

Editor's Report for *PS: Political Science & Politics*

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INTRODUCTION

PS: Political Science & Politics is in its 51st year of publication. We, the editorial team, strive to maintain the position of *PS* as a unique voice in the APSA portfolio of publications, providing an outlet for brief and nontechnical articles featuring new research, political science commentary, and research on timely political and social events, research into and discussion of the political science discipline, and scholarship on teaching and pedagogy.

As we enter our fourth year of our editorship, we have turned our attention from stewarding the journal as it transitioned from an in-house publication to one edited by an academic team, and have begun to introduce new content categories and innovations that we hope will sustain *PS*'s unique dual role as one of the association's flagship journals and the journal of record for the association.

In terms of editorial management, Ardoin and Gronke were reappointed to a second term as coeditors of *PS*. We worked closely with the new Publications Policy Committee of the APSA Council to respond to the suggestions provided to us by the review committee. The most salient suggestions were that:

- We ensure all content is peer-reviewed;
- We continue our efforts to broaden and diversify our author and reviewer pool; and
- We ensure that the symposia and spotlight solicitation and approval process not undercut our commitment to diversifying and broadening our pool of authors.

In addition, we continue to evaluate our review standards for teaching articles, a conversation initiated at the Teaching and Learning Conference in 2016, and continued with the editors of the *Journal of Political Science Education* at the 2017 APSA Annual Meeting.

The three suggestions from the review were all related to our policies regarding symposia, an important content category

for *PS*. We provide more details of our new policies below, but in brief, the main concern was with the process which symposia were solicited or proposed and reviewed. Our new policies, available on the APSA website, now specify all symposia and spotlight proposals must address and include a diversity statement¹ and must have at least one set of external double-blind peer reviews. We are also experimenting with issuing open calls for symposia as an additional means of expanding participation.

In response to concerns with employing SoTL standards for all teaching articles, we developed a new teaching innovations category which provides an outlet for shorter manuscripts focused on new, creative, or experimental teaching that do not necessarily meet the requirements of systematic assessment required of traditional SoTL research.

Finally, we want to highlight the important role that *PS* has played, and continues to play, in addressing issues of concern to our membership. We are proud that *PS* has become the "go to" outlet for articles on gender bias in the review and publication process and teaching evaluations (Breuning et al. 2018; Mitchell et al. 2018; Teele et al. 2017; Djupe et al. forthcoming). In fact, articles related to gender issues in the profession receive some of the highest Altmetric scores of all our published articles, with five out of the top-10 Altmetric-scored articles on gender (see table 6). We recently worked with the editors of five political science journals to publish a timely special report on gender bias in the journals (Brown and Samuels 2018).

Related to the special report, and in collaboration with the APSA Publications Policy

Committee, we worked to design and implement a data collection instrument that will allow APSA publications to report on the gender, race, institutional affiliation, and methodology of submitted articles. We argued strongly, and APSA agreed, that collection of this information should be standardized across APSA journals and provided by the authors themselves (not coded by editorial teams).

We are pursuing additional initiatives that highlight changes in academic careers and the "politics" of political science.

Most faculty recognize that academia is in a state of transformation, if not crisis. 70% of faculty are on non-tenure track appointments.² How have these changes impacted our profession? In the next year, *PS* will publish a symposium on the career trajectories of contingent faculty, a dialogue on a proposal to reform how external tenure letters are solicited, and a set of "reflections" on personal and professional challenges of an academic career (e.g., how to handle the realities of rejection; how to handle tenure denial). As with our articles on gender bias, we hope these articles encourage conversations, lead to reforms, and spark new ideas for research about political science.

The "politics of political science" is always a fraught topic, but one we think *PS* is uniquely positioned to address. Over the next 18 months, we expect to publish several symposia addressing underrepresented ideologies and racial groups within the discipline and the challenges they face both in the classroom and within their departments and the profession at large.

Table 1

New Submissions to PS

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018**
Submissions Received	118	101	171	256	174	130

** As of August 3, 2018

Table 2

Gender Distribution of PS Authors

Volume: Year	Female Authors	Male Authors
51: 2018	107 (43%)	141 (57%)
50: 2017	93 (29%)	225 (71%)
49: 2016	70 (36%)	123 (64%)
48: 2015	54 (38%)	86 (61%)
47: 2014	63 (33%)	122 (66%)
46: 2013	48 (27%)	132 (73%)
45: 2012	41 (31%)	92 (69%)

EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017–18 Overview

As shown in table 1, submission rates to *PS* have grown by 50–100% since we took over as editors in the fall of 2014. We appear to have leveled out to 175–200 submissions annually. We have had no difficulties filling our allocation of pages from Cambridge University Press.

We report the gender distribution of our published authors in table 2. As we noted in previous reports, these have been coded by our managing editor, and we have only coded published papers, not all submissions. The new data collection system allows individuals to self-categorize and provides more detail about the demographics of our submission pool. Overall, we appear to be exceeding the average number of females in the profession (approximately 35%)³ but we are disappointed at the lower number in 2017. We are proud of a more equitable representation of female authors in 2018. We look forward to the new data collection system because it will give us a better understanding of the demographics of the submitting authors and coauthors as well as of accepted articles.

Additional publication highlights of the past year:

- Frances Lee's symposium "Reflections of 65 Years of APSA Congressional Fellowship Program" 51 (1): 103–40.
- Charles Crabtree and Christian Davenport's spotlight "Contentious Politics in the Trump Era" 51 (1): 17–25.
- Betina Cutaia Wilkinson's symposium "Stepping Out of the Shadows? Latinos, Immigration, and the 2016 Presidential Elections" 51 (2): 277–308.

- Michael Alvarez, Ellen M. Key, and Lucas Nunez's article "Research Replications: Practical Considerations" 51 (2): 422–26.
- Jane Lawrence Sumner's article "The Gender Balance Assessment Tool (GBAT): A Web-Based Tool for Estimating Gender Balance in Syllabi and Bibliographies" 51 (2): 396–400.
- Kristin Michelitch's symposium "Whose Research Is It? Notable Ways Political Scientists Impact the Communities We Study" 51 (3): 543–70.

Staffing

The *PS: Political Science & Politics* staff consists of a portion of two editors' time and a full-time managing editor as well as a publishing associate. Coeditor Phillip Ardoin is based at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina while coeditor Paul Gronke is based at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Celina Szymanski, managing editor, is based in Las Vegas, Nevada. Nicholas Townsend, publishing associate, is based at APSA headquarters in Washington, DC and serves as a liaison between official APSA news and events and the journal. *PS* is further supported by part-time student assistants at both Appalachian State and Reed College.

Our current editorial board includes 26 members who represent a diverse set of universities and colleges, research interests and methodologies, and perspectives from the APSA membership. We added to our board this year Rob Griffin, who holds a doctorate in political science and is pursuing a nonacademic career in political polling. We would like to thank the members of our editorial board for their dedication and service to the journal and the profession:

Jeffrey Bernstein, *Eastern Michigan University*
 Michelle Brophy-Baermann, *Rhode Island College*
 Michelle Deardorff, *University of Tennessee at Chattanooga*
 Maryam Zarnegar Delofree, *Arcadia University*
 Mary Durfee, *Michigan Technological University*
 Johnny Goldfinger, *Marian University*
 Kristin Goss, *Duke University*
 Robert Griffin, *Public Religion Research Institute*
 Robert Hogan, *Louisiana State University*
 Mirya R. Holman, *Tulane University*
 John Ishiyama, *University of North Texas*
 DuBose Kapeluck, *The Citadel*

Samantha Majic, *John Jay College of Criminal Justice*

Elizabeth K. Markovits, *Mount Holyoke College*

Mary K. Meyer McAleese, *Eckerd College*

Kristin Michelitch, *Vanderbilt University*

Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, *University of Iowa*

Mason Moseley, *West Virginia University*

Mark Carl Rom, *Georgetown University*

Bartholomew Sparrow, *University of Texas at Austin*

Jonathan Strand, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Brent J. Steele, *University of Utah*

Mary A. Stegmaier, *University of Missouri*

Charles R. Venator-Santiago, *University of Connecticut*

Joel Westheimer, *University of Ottawa*

Leonard Williams, *Manchester University*

We want to thank the following board members, whose term of service ended at the 2018 APSA Annual Meeting, for their service, time, and dedication to *PS* during our first three years as editors:

Lindsay Benstead, *Portland State University*

James Campbell, *SUNY Buffalo*

Scott Crichlow, *West Virginia University*

James Garand, *Louisiana State University*

Tobin Grant, *Southern Illinois University*

Todd Hartman, *University of Sheffield*

David Kinsella, *Portland State University*

Amber Knight, *St. Louis University*

Peter Lindsay, *Georgia State University*

Joanne Miller, *University of Minnesota*

James Monogan, *University of Georgia*

Jennifer Nicole Victor, *George Mason University*

Ismail White, *George Washington University*

Jason Windett, *University of North Carolina, Charlotte*

Production and Delivery

We have successfully and fully implemented a FirstView production process. This has allowed us to significantly decrease the time between the date a manuscript is accepted and the date it is published online. We can now publish manuscripts within seven to 10 weeks of acceptance. The FirstView process allows for manuscripts to be published online one-by-one as each one is approved for production. The former process involved waiting for an entire issue to be completed before going to press.

While we are pleased with the pace of articles appearing online via FirstView, we are disappointed in one important aspect of the process: the ability to control the order in which symposia articles are published.

This is not a problem for standalone articles, but it is a problem for symposia. Symposia are generally five to seven articles with an ordered structure. It is logical that the introduction appears first, followed by a set order of contributions (determined by the guest editor), followed by a commentary or concluding piece. The current FirstView system is unable to control the order the articles appear online. We hope Cambridge University Press will be able to assist us in addressing this significant issue we are facing with FirstView.

PS continues to meet its production schedule and scheduled delivery dates. We have a strong working relationship with our publisher, Cambridge University Press. As of April 2018, our production manager at Cambridge University Press transitioned from Diane Davis to Katrina Swartz. Our compositor is TNQ, Ltd, based in Chennai, India. They have been responsive to our needs and work efficiently to typeset our journal to the high visual quality we demand.

The production of *The Association* section of *PS* (People, Business, Gazette, Annual Meeting) is completed in-house by APSA staff, primarily by Nicholas Townsend, publishing associate. The back of the book requires more layout and design features than the front, which consists only of peer-reviewed content.

We continue to employ the services of a freelance copyeditor who does a rigorous level of copyediting on articles. This helps *PS* be more readable and accessible to our general readership. Once a manuscript has been copyedited, it is sent back to the author for approval. Using the track changes function of Microsoft Word, the author has the option to accept or reject each change suggested by the copyeditor. Once the author approves of the final version, the managing editor confirms that the piece is ready for production and has all accompanying information (figures, tables, appendices, and copyright transfer forms). It is then sent to Cambridge. From there, the manuscript is typeset by TNQ and then first page proofs are sent directly to the author. The author provides any final edits and is restricted to correcting errors only. The managing editor and production manager work to correct final edits and then the manuscript is approved for publication. The article appears online three to seven days later.

Types and Categories of Content

2018 has seen a more equally distributed submission pattern among the three major

Table 3

PS Submissions by Category

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Politics	43%	37%	53%	57%	37%
The Profession	19%	32%	30%	24%	31%
The Teacher	39%	32%	17%	17%	26%
Other				6%	6%

NB: As of August 1, 2018

sections of the journal (table 3). The Politics sections continues to see the most submissions; The Teacher the least. The acceptance rate for 2018 is 62.2% (table 4). We attribute the higher acceptance rate in 2016–18 to a procedural change in how we handle symposia. Starting in the fall of 2015, we began processing symposia through Editorial Manager and 2016 was the first year to reflect that change in an increased acceptance rate.

Innovations vs. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

In response to concerns with employing SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) standards for all teaching articles, we developed a new teaching innovations category for manuscripts which focus on new, creative, or experimental teaching and are not expected to provide the systematic assessment required of traditional SoTL research. Submissions to the innovations category are substantially shorter, ranging in length from 1000–1500 words.

All SoTL submissions must now meet the SoTL standards providing rigorous, systematic, and evidence-based assessments of teaching goals. SoTL research may include but is not limited to questionnaires and surveys, reflection and analysis, interviews and focus groups, content analysis of text, secondary analysis of existing data, quasi-experiments (e.g., comparison of two sections of the same course), and case studies. Submissions can be diverse in terms of topic but must

Table 4

Final Disposition on Submissions

Volume: Year	Accept	Reject
51: 2018	62.2%	37.8%
50: 2017	63.5%	36.5%
49: 2016	53.1%	46.8%
48: 2015	33.3%	66.6%

NB: As of August 1, 2018

provide, either quantitatively or qualitatively, evidence demonstrating that the pedagogical innovations or teaching techniques described in the manuscript are effective.

Symposia & Spotlights

Symposia continue to be an important part of the journal's portfolio (table 5). *PS* is one of the only outlets in the profession that publish a thematic discussion about one particular topic. We categorize symposia under the heading which is most topically appropriate. For example, we published "What is a Political Methodologist?" under The Profession heading. We have a The Teacher symposium forthcoming on "Teaching Politics in Jails and Prisons."

We need to work on promoting our spotlight category—many scholars don't distinguish between spotlights and symposia. The spotlight content category is intended to

Table 5

Symposia & Spotlights Published in PS

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of Symposia/Spotlights Published	9	6	7	10	17	10
Number of Symposia/Spotlight Articles	68	60	55	68	120	65

Table 6
List of Top 10 Altmetric Scores as of July 25, 2018

Altmetric Attention Score	Title of Article	Date of Publication
533	Gender Bias in Student Evaluations	3/6/2018
490	Explaining the Trump Vote: The Effect of Racist Resentment and Anti-Immigrant Sentiments	4/12/2018
287	I Think My Professor is a Democrat: Considering Whether Students Recognize and React to Faculty Politics	4/2/2009
264	Gender in the Journals: Publication Patterns in Political Science	3/31/2017
252	Women Also Know Stuff: Meta-Level Mentoring to Battle Gender Bias in Political Science	6/12/2017
209	Increasing the Credibility of Political Science Research: A Proposal for Journal Reforms	8/4/2015
174	The Gender Balance Assessment Tool (GBAT): A Web-Based Tool for Estimating Gender Balance in Syllabi and Bibliographies	1/30/2018
146	The Benefits and Pitfalls of Google Scholar	6/13/2018
145	Does Peer Review Identify the Best Papers? A Simulation Study of Editors, Reviewers, and the Scientific Publication Process	10/10/2017
130	Writing Groups as Models for Peer Mentorship among Female Faculty in Political Science	1/20/2018

PS articles continue to be featured in news media and other publications including Inside Higher Ed, the *Monkey Cage*, and NPR, among others.

An Altmetric score is a measure of *attention* an article receives. Notably, we have 12 articles with Altmetric scores above 100. All but two *PS* articles in the top-10 of Altmetric scores were published in the last year (table 6). Nine of the 10 articles are from The Profession section of the journal, indicating that these articles generate the most shares, clicks, likes, retweets, and comments. ■

NOTES

1. The requirement is: "Achieving diversity and inclusion is a priority for the APSA. As part of this commitment, *PS* requests that scholars who propose a symposium consider how they may contribute to this effort by recruiting participants with a diverse set of scholarly backgrounds, methodological perspectives, and from groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in political science. Proposals should include a description of efforts to recruit a broad and diverse team of contributors."
2. <https://www.apsanet.org/RESOURCES/Data-on-the-Profession>
3. <https://www.apsanet.org/RESOURCES/Data-on-the-Profession/Dashboard/Membership>

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provide an outlet for short and topical treatment of emerging issues of interest to the profession. It may also be that scholars prefer to write short, timely pieces at blogs or other outlets that provide immediate publication.

We will publish a spotlight on the "Decline in Legislative Powers and Rise of Authoritarianism" which features many international scholars. The January 2018 issue saw the publication of two spotlights: "Contentious Politics in the Trump Era," guest edited by Charles Crabtree and Christian Davenport, and "Home Rule Be Damned: Exploring Policy Conflicts between the Statehouse and City Hall," guest edited by William D. Hicks and Carol Weissert.

Publicity and Outreach

PS joined the Twitterverse in January 2018. We have about 600 followers and are steadily building a follower base. Our handle is @ps_polisci. A typical tweet involves a catchy phrase or sentence describing the work and a link to the article itself. Often, authors of the featured article will provide the tweet for us to use on their behalf. We try to tag (@) authors who are active on Twitter to increase exposure and allow the authors to retweet the link.

The APSA-run Political Science Now blog (www.politicalsciencenow.com) continues to feature *PS* content. It is especially useful in promoting symposia and spotlights.