ISQ Annual Report, 2016

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Welcome to the 2016 annual report for *International Studies Quarterly*. As per International Studies Association policy, this document mainly covers the period of 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016. However, a significant number of manuscripts submitted during each "journal year" remain under consideration at the time of the annual report. This means that *first*, some of the data that we provide remains provisional and, *second*, this report includes updated information for the 2014-2015 period covered in our previous report. Finally, this report includes pooled data from both periods. However, unless otherwise noted, all figures pertain to the 2015-2016 reporting period.

Highlights from this year's report include:

- *ISQ* received 624 first-time (original) submissions from 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016. This constitutes an increase of around 14.7% from the previous period, a higher rate of growth than reported in the previous year.
- Our submissions included 547 research articles, 62 research notes, two responses to published pieces, and 13 theory notes.
- The proportion of co-authored manuscripts seems to have stabilized. 38% of manuscripts submitted in 2015-2016 had at least 2 authors. Co-authored manuscripts continue to perform significantly better in the review process.
- The sex breakdown of submissions continues to equalize, albeit slowly. 38% of manuscripts submitted had at least one female author, a slight increase from as last year (35%). The percentage of manuscripts with only female authors also increased to 24.5% (compared to 16.7% in 2014-2015 and 21% in 2013-2014).
- Around 25% of manuscripts had PhD students as authors, either alone (14.7%) or co-authoring with other PhD students (5.4%) or faculty (5.3%).
- As of 1 October 2016, 32 (5%) manuscripts were still awaiting a first decision (either with the editorial team or awaiting reviewer reports). Of original manuscripts with initial decisions (592), about 45.3% (268) were declined without external review, a six percentage point increase compared to the previous reporting year (meaning a return to the rate in the first year under the new editorial team). 11.6% (72) were offered revise-and-resubmit decisions after initial review; 39.9% (248) were declined after initial peer-review; four (.6%) were offered conditional acceptances or acceptances.
- The editorial team has only accepted a small number of manuscripts submitted since October 2015. As of 1 October 2016, 44 (7%) manuscripts still awaited a final decision (32 awaiting a first decision as noted above, 12 manuscripts awaiting a decision after review). Of those that have received decisions after review 42.9% (249) were declined after one or more rounds of review, 7.8% (45) were being revised for resubmission, and 3.1% (14) were accepted or in conditional acceptance stage.
- Although we saw a five percentage point increase in the rate of editorial rejections from the previous year, we also saw a five percentage point decrease in the rate of articles ultimately declined after review. The rate of revise-and-resubmit decisions after initial review decreased by 3.5 percentage points.
- ISQ received manuscripts from authors based in 57 countries, which signals continued diversification. 310, or 49.7% of the manuscripts, came from scholars based in the United States. This is a slight decrease compared to 55% and 56% in the two years prior. Submissions from English-speaking countries still account for about 70% of total submissions. The other 10 countries with the most submissions were the UK (68,

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10.9%), Germany (36, 5.8%), Canada (21, 3.8%), Australia (21, 3.4%), Netherlands (17, 2.7%), Israel (14, 2.2%); Sweden (12, 1.9%), and Switzerland, Norway, and Italy each with 9 (1.4%).

- In May of this year ISQ introduced triple-blind at the initial review stage. The editors handling an original manuscript submission make the decision to issue an editorial rejection (desk reject) or send the manuscript out for review without knowing the identity of the author(s). Occasionally, if there are concerns about originality or potential conflicts of interest an editor will break anonymity to adjudicate the matter and subsequently recuse themselves from handling the manuscript at that stage. While we do not yet have enough data to fully evaluate the impacts of this practice on the review process, it seems that triple-blind has produced an increase in the overall Desk-Reject rate (from 41% to 52%) and equalization in Desk-Reject rates across sex groups (manuscripts with women were previously less likely to be desk-rejected, now there is no perceptible difference).

Important updates from the 2014-2015 report include:

- *ISQ* accepted 64 manuscripts initially submitted during the 2014-2015 journal year. This represents an approximate acceptance rate of 12%. We accepted 60 manuscripts subsequent to revise-and-resubmit decisions. 80 manuscripts received revise-and-resubmit offers as a first decision. Thus, the "conversion rate" for revise-and-resubmit decisions stands at 75% during 2014-2015.
- Of these 64 manuscripts, 7 were solo-authored by female scholars (11%), 19 by male authors (30%), 17 co-authored by at least one female scholar and one male scholar (26%), 18 co-authored exclusively by male scholars (28%), and 3 (5%) were co-authored exclusively by female scholars.
- 41 (64%) of the manuscripts accepted came from authors based in the United States. Manuscripts originating from the United States comprised 55% of all manuscripts submitted, suggesting, *ceteris paribus*, a significant "overrepresentation" of US-based scholars. The UK (nine, or 14%), Switzerland (four, or 6%) and Canada (three, 5%) constitute the only other countries with more than one manuscript accepted.

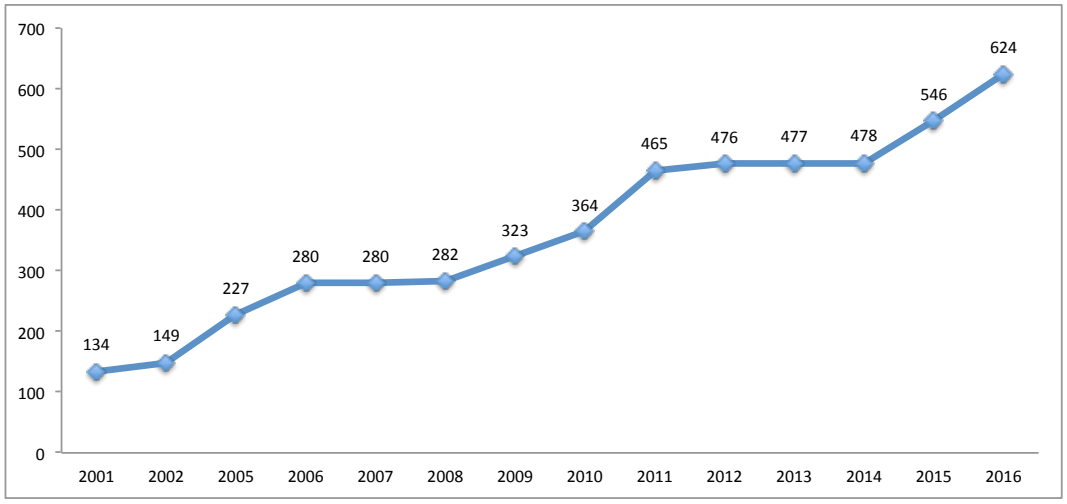
1. Manuscript Flow

During the 2015-2016 period, *ISQ* processed 624 first-time submissions. This represents an increase of around 14.7% from the previous period. *ISQ* also received four proposals for special sections. Of these, all received rejections after consideration by ad-hoc committees. One special section, originated under the prior team, was published in 2016.

For figure 1, we combined available historical data on original submissions with data in ScholarOne. A variety of considerations suggest caution for any comparison before 2013.[1]

[1]Details of our procedures and methodology appear in the 2014 report. In brief, we restrict these numbers to first-time submissions and emphasize issues of missing data and how we approached them.

Figure 1: Number of Original Manuscripts Submitted



Original submissions for 2016 included 547 research articles (87.7%), 62 research notes (9.9%), two responses to published pieces (.3%), 13 theory notes (2.1%) and no invited articles (0%). As of October 1st 2016, *ISQ* accepted 14 of these manuscripts (2.2%), offered conditional acceptances to four (0.6%), declined 219 (35.1%) after review, and desk rejected 235 (37.7%). 45 (7.2%) had outstanding revise-and-resubmit decisions, were awaiting reviews, or were undergoing internal processing.

Figure 2 shows the percentage breakdown of these decisions. In terms of manuscript submission type, *ISQ* accepted 10 research articles, two research notes, one theory note, and one responses to a published article. Table 1 presents the overall breakdown of decisions by manuscript type in more detail. Table 2 does the same for the 2014-2015 period.

Figure 2: Latest/Final Decision, 2015-2016

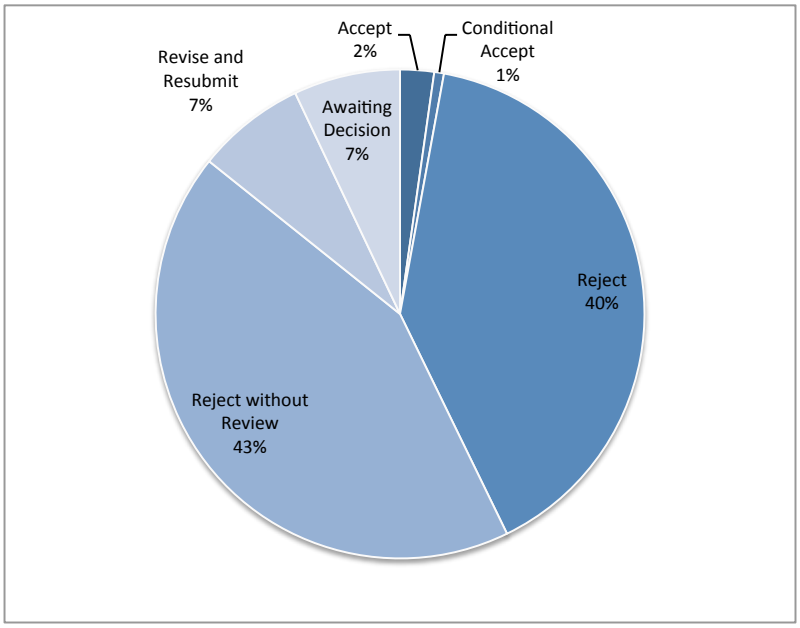


Table 1: Percentage Breakdowns of Types of Submissions and Final Decisions, 2016

	Accept	Conditional accept	Reject	Desk Rej.	R&R	Awaiting Decision	Total
Original Article	10	4	219	235	41	38	547
	1.8%	0.7%	40.0%	43.0%	7.5%	6.9%	
Research Note	2	0	23	26	4	7	62
	3.2%	0.0%	37.1%	41.9%	6.5%	11.3%	
Response to Published	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	
Theory Note	1	0	6	6	0	0	13
	7.7%	0.0%	46.2%	46.2%	0.0%	0.0%	

Table 2: Percentage Breakdowns of Types of Submissions and Final Decisions 2014-2015

	Accept	Conditional accept	Reject	Desk Rej.	R&R	Awaiting Decision	Total
Original Article	39	5	239	186	8	2	479
%	8.1%	1.0%	49.9%	38.8%	1.7%	0.4%	
Research Note	12	0	18	21	0	0	51
%	23.5%	0.0%	35.3%	41.2%	0.0%	0.0%	
Response to Published	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Theory Note	2	1	4	3	0	0	10
%	20.0%	10.0%	40.0%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Special issue	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	

Figure 3 shows all latest decisions logged in ScholarOne from 2010-2016, broken down by the time frame for annual reports.[2]

Readers may find the comparative trends of interest.[3] The desk-reject rate increased to 43.2%, after having dropped to 38.6% last year. The rejection-after-review rate correspondingly fell to 39.9% from 45.8%. The total first-round rejection rate remained pretty consistent throughout the periods reported, at around 83%. Figure 4 presents the first-round decisions. Figure 3 presents the latest decisions.

[2]For purposes of additional comparison, it might prove appropriate to total "conditional acceptances" and "revise and resubmit" manuscripts prior to 2013-2014. That is, we relabelled "minor revisions" as "conditional acceptances" in the system and use that category almost exclusively for manuscripts requiring only style-and-presentation changes.

[3]We calculated percentages for 2015-2016 based on the number of manuscripts with decisions. 32 manuscripts submitted in the period were still awaiting a first decision when we downloaded the data from the system.

Figure 3: Distribution of Latest Decisions for All Original Manuscripts (with Decisions) Submitted During 'Journal Year'

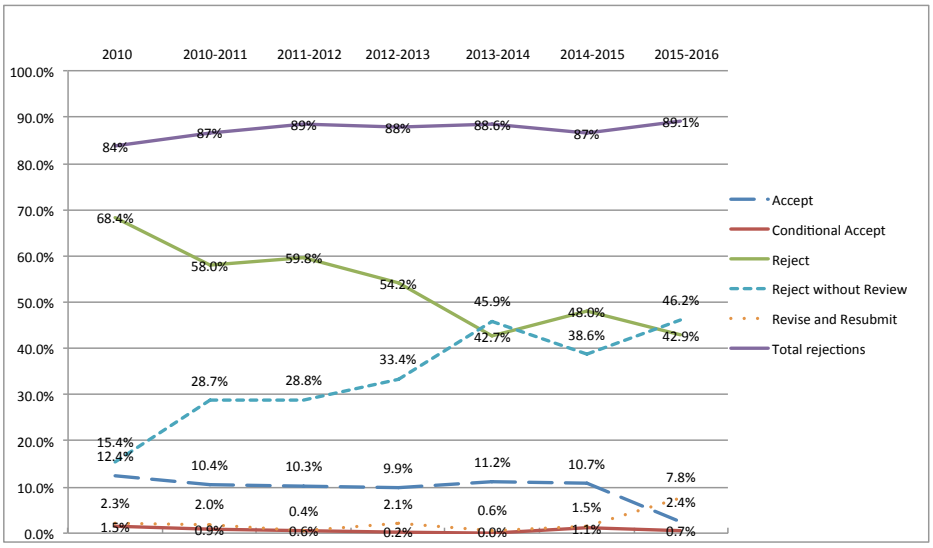
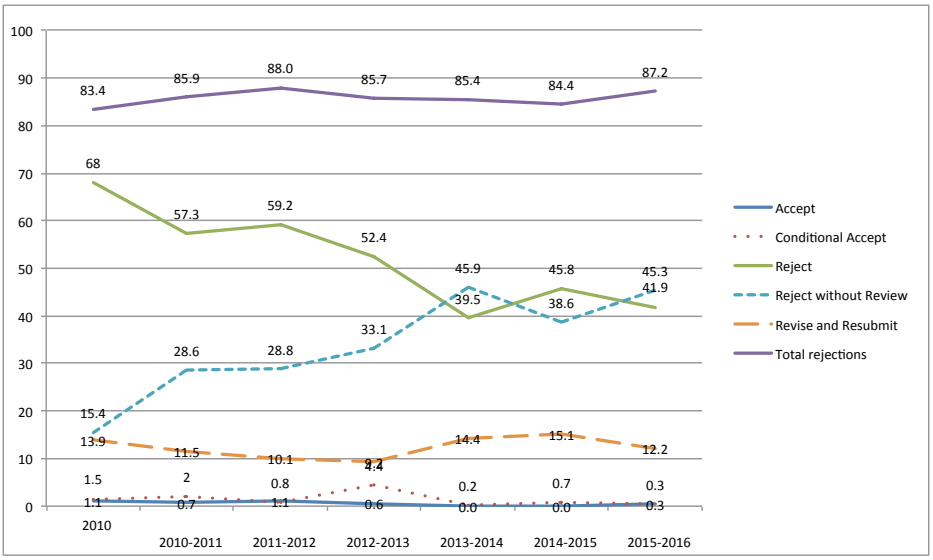


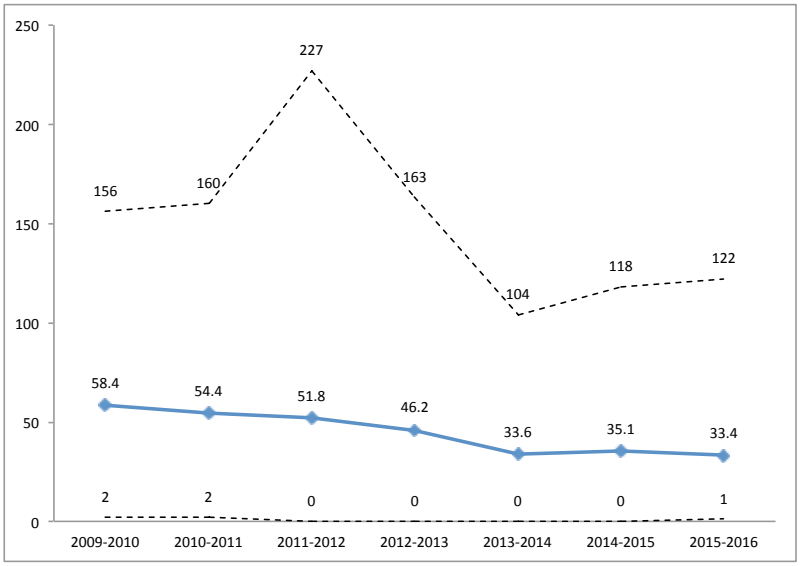
Figure 4: Distribution of First Decisions for All Original Manuscripts (with Decisions) Submitted During 'Journal Year'



2. Turnaround Time

ISQ reports by previous teams provided average turnaround time—the length of time between receipt of a manuscript and the transmission of a decision letter—for all manuscripts. Minimum, maximum, and median turnaround times can be found in Figure 5. As we noted in prior reports, two factors might artificially drive down aggregate turnaround time when comparing with prior teams. First, our increased desk-rejection rate may improve aggregate performance. Second, the current team's use of "conditional accepts" for style-and-presentation changes may artificially reduce turnaround time.

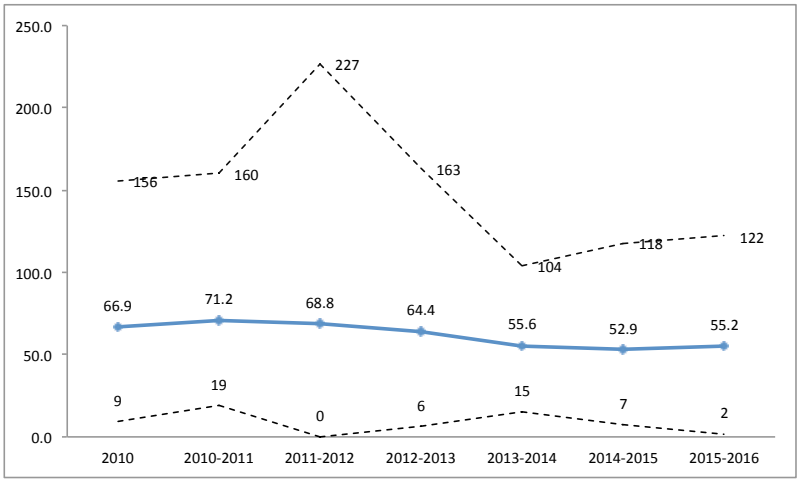
Figure 5: Average Number of Days from Submission to Decision



(a) Dotted lines: minimum and maximum times

A more reliable approach for comparing turnaround time involves disaggregating time-to-decision by decision type and manuscript status. The average turnaround time for desk rejections in 2015-2016 was a relatively fast seven days (a slight change from the 6.6 of the previous year). Manuscripts sent out for review took an average of 55 days (also slightly longer than the previous year, which averaged 53 days from submission to decision. See figure 6). Revise-and-resubmit decisions averaged the longest, 54 days; rejections averaged a bit less time, at 51.6 days.

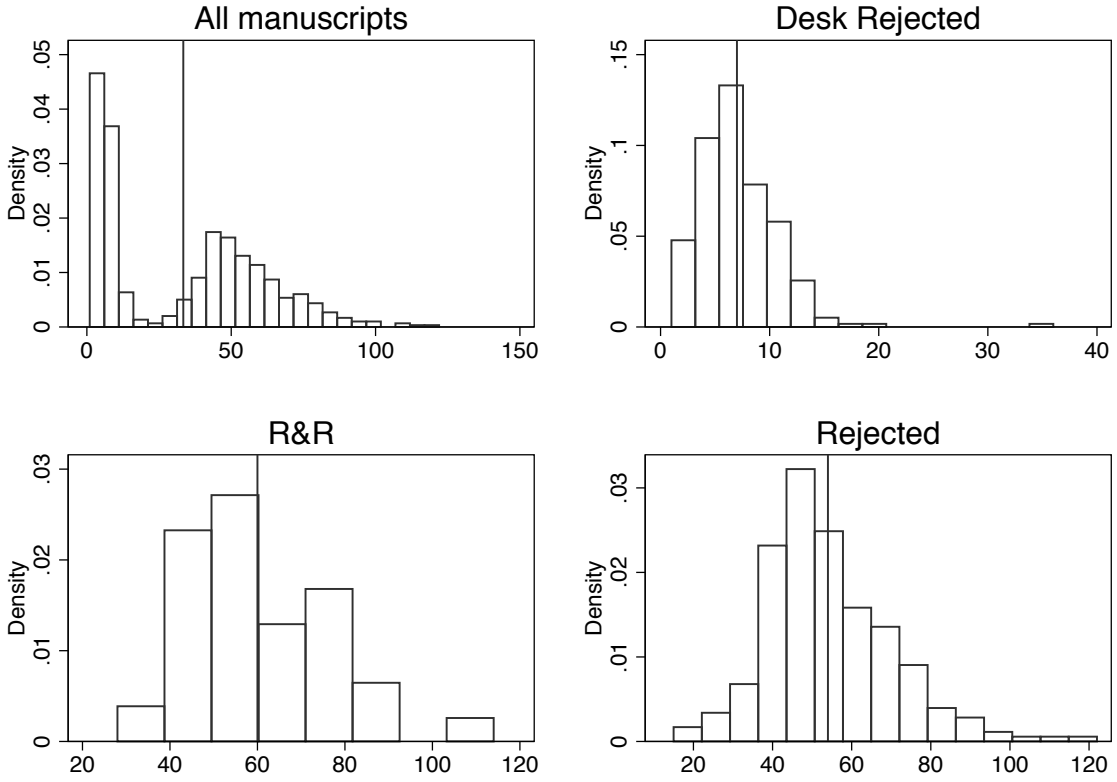
Figure 6: Average Number of Days for Decision after Review



(a) Dotted lines: minimum and maximum times

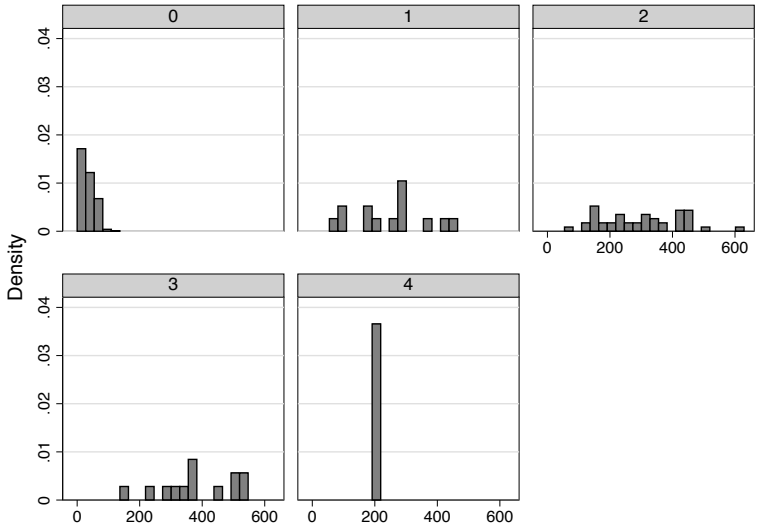
Too much focus on the averages obscures substantial variation within each category. To better illustrate the extent of that variation, we provide histograms of the turnaround time. Figure 7 shows turnaround time for a) all manuscripts, b) desk rejections, c) revise-and-resubmit decisions on first-time submissions, and d) submissions sent for review but got rejected.

Figure 7: Turnaround time by First Decision, 2015-2016



What about the time to final decision depending on the number of revise-and-resubmits a piece goes through? That is, how long does it take for manuscripts to work through the review system? Figure 8 provides this for 2014-2015. We lack enough revised manuscripts with final decisions in 2015-2016 for a meaningful comparison, but will provide that information in the 2017 report.

Figure 8: Time to Final Decision, by # of Revisions, 2014-2015



3. Author Demographics

The breakdown of 2015-2016 original submissions by sex appears in Figure 9. 153 submissions had all female authors (24.5%), compared to 16.7% the year before. 387 (62%) had all male authors, about 3 percent less than the year before. This means that we received slightly fewer manuscripts co-authored by men and women (13.5%, compared to 18.2% in 2014-2015). In other words, of the 237 manuscripts with at least one woman (single or co-authored), 36% are co-authored with men. Last year that number was over 50%. Only 27 (11%) were co-authored just by women. Figure 10 shows the aggregate breakdown for 2014-2015.

Figure 9: Submissions by author sex 2015-2016

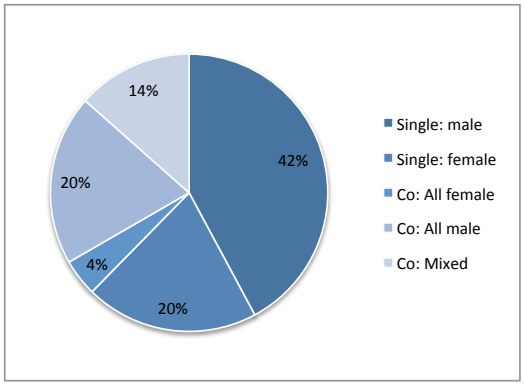


Figure 10: Submissions by author sex 2014-2015

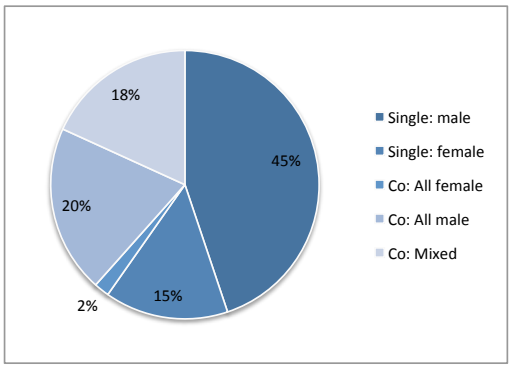
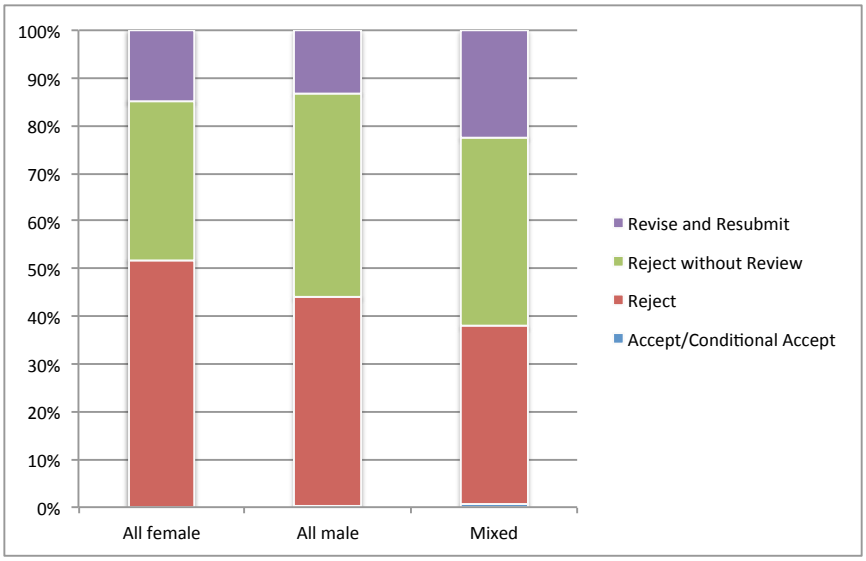


Figure 11 provides the breakdown for the sex of authors by latest decision (as of October 2016). Manuscripts with female authors are less likely (about 22%) to be desk rejected, and slightly more likely (about 16%) to be rejected after review. The difference in Desk Rejection rate seems to disappear after the introduction of triple-blind earlier this year. See Table 11 on page 13.

Figure 11: Final Decisions by Author Sex



Tables 3 and 4 present information on the country where the submitting author is based and the degrees of all authors (only includes manuscripts for which all authors report their degrees), respectively.

Table 3: Submissions by Country of Submitting Author

Country	n	%	Country	n	%	Country	n	%
United States	310	49.7%	Brazil	4	0.6%	Chile	1	0.2%
United Kingdom	68	10.9%	Hong Kong	4	0.6%	Estonia	1	0.2%
Germany	36	5.8%	Czech Republic	3	0.5%	Ethiopia	1	0.2%
Canada	24	3.8%	India	3	0.5%	Greece	1	0.2%
Australia	21	3.4%	Korea, Republic of	3	0.5%	Hungary	1	0.2%
Netherlands	17	2.7%	Spain	3	0.5%	Iceland	1	0.2%
Israel	14	2.2%	United Arab Emirates	3	0.5%	Iran	1	0.2%
Sweden	12	1.9%	Denmark	2	0.3%	Lao	1	0.2%
Italy	9	1.4%	Egypt	2	0.3%	Lebanon	1	0.2%
Norway	9	1.4%	Finland	2	0.3%	Luxembourg	1	0.2%
Switzerland	9	1.4%	France	2	0.3%	Macao	1	0.2%
Turkey	8	1.3%	Kuwait	2	0.3%	Nigeria	1	0.2%
China	6	1.0%	New Zealand	2	0.3%	Poland	1	0.2%
Japan	6	1.0%	Palestine	2	0.3%	Portugal	1	0.2%
Ireland	5	0.8%	Russian Federation	2	0.3%	Romania	1	0.2%
Mexico	5	0.8%	South Africa	2	0.3%	Saudi Arabia	1	0.2%
Singapore	5	0.8%	Azerbaijan	1	0.2%	Slovenia	1	0.2%
Austria	4	0.6%	Bangladesh	1	0.2%	Taiwan	1	0.2%
Belgium	4	0.6%	Cameroon	1	0.2%	Tunisia	1	0.2%

Table 4: Authors' Degrees

Single author	n	%	% of total
PhD	266	68.4%	42.6%
PhD student	92	23.7%	14.7%
No PhD	9	2.3%	1.4%
No data	22	5.7%	3.5%
	389		
Co-authored			
All PhD	163	69.4%	26.1%
All PhD students	34	14.5%	5.4%
PhD and students	33	14.0%	5.3%
Insufficient data	5	2.1%	0.8%
	235		

It is clear that that the majority of manuscripts come from authors based in the US. The UK is a distant second with 10.9% of submissions. This distribution is reflected in acceptance rates. Table 5 shows the countries of submission for manuscripts accepted in 2014-2015. Table 6 shows the countries of manuscripts R&Rd in 2015-2016.

Table 5: Manuscripts Accepted in 2014-2015, by Country of Submission

Country	n.	%
United States	41	64.1%
United Kingdom	9	14.1%
Switzerland	4	6.3%
Canada	3	4.7%
Australia	1	1.6%
Austria	1	1.6%
Germany	1	1.6%
UAE	1	1.6%
Israel	1	1.6%
Spain	1	1.6%
Sweden	1	1.6%

Table 6: Manuscripts R&Rd in 2015-2016, by country of submission

Country	n.	%
United States	43	59.7%
United Kingdom	12	16.7%
Australia	3	4.2%
Germany	2	2.8%
Canada	1	1.4%
Chile	1	1.4%
Czech Republic	1	1.4%
Denmark	1	1.4%
Egypt	1	1.4%
Hong Kong	1	1.4%
Italy	1	1.4%
Japan	1	1.4%
New Zealand	1	1.4%
Norway	1	1.4%
Sweden	1	1.4%
Switzerland	1	1.4%

4. Submissions: A More Granular View

Table 7 breaks down manuscripts by self-reported substantive areas of research. Table 8 shows the regions of interest. Table 9 shows the distribution of manuscripts by aggregating methods baskets. All categories are self-reported by the authors. There was a small but insignificant drop in the share of "purely statistical" manuscripts and a correspondingly small increase in "purely qualitative" manuscripts from last year. There was a larger increase in the number of manuscripts employing formal theory.

Table 7: Submissions by Substantive Issue Area*

International Security	274
International Relations Theory	164
International Political Economy	150
Foreign Policy	149
Comparative Politics	127
International Organization	127
Human Rights	86
Methodology	60
Political Sociology	59
Political Psychology	30
Philosophy of Science	11

*Multiple issue areas allowed

Table 8: Submissions by Region of Interest

Global	311	European Union	27
Middle East/North Africa	81	Southeast Asia/Oceania	21
United States	78	Eastern Europe/Former Soviet Union/Ce..	20
None	54	North America	17
Western Europe	53	South Asia	13
Sub-Saharan Africa	40	Russia	11
Transregional	38	India	7
Latin America	37	Japan	7
China	30	Pakistan	6
East Asia	30	Afghanistan	3

*Multiple regions allowed

Table 9: Submissions by Self-reported Methods

2015-2016			2014-2015		
Methods Basket	n.	Percent	Methods Basket	n.	Percent
Formal	14	2.2%	Formal	4	0.7%
Qual	252	40.4%	Qual	212	39.0%
Qual+Formal	5	0.8%	Qual+Formal	4	0.7%
Quant	256	41.0%	Quant	241	44.3%
Quant+Formal	9	1.4%	Quant+Formal	14	2.6%
Quant+Qual	88	14.1%	Quant+Qual	66	12.1%
Quant+Qual+Formal	0	0.0%	Quant+Qual+Formal	3	0.6%

In line with findings from other studies we also find that co-authorship is becoming more common, though it is not yet the norm. Figure 12 shows the uptrend in co-authorship as percentage of total submissions, despite a small dip this year to 37.8% from 40.3%. Table 10 provides information about the fate of single-authored and co-authored manuscripts. Co-authored manuscripts are about 25% more likely to be sent out for review. While we do not yet have enough data to be confident in this analysis, the introduction of triple-blind at the editorial review stage does not seem to have affected the relationship between co-authorship on review outcome. Figure 13 presents the results of a simple bivariate logit estimating the odds of acceptance for single- versus co-authored submissions that are sent for review, pooling data from 2013-2016. The independent variable is coded as 1 for manuscripts with one author and 0 for co-authored manuscripts.

Figure 12: Percentage of Co-authored Manuscripts

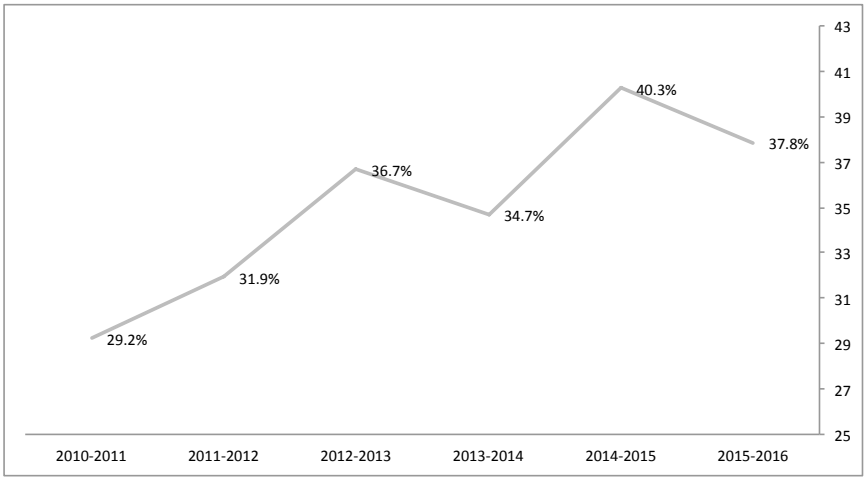
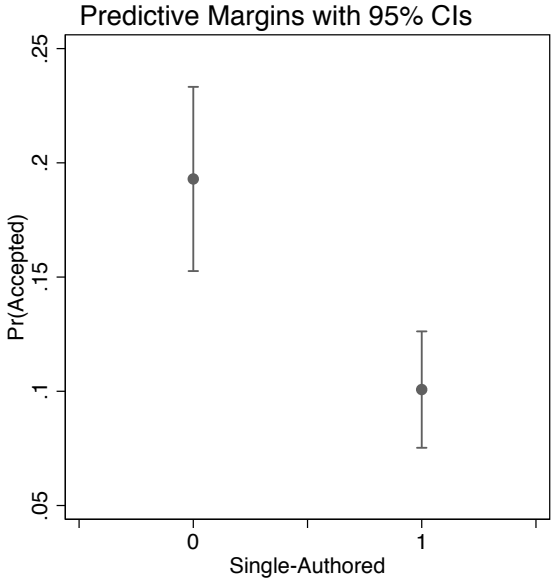


Table 10: Decisions on Single- and Co-authored Manuscripts

2013-2014			2014-2015			2015-2016		
Desk Reject								
Co-authored	0	1	Co-authored	0	1	Co-authored	0	1
0	50.8%	49.2%	0	60.0%	40.0%	0	50.5%	49.5%
1	60.8%	39.2%	1	63.6%	36.4%	1	61.8%	38.2%
Pearson chi2 = 4.3818 Pr = 0.036			Pearson chi2 = 0.7324 Pr = 0.392			Pearson chi2 = 7.10 Pr = 0.008		
R&R*								
Co-authored	0	1	Co-authored	0	1	Co-authored	0	1
0	75.32%	24.68%	0	80.31%	19.69%	0	80.11%	19.89%
1	70.30%	29.70%	1	68.12%	31.88%	1	73.88%	26.12%
Pearson chi2 = 0.7884 Pr = 0.375			Pearson chi2 = 6.42 Pr = 0.011			Pearson chi2 = 1.73 Pr = 0.188		
*R&R = 0 means Reject after first round of review								
Final Decision after Review								
Co-authored	Accept	Reject	Co-authored	Accept	Reject	Not enough data for 2015-2016.		
0	14.67%	85.33%	0	13.83%	86.17%			
1	25.25%	74.75%	1	27.74%	72.26%			
Pearson chi2 = 4.3644 Pr = 0.037			Pearson chi2 = 11.533 Pr = 0.003					

Figure 13: Probability of Being Accepted, Manuscripts Sent out for Review, 2013-2016



Of course, co-authorship is potentially correlated with other factors, such as methodological orientation. Indeed, manuscripts using statistics and formal theory are more likely to be co-authored. It also may correlate with geographical location and author sex. All of these may affect—or at least correlate with—editorial decisions and/or reviewer recommendations. In previous years, we conducted multivariate statistical analysis of editorial and peer-review decisions, and found that manuscripts using quantitative methods are considerably more likely to be sent for review, but are not more successful in subsequent stages. The effect of single-authorship on desk rejection loses significance when we control for other factors, but remains consistent and negative in subsequent stages. Submissions originating in the anglophone world are not only the majority, but they were also much less likely to be desk rejected. These findings hold when we add 2015-2016 data.

In May of this year, we introduced triple-blind review. The editors handling an original manuscript submission make the decision to issue an editorial rejection (desk reject) or send the manuscript out for review without knowing the identity of the author(s). While we do not yet have enough data to fully evaluate the impacts of this practice on the review process, preliminary analysis using the data we have collected so far suggests a few interesting things. First, triple-blind seems to have produced an increase in the overall Desk-Reject rate (from 41% to 52%). It also appears to have equalized Desk-Reject rates across sex groups (manuscripts with women were previously less likely to be desk-rejected, now there is no perceptible difference), manuscript methods, and country of origin. Table 11 below shows the coefficients for each variable's effect on the likelihood of a manuscript getting desk-rejected, conditional on the identity of the author(s) being visible to the editors (i.e., with or without triple blind). The drop in statistical significance for the manuscripts in the triple-blind category may be entirely explained by the fact that there are far fewer observations in that group (246). We will repeat the analysis for next years' report.

Table 11: Logistic Regression Analysis of Editorial Decisions, Conditional Effect of Triple Blind

Single-Authored						
	Triple Blind	Coef.	SE	P-value	95% CI	
	0	0.0370546	0.0277199	0.181	-0.0172753	0.0913846
	1	0.0966783	0.0714512	0.176	-0.0433634	0.2367201
Anglo (submitting author)						
	0	-0.2486589	0.028716	0	-0.3049413	-0.1923765
	1	-0.074395	0.0722318	0.303	-0.2159668	0.0671768
Any Quant Method						
	0	-0.0833424	0.0268975	0.002	-0.1360605	-0.0306243
	1	-0.0602335	0.0708041	0.395	-0.1990069	0.0785399
Any Female Authors						
	0	-0.0641254	0.0270607	0.018	-0.1171633	-0.0110875
	1	-0.0173494	0.0710312	0.807	-0.1565681	0.1218692

5. Reviewer Information

One of our initiatives involves building granular data on the peer-review process. We ask a variety of demographic questions as part of ScholarOne's user-account profiles. Unfortunately, response rates remain low, particularly for users with pre-existing accounts or users who declined invitations to review. We therefore hand-coded the sex of all active users (reviewers and authors) in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 period, leaving in place existing answers for those who filled out this part of the demographic battery. This not only allowed us to derive the data in Figure 9, but also provided some insight into the possible role of reviewer sex in the peer-review process.

Table 12: Reviewers' sex

Reviewer stats	2016	
	Freq.	Percent
Male	1,161	66.8%
Female	503	28.9%
Total	1,739	100

Table 13: Response to Request by Reviewer Sex, 2013-2016 pooled

	Male	Female	Total
Decline	768	358	1,126
	28.4%	31.8%	32.32
Agree	1932	769	2,701
	71.6%	68.2%	67.68
Total	2,700	1127	

Pearson chi2(1) = 4.2238 Pr = 0.040

As shown in Table 12, during 2015-2016, 1,161 (70%) of *ISQ*'s reviewers were male, while 503 (30%) were female. Unlike previous years, we didn't find a statistically significant difference in the the rate at which men and women agree to review. Using the 2013-2016 pooled data, however, as seen in Table 13, we still find that men are slightly more likely to accept invitations to review (72% vs. 68%). We also note that our reviewer pool has become slightly less US-centric over the last three years. In 2013-2014, 78.2% of reviewers were based in the US. In 2014-2015 that number came down to 72.7% and in 2015-2016 to 69%. Scholars based in the broader category of English speaking countries made up 91%, 84% and 85% in the three previous years.

We would like to know more about other potential ways in which sex, gender, and national origin play a role in the review process. To do so, we have convened a Task Force on Gender and a Task Force on Global Representation, which began their activities in the summer. We expect to have some findings to report in the next annual report. As part of these activities we are also currently undergoing an effort to gather missing biographical information for reviewers to provide a more complete picture of our reviewer pool.

6. *ISQ* Online

In 2015-2016, we ran nine symposia or extended debates—additional rounds of discussion begun in the pages of *ISQ*—all focused on direct engagement with specific articles.

The current plan is to transition *ISQ*'s online content to the new Oxford University Press journal platform. The precise timing of this move remains uncertain, but we expect it to allow us to better link online content to specific articles.

So far, no one has submitted unsolicited proposals for symposia or engagement with *ISQ* and *ISQ* Online content. We encourage readers to do so. The American University team remains hard at work editing and developing new symposia, as well as filling in gaps in replication files. At the risk of repetition, those interested in either aspect should contact them directly.

7. External Metrics

As we note every year: "when journals meet or exceed expectations, their editors trumpet their standing in Journal Citation Reports (JCR). When they fall short, editors downplay them. Before discussing metrics, we want to stress that we strongly oppose any effort to game *ISQ*'s rankings or otherwise adopt editorial policy for the purpose of improving *ISQ*'s position. *ISQ* should strive to best fulfill its mandate as a broad international studies publication as laid out by the ISA, regardless of whether or not doing so improves its position in specific metrics of journal quality, impact, and significance. *ISQ*'s impact factor lags behind expectations and its reputation-based rankings."

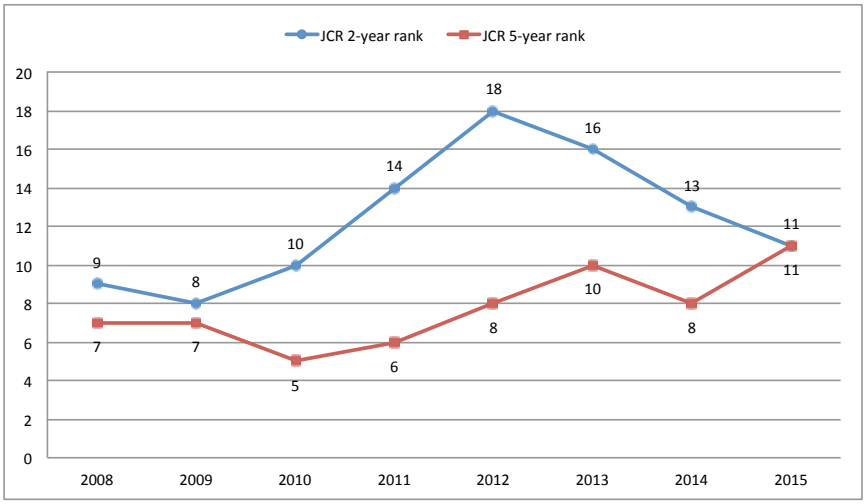
In the 2011 TRIP survey (PDF), *ISQ* ranked second–behind *International Organization*–for the question of what

journal publishes articles with the greatest influence in the field. In the latest survey, it ranks fourth after *International Organization*, *Foreign Affairs*, and *International Security*.

According to Google Scholar Metrics, *ISQ* ranks sixth for h5-index and ties for fifth for h5-median (as of December 11, 2016) for English-language "Diplomacy and International Relations" journals.[4]

In the 2015 Journal Citation Report, *ISQ* earned a two-year impact factor of 1.943 and a five-year impact factor of 2.298. This placed it at 11th and 11th, respectively, in the category of "International Relations" on 70 citable items in 2014 and 70 in 2013 (140 total), and 312 for the five-year impact factor. *ISQ* ranked fourth in the 2015 JCR Eigenfactor Score for the same category.

Figure 14: Journal Citation Report Rankings



8. Editorial Matters

The Georgetown team underwent personnel changes during the year. Terrence Chapman became a Senior Editor. Madison Schramm and Alexandra Stark replaced Dani Nedal and Irena Sargsyan as managing editors. We list the current editorial membership in Appendix A.

9. Issues and Challenges

9.1 Backlog

We inherited a significant backlog, but one much diminished by the efforts of the prior editorial team. These included adjusting the font size of the journal and moving to two columns per page. These adjustments helped to reduce the prior backlog. They also made it easier to handle an increased number of submissions while maintaining a relatively stable acceptance rate. In December 2015, we published the one—and the last—article accepted by the prior team.

We estimate the current backlog in a number of different ways. The two main variables are what we consider "in the pipeline" for publication and how many articles we expect to publish per issue.

The most liberal interpretation of the first variable includes all conditionally-accepted manuscripts, as we expect a near 100% conversion rate to acceptance. If we publish 14 articles per issue—for a total of 56 articles per volume—then our backlog as of 11 December stands at 3.93 issues. If we restrict this number to accepted manuscripts, then the current backlog stands at three issues for the same target.

[4]Google: "h5-index is the h-index for articles published in the last 5 complete years. It is the largest number h such that h articles published in 2011-2015 have at least h citations each" and "h5-median for a publication is the median number of citations for the articles that make up its h5-index." Note that the former metric clearly favors journals that publish a greater number of articles–such as *ISQ*.

Although we would like to publish 14 articles—or fewer—per issue, the volume of submissions currently makes that impractical without dramatic changes to the journal's standards. In 2015, we published 65 pieces (16.25 per issue). If we publish 16 per issue going forward, then our backlog would be 3.44 issues or, at the more restrictive count, 2.63 issues.

Because we are comfortable with the current backlog, we expanded the official maximum length for submitted research articles to 13,000 words. We continue to evaluate this number in light of changes in total submission and trends in the acceptances rate.

A major challenge for the journal involves the length of time it takes to conduct in-house copyediting. This process is handled by a part-time MA student and *ISQ*'s Lead Editor. It focuses on two aspects of accepted manuscripts: (1) the state of citations and references and (2) style-and-presentation matters related to our efforts to make articles more accessible and readable. The goods news is that the window for getting manuscripts back to authors with sample edits, queries, and suggestions had dropped under two months. The bad news is implicit in the good news. As of now, we are looking at options for speeding up this process.

9.2 Data Collection

As we reported in the prior two years, our ability to collect large-N data on the peer-review process remains dependent on users' willingness to provide demographic information. We recognize that some users consider the questions onerous, intrusive, or both. Some users may not even be aware of their existence. We supply "decline to answer" options for all questions, and reaffirm our commitment to keeping answers confidential. We also want to highlight that this information plays no role in the editorial process. We hope more users will enter their data, so that it will be available both for internal assessments and, in anonymous form, for those interested in studying the peer-review process for international studies journals.

9.3 The Citation Gap

Recent findings of a "citation gap" for female scholars remain a matter of debate and concern. Conventional wisdom also holds that such a gap extends to other demographic categories. Our approach focuses on using the editorial process–and prompting reviewers–to highlight appropriate scholarship that deserves acknowledgment in *ISQ* articles. To improve upon and complement this practice, we asked the members of our editorial board to volunteer to form a "task force" on this issue, which initiated activities over the summer.

9.4 Encouraging Broader Intellectual Engagement

The Georgetown-anchored team made a commitment to encouraging cross-talk among different research communities. We remain concerned that our efforts have fallen short, for reasons similar to those that undermine our efforts to address "citation gap" concerns. Our templates now include a "prompt" for editors to note broader literatures of relevance to papers, and individual editors are making more of an effort to consult with one another on this matter.

9.5 Diversity of Submissions

The data presented still paint a bleak picture for both the number of submissions and the fate of submissions originating outside of the "Global North." Only 35 submissions this year (5%) came from non-OECD countries. We therefore asked the members of our editorial board to volunteer to form a "task force" on this issue. The task force initiated activities in the summer. However, things appear to be in a holding pattern pending ISA's own efforts on the general subject.

9.6 Theory Notes

In 2014, *ISQ* introduced a new category of articles, called "Theory Notes." We published our first submission in that category ("Practice Theory and Relationalism as the New Constructivism," by David McCourt) in the September 2016 issue. We have two more Theory Notes under production, and one at the conditional-acceptance stage.

10. Acknowledgements

The complete 2015-2016 masthead for *ISQ* appears in Appendix A. We want to particularly acknowledge our current Managing Editors, Madison Schramm and Alexandra Stark, as well as our outgoing Managing Editors, Dani Nedal and Irena Sargsyan. In addition to thanking all those listed in Appendix A–and specifically the editorial board–we want to extend our special thanks to the ISA staff, the ISA publications committee, the terrific team at Oxford University Press, and all those who submit to and review for *ISQ*. Georgetown University's Department of Government, Mortara Center for International Studies, the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, and the University of Texas at Austin provide generous financial and in-kind support for the journal. American University provides essential financial and in-kind support for *ISQ* Online. Dani Nedal, Madison Schramm, and Alexandra Stark assisted with the production of this report.

11. Appendix A: *ISQ* Masthead, 2015-2016

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