AMERICAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Report to the Editorial Board and the Midwest Political Science Association Executive Council
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This Report from the Editor of the *American Journal of Political Science* to the Editorial Board and to the Executive Council of the Midwest Political Science Association covers the *AJPS* and operations in the Editorial Offices at Michigan State University during calendar year 2014. The Report presents information about the *Journal*'s status and influence, usage of *AJPS* content, manuscript processing statistics, referees and reviews, and the Editorial Board. It also explains several new policies and innovations that have been implemented from the start of the current editorial term through the present time. Finally, the Report will provide information about manuscript processing during the first three months of 2015.

IMPACT AND IMPORTANCE

The *AJPS* strives to maintain its position as one of the premier publication outlets, not only within the political science discipline, but also throughout the social sciences more generally. To that end, we continue to monitor closely the *Journal*'s performance on the various metrics that summarize its presence, visibility, and usage within the research community. The main indicators used for this purpose are the Thomson Reuters Impact Factors and the Google Scholar h5-index scores.

The Impact Factor for a journal is defined as the average number of citations received per paper published in that journal during the preceding two, or five, years. The 2013 Two-Year Impact Factor for the *AJPS* is 2.516. This value represents a downturn from the previous multiyear pattern of increasing Impact Factors. For example, the comparable figures for 2011 and 2012 were 2.756 and 2.811, respectively. Figure 1 plots the top fifty political science journals, according to their Two-Year Impact Factors for 2013. The current Two-Year Impact Factor places the *AJPS* in

Figure 1: Top fifty political science journals, according to Two-Year Impact Factors
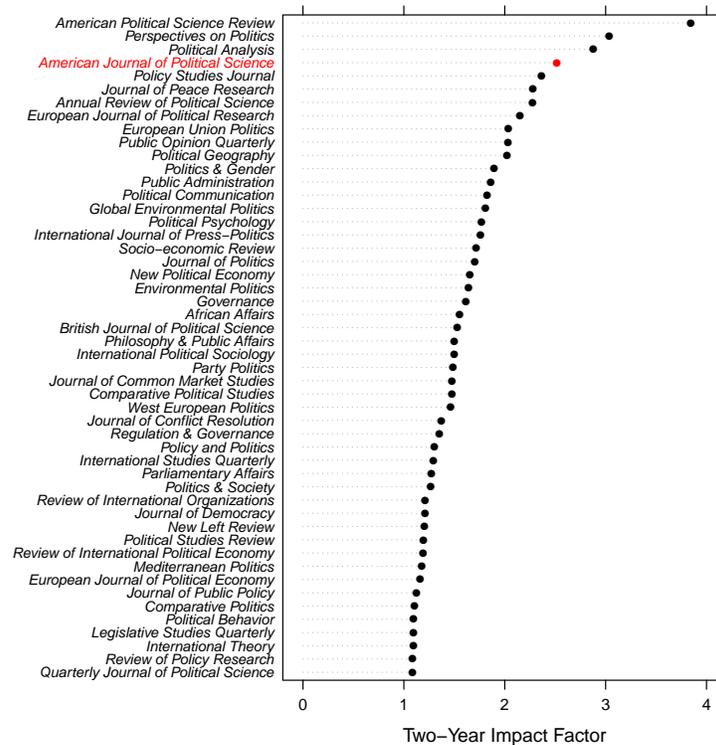
fourth place among political science journals, behind the *American Political Science Review* (2013 2-Yr IF = 3.844), *Perspectives on Politics* (2013 2-Yr IF = 3.035), and *Political Analysis* (2013 2-Yr IF = 2.879).

The 2013 Five-Year Impact Factor for the *AJPS* is 4.324. This value represents an increase over the comparable 2012 figure of 3.960. Figure 2 plots the top fifty political science journals, ranked by their 2013 Five-Year Impact Factors. Here, the Five-Year Impact Factor puts the *AJPS* in third place among political science journals, behind the *American Political Science Review* (2013 5-Yr IF = 5.298) and the *Annual Review of Political Science* (2013 5-Yr IF = 4.526). The figure also shows that there is a fairly sharp drop-off in the Five-Year Impact Factors after the *AJPS*; the next largest score is 3.552 for *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

Figure 2: Top fifty political science journals, according to Five-Year Impact Factors
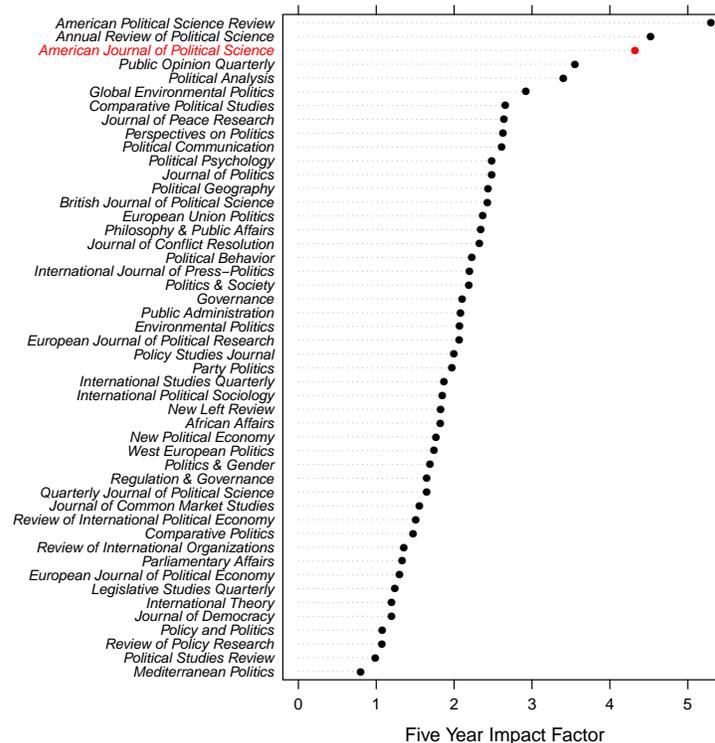

Of course, any decline in the Impact Factor is undesirable. But, Production Editor Michael Streeter, from Wiley Publishers, emphasizes that "both the two and five-year IFs are excellent scores." He also explains that "*AJPS*' two-year IF ... has over the years remained stable. We see spikes from other journals like *PA* and *Perspectives* typically due to articles that are highly cited and float the score for a year or two, then drop out." Therefore, I agree with his assessment that the figures for 2013 are not really cause for great concern.

Additional grounds for optimism about the professional visibility of the *AJPS* are provided by current citation statistics from Google Scholar. The h5-index for the *AJPS* is 53; this means that 53 articles have been cited at least 53 times during the five-year period from 2009 through 2013. The h5-index value places the *AJPS* ninth among all social science journals and at second place

within political science (see Figure 3). It is exceeded only by the *American Political Science Review*, which has a slightly higher h5-index value of 54. Once again, graphical display shows that there is a fairly sharp drop-off after the *AJPS*, with the *Journal of Politics* and *Comparative Political Studies* showing h5-index values of 45 and 43, respectively. The similarity in the patterns for the 5-Yr IF and the h5-index confirm that the *American Journal of Political Science* shows a temporally reliable distinctiveness in the degree to which scholars look to its content as support for their work. More generally, all of these figures demonstrate that the *AJPS* is maintaining its stature as one of the premier outlets for high-quality research in the social sciences.

Figure 3: Top twenty political science journals, according to Google Scholar h-5 index values
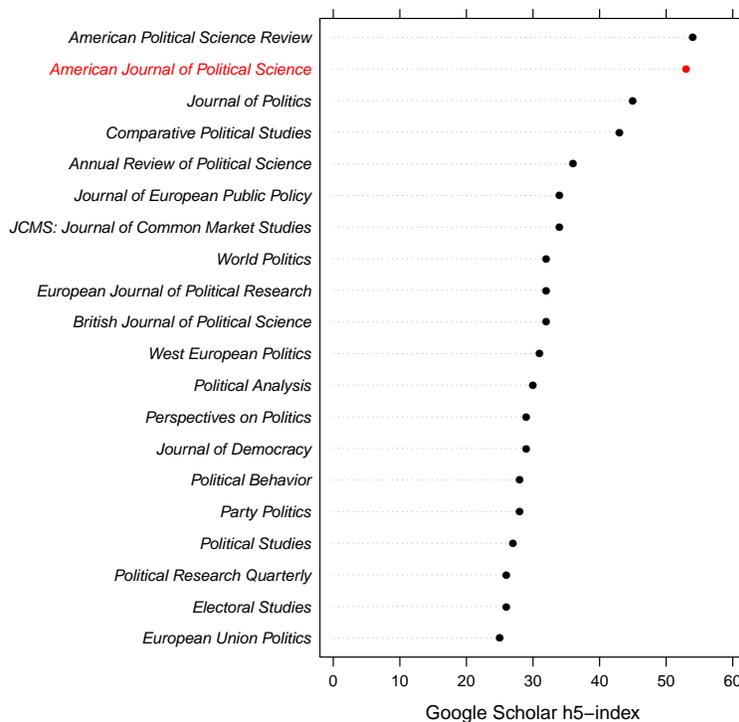
CONTENT USAGE

The *American Journal of Political Science* is disseminated very widely. According to the 2014 Report from the publisher, there are 4,094 institutional subscriptions throughout the world. Of these, 36% are from the United States and 33% are from Europe. There are 5,918 individual subscriptions. Of course, the vast majority of these are obtained through membership in the Midwest Political Science Association. Among individual subscribers, 13% are taking the electronic version of the *AJPS* only, with 87% obtaining the traditional, print version of the *Journal*.

Readers of the *AJPS* increasingly are accessing content by downloading articles from the internet and this provides a useful source of information about usage. The ten most-frequently downloaded *AJPS* articles from 2014 are listed in Table 1. During 2014, a total of 24 articles were downloaded more than one thousand times each!

**Table 1:** Ten most-frequently downloaded *AJPS* articles in 2014 (Number of downloads in parentheses).

1. McDermott, Rose; Dustin Tingley; Peter K. Hatemi. 2014. "Assortative Mating on Ideology Could Operate Through Olfactory Cues." *AJPS* 58: 4. (3,959)

2. Büthe, Tim and Helen V. Milner. 2008. "The Politics of Foreign Direct Investment into Developing Countries: Increasing FDI through International Trade Agreements?" *AJPS* 52: 4. (2,899)

3. Burden, Barry C.; David T. Canon; Kenneth R. Mayer; Donald P. Moynihan. 2014. "Election Laws, Mobilization, and Turnout: The Unanticipated Consequences of Election Reform." *AJPS* 58: 1. (2,779)

4. Brader, Ted; Nicholas A. Valentino; Elizabeth Suhay. 2008. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *AJPS* 52: 4. (2,648)

5. Healy, Andrew and Gabriel S. Lenz. 2014. "Substituting the End for the Whole: Why Voters Respond Primarily to the Election-Year Economy." *AJPS* 58: 1. (2,221)

6. Lorentzen, Peter. 2014. "China's Strategic Censorship." *AJPS* 58: 2. (2,092)

7. Prior, Markus. 2005. "News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout." *AJPS* 49: 3. (1,639)

8. Weber, Christopher R.; Howard Lavine; Leonie Huddy; Christopher M. Federico. 2014. "Placing Racial Stereotypes in Context: Social Desirability and the Politics of Racial Hostility." *AJPS* 58: 1. (1,610)

9. Bhavnani, Ravi; Karsten Donnay; Dan Miodownik; Maayan Mor; Dirk Helbing. 2014. "Group Segregation and Urban Violence." *AJPS* 58: 1. (1,442)

10. Hultman, Lisa; Jacob Kathman; Megan Shannon. 2013. "United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War." *AJPS* 57: 4. (1,405).

Further insights about the extent to which scholars rely on *AJPS* content is shown in Figure 4, which presents the h5-median scores for the journals that received the twenty highest h5-index scores from Google Scholar. The h5-median gives the median number of citations to the articles that are used to create the h5-index score. The *AJPS* has the second-highest h-5 median score, at 84. This falls just below the score for the *American Political Science Review* (at 85) and it is substantially above the next highest h-5 median score (64, for *Political Analysis*). Clearly, a very large number of scholars are citing work that appears in the *American Journal of Political Science*.

Along with aggregate figures about downloads and citations, there is now a great deal of information readily available about the usage and impact of specific articles. Since July 2014, the Wiley Online Library has been displaying Altmetric information for all *AJPS* articles. Michael Streeter, from Wiley, explains that "...Altmetric is a service that tracks and measures the impact of scholarly articles and datasets across traditional and social media, online reference managers, post-publication peer-review sites, and public policy documents." An Altmetric score is derived from three main factors: The volume of distinct mentions and citations; the types of media in which the article is mentioned; and the originator of each mention. Altmetric assigns a score to each article and that is displayed as part of the article's entry in the Wiley Online Library.

Larger Altmetric scores are better, but it is difficult to interpret specific values. Altmetric provides some guidance regarding interpretation. Each article's Altmetric score is linked to a web page that lists "Score in context" information. So, for example, "Widowhood Effects in Voter Participation" by Hobbs, Christakis, and Fowler (*AJPS* 58:1, pages 1-16) has an Altmetric score of 17. The

Figure 4: The h-5 median values for the political science journals with the twenty highest h-5 index values.
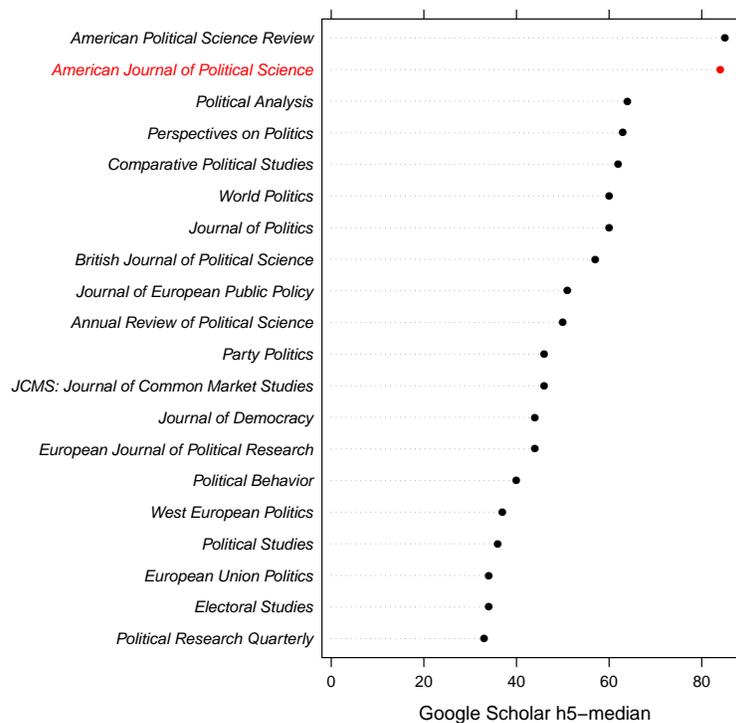
"Score in context" information says that this "Article is amongst the highest ever scored in this journal (ranked 48 of 461). There is also a graphical display ("The Altmetric Donut") that uses color to indicate the types of media in which the article has been mentioned or cited.

According to Altmetric's FAQ page, "most articles will score 0. A mid-tier publication might expect 30%-40% of the papers that it publishes to be mentioned at least once . . . ." Across all years of publication, 461 *AJPS* articles have non-zero Altmetric scores. To provide a relative assessment, consider that the *AJPS* published a total of 381 articles from 2009 through 2014. Of these, 260 or approximately 68% have non-zero Altmetric scores. This confirms that *AJPS* articles are attracting a great deal of attention in both absolute and relative terms— precisely what is to be expected for a top journal in the discipline.

It is important to emphasize that attention to, and usage of, *AJPS* content spans most fields of the discipline. Table 2 shows the distribution of subfields for the 50 most-frequently downloaded articles from 2014 and the 53 articles in the h-5 index. Regardless of the specific measure, American political behavior emerges as the modal category. This is reasonable, given the traditional focus and reputation of the *Journal*. But, a sizable proportion of the articles receiving the most attention are from comparative politics: 34% of the most-downloaded articles and 26% of the articles in the h-5 index. International relations articles comprise 18% and 10% of the respective lists. While these figures are quite respectable in themselves, they are probably a bit low due to the sizable number of subfield-specific journals that focus on various aspects of international relations. Articles on American political institutions have relatively few downloads (only 6% of the top fifty) but they

Table 2: Distribution across subfields for the 50 most frequently downloaded articles and the 53 articles that contribute to the h-5 index.

	50 most frequently downloaded articles	Articles contributing to the h-5 index
American political behavior	36%	30%
American institutions	6%	15%
Comparative politics	34%	26%
International relations	18%	10%
Methodology, formal theory	4%	19%
Normative theory	2%	0%

make a moderate contribution to the h-5 index (15% of the 53 articles). Articles in methodology and formal theory apparently are not downloaded very frequently (only 4% of the top 50 in 2014), but they comprise almost one-fifth of the citations in the h-5 index, at 19% of the 53 articles. Normative theory, unfortunately, is not represented very well in the usage statistics. Only one theory article occurs among the top fifty downloads (placing it at 2% of the total) and there are none contributing to the h-5 index. So, with the admittedly serious and potentially troubling exception of normative theory, the *American Journal of Political Science* publishes content that attracts interest from across the entire discipline. That, in turn, solidifies the *Journal*'s position as one of the top general-audience publication outlets for political scientists.

Still more information about the attention being paid to the *AJPS* can be gleaned from the metrics associated with social media. The *Journal* has had a Facebook page and a Twitter account for several years. The Facebook page currently (April 1, 2015) has 950 "likes." Note that this number has been growing consistently, at a rate of about three or four every day. On Twitter, the *AJPS* has 1,947 followers and this figure also grows steadily at a rate of about 100 new followers each month. One measure of an entity's influence on social media is the Klout score, which assesses the reactions to posts that originate with the entity. The *AJPS* Klout score is 53, a value that appears to be relatively high since the average Klout score is 40. Taken together, the information presented here confirms that the *American Journal of Political Science* is appealing to a large audience through several channels of communication!

SUBMISSIONS AND TURNAROUND TIMES

Table 3 provides the total number of manuscript submissions and the mean number of days from submission until the editorial decision for the past fifteen years, from 2000 through 2014 . Across the 2014 calendar year, 874 manuscripts were submitted to the *AJPS*. This produces a submission rate of 2.78 manuscripts per day (counting only the days that the *Journal* was open for submissions)! It also sets a new record for yearly submissions, exceeding the previous yearly maximum (803 submissions in 2003) by about nine percent. The 2014 submissions represent a sharp increase over

the immediately preceding years, as well. In 2012 and 2013, the numbers of submissions were 750 and 696, respectively. Thus, the 2014 figure represents a 26% increase over 2013 and a 17% increase over 2012.

**Table 3:** Yearly submissions and mean turnaround times.

Year	Number of submissions	Mean turnaround time (days)
2000	530	46
2001	586	39
2002	657	51
2003	803	36
2004	783	36
2005	691	41
2006	694	67
2007	583	130
2008	531	118
2009	479	113
2010	760	101
2011	665	91
2012	750	107
2013	696	93
2014	874	73

One relevant question is whether the increase in submissions represents a temporary fluctuation or a new standard of activity for the *Journal*. For example, some "conventional wisdom" suggests that changes in editorships attract more submissions— presumably from authors whose work was rejected by the previous editor. It is too early to provide any definitive answer to the question at this time. But, submission rates definitely have not abated so far! During the first three months of my term (January through March, 2014) the *AJPS* received 240 submissions. During the first three months of 2015, there were 263 submissions. Thus, the submission rate remains very high after a year into my term as Editor.

As the figures in Table 1 show, the *AJPS* Editorial Staff and I have been fairly successful at reducing the turnaround time for processing manuscripts. Across all editorial decisions in 2014, the mean number of days from submission until decision is 73, or slightly more than three-fourths of the corresponding figure from 2013 (93 days). But, this average value is a bit misleading. For one thing, it contains manuscripts that are not sent out to external referees for review. These "desk rejects" are processed very quickly: The mean turnaround is one day.

After the desk-rejected papers are removed from the calculation, the mean turnaround time is 97 days. But, this latter figure also is a bit difficult to interpret in a straightforward manner. Figure 5 shows the histogram for turnaround times (i.e., the number of days from submission to editorial decision) for all of the editorial decisions in 2014 that were not desk rejections. It is immediately obvious that the distribution is skewed positive. The large set of manuscripts that had relatively short turnaround times is counterbalanced by another set with varying, but quite long gaps between submission and decision. Given the shape of the distribution, the median turnaround time of 72 days may be a more accurate depiction of the central tendency.

Figure 5: Distribution of turnaround times for all editorial decisions in 2014.
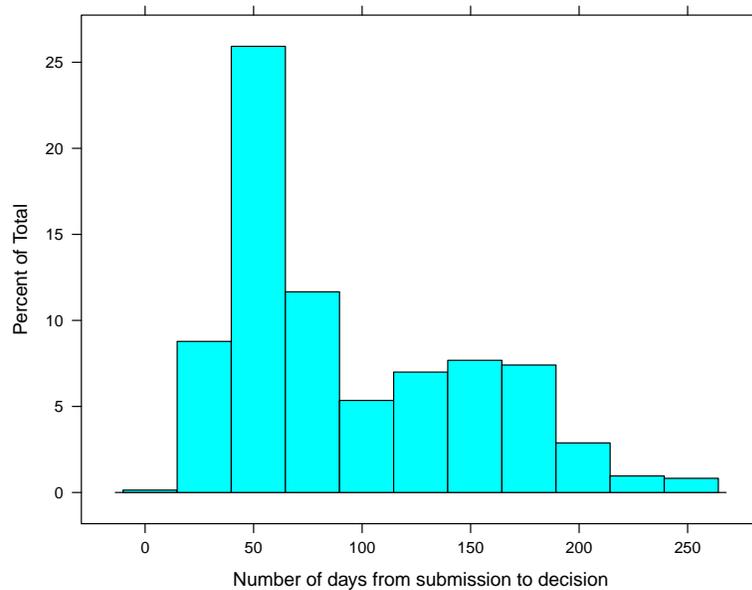
In fact, the source of the skewness is clear: The long upper tail in the distribution is due to manuscripts that had delinquent reviewers (i.e., those who never provided a review or never responded to my invitation to review). In those cases where the editorial decision was based on one or two reviews, the mean turnaround time is an unacceptably long 153 days. For manuscripts that received a full set of three reviews, the mean turnaround time is only 57 days. These separate central tendencies in turnaround times are easily discernible in the two modes of the distribution— the stronger one toward the left (around 50-60 days) and the weaker mode toward the right, around 150 days.

One of my objectives as *AJPS* Editor is to speed up the review process. Therefore, despite the improvements over previous years, I remain unhappy about the fairly long turnaround times that occurred during 2014. But, I must admit that they are largely due to my own inexperience and initial lack of familiarity with the Editorial Manager software system. Specifically, I did not monitor the queue of manuscripts with fewer than three completed reviews closely enough. So, it built up quickly to more than one hundred manuscripts. Beginning in August 2014, and continuing until early January 2015, the Editorial Staff and I devoted particular effort to whittling this backlog down to a more reasonable size. I am very happy to say that this activity was successful. At this point, there are no manuscripts that have been under review for more than three months. And, most of the manuscripts currently in the queue have been there for a considerably shorter period of time.

SUBMISSION RATES BY SUBFIELD

Table 4 shows submission rates by subfield for each year, from 2011 through 2014. Note that the subfield for each manuscript is determined by the submitting author's own designation. Authors are allowed to select more than one subfield for a manuscript, but the figure uses only the first subfield selected by the author.

Table 4: Manuscript submissions by subfield, for each year from 2011 through 2014.

	Year			
	2011	2012	2013	2014
American political behavior	23.3%	24.9%	23.4%	26.1%
American political institutions	16.4%	18.3%	16.7%	16.3%
Comparative politics	33.7%	36.5%	37.7%	32.1%
International relations	13.6%	11.1%	11.1%	14.8%
Methodology and formal theory	7.3%	6.4%	7.5%	7.8%
Normative theory	5.4%	2.7%	3.6%	3.0%

The distribution of submissions across subfields shows a great deal of stability over time. Comparative politics is the modal subfield across the four years, usually making up about one-third of the total submissions. In 2014, comparative manuscripts comprised about 32%, down about six percentage points from the corresponding 2013 figure of about 38%. American political behavior is the next largest category, with about one-fourth of the yearly submissions occurring in this subfield. The 2014 figure is up about three percentage points compared to 2013 (about 26% in 2014 versus 23% in 2013). International relations submissions are at about 15% for 2014, up four points from about 11% in 2013. The remaining three subfields, American political institutions, methodology and formal theory, and normative theory show steady levels of submissions since 2013, with about 16%, 8%, and 3%, respectively.

Given that submission rates do not change very much across the period from 2011 through 2014, it seems unnecessary to discuss trends in submissions. Similarly, it is difficult to specify any "appropriate" levels of submissions for the respective subfields. Nevertheless, the extremely low submission rates for normative theory are a bit troubling. It is not clear whether the Editor should try to take steps in order to increase submissions in this subfield and, if so, exactly how to go about doing that. So, ideas and suggestions are especially welcome on this point!

EDITORIAL DECISIONS

During calendar year 2014, I made 894 editorial decisions on manuscripts. From this total, 759 were decisions on an initial submission. Of the remainder, 115 were decisions on a resubmitted first revision, and 20 were decisions on second revisions. The distributions of editorial decision outcomes, calculated separately for initial submissions, first, and second revisions are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Editorial decisions for calendar year 2014.

	Initial submission ($n = 759$)	First revision ($n = 115$)	Second revision ($n = 20$)
Desk reject	20.7%	—	—
Reject	64.2%	23.9%	—
Revise and resubmit	15.1%	30.0%	5.0%
Accept	—	46.1%	95.0%

If desk-rejected manuscripts are eliminated from consideration, then 80.9% of submissions were rejected after the initial review and 19.1% were issued a "revise and resubmit" decision. The single manuscript that received a second "revise and resubmit" decision was rejected. Combining those manuscripts that were accepted after one and two revisions, the total acceptance rate for manuscripts submitted to the *American Journal of Political Science* during 2014 is 9.6%. With desk-rejected manuscripts omitted from the calculation, the *AJPS* acceptance rate for 2014 is 12.1%. These figures seem very reasonable for a top-tier journal.

Table 6 breaks the editorial decisions down by subfield, separately for initial submissions and for revised resubmissions. (Note that the table only includes manuscripts that have been assigned a final disposition; therefore the total number of manuscripts in the table does not sum to the total number of decisions for 2014). For the most part, there are not any major differences in the distributions of

Table 6: Editorial decisions from 2014, by subfield. Percentages are calculated separately for decisions on initial submissions and on revise and resubmits. (Figures in parentheses are numbers of submissions for each subfield).

	Initial submissions:			Revise and resubmits:	
	Desk reject	Reject	Revise and resubmit	Accept	Reject
American political behavior (206)	17%	68%	15%	70%	30%
American institutions (138)	16%	63%	21%	74%	26%
Comparative politics (143)	28%	61%	11%	44%	56%
International relations (106)	30%	60%	10%	83%	17%
Methodology, formal theory (96)	18%	72%	10%	50%	50%
Normative theory (30)	40%	50%	10%	0%	100%

review outcomes from one subfield to the next. And, one feature that does appear to be distinctive in Table 6 is more illusory than real: Comparative politics, international relations, and normative theory show much higher percentages of desk rejections than the other fields, at 28%, 30%, and 40% respectively. These figures are due entirely to the surprisingly large number of nonviable submissions that we receive from individuals in Russia, the Middle East and Africa, and from non-academic authors (especially for normative theory). If we were to adjust for the inappropriate manuscripts, the distributions for these fields would look much like those for American political behavior or institutions.

It is interesting that decisions on methodological manuscripts show a slightly higher proportion of rejections than other fields. This probably is due to the highly technical nature of these papers. In many cases, referees simply say that the subject matter is too narrow for the general audience of *AJPS* readers. And, such a recommendation is facilitated by the fact that *Political Analysis* serves as an obvious high-quality alternative publication outlet for such work. Finally, it is important to mention that any inferences from the distribution of decisions for normative theory are likely to be problematic because of the relatively small number of submissions.

REVIEWS AND REFEREES

Across calendar year 2014, the *AJPS* Editorial Office received 2,041 referee reports. For completed reviews, the mean number of days from the invitation to review until receipt of the review is 36.0 (or 32.8 days from the time the referee accepted the invitation). The distribution of recommendations from the reviews we received is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Reviewer recommendations, calendar year 2014.

Recommendation	Percentage $(n = 2,041)$
Reject	52.9%
Revise and Resubmit	31.3%
Publish with Minor Revisions	10.1%
Publish as Is	5.7%

Of course, we only receive reviews from a subset of the individuals who are invited to serve as referees. Across calendar year 2014, I invited 2,826 people to review manuscripts for the *AJPS*. It takes an average of 1.7 days from initial submission to invite the initial set of referees for a submitted manuscript. Considering only those who responded to the invitation, the mean number of days to provide the response (either positive or negative) was 3.9. The distribution of responses (and non-responses to the invitation is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Responses to Editor's invitation to review a manuscript for the *AJPS* during 2014.

Response	Percentage ($n = 2,826$)	Subtotal
Completed review	69.9%	
Review in progress	1.1%	
		71.0%
Declined invitation	19.5%	
Never responded	7.8%	
		27.3%
Did not need review	1.7%	1.7%

The database of potential referees for the *AJPS* currently contains information on 9,208 individuals. During 2014, 879 new people were registered into the database. The Editorial Staff edits the database contents when carrying out other tasks, and one of the Student Assistants is assigned to systematically check entries and update information.

EDITORIAL BOARD

The *American Journal of Political Science* Editorial Board currently is composed of 76 people. Most are mid-career scholars, along with a number of senior professors and a few junior faculty. All Board members are professionally active and highly visible members of the political science discipline. The composition of the Board has changed a bit since its initial creation. Several people left the Board and a number were added, not only to replace the vacancies but also to cover subfields in which we have had more submissions than originally expected.

I have relied very heavily on Editorial Board members for assistance with my editorial activities. As I stated at the outset of my Editorial term, I regard the Editorial Board more as a set of 76 Associate Editors than as mere names on the masthead of the *Journal*. Members of the Board have regularly provided me advice regarding desk rejections, decisions on manuscripts with divided referee recommendations, and author appeals of negative decisions. I also have asked several Board members for suggestions about possible additional members.

More than anything else, members of the Editorial Board review *many* manuscripts. I tell incoming Board members to expect up to one invitation to review a manuscript per month. In fact, I have never asked for that many from any Board member. But, the frequency with which I request reviews from Board members is almost certainly much higher than that for Editors of other journals or for previous *AJPS* Editors. Table 9 shows the distribution of the number of reviews completed by each of the active Board members who served during 2014.

Table 9: Distribution of reviews completed by Editorial Board members during 2014.

	Percentage of Board members ($n = 66$)
No reviews	3.1%
One review	10.6%
Two reviews	27.3%
Three reviews	28.8%
Four reviews	24.2%
Five reviews	4.5%
Six reviews	1.5%

The members of the 2015 *American Journal of Political Science* Editorial Board are:

James Adams, *University of California, Davis*
E. Scott Adler, *University of Colorado*
Barry Ames, *University of Pittsburgh*
David Armstrong, *University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee*
Ryan Bakker, *University of Georgia*
Jason Barabas, *Stony Brook University*
William Bianco, *Indiana University*
Cristina Bodea, *Michigan State University*
Cheryl Boudreau, *University of California, Davis*
Gregory Caldeira, *Ohio State University*
David Campbell, *University of Notre Dame*
Eric Chang, *Michigan State University*
Kevin Clarke, *University of Rochester*
Darren Davis, *University of Notre Dame*
Michelle Dion, *McMaster University*
Robert Franzese, *University of Michigan*
Erik Gartzke, *University of California, San Diego*
Guy Grossman, *University of Pennsylvania*
Catherine Hafer, *New York University*
Jens Hainmueller, *Stanford University*
Zoltan Hajnal, *University of California, San Diego*
Peter Hatemi, *Pennsylvania State University*
Jude Hays, *University of Pittsburgh*
Kim Hill, *Texas A&M University*
Patricia Hurley, *Texas A&M University*
Kosuke Imai, *Princeton University*

POLICIES AND INNOVATIONS

Over the first fifteen months of my term as *AJPS* Editor, the Editorial Staff and I have revised several *Journal* policies and adopted some new procedures. While we have taken a number of specific steps, the changes fall into three broad areas: Manuscript submission and referee solicitation; data access and research transparency; and the replication policy for published work.

Manuscript Submissions and Soliciting Referees

We have made several relatively small, but important, changes in the *AJPS* submission guidelines. The word limit for submissions is now 10,000 words. This appears to be an increase over the 8,500 word limit used by former *AJPS* Editor Rick Wilson. But, the comparison is not completely straightforward because there are also changes in what counted toward the limit. For example, entries in the list of references were not included in the 8,500 word limit. Now, the word count includes the main text of the manuscript, all footnotes, all references, and the headers of tables and figures. It does not include the title page, the Abstract, any supplemental material intended to be published online as Supporting Information, and the content of tables and figures.

The submission guidelines now state explicitly that authors of submissions to the *AJPS* are expected to review manuscripts for the *Journal*. Commensurate with this policy, most authors of submissions are invited to serve as a referee during the period in which their own manuscript is under review. This has proven to be a very effective strategy for encouraging timely completion of review assignments! I intend to formalize this policy even further by adding a statement to the "Author Acknowledgment of Submission" message saying that the corresponding author and all co-authors must agree to provide two reviews to the *AJPS* before the submission will be sent out for review. Co-authors will be able to request exemptions if they are not employed in academic positions or if they are not practicing social scientists. The submission guidelines now also state that the *AJPS* Editor reserves the right to decline submissions from authors who repeatedly fail to provide reviews for the *Journal* when invited to do so. I have not yet invoked this policy against any submitting author, but I will do so in the future if the appropriate circumstances arise.

One new component of the manuscript submission and review process should remain invisible to the vast majority of authors. Beginning in early February 2015, the standard *AJPS* workflow within the Editorial Manager system has been checking all incoming manuscripts that pass the initial technical check for plagiarism, using CrossCheck software from iThenticate. Of course, the objective is to prevent all occurrences of text that has been taken from another source without attribution. But, our experience so far suggests that most examples of this do not stem from dishonest or unscrupulous authors who are trying to pass off others' work as their own. Instead, the most common situation (which, fortunately, still remains *very* unusual) is an author using "stock" passages to describe some of the more or less standard preliminary material that appears before an actual data analysis (e.g., descriptions of methodology, datasets, and so on). Some individuals regard this material as relatively unimportant detail which can be handled with "boilerplate" text. While that is not necessarily an unreasonable position, it is still difficult to put it into practice. So, we are trying to implement a reasonable policy that is not excessively stringent for authors but nevertheless makes sure that each manuscript reviewed by the *AJPS* really does consist of original content.

The Editorial Staff and I have created several new procedures that are intended to both encourage referees to complete their reviews, and to speed up the review process. Under Rick Wilson, five or six invitations to review were sent out for each submission. We send out three invitations, and

the Editorial Staff monitors the responses very closely. Individuals who do not respond to the invitation receive several reminders. But if the person remains nonresponsive for more than a week or so, we now invite additional referees.

In cases where a person declines to review a manuscript, the invitation message requests suggestions for additional possible referees. Many, if not most, individuals who decline an invitation fail to provide names. Recently, however, *AJPS* Managing Editor Robert N. Lupton began taking the simple (but brilliant) step of sending these individuals a message thanking them for their response to the invitation, and asking again for names of potential alternative referees. This additional request has produced great results! Most individuals contacted in this manner do provide at least one (and frequently several) names. Of course, many of the people they mention are already known to us. But, this innovation has produced quite a few additional names for addition to the database.

Referees who fail to provide a review after agreeing to do so remain a vexing problem. We do use a series of automatic e-mail reminders that start about a week before the due date for the review, and continue at regular intervals thereafter. The reminder messages are very effective, either producing the reviews or requests for extension of the due date (which we are happy to grant) in most cases. For individuals who ignore the reminders for several weeks, I now send a personalized message from my own e-mail address (rather than from `ajps@msu.edu`). The tone of this message intentionally is somewhat pointed. But, I try to emphasize that I am concerned primarily about getting word back to the manuscript's author, who has been waiting a long time. Here, too, most of these personalized reminders receive positive responses from the tardy referees. And, we probably receive reviews from more than half of them.

The preceding policies have two major objectives: First, they are intended to encourage the relevant research communities to become actively involved in the process of evaluating the work within their subfield. If the individuals who are most qualified to evaluate new contributions fail to do so, then it poses a significant impediment to scientific progress. To the contrary, we want to maintain a system in which authors can be confident that their work is being reviewed by experts in the subject matter covered by their manuscripts. Second, these policies try to make the manuscript review process as efficient as possible. The review and publication process for professional journals is unavoidably cumbersome, but it need not be terribly slow. My personal goal is to make editorial decisions on manuscripts within three months of submission, and preferably much sooner than that. Experience so far shows that this objective can be achieved without sacrificing anything with respect to the quality of the reviews and the feedback provided to the authors.

Data Access and Research Transparency

In order to promote the general scientific objective of producing powerful theories of political and social phenomena through rigorous and cumulative research efforts, the *American Journal of Political Science* is fully committed to the principles of *Data Access and Research Transparency* (DA-RT). Science is inherently a social enterprise. Progress within any field can only occur when the research environment provides ready access to the procedures, tools, data, and results that were used to produce the existing state of knowledge within that field. The DA-RT principles are intended to encourage the existence of precisely such a research-conducive environment within the political science discipline. And I am proud to say that the *American Journal of Political Science* is taking a leadership position within this process.

A website providing a succinct explanation of DA-RT is available at `http://www.dartstatement.org/#!` and this discussion draws heavily from its content. DA-RT began several years ago as

an initiative of the American Political Science Association (APSA) Executive Council. While the initiative has proceeded in several different directions, the recent focus has been support for editors of journals that publish evidence-based knowledge claims. Since professional journals are the primary means of disseminating scientific information, editors are in a unique position to shape the practices of communicating research— thereby affecting what is openly available to members of the relevant research communities.

On September 18-19, 2014, the "Workshop on Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT) in Political Science: Implications for Journal Practices" was convened in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The workshops was jointly sponsored by the APSA, the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), the Center for Political Studies (Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan), and the Center for Qualitative and Multi-method Inquiry (Syracuse University). Attendees included journal editors, publisher representatives, leaders of data archives and domain repositories, and people who develop online workflow programs for journal management. A website that describes the Workshop and provides materials that were presented in its sessions is available at `http://datacommunity.icpsr.umich.edu/da-rt-workshop`.

The purpose of the Workshop was to determine whether it would be possible to develop a general consensus on data access and research transparency. As it turns out, it was surprisingly easy to do so. The major outcome of the Workshop was a joint statement of DA-RT principles articulated by the journal editors in attendance at the Workshop, and updated with subsequent suggestions from other sources. The DA-RT Statement is attached at the end of this Report.

Immediately after the Workshop, in October 2014, I joined with the editors of four other political science journals (the *American Political Science Review*, *Political Analysis* the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, and *Comparative Political Studies*) to establish and promote the DA-RT Statement. Since then, the editors of a number of additional journals (20 more, as of March 2015) have also signed the Statement. As an initial signatory to the DA-RT statement, the *American Journal of Political Science* is actively promoting sound scientific research practices throughout the discipline. In fact, the existing policies of the *AJPS* already were largely consistent with DA-RT principles prior to the Workshop and the creation of the joint Statement. Thus, the *American Journal of Political Science* maintains its position as an acknowledged leader in promoting the infrastructure of the research community.

Replication Policy

Consistent with the DA-RT principles discussed in the previous section of this Report, there are some very important new revisions to the policy regarding replication materials for *AJPS* articles. For many years, authors of manuscripts accepted for publication in the *AJPS* were asked to make their data available to interested researchers for replication purposes. Authors were strongly encouraged to comply with this policy, but doing so was voluntary on their part. As a result, the availability and quality of replication materials varied enormously across articles.

Former *AJPS* Editor Rick Wilson established a new policy by requiring authors to upload replication files to the *American Journal of Political Science* Dataverse on the Harvard Dataverse Network (`https://thedata.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/ajps`). This important innovation guaranteed that materials would be available for all *AJPS* articles (or at least those using empirical data) in a single, easily accessible location. To our knowledge, the *American Journal of Political Science* was the first publication outlet in the discipline to implement such a requirement for authors.

While the creation of the *AJPS* Dataverse was a critical first step, some problems remained that limited its effectiveness. Specifically, authors were given very little guidance regarding exactly what information and materials they needed to provide. As a consequence, the unfortunate variance in the content of replication files across articles persists.

Currently, we are addressing the previous issue through two important and related new innovations. First, a new document— "The *American Journal of Political Science* Guidelines for Preparing Replication Files" (attached at the end of this Report and available online at `www.AJPS.org`)— informs authors about exactly what information they are expected to provide and upload to the *AJPS* Dataverse. The Guidelines explain that replication materials must contain: The analysis dataset; detailed, clear code for using the analysis dataset to reproduce all tables, figures, and exhibits in the AJPS article; information about the source of the analysis dataset; and any instructions for extracting the analysis dataset from the source data (e.g., recodes, data transformations, details about missing observations, etc.).

We understand that these guidelines probably will not cover every possible situation that may arise. But, they should be sufficient for most data analyses that are reported in *AJPS* articles. The objective is to establish a general standard for the information that must be made available to the research community showing how to replicate the work that appears in the pages of the *American Journal of Political Science.*

The second major innovation is that submitted replication materials will be verified to guarantee that they do, in fact, properly reproduce the analysis results. The Midwest Political Science Association and the *AJPS* Editorial Staff have entered into an arrangement with the University of North Carolina's Odum Institute for Research in Social Science to carry out the verifications as a regular component of the publication workflow. When the *AJPS* Editor tentatively accepts a manuscript for publication, the author is informed that final acceptance is contingent upon successful replication of the results. The author is instructed to upload replication files to the *AJPS* Dataverse at the same time that the final draft of the manuscript is submitted.

When the author provides the final draft, the *AJPS* Editor notifies the Odum Institute staff about the new study. They verify that the full set of replication files has been provided, and that the files can be used to reproduce all data analyses and results from the article. If problems occur, then Odum staff inform the *AJPS* Editor, who gives the manuscript author the opportunity to resolve the issue and upload corrected materials to the Dataverse. This process continues until the replication is carried out successfully. At that time, the *AJPS* Editorial Staff sends the final version of the article to the publisher for copy editing and eventual publication, first online and then in a print issue of the *Journal*.

We believe that this new *AJPS* policy makes an important contribution to the infrastructure of social scientific research. Research transparency and replicability of results are standards to which the discipline traditionally has paid lip service. The new replication policy requires scholars to "practice what we preach" and adhere to these standards in a meaningful way.

The new procedures guarantee that complete replication materials are available and operate satisfactorily for all articles that appear within the *Journal*'s pages. Moreover, given the *American Journal of Political Science*'s position as one of the most prestigious, general-audience publication outlets in the discipline, the new replication policy facilitates transparency in, and helps to improve

the integrity of, political science research more generally. Thus, the new *AJPS* replication standards should contribute directly to a rigorous, rational, theory-driven, and cumulative approach to understanding political and social phenomena.

JOURNAL OPERATIONS IN 2015

While most of this Report focuses on *AJPS* operations during 2014, I do want to provide a brief update on the first three months of 2015. As already noted, the number of submissions remains very high. From January 5 (the *Journal*'s opening date for the year) through March 31 we received 263 manuscripts. This is 23 more submissions than we received during the same time period in 2014 and it represents a submission rate of 3.09 manuscripts per day!

The breakdown of 2015 submissions across subfields is shown in Table 10. Overall, the distribution remains very similar to the ongoing pattern discussed above. About one-third of the incoming manuscripts are in comparative politics, followed by almost one-fourth of the total in American political behavior and not quite one-fifth in international relations. As in previous years, we received smaller numbers of submissions in American political institutions (about 14% of the total), normative theory (4%) and methodology/formal theory (about 3%).

Table 10: Manuscript submissions by subfield, January 5 through March 31, 2015.

	Percent of total ($n = 263$)
American political behavior	24.0%
American political institutions	13.7%
Comparative politics	33.5%
International relations	19.9%
Methodology and formal theory	3.0%
Normative theory	4.2%

From January 5 through March 31, I made a total of 274 editorial decisions. The mean turnaround time for all of these manuscripts is 59.74 days. But, once again, this figure is misleading for several reasons. First, it includes 65 desk rejections, which are usually made in one day or less. Once these are removed, the mean turnaround time increases to 76.42 days. Second, 131 of the editorial decisions were on manuscripts that were submitted back in 2014. And, while I had cleared out most of the "problem" files by the beginning of the year, there were still some papers that had been languishing in the queue for too long, due to one or more non-responsive referees. The latter contributed heavily to the sharply skewed distribution of turnaround times (with two very high outliers) shown in Figure 6. (Note that desk rejections are omitted from the figure). Given the skewness, the median of 67 days provides a more reasonable gauge of central tendency.

Figure 6: Distribution of turnaround times for all editorial decisions from January 5 through March 31, 2015.
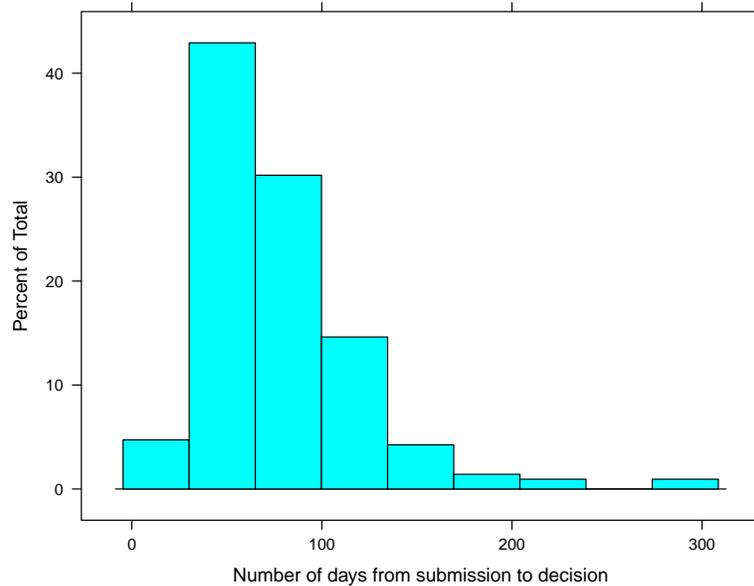
In fact, turnaround times for manuscript processing show enormous improvement in 2015, due in large part to some changes we have made in our internal procedures for managing the review process. For example, declined invitations to review a manuscript now generate an automatic e-mail message alerting the Editor and Editorial Staff that a new person must be invited to review the manuscript. The Editorial Staff also monitors the queue of manuscripts very closely, and helps the Managing Editor to generate a weekly report that highlights "problematic" manuscripts and identifies cases where further action needs to be taken.

As of March 31, I made 143 editorial decisions on manuscripts that were submitted during the current calendar year (i.e., since our opening date of January 5). The mean turnaround time for these manuscripts is 25.70 days. Of course, this impressive figure also includes the 65 desk rejections I have issued so far this year. Once those are removed, the turnaround times for the remaining 78 manuscripts is still very low, at 46.17 days. Thus, most authors who currently submit their manuscripts to the *AJPS* can reasonably expect to receive the results of the review in just over six weeks!

In conclusion, the *American Journal of Political Science* had a very successful year in 2014, and operations continue to improve during the first quarter of 2015. *AJPS* articles are highly influential and widely cited, manuscript submission rates are up, review turnaround times are down, and several new policies help maintain the integrity of the scientific process. For all of these reasons, the *American Journal of Political Science* is widely recognized as a premiere publication outlet for research of the very highest quality, not only within the political science discipline, but also throughout the entire social scientific research community.

Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT): A Joint Statement by Political Science Journal Editors

From the "Workshop on Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT) in Political Science." Convened by the American Political Science Association (APSA) and hosted by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), with support from Syracuse University's Center for Qualitative and Multi-Method Inquiry (CQMI), and the University of Michigan's Center for Political Studies (CPS).

September 18-19, 2014, Ann Arbor, MI

October 6, 2014

In this joint statement, journal editors commit their respective journals to the principles of data access and research transparency, and to implementing policies requiring authors to make as accessible as possible the empirical foundation and logic of inquiry of evidence-based research.

Background

In 2012, the American Political Science Association (APSA) Council adopted new policies guiding data access and research transparency in political science. The policies appear as a revision to APSA's *Guide to Professional Ethics in Political Science*. The revisions were the product of an extended and broad consultation with many APSA committees and the association's membership.

To instantiate these revisions into practice, APSA (with assistance from ICPSR, CQMI, and CPS) convened a meeting of political science journal editors and related stakeholders on September 18-19, 2014 in Ann Arbor, MI.

The meeting focused on the unique role academic journals play in promoting data access and research transparency. This joint statement by journal editors grew out of conversations at the meeting, and signals a strong and shared commitment to develop and support improved best practices for academic publishing.

Meeting participants hailed from many different research traditions. Participants agreed that while data access and research transparency pose different challenges for their traditions, the pursuit of greater access and transparency benefits the discipline as a whole and should extend to all evidence-based research in political science. The editors recognized that although the obligation to provide data access and research transparency rests on all authors equally, data and analysis take diverse forms in different traditions of social inquiry. The means for satisfying the obligations will vary correspondingly. The editors desired that this joint statement be relevant to journals which publish all types of evidence-based research. Accordingly, the statement uses general terms which are intended to be inclusive of specific instantiations of those categories. The materials that an author might provide to show her analytic procedures, for example, could include program code, pre-analysis plans, activated citations, and so on.[i]

A Commitment to Data Access and Research Transparency

Transparency requires making visible both the empirical foundation and the logic of inquiry of research. We agree that by January 15, 2016 we will:[ii]

1. Require authors to ensure that cited data are available at the time of publication through a trusted digital repository.[iii] Journals may specify which trusted digital repository shall be used (for example if they have their own dataverse).

   - If cited data are restricted (e.g., classified, require confidentiality protections, were obtained under a non-disclosure agreement, or have inherent logistical constraints), authors must notify the editor at the time of submission. The editor shall have full discretion to follow their journal's policy on restricted data, including declining to review the manuscript or granting an exemption with or without conditions. The editor shall inform the author of that decision prior to review.

2. Require authors to delineate clearly the analytic procedures upon which their published claims rely, and where possible to provide access to all relevant analytic materials. If such materials are not published with the article, they must be shared to the greatest extent possible through a trusted digital repository.

3. Maintain a consistent data citation policy to increase the credit that data creators and suppliers receive for their work. These policies include using data citation practices that identify a dataset's author(s), title, date, version, and a persistent identifier. In sum, we will require authors who base their claims on data created by others to reference and cite those data as an intellectual product of value.

4. Ensure that journal style guides, codes of ethics, publication manuals, and other forms of guidance are updated and expanded to include improved data access and research transparency requirements.

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[i] On "active citation," see Andrew Moravcsik, Active Citation: A Precondition for Replicable Qualitative Research, *PS: Political Science* (January 2010) 43(1): 29-35.

[ii] Part of this list draws on language used in "Research Transparency, Data Access, and Data Citation: A Call to Action for Scholarly Publications," Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, March 16, 2014.

[iii] See http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/datamanagement/preservation/trust.html.
http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/trustedrep/repositories.pdf
http://public.ccsds.org/publications/archive/652x0m1.pdf and
http://public.ccsds.org/publications/archive/652x0m1.pdf.

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING REPLICATION FILES

Version 1.0, March 25, 2015

William G. Jacoby

The *American Journal of Political Science* requires the authors of all accepted manuscripts to provide replication files before the article enters the production stage of the publication process. The replication files for each article must be made available as a Study located in the *AJPS* Dataverse on the Harvard Dataverse Network (http://thedata.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/ajps). Instructions for getting started on the *AJPS* Dataverse can be found in the "Quick Reference for Uploading Replication Files," available on the *AJPS* website.

This document provides some guidelines, including both general principles and specific requirements, for preparing replication files. The objective is to establish a broad standard for the information that must be made available showing how to reproduce the work that appears in the pages of the *American Journal of Political Science*. This standard should facilitate and encourage active use of the replication files by interested members of the social science research community.

Producing a single set of instructions that would pertain to all articles appearing in the *AJPS* likely would be impossible. So small exceptions may be necessary in order to accommodate some individual articles. But, the following guidelines should sufficiently address the vast majority of situations that arise.

Note also that the following guidelines concern the replication materials for quantitative analyses. The same general principles should apply to qualitative analyses, but the specific requirements probably will differ. Therefore, guidelines for qualitative data are currently under development and will be added to this document in the near future. Until then, authors of articles that rely on qualitative data should contact the *AJPS* Editor for further instructions.

General Principles:

The purpose of replication materials is to enable interested researchers to reproduce all of the analyses that are reported and presented in articles that appear in the *American Journal of Political Science*. Authors should always consider this basic objective when preparing replication materials. Generally speaking, more information is better than less.

All analyses reported in *AJPS* articles are open and available to the scientific research community. Authors are not permitted to "embargo" or withhold information that has been used to perform an analysis featured in an *AJPS* article. Instead, authors must provide all information that is required to reproduce any analytic result that is reported in their article. This material includes (but is not limited to) analysis data, code for running relevant software, and source files for software that is not publicly available (e.g., Stata .ado files or R packages written by the author).

Authors do not need to provide any additional information or data, beyond what is necessary to reproduce the analyses reported in the *AJPS* article. So, for example, the analysis dataset may contain variables that are neither employed in any models, nor used to construct variables that are employed in reported models. If so, then these variables need not be included in the replication materials for the article.

Specific Instructions and Recommendations:

In most cases, the replication materials will include: a Readme file, information about the data source(s); the analysis dataset; and code for running relevant software. Each of these elements will be discussed in greater detail, below. Optionally, authors may include extensions to the analyses reported in the article. Note that the replication materials are expected to cover all analyses presented in the main article and in the Supporting Information for the article.

Readme File:

Every Study on the *AJPS* Dataverse should include a plain-text file named "readme.txt". This file provides the names of all other files contained in the study, along with a brief description of each one. For relatively small Studies, this information can be presented as a simple list. Larger Studies should group similar files under subheadings, such as "Data files" and "Stata .do files", or "Files to Reproduce Table 1", etc.

Analysis Dataset(s):

Every Study must include one or more files containing the data required to reproduce all tables, figures, and other analytic results reported in the *AJPS* article and its Supporting Information. Authors can choose their own data storage formats (e.g. rectangular text files; comma-delimited files; Stata .dta files; data objects within an R package; SAS files; SPSS files, etc.), as long as the files are readily accessible to researchers in the social science community. Files stored in arcane or proprietary formats generally are not acceptable.

Data should be arranged within each file to facilitate understanding of the contents. If possible, variables should be given meaningful names. And, a unique case identifier variable always should be included. If the data are extracted from another source (as often will be the case) then the case identifier should link the observation in the analysis dataset to its information in the original source.

In analyses based upon highly data-intensive procedures (e.g., Bayesian simulations, bootstrap resampling, etc.) it is not necessary to provide the full contents of each replicated dataset. However, the full set of relevant results (e.g., the simulated parameter values in MCMC estimation, the bootstrap replications of a sample statistic, etc.) should be provided in a coherent data file. And in such cases, providing software command files (see next subsection) to reproduce the entire data-intensive analysis is particularly important.

Each file containing an analysis dataset must be accompanied by a PDF file containing a codebook for the dataset. The codebook always should contain variable definition information for all variables used in the analysis. If the dataset is stored in a proprietary format (e.g., a Stata .dta file) then the codebook must include variable names. If the data are stored in a text file, then formatting information must be provided.

In some rare cases, the analyses in an *AJPS* article may be based upon restricted data that cannot be posted in a publicly-accessible location. Any such exceptions to the general *AJPS* policy regarding replication materials must receive explicit prior approval from the Editor. Once this permission is

received, the analysis dataset need not be posted to the *AJPS* Dataverse. But, the author still must provide instructions that interested researchers can use to access the data (see the section on "Information to Reproduce the Analysis Dataset" below), as well as formatting and variable definition information for the data that are analyzed in the *AJPS* article.

Software Commands:

Every study must include one or more files containing the software commands that can be applied to the analysis dataset in order to reproduce all tables, figures, and other analysic results presented in the *AJPS* article. Typically, these will be plain text files. The exact format of the file contents depends upon the software used to carry out the original analysis. Authors can provide Stata .do files, R command scripts, or text files appropriate for submission to other software systems and environments.

Regardless of the format used for the command files, comment statements should be used extensively throughout the files to explain the steps of the analysis. Authors can assume that users are familiar with the software system used for the analysis (i.e., there is no need to explain how specific commands function). But, authors should explain how the various commands produce results that are relevant for the analyses reported in the article (e.g., "The following commands recode variables X and Y in preparation for the logistic regression model"; "The following commands create Figure 1 in the article"; etc.).

In some cases, conducting the analyses in an *AJPS* article may require software tools that are not readily available to the research community. Examples include (but are not limited to) Stata .ado files or R packages written by, or specially available to, the author. Any such software resources required to replicate an analysis from the *AJPS* article must be included in the Study for the article, along with relevant documentation and instructions for installing (if necessary) and using them.

Authors always should provide clear and specific information about the version of the software system used to conduct the analyses reported in their *AJPS* article. This requirement is critically important because algorithms, procedures, and functions can (and do) change across software versions! For example, an R command file might begin with the comment statement, "The following analyses were carried out using R version 3.1.0" or the Readme.txt file for the Study could contain the following statement: "All data analyses in this article were carried out using Stata/MP 13.1 for Windows (64-bit x86-64)."

As mentioned earlier, software command files are particularly important for data-intensive analyses in which the "intermediate" datasets used to obtain the final results (e.g., MCMC simulations or bootstrap replications of the original data) are not, themselves, included among the Study's replication files. In such cases, users literally would be recreating the original analysis. Thus, the command file needs to provide especially clear instructions for doing so. On a related point, any commands that generate random numbers (e.g., for Monte Carlo simulations, bootstrap resampling, jittering points in a graphical display etc.) should include a seed value in order to insure consistent results.

Authors can provide either a single command file that covers all analyses reported in the *AJPS* article, or separate files for the specific analyses contained within the article. In the former case, comment statements should be used within the command file to distinguish the commands used for different figures, tables , or other analytic results. The process is best served when authors use meaningful, rather than "generic" file names. For example, files named "Stata commands for performing logistic regressions.do" or "R functions to reproduce Figure 1.R" are better than "Commands.do" or "R_scripts.R".

Information to Reconstruct the Analysis Dataset:

Every Study must contain complete information for constructing the Analysis Dataset(s) from the original sources of the data. The exact materials for doing so will depend upon the nature and sources of the analysis data. But regardless of the specific details, interested researchers always must be able to follow the author's instructions in order to reproduce the precise data values used for any analyses reported in the *AJPS* article.

The Analysis Dataset often is created by extracting variables and observations from another, larger, dataset such as an entry in the American National Election Study series, The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, the International Correlates of War project, or the General Social Survey. In such cases, the author must provide a software command file for doing so. Although the format will vary depending on the software that the author uses, the file always should contain commands for selecting the relevant variables, extracting subsets of observations if necessary, performing any data transformations that are carried out prior to the analysis itself, and assigning missing values. Again, comment statements should be used extensively throughout the file to explain the commands that are used. As stated earlier, there always should be a case identification variable that links observations in the Analysis Dataset to their original records in the source dataset. And, it is important to identify the specific version of the source dataset and the date that it is accessed in order to construct the Analysis Dataset.

The Analysis Dataset sometimes is created by merging information extracted from several other sources. For example, an analysis of the American states may use information obtained from both the states themselves and from the federal government. In such cases, the author must provide the relevant software commands for extracting the data from the separate sources, and for merging the separate subsets of data into the overall Analysis Dataset. As always, comment statements should be used extensively to explain the procedures.

Complete reference information must be provided for all source datasets used to construct the Analysis Dataset. Some useful information about the practice of data citation can be found on the website of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR):

http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/datamanagement/citations.html

Restricted Access Source Datasets

There are two situations in which an author of an *AJPS* article can request, and may be granted, an exemption from the general requirement of providing the source data for the Analysis Dataset. First, the author may want to prevent outside access to the source dataset in order to further his or her own research. As explained earlier, the data used in the *AJPS* article cannot be "embargoed" in this manner. However, the author can request an embargo for any additional information that is contained in the source dataset(s). Any such restrictions will be imposed for a limited amount of time only, and the Study materials will include a statement specifying when the source data will be made available to the general research community. The *AJPS* Editor explicitly must give permission for any data embargo of this type. Furthermore, the author still must make the source data available to the *AJPS* Editorial Staff and to the *AJPS*' contractor tasked with verifying the content of replication materials (currently, the Archive Staff at the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). The AJPS Editorial Staff and the Archive Staff at the Odum Institute guarantee that the embargoed data will be used strictly to verify the integrity of the replication materials, and will not be retained after that has been established.

The second situation involves a restricted-access source dataset. In such cases, the *AJPS* Editor may allow an exception to the general policy of full data access. Note, however, that "blanket" denial of access to the Analysis Dataset used in an *AJPS* article will not be permitted. The holders of the restricted-access data also must provide the *AJPS* Editor with (1) a statement that access will be granted to the data for qualified researchers; (2) an explanation of the conditions under which the data will be made accessible; and (3) the qualifications that a researcher must present in order to be granted access to the data.

If the *AJPS* Editor does permit restricted access to the Analysis Dataset or the source data, then the author must specify the procedures through which an interested researcher can apply for access to the Analysis Dataset for replication purposes (including the construction of the Analysis Dataset from the original source dataset) from the holders of the source data. The author also must provide software command files for carrying out the analyses and constructing the Analysis Dataset. The objective here is to provide researchers with all possible information about the data analysis, even if the data, themselves, are not immediately available in the Study on the *AJPS* Dataverse.

Conclusion

The preceding guidelines describe the minimum requirements for a Study on the *AJPS* Dataverse. They implement the principles of data access and research transparency (DART) to which the American Journal of Political Science is a founding signatory. But, authors certainly are not limited to providing the previously-described files. In fact, they are encouraged to provide as much information as possible. Additional contents of the Study on the *AJPS* Dataverse might include supplemental reports, pre-analysis plans, additional data, and extensions of the analysis beyond those reported in the *AJPS* article and Supporting Information. Authors are encouraged to keep in mind that scientific research is an ongoing stream. Hopefully, the research reported in the pages of the *American Journal of Political Science* will facilitate and encourage further efforts to establish powerful theories of political and social phenomena. Any materials that facilitate this process are welcome elements of a Study on the *AJPS* Dataverse!