Manuscript Style Guide
(Updated September 2, 2015)

General layout

A) Main manuscript content includes:
   1) Cover page with title, authors, affiliations, and corresponding author information
   2) Abstract
   3) Introduction (may or may not be stand-alone section depending on the journal and article type)
   5) Results
   6) Discussion (which may be combined with Results depending on the journal and article type)
   7) Methods
   8) References
   9) Acknowledgements
  10) Description of author contributions
  11) Competing financial interests statement
  12) Description of supporting information (if applicable)
  13) Figure legends

B) Supporting information content includes:
   1) Cover page with title, authors, affiliations, corresponding author information, and a header stating “SUPPORTING INFORMATION”.
   2) Table of contents
   3) Supplementary figures and tables
   4) Supplementary methods
   5) References

C) All text is written with 1-inch margins on all sides and in either 12-pt Times New Roman, 11-pt Arial, or 11-pt Helvetica font. Except for the cover page, all text is double-spaced.

D) All pages are numbered on the bottom center, except for the cover page (which is designated as page 1)

E) All references are added through Endnote, and each reference is imported into the Endnote library via its PubMed ID whenever possible to ensure that the data fields are stylistically equivalent.

F) Manuscript text should be provided as a Word document and an accompanying Endnote library containing only the cited references.

Recommendations for manuscript text

A) Paper writing is like storytelling. Consider the major theme(s) of your manuscript, what your audience should already know, what background you need to convey for them to understand and appreciate your story, how you will build to your punchline, and your closing thoughts.
B) Be as precise (e.g., “protein levels changed” versus “protein translation rates increased”) and concise as possible.

C) Vary sentence structure and word choice to improve readability.

D) Conjunctions (e.g., and, or, but) and prepositions (e.g., of, for, in, between) should be used sparingly per sentence.

E) Remember the difference between words and phrases that are not interchangeable/equivalent and are commonly misused:
   1) “which” versus “that”
   2) “compose” versus “comprise”
   3) “compare to” versus “compare with”
   4) “different than” versus “different from”
   5) “percent” versus “percentage”
   6) “principle” versus “principal”

F) Specific experimental outcomes/observations should be written in the past tense. More general scientific statements (that presumably will be observed by others in the future) are written in the present tense.

G) Active tense is preferable to passive tense.

H) Groups of words that are used as compound modifiers are hyphenated (e.g., “back-of-the-envelope calculation” or “10-cm dish”).

I) In general, integral numbers 1-10 should be written out as words (e.g., one, ten). Numbers greater than ten or used with scientific units of measure (e.g., cm, liter) are written as Arabic numerals. If a sentence includes both classes of numbers, then all are written as Arabic numerals.

**Methods**

A) Methods should be written with sufficient detail that other researchers can readily reproduce your work. Reagent amounts (mass, volume, and/or concentration), duration, working temperature, etc. should be conveyed for each key procedure. Err on the side of providing more information than necessary—the methods section can be condensed as necessary to fit journal page requirements and/or moved to the supporting information document.

B) Synthetic chemistry procedures should be written in ACS journal format, indicating reagent amounts in both weight/volume and moles and with the correct number of significant digits. Compound structures should be confirmed by NMR and HRMS as appropriate. If several compounds are described in the manuscript, it is often useful to include an introductory statement that describes general synthesis and characterization procedures and related instrumentation.

C) Biological reagents should include source information, particularly when specific kits are used. Working reagent concentrations and antibody dilutions should be shown, and product numbers should be provided for commercially available antibodies.
D) When reagents are conveyed as percent-solutions, it should be indicated whether this is volume/volume or weight/volume.

E) Studies with cultured cells should provide information on plate/well size, seeding density per well, culture media components, and cell confluency at key steps.

F) Centrifugal steps should convey the centrifugal force in \( g \) forces (not rpm), spin duration, and working temperature.

G) Imaging information should include the microscope systems, objectives, filter sets, cameras, light sources, and acquisition/processing software.

H) Procedures for data quantitation, processing, and statistical analyses should be provided as appropriate.

**Figures**

A) All figures should prepared as Adobe Illustrator files for their final format, using standard portrait (8.5” x 11”) or landscape (11” x 8.5”) layouts. The guidelines below optimize readability for reviewers, with an expectation that the journal will use a 60%-scale image for the actual publication (figures within the printed article; supplementary figures will remain the same size).

B) Images should be formatted in Adobe Photoshop or ImageJ and saved in TIF format. Do not “crop” the images in Adobe Illustrator. Image sizes should be exact (e.g., by using the “fixed size” option for the Rectangular Marque Tool in Photoshop). Image sizes and resolutions should be selected to ensure 300 dpi for the final presentation (actual size in the printed journal) and a reasonable TIF file size (typically ≤ 500 KB, no more than 1 MB per image). The final Adobe Illustrator should be no greater than 10 MB in size, preferably ≤ 2 MB.

C) Any adjustments (e.g., brightness/contrast, levels, etc.) should be applied uniformly to all images within a comparison group. I would strongly recommend that you also keep a record of all changes to the raw image (e.g., as an accompanying Word document) so that they can be reproduced by others if necessary. Both adjusted and raw images should be saved as separate files.

D) All images placed in the Adobe Illustrator file should be embedded rather than linked.

E) All line drawings generated by other software (e.g., graphing programs) should be saved as EPS files and placed/embedded in the Adobe Illustrator file. This ensures that all graphical and text elements can be subsequently edited in Illustrator.

F) Line drawings in Adobe Illustrator should be 0.5 pt in thickness whenever possible. Scale bars are typically best with 1 or 1.5 pt thickness.

G) Graphs with line or dot plots should have both “in” and “out” tick marks. Bar graphs should have only “out” tick marks. Typically only X and Y axes are shown (no boxes).

H) Whenever possible, statistical information should be provided or key comparisons (e.g., s.e.m. error bars, confidence intervals, p-values, etc.)
I) All figure text should be 10-pt Arial or Helvetica font (depending on the journal preference). The first letter in each text element should be capitalized; all other letters should be lowercase (e.g., “Relative pixel intensity”). Units should be provided in parentheses as appropriate.

J) All figure panel labels (e.g., “A”, “B”, and “C”) should be boldface, 18-pt Arial or Helvetica font.

K) Minimize white space between elements/panels in the figure.

L) Align similar/related figure elements as much as possible.

M) Main figures should have the figure citation in the top left corner (e.g., “Figure 1”) in 24-pt boldface Arial or Helvetica font. Supplementary figures should include the entire legend in the Adobe Illustrator file as a text box (typically 10-pt Arial or Helvetica font, with the figure citation and legend title in boldface).

N) For each figure, please prepare an individual folder that contains the final Adobe Illustrator file, the image and EPS files used to generate the Illustrator document, related documentation (e.g., image adjustments), all related raw images/data.