



# The Clay Minerals Society

[www.clays.org](http://www.clays.org)

## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



fiw omg lol b/c txt is NP 4 ppl. If you are clueless so far, then don't worry: so am I. With the help of my students, I now know that the preceding set of chat or text message abbreviations roughly translates to "I am about to give you information which I am not sure is useful or important. Wow, I find myself really chuckling because sending messages via text on your phone is quite simple for common individuals." To those of you who do not need the translation, I say, "Great!" You are the ones whom we need involved in clay science

and leading us into the future. Concise communication is essential in all of science, and clay science is no exception. Of course problems arise as we become so entrained in our own vernacular, with only a handful of people actually knowing what is being talked about. This is one reason I will go to my grave irked by the scientist who decided to divide the disciplines of organic and inorganic chemistry during my formative years of training. As clay mineralogists, we study mineralogical and biological processes in near-surface Earth environments, and we all know that these processes are inseparable. To split biological processes from mineral-forming processes is next to impossible in almost all environments in which we live or extract our natural resources. With the expansion of knowledge about life's extremes, perhaps we should reconsider the need to shoehorn the term *biogenic* into or out of our definition of a mineral. Let's face it: most people think a mineral is the "essential" stuff they eat in their breakfast cereal. But that's another story and the beauty of science. It is quite acceptable to change your paradigm if the body of evidence supports a new one.

Along with the necessary evil of obscurity that nomenclature brings, the upside is the ability to communicate without fear of misunderstanding. Thankfully the CMS is on the leading edge of nomenclature and produces the *Glossary for Clay Science*. The hard-working CMS Nomenclature Committee includes Steve Guggenheim, Richard Brown, Eric Daniels, Takashi Watanabe, Helge Stanjek, Don Peacor, Haydn Murray, Joe Stucki, and other past members who are listed on the CMS Clay Glossary website. A summary of the recent Clay Glossary updates is presented in this page. The glossary is thorough and even tackles the age-old question, "What is clay?" Even today, the question still might evoke a different response from every clay scientist out there with mud under his or her fingernails. We are in the process of making the glossary contents even more accessible via network search engines, which is a real milestone for the mission of CMS.

Speaking of networking, there's been lots of discussion about the benefits of connecting CMS to social networks like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. The sticking points of formalizing the connection of CMS to these sites are related to content ownership, oversight, and the fact that many employers will not allow employees access to social networks. In the interim, groups like Clays and Clay Minerals on Facebook have started, and if they promote the same tenets as those of the CMS, then I say, "Why not?"

By the way, congratulations to this year's CMS award winners, including Sridhar Komarneni for the Bailey Award and Dougal McCarty for the Jackson Award. They are among the giants whose shoulders we'll be standing upon as clay science advances into the future.

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President, The Clay Minerals Society

## THE CMS GLOSSARY FOR CLAY SCIENCE PROJECT

The CMS Nomenclature Committee was asked by Council in 2003 to produce a glossary of clay science. By 2006, the committee had developed an initial *Glossary for Clay Science* containing about 100 definitions, and by 2008 the *Glossary* had about 250 entries. Since then, the *Glossary* has grown to about 400 definitions, with updates being provided every April. The *Glossary* download can be obtained at [www.clays.org/GLOSSARY/GlossIntro.html](http://www.clays.org/GLOSSARY/GlossIntro.html) as either a .doc or .pdf file.

Early on, it was decided to produce a glossary of clay terms based on clay science, and not necessarily on how other disciplines may use the terms. However, the definitions do not stray from the basic-science definitions in chemistry and physics. Unlike the AGI *Glossary of Geology*, where current usage is given even if that usage deviates from the original definition, the CMS *Glossary for Clay Science* provides the original definition and explains how the word may be currently, and perhaps incorrectly, used. In addition, the CMS *Glossary for Clay Science* is more extensive than the AGI *Glossary of Geology* for clay terms and provides greater depth.

Provisional or tentative definitions have been avoided, and the Committee has only listed terms that could be well defined. A basic premise is that established definitions by international committees (IMA, AIPEA, etc.) are provided, sometimes with further explanation to show the utility of a term in clay science, but the definitions remain unchanged from those of the original committee. The initial effort was not to include mineral and related names (i.e. discredited terms, synonyms, etc.), although group names were included. There are other websites that have compiled lists of mineral names.

Over the next couple of years, the Committee will expand on clay terms relating to industry. Volunteers are needed to help compile new terms and definitions, and if you are interested in being considered for Committee membership, please contact the chair (xtal@uic.edu).

**S. Guggenheim**, Chair, CMS Nomenclature Committee

Report modified from the Introduction, *Glossary for Clay Science*



CMS Workshop "Trace Elements and Clays: Occurrence, Analysis and Applications": 25 September

Technical sessions: 26-29 September

Field trips: 30 September

See the CMS website for more information: [www.clays.org](http://www.clays.org).