

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Appendix 1. Questions used in Survey of Journal Editors

1. What is the name of the journal for which you are editor?
2. Does the journal have a written desk rejection policy?
 - Yes
 - No
3. If the journal does have a written desk rejection policy, what is it? (Briefly describe in the text box below. Alternatively, you can provide a link to the written policy or cut and paste the policy into this text box.)
4. Does the journal have an informal desk rejection policy that is not formally published on the journal webpage?
 - Yes
 - No
5. If the journal does have an informal desk rejection policy that is not formally published on the journal webpage, what is it? (Briefly describe in the text box below.)
6. What are the criteria used for desk rejections? Select all that apply. If reason(s) not listed, please select "other" and provide that information in the text box.
 - Manuscript does not fit the substantive content of the journal
 - Manuscript fails to meet the journal's required submission guidelines (e.g., length)
 - Manuscript is not a scholarly contribution appropriate for a scholarly journal (e.g., editorial, opinion piece)
 - Manuscript is not properly formatted according to journal guidelines
 - Manuscript is flawed or of insufficient scholarly quality
 - Diversity/inclusion criteria (i.e., desk rejection decisions based on efforts to improve diversity and inclusion for authors published by the journal)
 - Reviewer fatigue, or shortage of reviewers
 - Other (please describe)
7. Does the journal have precise data or informed estimates on the final disposition of manuscripts for a recent year or years?
 - Yes, precise data
 - Yes, informed estimates
 - No, neither

(continued)

Note: If either “yes” option was selected, respondents were presented with the related follow-up question. *Note – respondents only saw “precise data” if they selected it, and only those who selected “informed estimates” saw that wording in the follow-up question.

Please provide the data for the most recent year(s) for which precise data [informed estimates] are available. If you do not have precise data [informed estimates], please leave the entry blank. In addition, please report the year(s) for which data are reported.

%

- Percentage Desk Rejected:
 - Percentage Rejected with Peer Review:
 - Percentage Given Revise-and-Resubmit:
 - Percentage Accepted:
 - Year(s) of Data Reported:
8. Does the journal have a report that includes data on final disposition of manuscripts for a recent year or years?
- Yes
 - No
9. If a report with data on final disposition of manuscripts for a recent year or years is available, please share a link to it below. If no link is available, please email a recent report to *****.

Appendix Table A1. Desk rejection rates for 31 political science journals, with data details

Journal	% Desk Rejected	% Rejected with review	% R&R	% Accept	Years Covered	Data or Estimates	Source
High desk reject rates							
Governance	76	9	16	13	2.7 years	Precise data	Survey
Political Theory	69	*	*	8	2018-2020	Precise data	Email
Polity	68	20	11	12	2019	Precise data	Survey
Law & Society Review	59	*	9	8	2019	Precise data	Survey
European Journal of Political Research	56	30	14	*	2019	Precise data	Survey
Perspectives on Politics	56	26	17	10	2019	Precise data	Survey, Report
European Journal of International Relations	52	33	16	10	2019	Precise data	Survey
Political Research Quarterly	51	34	15	11	2019	Precise data	Report
Politics & Society	50	44	6	6	5 years	Informed Estimates	Survey, Email
Comparative Political Studies	50	40	10	10	7 years	Precise data	Survey, Report
Moderate desk rejection rates							
British Journal of Political Science	46	*	*	*	2019	Precise data	Email
Political Science Research & Methods	45	36	18	0	2019-2020	Precise data	Survey, Report
Publius	45	26	11	18	2019	Precise data	Survey
International Political Science Review	45	*	*	*	2019	Precise data	Email
Political Science Quarterly	42	43	9	6	2019	Precise data	Survey
Public Choice	40	30	20	10-15	Since 2005	Precise data	Survey
Journal of Theoretical Politics	40	25	35	0	*	Informed Estimates	Survey
Social Science Quarterly	40	17	22	21	1.5 years	Informed Estimates	Survey
American Political Science Review	39	55	6	*	2018-2019	Precise data	Survey, Report
Political Analysis	39	39	*	22	2018-2020	Precise data	Email
Comparative Politics	38	44	9	9	2019	Precise data	Report
Politics & Gender	38	42	20	9	2020	Precise data	Survey
Journal of Politics	36	*	*	*	2019	Precise data	Email
International Studies Quarterly	35	44	13	6	2018-2019	Precise data	Survey
Political Behavior	34	44	22	19	2020	Precise data	Survey, Report

Appendix Table A1 (continued)

Journal	% Desk Rejection	% Reject with review	% R&R	% Accept	Years Covered	Data or Estimates	Source
Low desk rejection rates							
American Journal of Political Science	29	61	9	*	2019	Precise data	Report
Studies in American Political Development	25	50	25	15	5 years	Informed Estimates	Survey
American Research Politics	15	60	25	20	3 years	Informed Estimates	Survey
Party Politics	15	62	25	23	1 year	Informed Estimates	Survey
State Politics & Policy Quarterly	12	60	*	25	2019	Precise data	Survey
PS: Political Science & Politics	10	20	70	80	3 years	Informed Estimates	Survey, Data
Politics, Groups, & Identities	7	20	40	13	2020	Informed Estimates	Survey
Legislative Studies Quarterly	5	80	20	15	2018-2020	Precise data	Survey

Summary, Desk rejection rates:

Mean	39.7
Standard deviation	18.00
Minimum	5%
Maximum	76%

* Data not reported or not available

Note: In answering the question about the years covered, some journal editors responded with specific years for which data are available. Other editors responded with the number of years available; we assume that these number responses represent the most recent years available (e.g., 3 years means 2017-2019).

Appendix Table A2. Summary of editors' responses to questions about desk rejection practices

	%	f
Reasons for desk rejections:		
Manuscript is not a scholarly contribution appropriate for a scholarly journal (e.g., editorial, opinion piece)	96.8%	30
Manuscript does not fit the substantive content of the journal	93.5%	29
Manuscript is flawed or of insufficient scholarly quality	90.3%	28
Manuscript fails to meet the journals required submission guidelines (e.g., length)	44.4%	14
Manuscript is not properly formatted according to journal guidelines	3.2%	1
Reviewer fatigue, or shortage of reviewers	3.2%	1
Diversity/inclusion criteria (i.e., desk rejection decisions based on efforts to improve diversity and inclusion for authors published by the journal)	3.2%	1

N = 31

Appendix Table A3. Distribution of final decisions on manuscripts submitted to *the American Political Science Review*, *Perspectives on Politics*, and *PS: Political Science and Politics*

	<i>APSR</i>	<i>POP</i>	<i>PS</i>
Desk rejected	39.1% (667)	61.0% (440)	7.6% (23)
Rejected after peer review	55.4% (945)	26.2% (189)	19.3% (58)
Accepted	5.6% (95)	12.8% (92)	73.1% (220)
N	1707	721	301

Appendix Table A4. Multinomial logit estimates for model of final editorial decisions, *American Political Science Review*, 2018-2019

Variable	Desk rejection vs. accept		Rejection with review vs. accept	
	b	z	b	z
Number of authors	-0.321	-1.53	-0.182	-0.95
Article type (full article vs. letter)	-0.028	-0.08	0.143	0.46
Manuscript methodology				
Method: case study	1.031	1.34	-0.183	-0.24
Method: critical, ethnography, interpretive	0.906	1.27	-0.283	-0.40
Method: experimental	-0.064	-0.20	0.090	0.29
Method: formal	-0.424	-1.03	-0.394	-1.01
Method: normative	0.342	0.43	-0.031	-0.04
Method: not applicable	1.425	1.32	0.544	0.50
Method: quantitative (excluded)	---	---	---	---
Manuscript subfield				
Subfield: comparative politics	0.250	0.75	-0.020	-0.06
Subfield: international relations	0.998	2.19*	0.781	1.80
Subfield: methodology	0.217	0.40	-0.104	-0.21
Subfield: political theory	-0.215	-0.31	-0.124	-0.18
Subfield: other	0.474	1.14	-0.562	-1.40
Subfield: American politics (excluded)	---	---	---	---
Country/region of authors				
Country: United States	-1.011	-2.30*	-0.406	-0.97
Country: Western Europe	0.425	1.06	0.397	1.06
Country: Canada, Australia, New Zealand	-0.021	-0.04	0.240	0.41
Country: Asia	1.170	1.43	0.509	0.63
Country: other	1.353	1.72*	0.926	1.19
Employer of authors				
Ph.D-granting university	-1.315	-1.85*	-0.670	-0.95
Non-Ph.D. granting university	0.445	1.00	0.017	0.04
Other college (community, undergraduate)	1.857	1.77	1.617	1.56
Government, non-profit, private sector	-0.425	-0.52	0.344	0.43
Prefer not to say employer	-0.580	-0.65	-0.652	-0.75
Gender of authors				
Male	0.501	1.19	0.368	0.92
Female	0.167	0.52	0.230	0.76
Non-binary	1.227	1.10	0.392	0.36
Prefer not to say gender	0.017	0.03	0.114	0.24

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Appendix Table A4 (continued)

Variable	Desk rejection vs. accept		Rejection with review vs. accept	
	b	z	b	z
Academic rank of authors				
Full professor	0.037	0.10	0.081	0.24
Assistant professor	-0.693	-2.00*	-0.340	-1.04
Associate professor	-0.049	-0.13	0.057	0.17
Graduate student	-0.038	-0.11	-0.219	-0.68
Post-doctoral fellow	-0.969	-2.62**	-0.736	-2.13*
Non-tenure track faculty	1.476	1.40	1.470	1.41
Other rank	0.708	1.22	-0.040	-0.07
Race/ethnicity of authors				
Anglo White	-0.599	-1.47	-0.283	-0.73
Black	1.221	1.11	0.736	0.69
Latino	-0.061	-0.11	0.266	0.50
Non-Anglo white	0.637	0.81	0.538	0.71
Asian	-0.107	-0.28	-0.183	-0.51
Middle Eastern	-0.071	-0.10	0.060	0.09
Native American	-1.046	-0.79	-1.344	-1.09
Other race	-0.043	-0.06	0.261	0.40
Mixed race	-0.143	-0.26	0.033	0.06
Prefer not to say race	-0.357	-0.88	-0.341	-0.90
Constant	4.157	4.32***	3.499	3.72***
N	1707			
Pseudo R ²	0.121			
LR χ^2	354.21			
Prob (LR χ^2)	0.0000			
Percentage predicted correctly	0.654			
Proportional reduction in error	0.226			

***prob < 0.001

** prob < 0.01

* prob < 0.05

Appendix Table A5. Multinomial logit estimates for model of final editorial decisions, *Perspectives on Politics*, 2018-2019

Variable	Desk rejection vs. accept		Rejection with review vs. accept	
	b	z	b	z
Number of authors	-0.753	-2.95**	-0.289	-1.13
Special issue manuscript	-0.024	-0.07	-0.848	-2.23*
Reflection or review manuscript	-1.211	-2.63**	-3.159	-4.36***
Manuscript methodology				
Method: case study	0.161	0.43	0.194	0.49
Method: critical, ethnography	0.164	0.23	-0.458	-0.56
Method: experimental	-0.143	-0.22	0.869	1.38
Method: normative	-0.010	-0.02	0.016	0.02
Method: interpretive	1.359	2.64**	0.830	1.48
Method: not applicable	1.684	2.36**	2.272	2.98***
Method: quantitative/formal (excluded)	---	---	---	---
Manuscript subfield				
Subfield: comparative politics	-0.165	-0.41	0.606	1.41
Subfield: international relations	-0.281	-0.58	-0.342	-0.65
Subfield: methodology	-1.052	-1.37	-2.095	-2.13*
Subfield: political theory	0.135	0.25	-0.543	-0.90
Subfield: administration and policy	1.987	1.76	1.472	1.24
Subfield: other	0.584	0.90	0.246	0.34
Subfield: American politics (excluded)	---	---	---	---
Country/region of authors				
Country: United States	-1.667	-3.64***	-0.792	-1.66*
Country: Western Europe	-0.960	-2.14*	-0.471	-1.02
Country: Canada, Australia, New Zealand	-0.482	-0.77	0.173	0.26
Employer of authors				
Ph.D-granting university	-0.327	-0.60	0.063	0.10
Non-Ph.D. granting university	0.942	2.06*	0.443	0.91
Other college (community, undergraduate)	0.704	1.29	0.012	0.02
Government, non-profit, private sector	0.787	1.02	-0.241	-0.26
Prefer not to say employer	-0.811	-0.80	-1.534	-1.10

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Appendix Table A5 (continued)

Variable	Desk rejection vs. accept		Rejection with review vs. accept	
	b	z	b	z
Gender of authors				
Male	0.625	1.38	0.319	0.67
Female	-0.102	-0.25	-0.353	-0.81
Non-binary /Prefer not to say gender	0.410	0.65	0.216	0.31
Academic rank of authors				
Full professor	0.306	0.75	0.037	0.08
Assistant professor	0.570	1.34	0.720	1.59
Associate professor	0.246	0.60	0.152	0.35
Graduate student	0.804	1.77*	-0.176	-0.36
Post-doctoral fellow	0.605	1.19	0.657	1.24
Non-tenure track faculty	1.228	1.79*	1.212	1.66*
Other rank	0.607	1.11	-0.340	-0.56
Race/ethnicity of authors				
Anglo white	-0.090	-0.19	0.336	0.66
Black	-0.036	-0.06	0.154	0.24
Latino	0.526	0.77	0.807	1.15
Non-Anglo white	-0.462	-0.65	-0.982	-1.17
Asian	1.177	2.12*	0.751	1.28
Middle Eastern	0.690	0.78	-0.137	-0.14
Other race	1.885	1.71	0.967	0.83
Mixed race	-0.799	-1.16	-0.457	-0.68
Prefer not to say race	0.233	0.44	0.348	0.62
Constant	2.785	3.31***	1.026	1.13
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N	721			
Pseudo R ²	0.189			
LR χ^2	249.91			
Prob (LR χ^2)	0.0000			
Percentage predicted correctly	0.657			
Proportional reduction in error	0.121			

***prob < 0.001

** prob < 0.01

* prob < 0.05

Appendix Table A6. Multinomial logit estimates for model of final editorial decisions, PS: *Political Science and Politics*, 2018-2019

Variable	Desk rejection vs. accept		Rejection with review vs. accept	
	b	z	b	z
Number of authors	0.182	0.34	0.269	0.92
Manuscript methodology				
Method: case study	1.465	1.52	-0.318	-0.53
Method: critical, ethnography, interpretive	-0.158	-0.12	-0.840	-1.05
Method: experimental	0.778	0.63	0.179	0.32
Method: normative	2.303	1.77	-1.211	-1.02
Method: not applicable	0.113	0.12	-1.262	-2.44**
Method: quantitative/formal (excluded)	---	---	---	---
Manuscript subfield				
Subfield: comparative politics	-1.757	-1.11	-0.312	-0.43
Subfield: international relations	0.995	0.67	0.705	0.74
Subfield: methodology	1.718	1.67	-0.251	-0.32
Subfield: political theory	-0.101	-0.07	0.045	0.05
Subfield: pedagogy	0.306	0.32	0.613	1.12
Subfield: the profession	2.023	1.17	2.458	1.82
Subfield: other	-0.666	-0.71	-0.846	-1.61
Subfield: American politics (excluded)	---	---	---	---
Country/region of authors				
Country: United States	0.568	0.46	0.503	0.57
Country: Western Europe	1.811	1.49	0.176	0.20
Country: Canada, Australia, New Zealand	1.381	0.82	-0.392	-0.33
Country: Asia	2.408	1.48	-1.053	-0.75
Country: other	2.616	2.11*	1.881	2.05*
Employer of authors				
Ph.D.-granting university	-0.477	-0.35	-0.545	-0.82
Non-Ph.D. granting university	-0.523	-0.42	-0.638	-1.03
Undergraduate college	-0.866	-0.58	-0.853	-1.18
Other college / other sector	0.596	0.43	-1.683	-1.90
Gender of authors				
Male	1.616	1.17	0.236	0.38
Female	-0.651	-0.52	0.181	0.29
Nonbinary/prefer not to say gender	1.952	1.04	-0.964	-0.93

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Appendix Table A6 (continued)

Variable	Desk rejection vs. accept		Rejection with review vs. accept	
	b	z	b	z
Academic rank of authors				
Full professor	-1.102	-0.93	-1.245	-2.01*
Assistant professor	-0.708	-0.67	-0.177	-0.32
Associate professor	-0.008	-0.01	-1.177	-2.10*
Graduate student	-0.737	-0.54	-0.282	-0.45
Non-tenure track faculty / other rank	-0.152	-0.13	0.577	0.92
Race/ethnicity of authors				
Anglo white	-1.422	-1.07	-0.314	-0.50
Black	-0.719	-0.46	0.008	0.01
Other race / ethnicity	-2.179	-1.58	-0.686	-1.17
Prefer not to say race	-2.598	-1.45	0.589	0.83
Constant	-2.807	-1.48	-0.162	-0.15
N	290			
Pseudo R ²	0.250			
LR χ^2	106.32			
Prob (LR χ^2)	0.0000			
Percentage predicted correctly	0.776			
Proportional reduction in error	0.156			

***prob < 0.001

** prob < 0.01

* prob < 0.05

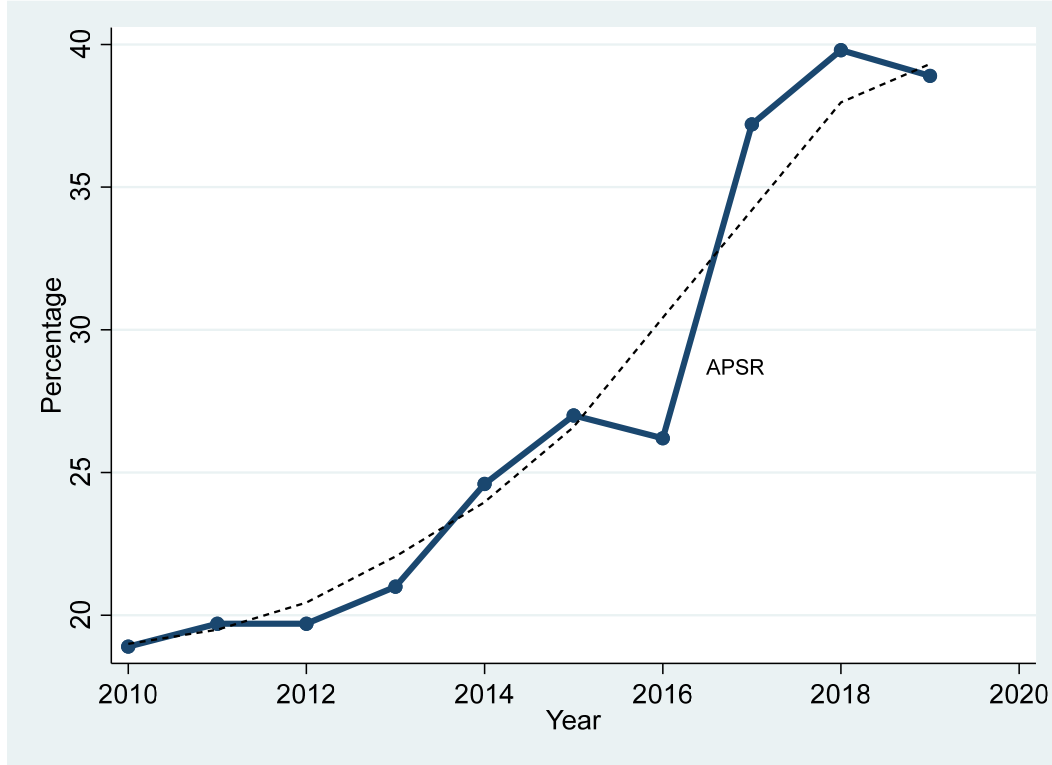
Appendix 2. Recent trends in desk rejection rates for selected journals

Has there actually been an increase in the use of desk rejections in recent years? Our sense is that when most senior scholars who have been in the political science profession for multiple decades refer to the increase in desk rejection rates, they are talking about long-term trends that go back into the 1970s, 1980s, or 1990s. Many senior scholars have the distinct impression that desk rejections were used relatively rarely before, say, 2000, and that the more regular use of desk rejections is a practice of more recent vintage. Regrettably, long-term data on desk rejection rates for major journals are not available, but we have been able to obtain data on desk rejection rates since 2010 for a small number of major journals: the *American Political Science Review*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and *Political Behavior*. These data reveal a general pattern of increased desk rejection rates since 2010, though there is quite a bit of variation across these journals.

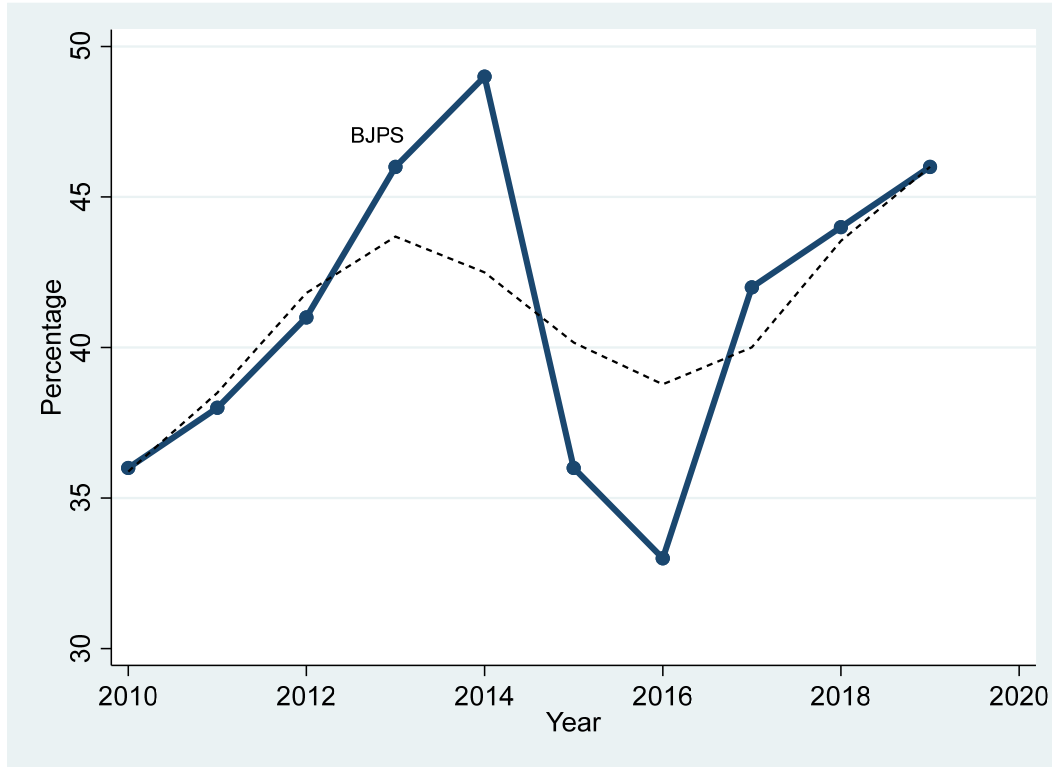
In Figures 2.1-2.6 we present trends in desk rejection rates for each of these six journals, respectively. In most cases we have data for 2010 to 2019, though we have a shorter time frame for *Political Research Quarterly* and data for 2020 for two other journals. As one can see, four journals—the *American Political Science Review*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and *Political Behavior*—have desk rejection rates that exhibit a clear upward trajectory. The other two journals—*British Journal of Political Science* and *Comparative Political Studies*—exhibit a pattern with ups and downs but with an overall upward path, and in the end the desk rejection rates for these two journals are higher at the end of the time period than at the beginning. Overall, it appears that patterns of desk rejection rates for these six journals are in a strong, upward direction.

There are two caveats. First, data are not available for very many journals, and it is possible that other journals exhibit a steady or declining pattern of desk rejections over time. For instance, one journal editor reported that the scholarly organization sponsoring the journal had encouraged a lower level of desk rejections. Second, the short time frame for which desk-rejection data are available is not long enough to speak to the issue of whether or not there are longer-term trends toward higher desk rejection rates.

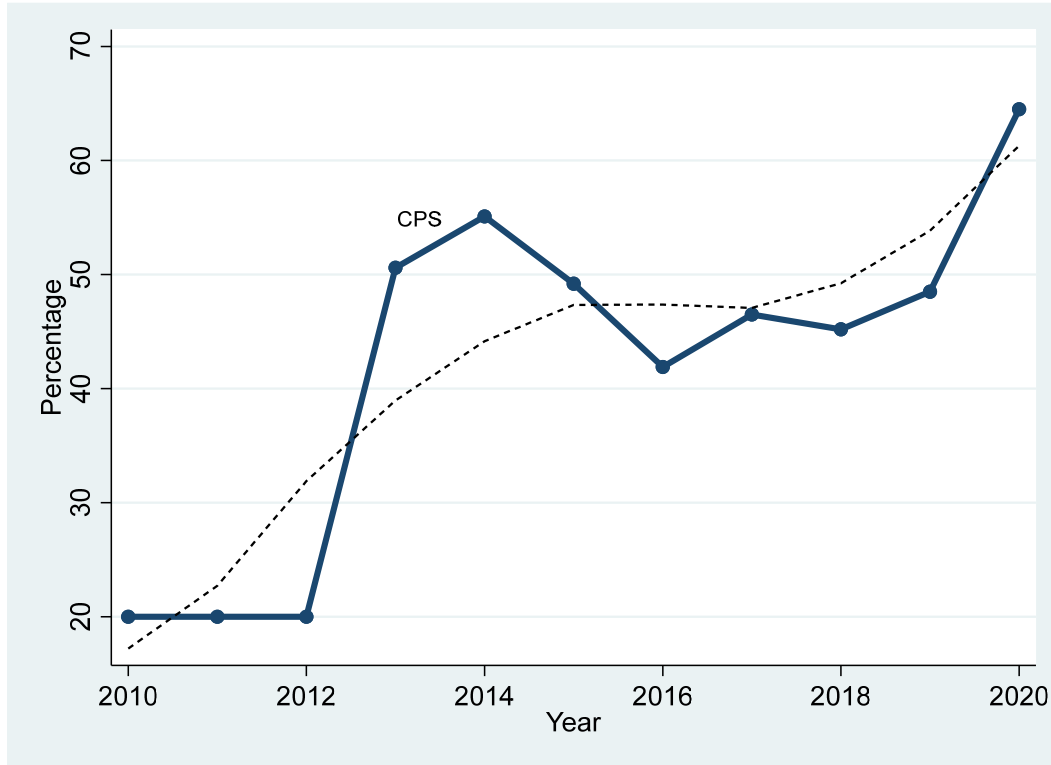
Appendix Figure 2.1. Trend in desk rejection rate for the *American Political Science Review*, 2010-2019.



Appendix Figure 2.2. Trend in desk rejection rate for the *British Journal of Political Science*, 2010-2019.

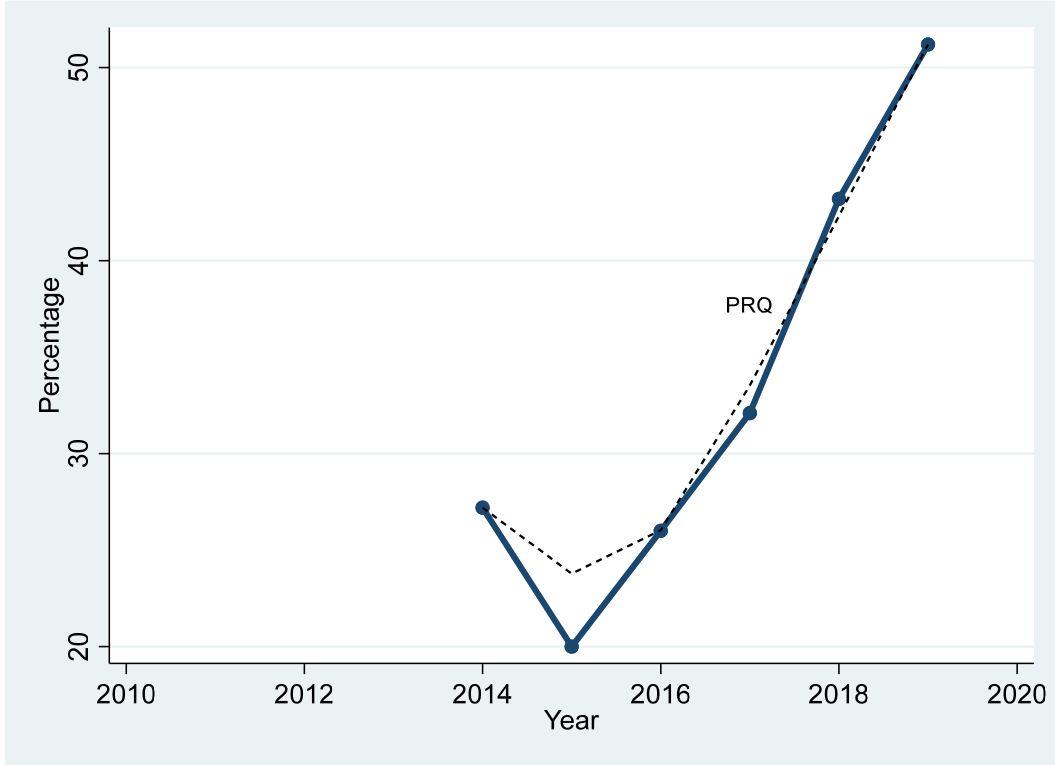


Appendix Figure 2.3. Trend in desk rejection rate for the *Comparative Political Studies*, 2010-2020.

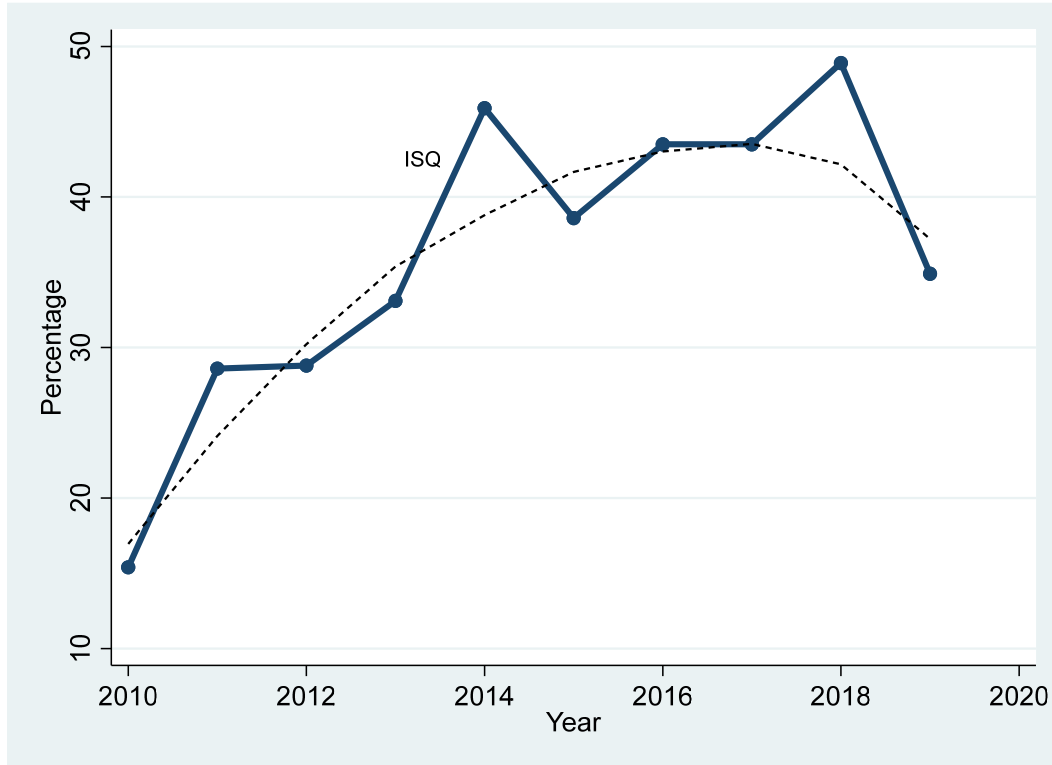


Note: The 20% desk rejection rate reported here for 2010-2012 is an estimate by the current editors of the desk rejection rate by the previous editor.

Appendix Figure 2.4. Trend in desk rejection rate for the *Political Research Quarterly*, 2014-2019.



Appendix Figure 2.5. Trend in desk rejection rate for the *International Studies Quarterly*, 2010-2019.



Appendix Figure 2.6. Trend in desk rejection rate for *Political Behavior*, 2010-2020.

