

## **Society Publications Ethics Policy**

The American Ceramic Society (ACerS) expects authors, reviewers, editors and others involved in the editorial process to safeguard its integrity and to alert the Society to possible misconduct when and if it appears. The Society believes that it has a responsibility to ensure that allegations of research misconduct are properly investigated. ACerS will take such allegations seriously and will take steps to examine their validity.

### **Examples of Misconduct:**

1. Fraud – fabricating a research report or suppressing or altering data.
2. Duplicate publication – publishing the same article first in an ACerS publication and subsequently in another publication, or vice versa.
3. Plagiarism – taking material from another's work and submitting it as one's own.
4. Self-plagiarism – republishing one's own material that has previously been published elsewhere in the primary literature without citing the earlier publication.
5. Improper assignment of credit or authorship – omission of those who should be authors or inclusion of those who should not be authors.
6. Financial or institutional conflict of interest.

### **Expectations for Authors:**

ACerS expects authors submitting to and publishing in its journals, proceedings, and books (“publications”) to adhere to ethical standards for scholarship and to ensure that the work they submit to be published is free of scientific misconduct.

- Authors must take credit only for work that they have produced and properly cite the work of others as well as their own related work. It is the responsibility of authors to ensure that relevant prior discoveries are appropriately acknowledged with the original citations in manuscripts submitted for publication.
- Authors should submit only original work to ACerS publications. Authors must alert ACerS if any part of a work has been previously published in print or online as, or is under consideration as a paper or chapter in another publication.
- Authors must determine whether the disclosure of content requires the prior consent of other parties and, if so, obtain that consent prior to submission.

All authors of articles submitted for publication assume full responsibility, within the limits of their professional competence, for the accuracy of their paper.

### **Expectations for Reviewers:**

ACerS expects reviewers of papers submitted to its journals, proceedings, and books (“publications”) to adhere to high ethical standards for scholarship.

- Reviewers will work diligently to complete reviews of papers in a fair, consistent, objective and timely manner.
- Reviewers must recuse themselves from reviewing any paper where there is a potential conflict of interest.
- Reviewers must never deliberately delay the review and potential publication of any paper.
- Reviewers must never misuse the privileged information that they receive by virtue of reviewing papers or divulge content they review to third parties.

### **Expectations for Editors and Associate Editors:**

Editors and Associate Editors will work diligently to make recommendations and decisions in a fair, consistent, objective and timely manner.

- Editors and Associate Editors will recuse themselves from making decisions or recommendations on any paper where there is a potential conflict of interest.
- Editors and Associate Editors must never deliberately delay the publication of any paper.
- Editors and Associate Editors must never misuse the privileged information that they receive by virtue of reviewing papers or divulge content they review to third parties.

### **Who Is Responsible for Investigating Allegations?**

For alleged cases of plagiarism, duplicate submission, and reviewer misconduct, ACerS will carry out the primary investigation. In some cases, the individual’s institution may be informed or asked to carry out a further inquiry.

For alleged misconduct related to fabrication of data or proper credit of authorship, ACerS believes that responsibility for investigation lies with the involved individual’s institution or employer. ACerS will contact the involved individual’s institution or employer, present the allegation along with any existing evidence, and ask the institution or employer to investigate the alleged misconduct and inform ACerS of progress.

### **Initial Considerations:**

ACerS recognizes that any accusation of misconduct may, in the end, prove to be unwarranted and that an allegation of misconduct could be damaging to an individual. Therefore, ACerS will undertake an investigation following these guidelines:

- Presume innocence, but proceed promptly with an investigation.
- Strictly observe confidentiality, fairness, and impartiality.
- Maintain a file of communications, documents, and other materials related to case.
- If necessary, freeze action on any papers involved.
- Promptly resolve the case, but not at the expense of fairness or confidence in process.

**Procedure for Addressing Allegations of Misconduct:**

All allegations of scientific misconduct or ethical violation will be referred to the Staff Director, Technical Publications (“Publications Director”). The Publications Director will advise persons making oral allegations that no action will be taken by the Society unless the allegation is made in writing.

When an allegation of misconduct is received, the Publications Director will determine if the Society has received sufficient evidence to forward the allegation to the Review Committee, which consists of the Publications Committee Chair, the incoming Publications Committee Chair, the chief editor(s) of the impacted publication, and the Publications Director.

Once sufficient information is received, the Publications Director will notify the Review Committee and the Executive Director. The Review Committee will examine the evidence and determine whether further action is necessary. The Review Committee will be instructed to treat the allegation confidentially.

**Review Committee Steps:**

1. Inform:
  - a. If further action is deemed necessary, the Review Committee will inform the involved individual(s) of the existence of the problem, identify what is known, and state that an investigation is pending.
  - b. If appropriate, the Review Committee will notify the involved individual(s) that papers will be held until the situation is resolved.
  - c. The involved individual(s) will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing within 30 days.
  - d. In cases where an honest mistake or miscommunication has caused the problem, the investigation may end after this step.
2. Research:
  - a. If initial inquiry does not resolve the situation, further research may be required. This could involve preparing a dated summary of events; obtaining and reviewing internal records if the situation concerns a paper already published or under consideration for publication; obtaining and reviewing pertinent papers that appeared in other publications or in proceedings for purposes of comparison.
  - b. The Review Committee will consider all relevant information, including any response received from the involved individual(s), in making its findings. If requested, the Review Committee will provide the involved individual(s) the opportunity of participating in an informal hearing, which can be conducted via telephone.
3. Results:
  - a. If misconduct is not apparent, the Review Committee will contact the involved individual(s), thank the individual(s) for patience, and apologize for any delay in processing of paper(s). The documentation will be sealed unless requested by the involved individual(s).

- b. If misconduct is apparent, the Review Committee will contact involved individual(s), summarize research and evidence, and explain issues of the case. The Committee will explain actions that will follow if no exculpatory information is received within 15 days. The Committee may suggest acceptable responses or alternatives for the individual believed to have engaged in misconduct.

**Course of Action:**

If no information is forthcoming that changes the determination of misconduct, the Review Committee will recommend the appropriate course of action. The Publications Director will review this recommendation with the Executive Director to determine if a legal review is necessary before the Society takes action.

Potential actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Returning the manuscript to the author(s), if the misconduct is discovered during the review process.
2. Notification of the involved individual(s) home institution on an informational basis.
3. Issuing an official retraction of the paper and ensuring that the electronic version is identified as a retracted paper.
4. Removing the paper from the electronic archives.
5. Prohibiting the involved individual(s) from further publication for a specified time period.

Once a decision is made, the involved individual(s) will be notified in writing of the decision and of any action that will be taken by the Society.

**Rectifying the Situation with Other Publishers:**

These steps will be followed when material published by another publisher has appeared in an ACerS publication or when ACerS material is published in another journal, book or proceedings.

1. Inform the other publisher and commence rectification process.
2. A retraction will be printed as soon as possible in the print version of the publication and in the electronic version, if applicable.
3. If requested by the offended publication, the paper in question will be deleted from the publication's (journal or proceedings) electronic version.
4. In all cases, a retraction will appear in the electronic version and in the table of contents.

**Case Files:**

1. The Society will maintain official files containing all correspondence and documents related to each case.
2. If misconduct is not apparent, the Society will seal the documentation unless the individual(s) involved request that the document be made public.