EDITING NOTES

The choice of a or an before an acronym is determined by the way the acronym would be read aloud. The same is true of chemical element abbreviations.

Change about to approximately, which is preferred in scientific text.

An acronym should be defined the first time it appears in a manuscript. Although some LLE authors tend to use initial caps [e.g., Equation Of State (EOS)] when defining an acronym, it is in most cases unnecessary. Use 's to form the plural of acronyms. Per Physical Review, acronyms should not be used in titles.

To affect is to influence, cause a response, or change; to effect is to bring about, cause, or produce.

All or all of: Delete the of whenever possible (e.g., all the targets, all the beams). When all precedes a nonpossessive pronoun (all of them) or a possessive noun (all of LLE's funding), it must be followed by of.

Do not use a lot; substitute numerous or many.

Allow means "to let someone do something." It is an intransitive verb and does NOT take an object. Suggested alternatives may include "to allow for," "make it possible for," "has occurred as a result of," or "enable one to _____.

An 's may be used to eliminate a hyphenated modifier.

Change seems to be to appears to be.

An appositive renames.

As: Do not use "as" as a conjunction if you can substitute because, since, or while.

"As to" phrases: NO!!!!

As long as: provided that; since; on the condition that
So long as: during and up to the end of time that

Assure, ensure, and insure: All mean "make secure or certain," but assure (to convince; to guarantee) refers to people and insure is used primarily in the sense of guaranteeing the value of life or property.

As well as: Do not use with both; use one or the other. If a singular subject of a sentence is followed by as well as, along with, in addition to, etc. the verb should be singular to agree with the singular subject.

Change based on to on the basis of.

Because and since are not always preceded by a comma; it depends on whether the phrase that follows is essential or nonessential.

Cannot is one word.
Capitalization of titles: The first and last words and all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and subordinating conjunctions (if, because, as, that, etc.) are capitalized. Articles (a, an, the), coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor), and prepositions (of four letters or less) are lowercased unless they are the first or last word of the title or subtitle. The to in infinitives is also lowercased. (Note: Any word following a colon in a title is capitalized.)

Do not capitalize words simply to emphasize their importance. Caps should be used only for proper nouns.

Capitalize captions or subtitles on viewgraphs just as you would a title.

Chemical elements should be lower case when spelled out in a sentence, but capitalized when abbreviated.

Colon: Use a colon when a word, phrase, or clause amplifies or further explains the first part of the sentence. Do NOT use a colon to introduce a series of items, people, or ideas that are direct objects of the verb or are objects of a preposition. If you want to use a colon, insert the words “as follows” or “the following.” (See also the Chicago Style Manual, pp. 257 & 258.)

Commas:
  - Do not surround a symbol with commas or parentheses when it immediately follows the noun that defines it but do insert the commas or parentheses if another phrase intervenes (e.g., the temperature \( T \); the temperature reported by Green et al., \( T \), …………
  - Place commas around etc., e.g., i.e., namely, for example, that is, or respectively; do not use commas around et al.
  - See also the Chicago Style Manual, pp. 244–255.

Compare to: regard as similar; resemblances between objects of different order

Compare with: examine to discover similarities or differences between objects of the same order

Compose/constitute/comprise: Compose and constitute “make up the whole”; for example, the parts compose or constitute the whole. Comprise means to “include,” “contain,” or “consist of”; for example, the whole comprises the parts.

Conditional Rule (example): If each unit were to generate….. ,

Data, especially in scientific text, takes a plural verb.

Decimals: Use the singular when decimals or fractions of one or less are used as adjectives (e.g., 0.25 inch, 0.8 ton, 0.3 centimeter); this rule won’t affect LLE documents very often since we always abbreviate units of measure after a numeral.

Depends on is preferred over depends upon.

If d means derivative, do not italicize (e.g., \( dE/dt \)).

Use to determine instead of in determining.

Different from: May also use other than or unlike. (Different than is less formal and is a shortcut for from that which.)

Change do not have any to have no or does not show any to shows no.
Due to: LLE authors overuse “due to.” Use “due to” only when it follows a linking verb like “was” and means “caused by” or “attributable to.” Do not use “due to” with a nonlinking verb to replace “because of” as in “He left work because of illness.” May substitute “occurs as a result of,” “was a consequence of,” “___ that made it possible for ___ to occur,” OR “___ made it possible for ___ to be ___.”

Due to the fact that: Substitute because.

Equations: When a sentence contains an equation or equations, read through it and punctuate just as you would if it were a regular sentence.

When referring to people, use et al.; when referring to things, use etc.

Factor of 2: Always use the numeral.

Farther refers to distance; further refers to time or quantity.

Fewer or less: Fewer refers to number (or fewer than); less refers to quantity (or less than).

Use flammable instead of inflammable. Items that do not burn should be labeled “nonflammable.”

Former is preferred over ex–.

Free: Whether placed before or after a noun, a medium containing “free” should always be hyphenated (e.g., tax-free, fat-free).

Genitive case: Expresses possession, measurement, or source (e.g., six months’ leave, three days’ time).

Words may be used in place of Greek symbols in titles (per the Phys. Rev. Style Guide).

Half: Most adjectival compounds with half are hyphenated; compound nouns can be closed, hyphenated, or open (check Webster’s).

Half (of): Delete the of whenever possible.

Hence: NO!! Use therefore or for this reason or consequently.

However: Try to avoid starting a sentence with however when it means nevertheless. Place it after the word that contrasts. You may also use on the other hand, in spite of that, or but. When however starts a sentence, it means in whatever way or to whatever extent. Do not use but and however together.

Hyphenate nouns when necessary for clarity; if in doubt, check Webster’s.

Inasmuch as: because of the fact that (since)
Insomuch as: to such extent or degree as

In order to: Limit the use of “in order,” especially at the beginning of a sentence; quite often “to” will suffice. In order not to: keep the in order and make sure not precedes to.

Change involving to that involve.

Irregardless is not a word; use regardless.
DO NOT italicize chemical symbols, most multiletter abbreviations, and most units of measure.

Laser: light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation

Like: Substitute such as.

Modifiers: Don’t stack modifiers in front of a noun; rewrite the sentence.

Needs to be: If possible, substitute must be, is necessary, or is required.

Collective, mass, group, or number noun: As the subject of a sentence, it usually takes a singular verb but if used in a collective sense, may take either a singular or a plural verb form, depending on whether the sentence emphasizes the group (singular) or individual members (plural). (Note: Check the last page of the LLE Spelling List for examples.)

Numbers: Write out all numbers up to ten. When two or more numbers appear in the same sentence, write them as numerals, making them easier to read.

To form the plural of numbers, add s with no apostrophe (ex. 1990s).

20 µm of CH is quite often shortened to 20 µm CH; do not hyphenate unless it’s being used as a modifier.

Of the order of instead of on the order of.

On the basis of instead of based on.

Always check for parallel construction.

Parenthetical expression: Do not capitalize a parenthetical expression within a sentence; also omit the period at the end of the expression. (Capitalize it and retain the period if the expression stands alone as a sentence.)

Presently may be used to mean in a short while or currently; try to restrict its use to the first meaning.

Reference numbers are placed after commas, periods, quote marks, colons, and semicolons.

Restrictive or nonrestrictive (“that” or “which”): A restrictive clause beginning with that is absolutely necessary to the sentence; it cannot be removed without changing the meaning of a sentence. A nonrestrictive clause beginning with which adds descriptive matter but is not necessary to the sentence. (These types of clauses may also be referred to as essential or nonessential.)

Self: Most adjectival compounds with self are hyphenated (check Webster’s).

Semicolons take the place of coordinate conjunctions. They show a closer relationship between ideas than a period does. Semicolons precede connective adverbs such as however, moreover, furthermore, consequently, nevertheless, otherwise, therefore, accordingly. Use semicolons to separate phrases or clauses in a series that already have internal commas.

Sized or size (e.g., medium-sized, millimeter-sized; a NIF-size target): In most cases, use -sized.

Watch for split infinitives.

Use such as instead of like when citing examples.
**Tense:** Describe experimental work and results in the *past tense*; express principles, theories, facts, etc., in the *present tense*.

Try to avoid using "**There are**" to begin a sentence.

**The reason is because:** replace with the reason is that or because.

**Thus:** may substitute in this way or therefore. If you don’t wish to use “therefore,” substitute so, as a result, for that reason, or consequently.

**Toward,** not towards; also true for upward, downward, forward, backward, and afterward.

**Trademark:** The capital R in a circle means that the trademark is registered; the capital TM in a circle means that the trademark is pending and not yet registered (no legal standing).

**Try to,** not try and.

**Unique:** There are no degrees of uniqueness; do not modify unique with most, very, etc.

**Units of measure** are spelled out in lower case when they appear alone in the text, but are abbreviated if they follow a number.

**Use** is most often preferred over utilize; use implies availing oneself of something as a means to an end, where utilize may suggest the discovery of a new, profitable, or practical use for something.

Substitute various for different when appropriate.

Use by means of instead of via.

Avoid using "**What it is is........**"

**Where:** If appropriate, may substitute in which.

**Whether or not:** Omit or not.