



**Committee on Publications (CPub)**

**2020 Annual Meeting**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

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A meeting of the AMS Committee on Publications (CPub) was held on Friday, October 16, 2020 via Zoom web conference. Douglas Arnold, chair, presided.

***Actions taken by CPub:***

- **Minutes of Business by Email**

The October 22, 2019 minutes of business by email were approved. The business conducted was to approve the minutes of the September 20-21, 2019 CPub meeting.

- **Update from the Subcommittee Investigating Double-Blind Refereeing**

At its 2018 meeting, upon the recommendation of President Elect Jill Pipher, CPub moved to form a subcommittee charged with considering whether double-blind refereeing should be instituted for some or all AMS journals. The subcommittee was asked to focus solely on the matter of policy (i.e., whether double-blind refereeing is a policy that reflects AMS's standards and goals), exclusive of implementation.

In 2019, CPub determined that more work needed to be done by the subcommittee for developing a recommendation. The subcommittee continued its investigation of double-blind refereeing with David Morrison as Chair.

The subcommittee found that one of the challenges about investigating double-blind refereeing was that there hasn't been a study with data that they could refer to in the field of mathematics. There have been studies in other fields, but are they predictive of what would happen in mathematics? The subcommittee did an investigation into what other groups of mathematicians might have thought about this issue in the past and discovered that in 2012, the committee for the *American Mathematical Monthly* (published by MAA) had been considering double-blind refereeing. The MAA report had an excellent analysis of the pros and cons on this issue. With permission, the report was included as a sub document of the AMS subcommittee's report.

*The subcommittee's report and recommendation to implement a double-blind refereeing policy for all AMS journals (and perhaps even for its books) was unanimously endorsed by CPub. The subcommittee's report and an implementation plan (drafted by AMS Publishing staff) will be included in the January 2021 Council agenda with CPub's recommendation for approval.*

- **Actions Required for *Communications of the AMS* (CAMS)**

1. Since CAMS is a new journal, the charge for the Editorial Boards Committee needs to be updated to include overseeing the recommendations for nominations to the CAMS committee.

*CPub voted unanimously to recommend to Council that “Communications of the AMS” be added to the list of editorial boards in the Principal Activities section of the Editorial Boards Committee charge.*

2. The Chief Editors of the AMS primary journals are designated as Council members in the Bylaws: <http://www.ams.org/about-us/governance/bylaws/bylaws#art4>  
Council membership cannot change without modifying the Bylaws, which would require a vote of the entire Society in the annual election.

*Since CAMS will be considered an AMS primary journal, the question of whether or not the co-chief editors of CAMS automatically become Council members will be included in the 2021 CPub agenda.*

### **Discussion items and informational reports provided by staff:**

- **Overview of AMS Policies:**
  1. The role of the Committee on Publications and its [Charge](#)
  2. [AMS Conflict of Interest Policy for Officers and Committee Members](#)
  3. [AMS Policy on a Welcoming Environment](#)
  4. Society Governance
  5. AMS Publishing Division Structure – Robert Harington (Associate Executive Director for Publishing) gave an overview of the structure of the Publishing Division’s organization.
- **Report from the AMS Executive Director**
- **Report from the AMS Publisher**
- **Report from the AMS Executive Editor for Mathematical Reviews/MathSciNet®**
- **Communications of the AMS (CAMS)** – It was noted that in April, 2020, as recommended by CPub, Council approved the following:
  1. The name for the new journal: *Communications of the American Mathematical Society* (CAMS).
  2. Two Co-Chief Editors for a term effective 8/2/2020 - 1/31/2025: Ralph Cohen (Stanford University) and Qiang Du (Columbia University).
  3. The creation of the CAMS Editorial Committee and approval of its charge.  
*The new CAMS Editorial Board hopes to establish and maintain the highest level of standards on the order of the Journal of the AMS. It was also mentioned that there are no page restrictions for CAMS so potential authors can consider submitting longer papers.*
- **Issues Raised in the 2019 Report of the CPub Subcommittee to Review the AMS Primary Research Journals** – There were three main concerns raised during CPub’s 2019 review of the AMS primary research journals (*Journal of the AMS [JAMS]*, *Mathematics of Computation [MCOM]*, *Proceedings of the AMS [PAMS]*, *Transactions of the AMS [TAMS]*):
  1. Journal backlogs
  2. Acceptance rates across editors
  3. Appropriateness of coverage – specifically JAMS and its statement of scope. *Doug Arnold will discuss the possibility of modifying the JAMS statement of scope with the new JAMS Managing Editor after being seated in February, 2021.*

- **List of Policies and Position Statements Related to Publishing and Approved by Council and ECBT**

A comprehensive record of policies and position statements related to publishing (some recommended by C Pub) and approved by Council and ECBT since January 1995 will be updated as needed and made available to C Pub members upon request.

- **The Transition to Open Access in the Mathematics Scholarly Publishing Sector**

The outcome of the letter to the White House, for which AMS was a signatory, was discussed. There seems to be a slight backing off from zero embargo period by the federal government. Also discussed were different publication models including subscription and various forms of open access, and the balance of factors such as openness and the needs of the authors and readers with the necessity for financial sustainability.

- **C Pub Sponsored Panel at the Joint Mathematics Meeting**

At each Joint Mathematics Meeting (JMM), every AMS policy committee automatically has a panel slot available to them. At its 2021 meeting, C Pub will revisit the opportunity of having a sponsored panel starting at the JMM in 2022.

### ***Other Business:***

- **2021 Annual Review**

C Pub's charge calls for reviews according to the following schedule:

- Year 1: AMS Book Program
- Year 2: Primary Journals (JAMS, MCOM, PAMS, TAMS)
- Year 3: Member Journals (*Bulletin, Notices, Abstracts*) and All Other Journals (electronic only, translation, and distributed journals)

Since the Year 3 review did not take place in 2020, the Year 3 evaluation of the Member and "All Other" Journals will be conducted in 2021.

- **Next Meeting**

The next C Pub meeting will be held *September 24-25, 2021* at the Providence, RI headquarters.

*Douglas N. Arnold*  
*Chair, Committee on Publications*  
*Robert M. Harington*  
*Associate Executive Director, AMS Publishing*  
November 19, 2020