

Announcing the *JGP* Journal Club, a publication for early-career physiologists

Edward N. Pugh Jr., Editor

The Journal of General Physiology

At the 2010 Editorial Board Meeting during a discussion about encouraging early career scientists to be actively involved with the *JGP*, Merritt Maduke of Stanford proposed the development of a journal club article, and the idea received wide support. The editors are pleased to announce the launch of *The JGP Journal Club* and the publication of the first such article, “Lysosomal pH and analysis of the counter ion pathways that support acidification” (see [DiCiccio and Steinberg](#) in this issue).

Purpose

The primary purpose of a *JGP* Journal Club article is to provide a critique of a previous publication or publications (in any journal) with content of interest to the *JGP* readership. The critique will examine the publication’s scientific content, the validity of its inferences, and the broader implications of its results and conclusions. A second purpose is to provide an opportunity for early-career scientists to gain authorship experience.

Format

A *JGP* Journal Club article comprises three components: (1) a brief summary of the question or problem addressed in the critiqued publication(s); (2) a statement of the key results in the publication(s); and (3) an evaluation of the conclusions within the context of the state of knowledge in the field. The Journal Club article has a 2,500-word limit, with no more than three figures (i.e., three to four published pages) and no abstract or supplemental material. The content of the figures may include data from the original paper, diagrams, and novel analysis.

Authorship

A *JGP* Journal Club article must be authored and submitted by graduate students or postdoctoral fellows. Each article must have a faculty advisor (or two at most). These advisors will verify the graduate student or postdoctoral status of the authors in the submission letter. The faculty advisor of the submission will be identified in the publication as the “Advisor,” but not listed as a coauthor. Submissions are to be made through the *JGP* website.

Evaluation criteria

The overarching criterion for acceptance of a Journal Club article is that it provides “added value” to the original

publication(s) on which it focuses. Examples of added value include critical reexamination of conclusions, new analysis of data leading to new predictions or insight, and suggestions for experiments to address a question raised by the original publication(s). The Journal Club article will be reviewed by a member of the editorial board.

Presubmission inquiry and comments

Those thinking of submitting a Journal Club article are strongly encouraged to submit a presubmission inquiry that will include (1) identification of the published article(s) that will be the topic of the Journal Club; (2) a statement of the particular aspect of the published article that will be the focus of the Journal Club; (3) an explanation of the potential interest to the *JGP* readership; and (4) a description of the specific “value added” by the Journal Club submission to the published article. The editors will normally respond to presubmission inquiries within one week.

Comments on Journal Club Articles

After publication, we will have an open discussion thread on the most recent Journal Club article. This discussion will be on the *JGP* page at Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/JGenPhysiol>); it will be open for comments for 1 month after publication. The comments will be monitored by the editors.

The first *JGP* Journal Club article

The inaugural *JGP* Journal Club article by DiCiccio and Steinberg provides an outstanding exemplar. The topic, “Lysosomal pH and the analysis of the counter ion pathways that support acidification,” is well matched to the *JGP*’s goal of publishing “articles that elucidate important biological, chemical, or physical mechanisms of broad physiological significance” (<http://jgp.rupress.org/site/misc/about.xhtml>), and should appeal to a broad group of readers. DiCiccio and Steinberg examine the conflicting conclusions of several previous publications that have proposed that

ClC-7 or CFTR chloride conductances in lysosomal membranes provide a counter ion pathway for the inwardly directed proton flux generated by vacuolar ATPase that creates the acid lumen of the lysosome. They make the case that at least some of the discrepan-

cies in the literature arise from poor selection of fluorescent pH indicator dyes and also propose a novel hypothesis. This thoughtful, scholarly *JGP* Journal Club sets a high standard that we hope will be reached by many more such articles in the future.