

Political Research Quarterly

2019 Activity Report

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Overview

The 2019 annual report represents the first full year of the *Political Research Quarterly (PRQ)* editorial team composed of Seth C. McKee (Editor in Chief, American Politics Field Editor, Texas Tech University), Toby J. Rider (International Relations Field Editor, Texas Tech University), Frank C. Thames (Comparative Politics and Gender Politics Field Editor, Texas Tech University), Sophia Jordán Wallace (Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Field Editor, University of Washington) and David Lay Williams (Political Theory and Philosophy Field Editor, DePaul University).

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic work published in *PRQ*. In furtherance of this objective, at the start of our tenure we embraced an editorial model that employs a division of labor based on academic specialization. We see it as an optimal means to improve the quality of published work and efficiency in processing manuscripts. We believe that our model contributed to a major milestone: 2019 marks the first time *PRQ* received over 500 original submissions. In addition, our management model in combination with an increasing rate of manuscript submissions, allowed us to substantially reduce the percentage of accepted papers (down to 11%) while also reducing processing times.

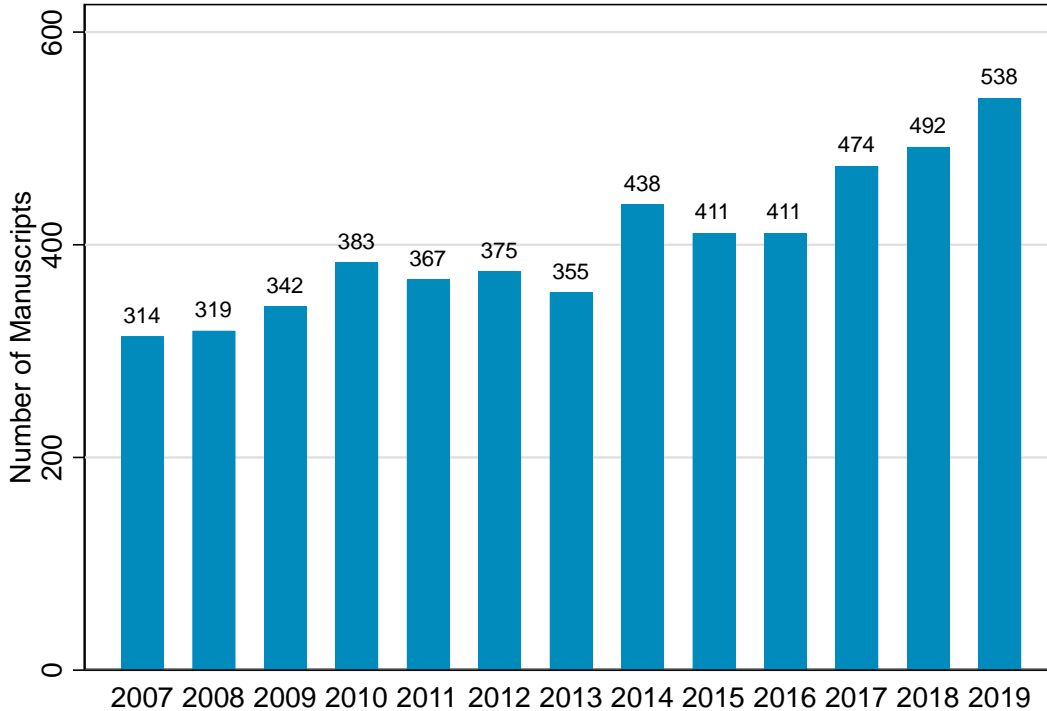
We are particularly pleased with the growth of articles represented in the areas of *Race and Identity* and *Gender*. These fields saw a notable rise in submissions and acceptances in 2019. We are also excited about the considerable rebound in *Political Theory* articles, which declined in 2018, but now submissions and acceptance rates are substantially higher in 2019. We have also started accumulating papers in our *TRENDS* section, which hosts some of the most exciting recently published papers in the political science discipline. We introduced this section to the journal at the end of 2018 to draw attention to work that appears particularly novel in speaking to the dynamics of contemporary political phenomena.

Once again, we want to emphasize our commitment to efficient communication with authors and reviewers. It should be expected that you will hear from us no later than two days, and usually within twenty-four hours, from the time of your inquiry. In addition, we keep making efforts to further increase *PRQ*'s academic and public visibility. We continue to recognize award-winning articles, host article symposiums, and make use of podcasts to further the reach and impact of our authors. We also consistently use Twitter to promote research published at *PRQ*. Finally, if and when the coronavirus pandemic subsides, we will once again offer a vibrant reception at the WPSA annual conference and host the *PRQ* editorial board meeting at the American Political Science Association (APSA) conference.

Manuscript Submissions

For three years in a row, *PRQ* received a record-breaking number of original¹ submissions. In 2019, 538 original manuscripts were submitted to the journal; again, the first time *PRQ* has crossed the 500 new submissions milestone. Barring the coronavirus pandemic greatly halting productivity, we are likely to stay above the 500 original submission threshold in 2020. Given the journal's page limits (1,000 for a calendar year), we remain in the envious position of being highly selective with respect to what we deem as worthy of being sent out for peer review.

Figure 1: Original Manuscript Submissions, 2007-2019



In 2019, the *PRQ* editorial team made a change in primary field categories used to classify manuscripts and reviewers. The previous category of *Gender, Race, and Identity* is now split into two and reported separately: (1) *Gender* and (2) *Race and Identity*. This alteration was enacted because of the division of editorial labor; since we have different editors processing *Gender* submissions from those manuscripts falling primarily into the *Race and Identity* category. So, starting in 2019, annual report submission rates and other statistics will be reported for both aforementioned categories separately.

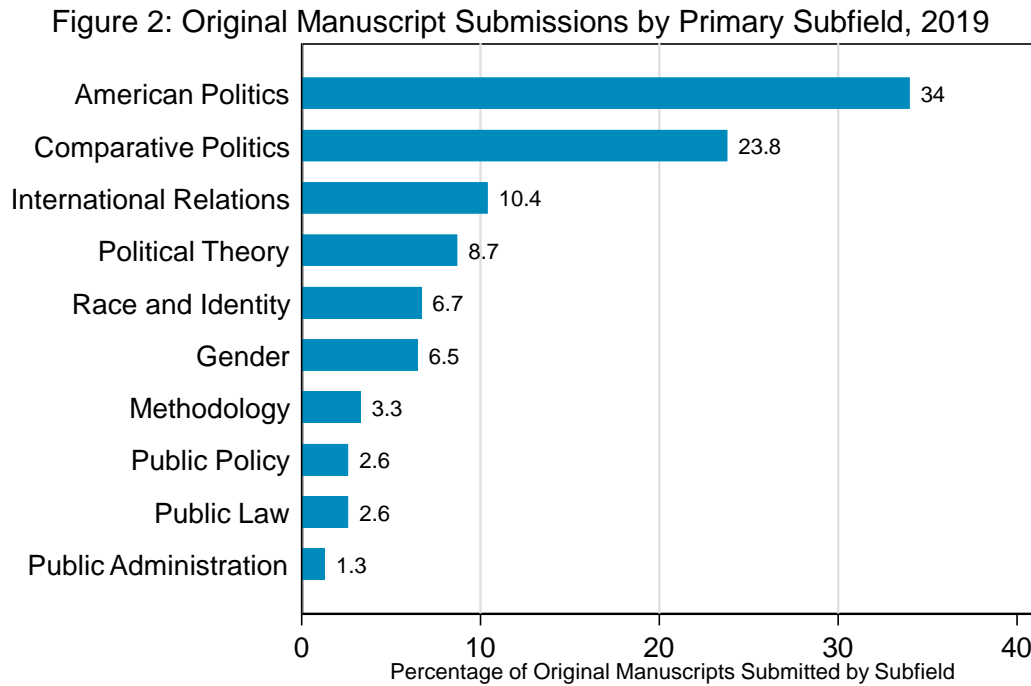
Therefore, the currently used list of categories consist of:

- American Politics
- Comparative Politics
- Gender
- Race and Identity
- International Relations

¹ *Original* refers to only new manuscripts. It excludes all manuscripts that were resubmitted after reviews.

- Methodology
- Political Theory
- Public Administration
- Public Policy
- Public Law

Accordingly, Figure 2 presents the breakdown of original submissions in 2019.



Number of submitted original manuscripts: American Politics - 183, Comparative Politics - 128, International Relations - 56, Political Theory - 47, Race and Identity - 36, Gender - 35, Methodology - 18, Public Law - 14, Public Policy - 14, Public Administration - 7.

Based on the descriptive statistics provided in Figure 2, *PRQ* remains a journal heavily represented by the *American Politics* and *Comparative Politics* subfields. Together these fields accounted for around 58% of all original submissions. The proportion of manuscripts in the *American Politics* subfield increased from around 33% in 2018, to 34% in 2019. The proportion of submissions in the *Comparative Politics* subfield decreased by around 4.5 percentage points, 28.3% in 2018 to 23.8% of all submissions in 2019.

We are pleased with the increasing number of submissions in the *Gender*, as well as *Race and Identity* categories, which received 6.5% and 6.7% of all submissions respectively. Together these categories accounted for 13.2% of all submissions, an increase of 3.8 percentage points over 2018. The uptick in submissions is partially related to our mini-symposium that examines women running in the 2018 midterm elections (the submission deadline was 5/31/19). Additionally, we are also pleased with the steady stream of manuscripts for *International Relations* (down just a hair from 11.2% to 10.4%, but roughly constant).

Furthermore, in the 2018 annual review we stressed our concern about the decline in submissions in the *Political Theory* field. We are happy to announce that in 2019 we saw an uptick of 1.4 percentage points; 8.7% of all manuscripts received in 2019 were in *Political Theory* (versus 7.3% in 2018). This field remains one of the cardinal priorities for us and in 2019 our field editor David Williams organized a successful online campaign to increase *Political Theory* submissions.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that while *PRQ* receives most of its submissions from the United States, we also receive manuscripts from around the world. In 2019, 68% (366 manuscripts) of all original submissions came from the United States. During this same period, *PRQ* received 21 manuscripts from the United Kingdom, 16 from China, and 10 from Canada. Together, scholars from these countries accounted for around 8.7% of total original (new) submissions. Between 5 and 9 submissions came from Denmark, Germany, Spain, Israel, Hong Kong, Switzerland, and Turkey. In the aggregate, these countries accounted for approximately another 8.7% of total original submissions in 2019.

Processing Times

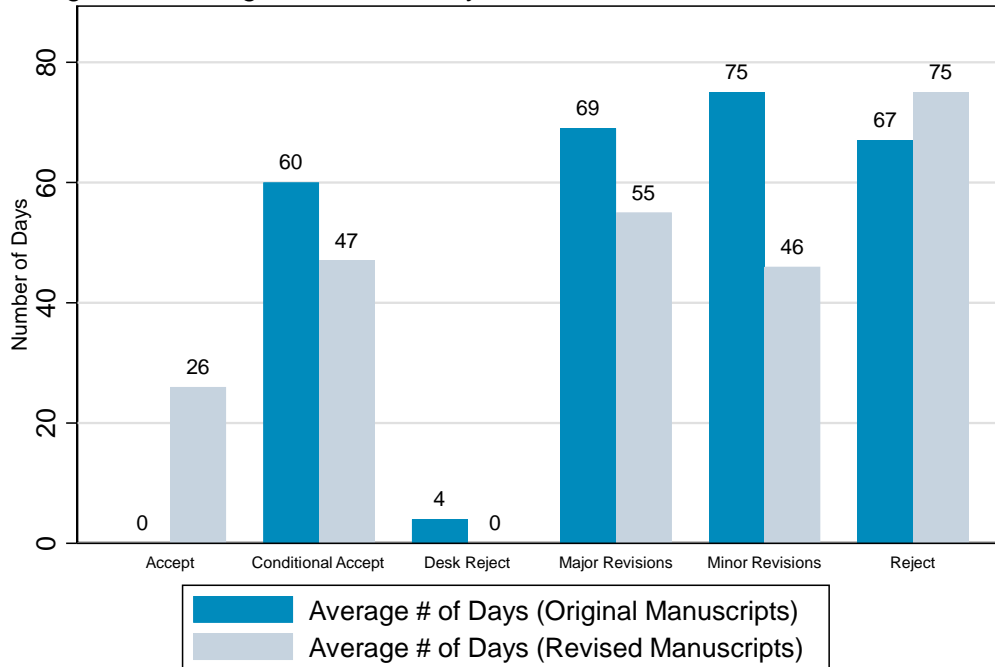
The current editorial team employs a division of labor based on academic specialization. This model has already improved efficiency and reduced manuscript processing times in some stages. Figure 3 provides data on the average number of days between manuscript submission and editorial decisions for both original and revised manuscripts.

In 2019, the average processing time for desk rejected manuscripts was 4 days (down from 5 days in 2018 and 8 days in 2017), while the average processing time for all original manuscripts receiving external review was 67 days in the case of rejections (63 days in 2018), and between 69 (minor revisions; 81 days in 2018) and 75 (major revisions; 78 days in 2018) days when authors are invited to make revisions.

Our time of decision for revised manuscripts that are accepted was 26 days (down from 28 days in 2018 and 40 days in 2017). Our time to decision for major revisions was 55 days (60 days in 2018), minor revisions was 46 days (48 days in 2018), and rejection was 75 days (46 days in 2018).

Our editorial team is committed to trimming manuscript processing time upon initial submission by being selective regarding papers considered worthy of peer review. In addition, when a manuscript is sent out for review, we are of course to a heavy degree, at the mercy of reviewers submitting timely reviews. Therefore, we closely monitor all reviewers who are over 30 days late in submitting their reviews and contact them directly to encourage submission of the review. When we are unable to make a decision about a manuscript after 60 days due to an overdue report, we either use the existing reviews or reach out to editorial board members or find new reviewers, to judge the manuscript in a timely fashion.

Figure 3: Average Number of Days From Submission to Decision, 2019



By having the privilege to be increasingly selective in our assessment of submitted papers, we are also making efforts to reduce an excessive backlog of manuscripts accepted for publication. Currently (as of March 2019), we have about a three and a half issue backlog. Thus, manuscripts accepted today (in March) will be published in the March 2021 issue. We are currently accepting manuscripts at a rate that precludes us from generating an excessive backlog. Once manuscripts have been uploaded by journal staff to SAGE for copyediting, they typically appear on SAGE’s Online First platform within four to six weeks. As a result, although it may take several months for an article to appear in print, the digital version is available for researchers to access and to cite well in advance of the designated printed issue. All of this said, SAGE currently allows for 1,000 total hard copy printed journal pages a year, which means that a low acceptance rate goes hand-in-hand with increasing the quality of published work while also keeping the article backlog to a minimum.

Manuscript Decisions

Up to March 1, 2020 the *PRQ* editorial team made 661 decisions on manuscripts submitted since the start of 2019, and out of these, 537 decisions were made on original submissions and 124 on reviewed articles. The overall acceptance rate for manuscripts submitted in 2019 was around 11% (down from 16% in 2018). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the decisions made for original submissions received in 2019, and Table 2 does the same for revised submissions.

Table 1. Decision for Original Submissions, 2019

Manuscript decision	Number of Manuscripts	Percentage of Manuscripts
Desk Reject	275	51.2%
Reject	182	33.9%
Minor Revisions	8	1.5%
Major Revisions	70	13.0%
Conditional Acceptance	2	0.4%
<i>Summary</i>	<i>537</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 2. Decision for Revised Submissions, 2019

Manuscript decision	Number of Manuscripts	Percentage of Manuscripts
Accept	75	60.6%
Conditional Acceptance	16	12.9%
Minor Revisions	21	16.9%
Major Revisions	6	4.8%
Reject	6	4.8%
<i>Summary</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>100%</i>

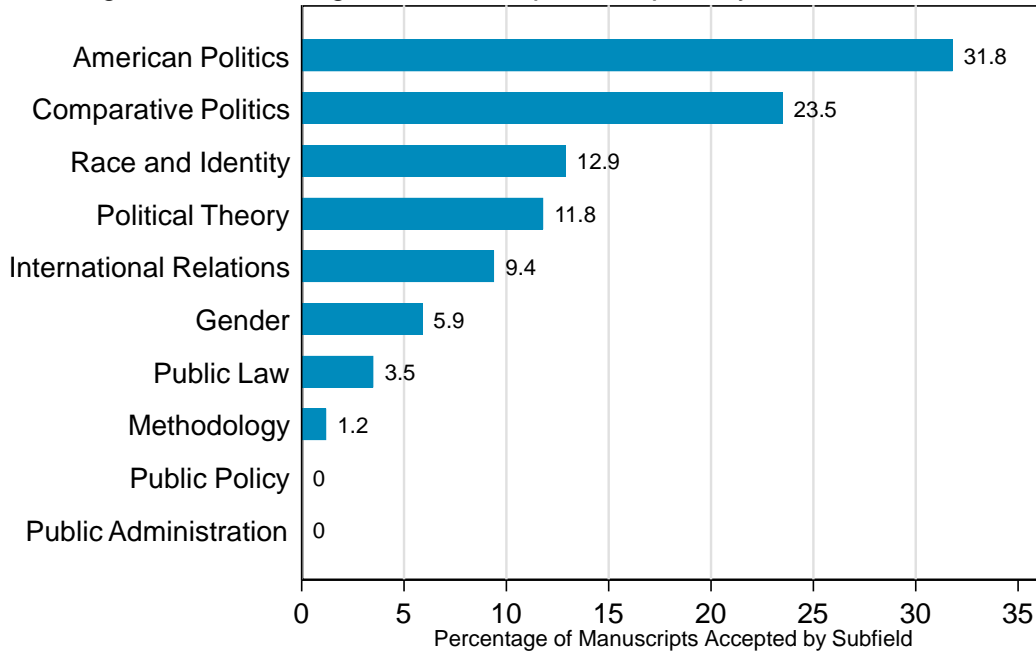
Figure 4 shows the distribution of articles accepted in 2019 by field. Not surprisingly, the trend in proportions of accepted manuscripts is highly similar to the distribution of article submissions shown in Figure 2. Most manuscripts were accepted in the *American Politics* field at 31.8% (for comparison, it was 34% for manuscripts accepted in 2018), followed by *Comparative Politics*, which accounted for 23.5% of all accepted articles (24.3% in 2018).

We are very pleased with the impressive share of accepted manuscripts in the *Race and Identity*, as well as *Gender* fields. Together they accounted for 18.8% of all accepted manuscripts (up from 11.7% in 2018). This 7.1 percentage point increase is indicative of the growing number of submissions and their quality in both fields. We are also satisfied with the increase in the share of accepted *Political Theory* manuscripts, which accounted for 11.8% in 2019 as compared to 7.8% in 2018.

The proportion of accepted manuscripts in *International Relations* declined from 14.6% in 2018 to 9.4% in 2019. Nonetheless, this change remains in line with the longer term growth trend. For

instance, the proportion of accepted manuscripts in *International Relations* was 7% in 2017, 8% in 2016, 4% in 2015, and 5% in 2014. There were no manuscripts accepted in the areas of *Public Policy* and *Public Administration* in 2019, but this is primarily because of the very low total number of submissions received in these subfields (n=21: 14 new submissions in the former subfield and 7 in the latter subfield).

Figure 4: Percentage of Manuscripts Accepted by Subfield, 2019



Number of accepted manuscripts:
 American Politics - 27, Comparative Politics - 20, Race and Identity - 11, Political Theory - 10, International Relations - 8, Gender - 5,
 Public Law - 3, Methodology - 1, Public Policy - 0, Public Administration - 0.

Reviewer Awards

To thank *PRQ* reviewers for their time and effort, SAGE continues to offer 60 days of free access to all titles on the SAGE Journals Online First platform, as well as a 25% discount on SAGE books.

Following *PRQ* custom, we annually recognize our Top 20 Reviewers, each of whom receives a free one-year subscription to *PRQ*. The Editor in Chief will also send a message of recognition to each top reviewer's department chair.

The Top 20 for 2019 are (in alphabetical order):

Kevin Banda	<i>Texas Tech University</i>
Tiffany Barnes	<i>University of Kentucky</i>
Andrea Benjamin	<i>Ohio State University</i>
Rebecca Best	<i>University of Missouri at Kansas City</i>
Charles S. Bullock III	<i>University of Georgia</i>
Ivy Cargile	<i>CSU Bakersfield</i>
Jason Casellas	<i>University of Houston</i>
Darin DeWitt	<i>CSU Long Beach</i>
David Dreyer	<i>Lenoir-Rhyne University</i>
Linda L. Fowler	<i>Dartmouth College</i>
Morgan Hazelton	<i>Saint Louis University</i>
Mirya R. Holman	<i>Tulane University</i>
Rebecca LeMoine	<i>Florida Atlantic University</i>
Gregory Love	<i>University of Mississippi</i>
Patchen Markell	<i>Cornell University</i>
Alessandro Nai	<i>University of Amsterdam</i>
Andrea Silva	<i>University of North Texas</i>
Zeynep Somer-Topcu	<i>University of Texas at Austin</i>
Gary Uzonyi	<i>University of Tennessee</i>
Susan H. Whiting	<i>University of Washington</i>

Journal Impact

We are pleased with the growing influence of *PRQ*. In 2018 most of the important metrics kept improving (see Table 3). The Journal Citation Report (JCR) Impact Factor is one commonly used measure of the impact of academic journals. *PRQ* has seen steady growth in this measure over time, with a steep increase in 2017. In 2018 the impact factor rose to 1.581 (as compared to 1.523 in 2017). The five-year impact factor rose to 2.050 (from 1.988 in 2017). *PRQ*'s ranking among other political science journals (by impact factor) was 75 out of 176 journals. In 2018, citations rose by 9.6% to 3,089. In terms of total citations, *PRQ* ranks 29 out of 176 political science journals.

Table 3. PRQ Impact Factor, 2007-2018

Year	Total Cites	Impact Factor	5-Year Impact Factor	Journal Ranking (by Impact Factor)
2007	636	0.486	0.902	56/93
2008	887	0.75	1.294	39/99
2009	963	0.915	1.219	36/112
2010	1187	1.018	1.249	40/141
2011	1189	0.921	1.298	45/149
2012	1323	1.044	1.281	48/157
2013	1550	0.985	1.46	58/157
2014	1831	1.149	1.561	47/161
2015	1956	1.116	1.539	59/163
2016	2406	1.053	1.816	83/165
2017	2818	1.523	1.988	65/169
2018	3089	1.581	2.050	75/176

Source: Journal Citation Report 2019

Appendix A

PRQ EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD - 2019

Sarah Anderson	<i>University of California, Santa Barbara</i>
Sarah F. Anzia	<i>University of California at Berkeley</i>
Antoine Banks	<i>University of Maryland</i>
Tiffany Barnes	<i>University of Kentucky</i>
Andrea Benjamin	<i>University of Missouri</i>
Richard Boyd	<i>Georgetown University</i>
Royce Carroll	<i>University of Essex</i>
Jason Casellas	<i>University of Houston</i>
Cornell W. Clayton	<i>Washington State University</i>
Bridget Coggins	<i>University of California, Santa Barbara</i>
Michael H. Crespín	<i>University of Oklahoma</i>
Mary G. Dietz	<i>Northwestern University</i>
Elisabeth Ellis	<i>University of Otago</i>
Jennifer Fitzgerald	<i>University of Colorado</i>
Megan Ming Francis	<i>University of Washington</i>
Danny Hayes	<i>George Washington University</i>
Clarissa Hayward	<i>Washington University in St. Louis</i>
Erik Herron	<i>West Virginia University</i>
Mirya Holman	<i>Tulane University</i>
Mala Htun	<i>University of New Mexico</i>
Michele Keunzi	<i>University of Nevada, Las Vegas</i>
Ari Kohen	<i>University of Nebraska</i>
Suzanne M. Leland	<i>University of North Carolina, Charlotte</i>
Amanda Licht	<i>Binghamton University</i>
Gregory Love	<i>University of Mississippi</i>
Frank Lovett	<i>Washington University in St. Louis</i>
Robert Lupton	<i>University of Connecticut</i>
Tofiq Maboudi	<i>Loyola University Chicago</i>
Anthony J. Madonna	<i>University of Georgia</i>
J.S. Maloy	<i>University of Louisiana</i>
Elizabeth Markovitz	<i>Mount Holyoke College</i>
Jonathan Marks	<i>Ursinus College</i>
Angie Maxwell	<i>University of Arkansas</i>
Amy G. Mazur	<i>Washington State University</i>
Michael McKoy	<i>Wheaton College</i>
Jeanette Mendez	<i>Oklahoma State University</i>
Jamila Michener	<i>Cornell University</i>
Michael Minta	<i>University of Minnesota</i>
Diana O'Brien	<i>Rice University</i>
Ian Ostrander	<i>Michigan State University</i>
Erica Owen	<i>University of Pittsburgh</i>
Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz	<i>University of Rhode Island</i>

Efrén Pérez	<i>University of California, Los Angeles</i>
Kelly Rader	<i>Yale University</i>
Jordan Ragusa	<i>College of Charleston</i>
Ora John Reuter	<i>University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee</i>
Emily Hencken Ritter	<i>Vanderbilt University</i>
James M. Scott	<i>Texas Christian University</i>
Paru Shah	<i>University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee</i>
Yael Shomer	<i>Tel-Aviv University</i>
Shane Singh	<i>University of Georgia</i>
Zeynep Somer-Topcu	<i>University of Texas at Austin</i>
Dara Strolovich	<i>Princeton University</i>
Sharece Thrower	<i>Vanderbilt University</i>
Alvin Tillery	<i>Northwestern University</i>
Susan H. Whiting	<i>University of Washington</i>
Jennifer Wolak	<i>University of Colorado Boulder</i>
Antoine Yoshinaka	<i>University of Buffalo</i>
Amy Yuen	<i>Middlebury College</i>
Chris Zepeda-Millán	<i>University of California, Los Angeles</i>