussing on how that particular reaction was optimized and the important parameters, which need to be controlled on plant to produce a high yield/good quality product. This type of communication should have experimental detail—I would suggest simply a detailed description of the final optimized process at the largest scale operated.
- A second area, which lends itself to the communication format—particularly the urgency aspect—is safety. I know that during routine hazard evaluation of processes prior to scale up potential runaway reactions are identified. It is important for the process R&D community that this information is published to prevent other chemists and engineers making the same mistakes. I encourage those involved in hazard evaluation to briefly write up—in just one or two pages—work which will alert others to potential problems and ways to circumvent these difficulties. In case of confidentiality issues, my feeling is that by masking the details of the structure of the compounds, enough information can be given to assist others in safety evaluation without revealing the true identity of a new compound under development.

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For these papers experimental could be provided but is not essential.

Your comments are invited on these new proposals, as are suggestions for potential communications—either subjects or authors. Why not volunteer to be the first? I will assist with advice on what needs to be done to make sure this is a relatively simple way to broadcast your results to a wide audience.

Dr. Trevor Laird

Editor

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