

Political Research Quarterly

2022 Annual Report

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Overview

The 2022 annual report constitutes the final six months of the previous *Political Research Quarterly (PRQ)* editorial team based out of Texas Tech University and the first six months of the current *PRQ* editorial team. The current team is composed of: Editor-in-Chief Charles Anthony Smith (University of California, Irvine); Associate Editors Andrew Flores (American University), Jennifer Garcia (Oberlin College), Stephen Andrew Nuno (Northern Arizona University), Davin Phoenix (University of California, Irvine), Julia Jordan-Zachary (Wake Forest University), Heather Smith-Cannoy (Arizona State University), Christopher Stout (Oregon State University), Jami Taylor (University of Toledo), Angelia Wilson (University of Manchester), and Wendy Wong (University of British Columbia); and Managing Editor Jacob Sutherland (University of California, Irvine).

As noted in last year's report, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to present some challenges for the journal. In 2022, *PRQ* received 435 submissions, reflecting a 3.5% decrease in submissions from the previous year, and an overall third consecutive year in which the journal has experienced a slight decline in submissions. That said, the rate at which the number of submissions has declined has also decreased, suggesting that we are reaching a plateau and can expect to see an uptick in the number of submissions in 2023 and beyond. Our goal, ultimately, is to reach pre-pandemic levels in the number of submissions we receive.

Our new editorial team is quite large in comparison to previous teams—we maintain a group of 11 associate editors from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. This has allowed us to increase our work and efficiency in the processing times for submissions. While we did experience a learning curve in the beginning, we are confident in our ability to decrease our time-to-decision in 2023. Noteworthy in 2022, however, is our distribution of decisions made. Briefly, 45.9% of all new submissions were desk-rejected, and 16.5% received a revision request. Of all revised submissions, 82.6% were ultimately accepted for publication. This represents an overall acceptance rate of 18.43% in 2022, up from 16% in 2021.

We are excited to note the growth in the number of submissions made in both the *International Relations* and *Gender* sub-fields. Additionally, of the sub-fields which did experience slight decreases in the percentage of submissions received—*Political Theory* and *Race and Identity*—we still saw numerical increases in the volume of submissions received for both. This suggests that, overall, each of the sub-fields represented in *PRQ* continues to grow in popularity, and likewise has room for further growth going forward.

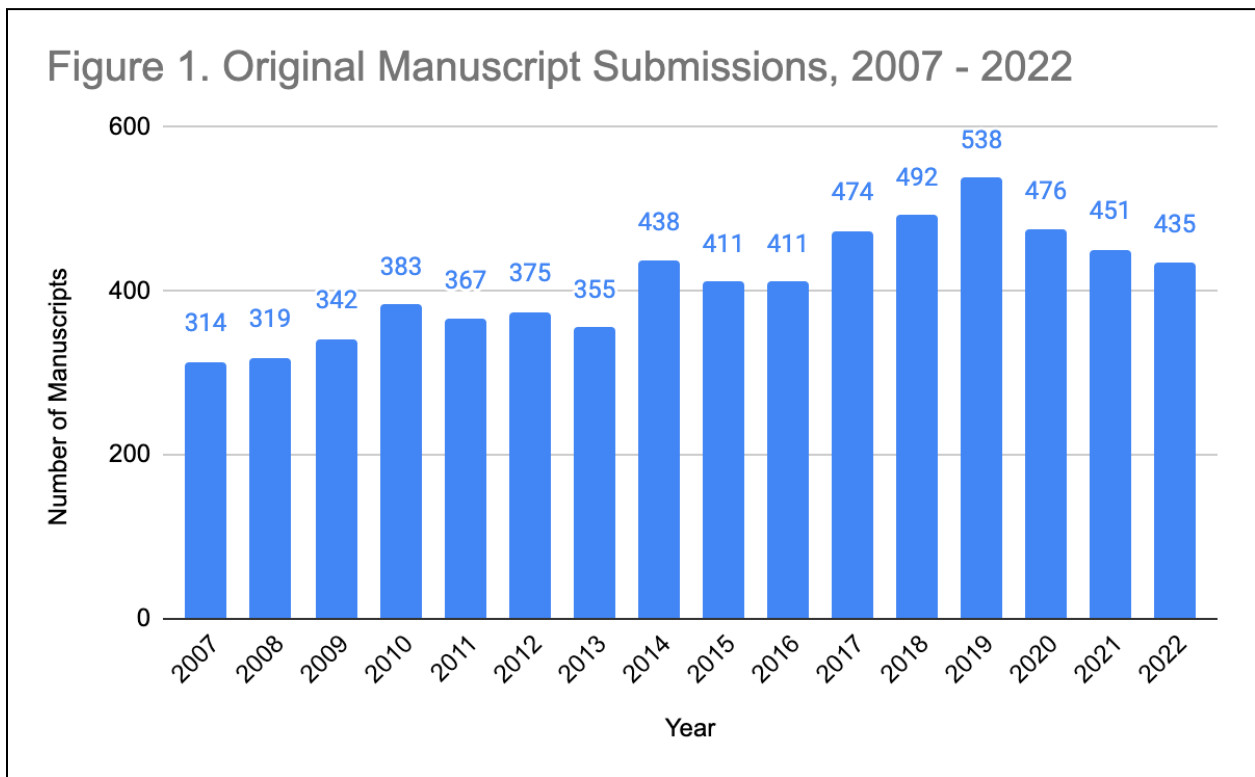
Upon taking over leadership of *PRQ* in July 2022, we identified and implemented several opportunities to further develop or revise *PRQ*'s infrastructure. These changes are as follows:

- We conducted an audit of the email templates within the ScholarOne system in August, revising dozens of the templates to streamline communication between our editorial team and authors. We will revisit the templates again in the near future to ensure we maximize clarity and improve communication as much as possible.
- We worked with SAGE to update the *PRQ* website information, specifically revising and reformatting the "Submission guidelines" page on the website to make the information much more understandable and clear. As a result, we have had to "un-submit" fewer manuscripts for failure to properly format.
- We continued using Twitter, and began using Instagram to further promote the journal at large, as well as the articles we publish. We also updated the logo for both social media platforms, and created a set of social media templates to better provide a visual component to our posts. Our Twitter account specifically has seen exceptional growth, reaching 3,160 followers as of March 3, 2023.

We continue to maintain prompt communication with our authors. We have been averaging same-day replies to all emails received on business days. This has allowed us to streamline communication with and provide greater confidence to our authors. With many political science conferences returning to either hybrid or fully in-person events, we look forward to hosting a "meet the editors" event this year at the 2023 WPSA and participating in a "meet the editors" roundtable at the 2023 MPSA, as well as a *PRQ* editorial board meeting at the 2023 American Political Science Association (APSA) conference..

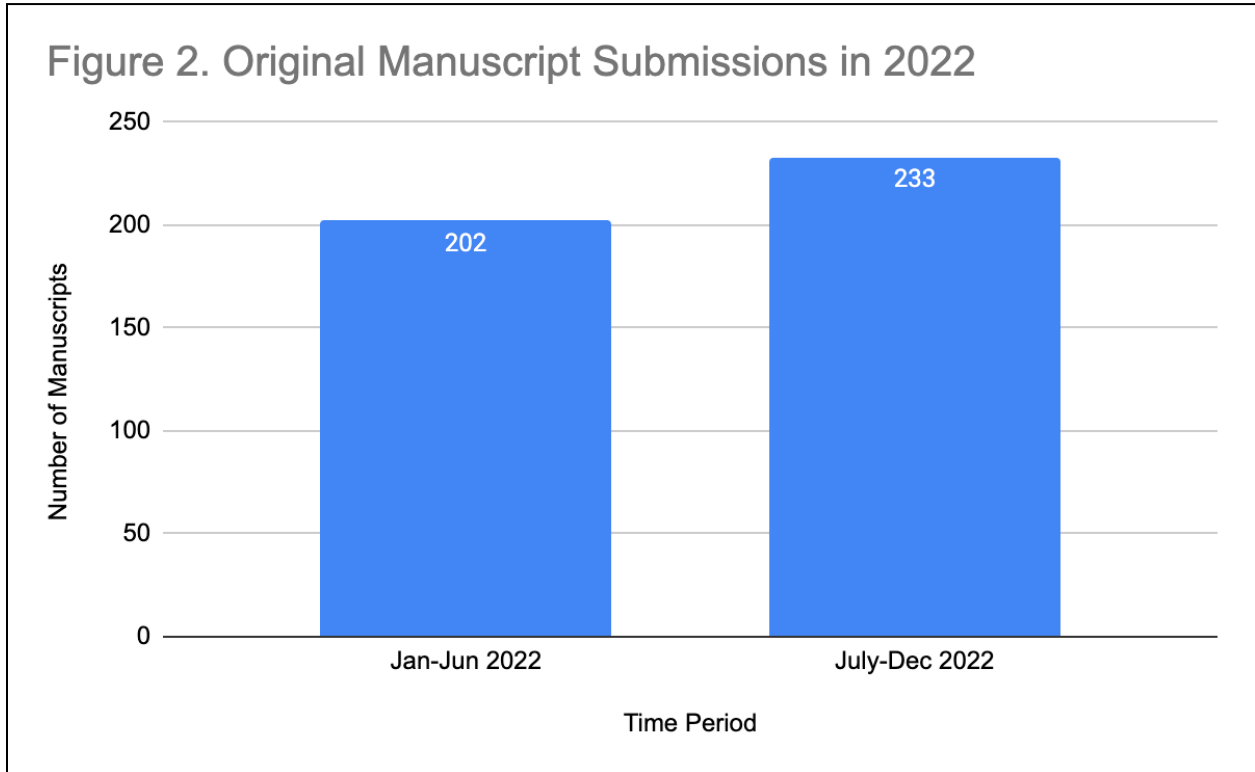
Manuscript Submissions

In 2022, original¹ manuscript submissions declined by 3.5% (Figure 1). While this is the third year in a row that *PRQ* has seen a decline in submissions, this is the smallest reduction in submissions thus far since the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic began. As a result, we are optimistic that this decline is nearing a plateau, and hopefully 2023 will be the year we rebound in the number of original submissions received. That said, we have likewise observed the reluctance of reviewers to accept invitations to review submissions that was noted in last year's report. We hope that this reluctance also begins to subside.



¹ "Original" denotes only new manuscripts and excludes all revised resubmissions.

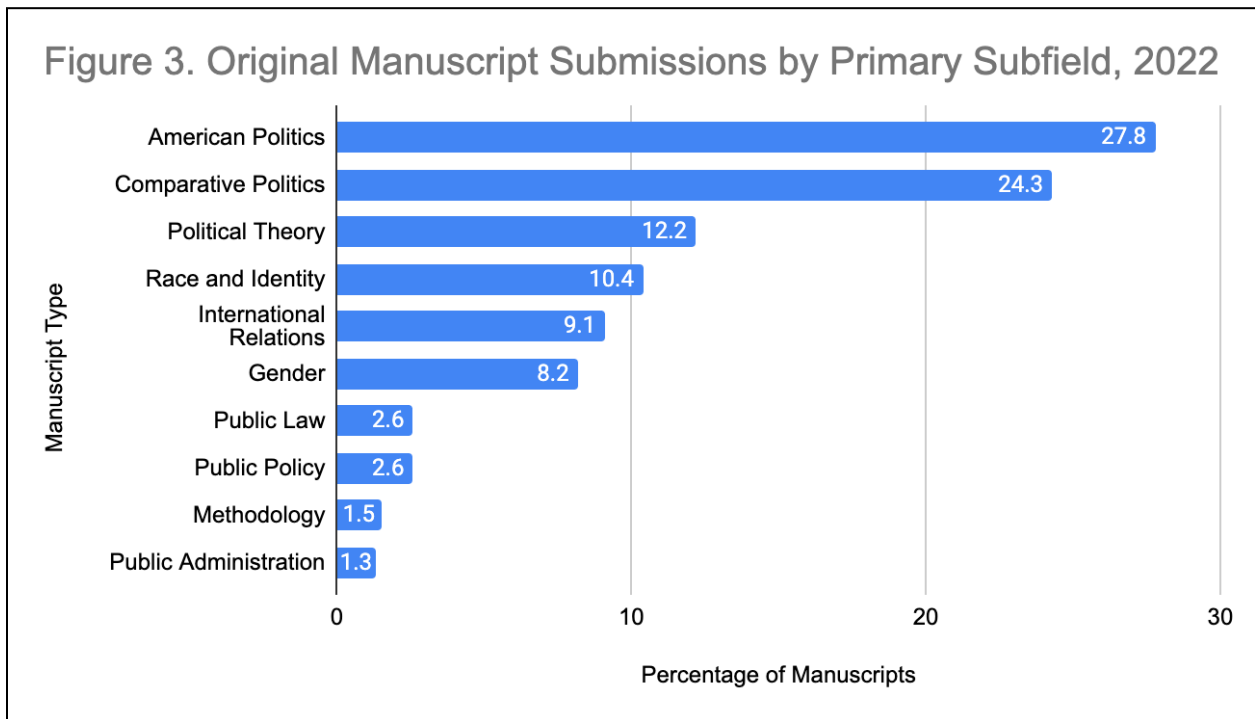
Figure 2 shows the number of original submissions throughout 2022, broken down between the previous editorial team (January–June) and the current editorial team (July–December). We take the roughly 15% increase in submissions as a sign that our team is doing the necessary work to increase original submissions across the board. We plan to continue to monitor our progress in increasing submissions throughout the year.



PRQ currently uses the following primary field categories to classify manuscripts and reviewers:

- American Politics
- Comparative Politics
- Gender
- Race and Identity
- International Relations
- Methodology
- Political Theory
- Public Administration
- Public Policy
- Public Law

Accordingly, Figure 3 presents the breakdown of original submissions in 2022.



As noted in last year's report, it is apparent that *PRQ* remains a journal that is heavily represented by the *American Politics* and *Comparative Politics* subfields, sharing a combined 52.1% of all original submissions received throughout 2022 (in comparison to 46% in 2021). In 2022, the number of *American Politics* original submissions increased by 4.1%, representing 152 original manuscripts in comparison to the 107 received in 2021. In 2022, the number of

Comparative Politics original manuscripts increased by 1.9%, representing 133 original manuscripts in comparison to the 101 received in 2021.

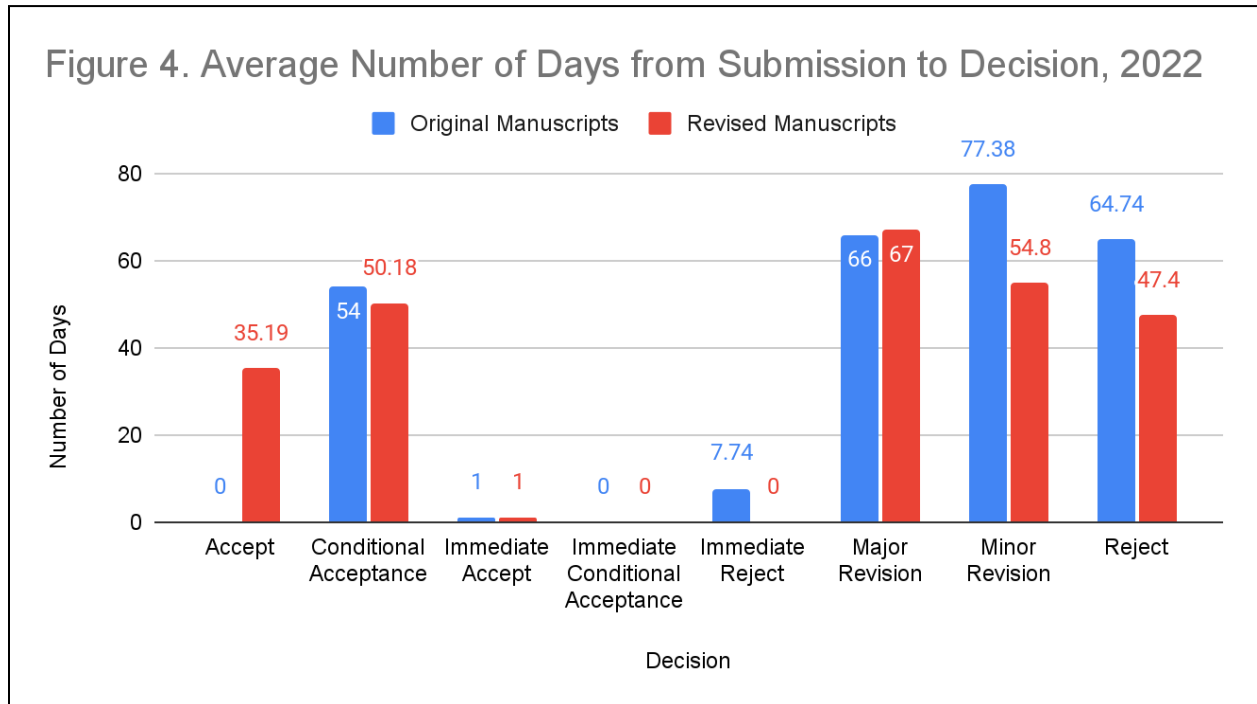
We are pleased with the increase in submissions for the following subfields: *International Relations* saw a 1.3% increase in original submissions (50 in 2022, 35 in 2021); *Gender* saw a 2% increase in original submissions (45 in 2022, 28 in 2021).

We similarly observed declines in submissions for the following subfields: *Political Theory* saw a 1.8% decrease in original submissions (67 in 2022, 63 in 2021); *Race and Identity* saw a 2% decrease in original submissions (57 in 2022, 56 in 2021). Important to note, however, is that while these numbers are all decreases in the percentage of original manuscripts received, numerically these subfields still received increases in submissions from last year. In other words, all categories saw more submissions, some just increased more than others.

Finally, we wanted to note that while *PRQ* primarily receives submissions from scholars based in the United States, we received a significant number of original manuscripts from around the world. In 2022, 58% (253) of all original manuscripts came from the United States (in comparison to 63% in 2021). Throughout 2022, *PRQ* received 20 original manuscripts from the United Kingdom (17 in 2021), 15 from China (13 in 2021), 11 from Turkey (11 in 2021), and 10 from Germany (9 in 2021). Together, these countries accounted for 12.9% of all original manuscripts. We likewise received between 5 and 9 submissions each from Canada, South Korea, Israel, Hong Kong, Denmark, Spain, Japan, and Australia. Together, these countries represent 11.5% of all original manuscripts.

Processing Times

Like the previous team, the current editorial team divides up labor by academic specialization. We expanded our editorial team from the 5 maintained by the previous team to 11 editors to help speed up processing times. Figure 4 provides a breakdown of the average number of days from submission to editorial decisions, broken down by original and revised manuscripts.



In 2022, the average processing time for desk rejected manuscripts was 8 days. The average processing time for all original manuscripts undergoing external review was 65 days in the case of rejections, and between 66 (major revisions) and 77 (minor revisions) days when authors are invited to make revisions.

Our time to decision for revised manuscripts that are accepted was 35 days and 50 days for conditionally accepted manuscripts. Our time to decision for major revisions was 67 days, 55 days for minor revisions, and 47 days for rejections.

Our team reduced the amount of time from submission to decision for the following decision types: accepted revised manuscript (35 days in 2022; 38 in 2021); conditionally accepted revised manuscripts (50 in 2022; 55 in 2021); major revision original manuscripts (66 in 2022; 76 in 2021); rejected original manuscripts (65 in 2022; 68 in 2021); and rejected revised

manuscripts (47 in 2022; 57 in 2021). As we continue into the new year and refine our revision practices, our team will continue to reduce the amount of time from submission to decision in order to have a more consistent feedback process for our authors.

Currently, we have less than a three-issue backlog. Subsequently, manuscripts accepted today (April) will be published in the December 2023 issue. When the incoming *PRQ* editorial team came in, we had an approximately seven-issue backlog carried over from the outgoing *PRQ* editorial team. To decrease this backlog, we began publishing issues at 450 pages in length, up from the standard 250 pages in length. This has been possible due to SAGE removing page limits on issues. However, given the backlog, we have been relatively conservative in our acceptances in order to decrease this backlog to a point where we can return to the standard 250 page length. Once manuscripts have been uploaded by journal staff to SAGE for copyediting, they typically appear on SAGE's Online First platform within three to four 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 long in advance of the designated printed issue. Once the backlog is fully cleared, we expect the lag time between acceptance and publication to approach about six months.

Manuscript Decisions

From January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022, the *PRQ* editorial team made 510 decisions. Out of these, 401 were decisions on original submissions, and 109 were decisions on revised submissions. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the decisions made for original submissions in 2022, and Table 2 does the same for revised submissions. The desk rejection rate increased from 38.6% in 2021 to 45.90% in 2022, largely due to an extensive backlog of accepted articles that the incoming *PRQ* team inherited from the outgoing *PRQ* team that needed to be published in print editions. The overall acceptance rate for manuscripts submitted in 2022 was around 18.43% (up from 16% in 2021).

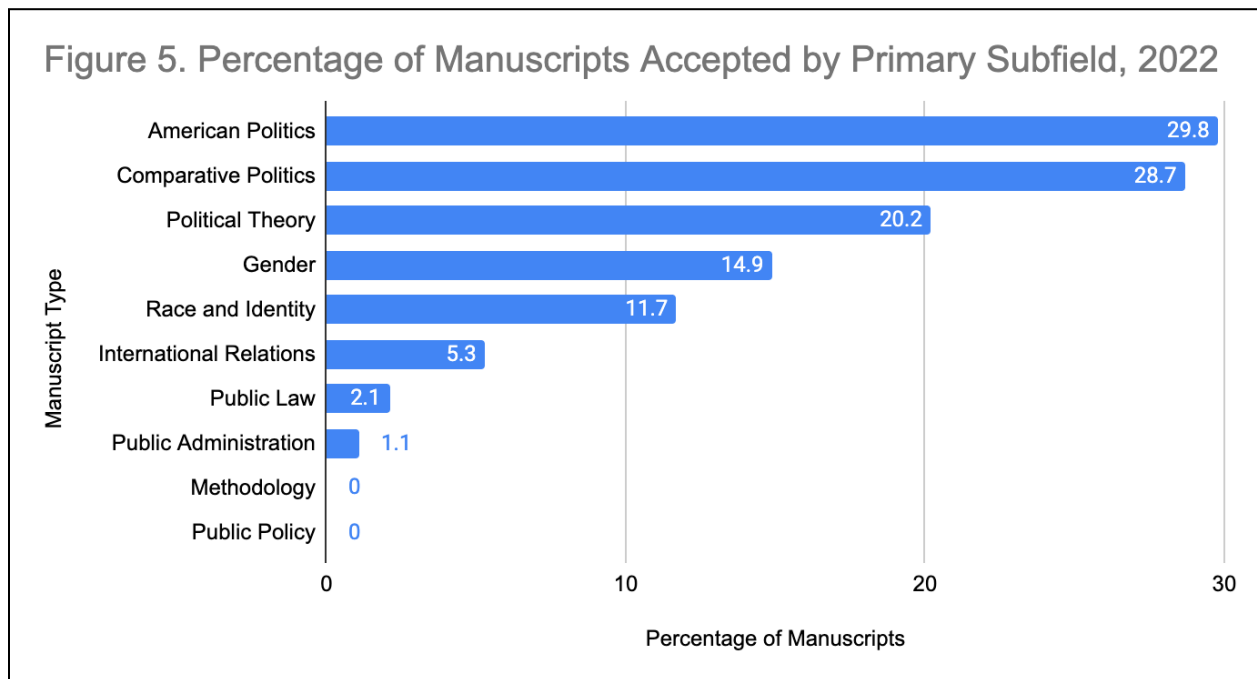
Manuscript Decision	Number of Manuscripts	Percentage of Total
Conditional Acceptance	2	0.50%
Immediate Accept	1	0.20%
Immediate Conditional Acceptance	1	0.20%
Immediate Reject	184	45.90%
Major Revision	58	14.50%
Minor Revision	8	2.00%
Reject	147	36.70%
<i>Summary</i>	<i>401</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

Manuscript Decision	Number of Manuscripts	Percentage of Total
Accept	79	72.50%
Conditional Acceptance	11	10.10%
Immediate Accept	1	0.90%
Major Revision	3	2.80%
Minor Revision	5	4.60%
Reject	10	9.20%
<i>Summary</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

Figure 5 shows the distribution of articles accepted in 2022 by field. In 2022, most manuscripts were accepted in the *American Politics* subfield at 29.8% (32.3% in 2021), followed by *Comparative Politics*, which accounted for 28.7% of all articles accepted (20.4% in 2021).

We are very pleased with the increased shares of accepted manuscripts under the *Gender* and *Race and Identity* subfields. Together they accounted for 26.6% of all accepted manuscripts (versus 26% in 2021; 25 manuscripts accepted in 2022, compared to 24 accepted in 2021). This growth in the share of manuscripts published in both of these subfields indicates the continued rise in quality of manuscripts submitted in both areas that was observed in last year's annual report.

Publication of manuscripts increased across the following subfields between 2021 and 2022: the aforementioned *Comparative Politics*, along with *Political Theory* (20.2% in 2022; 10.8% in 2021), *Race and Identity* (11.7% in 2022; 10.8% in 2021), *Public Law* (2.1% in 2022; 1.1% in 2021).



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.

Historically, *PRQ* annually recognized the Top 20 Reviewers as measured by the number of reviews. We are taking a different approach for two reasons. First, we want to avoid reviewer fatigue, so we are striving to ask any given reviewer for no more than one review a year. Secondly, we are concerned that using a small group of reviewers for many reviews in a given year in essence creates a gate-keeping cabal that may limit the scope of which articles move forward. We think the discipline is more fairly represented if we do not consolidate the reviewer process.

Journal Impact

While there was a slight decline across all metrics of impact in 2021 (see Table 3), broadly we are pleased with the growing influence of *PRQ*. 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 2021, the 2-year impact factor remained relatively steady at 2.531 (in comparison to 2.556 in 2020). Regarding the 5-year impact factor, the value also remained relatively steady at 3.254 (in comparison to 3.443 in 2020). *PRQ*'s ranking among other political science journals (by 2-year impact factor) in 2021 was 67 out of 188. In 2021, citations declined slightly by 1.03% to 4973. In terms of total citations, *PRQ* ranks 22 out of 188 political science journals.

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	2.05	75/176
2019	3460	1.362	2.287	92/181
2020	5025	2.556	3.443	64/182
2021	4973	2.531	3.254	67/188

Source: Journal Citation Report 2021

Appendix A

PRQ Editorial Advisory Board - 2022

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- Sarah F. Anzia, University of California at Berkeley
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- Richard Boyd, Georgetown University
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- Jason Casellas, University of Houston
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- Antoine Yoshinaka, University of Buffalo
- Amy Yuen, Political Science, Middlebury College
- Chris Zepeda-Millán, University of California