Choosing the right journal for your next research paper

Department of Chemistry

22 February 2017
Graduate Student Lunch and Learn
Berenika M. Webster, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
University Library System

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What are your career ambitions?

❖ Become an academic researcher
❖ Secure a post-doc position
❖ Join or launch a start-up company
❖ Get a research job in a corporation
❖ Get a research/tenure track job in a prestigious institution
❖ Be promoted and/or get tenure
Publications (and external funding) are critical for academic success.

- To get/keep job
- To inform/participate in debate within your community
- To get feedback from your community of peers
- To make your work known
- To claim priority of discovery

97% of chemistry research is published in journals!
What to consider when selecting a journal:

- Subject fit
- Manuscript characteristics
- Audiences and reach
- Prestige (citation rates and acceptance rates)
- Editorial board and practices
- Speed of process
- Open access?
Subject Fit

- Journal Finder (Elsevier titles only)

- Journal Guide

- Semantic matching services

- SCOPUS and Journal Metrics

- Web of Science and Journal Citation Reports

- Indexing services
Manuscript characteristics

- Research type: applied, basic, clinical (clue often in JIn title)
- Document type: review, theorem, case study (review last few issues)
Audiences

❖ Academic colleagues in my discipline
❖ Academic colleagues in other disciplines (inter- and multi-disciplinarity)
❖ Practitioner audiences (industry)
❖ General public (educational, enlightenment, public debate)
❖ Geographic reach (open?)
Based on journals indexed in Web of Science

widely used as proxy for quality
includes title with robust review policies only
includes title with robust classification within journals

around 9k titles in sciences and social sciences

Based on journals indexed in Web of Science

Journal Impact Reports (access via Library Pages, under "Database")

Prestige 1
Let's look at JOURNAL OF PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY C.
Beware of predatory journals

❖ Think Check Submit

❖ Do you or your colleagues know the journal?
❖ – Have you read any articles in the journal before?
❖ – Is it easy to discover the latest papers in the journal?
❖ – Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?
❖ – Is the publisher name clearly displayed on the journal website?
❖ – Does the journal site explain what these fees are for and when they will be charged?
❖ – Is the journal clear about the type of peer review it uses?
❖ – Are articles indexed in services that you use?
❖ – Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?
❖ – Do they belong to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)?
❖ – Do you recognize the editorial board?
❖ – Do the editorial board members mention the journal on their own websites?
❖ – Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?
❖ – Do they belong to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)?
❖ – Is the journal open access, is it listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)?
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Open access considerations

- Open access DOES NOT EQUAL low quality
- Green (mostly "free to publish") vs Gold (author fees)
- Some evidence of citation advantage of papers available in open access
- Some form of "open access" required by funders
- Check the status using doaj.org
- WOS and Scopus note open access

Open access DOES NOT EQUAL low quality
Other Considerations

❖ Impact tracking
❖ Marketing efforts on your behalf
❖ Copyright
❖ What about data?
❖ Completion to publication
❖ Speed of process (from submission to editorial decision to peer review)
To conclude...

Think, Check, Submit