

Summary of Systematic Biology Managing Editor Duties (prepared by Debbie Ciszek - November, 2004)

I. Supervise the movement of manuscripts through the review process using Manuscript Central. The Managing Editor (ME) performs the roles of both Administrator and Production Editor in the Manuscript Central system. For example, when authors submit a manuscript the ME checks to be sure all files were successfully combined into a “pdf proof” and that any necessary data files are present and useable, then forwards the submission to the Editor in Chief (EiC) for Associate Editor (AE) assignment. The ME is available to authors and reviewers (as well as AEs and the EiC) to answer any questions about the web-based submission and the review processes. When the review process has been completed and a manuscript has been accepted, the ME moves the ms into the production phase.

II. Work with the publisher (T&F) to prepare each issue for printing. Several weeks before an issue is due to be sent in to T&F the ME begins organizing a list of manuscripts likely to be included. The ME sends out copyright forms, reviews each ms to see that required information such as GenBank numbers are present and that figures are of good quality and in acceptable formats (making sure that published figures will look good takes quite a bit of time), and estimates the published page count. After the EiC has made the final decision regarding which papers will be included and the final version of each has been received from the authors, the ME compiles and sends to T&F a package including 1) the final version of the master ms list, 2) a completed transmittal form for each paper, 3) a copy of the signed copyright form for each paper, 4) a hard copy of each paper including figures, and 5) a cd containing final electronic versions (matching the hard copies exactly) of the papers and figures (the cd may not be required once ms’ submitted through MS Central begin being used to fill issues). Using the cover image chosen by the EiC, the ME chooses the text box banner colors and creates a layout for the journal cover. The ME also communicates with the publisher regarding the cover, changes to the inside front cover, announcements, special reports, the authors’ instructions, and proofs.

III. Configuration and administration of the Manuscript Central system. The ME works with the Electronic Production Coordinator at T&F to make sure the details of the MS Central configuration (for example, the order and timing of ms processing events) match the journal’s needs. MS Central uses approximately 100 email templates to communicate to users and remind people of their various tasks. The ME tailors these for use by SB and updates them as needed (this requires an in-depth knowledge of the journal and all phases of ms processing). By using MS Central’s “report” functions the ME keeps track of the status of all manuscripts in the system and creates informative reports for events such as the SSB Council meetings. The ME is also the administrator of the list of users of the MS Central site, which involves responsibilities such as assigning permissions and answering questions from users about their accounts.

IV. Liaison between publications committee and the website administrator. When information to be posted on the SSB website is approved by the publications

committee, the ME passes it on to the website administrator. This involves keeping the following files up to date: Instructions to Authors, SB Policies on Critiques and Point-Counterpoints, lists of Editorial Staff and Editorial Board Members, Officers' Duties, Awards, Announcements, etc. For some journal articles the ME provides files for online appendices (text, figures, or tables) and data files to be posted. The ME also works with authors to generate slides that use key figures or tables from Systematic Biology papers to illustrate important, generalizable points that will aid students in understanding basic concepts. Pending approval of the publications committee, these will be posted under the "Education" link.