AJPS

American Journal of Political Science

Mid-Year Report to the Executive Council of the
Midwest Political Science Association

October 2025

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Co-Editors in Chief

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Associate Editors

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Introduction

This is the first editorial report for *American Journal of Political Science* by the current editorial team. It covers a period of time (January 1, 2025 – September 3, 2025) that straddles the end of the former team's tenure and the beginning of the current team's term. In order to ensure consistency, it seeks to update performance information based upon the same metrics the former team used. It also provides a summary of policy changes that have been made since June 1, 2025.

Editorial Transition

May 31, 2025 marked the last day of the Dolan-Lawless editorial team's tenure. We thank Kathy Dolan, Jennifer Lawless, Fred Boehmke, Elizabeth Cohen, Graeme Robertson, and Dave Siegel for their work on the *AJPS* for the previous six-year period, which included guiding the *Journal* through unprecedented times during the pandemic and navigating many new publishing-related challenges as they emerged. The current team is deeply grateful to the former team, especially the previous editors-in-chief, for their tireless efforts in helping *AJPS* achieve and maintain such a high standard of scholarly excellence and efficiency.

On June 1, 2025, the current editorial team officially took over operations at the *American Journal of Political Science*. The new team includes Adam Berinsky and Dan Reiter as Co-Editors-in-Chief and ten Associate Editors: Elizabeth Cohen, Kathleen Cunningham, Christina Davis, Frances Lee, Matt Levendusky, Andrew Little, Ellen Lust-Okar, Efrén Pérez, Teppei Yamamoto, and Elizabeth Zechmeister. In addition to the editors, there are a number of people who work to ensure that daily operations continue. Julia Salvatore and Jae Eun Kim are continuing on in their respective capacities as Managing Editor and Senior Editorial Assistant. The journal also welcomed three new Editorial Assistants this past June: Anthony Luongo (Emory), Clemente Sánchez (MIT), and Lior Hamovitz (Boston University).

Journal Performance

As this new team takes over, the *AJPS* continues to perform well with respect to impact and visibility. The *AJPS* two-year impact factor is 5.6 (up from 5.0 last year), which puts it in seventh place in relation to other political science journals. This is just behind the *American Political Science Review*, which had a two-year impact factor of 5.8.

The AJPS five-year impact factor (based on citations of papers published in *AJPS* between 2020 and 2024) is 7.1 (stayed the same as it was last year). Using this metric, *AJPS* is the ninth highest ranked journal in the discipline. For some context, the *Annual Review of Political Science* ranked first, with an impact factor of 16.8, the *American Political Science Review* placed third (8.5), and the *Journal of Politics* came in at 34th (4.3).

The current *AJPS* Google Scholar h-5 index score is 69 (up from last year's score of 63). This indicates that 69 articles have been cited at least 69 times during the five-year period from June 2020 – 2024. This puts *AJPS* in third place with regard to other political science journals included in the Google Scholar metric. By comparison, the *American Political Science Review* and the *Journal of Politics* scores are 85 and 64, respectively.

Continuing trends that we first saw emerge this past spring, our social media visibility continues to rise considerably on Bluesky while it declines very slightly on Twitter and Facebook. As of September 3, 2025, *AJPS* had 19,045 Twitter followers, which represents a 0.01% decrease from March 2025. We also have 6,470 Facebook followers, which represents a 0.4% decrease since March 2025. By contrast, we currently have 7,123 followers on Bluesky--an increase of 13% since March. As reported in the April 2025 report, we suspect that these numbers and trends simply reflect the social media usage patterns of people in the discipline.

Submission and Turnaround Time

From January 1 – September 3, 2025, we received 921 submissions – an average of 4.7 submissions per day that the journal was open. This is the highest submission rate the *AJPS* has ever experienced (last year at this time, we received on average 4.0 submissions per day). This remains true even when one controls for the fact that we were closed to submissions during the transition, resulting in the journal having been open to submissions for fewer days than usual. If we were to count the journal as having been open during this time as it normally is, the average number of submissions per day would still be at an all-time high with an average rate of 4.3 submissions per day.[1]

Comparative Politics (37%) and American Politics (22%) dominated the submission pool, with International Relations (18%), Political Theory (11%), Methodology and Formal Theory (11%), comprising the rest. In most respects, this breakdown is similar to what we saw in 2024; however, it is different in one respect: the proportion of submissions in International Relations has steadily increased over the past year. Last year's midterm report in October reported that IR comprised 13% of all submissions. This number increased to 14% in April's annual report for 2024. Apparently, it continued to climb in the new year, reaching 18%.

The mean turnaround time (from date of submission to first decision) remains short: just 29 days.[2] The average time from receiving an author's original submission to sending it out for review is still only 7.5 days as it was in 2024. Also holding steady from 2024 is the average time to decision for desk rejections. The mean time to decision in these cases is 4 days.

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[1]The *AJPS* received 606 submissions in the period prior to the editorial transition and 315 submissions after the transition.

[2] It should be noted that this turnaround time, when calculated for the midyear report is always shorter than it is for the annual report. For the midyear report, only the manuscripts submitted during this period that currently have a decision are counted. Those for which we do not yet have an editorial decision are not yet included in the calculation of the mean and some of those will have a review period that is longer than average. By contrast, the data that is used for the annual report is pulled many months after the period being analyzed and editorial decisions have usually been entered for all of the manuscripts submitted during that period.

Table 1. Manuscript Submission and Turnaround Time		
Year	**Submissions**	**Turnaround Time**
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
2018	1,035	55
2019	1,185	46
2020	1,161	43
2021	1,093	46
2022	1,019	44
2023	1,187	39
2024	1,317	35
2025	**921**	29

Note: Turnaround time is reported in days from initial submission to initial decision. The reporting period for 2025 is January 1, 2025 – September 3, 2025.

Editorial Decisions

The overall acceptance rate at *AJPS* was slightly higher from January 1 – September 3, 2025 than it had been in 2024. During this period, the acceptance rate was 9% as opposed to 7%. However, we do not believe that this represents a meaningful increase in the acceptance rate. Most of this increase is accounted for by the fact that the acceptance rate was 10% before the transition on June 1st. Since the transition, the acceptance rate has returned to where it normally sits: 7%.

There is a simple explanation for the temporary increase to 10% during the first half of the year: During that time, the previous team had been strongly encouraging authors with outstanding invitations to

revise to promptly resubmit and they had tightened the rules on granting extensions for revisions as early as Fall 2024. This meant that authors were not sitting on invitations to revise as long as they normally do and they were submitting both revised manuscripts and final drafts at abnormally high rates. In the period between January 1 – May 31, 2025, we received 147 revised manuscript submissions. By contrast we received 84 and 93 revised manuscripts during that same period in 2024 and 2023, respectively. This rush in the submission of revised manuscripts inevitably led to an increase in the number of editorial decisions being made on revised manuscripts. Since the *AJPS* tries to invite revisions only when the editors see a possible path forward for acceptance of the manuscript, it meant that more manuscripts than usual were being accepted during that timeframe.

In the period since September, 46% of manuscripts were sent out for review with an overall desk rejection rate of 54%. The desk rejection rate was a little higher prior to the transition at 56%; however, the current team's desk rejection rate has been comparable at 50%.

The rate at which authors are invited to revise and resubmit has remained relatively steady overall: 9% received an invitation to revise and resubmit. When we break up this period into pre and post transition, we do see that there appears to have been a slight increase in the numbers of manuscripts receiving an invitation to revise and resubmit. We were curious to see if this might be the result of a relatively small denominator and pulled data from the system through September 24th. When we did this, the rate of invitations to revise since June 1st went down from 12% to 10%, so it could be that this is not a meaningful increase or it could be that the rate increased temporarily during the period that the new team was settling in.

As can be seen in the tables below, it remains the case that most manuscripts are rarely rejected after an invitation to revise and resubmit has been issued. As mentioned above, this is in part due to editors inviting revisions only when they believe that an author can successfully address the reviewers' concerns.

Table 2. Editorial Decisions, 2025			
	Initial Decision	**First Revision**	**Second Revision**
Desk reject	54%		
Reject	37	8%	8%
Revise & Resubmit	9	15	8
Accept	0	78	83
N	881	89	24

Table 3. Editorial Decisions Prior to Editorial Transition, 2025			
	Initial Decision	First Revision	Second Revision
Desk reject	56%		
Reject	36	5%	10%
Revise & Resubmit	8	14	5
Accept	0	81	85
N	600	64	20

Table 4. Editorial Decisions Post Editorial Transition, 2025			
	Initial Decision	First Revision	Second Revision
Desk reject	50%		
Reject	38	16%	
Revise & Resubmit	12	16	25%
Accept	0	68	75
N	281	25	4

Reviews and Reviewers

We sent out 2400 reviewer invitations from January 1- September 3, 2025. Of the reviewers who responded affirmatively to the invitation, 70% completed a review and 4% are still working on their review as of September 24, 2025. Exactly a quarter of all reviewers who accepted the invitation were released prior to submitting a review. In most cases they were released because we were able to make a publication decision on the manuscript with two reviews. In a small number of cases, reviewers were released after agreeing to review due to non-responsiveness.

The new team has continued the previous editorial team's policy of requiring at least two reviews to reject a manuscript and requiring three reviews for an invitation to revise and resubmit.

On average, reviewers took 2 days to respond to reviewer invitations, and they took 34 days to complete a review after having received our invitation

Below, Table 5 lays out the distribution of reviewer recommendations that we received between January 1 – September 3, 2025.

Table 5. Reviewer Recommendation Summary, 2025	
Reviewer Recommendation	**Frequency of Recommendation**
Decline	47%
Revise & Resubmit	30
Must Publish with Minor Revisions	10
Must Publish as Is	14

Conflicts of Interest

The *AJPS* continues to ask authors to identify conflicts of interest between themselves and the editors. In addition, if a member of the editorial team or staff spots a conflict of interest with an editor that the author did not disclose, they mark it and handle the manuscript accordingly. From January 1 – September 3, 2025, we noticed a total 138 conflicts of interest. Of the 138 conflicts of interest, 51 were reported by the corresponding author on 51 separate manuscripts.[3] A member of the editorial team spotted the remaining 87 conflicts of interest spread across 71 manuscripts. In most cases, the conflict arose out of having a shared institutional affiliation with an editor, being a recent collaborator with an editor, or having had an editor on their dissertation committee. In those cases, a different editor was assigned to the manuscript.

By contrast, two cases required involvement of the MPSA Publishing Ethics Committee (PEC). In both cases, the authors checked off the box on the submission form indicating that there was a "[c]urrent or past interaction that may unduly influence an editor's professional judgment, including actions perceived to be harassment, assault, or discrimination, or other relevant conflicts of interest of a serious nature not specified above". When these manuscripts were received, the Managing Editor contacted the PEC. Sarah Binder contacted both authors on behalf of the PEC. In the first instance, which occurred under the previous editorial team, the author had selected this especially sensitive type of conflict of interest with each member of the editorial team. The PEC learned that this had been done in error and that the author did not have any conflicts of interest with the editors. Consequently, the paper was considered for publication. In the second instance, the author did have a conflict of interest with a member of the current editorial team, but the conflict-of-interest type did not fall into the more sensitive to category as

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[3] In some cases, there is more than one conflict of interest reported on a single submission. This can happen when one author has a conflict of interest with more than one editorial team member; it can also happen because multiple authors might have a conflict of interest with differing members of the editorial team.

they had indicated. As such, the paper was referred back to the editorial team so that it could be sent out for review by an editor who did not have conflict of interest with the author.

Policy Updates

The new editorial team has instituted a handful of policy changes to *AJPS* since taking over on June 1, 2025. They are as follows.

1. **Establishing a larger group of associate editors.** The new team moved from five under the previous team to ten under the current team. This increase was necessary, in reflection of the significant increase in submissions (by comparison, *APSR* has 14 associate editors). The greater scholarly specialization provided by the larger number of associate editors also improves the ability of associate editors to handle effectively manuscript submissions.

2. **Artificial intelligence (AI) policy.** The spread of AI is rapidly and significantly affecting how scholars write and review manuscript submissions. This is a complicated issue that has implications for research integrity, research quality, and legal issues. *AJPS* has established its first ever AI policy, and posted it on the website. *AJPS* now requires manuscript authors to disclose the use of any artificial intelligence tools for work on any element of a submitted manuscript, or any research conducted by the authors to produce the manuscript. We expect to continually reconsider AI and AI policy in the evolving scholarly and technological environment.

3. **Conflict of interest (COI) policy.** An increasing number of manuscripts and articles have large and sometimes very large numbers of coauthors. Because established COI policy forbids coauthors from reviewing each other's manuscripts, this created growing problems in creating reviewer panels. We slightly altered the COI policy, allowing for coauthors to review each other's manuscripts when they do not have close personal or professional relationships.

4. **Formal appeals policy.** Though *AJPS* has long reviewed appeals of editorial decisions, to our knowledge the journal has never published a formal appeals policy. We crafted and published a formal appeals policy which essentially reflects past practice.

5. **Research notes.** For the first time, *AJPS* will publish shorter, research notes. We will only publish research notes pertaining to methodology, or that use meta-analyses. Since the transition, we have received 11 research notes submissions. However, only one was sent out for review. The other 10 were desk rejected because they neither pertained to methodology nor did they use meta-analyses.

Appendix: Current Editorial Team (Since June 1, 2025)

Co-Editors in Chief

Adam Berinsky, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Dan Reiter, Emory University

Associate Editors:

Elizabeth Cohen, Boston University
Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, University of Maryland
Christina Davis, Harvard University
Frances Lee, Princeton University
Matt Levendusky, University of Pennsylvania

Andrew Little, University of California, Berkley
Ellen Lust, Cornell University
Efrén Pérez, University of California, Los Angeles
Teppei Yamamoto, Waseda University
Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Vanderbilt University

Editorial Board:

Arash Abizadeh, McGill University
Avi Acharya, Stanford University
Sarah Anzia, University of California, Berkeley
Leonardo Baccini, McGill University
Kate Baldwin, Yale University
Lauren Cohen Bell, Randolph-Macon College
Elissa Berwick, McGill University
Alex Braithwaite, The University of Arizona
Steven Brooke, University of Wisconsin–Madison
Sarah Bush, University of Pennsylvania
Brandice Canes-Wrone, Stanford University
James M. Curry, University of Notre Dame
Lauren Davenport, Stanford University
Janina Dill, University of Oxford
Amanda Driscoll, Florida State University
Jamie Druckman, Univeristy of Rochester
Naoki Egami, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Stefan Eich, Georgetown University
Erica Franklin Fowler, Wesleyan University
Bernard Fraga, Emory University
Taylor Fravel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Jennifer Gandhi, Yale University
Anna Gryzmala-Busse, Stanford University
Caroline Hartzell, Gettysburg College
F. Daniel Hidalgo, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
D. Sunshine Hillygus, Duke University
Lauren Honig, Boston College
Carlo M. Horz, Washington University in St. Louis
Lisa Hultman, Uppsala University
Susan Hyde, University of California, Berkeley
Jane Junn, University of Southern California
Josh Kalla, Yale University
Ayse Kaya, Swarthmore College
Orit Kedar, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Josh Kertzer, Harvard University
Korhan Koçak, New York University Abu Dhabi
Eric Kramon, The George Washington University
Yanna Krupnikov, University of Michigan
Chryl N. Laird, University of Maryland
Ranjit Lall, University of Oxford
Gabriel Lenz, University of California, Berkeley
Brad Leveck, University of California, Merced

Jacob Levy, McGill University
Kenneth Lowande, University of Michigan
Jason Lyall, Dartmouth College
Carla Martinez Machain, SUNY at Buffalo
Edmund Malesky, Duke University
Neil Malhotra, Stanford University
Michele Margolis, University of Pennsylvania
Rahsaan Maxwell, New York University
Elena Mclean, The State University of New York at Buffalo
Rachael McLellan, University of Glasgow
Heather Silber Mohamed, Clark University
Lisa Mueller, Macalester College
Paulina Ochoa Espejo, University of Virginia
Santiago Olivella, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Iain Osgood, University of Michigan
Alan Patten, Princeton University
Jennifer Pan, Stanford University
Tom Pepinsky, Cornell University
Jason Roberts, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Kenneth Roberts, Cornell University
Bryn Rosenfeld, Cornell University
Andrew Sabl, University of Toronto
Thomas Sattler, University of Geneva
Melissa Schwartzberg, New York University
Joshua Simon, Johns Hopkins University
Hannah Simpson, Washington University in St. Louis
Dan Slater, University of Michigan
Rune Slothuus, Aarhus University
Tara Slough, New York University
In Song Kim, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Wendy Tam Cho, Vanderbilt University
Jakana Thomas, University of California, San Diego
Danielle Thomsen, University of California, Irvine
Ian Turner, Yale University
Rocío Titiunik, Princeton University
Felicity Vabulas, Pepperdine University
Michael Wahman, Michigan State University
Yuhua Wang, Harvard University
David Waldner, University of Virginia
Rachel Wellhausen, University of Texas at Austin
Ismail White, Princeton University
Boliang Zhu, The Pennsylvania State University

Appendix: Former Editorial Team (Through May 31, 2025)

Co-Editors in Chief (and Field Editors for American Politics):
Kathleen Dolan, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee
Jennifer L. Lawless, University of Virginia

Associate Editors:
Frederick Boehmke, University of Iowa
Elizabeth Cohen, Boston University
Dan Reiter, Emory University
Graeme Robertson, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
David Siegel, Duke University

Editorial Board:

Arash Abizadeh,　McGill University
Sarah Anzia, University of California, Berkeley
Brandon Bartels, George Washington University
Shaun Bowler, University of California, Riverside
David Broockman, University of California, Berkeley
Jennifer Chudy, Wellesley College
Michael Colaresi, University of Pittsburgh
Mia Costa, Dartmouth College
Lauren Davenport, Stanford University
Christina Davis, Harvard University
Johanna　Dunaway, Syracuse University
Wioletta Dziuda, University of Chicago
Naoki Egami, Columbia University
Katrina　Forrester, Harvard University
Richard Fox, Loyola Marymount University
Bernard Fraga, Emory University
Taylor Fravel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Timothy Frye, Columbia University
Bryan Garston, Yale University
LaGina Gause, University of California, San Diego
Sona Golder, Pennsylvania State University
Adam Harris, University College London
Mai Hassan, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Danny Hayes, George Washington University
Sunshine Hillygus, Duke University
Magda Hinojosa, Arizona State University
William Howell, University of Chicago
Lisa Hultman, Uppsala University
Vincent Hutchings, University of Michigan
Susan Hyde, University of California, Berkeley
Hakeem Jefferson, Stanford University
Junyan Jiang, Columbia University
Kimuli Kasara, Columbia University
Joshua Kertzer, Harvard University
Samara Klar, University of Arizona
Tomila Lankina, London School of Economics
Katie Levine Einstein, Boston University

Jacob Levy, McGill University
Andrew Little, University of California, Berkeley
Yonatan Lupu, George Washington University
Ellen Lust, University of Gothenburg
Carla Martinez Machain, University at Buffalo, SUNY
Rahsaan Maxwell, New York University
Anne Meng, University of Virginia
Jacob Montgomery, Washington University, St. Louis
Tatishe　Nteta, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Paulina Ochoa Espejo, University of Virginia
Alan Patten, Princeton University
John Patty, Emory University
Maggie Penn, Emory University
Jennifer Piscopo, Royal Holloway University of London
Jeremy Pope, Brigham Young University
Johanna　Rickne, Stockholm
Molly Roberts, University of California, San Diego
Guillermo Rosas, Washington University in St. Louis
Peter Rosendorf, New York University
Andrew Sabl, University of Toronto
Keith Schnakenberg, Washington University in St. Louis
Melissa Schwartzberg, New York University
Mehdi Shadmehr, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Paru Shah, Rutgers University
Josh Simon, Johns Hopkins University
Alastair Smith, New York University
David Szakonyi, George Washington University
Katey Stauffer, University of Georgia
Sean Theriault, University of Texas
Mike Ting, Columbia University
Michelle Torres, Rice University
Jessica Trounstine, Vanderbilt University
Jessica Weeks, University of Wisconsin
Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro, Brown University
Deva Woodly, Brown University
Jonathan Woon, University of Pittsburgh