

EDITORIAL

Meeting the needs of our authors and readership is the main mission of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) Publications Department. In line with this goal, this editorial discusses and updates three topics of interest: open access to our online journals, a style change to our correspondence section, and color charges.

First, there have been increasing calls for open access to publicly funded articles printed in scientific journals. Publishers have wrestled with balancing the widest dissemination of their material with maintaining a revenue stream that is sufficient to cover the costs of publishing scientific content. For years, AMS made all journal material older than 5 years freely available online. Several years ago that threshold was reduced to 2 years. AMS is pleased to announce a new policy called Open Choice in which, in addition to paying the customary page and color charges, authors can pay a flat fee of \$800 for the right to make the full contents of their paper freely available to all, subscribers and nonsubscribers alike, at the AMS Journals Online site immediately upon final publication of the typeset and edited version (for more details and background, please see AMS Executive Director Keith Seitter's column in the January 2012 *BAMS*, p. 99).

Second, a concern that has been raised repeatedly by authors over the years is that the AMS style practice to title all responses to Comments on previously published papers simply as "Reply" lacks descriptive information and causes confusion when citing such a reply and including it in bibliographies. The practice dates back to the September 1946 issue of *The Journal of Meteorology* in which the first published reply to a half-page Letter to the Editor appeared. Over the years, this custom was retained even as the process of commenting and replying in AMS journals became more formal and structured, and as comments and replies became lengthier. After considering author input, the Publications Department has decided to amend the AMS style guide to allow for a more descriptive title for articles submitted in reply to comments upon a published article. To demonstrate the new style, we present as an example the first such paper to appear in print, by Schwartz et al., which was published in the 15 March 2012 issue of the *Journal of Climate*:

Reply to "Comments on 'Why Hasn't Earth Warmed as Much as Expected?'"

Third, the cost of color figures in AMS journals has justifiably been a longtime concern of our authors. A decade ago, the first two color figures in a paper cost \$1200 in total, with a \$200 incremental cost for each subsequent figure. The most recent fee structure was \$150 per figure for all color figures for authors who paid page charges in full. We now take the opportunity to remind authors that, beginning with papers submitted on 1 May 2011, AMS has reduced that charge by 40% to \$90 per color piece for authors paying full page charges. As reduced print runs allow us to increasingly take advantage of reduced color charges afforded by digital printing, we hope to pass on even more savings to our authors. Many authors have wondered why we cannot simply run color in the electronic version of the journals (at essentially no additional cost) while limiting print content to black and white. The fact is that such an approach would result in a degraded print product and would be inconsistent with AMS journal quality standards as set by the AMS Council. This latest reduction in color prices reflects our continuing effort to publish visually vibrant journals of the highest quality no matter whether one is reading the print or electronic version.

We encourage your ongoing feedback. Be assured that our primary objective will always be to improve the experience of publishing with the American Meteorological Society.

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