

Special Issue

Tackling Materials Failure: Scale Bridging for Structural Integrity

Message from the Guest Editors

As the Second Law of Thermodynamics suggests, failure is an intrinsic characteristic of any materials system. Given its prevalence, one would assume that assessing a materials system's capability to endure is relatively straightforward; however, this is not the case. The proverbial *butterfly effect* is an appropriate moniker for failure as delicate and pernicious events rooted in the lower-length scales can evolve almost unpredictably to severely compromise the structural integrity of a materials system. For example, in metallic systems, seemingly innocuous dislocations at the atomic scale can evolve into life-limiting cracks in a myriad of ways. Some dislocations might nucleate microcracks whose stress intensities are amplified by micron-sized voids, thereby facilitating ductile crack propagation. Others might initiate microcracks that evolve synergistically with oxidation, creep, and/or fatigue loading. In organic materials systems, physiological processes, such as the up-regulation of proteins (e.g., in cell membrane repair), can act to strengthen or even heal the system, making the question of failure both stochastic and highly non-linear.

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Materials (ISSN 1996-1944) was launched in 2008. The journal covers twenty-five comprehensive topics: biomaterials, energy materials, advanced composites, advanced materials characterization, porous materials, manufacturing processes and systems, advanced nanomaterials and nanotechnology, smart materials, thin films and interfaces, catalytic materials, carbon materials, materials chemistry, materials physics, optics and photonics, corrosion, construction and building materials, materials simulation and design, electronic materials, advanced and functional ceramics and glasses, metals and alloys, soft matter, polymeric materials, quantum materials, mechanics of materials, green materials, general. *Materials* provides a unique opportunity to contribute high quality articles and to take advantage of its large readership.

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