



The Clay Minerals Society

www.clays.org

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Peter Komadel

I have frequently been involved in personal and electronic discussions on journal impact factors (IFs) and related issues, leading to both expected and surprising information on this subject. This contribution is certainly not a complete and detailed analysis of the problem. People wishing to learn more can get further information from the source, the Web of Science and its Journal Citation Reports. Many of you know that IFs appear regularly every year, and that a journal's IF is a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year.

However, many of you may not realize that

the IF helps evaluate a journal's relative importance, especially compared to other journals in the same field. Comparisons among journals from different fields are less straightforward and suffer from many factors and variables. Again, much on this can be learned from Journal Citation Reports.

The most frequently used IFs are those covering two-year periods. The most recent IFs are those of 2011. They were calculated as the citations in 2011 to articles published in two previous years, C2009 + C2010, divided by the number of papers published in the same two years, P2009 + P2010. The numbers for our journal, *Clays and Clay Minerals*, were C2009 = 104, C2010 = 54, P2009 = 70, P2010 = 66; thus, IF2011 = $(104 + 54) / (70 + 66) = 158 / 136 = 1.162$.

Based on this, it is easy to see that the effect on the IF of the papers published during the year differs. In our example, citations from the first issue (February 2009) contribute to the IF2011 for almost two years while those from the last issue (December 2009) for just over one year. This is a rough estimate because electronic versions are available for citation before the print version appears. The positive side of the competition for higher IFs is that it encourages publishing better papers. A large number of citations of scientifically superior papers is the desired target of the publishers and editors of all journals. The downside is the possibility of manipulating a journal's IF without improving the quality of the papers. This is also known from papers devoted to this subject published in different electronic and paper media, including journals with the highest IFs, such as *Science*. Coercive citation in the scientific literature has recently become a serious problem that is difficult to fight effectively. Authors may be forced to include IF-increasing citations in the reviewed paper. Such a message can appear in the officially available Instructions for Authors, or less visibly in the individual letters to authors. These problems are known to the CMS Executive Committee, but we decided to avoid any specific requirements on the number of citations. Consequently, a paper's references are not affected by any generally applied wish or recommendation by anyone and remain the full responsibility of the authors.

Best wishes,

Peter Komadel (peter.komadel@savba.sk)
President, The Clay Minerals Society

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR CMS AWARDS

The CMS gives four awards at its annual meeting. Go to the CMS website, www.clays.org, for a description of the awards and an overview of the nomination process. **The nomination deadline for the 2014 awards is March 31, 2013.**

STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS AND TRAVEL AWARDS

The research grant program is designed to provide partial financial support (up to \$3000) to graduate students of clay science and technology for master's and doctoral research. The travel grant program provides partial financial support to graduate students to attend the annual meeting of the Clay Minerals Society to present results of their research. All student members of the Clay Minerals Society are eligible for the travel grant program. Go to the CMS website, www.clays.org, for more information. **The application deadline is 30 April 2013.**

STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



Michael B. Meyer

Congratulations to **Michael B. Meyer** for winning a CMS Student Research Grant award. Michael is a PhD student in the Department of Geosciences at Virginia Polytechnic and State University, working on a project in paleontology with Shuhai Xiao. He received BS degrees in geology and anthropology from Beloit College and an MS in geology from the University of South Florida. His research focuses on the underlying forces that drove early metazoan radiations, and combines field studies, isotope analyses, body and trace fossils, and new microinvestigative tools.

50TH 1963–2013
Anniversary
OF THE CLAY MINERALS SOCIETY



ANNUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 6–10, 2013
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



[WWW.CLAYS.ORG/ANNUAL%20MEETING/
50TH_ANNUAL_MEETING_WEBSITE/](http://WWW.CLAYS.ORG/ANNUAL%20MEETING/50TH_ANNUAL_MEETING_WEBSITE/)

