



# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

**Report to the Editorial Board and the Midwest  
Political Science Association Executive Council  
April 2018**

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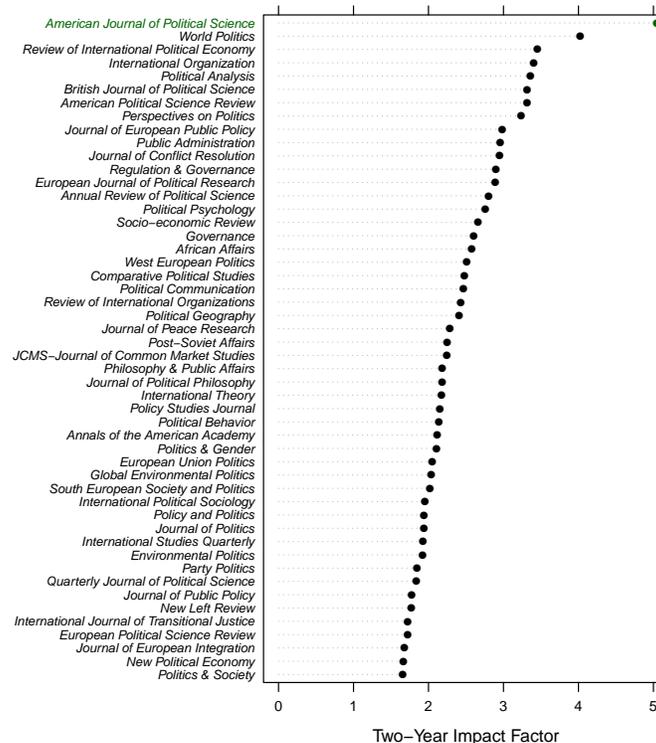
This Report from the Editor of the *American Journal of Political Science* to the Editorial Board and to the Executive Council of the Midwest Political Science Association covers the *AJPS* and operations in the Editorial Offices at Michigan State University during calendar year 2017. The Report presents information about the *Journal's* status and influence, usage of *AJPS* content, manuscript processing statistics, referees and reviews, and the Editorial Board. It also discusses some journal policies. Finally, the Report will provide information about manuscript processing during the first two months of 2018.

## 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 2016 Impact Factor for a journal is defined as the mean number of citations in that journal during 2016 to articles published during the preceding two or five years. The 2016 Two-Year Impact Factor for the *AJPS* is 5.044. This figure is very impressive, not only because it represents a fairly substantial increase over the 2015 Two-Year Impact Factor (which was 4.515). I also am very pleased to say that this value ranks the *AJPS* in first place across all political science journals! Figure 1 plots the top fifty political science journals according to their Two-Year Impact Factors for 2016. This display shows that there is a fairly wide gap in scores after the *AJPS*; the next four

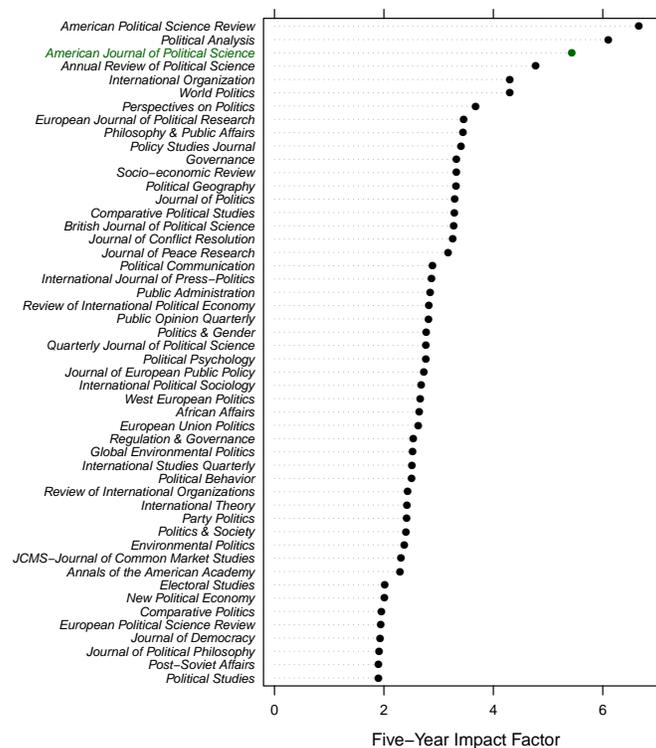
**Figure 1:** Top fifty political science journals, according to 2016 Two-Year Impact Factors



journals are *World Politics* (2016 2-Yr IF = 4.025), the *Review of International Political Economy* (2016 2-Yr IF = 3.452), *International Organization* (2016 2-Yr IF = 3.406), and *Political Analysis* (2016 2-Yr IF = 3.361). This is the second year in a row that the *AJPS* has appeared at the top of the list.

The 2016 Five-Year Impact Factor for the *AJPS* is 5.436. This represents a very slight increase over the 2015 figure of 5.424. Figure 2 plots the top fifty political science journals, ranked by their 2015 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* (2016 5-Yr IF = 6.658) and *Political Analysis* (2016 5-Yr IF = 6.103). The figure also shows that there is a drop-off in the Five-Year Impact Factors after the *AJPS*; the next largest score is 4.777 for the *Annual Review of Political Science*, and only two other journals have scores greater than 4.00 (*International Organization* at 4.301, and *World Politics* at 4.300). Thus, the *American Journal of Political Science* is retaining its position as one of the most widely-cited journals in the entire discipline.

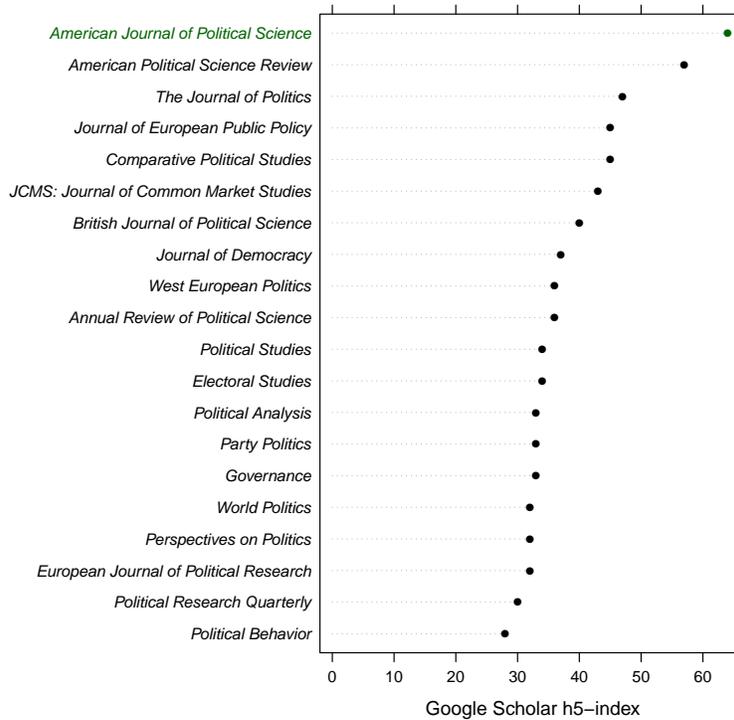
**Figure 2:** Top fifty political science journals, according to 2016 Five-Year Impact Factors



Additional grounds for optimism about the professional visibility of the *AJPS* are provided by current citation statistics from Google Scholar. The 2017 h5-index for the *AJPS* is 64; this means that 64 articles have been cited at least 64 times during the five-year period from June 2012 through June 2017. The h5-index value places the *AJPS* eighth among all social science journals and in first place within political science. Figure 3 plots the top twenty political science journals by their h5-index values. The *American Political Science Review* appears after the *AJPS*, with an h5-index value of 57. This ranks the *APSR* twelfth among social science journals and second within political

science. After that, the *Journal of Politics* has the next-highest h5-index, although there is a substantial gap between the two: The h5-index for the *JOP* is 47. All of these figures confirm that the *American Journal of Political Science* is maintaining—and perhaps even enhancing—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 2017 Google Scholar h5-index values



### CONTENT USAGE

The *American Journal of Political Science* is disseminated very widely. According to the 2018 Report from the publisher, there are 5,260 institutional subscriptions throughout the world. Of these, 15% are from the United States and 38% are from Europe. There are 6,531 individual subscriptions. Of course, the vast majority of these are obtained through membership in the Midwest Political Science Association. Among individual subscribers, 89% are taking the electronic version of the *AJPS* only, with only 11% 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. In 2017, *AJPS* articles were downloaded 356,059 times! 60.6% of the downloads are to the HTML version of an article, and the remaining 39.4% are to the PDF version. This breakdown may seem somewhat surprising. But, the default link (e.g., in Google Scholar) is to the HTML version. In addition, the HTML version is optimized for mobile viewing. A combination of these factors may explain why more HTML articles are downloaded rather than PDF's.

The ten most frequently downloaded *AJPS* articles from 2017 are listed in Table 1. During 2017, a total of 71 articles were downloaded more than one thousand times each! Note that these figures

only include downloads from the Wiley Online Library. They do not include downloads from JSTOR. There are 8,392 institutions that have access to the *AJPS* through JSTOR.

**Table 1:** Ten most-frequently downloaded *AJPS* articles in 2017 (Number of downloads in parentheses).

1. Pérez, Efrén and Margit Tavits. (2017) "Language Shapes People's Time Perspective and Support for Future-Oriented Policies." *AJPS* 61: 3. (3,786)
2. Abadie, Alberto; Alexis Diamond; Jens Hainmueller. (2015) "Comparative Politics and the Synthetic Control Method." *AJPS* 59: 2. (3,362)
3. Hainmueller, Jens and Daniel J. Hopkins. 2015. "The Hidden American Immigration Consensus: A Conjoint Analysis of Attitudes toward Immigrants." *AJPS* 59: 3. (3,243)
4. Lelkes, Yphtach; Gaurav Sood; Shanto Iyengar. "(2017) The Hostile Audience: The Effect of Access to Broadband Internet on Partisan Affect." *AJPS* 61: 1. (3,224)
5. Knutsen, Carl Henrik and Håvard Mokleiv Nygård. (2015) Institutional Characteristics and Regime Survival: Why Are Semi-Democracies Less Durable Than Autocracies and Democracies?" *AJPS* 59: 3. (2,888)
6. Broockman, David E. and Daniel M. Butler. (2017) "The Causal Effects of Elite Position-Taking on Voter Attitudes: Field Experiments with Elite Communication." *AJPS* 61: 1. (2,813)
7. Brader, Ted; Nicholas A. Valentino; Elizabeth Suhay. 2008. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *AJPS* 52: 4. (2,718)
8. Taber, Charles S. and Milton Lodge. (2006) "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs." *AJPS* 50: 3. (2,554)
9. Garand, James C.; Ping Xu; Belinda C. Davis. (2017) "Immigration Attitudes and Support for the Welfare State in the American Mass Public." *AJPS* 61: 1. (2,522)
10. Verhulst, Brad; Lindon Eaves; Peter K. Hatemi. 2016. "Erratum to 'Correlation not Causation: The Relationship between Personality Traits and Political Ideologies,' *American Journal of Political Science* 56(1), 34-51." *AJPS* 60: 1. (2,510)

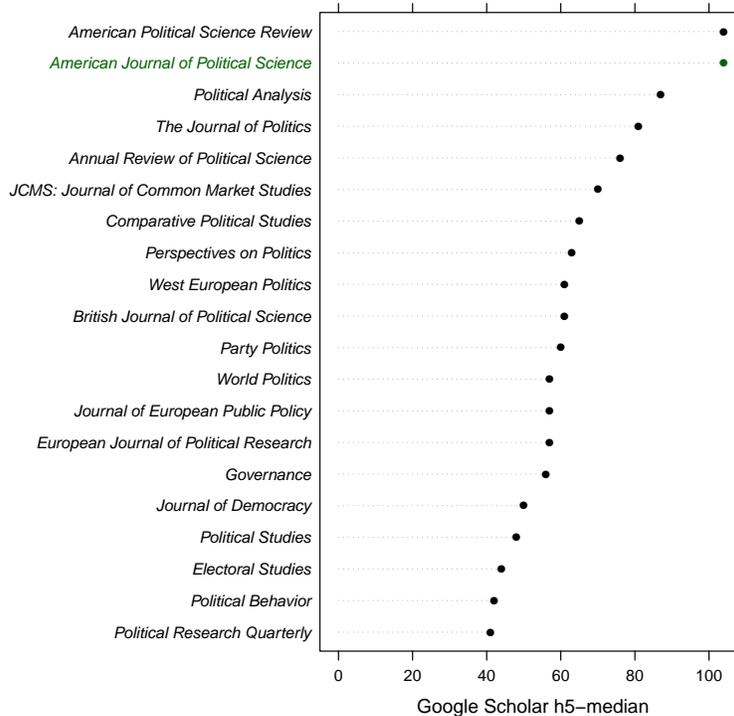
Further insights about the extent to which scholars rely on *AJPS* content is shown in Figure 4, which presents the h5-median scores for the journals that received the twenty highest h5-index scores from Google Scholar. The h5-median gives the median number of citations to the articles that are used to create the h5-index score. The *AJPS* is tied with the *American Political Science Review* for the highest h5-median, at 104. and it is substantially above the next highest h5 median score (81, for the *Journal of Politics*). 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, the Social Science Editor at Wiley, explains:

Altmetric measures the "level of attention" an article is receiving at a specific point in time. Mentions, references, and citations to published articles in blogs, news outlets, social media, and scholarly article sharing sites (like Mendeley for instance) are all counted toward the overall score. Mentions and references by type are weighted. A mention in the *New York Times* or even a local newspaper counts for five points, whereas a tweet counts for one point. References

to the published article need to be to be the URL for the final version that appears on Wiley Online Library, or to the relevant publisher's site. Links to earlier versions of the paper will not be picked up by Altmetric. Altmetric scores are cumulative.

**Figure 4:** The 2017 h5-median values for the political science journals with the twenty highest 2017 h5-index values.



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 "Overview of Attention" information that places the score into a broader context and provides detailed information about the sources of the attention it has received. So, for example, "Assortative Mating on Ideology Could Operate Through Olfactory Cues" by McDermott, Tingley, and Hatemi (*AJPS* 58:4, pages 997-1005) has an Altmetric score of 276 (as of March 9, 2018). The "About This Attention Score" information says that this score falls "(i)n the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric;" is "(o)ne of the highest-scoring outputs from this source (#3 of 913);" is a "(h)igh score compared to outputs of the same age (99th percentile);" and is a "(h)igh score compared to outputs of the same age and source (87th percentile)." There is also a graphical display ("The Altmetric Donut") that uses color to indicate the types of media in which each article has been mentioned or cited.

According to Altmetric's FAQ page (accessed in March 2016), "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, 1017 *AJPS* articles have been assigned Altmetric scores. Of these, 913 (or 90%) are non-zero. The mean Altmetric score for *AJPS* articles that have scores

is 15.15. But the distribution is severely skewed and contains several high-end outliers. So the median Altmetric score of 4 probably is more informative. According to Altmetric's "Overview of Attention" information, an article with a score of 5 is "(i)n the top 25% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric. All of this information 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 100 most-frequently downloaded articles from 2017 and the 64 articles in the 2017 h-5 index. American political behavior is the modal category both for downloads and inclusion in the h5-index, at 42% and 36%, respectively. Both measures show similar results for articles on American political institutions, which comprise 15% of the downloads and 19% of the h5-index. A sizable proportion of the articles receiving attention are from comparative politics: 25% of the most downloaded articles and 23% of the articles in the h-5 index. International relations articles make up 10% of the downloads and nine percent of the h5-index. While these latter 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. The results diverge a bit for methodology and formal theory; articles in this category represent seven percent of the most frequently downloaded articles, 13% of the articles going into the h-5 index. Normative theory is the only subfield that is not represented very well in these usage statistics. Only one theory article appears among the top hundred downloads 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.

**Table 2:** Distribution across subfields for the 50 most frequently downloaded articles and the 64 articles that contribute to the h5-index.

	100 most frequently downloaded articles	Articles contributing to the h-5 index
American political behavior	42%	36%
American institutions	15%	19%
Comparative politics	25%	23%
International relations	10%	9%
Methodology, formal theory	7%	13%
Normative theory	1%	0%

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 (as of March 12, 2018) has 4,425 "likes." Note that this number has been growing consistently, at a rate of about three or four every day. On Twitter,

the *AJPS* has 7,817 followers and this figure also grows steadily at a rate of more than 130 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 49.95, 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 eighteen years, from 2000 through 2017. Across the 2017 calendar year, 906 manuscripts were submitted to the *AJPS*. This produces a submission rate of 2.88 manuscripts per day (counting only the days that the *Journal* was open for submissions)! While the number of submissions for 2017 is a bit lower than the record-setting figure from 2017 (928 submissions), it is still much higher than the number of submissions in any year prior to that. The 2017 submissions represent a 3% increase over submissions from 2015, but also an increase of 30% over submissions in 2013, the year immediately preceding the start of my editorial term.

**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
2015	876	45
2016	928	54
2017	906	54

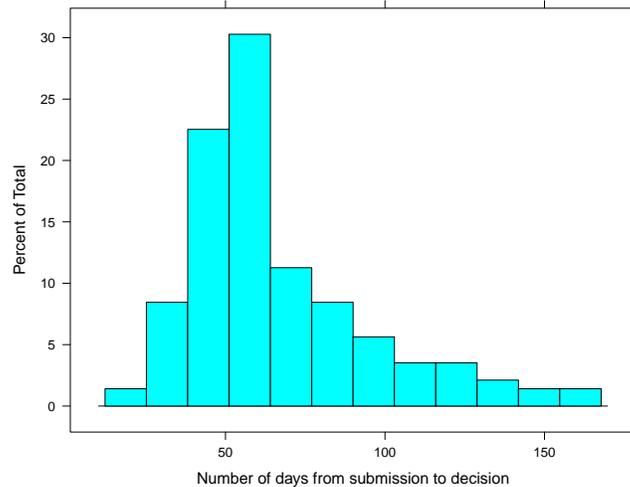
The mean turnaround time (i.e., the number of days from submission to editorial decision) for manuscript reviews in 2017 was 54 days. This is identical to the figure from 2016. It is nearly three weeks faster than the mean turnaround time in 2014 (73 days), and over a month faster than the mean turnaround from 2013 (93 days).

Note that the average overall turnaround time includes manuscripts that are not sent out to external referees. These "desk rejects" are processed very quickly: The mean turnaround time is less than

one day (0.82 to be precise). Once the desk-rejected papers are removed from the calculation, the mean turnaround time is 73 days. Again, this is identical to the comparable figure from 2016.

Figure 5 provides more detailed information about manuscript turnaround times. The figure shows the distribution of times from submission to editorial decision for all externally-reviewed manuscripts in 2016. The graphical display shows that the distribution is skewed in the positive direction. The mode for 2016 is sharply defined, just above 50. The median turnaround time for 2017 is 62 days, with an inter-quartile range of 36 days. This distribution is very similar to the distribution from 2016, which also was skewed positive with a median of 62 days and an inter-quartile range of 37 days. Thus, half of the externally-reviewed submissions to the *AJPS* received decisions in two months or less during 2017.

**Figure 5:** Distributions of turnaround times for externally-reviewed manuscripts in 2017.



### SUBMISSION RATES BY SUBFIELD

Table 4 shows submission rates by subfield for each year, from 2011 through 2017. 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.

American political behavior is the modal category, with about 27% of the total submissions (up very slightly from about 26% in 2016). Comparative politics is the next largest category, with almost 25% in 2017 (up a bit from about 22% of the total in 2016). Submissions in international relations come next (17%), followed by American political institutions with 15%. The latter two percentages are down from their 2016 values, both of which were 20%. Submissions in methodology and formal theory comprise just over 10%, and this is up about three percentage points from the 2016 figure. Submissions in normative theory remain low, at about six percent, although this is up one-half a percentage point from 2016.

**Table 4:** Manuscript submissions by subfield, for each year from 2011 through 2017.

	Year						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
American political behavior	23.3%	24.9%	23.4%	26.1%	23.1%	25.7%	26.7%
American political institutions	16.4%	18.3%	16.7%	16.3%	14.6%	20.0%	15.0%
Comparative politics	33.7%	36.5%	37.7%	32.1%	36.2%	21.5%	24.7%
International relations	13.6%	11.1%	11.1%	14.8%	14.0%	20.0%	17.3%
Methodology and formal theory	7.3%	6.4%	7.5%	7.8%	8.4%	7.5%	10.5%
Normative theory	5.4%	2.7%	3.6%	3.0%	3.7%	5.3%	5.8%

The distribution of submissions across subfields in 2017 is fairly similar to the distribution from 2016. But there are some noticeable differences from earlier years. For example, comparative politics submissions averaged about 35% of the total up through 2015. More recently, that has dropped by more than 10 percentage points. On the other hand, submissions in international relations in the last two years are up by about five percent over their pre-2016 mean of about 13%. Submissions in both methodology/formal theory and normative theory show smaller, but still steady increases over time.

## EDITORIAL DECISIONS

During calendar year 2017, I made 922 editorial decisions on manuscripts (down slightly from 987 decisions in 2016). From this total, 844 were decisions on an initial submission. Of the remainder, 65 were decisions on a resubmitted first revision, and 13 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 2017.

	Initial submission ( <i>n</i> = 844)	First revision ( <i>n</i> = 65)	Second revision ( <i>n</i> = 13)
Desk reject	24.5%	—	—
Reject	67.3%	15.4%	7.7%
Revise and resubmit	8.2%	26.2%	—
Accept	—	58.4%	92.3%

If desk-rejected manuscripts are eliminated from consideration, then 89.2% of submissions were rejected after the initial review and 10.8% were issued a “revise and resubmit” decision. 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 2017 is 5.9%. With desk-rejected manuscripts omitted from the calculation, the *AJPS* acceptance rate for 2017 is 7.9%. These figures seem very reasonable for a top-tier journal.

Table 6 breaks down the editorial decisions 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 2017). Note that Table 6 does not include 63 manuscripts that were categorized as “unclassifiable.” All of these were desk-rejected. For the most part, there are not any major differences in the distributions of review outcomes from one subfield to the next.

**Table 6:** Editorial decisions from 2017, 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 (172)	14%	78%	8%	88%	12%
American institutions (107)	14%	78%	8%	67%	33%
Comparative politics (224)	22%	72%	6%	92%	8%
International relations (78)	19%	68%	13%	83%	17%
Methodology, formal theory (73)	16%	65%	19%	80%	20%
Normative theory (34)	23%	69%	8%	75%	25%

## REVIEWS AND REFEREES

Across calendar year 2017, the *AJPS* Editorial Office received 2,041 referee reports; this is slightly lower than the 2,067 reports that we received in 2016. For completed reviews, the mean number of days from the invitation to review until receipt of the review is 36.2 (or 33.9 days from the time the referee accepted the invitation). These numbers are basically identical to the comparable figures from 2016 (36.1 and 33.9, respectively). The distribution of recommendations from the reviews we received is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7:** Reviewer recommendations, calendar year 2017.

Recommendation	Percentage ( <i>n</i> = 2,041)
Reject	56.0%
Revise and Resubmit	31.1%
Publish with Minor Revisions	8.5%
Publish as Is	4.5%

Of course, we only receive reviews from a subset of the individuals who are invited to serve as referees. Across calendar year 2017, I invited 2,751 people to review manuscripts for the *AJPS*. It takes an average of 0.8 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 3.3. 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 2017.

Response	Percentage ( <i>n</i> = 2,751)	Subtotal
Completed review	73.9%	
Review in progress	0.7%	
		74.6%
Declined invitation	17.3%	
Never responded	2.4%	
		19.7%
Did not need review	5.8%	5.8%

Based upon the information in Table 8, referee responsiveness and performance remained very stable over the past two years. I did issue about 80 fewer invitations— 2,751 in 2017 compared to 2,835 in 2016. But the percentage of referees who completed their reviews is virtually identical in each of the two years: 73.9% in 2017 and 73.6% in 2016. The percentage of invited referees who did not provide reviews is down, at 19.7% in 2017 compared to 23.2% in 2016. Thus, we receive reviews from about three-fourths of the people who are invited to serve as referees. This is an improvement over the first year of my editorial tenure, when only 70% of the invitees provided reviews. But, we still hope to do better in getting people to respond to reviewer invitations.

The database of potential referees for the *AJPS* currently contains information on 11,727 individuals. During 2017, 844 new people were registered into the database. Of these, the *AJPS* Editorial Staff registered 411 individuals while searching for new referee candidates. The remainder of the new registrations were almost all authors or co-authors of submitted manuscripts who registered themselves.

## 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 2017. The mean number of reviews per Board member was 2.3 in 2017.

**Table 9:** Distribution of reviews completed by Editorial Board members during 2017.

	Percentage of Board members ( $n = 80$ )
No reviews	2.5%
One review	25.0%
Two reviews	32.5%
Three reviews	27.5%
Four reviews	10.0%
Five reviews	1.3%
Six reviews	0.0%
Seven reviews	1.3%

The members of the 2018 *American Journal of Political Science* Editorial Board are:

James Adams, *University of California, Davis*  
Claire Adida, *University of California, San Diego*  
David Armstrong, *University of Western Ontario*  
Ryan Bakker, *University of Georgia*  
Jason Barabas, *Stony Brook University*  
William Bianco, *Indiana University*  
Cheryl Boudreau, *University of California, Davis*  
Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, *University of Chicago*  
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*  
Guy Grossman, *University of Pennsylvania*  
Christopher Hare, *University of California, Davis*  
Peter Hatemi, *Pennsylvania State University*  
Jude Hays, *University of Pittsburgh*  
Kim Hill, *Texas A&M University*  
Patricia Hurley, *Texas A&M University*  
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Nathan Jensen, *George Washington University*  
Jennifer Jerit, *Stony Brook University*  
Stephen Jesse, *University of Texas* James Johnson, *University of Rochester*  
Eric Juenke, *Michigan State University*  
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Kerem Ozan Kalkan, *Eastern Kentucky University*  
Nathan Kelly, *University of Tennessee*  
Kenneth Kollman, *University of Michigan*  
George Krause, *University of Pittsburgh*  
Dimitri Landa, *New York University*  
Horacio Larreguy *Harvard University*  
Frances Lee, *University of Maryland*  
Beth Leech, *Rutgers University*  
Matt Levendusky, *University of Pennsylvania*  
Daniel Lewis, *Siena College*  
Michael Lewis-Beck, *University of Iowa*  
Quan Li, *Texas A&M University*  
Staffan Lindberg, *University of Gothenburg*  
Xiaobo Lü, *University of Texas*  
Noam Lupu, *Vanderbilt University*  
Neil Malhotra, *Stanford University*  
Gwyneth McClendon, *New York University*  
Scott McClurg, *Southern Illinois University*  
Bonnie Meguid, *University of Rochester*  
Sara Mitchell, *University of Iowa*  
Jana Morgan, *University of Tennessee*  
Bumba Mukherjee, *Pennsylvania State University*  
Megan Mullin, *Duke University*  
Irfan Nooruddin, *Georgetown University*  
Susan Orr, *State University of New York, Brockport*

*AJPS* Editorial Board (continued):

Costas Panagopoulos, *Northeastern University*  
John Patty, *University of Chicago*  
Elizabeth Maggie Penn, *University of Chicago*  
Mark Pickup, *Simon Fraser University*  
Kristopher Ramsay, *Princeton University*  
Dan Reiter, *Emory University*  
Meredith Rolfe, *University of Massachusetts*  
Saundra Schneider, *Michigan State University*  
Melissa Schwartzberg, *New York University*  
Yael Shomer, *Tel Aviv University*  
Shane Singh, *University of Georgia*  
Jeffrey Staton, *Emory University*  
Cameron Thies, *Arizona State University*  
Jakana Thomas, *Michigan State University*  
Sharece Thrower, *Vanderbilt University*  
Rocio Titiumik, *University of Michigan*  
Joe Ura, *Texas A&M University*  
Craig Volden, *University of Virginia*  
Guy Whitten, *Texas A&M University*  
Alan Wiseman, *Vanderbilt University*  
Christopher Wlezien, *University of Texas*  
Scott Wolford, *University of Texas*  
Jonathan Woon, *University of Pittsburgh*

## JOURNAL POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES

Manuscript processing operations continue to run very smoothly; therefore, it was not necessary to introduce any major changes in *Journal* policies during 2017. The procedures implemented by the *AJPS* Editorial Staff to encourage timely submission of reviews clearly have paid dividends. I believe that we are fulfilling our commitment to submitting authors by providing them with informative and timely critiques from referees. The feedback we have received from various participants in this process— including a sizable number of authors who received negative editorial decisions— has been overwhelmingly positive.

The *AJPS* Replication and Verification Policy continues to operate very smoothly. The *AJPS* Dataverse currently (as of March 25, 2018) contains 307 Datasets (i.e., collections of replication materials for articles published in the *AJPS*). Since March 2015, the replication materials submitted by authors have been verified to confirm that they do, in fact, provide enough information for interested researchers to reproduce the results reported in their articles. Verification of quantitative analyses is carried out by the University of North Carolina's Odum Institute for Research in Social Science. Verification of qualitative analyses will be conducted by the Qualitative Data Repository at Syracuse University.

So far, all verifications have involved quantitative work. Since March 2015, Odum Institute staff have worked with 149 manuscripts that have been accepted for publication. Of these, 131 have completed the process; their replication materials are now publicly accessible on the *AJPS* Dataverse. Seven more sets of replication materials currently are being processed, while 12 are awaiting resubmission from the author. Submitted replication materials almost always have to be returned

to authors for revisions before they are published. The revisions, themselves, usually involve minor issues such as missing materials or information, incomplete computer code, or elements of the analysis that do not reproduce properly. In almost all cases, the issues are resolved quickly and easily. In all, only eight sets of replication materials made it through the verification process without any need for revisions.

In 2017, I engaged in several “outreach” activities. With two colleagues from the Odum Institute, I wrote an article titled “[Should Journals be Responsible for Reproducibility](#)” for the online journal, *Inside Higher Ed*. This article is part of a series, titled “[Rethinking Research](#)” and there also is a [podcast](#) discussing the series and the issues covered in the various articles. As part of the 2017 [Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research \(ICPSR\) Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research](#), I participated along with Professor Arthur S. Lupia (University of Michigan) in a session titled “[The Importance of Transparency and Reproducibility in the Social Sciences](#).” Also at ICPSR, I participated in two roundtables on “Publishing in, and Reviewing Manuscripts for, Social Science Journals.” At the 2017 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, I participated in a workshop on “Data Under Constraint: Tools and Strategies for Facilitating Transparency” and a roundtable on “Opportunities and Challenges for Data/Material Archiving of Published Research.”

The *AJPS* Replication and Verification Policy has attracted a great deal of attention from the broader research community outside the social sciences. The Center for Open Science and the Dataverse Project both have used the *AJPS* repeatedly as an example of “best practices” procedures in research transparency. As a result, I have had several interactions with scientists from other disciplines regarding replication issues. On November 6, 2017, I attended the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation’s event on “Research Transparency and Replication— HIV Prevention.” And on December 12, 2017 I gave a presentation to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineer, and Medicine Committee on Reproducibility and Replicability in Science. I believe that these kinds of outreach activities are important for publicizing the *AJPS* Replication and Verification Policy, explaining how it works, and clarifying its importance for the scientific research community.

## **JOURNAL OPERATIONS IN 2018**

While most of this Report focuses on *AJPS* operations during 2017, I do want to provide a brief update on the first few months of 2018. The number of submissions remains very high. From January 9 (the *Journal*’s opening date for the year) through March 26, we received 270 manuscripts. This is a large increase (18.4%) over the number of manuscripts we received during a similar period in 2017 (228 submissions from January 9 through March 26, 2017) and an even larger jump (27.4%) over the same period in 2016 (when 212 manuscripts were submitted). The figure for 2018 represents a submission rate of 3.55 manuscripts per day! The breakdown of 2018 submissions across subfields is shown in Table 10.

From January 2 through March 26 I made a total of 209 editorial decisions. The mean turnaround time for all of these manuscripts is 48.81 days and the median is 51. With desk rejections excluded, the mean turnaround is 68.3 days, and the median is 60 days. From the total number of decisions, 28.7% were desk rejections, 57.9% were rejections after external review, 10.0% were invitations to revise and resubmit, and 3.4% were conditional acceptances.

**Table 10:** Manuscript submissions by subfield, January 9 through February 28, 2018.

	Percent of total ( $n = 270$ )
American political behavior	26.9%
American political institutions	19.7%
Comparative politics	21.3%
International relations	17.7%
Methodology and formal theory	10.8%
Normative theory	3.6%

In conclusion, the *American Journal of Political Science* had a very successful year in 2017, and operations continue to run very smoothly during the first quarter of 2018. *AJPS* articles are highly influential and widely cited, manuscript submission rates are high, review turnaround times are relatively low, and *Journal* 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 and a leader in promoting open science principles, not only within the political science discipline, but also throughout the entire social scientific research community.